L 100 VE COMPANY

L Company, 399th Infantry Regiment, of the 100th Infantry Division during World War II and beyond

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Printed at:
Ted Weiss Printing
409 Bridgetown Pike
Langhorne, PA

Published by:
Chi Chi Press
PO Box 914
Maywood, NJ 07607
(800) 807-8265

ISBN 0-9727330-0-0

TO THOSE FELLOW INFANTRYMEN
WHO NEVER SAW ANY GLORY IN WAR,
ONLY THE MISERY OF WAR,
AND COULD NEVER FORGET IT
OR TELL OF IT

About the author

John M. Khoury was born in Brooklyn. He was educated in New York City schools and attended Columbia University for two years. After his military service, he joined his father's wholesale linen importing company. Over the years, the business changed because of marketing conditions and public tastes. Hand-embroidered fancy linens were replaced by no-iron merchandise. The retail trade was dramatically changed by discounters and shopping malls. To keep up with the changes, he made many trips abroad to import textile products that were in demand. Although he was successful in business, he was always aware of the folly of striving to amass great wealth. His experience as an infantryman made him value the things that are meaningful and priceless in one's life. To have survived combat when other comrades died in their prime of life gave him a feeling of blessing that permeates his thoughts every passing day.

He married a lovely childhood friend who has brought happiness into his life. They have a family of four children who have successfully made a place in society. They are all independent in their careers and are the pride of his life. This book has been written for them, their children and for later generations. His hope is that they will understand how it once was to serve one's country in a war that resulted in the greatest loss of human life in history.

LOVE COMPANY

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PREFACE

I was an ordinary infantry soldier who served my country in World War II, a time of national peril. When I was discharged from the U.S. Army in 1946, at the convenience of the government, I put that period behind me and returned to civilian life. I wanted to forget those days but no matter how I tried, I could not completely erase all those memories.

After two years, I found and married the little girl who had once lived on my street. She had grown into a beautiful young woman. We had a family of three girls and one boy. As the years went by, the children would ask about my wartime experiences. How could I answer their questions? I could not brag about being a great warrior or hero. I would not describe the life of a dogface in the front line where teenage buddies were wounded and killed every day. Instead, I tried to tell about the funny experiences that unexpectedly humanized the tragedy of war. Although this satisfied their curiosity, temporarily, they still wanted to hear more, but I did not want to go back to that period in my life.

What made me decide to dig into the past and bring up the times that I wanted to forget? It may have been the reunions of the 100th Infantry Division where I met the young boys who were becoming old men. They still felt undiminished affection for their fellow comrades in arms. It may have been the trip back to the battlefields in France and Germany where I could almost see the ghosts of lost foxhole buddies. In the American Military Cemetery at Epinal, I bowed my head and could not hold back a tear at the grave of each lost soul I once knew. It was then that I asked myself, "Should I write the stories of our old company?" I thought of all that I could remember and it seemed as though I had amnesia. I had so thoroughly wiped away those memories that I sometimes questioned whether I had actually been there. It was then that I was challenged to go back to those days and write about what happened to those who served in our company during the war.

I did not keep a diary. No one I knew kept a diary. When you are not sure if you are going see the next sunrise, the idea of writing notes in a diary is of no importance. Besides, the Army advised that you should not keep records in case you are captured, wounded or killed and fall into the hands of the enemy. Your diary could be a source of information that

might endanger the lives of the men in your unit. As a practical matter, you had to carry everything that was essential and that did not include a pad of paper and a pencil. That paper and pencil had to be protected inside dirty clothing through the cruelest weather conditions. A pencil was the sole handwriting instrument in those days and a bayonet was a pencil sharpener. Ballpoint pens were not available then.

The beginning of 1944 was a period of reorganization in the U.S. Army. The war in Europe had changed from air and sea battles to a land battle. The Luftwaffe was on the defensive and the seas were now controlled by the Allied navies. Ground forces were needed for the invasion of the Continent after the campaign in North Africa. Some infantry divisions in the U.S. were stripped of troops that were sent to Europe as replacements.

The 100th Infantry Division sent 3,675 men as replacements between April and September 1944. From activation on 14 November 1942 until embarkation in October 1944, replacements from the division totaled 14,787 enlisted men and 1,460 officers. At one time, it was feared that the 100th would be just a training division and never be sent into combat but that changed.

During the spring and summer of 1944, it was brought up to full strength as a fighting force with soldiers from other units. Enlisted men and officers came from deactivated anti-aircraft units; bright young men came from the cancelled Army Specialist Training Program (ASTP); cadets came from the Army Air Corps training program; and others came from stateside coast artillery, ordnance, and other units from as far away as the Aleutian Islands.

This is one soldier's story during those turbulent times. It is not about a hero or a great patriot. It is meant to take the reader along with the young man to see through his eyes what he saw and to understand what he thought. He has tried to make the experiences as human as possible, so that sensation is discarded for sensitivity. Words are not adequate to describe the feelings of fear, cold, relief, determination, or exhaustion. Those feelings will always remain with the writer.

LOVE COMPANY

At the time I was assigned to an infantry regiment in May 1944, I learned that each rifle company and heavy weapons company had a name besides a letter. This was important when communicating by field telephone, radio, or walkie-talkie, because A Company could be confused with K Company and B Company with D Company.

The names assigned to the 1st Battalion's three rifle companies and the heavy weapons company were as follows:

A was Able Company, a proud name.
B was Baker Company, a masculine name.
C was Charlie Company – it had a swagger to it.
D was Dog Company. This heavy weapons company had a growl to it.

For the 2nd Battalion, the three rifle companies and heavy weapons company were:

Easy for **E** Company, which had a cocky flair.
Fox for **F** Company, a sly outfit, of course.
George for **G** Company, a serious group.
Hypo for **H** Company, the heavy weapons company, maybe named for its sting.

In the 3rd Battalion, the three rifle companies and heavy weapons company were:

Item for **I** Company, which may have been named for newsworthiness.
There was no J Company in the infantry. (According to a story I have heard, General George Armstrong Custer's unit that was destroyed at the Battle of the Little Big Horn was J Company. Because of that, there is no **J** Company, but I don't know for sure.)
King for **K** Company, which is a name to respect.
Love for **L** Company. Love? For tough, hardened, fearless front-line warriors! Couldn't the Army call us Lion or Leopard Company? Probably Lion would not be good because it would sound like Line and all infantry rifle companies are line companies. Nevertheless, we were Love Company and we loved the irony of the name.
Mike for **M** Company, a masculine name for the heavy weapons company.

One particular Saturday, in the summer of 1944, a review of the entire 100th Infantry Division was held for Secretary of War Henry Stim-

son and high-ranking officials from England. The 15,000 men of the division were assembled on the parade grounds of Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Each soldier was checked from head to toe for perfect dress, posture, and alignment by his company commander. We stood in the bright, hot, summer sun at parade rest during the formal exchange of greetings between the officers on the field and the officials in the reviewing stand. We were in full battle gear with full field packs, helmets, and rifles. The division band started to play, and then the command came to "Pass in Review!"

From my position way in the back of the formation, I could hear "397th Regiment! A Company! Right face! Forward march!" A Company was followed by 11 more companies in the regiment, 12 more companies in the 398th Regiment and 10 more companies in the 399th Regiment until we were called to parade before the reviewing stand. Since I was in the 3rd squad of the 3rd platoon of the last rifle company of the last battalion of the last regiment of the division, I think I was the last rifleman in the parade.

We were proud to strut in perfect precision as a unit to a military march and to line up as we passed the reviewing stand when the command was given "Eyes right!" At the same time, fighter planes swooped in low over the field in perfect formation. Of course, we were not the last to leave the field. The men of M Company followed us. Other soldiers of artillery, anti-tank, ordnance, engineer, and other units followed in vehicles.

By September, the division was at full strength and fully trained for combat. All leaves were cancelled and preparations were made to move out. Nevertheless, I reviewed the situation with my buddy, Skull (Pfc. Alexander J. Lapa), so-named because he always had the shortest possible GI haircut, and decided that we could use additional training before facing the enemy. We went to see our 1st Sgt. Roy Simmons about a transfer to the Rangers, but he refused to give us an application. Several days later, we suggested that the paratroopers could use our services, but again we were rebuffed and told "No transfers and don't come back."

The roster of L Company, 399th Infantry Regiment, dated 8 September 1944 is in Appendix A. These are the men who comprised the original unit to be sent overseas.

U.S.A.T. GEORGE WASHINGTON

At the end of September 1944 we shipped out from Fort Bragg to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, the port of embarkation. We were the last rifle company to arrive. The place seemed to be in a constant state of activity and disorder. Our equipment was checked and we were given last minute physical examinations.

While we were waiting for orders to move out, one-day passes were issued. I took a pass for a bus to New York City. When I arrived, I rode the subway from New York to Brooklyn to see my family and visit the old neighborhood. Later, I went back to the city and strolled around Times Square, which was crowded with soldiers and sailors. The movie theaters: the Paramount, the Roxy, Radio City Music Hall, the Strand and all the others were operating with big band stage shows and vaudeville acts. Wartime did not diminish the tempo of the area even though the bright lights were out. I had a few beers, and picked up a girl at the USO canteen for company. She was from Hell's Kitchen, the neighborhood between 9th and 10th Avenues from about 40th to 50th Street on the west side of Manhattan. She was just one of the many girls who came there to meet servicemen. When I left, I gave her my APO address because she insisted she wanted to write to me. I thought that would be nice though I really did not know her. Then I boarded one of the last buses back to Camp Kilmer.

Early in the morning of 6 October 1944, we moved out in a motorized convoy from Camp Kilmer through the Lincoln Tunnel to Pier 72 at 42nd Street and 12th Avenue in New York City. We dismounted and assembled on the pier with our weapons and duffel bags. We could see our ship, the U.S.A.T. George Washington, which was the Army's largest troop transport. She was a passenger liner built in Germany in 1909 for the North German Lloyd Line. She was interned at New York in 1914 and seized by the United States Government in April 1917 and converted to a troopship. After World War I, she carried President Woodrow Wilson and his staff to the 1919 Versailles Peace Conference. After several ownerships she served as a U. S. Lines passenger ship until 1932, when she was laid up and taken out of service. She was refitted in 1942 with the removal of one funnel and her boilers were converted to oil-firing from coal. She

reentered service to the U.S. Army as a troop transport in April 1943. She was readied for war, again, so that World War II soldiers could follow where others had gone before, just a generation ago.

Red Cross girls were handing out coffee and doughnuts on the pier as we waited to board the ship. Though I did not like those lead sinkers which always weighed heavily on my stomach, I took a doughnut, anyway. ... It seemed to make the girls feel they were helping the war effort.

The L Company Morning Report of that day shows:

Pvt. Frank W. Pszeniczny Trfd to NYPE Cas Det Cp Kilmer; Pvt. Dominick A. DeAngelo was moved Fr Conf in Qtrs to dy; 186 EM and 6 Off left US for Foreign Service fr NYPE on 6 Oct 44 at 0920.

(Translation: Pvt. Frank W. Pszeniczny Transferred to New York Port of Embarkation Casualty Detention Camp Kilmer; Pvt. Dominick A DeAngelo was moved From confined to quarters to duty: 186 Enlisted Men and 6 Officers left United States for Foreign Service from New York Port of Embarkation on 6 October 1944 at 9:20AM)

It was early that morning when tugboats towed the U.S.A.T. George Washington out into the middle of the Hudson River, cast off our lines, and the ship started our voyage to war. As I stood at the starboard rail looking at New Jersey, standing at the rail with me were Redbird and Mo. The Redbird was Pfc. John W. Howe, Jr., a very young soldier, about 18 years old, who was always happy and friendly. Neither rain, nor heat, nor Army chow nor any hardships dimmed his exuberance. He was the opposite of a griper and he was fun to be with. He called everyone "Old Buddy." Because of his bright red hair and his bird-like disposition, he was called "Redbird."

Mo was really Cpl. Stanley T. Cardozo, who was about 25 years old and had been transferred from an anti-aircraft unit in the Aleutian Islands. He was from Modesto, California and had a calm, easygoing disposition. Nothing seemed to bother him. He had a ready smile especially when we teased him about his not rushing to the mess hall, the movies, or any company formation. Originally, he was called Moping Mo, but later it was just Mo.

We were watching the sights along the river, when suddenly, Redbird started to shout excitedly, "Look! There's my house! I can see my house!" He pointed toward a cluster of houses on top of the New Jersey Palisades and said, "That's Weehawken and you can see my house there!"

Because we had been wondering about our future destination, I turned and asked him, "Since you are so close to home, what are you doing

on this ship?" He laughed and said, "If I didn't think I was coming back, they would never get me on this ship."

I turned to Mo and asked him, "What do you think about coming back?" With a half smile, he shook his head and said, "I don't expect to come back. I think this is a one-way trip for me." Old Mo was as calm as usual when he said that.

When they asked me, I thought about it and said, "I don't know what's going to happen, but I'm going to do the best I can to make it back." As the last rifle company to board, we learned that the lower decks were full and every bunk was taken. On this occasion, we did better than usual because we were assigned to A deck, which became our company compound. We bivouacked outdoors on the deck in our heavy winter uniforms through cold weather, rain, and storms, and slept on the deck in our sleeping bags.

Below decks, the other soldiers were cramped in bunks, stacked four high, like shelves, with just inches of clearance between bodies. The worst part was the foul air from the closeness. Later the smell of vomit from sick men was overpowering. It was great to be topside where hardly anyone got seasick, but if a man did get seasick he just heaved over the side.

This was my first ocean voyage, as it was for most of the men. The sea air in the North Atlantic in October was cold and brisk, and the ocean was vast with white-capped waves all around. The convoy was made up of dozens of ships of all sizes with our ship, the George Washington, the largest of all. Ships were spread out from horizon to horizon with U.S. Navy ships guarding the convoy. There were cruisers, destroyers, destroyer escorts, and corvettes on the watch for enemy submarines. They did not look very formidable because they were so much smaller than our ship, but they were floating arsenals.

The serious part of the trip consisted of lifeboat drill and air raid drill. The ship was equipped with 20mm anti-aircraft guns manned by the ship's gun crews. We had to clean our rifles every day because of the salt air. I had a bolt-action, five-round, 1903 Springfield with a telescopic sight, which was the army's most accurate rifle. Most of the other riflemen had the new M1 Garand rifles that could fire eight rounds semiautomatically.

As I cleaned my rifle, I thought back to my start in the Army, which began when I joined the Enlisted Reserve Corps (ERC) because its program promised me the completion of my college education before I

would be called to active duty. I enlisted on 22 October 1942, and after just six and a half months, I was called to active duty. Final examinations at Columbia University were advanced two weeks so that students could complete their term before leaving for military service. I had just finished my sophomore year.

On 8 May 1943, I said "Good-bye" to civilian life. My father and my uncle went with me to Pennsylvania Station in Manhattan to see me off. This was very unusual because they had never seemed too interested in what I was doing before. They both went out of their way to make this special trip because they were truly concerned about me. I did not have any particular cares because at 19 years old nothing in life could faze me. But they were much more mature and knew that I was headed into an uncertain world from which soldiers don't always come home to their families.

I boarded the Long Island Railroad train and waved to those aging men who smiled back bravely at me. Perhaps, they were also thinking of their younger brother who had served in the U. S. Navy 26 years earlier and came back from World War I with a sickness that changed his entire life. The three brothers had come to the United States from what was called "Turkish Syria" around 1905. As teenaged Christian boys they wanted to avoid being conscripted into the Turkish Army. They were all American citizens in 1917 when the youngest brother enlisted to fight for his adopted country. He stoked coal in the engine rooms of two destroyers that patrolled the North Sea.

Now the oldest son had been called to war. Would he be killed or wounded? What would become of him? Their parting words to me were, "May God go with you."

ARMORED INFANTRY BASIC TRAINING

In Camp Upton at Yaphank, Long Island, in May 1943, I received my olive-drab army uniform, boots, mess kit, toiletries and other items. The clothing fit me fairly well even though no alterations were made. My sizes were all in the normal range – not tall or short, not fat or thin.

The accommodations consisted of an eight-man tent with a cot, woolen army blanket, bedsheets and pillow for each recruit. The pot-bellied stove in the center of the tent provided ample heat at night. We had to use paper, kindling wood and coal to start the fire in the stove each night. The order of the day was for every member of the cadre to yell as loud as they could because they apparently thought we could not hear their instructions. As recruits, we were cowed by corporals and even by privates first class. We had to march in a group everywhere: to the mess hall for chow, to the medics for shots or psychological evaluation and to the main building for oral and written tests.

I took various intelligence and aptitude tests while suffering a mild case of diarrhea because the army food did not agree with my digestive system. The meal consisted of some strange tasting meat that caused distress for many of the recruits. I spent part of the time for the test on the line for the latrine. Needless to say, I didn't do as well on the tests as I would have under normal conditions.

After about ten days, all the preliminary procedures were completed and an officer who would assign me to my next unit for basic training interviewed me. When I was asked which service I would like to join, I chose the armored forces. I thought that I would be riding in a tank and blasting away at the enemy. My feeling of patriotism was very high and I wanted to be in the middle of the action. Within a few days, I was in Fort Knox, Kentucky, at the Armored Replacement Training Center (ARTC) where I was to have my basic training. The first thing I learned was that this was an elite corps where you were different from the rest of the Army. You wore your overseas cap on the left side of your head, not on the right side like all the other units in the Army. You were expected to be cocky and proud of being in the armored force.

Our platoon leader was Lt. Davis. He was blond, of medium height, young, slender and from the South. He was the most obnoxious

person I had ever met. He cursed us. He ran us from reveille to retreat. He nagged us about our haircut, posture, uniform, saluting, shoeshine, marching and on and on. He was never satisfied with anything we did. He told us, "I want you to hate me! I don't want to be your buddy! I don't want you to like me! I am your commanding officer and you do what I tell you! I am going to make soldiers of you! You are going learn to kill or be killed! You are not expected to die for your country! You are expected to make the enemy die for his! That's why you are here!" The message was loud and clear: He loved us!

The training was absolutely the most thorough and intensive I had ever experienced. Although I never got into a tank, I learned to drive almost every vehicle from a jeep to a half-track. The half-track was a lumbering, armor-plated, open-topped truck with wheels in the front and tracks in the rear that could go about 45 miles an hour on an open road and carry a squad of infantrymen. I was also trained on almost every weapon in the Army, including the .45 caliber revolver and pistol, Thompson submachine gun, grease gun, M1 carbine, 1917 Enfield rifle, Garand M1 rifle, all of which I could take apart, clean, and reassemble. I was also briefly instructed on the .30 caliber light machine gun, .50 caliber machine gun, 37mm cannon, 57mm cannon, bazooka, hand grenade, rifle grenade, bayonet, and mortar and learned to use each of them. I think we were trained on all these weapons because as replacements, we could readily be assigned to almost any unit.

In addition to all that, there was the obstacle course of scaling a wall, swinging on a rope over a ditch, and running at full speed. We practiced reconnaissance patrols, did guard duty, studied map reading, worked in the kitchen, exercised the manual of arms, and marched in drill routines.

I had the dubious pleasure of crawling on my stomach, with other trainees, on a muddy field with my rifle cradled in my arms, wearing a helmet and field pack, under barbed wire while machine guns fired over our heads and explosives were set off around us. The feeling of being in actual combat seemed almost real except that we knew it was a training exercise. It was imperative that you did not panic and kept crawling through to the final objective.

We were also taught about explosives - the use of dynamite, cordite, detonators, fuses and how to set them up. This was a specialty for the combat engineers and we might have been shipped to such a unit. We never had the chance to actually set off an explosive charge but it would

have been a blast. Probably, we would have lost too many men because you were allowed only one mistake in that trade.

Disarming land mines was another specialty we learned. However, the course only covered the "how to" part without any actual practice. That was a specialty of "sappers" who had to be aware of all types of mines that could be booby-trapped.

There was gas mask drill held in an airtight room with exposure to various poison gases: mustard, lewisite, chlorine and phosgene. We had to learn to recognize each of them at the first whiff and don our gas masks plus protective covering in the case of mustard gas because it would burn any exposed skin. The other gases caused choking, vomiting and death.

The training cadre also taught us how to use our bare hands to deliver chopping blows to the neck, throat, nose, and abdomen that would maim, disable, or even kill an enemy. Whether this would actually work in hand-to-hand combat, we had to take on faith. No live demonstrations were offered, but the message was that we were in a deadly business.

We had weekly 5 to 15 mile hikes with full field packs in the full blaze of summer. The ultimate hike of 25 miles took place in the final weeks of training. We started off around 2000 (8 p.m.) with full field equipment, including rifle and helmet. The weather was cooler than during the day but it was still warm and the long march took about 8 hours. An Army ambulance trailed the company to help any soldier who dropped out because of exhaustion or cramps. Except for a few men, we all made it back to the barracks just before reveille, completely exhausted. I, and some others, were so tired that we found it was impossible to lie down and sleep. I took a shower and went to the Post Exchange and then went to the recreation room where I sat in a daze until chow time.

One of the final exercises was a week of maneuvers with the "Blue Army" against the "Red Army" in the field with patrols, attacks, flanking movements, and such. I don't remember which side won, and I never understood what we were doing. I was the driver of a half-track which had heavy armor plate on the sides and the rear. In front, there was no windshield but it had a one inch thick armor-plate shield of steel that was hinged to lift or lower as needed for protection. When it was lowered in place, a four inch square opening in the steel allowed the driver to see ahead. I drove it wherever I was ordered. On the roads, this clanking vehicle was fairly easy to drive, but when it had to go into the woods and open fields, it was slow and cumbersome. It was even more difficult at night, with blackout headlights. I had to avoid hitting trees and driving into a

gully. I did hit a tree stump and it crunched the running board on the left side. At that point, I wanted to give up the wheel and sit in the back of the truck. However, the lieutenant kept me as his driver. When we stopped to bivouac, I had to check the half-track from top to bottom. That meant checking the engine oil, tires, tracks, gasoline gauge, etc. That was my responsibility as the driver. Then I could eat, pitch a pup tent, or dig a foxhole and rest. I was told that this was like the cavalry where the rider had to feed and tend his horse before himself. Nevertheless, I liked being the driver because it was a challenge to steer, shift gears, and control this monster.

Basic training ended with a "king of the hill" battle where one squad stood on top of a small mound and had to defend it against an "enemy" squad attacking from below. Both sides wore thickly padded boxing gloves. After a half hour of going up the hill and being knocked back down, a break was called and positions were reversed. There was more laughing than broken noses. That was not an exercise from an Army manual.

By September 1943, I had completed 13 weeks of basic training and received my PFC stripe, a Good Conduct medal and a Marksman medal for firing the rifle. After a two-week furlough, I returned to Fort Knox and was placed in a group that was shipped out to the 14th Armored Division at Camp Chaffee near the small town of Fort Smith, Arkansas.

Even though I had training in many specialties, I soon found myself sitting in the back of a half-track, assigned to an armored infantry company as a rifleman. This did not appeal to me very much, because a nice guy like me could get killed in this outfit. I thought that a more suitable service would be the Army Air Corps, where the glamour of flying into the "wild blue yonder" had greater appeal.

There was an announcement that the Air Corps needed airmen and that they had reduced the requirement from 20/20 vision to 20/30 vision. I applied for a transfer and was given a physical examination. Despite hereditary second degree flat feet, a broken nose from football, a scarred right eardrum from an infantile abscess that was lanced and healed, I was passed on each count.

The critical moment came when I had to take the eye test. I had 20/40 vision and hoped I could read the 20/30 line. A buddy of mine, with the nickname of "Twist" – probably because his name was really Oliver – was in line ahead of me. He could see the eye chart through the small opening in the door and read the 20/30 line to me, which I memorized.

When I was called in for the test, I read the 20/30 line with the left eye closed and then the right eye closed, and I could have done it with both eyes closed. I passed and was transferred to the Army Air Corps. They issued me my first pair of glasses to correct my eyesight to 20/20. In the meantime, Twist passed every test but was washed out because he was color-blind! I suppose he stayed with the 14th Armored Division.

AIR CORPS BASIC TRAINING

The Air Corps was a vacation after the Armored Force. I had a second basic training at the Gulfport Air Base, Gulfport, Mississippi. There were no bivouacs, maneuvers, obstacle courses, or long marches, though the rain came down in torrents almost every day. Short five mile hikes and calisthenics were the most strenuous workouts we had. The weapons on which I had to qualify were a Colt .45 caliber pistol and the .30 caliber M1 carbine which I had previously learned to service and fire. The most difficult part was the week of rigorous physical and mental tests I had to take at nearby Keesler Field, but I was passed for training as a navigator and bombardier. I probably did not make a passing grade for pilot because of my depth perception and less than perfect eyesight.

It was Christmas 1943 and on the Gulf Coast there were busloads of soldiers and airmen from many outfits streaming into New Orleans. At the local USO club, there was a sort of hospitality desk where civilians could offer to entertain servicemen at their homes. Most of them offered a family dinner because they had someone in the service and wanted to have a replacement join them. I was with two other airmen and we asked if there were any invitations for three servicemen. "Yes. We have a request for two tall men and one short." We did not fit the bill because we were of the opposite assortment: one tall and two short. I sometimes wonder what we had missed. Nevertheless, we went on to visit the famous French Quarter where the streets, bars and night clubs were packed with servicemen. There was a non-stop party every place we went.

I loved New Orleans because it was the only place I found outside of New York City where they did not go to sleep at 2200 hours (10 p.m.). Even if you had a slim wad of money you could just stroll the streets and enjoy the sights and sounds of the city. There were several famous restaurants on Bourbon Street in the French Quarter: Antoine's, Arnaud's, the Court of the Two Sisters., etc. After a dinner at Arnaud's, we dutifully returned to the base with the sound of New Orleans jazz echoing in our heads.

In January 1944, there were many thousands of air cadets waiting to start training and the Army Air Corps lacked adequate facilities. I was among a group sent to Mission Air Field in Mission, Texas, to work as

ground crews until we could start our training. Fighter pilots received their final training there. They had to fly solo in a P40 fighter plane as their final qualification. This plane was used by General Claire Chennault's "Flying Tigers" group in China. It had a very long engine in front of the cockpit, which was situated toward the rear edge of the low-slung wing. The landing gear consisted of two wheels under the wing and a wheel on the tail. Landing this plane was very difficult because the pilot had to judge the distance to the ground by looking between the fuselage and the wing from his seat, where the angle was more forward than downward. As a result, many of the novice pilots bounced the P40 fighter plane like a rubber ball before they were able to roll it down the runway to a stop. When the cadet pilots made that solo flight, they graduated to second lieutenants and received their wings.

The advanced fighter training plane was North American Aviation's AT6, which the Japanese copied for their famed Zero fighter. I learned to ground service the AT6 training plane. I would start the engine by priming it, turning on the magneto, and adjusting the throttle when it had ignition. It was good fun to have that engine roar while you were in the pilot's seat and let it warm up so that it was ready for takeoff. There were rows of these planes wingtip to wingtip being serviced with gasoline and started.

One day another cadet who was warming up an AT6 plane forgot to check to see that the wheel chocks were in place. He revved up the engine and the plane rolled forward. His propeller totally destroyed the tail section of the plane in front of him. He was probably just 18 and did not even have a license to drive a car. Shortly after that incident, we were ready for another assignment.

Orders came in for us to move on for our training as airmen. I was in Mission, Texas only a month and had to remain on the base for the quarantine period of at least two weeks. When I finally received a weekend pass, I toured the Rio Grande Valley towns of McAllen, Edinburgh, Pharr and Mission where the air was filled with the sweet smell from grapefruit blossoms. This was the grapefruit bowl of America and there were huge piles of them everywhere. I found these small towns very quaint and more Spanish than Yankee. I would have liked to visit Reynosa, Mexico, just across the Rio Grande River but there were no more weekends left.

My group boarded a troop train from Mission Air Field, in the extreme depths of Rio Grande Valley, and headed northward. The train took

two days just to pass through Texas because of so many stops along the way. I was in a coach passenger car, where I tried to sleep during the night crunched up in my seat. To get a better night's sleep, I copied another soldier and climbed up into the overhead baggage rack where there was more leg room. It was not too uncomfortable.

I finally arrived at the "College Training Detachment" unit at Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio, where all cadets had to take courses to achieve a college level of proficiency. The Jesuit brothers, who ran the university, were conscientious about teaching the courses and did not emphasize religion or try to convert any of the non-Catholic cadets. The courses were not difficult, and the lay professors were very liberal in their marking of homework. I was happy when a professor told me that my writing was very good, which indicates how easy they marked our assignments.

We had formations every morning on the campus, and I was made an acting corporal, which was a promotion from my current rank of Private First Class that I received when I finished basic training at Fort Knox. This placed me at the head of my squad at all formations. My military career was soaring to untold heights.

When several hundred of us would jog around the city streets in sweatpants and T-shirts, the young girls would come out to watch and shout at us. It was a little embarrassing, but all the guys enjoyed the attention. Cincinnati was a great town for young men because we were outnumbered by women who were not shy about approaching a soldier. This was complete role reversal at that time because it was customary for the boy to approach the girl. But most boys got used to it without any loss of their manhood.

Then it was also impossible to buy more than one drink at a bar because civilians would immediately tell the bartender to give us another drink. Sometimes several drinks would be set up at one time. After one or two drinks we would have to leave because we could not possibly accept all the drinks offered. This was Cincinnati in 1944. It was also a time of unbridled optimism. Although it was wartime on a mighty scale, the average American had just lived through a devastating economic depression that sapped his feeling of self-worth. He did not see a future for himself in his work and or in having a family. Not many young men or women could afford to attend college, and if they did, the opportunities were very limited upon graduation. Now, the people had a grand purpose in life: to fight

for America and show the world how great a people we are. Patriotism was the word, but it hardly described their enthusiasm.

In this euphoric atmosphere, I could not foresee the change in destiny that lay ahead of me. About the fateful Ides of March 1944, the program for air cadets came to an abrupt halt when orders came in that they were no longer needed. Instead, ground units had to be strengthened with more soldiers, and we were to be assigned to ground forces. The cadets on the campus were in a state of deep depression. The life at the college was a lark. The training was fun. The city was a huge party for the cadets, who were the darlings of the town. Now, the party was ending.

Nevertheless, there were still military procedures to be carried out. We still had to do guard duty and carry a sidearm at night. It was one hour of duty and two hours off all night long. I was assigned a tour of guard duty just before the end of March. I had been out on the town and reported for duty at 2000 (8 p.m.). I had had a few drinks, but I was quite sober.

As I marched along, on my post, I passed the windows of the dormitory rooms where there were parties of cadets getting very drunk. When I came to an open window, I looked in and was immediately offered a beer. I thought for a minute that I should refuse, but this was a farewell party so I did have the beer. I had several more beers, and I reeled along on my post. When my relief came on to take over my guard post, I barely remember exchanging orders. Instead of going through the door of the building, I climbed through an open window and joined the drunken cadets. When I had to return for my second hour of guard duty I was sprawled out on a bench completely out. According to the Army code of conduct, I could have been court-martialed and shot for dereliction of duty while on guard duty. The only thing that happened was that I was no longer an Air Cadet and no longer an acting corporal. I was just one of about 100,000 airmen who were shipped out of the Army Air Corps on 1 April 1944. Most of us went to infantry divisions.

INFANTRY BASIC TRAINING

I was assigned to the 75th Infantry Division in Camp Breckinridge, Kentucky, which is near the little town of Morganfield. So many soldiers poured into town on weekends that it was almost impossible to find any place where there were no soldiers. It was like being in camp with a few civilians here and there. I never saw a more dismal town for a weekend pass than this one and I had been in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, Bardstown, Kentucky and Poteau, Oklahoma where the local people drove their cars back and forth on the four-block main drag, angle parked, then sat in their cars to watch people pass along on the sidewalk. At nine o'clock it was time to go home. Morganfield was a social disaster after Cincinnati.

I was there only about two weeks when I was ordered to get ready to move out with a group assigned to the 100th Infantry Division. On the day the group was to take the train, everyone was awakened at 0400 (4 a.m.) except the four of us in my barracks, who were forgotten. Two days later, when we four were to leave, the one soldier who had the orders awoke and left by himself. Finally, after several more days of loafing, an exasperated O.D. (Officer of the Day) woke us at 0400 and with the first sergeant escorted us to the train station.

The train went to Atlanta, Georgia, where we had a four-hour layover to transfer to another train for Fayetteville, North Carolina, and Fort Bragg. When I read our orders, I found it said that we had to report "immediately upon arrival" to the Commanding General, 100th Infantry Division. Since no particular date or time was mentioned, I thought this would be a wonderful opportunity to visit with the warm and friendly people of Atlanta for a few days. Despite the pleas of two of us, the other soldier, who was in charge, absolutely refused. So we obediently boarded the designated train. We arrived at Fayetteville and were transported to the division, where the officer in charge who greeted us did not even ask why we were one week late. I was then assigned to L Company, 399th Infantry Regiment. No doubt, if I had arrived earlier or later, I would have been in some other unit.

With some exceptions, everyone in L Company was reassigned from some other part of the Army. They came from ASTP, the Army Air Corps, anti-aircraft units, and others. Since we were new to the infantry, it

was time to go through basic training. Again, I went through the same exercises as before, at the Fort Knox Armored Replacement Training Center, except I did not drive any vehicles. It was obstacle courses, marching, manual of arms, guard duty, map reading, patrols, weapons, bayonets, gas masks, grenades, house-to-house fighting, maneuvers, and more hiking, including the 25 mile hike with full field equipment. I was not very enthusiastic about this third basic training.

When it was time to fire the M1 Garand rifle for score, after having visited the rifle range six times before, I expected the usual results. The test consisted of firing from three positions: sitting, kneeling and prone, at a target from 100 to 300 yards away. I fired at the target, which was then pulled down by the soldier in the trench below. He put a marker where my shot had hit and sent the target back up. Each shot was entered on my scorecard by the soldier next to me. We would later reverse positions. If I fired and missed, the target would be pulled down, examined for a bullet hole, and sent back up without a marker and a red flag – "Maggie's Drawers" – would be waved in front of the target. When I finished, my generous scorekeeper handed me my scorecard. He had given me a total of 182, which is a top score for expert! I was surprised but when he smiled, I think that he had used a ".30 caliber pencil." I had the last laugh when I kept his score and made him an "expert," too. It was our joke on the Army.

About a week later, on the company bulletin board there was a notice that read: "The following men will report to the officer in charge of sniper school for intensive sniper training." There I was on the list with the other "expert" rifleman. As usual, the Army had the last laugh.

Sniper training consisted of using a bolt-action, five round, 1903 Springfield rifle with a Weaver telescopic sight and firing at various pop-up and moving targets. The sight itself had cross hairs that had to be adjusted so that you were zeroed-in accurately on your target. This meant that you had to be careful with the rifle, because the cross hairs could be knocked out of alignment and your aim would be off. Of course, the rifle I received when I went overseas was not the one I had used in training and I did not know if the sight was zeroed-in. That did not matter, because the Army Table of Organization of a 12 man infantry squad was: 10 M1 (Garand) rifles, 1 automatic rifle (BAR) and 1 1903 sniper rifle. I was the assigned sniper of the squad and considered one of the best "shots" in the company.

While at Fort Bragg I was very disappointed that, although I had been an Air Cadet, I had never flown in an Army Air Corps plane. I had

been on an airfield and serviced them, but here I was an airman in the infantry who had never been up in the air. On a weekend pass in Fayetteville I stopped at a luncheonette and learned that the owner had a Syrian name. I explained that my parents were also Syrian. He was very warm, friendly, and happy to meet a soldier of the same background and would not allow me to pay for my lunch. Furthermore, he insisted that I accompany him to his home to visit his family. He had two daughters that he wanted me to meet. That almost scared me away. It was Sunday, and he wanted me to enjoy a home-cooked Middle Eastern dinner with his family. Although I thought it best to decline the invitation, he insisted so much that I found myself at his home with all the family gathered around and talking like old friends. The food was delicious, a treat at any time and especially after months of Army chow.

His son, a lieutenant, was also there. He had come home from a nearby airfield where he was a flight instructor. When I told him that I had been in the Air Corps, he was very interested and asked if I had been in a plane. I answered, "Yes." That did not mean that I had flown in a plane. He said that he had come home in an AT6, which is the advanced fighter training plane I serviced in Mission, Texas. "Let's go out to the field and show the family how we fly the plane," he suggested. The family liked the idea.

We went to the airfield and there he gave me a parachute, which I had never before put on. It occurred to me that if I had to use it, I did not know what ring to pull after I jumped out of the plane. I climbed onto the wing and got into the front cockpit as I had done many times before. He got into the rear cockpit and started the engine. When the engine was warmed up, we rolled down the runway and the tail lifted as he gave it more throttle. In a short time, we were off into the wild blue yonder and looking down at the family below. It was beautiful.

Over the roar of the engine, he asked me, "Are you ready to do a few acrobatics for the folks below?" I yelled, "Okay." Then he put the plane into a series of rolls, followed by banking turns, and ending with a rollover and dive toward the field. One minute I was looking up at the sky and then it was on my right and the earth was on my left side. Later, the sky and the earth were rotating in front of me. When he pulled out of the dive, I felt myself being powerfully pushed down into my seat. By this time, I was not feeling too well. The delicious meal I had had shortly before was now in my throat, but I was determined not to get sick and vomit. That took all my willpower. Fortunately, we landed soon after that, and I

staggered out of the plane barely keeping the food inside. When he saw my blood-drained face, he asked, "Are you okay?" As a tough kid from Brooklyn, I, of course, said, "Sure! That was great!"

Actually, I said to myself, "Thank God I didn't puke in the cockpit!"

And that brings me back to the ship. ...

VOYAGE TO EUROPE

At mealtime, each unit took its turn going down to the dining room, which still had some of the fine wood paneling and ceiling fixtures of the passenger liner that she was before she became a troop ship. The wide elegant stairway led to a chow line where we filled our mess kits with inelegant army food and our canteen cups with tepid coffee. The most unappetizing meal for me was breakfast and the nauseating smell of hard-boiled eggs. Fortunately, we did not have that every morning.

One day, I was assigned to serve on the chow line, and my offering was rutabagas. As I stood there with serving spoon in hand ready to slop a helping into the oncoming line of mess kits, I was asked, "What is that?" "Rutabagas," I replied. The reaction was usually a wrinkled nose and a "No, thanks." This happened with every other soldier, who invariably withdrew his mess kit and walked on. While other pots on the chow line were being emptied and refilled, I still had more than half of my first pot of rutabagas. Then along came a soldier who asked, "Are those sweet potatoes?" Well, they did look like sweet potatoes and, since I wanted to get rid of them, I lied and said, "Yeah! Sweet potatoes!" From then on, every mess kit was filled with "sweet potatoes." Shortly afterward, I was roundly cursed by numerous diners who hated rutabagas. However, one soldier came back to tell me that he loved rutabagas and wanted seconds. He scolded me for lying, but as a soldier, I had a mission to get rid of the rutabagas.

Every day, we had to bathe and wash in salt water with sudsless soap and shave in the same way. The toilets and the shower stalls were very small, so that it was in and out very quickly. I never felt clean after a salt water shower. My body, my hair, and my face felt clammy like I had just been swimming in the ocean at Coney Island. With so many soldiers on board who had to shower, shave and use the facilities, not a moment was wasted in the latrines.

During the first few days of the voyage, I lost almost all my money, about $10, playing seven-card stud poker. That was the most popular game. The loss did not matter because there was no place to spend the money and the Army took care of all my simple needs. I often wondered what the winners did with the hundreds of dollars they won.

To pass the leisure time during the rest of the voyage, Redbird and I started playing bridge as partners. The cards were dealt out on an Army blanket spread out on the deck. We were a good team and won most of the time. There was always a crowd of hecklers around because Redbird kept everyone laughing. We would forget for a while that we were not on a pleasure cruise.

It was awesome to look out over the vastness of the ocean and the sky during the day. The gray seas, so deep, reached from horizon to horizon under cool blue skies that hid behind pillows of floating white clouds. In comparison, we were so small and insignificant – this whole convoy of hundreds of ships that was such a powerful military force on its way to war.

Nights on deck were beautiful as we looked out on the ocean. The cool, brisk, October sea air was refreshing. There were no lights on any ship, and the blackness of the night amplified the lights of heaven. The moonlight glistened on the white-capped rolling sea. Wavelets spoke to us at a conversational pitch. As the ship cut through the water smoothly, the engines hummed below and the world seemed to be at peace all around us.

Suddenly, after several days at sea, a tremendous North Atlantic storm overtook us during the night. We were buffeted with torrents of rain and mountainous waves that swept over the entire ship. Where we once were looking down at the water, we now saw huge waves twenty feet above us as this great ship was driven down into a valley of the sea. The bow dove into a wall of foam and pitched up through the far side to be pounded again by another and another furious avalanche of water. The ship pitched and rolled helplessly in submission to the power of the storm, and she shuddered each time the propeller tilted out of the water. The vast array of ships in the convoy seemed to be converted into scattered pieces of flotsam tossed about among the waves. In L Company, we stayed awake on A deck, in the soaking rain and waves, hanging onto the railings, amazed by the fury of the storm.

When dawn came and calm returned, we were told that the storm was one of the worst the crew had ever seen. During the night, our ship miraculously avoided a collision with another ship that was nearby. Yet the storm seriously damaged our steering mechanism. While repairs were being made, the ship's engines were idled and she drifted as Navy ships patrolled the sea around her. The damaged rudder controls were repaired in a short time, and it was then onward, eastward, to our destination.

All was now back in order and calm again on board ship until we neared land. The gun crews for the 20mm anti-aircraft guns were on constant alert and prepared for the possibility of an air attack. Around the convoy, the Navy escort ships were very busy patrolling for any sign of enemy U-boats. We were almost unconcerned that anything unexpected was going to happen. The seas had been mostly cleared of German pocket battleships and submarines that had sunk hundreds of ships in the previous two years. The Allied navies had won the battle of the Atlantic in the recent past and sinkings had become very rare.

ARRIVAL IN FRANCE

On 15 August 1944, the U.S. Seventh Army, commanded by General Alexander Patch, invaded Southern France. It was made up of the 3rd, 36th and 45th Infantry Divisions which had been through the campaigns of Naples-Foggia, Anzio and Rome-Arno. In addition, the 45th Infantry Division had been in the campaign of Sicily, while the 3rd Infantry Division had also been in the campaigns of Algeria-French Morocco, Tunisia and Sicily. These veteran divisions overcame the German defenses in the south and fought their way inland to Baccarat and the foot of the Vosges Mountains. The mission of the 100th Infantry Division was to be the first division to join with them on the U.S. Seventh Army front.

We passed the Pillars of Hercules, through the Strait of Gibraltar, along the North African coast, and then sailed northeast to Marseilles, arriving on 20 October 1944. As stated in the Morning Report of 21 October 1944:

Debarked fr Marseilles, France 2345 20 Oct 44 and proceeded by foot to NATOUSA Delta Base Section Staging Area No.1 Arrived 0330 21 Oct 44.

Most of the men of Love Company would have stated it a little differently: It was midnight (2345 is 11:45 p.m.) and it was raining steadily. Overhead, an airplane could be heard. It was reported to be an enemy plane that had come to attack us. Also, Axis Sally was broadcasting greetings to the 100th Infantry Division and predicting that Major General Withers A. Burress and his men would be destroyed by the mighty forces of the Third Reich. Since I did not have a radio and I did not particularly notice any aerial attack at that time, I only mention this because everyone seemed to repeat the same story.

However, I do remember going over the side of the ship at the same time as two or three other soldiers carrying full field pack, rifle, and steel helmet, and then descending slowly step by step down the cargo netting into a landing ship. I thought we looked like a stream of rats abandoning the troop ship. When she was finally loaded up with soldiers, the landing ship cast off from the U.S.A.T. George Washington and the Navy helmsman ferried us to the nearby beach. The front of the craft came down as a ramp and we waded through a few inches of water and entered France.

Fortunately for us, the enemy had been routed during the U.S. Seventh Army invasion and our arrival was a walk on the shore.

We hiked up from the beach along cobblestone streets with stone walls on either side in the dark early morning hours. The "Staging Area" we arrived at, after three and a half hours of hiking 10 miles in the rain, was a mud-soaked farmer's field in Aix-en-Provence, where we were to pitch pup tents. I was so tired because of the hour, 0330 (3:30 a.m.), that I just lay down in the mud, with my head in my helmet on my field pack and my raincoat over my face. I slept for a couple of hours. The rain did not disturb my deep and restful sleep, but I was thoroughly soaked.

During the next few days, the company set up pup tents, showers, field kitchen and dug latrines. We had hot meals, cleaned ourselves, checked our weapons and equipment, and prepared for the move to the front. The toilet facilities consisted of a wooden box latrine, which was an eight-seater – four holes cut out back-to-back – mounted over a trench slightly smaller in size that was lined with lime. This was used by the enlisted men when nature called. It was better than a slit trench or a cat-hole that an infantryman would use in the field.

Since the latrine was situated in front of the camp about 10 yards from the road, we could look out over the countryside and watch the people passing by as we sat there. On occasion, it happened that a passerby would use the latrine while soldiers were there. It was "Bonjour," "Hello." When a young French girl came along, it was a little embarrassing when she joined the group by taking a seat, but she seemed to enjoy the visit. Incidentally, the officers had their own latrine, which was much smaller and surrounded by a khaki privacy curtain for "gentlemen."

One-day passes were issued to those who wanted to visit nearby Marseilles. This port city was filled with soldiers of every sort. There were Frenchmen, French Colonial Ghurkas, Senegalese from Africa and Americans. Except for the French soldiers, I never saw any of the colonials outside of Marseilles. We heard stories of GIs being robbed and even murdered in the city for their combat boots. However, I never saw a single incident or ran into any difficulties there.

The cafes were busy selling beer and wine, and some had music and girls who would dance or keep you company. At one place, I was having a beer at a table with some buddies and observing the scene when I noticed a young French girl sit down at a table on the other side of the room. She lifted the back of her skirt before she sat down so that she would not sit on it and wrinkle it. At that moment, the brilliant whiteness

of her gluteus maximus (rump) hit me in the eye. She was not wearing underwear!

I marveled at this strange world as I made my way to the toilet to relieve the pressure of the last glass of beer. As I opened the only door marked "WC," I was surprised to find a woman squatting there and looking up at me. I said "Pardon," closed the door, and waited outside. A few minutes later, she gave me a smile as she exited. I then went in to find a Turkish toilet, which was a hole in the floor with positions for my feet so that I could stand or squat to relieve myself, as necessary. This was a marvelous world of wonders for me.

My squad leader was Sgt. John D. Baud, who was a few years older than most of the men in the company. He was not a bellowing, overbearing sergeant, but rather a soft-spoken workman who was well liked and who spoke with a slight French accent. He was originally from Marseilles, and on the day he had his pass, he went to visit his family there. They, unfortunately, did not know that he would be knocking on their door, and they were not at home. Unfortunately, that was the only chance he had to call on them, because just one pass was issued to each soldier while we were there. He was deeply disappointed.

In about a week, all preparations had been completed, and the day had come to move out. Personal items were packed away in our duffel bags and left with the supply sergeant. I left my Kodak box camera, the silver identification bracelet my mother had given me, a wristwatch, and my Army-issued eyeglasses in my bag. Others left musical instruments, such as guitars and harmonicas, along with their personal belongings.

Before we left Marseilles, it would have been funny if I had met Twist there, because the 14th Armored Division was in our convoy and it had also landed on 20 October 1944. He would have yelled, "Hey, Khoury! I thought you were in the Army Air Corps!"

TRUCK CONVOY TO THE FRONT

The Morning Report of 29 October 1944*: Departed Delta Base Section Staging Area at 0730 Traveled by motor convoy approximately 142 miles Arrived at Valence France at 1700.*

Love Company arose early in the morning to strike our pup tents, gather all our equipment and pack it up before moving out. We had a hot meal before we mounted our assigned truck. This Army truck was called a two and a half ton truck, a deuce and a half truck and a six by six because its six wheels had power to drive the truck. We took seats on the benches along each side of the back of the truck. The canvas top was off on that mild autumn day and the countryside was spread out before us. The hand signal was passed back from the convoy commander to move out and the trucks started to roll.

Along the way, we passed through villages where small cheering crowds came out to greet us waving French and American flags. Some people offered bottles of wine but they never reached the back of the trucks. We did get a few freshly picked apples. It felt good to have such a welcome, but you would have to be a fool not to know that you were on your way to the front lines.

There was some joking, some speculation, and some reminiscing, amid the talk in the back of our truck, but the mood was tempered by the sober reality of the moment. In the group was Pfc. John J. Hudec, also known as "Spider." He was one of the many former air cadets who now were in an infantry company. From the day we arrived in Fort Bragg, we were required to remove our Air Corps patch and sew on the 100th Division shoulder patch. He never took off his Army Air Corps shoulder patch and wore it everywhere. Former airmen would tell him that he would get in trouble, but he scoffed at them and said that the commander of the Air Corps, General Henry "Hap" Arnold, is calling us back. Spider said the same thing repeatedly, during infantry basic training, on the ship in the middle of the Atlantic, and when we landed in France, "General Arnold is calling us back!" Now, in this truck convoy to the front, we asked him, "Spider, what have you heard from General Arnold?" He replied, "Don't worry! General Arnold is calling us back." We all thought, "He'd better

hurry up." Some of us managed somber smiles but no one felt like laughing now.

The convoy stopped periodically so that the soldiers could relieve themselves in wooded areas along the roadside and dig cat holes when necessary. We had hot meals along the way because the cooks hustled to prepare hot meals for the convoy. We slept overnight near the trucks in sleeping bags, taking turns at guard duty.

The Morning Report of 30 October 1944: *Departed Valence France at 0830 Traveled by motor convoy approximately 190 miles Arrived Dijon France 1950.*

The day was similar to the previous one. There were no signs of war or destruction, just people and villages along the Rhone Valley in autumn. Our convoy was the only motorized traffic on the road. There was no fuel for civilian cars or trucks. They relied on horse power.

The Morning Report of 31 October 1944: *Departed Dijon Fr area at 0630 Traveled by motor convoy approximately 124 miles arrived at Fremifontaine France at 1800.*

On that day, we saw the wreckage of war. We passed American and German tanks and trucks, disabled and burned out along the side of the road. Walls and chimneys were all that remained of bombed or burned-out houses and churches. Furnishings from their insides littered the area around these hulks. Civilians and farm animals wandered aimlessly and in a daze among the ruins.

There was the distant rumbling of artillery fire ahead of us. Few civilians were visible anywhere on the road ahead of us. We drove past the grim and chilling sight of dozens of dead GIs laid out side by side near the road. They were inside white cloth body bags with bloody marks on the outside. As I looked at them, I recognized the white tie strings of the cotton mattress covers we used on our beds back in the barracks. In our duffel bags, each of us had to pack a cotton mattress cover with our overseas gear. I wondered, at the time, why we needed the cotton mattress covers because we did not bring any mattresses with us. Now I knew. We had brought our own shrouds with us! The Army had thought of everything!

When we arrived at our destination, the artillery fire grew louder and the flashes of light lit the sky. We dismounted the trucks and moved up on foot toward a wooded area. We reached the edge of the woods and the company commander assigned an area for each platoon. The order to "dig in" was given. We formed groups of three to dig foxholes that were about six feet square and about three or four feet deep.

We proceeded to gouge out the soil with our little entrenching tool. This special instrument, which was a combination shovel and pick, is carried only by infantrymen. It had an 18-inch handle and a blade about 8 inches wide and 8 inches long with an obtusely pointed edge. In the straight position it served as spade or shovel. When the blade was turned and locked in a 90-degree position it could be swung like a small pick. We dug our foxholes in a short time, especially when we saw the flashes of cannon fire in the evening sky, followed by the boom of the muzzles and the whistle of the shells as they trailed off into the distance. I could not tell whose artillery was firing or how close the shells were landing. The reality of where we were burst in upon us very quickly. As the intensity of the cannon fire increased, we burrowed even more rapidly into our foxholes. It felt a little safer sitting in a hole and relaxing with a cigarette. Some food in the form of K rations also helped make the situation better. Nevertheless, sleep came fitfully that night. We were somewhere in France and we wondered what would happen next. Thoughts about our families and friends back home also came to mind.

THE FIRST BATTLE

On 1 November 1944, in the fastest deployment in U.S. military history of an entire infantry division, the 3rd platoon of Love Company was the first rifle unit to move into the front line to relieve troops of the 45th Infantry Division. We were the last for roll call, last in a parade, last to board the ship, but first to disembark and first to enter combat.

We dug foxholes that had three men in each one. As night fell, we could see flashes in the sky followed by the boom of cannon fire. It was an uneasy feeling being in a hole in the ground with two other soldiers peering into the blackness, tensely listening to all the eerie and strange sounds that come in the night. Was it some enemy movement? It could be an enemy patrol. There might be an assault on our front or maybe an attack from the flank. No green soldier at the front sleeps soundly that first night.

Al Lapa remembers being assigned to an old French Army dugout from World War I with John Bolin and Angelo Argiris where there was about two inches of water covering half of the bottom. It rained all night and the log roof leaked, and none of them got much sleep. Toward morning, Bolin and Lapa thought they heard noises in front of their position and challenged, "Who goes there?" When they received no reply, Bolin fired his BAR (Browning Automatic Rifle) and Lapa joined in with his M1 rifle. Then the whole platoon started firing, but there was no return fire. Daylight revealed just shredded branches. I suspect that some rabbit or other animal made the noises that brought on the fusillade. We soon learned to attune our hearing to most of the strange sounds that are part of the forest world at night.

On 3 November 1944 we moved up to relieve a rifle company of the 45th Infantry Division that was in danger of being surrounded. They were pinned down by small arms fire from the German line. As we were passing through, some of the soldiers of the 45th smirked and thought that we were very green. That was true. We did not know anything at all about what lay ahead. We carried full field packs that contained much equipment that we later learned we did not need. Nevertheless, they were happy to see us and to get much needed relief.

Ahead of us were the wooded slopes of the lower Vosges Mountains that the enemy was defending stubbornly. As we advanced, we were

immediately subjected to the same intense small arms fire from the enemy. They were dug into camouflaged defensive positions and were firing machine guns that spewed bullets at twice the rate of ours. These "burp" guns fired 1,600 rounds per minute against our 900 rounds per minute. They also had rapid-fire machine pistols that were called "Schmiessers," bolt-action Mauser rifles, and concussion hand grenades shaped like oversized eggs that they threw at us. We fired back with our semi-automatic Garand M1 rifles and BAR automatic rifles. We had some support from our .30 caliber light and heavy machine guns, which are not mobile weapons. They cannot be used in a close infantry attack with their tripod mounts, ammunition belts, and extra barrels to replace burned-out ones. They each require a gunner and an ammunition bearer to operate, which makes them most useful for defense against an enemy attack or for cover during an infantry advance.

Meanwhile, all around us, the smell of gunsmoke filled the air and the noise of gunfire was deafening. I lay behind a tree with my 1903 sniper's rifle trying to see something to aim at. Nearby I could hear an M1 rifle going full blast. Eight rounds were fired and the ammunition clip flew out of the cartridge chamber. Another clip of eight rounds was thrown in and they were fired. At this point I yelled to Lapa, "Hey! Skull! What are you firing at?" He yelled back, "I don't know, but I am going to scare the hell out of them!"

Then I heard someone yell, "MEDIC! MEDIC! I'M HIT!" At that same moment, I heard and felt the crack of a rifle bullet fly right by my head. Instinctively, I looked up into a tree directly in front of me about 50 yards away and saw a puff of smoke. Though I could not see anyone, I aimed my sniper's rifle at that spot and fired each of the five rounds in my rifle. Each time I fired, I had to pull back the bolt, eject the spent cartridge shell, and push the bolt forward to insert a new round into the chamber. My rifle gave me and my shoulder a powerful jolt each time I fired a round and the smoke from the muzzle kept me from seeing if I had hit anything.

Now I had to reload my bolt-action rifle. Because of the telescopic sight mounted over the breech opening, I could not feed the clip of five rounds at one time. I had to take each round off the clip and load one at a time. As I was doing this, the firing all around me kept up at a furious pace. Suddenly, I heard a voice almost in a whisper say, "Nicht schiessen!" I looked to my right, and there was a German soldier no more than six feet away, staring me in the face! "Nicht schiessen? Don't shoot?" I

wondered! My rifle was not even loaded! He could have easily shot me or bayoneted me before I could have defended myself!

Somehow, I was more surprised than frightened as I stared at him. I pointed with my rifle for him to move down the hill to the rear of our line. I held my rifle on him and crawled back down the hill after him. He was frightened and trembled as he walked in front of me with his hands on his head. When I searched him, he became agitated because he thought I wanted to take the bread he had in his pocket! It turned out that he had no weapon, grenade or ammunition.

As he was marching off into the 45th Infantry Division area, one of their men said to me, "Let's see how big a hole you can put in his back." That struck me as insane, because I could have been dead just a few minutes before. Besides, if we shot every enemy soldier who wanted to surrender, none ever would. The result would be a total disaster with more dead soldiers on both sides. The stories of the killing of prisoners of war on the Russian Front were heard on our front. Nevertheless, the war was over for that German, but not for me. From that moment on, I knew I had received a gift of time that I prayed would last until the end of the war.

I rejoined my platoon and continued the fire fight. The Germans were routed, and we pushed through to new positions beyond the woods. Later, 1st Lt. Park Ashbrook, our company executive officer, told me I had hit the sniper in the tree. When I said that I hadn't seen anything when I was firing, he said he saw him fall to the ground. Then it came to me that the sniper fire had stopped after I had shot those five rounds into the tree. (Frank Hancock of M Company, which is a heavy machine gun and mortar company, recalls that he had followed us on this attack and found a dead German soldier who had been killed by a bullet wound in his chest. (Perhaps, he had been the enemy sniper.)

In this baptism of fire, the men of Love Company had faced the enemy in relief of a company of the veteran 45th Infantry Division and proved themselves ready and able. Fortunately they had only a few casualties. Their war had just begun with a small victory. But it would go on and on for many months though they did not know it.

The Morning Reports of 3 and 4 November 1944:

1 SWA and 2 LWA. Also 1 NBC GSW self inflicted. (SWA - Severely wounded in action; LWA - Lightly wounded in action; NBC - Not battle connected; GSW - Gun shot wound).

RECONNAISSANCE PATROLS

We now were on the front with our own piece of real estate to defend and from which we were to attack the enemy. The first order of combat is to find the enemy and to know his position and strength. That meant reconnaissance patrols – a job that we had been trained for in maneuvers when no one was shooting at us.

In the Vosges Mountains, the hills are covered with forests and visibility is almost always poor. It rained sometime during every day and this added to the limited visibility. The first patrol to be sent out was led by a technical sergeant who was regarded as the toughest platoon sergeant in the company. He warned his men that no matter how tough maneuvers were in training at Fort Bragg, it would be hell and ten times worse when they went into combat. No noncom was more highly regarded than he was.

With a squad from his platoon, he led a night reconnaissance patrol from our line of foxholes toward the German line. They were to seek out the enemy positions, but not to engage in combat. That meant that they had to form the patrol with a point scout, followed by the leader of the patrol about 5 or 6 yards behind the point, and the rest of the squad spread out with flank guards.

It is not easy to find your way at night through no-man's-land with a compass and the fear that your enemy is waiting for you in a foxhole ready to kill you. You worry about making noise, because the snapping of a twig underfoot sounds like the falling of a tree in the cold, crisp night air. Those thoughts must have hit the sergeant as he set out, because he froze up shortly after leaving the American front line and fell to sobbing and trembling. The patrol managed to reach enemy lines, where they received small arms fire, and returned with the sergeant in tow. On 15 November 1944, he was sent back to an Army hospital on sick leave.

(On 11 December 1944, the sergeant returned to the company and on 14 December 1944 he went on sick leave again. On 16 December 1944, he reported back to the company and on 26 December 1944 he was reduced to private. His MOS was 745 rifleman but I believe he was assigned to the kitchen.)

I could not find it in my heart to condemn him, because he was given a responsibility greater than his ability to handle it. His bravado had

been an act to bolster his courage, but fear shattered his facade. Yet every good soldier knows fear and does not let it stop him from doing his duty, which is keeping faith with his fellow soldiers. He cannot break the bond that unites soldiers in battle. Patriotic songs and speeches about love of country are not the cement that binds infantry dogfaces together. It is mutual survival and getting out alive.

Reconnaissance patrols, on foot, were assigned to the infantry riflemen and no other unit. It was the most disliked duty for a dogface. In daytime, it was somewhat easier to know what was ahead of you, but it was nerve-wracking at night with only heavenly light to guide you, if there was any. All the time we were in the line, a patrol would be sent out almost every day. Fortunately, the job was shared on a rotating basis with nine rifle squads in the company. Machine gunners, mortarmen, cooks, supply men, and clerks never went on reconnaissance patrols. Our officers sometimes led patrols.

The purpose was always to probe the enemy lines to see if he was still there and if he had changed in any way. Had he moved in additional troops or had he moved out to a different location? If an enemy soldier was captured and brought back with the patrol, that was a bonus, but that seldom happened. As we would try to sneak close to the enemy line, one of them would see us and open fire, which brought more enemy fire down on the patrol. When that happened, we would know where the enemy was and how much small arms fire power he had. The patrol would then scoot back to the safety of our front line.

Inviting the enemy to shoot at you so that you can find out his position is not something that a dogface GI ever gets used to. On one assignment, our squad leader was instructed by our captain to take his men on a patrol that was to follow a road shown on a map. Then he would cross railroad tracks, pass by another wooded area, and continue on for about a mile to another crossroads. At that point, the squad had to be alert for enemy forces.

As the eight of us moved out, we walked in the woods parallel to the road to give us cover. After about a quarter mile, we reached the railroad tracks, which ran through a clearing in the woods. To our left where the road crossed the railroad tracks, there was a small hut for a railroad guard who stopped traffic when a train arrived. There was smoke coming out of the chimney of the hut, which had windows that offered a clear view of the tracks in both directions. We moved one at a time across the tracks to the woods on the other side without any trouble. After another hundred

yards, the woods ended and we stopped to look across the clearing. We saw some activity. It was the enemy digging in machine gun positions! We were quite sure that they saw us, but they did not open fire or pursue us. Since this was a reconnaissance patrol, we immediately turned around to return to our lines at a very brisk pace.

We came back to the railroad tracks and had to cross them one at a time. The first man crossed without incident. The second man was shot at from the railroad guard house, but was not hit. Each of us had to tear across in a crouch to make as small a target as possible. One man stopped in the middle of the tracks to retrieve his helmet, which had fallen off his head because he had not buckled his chin strap. Only one man was hit, but the bullet caromed off his ammunition belt and did not hurt him. Fortunately, these eight ducks in a shooting gallery got back to the company safely.

The sergeant reported to the captain that the Germans had dug into positions just beyond the railroad tracks and that they were infantry, with machine gun emplacements. When the captain heard this, he said, "There are no Krauts there! Army intelligence has reported that they are way beyond those woods!" The bullet-torn ammunition belt was offered as proof. Nevertheless, another patrol was sent out to confirm our report. It was maddening when someone in the rear echelon thought he knew more than the man on the front line and because of his rank, gave orders that could cause unnecessary deaths.

FOXHOLE "LIVING"

While I was at the front in a foxhole I had a limited idea of who was in the company. There was no mess hall, rec room or PX, to exchange scuttlebutt with other GIs. There were no formations for reveille or retreat. There was no roll call. I could only relate to the buddies in my foxhole and to those in the nearby foxholes. A foxhole on the front line was a very lonely place. A dogface was told nothing and could not tell what to expect next. He was there just to follow orders.

From the first day we got into the line, it rained sometime during every day. We wore shoepacks, which were boots that were half rubber and half leather. The lower foot part was made of rubber. The upper part from the ankle to midcalf was made of leather with boot laces. Inside, the soles were lined with two heavy felt pads. With the mud and water we lived in, they were much better than the combat boots we might have had. The shoepacks kept water out, but they also did not allow any air in to permit our sweaty feet to dry. It also happened that when we got water in the boots, we just squished along until we could find a safe area to take them off and let them dry out.

We had raincoats that were almost useless, because they did not keep us warm and they did not completely repel rain. My shoulders were soaked inside the raincoat when we had a steady rain. These raincoats were waterproof only in the pockets, where they kept water from flowing out. This was very good, because we could wash our hands after eating or after going to visit Mother Nature.

It was small consolation that the enemy was also in the same circumstances as we were. We were living in a hole in the ground where we usually built a roof made of branches, covered with dirt and leaves to camouflage our position. This kept out some of the weather, especially at night, when the temperature would drop to a subzero, teeth-chattering coldness. We covered the dirt floor with small pine branches that cushioned the hardness and dispersed the mud. No fires were ever made in the hole, because they could be seen for miles at night and invited unwanted guests wearing German uniforms.

Cigarettes were smoked by almost every GI because they were included in our K rations and sold for five cents a pack of twenty when you

bought them at the Post Exchange. To smoke a cigarette at night in a foxhole required lighting it quickly in the most secluded part of the hole and cupping your hands around the flame. Then every drag had to be taken near the bottom of the hole with your hands hiding the glow, which could be seen for a mile. I enjoyed a smoke then because it seemed to calm the nerves and gave a feeling of being in another world where civilized people lived.

In time, you found that while living in a hole you could adapt to conditions when things were quiet. You could use your helmet as a basin. Pour water in it and bathe by using a wash cloth and some soap and sometimes shave the beard. Living in that hole with two other guys who lived and sometimes died in the same clothes called for an outlook on life that was morbidly called "foxhole humor." Bill Mauldin's cartoons for the Army newspaper Stars and Stripes usually caught the irony of the experiences we had every day.

It was not unusual for a GI in a foxhole to get out and hurry a discreet distance away in order to defecate. This was always an involved procedure starting with digging a small cat-hole for the burial of the deposit, unlayering six plies of clothing, and balancing oneself so that nothing was accidentally soiled. Oftentimes, the enemy would inconveniently lob in mortar shells or 88mm artillery fire. What to do? Dive for the ground? Pull up your britches and run back to the foxhole? Or just say "To hell with them!" and finish your chore? As you accepted your fate in the war, you usually chose the third option.

I found that there came a time when nothing seemed to bother me. My hands thickened and my face was bearded and tough from the constant exposure outdoors in the cold and the rain and the snow. I could crush the lit end of a cigarette with my fingers or put my hands over a fire and not feel anything. Not only was this numbness physical, but it was mental, too. I plodded along shuffling from one position at the front to another, slogging through mud, following the Joe in front of me or leading the stragglers behind me. I moved like an old, tired, and demented man until that moment when another battle began.

The monotonous diet of K rations provided nourishment, but I dreamed of fresh food such as steak or chicken or even an egg. Every day for weeks I had to open a box that contained my rations: a packet of powdered coffee or lemonade or broth that I dissolved in chlorinated water in my canteen cup. The entree was a can of Spam or chicken or cheese eaten with a few salted crackers. The dessert was a prune and raisin fruit bar, or

a nonmeltable chocolate bar. Then, to top off the repast, there was a pack of four cigarettes.

The entire K ration came in a wax-coated box that was easily converted into a small, stove-like heater. I cut a hole near the bottom on each wide side of the box with my bayonet and lit the top edge. The holes permitted a draft of air to circulate up through the box and let the flame burn from the top all the way down to the bottom. This made it possible to heat water to a boil in a canteen cup for soup or coffee. For variety, I would cook the Spam in the broth or make some other concoction. I never got sick, but I know I lost any excess fat on my body.

Though hot meals were seldom served at the front, Charlie Brigandi, one of our cooks, told me that they always tried to get hot food to us when there was a quiet time on the line. They would drive a Jeep up with a trailer that held big kettles of hot meat and potatoes and hot brewed coffee and would park a few hundred yards behind our foxholes. Then a few men at a time would go back to the chow line, fill their mess kits and canteen cups, and return to their holes. They would be followed by a few more men who went to the chow line. Charlie said that the cooks were always nervous there, because sometimes the Germans spotted the activity and mortar-fired the chow line. That would end the hot meal as the kitchen crew scurried back to the rear. I truly believe he felt guilty when he could not bring us hot food, but it was a welcome treat when he did.

THE VILLAGE OF ST. REMY

We had spent all our time in the forests, driving the Germans back. As we moved through the woods, the enemy would often hit us with 88mm artillery fire. A tree burst would send shrapnel showering down on us. If a shell hit the ground and then exploded, the shrapnel would fly upwards and outwards, which made laying on the ground in a hollow the most protected place to be. When we were in a dugout we had the best protection except for a direct hit.

My hearing became so acute that I would dive for the ground in an instant when an artillery shell had a certain sound that said to me, "I'm going to get you this time." I could tell where it was coming from, if it was American or German, and how close it was going to hit. The one I would not hear would be the one that got me. I spent a lot of time hitting the ground, getting up, listening and hitting the ground again. Small arms fire from rifles and machine guns also got my attention and the ground was my refuge until I could tell what and where it was coming from. It became an instantaneous reflex.

On 14 November 1944, the company was attacking the German positions outside St. Remy when artillery and mortar fire came in on us. Hot, jagged shards of steel rained down on us. Some men were wounded. One piece of shrapnel struck my squad leader, Sgt. John Baud, in the back of the neck just below his helmet and he was killed almost instantly. Lapa went over to see him when he heard that he had been hit. He said that blood was all around, and there was nothing anyone could do for him. Baud, the French-American who came back to France, was the first soldier to be killed in Love Company. (He is buried in the American Military Cemetery in Epinal, where his family can visit his grave. He had just missed seeing them two weeks earlier.)

As we emerged from the woods, we crossed an open field toward the town of St. Remy, which was about a quarter mile ahead of us. We could see the church steeple as we advanced in a long skirmish line that stretched out for several hundred yards on a broad front. We continued in the face of rifle and machine gun fire. The enemy also lobbed mortar shells down on us. Some of the rounds could be seen as they descended just prior to detonation, according to Lapa, but I was not interested in looking up.

St. Remy, a small farm village in the Vosges Mountains, was the first town the company entered. There were no civilians to be seen and no Germans anywhere as we came to an intersection of two main streets in the center of town. We were wary of an enemy counterattack or house-to-house fighting. However, they had the intersection zeroed in and before we could dig in, they were shelling us with 88mm artillery fire. We scrambled for cover into the ditches at the sides of the road. Cow dung or horse manure didn't bother us when we hugged Mother Earth. What was a little more filth when you had to dive for cover to save your life?

As I was lying there I could hear, above the noise of the shelling, a voice singing:

"You'd better not laugh when the hearse goes by
For you may be the next to die.
They put you in a wooden box
And cover you over with dirt and rocks
And the worms crawl in and the worms crawl out
In through your eyes and out of your mouth.
They call their friends and their friends' friends too
And they sit on your chin and they chew and they chew.
So-o-o-o-o-o
You'd better not laugh when the hearse goes by
For you may be the next to die . . ."

Some of us threw any handy stones or rocks at the guy who was singing.

When we learned that a German forward artillery observer was directing the cannon fire from the church steeple about 100 yards up the street from us, he was put out of business very quickly and the shelling ended. It was now safe to check for any other enemy resistance, but the village was ours. We had taken our objective.

THE CLOCK TURNS BACK

We stayed a few days in St. Remy and spent some time talking with the townspeople. There were no young men there. We saw some children, some older men and a few women, both young and old.

Hound Dog (Pfc. John H. Bolin, Jr.) said that he remembered his father saying that he had been in a town called St. Remy during World War I. He and other doughboys had carved their initials in the ceiling beam of a farmhouse. It sounded sort of fantastic, but as the semiofficial interpreter of the platoon, I thought that it wouldn't hurt to ask someone, "Were there American soldiers in St. Remy during the first World War?"

One farmer became very excited when asked about it. He said, "Yes! American soldiers were here in World War I." They had even stayed in his house. He led us into his home which was divided on one side as a barn for his animals. On the other side, that was partitioned for the family, he pointed to a wooden beam about eight inches by eight inches thick with initials carved in it. The room was dimly lit, and the beam was dark brown with age and dirt. The ceiling was only about seven feet high. Hound Dog searched for his father's initials, but it was difficult to see anything even if they were there. Suddenly, he shouted, "There they are! Just the way my Dad said they would be." Then we all saw the initials: "JHB" carved exactly the way Hound Dog had described them.

Not only did Bolin come to the same town and the same house, but he was also carrying a BAR just as his father had 26 years before. It was hard to believe such a story, that a father and son would live and relive the same experience in the same place a quarter of a century apart. Most listeners would scoff at it, but the house and the initials are still there, since 1918.

In reality, this was not World War I and World War II. It was still the "Great War" as it was originally called. The 20-year intermission, 1919 to 1939, was used for the development and improvement of the weapons of war. The result was devastation beyond imagination.

Anyway, the moment called for a celebration and the farmer offered some wine, which his pretty, young daughter brought to us. I thought that it would be fun to tell the girl that Hound Dog had fallen madly in love with her and would like to marry her after the war. She said that she

might be interested, but he was too old. When I asked her, "How old do you think he is?" she replied, "Thirty-five." Actually, Bolin was 18, about six and a half feet tall, unshaven, dirty, hollow-eyed and looked beat, just like the rest of us. The budding romance never developed because, unfortunately, it was time to move out.

We headed into the woods, parallel to the road, to avoid enemy artillery spotters. It was uneventful except for the usual sounds of artillery and occasional small arms fire. As we passed through, I noticed an extended depression in front of us. It was about 10 or 12 feet wide and sloped down about two feet deep and then sloped up again to the other side. It was not an old dried out river bed. It was a World War I trench whose sides had collapsed and time had partially filled in. I thought I could hear the machine guns and cannons and dying moans of that time, but I was hearing the sounds of my time.

MORALE AT THE FRONT LINE

On 1 November 1944, the company began with six officers and 186 enlisted men, and on 18 November 1944, Love Company had five officers and 155 enlisted men.

The wounded officer was 2nd Lt. Israel N. Markfield, who was originally in an anti-aircraft unit. From the time he was assigned to our company he seemed to be uncomfortable as an infantry platoon officer. Rather than show boldness and assertiveness, he was very cautious and hesitant. His dugout was his haven where he took cover and rarely walked along the line of foxholes where the men of his platoon were posted. The sergeants of the platoon checked the men for him. It happened on 16 November 1944, that he was seriously wounded by shrapnel from an artillery shell that burst in a tree directly over his dugout. He was evacuated to a hospital and never came back to the company. That was another case of not knowing how, what or when you may be wounded or killed on the battlefront. The platoon sergeant took over and no replacement officer was assigned for quite some time.

Included with the 155 enlisted men were seven replacements. By subtracting 155 from 186 and adding the seven replacements, the number is 38 men who were killed, wounded, sick, or transferred and included three who had self-inflicted wounds. Among the enlisted men, there were certain non-combat personnel, such as the cooks, supply clerks, company clerk, and mail clerk.

The rate of turnover in the foxholes was very noticeable to those who were still there. Our morale was always high, but as the war dragged on, we changed. Our emotions and nerves were deadened, so that the sights and sounds of death and destruction were accepted with an all-encompassing numbness.

An infantry soldier, well trained or not, went into battle with a steel helmet on his head and several layers of khaki clothing as his only protection. The Germans had rifles, machine guns, mortar shells, artillery shells, grenades, bayonets, booby traps, shoe mines, antipersonnel mines, tanks, bombers, and strafing airplanes – all aimed at this woebegone dogface!

This infantryman had to be stopped before he took over your territory because you would have to fight him to get it back. If you killed him, another would take his place. He was not invincible. As he survived battle after battle, his cold determination cracked little by little as the emptiness and futility of war set in. "When will it end?" "Will the next day be my last?" "What will get me? A bullet? A chunk of shrapnel? A land mine? Will it hurt? Will it be my eyes?" Then he was broken in spirit. He felt terror. This used to be called "shell-shock." Then it was called "battle fatigue." Most infantrymen I knew didn't think about anything but coming out of the war alive. They were brave and uncomplaining and laughed at their fate.

It happened, on rare occasions, that desperation and rage overtook caution and a soldier recklessly dared to expose himself and blindly attacked the enemy. He came to the point where he wanted to end his misery, whatever the cost. Another day in the front line would drive him insane. Death was his final escape, whether in a blaze of glory or not. ("So farewell hope and, with hope, farewell fear." John Milton.)

The "million-dollar wound" was the desire of almost every dogface. Such a wound had to be severe enough to get him out of the war by sending him to a stateside hospital, but not so severe that he would be unable to live reasonably well for the rest of his life. The loss of part of an arm, hand, leg, or foot was acceptable to him. Some desperate ones had self-inflicted wounds.

There were many quiet periods on the line when both sides were sending out patrols and not attacking in force. One day, from my foxhole on the edge of a wood, I could see German foxholes across an open field – "no-man's-land." In an adjacent foxhole, there was one of my buddies waving his arm back and forth. Then I noticed a German soldier waving back at him. I was puzzled and yelled at my buddy, "Why are you waving at the German? Or is he waving at you?" He replied, "I want to get a million-dollar wound in my arm!" The plan didn't work.

It rained and snowed constantly during that winter of 1944-1945, which was reported to be the worst in 40 years in Europe. Yet there was very little weather-related sickness in the company. We were in the Vosges Mountains, in dugouts or foxholes, and never saw the inside of a house for many weeks at a time. A little pneumonia would have been a ticket back to the States, but no one seemed to get it. In fact, I don't know of anyone who had a cold, even though eyes were bleary, noses ran, and we had the

shivers. Often our teeth chattered uncontrollably, our knees trembled and we stomped our feet in the bitter cold, but somehow, we survived.

Many days the temperature sank well below freezing. In a three-man foxhole at night, one man would be on guard duty while the other two would try to get some sleep. It was one hour on guard duty and two hours off. During those off hours, the two who were trying to sleep would cuddle up under a soggy, wet Army blanket in spoon fashion for warmth. Then as the upper side that was exposed to the cold became frozen, they would reverse position in unison and warm up the cold side. This was not at all a sexy thing, though a pin-up girl or a girl of any shape or form would have been a dream come true.

When we were pulled off the front, we usually had mail waiting for us. There would be letters from home and packages of cookies or candy or some other items that the folks at home thought would be appreciated. Amazingly, our address was simply APO 447 New York and the post office was able to deliver the mail to this God-forsaken part of the world where life and death were on equal terms. The cookies and sweets my mother sent to me were homemade and delicious and usually included brownies, chocolate chip cookies, and baklava, which often arrived broken in a flimsy cake box. I seldom had more than a couple of pieces because of the vultures who stood over me and swooped in as I opened the box. I was more happy than angry to share the treats with my old buddies, and they also shared whatever they received. This was a real morale booster after all the K rations we had eaten.

In one of the earliest mail deliveries at the front, I received a letter from the girl I had met in Times Square just before we left for overseas. She wrote how much she enjoyed meeting me and that I should not forget her, especially since I was probably having a good time with all the pretty French girls over there. She asked that I write and tell her all about the wonderful experiences I was having in France. Somehow, I did not find it in my heart to answer the letter. Yet, it made me think of how so many people at home did not know anything about war, devastation and death. Pictures and newsreels could only give a sixtieth of a second's view. To live it is the only way they could understand. They were more fortunate than they knew.

While we were off the front in reserve, we had time to write letters home. Pencils were the only writing instruments available. The stationery was V-mail – a single sheet of blue paper that folded so that the message was inside and the address was outside. No postage was necessary for a

soldier. I did not have much to say in my letters – just that I am all right and do not worry. If I said anything about my location or the condition of the company Lt. Taylor would have had to censor it. None of my letters survived the war. The only one I ever found was the souvenir postcard with the picture of a German bomber.

Some soldiers in the company became sick with yellow jaundice and were sent straight back to an evacuation hospital. Why some men got it and others did not was a mystery to me, because we all had the same "haute cuisine." Yet the guys with the yellow eyeballs and sallow complexions were very happy to leave. At the hospital, they were prescribed a special diet with no fat and were assigned to a special chow line. However, some did not want to be cured and sent back to the front, so they sneaked onto the regular chow line where they could eat lots of fatty foods and prolong their stay in the hospital. If the jaundice worsened, the patient was shipped to the U.S., and if he was cured, he was usually assigned to some rear echelon unit. (Many years later, I was told that the hepatitis was transmitted by unclean hypodermic needles. If that was true, it must have happened before we were shipped overseas. We had been given shots for every known disease.)

When the company was pulled out of the front line to a rear area for rest and to clean up, it would be in a town where the Army took over civilian houses to quarter the troops. The company kitchen would be set up, and we would sleep indoors for a change – sometimes under goose down quilts. After a shower that removed a three-week layer of dirt, a shave of a three-week beard, and a change into clean clothes that we scrubbed ourselves, we felt human again.

At Moyenmoutier, we were billeted in a hotel, where each room had a heater, but there was no heat and no one felt like going out for firewood to start the heater in the room. What to do? Break up the furniture and start a fire! That's what we did. If the owner was angry, he could complain to the U.S. Army and it would pay for it.

While we were there, shots rang out from another room. It sounded like a pistol, not a rifle. In checking the source of the noise, we found one of our buddies calmly sitting in the middle of his room firing his 45 caliber pistol at mice that were scampering about the floor. After a brief warning, he stopped upsetting our rest.

In a house nearby, three of our men were trying to light a fire in the heater to warm up. By accident, the fire got out of control and the place went up in flames. The three men, Pfc. George J. Cambigue, Pfc. John M.

Hickey, and Pfc. Salvatore V. Maietta, were injured in the fire. For some reason, they were listed as AWOL in the company from 16 November 1944 to 27 November 1944, when they returned to the company. (1 March 1945, Pfc. Cambigue left L Company on sick leave. He never returned to the company. Instead, he was assigned to K Company and on 9 March 1945 was killed in action.)

On the front, we usually ate K rations and less often we had C rations which came in two small cans. One can contained a stew or hash or meat with vegetables, or spaghetti; frankfurters or pork with beans; ham and eggs with potatoes; chicken and vegetables. The other can had crackers and powders for beverages.

While in reserve, hot meals were the greatest enjoyment of all after living on K and C rations. Our cooks prepared delicious, hot meals that we enjoyed in a relaxed atmosphere without the threat of enemy bombardment. I don't know if they improved their cooking or we were just hungry for any food other than K rations.

The only thing that diminished the pleasure of standing in the chow line and getting a messkit full of roast beef, mashed potatoes and gravy, and a helping of peas and carrots was seeing the hungry civilians who stood around us with soulful looks eyeing the food we had. They each had a pail to collect any scraps of foods left behind from our messkits or from the chow line. It was a severe winter, and the French people living in towns near the front lines were sorely in need of food. We, as infantrymen who had nothing but our weapons and the clothes on our backs, could not do much for them, but we did give them any extra rations when we had them. The soldiers in rear echelon units were better able to help these people, because they rode in vehicles with plenty of food and equipment. Furthermore, they often were billeted in houses for days and sometimes weeks at a time and could offer much more than the dogface who was busy fighting a war out of a foxhole.

The retreating German soldiers took food, horses, chickens, eggs, and anything else they wanted from the French civilians. We felt sorry for the poor local people whose houses had been destroyed and struggled to survive. In this cold-hearted, wintry world of war, the enemy did not worry about the people they left sick and hungry. They did not have enough food for themselves, which did not make us unhappy.

ATTACK, ATTACK, ATTACK

Throughout the month of November and into December 1944, the company was on the offensive in coordination with I Company and K Company of the 3rd Battalion. Each attack consisted of two companies in the van and the third company in reserve. There was a regular rotation of assignments. The Germans were giving us stiff resistance as they slowly retreated.

Our attack would sometimes be preceded by a barrage from our mortars and artillery. Our rifle company would then move forward against the German lines. Usually, they would have retreated to prepared positions behind the front we attacked. It was then that we would often be bombarded by the enemy 88mm artillery and 81mm mortars as we reached their abandoned positions. They knew the pinpoint range to their former positions and the barrage could be devastating. If our attack was stopped and we were ordered to return to our lines, the Germans would return to their previous positions. Then we would have to prepare for another attack unless they counterattacked. Whenever possible, it was always better to push through and take the objective and hold it, regardless of the casualties we had to suffer. We learned that if you retreated, you had to go back at them again, and your first attack was wasted.

On 18 November 1944, in the area of Neufmaisons, France, the 3rd Battalion was assigned the task of taking the high ground on the road to Raon l'Etape. L Company suffered heavily from a barrage of mortar and artillery fire. The enemy attacked at 1400 against the left flank of the company, which was also the left flank of the division. If the attack had succeeded, the division flank would have been exposed, but after a two-hour battle the Germans were repulsed. The Story of the Century had the following report:

"Pfc. William J. Ansel was one of the deciding factors in Co. L's success that afternoon. Ansel, who had become acting squad leader earlier in the day when his squad leader suffered serious wounds, was directing his squad in digging an emplacement for their machine gun when the enemy counterattack began. (He) first noticed the enemy moving on his position less than fifty yards away. Ordering his men to take cover and open fire with their small arms, he tried to mount his machine gun. but the en-

emy was closing in too rapidly. ... Ansel began firing the heavy gun from his hip. ... The enemy hesitated but soon were advancing again, directing most of their fire at him. Ansel was forced back twice, once because of the enemy onrush, and the second time to insert a new belt of ammunition in the smoking gun. With the new belt inserted, Ansel grimly walked toward the thickest part of the Jerry attack, firing as he advanced.

"Seven enemy were killed and 11 wounded before Ansel ceased firing, having broken the counterattack and enabled Co. L to retake the ground it had lost. ..."

For his action, Pfc. William J. Ansel received the Distinguished Service Cross, the second highest medal, and was promoted to sergeant.

Among the casualties on this day was Spider – Pfc. John J. Hudec, who was severely wounded and evacuated to the hospital.

THE ATTACK CONTINUES

As we pressed our attack against the enemy, we came across shoe mines, which were designed to blow up under the footstep of an infantry soldier. The shoe mine was a simple device: a wooden box about 4" by 4" with a hinged cover. Inside there was about ¼ pound of dynamite with a detonator and spring-loaded firing pin that exploded the shoe mine when it was stepped on. Many a soldier lost a foot or a leg because of them. Some who fell on them were killed.

The Germans also had other antipersonnel devices, such as bouncing bettys that were buried in the ground just below the surface. They would be set off when stepped on and would shoot a shell up about three feet, which then exploded sending steel balls and shrapnel flying for 50 feet in every direction. Fortunately, we did not come across any bouncing bettys.

During this period of pursuit, I got into the habit of looking in every direction as if I had 360 degree vision. I dragged my feet as I trudged through the woods, because I didn't want to lose a foot by stepping on a shoe mine, which was usually placed on the ground covered with leaves or some dirt. By doing this, I thought I would kick the shoe mine out of my way.

On one attack, I remember moving through a wooded area made up of trees that not only were barren of leaves for winter, but were skeletons with spindly branches and stunted growth. Heavy artillery shelling had splintered them into grotesque shapes. A fog formed by the smoke left by artillery shells hung over the entire woods. The sun could not come through the gray pall that covered the whole scene. There was the smell of gunpowder in the air. I thought that I had come to a world of the supernatural – a world of grays and whites with no living things and just me walking in a dream through it. My buddies were there in a skirmish line on my right and left, but I could not see them in the smoke and fog. There was the sound of artillery, but it seemed artificial – unreal. I finally shuffled through to the other side of this eerie world where I could see the reality of winter in evergreen trees on an open field. I looked left and right to see the other dogfaces emerging from the woods.

The company was moving constantly from the end of November until the end of December 1944. When we marched from one area to another to take up a new position, the company would be strung out with a column on each side of the road. A distance of 4 or 5 yards between each man was kept to minimize our casualties if we were hit by artillery or enemy attack. On one occasion, while we were walking along in our usual desultory manner, we were suddenly alerted to the roar of a low-flying airplane. We looked up to see a P47 Thunderbolt with U.S. markings bearing down on us and firing a burst of machine gun bullets. In an instant, every one of us hit the ground. There was not a single dogface standing on the road. Fortunately, no one was hit.

As I got up I cursed the pilot and thought of Spider, "General Arnold doesn't want us back, after all." Some of the guys thought that it was a German flying a captured P47 Thunderbolt, but it was more likely another snafu (situation normal all fouled up) – just an unfortunate mistake. Love Company formed up again and we resumed our march.

One battle faded into the next. I cannot describe every firefight with the enemy. It was almost always the same. We attacked with mortars and cannon shells followed by riflemen moving ahead with rifles, grenades and machine guns. They returned our fire with their fire. Then it depended on which side had the greater firepower and the fewest casualties to advance or retreat. Fortunately, we outfought the Germans in almost every battle. Some were very costly.

Each patrol was a repetition of the last. Whether it was a battle or a patrol, I remember the shots of German burp guns and machine guns whizzing over my head as I hugged Mother Earth. They spewed bullets in tremendous bursts. Trees and branches splintered around me as they were hit. I could only fire back with the M1 Garand rifle that I now had when they stopped for an instant or fired in another area.

When we were bombarded with artillery shells they came down on us and tore up the ground as they exploded. The shells also exploded in the trees and showered us with shrapnel. They maimed and killed more men than any other weapon. The soldier had no defense against the enemy artillery bombardment except to dig a foxhole with a cover. When you could fire back, you did it with anger and vengeance for the buddies that were hit.

Captured enemy soldiers also complained that American artillery was the most feared weapon of all. Some of them surrendered because they could not take any more shelling from our gunners who were deadly

accurate in their firing. They may not have had the rough life of a dogface as they fired from their cannons from a mile behind the front line but they were loved for their support.

After one particular battle, when everything was quiet, my foxhole buddy and I were having a meal of K rations outside our foxhole and relaxing when we were suddenly surprised. Standing before us in a spotless uniform and polished boots was a German officer. He wore an officer's cap and not a steel helmet. He had a pistol in a holster on his belt, but he did not take it out. He said in an authoritative way that he wanted to see our commanding officer. We were so stunned that we grabbed our rifles and pointed them at him. We took his pistol, which was a P-38 and not a prized Luger, and checked to see if he had any other weapon. He sneered at our unkempt uniforms, dirty, unshaven faces, and plodding movements. That was answered with a powerful shove that almost sent him into the muddy ground as he was escorted back to the rear. This officer was more than a lieutenant, probably a major or a colonel (Oberst). We wondered how he managed to walk from his own front lines alone across no-man's-land and not be noticed. He seemed to materialize out of nowhere. I did admire how he surrendered in style.

Our movements were usually on foot whether we were in reserve or were sent back up to the front line. As one company pushed through our position, we would then be following the front. We would rest a few days and then march up to push through K or I Company's position. Until we reached their line, we would march along in the usual manner on both sides of the road with five-yard distances between each man. On a few occasions, there would be a dogface who had unfortunately soiled his trousers ahead of you. It was a result of fright or a delay in planning ahead. Though the smell was sometimes strong, we did not add to the embarrassment of the poor guy who was just a boy of 18. He would clean up his outfit as soon as we reached reserve quarters.

The roadside sights on those marches told of the destruction of this war. There were burned-out tanks, destroyed trucks, rubble piles that were once houses, dead horses and cattle lying on their sides with their four legs sticking straight out in rigor mortis, and there were dead soldiers, too. The destruction of men and military materiel was from both sides. However, when it was an American soldier, we were especially grim, and we felt a loss even though we did not know him. We passed the body of an American sapper who was lying in the middle of the road where he had been killed by an enemy mine that he was trying to disarm. His arm was reach-

ing into the hole where the mine was buried. It exploded and then it was all over for him. I felt a shiver of pain, but it just added to my feeling of numbness.

Upon reaching our destination where we were to attack through another company's line, we would follow orders when to move ahead. On one particular action, we had to wait in a column in a wood and could hear the sounds of a fire fight in front of us. There were American and German machine guns and rifles firing away in loud bursts. It seemed that the men ahead of us had run into strong enemy positions and were pinned down. My platoon was in the rear of the column, and we had stopped to await orders. Out of nowhere, we were joined by a lieutenant colonel, the regimental commander, whom I had never before seen so close to the front. He stood with us for a few minutes and then shouted, "Tell those soldiers to move up! That's an order from the Colonel! Pass it along!" The command was picked up by the company noncoms and soldiers and yelled to the men further ahead nearer the fighting. "The Colonel says, 'Move up! That's an order!' Pass it along!" It was not too long after that when we received the reply from the front, "Screw the Colonel! Pass it along!" He did not stay there with us, but got into his Jeep and left. We, of course, did move up into the line as the situation developed and our platoon leaders gave the orders.

For the dogface at the front, the orders of his sergeant and platoon leader are the only ones he feels confident to obey, because they are there with him in the middle of the fight. Very high-ranking officers are not overly respected by those at the very bottom of the military ladder unless they have proved themselves in combat.

In fact, it was rumored that the big army brass at the top levels sent an order to the 100th Division to the effect that our casualties were not consistent with the amount of territory we were capturing. This meant that there was something wrong; that we must be having an easy time and were not pushing hard enough against the enemy. We were having a walk in the park. Incidentally, long after the war was over, our division commander, Maj. Gen. Withers A. Burress, was asked what he was most proud of while in combat. He said that the 100th Infantry Division conquered more enemy territory with fewer casualties than any other division in the war. For that reason alone, I think "Pinky" Burress was one of the unsung heroes of World War II.

Morning reports of that period read as follows:

28 Nov 44 Entrucked 0755 at Moyenmoutier Fr. 32 miles to Brouderdorff, Fr arr. 1200.

We arrived there after a brief rest during Thanksgiving to take our position with other companies in the 3rd Battalion of the 399th Infantry Regiment.

A story was told that a sergeant and a few of his men had come in from the front to the kitchen of regimental headquarters for a Thanksgiving dinner. They had seen a lot of action and were on special assignment to have this special treat. Of course, they were in miserable shape, dirty and smelly, and they were greeted by an arrogant mess sergeant who said to them, "You're too late. The kitchen's closed. There's no more turkey." This did not please the hungry sergeant and his men. They took their rifles off their shoulders and pointed them at the mess sergeant and his cooks. "We have just come in from killing the Germans! Now, do we get a dinner or do we have to shoot somebody?" They were promptly fed.

2 Dec 44 Left Brouderdorff Fr. by motor 0640 Arr. Siewiller Fr. 0815 motored 16 miles.

From this point we advanced on foot. Many of the towns in this part of France, which is Alsace, have German names and the people speak German and French, but they are true Frenchmen. For the next few days, we met little resistance because the Germans had retreated. Nevertheless, we had to dig in each day because of sporadic enemy shelling.

3 Dec 44 Left Siewiller Fr by foot 1015 and arr at Lutzelstein Fr 1410 distance marched 8 miles.

As we were slogging along a muddy road on one particular day, we passed a few tanks of the 781st Tank Battalion, which were attached to our division. We noticed all the extra items they were able to carry on the outside of their tanks. They had cartons of "10 in 1" rations that contained cans of orange marmalade, bacon, meat, vegetables and loaves of real bread and butter. As we passed alongside the tanks, several of our men liberated a few of the choicest items they were able carry. The tankers did not seem to notice anything as they sat comfortably inside and smoked cigarettes as we went by. One of best items that was carried off was a full-sized shovel. That shovel was used to dig a foxhole in one-quarter the time it took with our regular entrenching tool. When we had to "dig in" this shovel made it almost a pleasure. It was passed around to everyone in the platoon. That spade was carefully guarded, but one day, it mysteriously disappeared. We never caught the culprit.

The tankers' food was a big treat. When we stopped at a farm house for the night, we decided to have toast and butter. A fire was lit in the farmer's wood burning stove, and the bread was toasted and the butter liberally slathered on it. The one thing lacking was cinnamon for cinnamon toast. On the chance that one of our men who was noted for carrying everything imaginable might have some, we asked Pvt. William Bailey, also known as PX Bailey, "Do you have any cinnamon?" After he searched through his pockets and his musette bag, he came up with a can of cinnamon! That was one of the most memorable meals I had in the Army: bread with marmalade, cinnamon toast, crisp bacon, and real meat. The fact that it was liberated from the tankers made it more delicious.

4 Dec 44 Left Lutzelstein Fr by foot 0730 and arr at Puberg Fr. 1010 distance marched 5 miles. 5 Dec 44 Left Puberg Fr by foot 1500 arr at Huhnerscherr, Fr 1710 distance marched 5 1/2 miles.

6 Dec 44 Left Huhnerscherr Fr by foot 0920 arr at Goetzenbruck Fr 1145 distance marched 4 1/2 miles.

It was somewhere in this region when we were ordered to dig in along the crest of a hill that was terraced with grape vines. I had selected a spot for our foxhole, but my buddy who was to be in the hole with me did not like my choice and started digging about 50 feet to the left. I did not argue because one spot was the same as any other. We had been hacking at the frozen earth for a short time when, suddenly, we were being pounded with artillery shells. Both of us dove into the partly hollowed out foxhole as the earth around us shook with the explosions. Dirt and shrapnel flew up and around us. This lasted for about 10 minutes as I tried to crawl as deeply as possible into my helmet for protection. Finally, all was quiet and we came up to see what had happened. The spot I had chosen for a foxhole had a direct hit! A thing like that unsettles the nerves and brings on a prayer of thanks.

The shelling did not sound like German 88mm artillery, and it was rumored that one of our officers or the forward artillery observer had read the contour map wrong. He gave the number of the hill we were on and called for artillery fire. He should have given the number of the hill in front of us, where the enemy was dug in.

Not only were the Germans trying to kill me, but I had to worry about my own officers! Fortunately, mistakes like this did not happen very often. I don't know what casualties we had that time, but every day someone got sick, wounded or killed.

LEMBERG, FRANCE

8 Dec 44 Traveled 1 mile by foot to Lemberg, Fr.

This small town in the Vosges Mountains is an important intersection for main roads and a railroad leading in all directions. The strongest forts in the Maginot Line were located at Bitche, which is only about five miles to the northeast. The Germans retreated to this town and set up strong defenses to hold it against our advance.

On 9 December 1944, early in the morning, the 3rd Platoon moved through the woods following a road leading to a railroad trestle. We reached the edge of the woods and were deployed along a draw facing an open field that sloped upward toward the embankment where the railroad tracks ran. The road to our left ran under the railroad trestle. We were able to peek over the edge of the draw and look across the open field, but we could not tell what the enemy had facing us. All the dogfaces were tense as they fixed bayonets. I had my M1 Garand rifle and was given a grenade launcher and two rifle grenades. We waited for the command to charge across the open field into the German positions. Our mortars and artillery did not lay in a barrage before us. The attack was supposed to be a surprise. Smoke shells were probably used to screen our movements, but they did not do much good. Everyone was quiet. There was no talking.

Then our platoon leader, Lt. Bennett Taylor, gave the order to charge, "Let's go!" he yelled. It was like a reenactment of a World War I movie as we all rose up and started running across the open field toward the embankment. We had not gone more than five yards when the Germans opened up with their rapid-fire machine guns, rifles, and mortar shells. They even fired their 20mm anti-aircraft gun at us with tracers and exploding shells. There was booming noise and smoke and streaking bullets whizzing all around us. I had the strangest feeling that I was not really there in the middle of all this mayhem. In my mind, I was floating as I was running straight for the cover of the railroad embankment, and I did not feel any terror or exhaustion. It was not me, but someone else who was there, and I was just an observer. I didn't even seem to hear or smell the battle. It was like a dream. Some would call it an "out-of-body experience."

In what seemed like an instant, I ran across the open field, straight into the enemy fire, cut to the road just to the left of the underpass and hit down on the side of the embankment. It was safe there below the range of fire of the enemy guns. Running with me and landing in the dirt beside me was Moping Mo, Cpl. Stanley T. Cardozo, who said, "I've been hit!" I turned to him and asked, "Where did you get it?" "In the ass," he said. He lay on his stomach. I examined his behind and found a slit about an inch long on the right cheek of his pants, and poked it with my finger. "Ouch!" he yelled. A piece of shrapnel from a 20mm shell had exploded and hit him in the butt. Fortunately, it was not serious.

Meanwhile, right over our heads, the Germans were firing away with a machine gun and the 20mm cannon. I crawled up over the embankment to see where they were and caught sight of the position. I crawled back down the embankment, removed my bayonet and attached the grenade launcher to the end of my rifle. I loaded a blank cartridge in the chamber, and slipped the grenade onto the launcher. Carefully, I aimed for the spot just beyond the railroad tracks and to the left of my position where I had seen their emplacement. I fired the two rifle grenades, and in the turmoil I don't know if they hit the target, but there was no more firing from there.

In the meantime, Al Lapa who was on my right was firing his BAR near the head of Lt. Taylor. That did not make the lieutenant very happy.

This attack was recorded in the Story of the 399th Infantry Regiment on pages 60 and 61, which was written shortly after the war. (I do not know the author or the source of the quotation.) It reads as follows:

Love Company spearheaded the 399th into Lemberg, when they made a dash from the eastern woods to reach the RR underpass in the center of town in midafternoon. The Railroad was the German MLR.

"Lt. Taylor's 3rd platoon reached the RR embankment and Lt. MacDonald's 2nd platoon dashed up a draw to hit the railroad on the right. Charley Goldman stuck his head over the embankment and got hit by a machine-gun bullet. Sgt. John Butler tried to lead the 2nd across the tracks but didn't make it. They were firing a hail of 20 millimeter stuff and machine-guns up and down the tracks. *The only possible way into Lemberg was through that underpass and the Germans knew it.* A bunch of krauts came charging through the underpass and we wiped 'em out with guns and grenades – Harvey Rohde, Al Lappa [Lapa], and Bob Binkley shot up plenty. *George Demopoulos of the Medics amputated a Mike boy's arm*

under fire. Then two mortars were rushed up behind the RR embankment and set up like infantry cross-fires, each firing a different direction. John Khoury crawled up on the tracks and directed fire to knock out a flak wagon and a machinegun. Then we opened up with everything we had, charged through the underpass, and made a dash for the first couple of houses in Lemberg."

There was enemy small arms fire and 88mm artillery shelling as we sought cover inside a house that had thick masonry walls. To watch for a counterattack, Pvt. Carroll Stratmann was assigned to guard the rear of the house. He had just joined the company as a replacement on the 26th of November. He posted himself about ten feet from the door. Just then a shell exploded in the yard and Stratmann was seriously hit. Pfc. Al Lapa and others rushed outside and carried Stratmann into the kitchen. He was placed on a table as the medic, Geogre Demopolis, treated his wound. He had been hit in the chest where there was the sound of air being sucked into his lungs. The actual wound was small with very little blood around it. The medic poured sulfa onto the hole and cut a piece of a raincoat to cover it. Soon a Jeep came and Stratmann was put on a litter and taken back to the Battalion Aid Station.

In the meantime, I was crouched by a window, and was surprised to looked up and see a German position opposite us in plain view on a low hill. Then an officer or noncom walked upright in front of the dug-in soldiers and was silhouetted against the sky, apparently giving orders to his men. He was about 200 yards away, and I took careful aim from the window, fired one shot, and missed. He did not flinch or duck or take cover. I fired a second shot that did not miss. He stopped and collapsed backwards. That was my small contribution to the memory of Stratmann, who later died of his wounds.

Meanwhile, in a house at the end of the main street, there was a German sniper firing from the upper window at any GI in the street. A Sherman tank was called in and it sent one 75mm cannon shell into the window, which eliminated the sniper but did not improve the house. The town was taken after some house-to-house fighting, and the enemy retreated to fight at his next line of defense.

According to the Morning Reports of 8 December 1944, there were six officers and 150 enlisted men in Love Company, and on 10 December 1944 there were five officers and 139 enlisted men.

Killed in action on 8 December 1944, were S. Sgt. John P. Butler, Sgt. Monroe W. Dixon, Sgt. Francis J. Touri, Pfc. George C. Rex, and Pfc.

William G. Zilliox. On 9 December 1944, Pfc. Eugene Greenbaum was killed in action.

A number of men were wounded on 9 December 1944, among them was Pfc. John W. Howe, Jr. When I heard that, I remembered Redbird on the ship as we left New York, looking at his house across the river and laughing, "If I didn't think I was coming back, they would never get me on this ship." I had not seen very much of Redbird after we went to the front on 1 November. We didn't have much time for social activities, especially since he wasn't in my platoon.

Of course, news circulated fast of who was wounded or killed or missing. That news always hurt everyone. On that day, word came that Redbird was hit and was taken to a house nearby where our medic was giving him first aid. A couple of old buddies stopped in to see him and reported back that the Redbird sent a message that he was okay and would be back soon. Later, he was sent back to the Battalion Aid Station and then to the hospital. I prayed that he would be all right.

He had been hit by shrapnel in several places, and his wounds were so severe that he did not survive. I felt both sad and angry, because he was such a good old buddy. (Today, if you pass along Boulevard East just a little bit north of the marker where Alexander Hamilton was shot by Aaron Burr, there is a memorial for those from Weehawken, New Jersey, who gave their lives in World War II. At the bottom of the first column is Redbird, John W. Howe, Jr.. He had come home.

For their action at the railway bridge, 9 December 1944, the soldiers of the 3rd platoon were awarded Bronze Star Medals for valor, as per an order of 7 January 1945.

BEYOND LEMBERG

13 Dec 44 Left Lemberg Fr 1500 by foot arr Schwangerbach Fr 1650 dist. marched 3 1/2 miles.

During the next week, the company was in reserve. We cleaned ourselves by bathing out of our helmets which served as wash basins. We also shaved a two week growth of whiskers with a dull army razor. I let my mustache grow just for a change. We scrubbed our clothes clean of the mud and filth. The supply sergeant gave each of us clean underwear and socks which came in one color: olive drab because white underwear was more visible to the enemy. Of course, we were seldom seen in our underwear.

We stripped, cleaned and oiled our weapons to be sure that they would be ready for us when we returned to the front. I remember being told that my rifle or BAR or carbine was my closest friend.

In the civilian houses where we were quartered, we had a chance to sleep in a real bed. It was not an Army cot or a bedroll, but a real bed with a mattress, sheets, and a down comforter. That was an indescribable luxury. Yet, strangely, I found it difficult to sleep in the bed because my body had become used to the hard, cold surface of the ground. I could drop to the ground almost anywhere and fall asleep instantly, feeling very comfortable.

The mail clerk had accumulated our letters from home and we had a little time to read about the world we left and were fighting to return to. We, in turn, wrote letters back home, in pencil, that our lieutenant had to read and censor. It was forbidden to give any information about where we were or what we did or what we might do. I did not feel that I could tell anything in a letter or even in person about what it was like to fight in a war as a dogface. What good would it have done, anyway? However, I did tell my younger brother who was seventeen in 1944 to join the Navy before he was drafted into the Army. That was not censored and he took my advice.

Meanwhile, laid out in contorted positions alongside one of the buildings in town were the bodies of about a dozen German soldiers. We passed them on our way to the chow line each day. Seeing the gray lifeless corpses with sightless eyes wide open and flies buzzing around them did

not disturb most of the men who had seen almost two months of combat and death in many forms. Since it was late autumn and the weather was cold, the corpses did not smell of decay.

One or two of our soldiers had a morbid interest in the bodies, and they went through the pockets of their uniforms for anything of value. Family photos of wives and children and identification cards with a picture of the dead soldier were discarded by the body, along with letters and other personal belongings.

The most ghoulish acts were the amputating of a finger to get a gold wedding ring that would not slide off and the prying out of gold teeth with a bayonet. I did not see the actual deeds, but I noticed the corpse with a wedding ring on his finger one day and the following day the finger and the ring were gone. Sometime later, one of our soldiers was proudly showing everyone his "gold collection," which he kept in a glass jar. He had gold teeth, rings and other jewelry. We knew how he had collected them and most of us were disgusted with him.

Even if he was poor and had suffered through the "Great Depression," what was money or gold worth in a foxhole? No one cared about money. We had none. We did not get money on the front line. A private got less than $3.00 a day in overseas combat infantry pay, plus nutritious food, adequate clothing and dig-your-own shelter. Our lives were put on the line by our country and we were fighting to keep them. Nothing else mattered more than that.

During this week, we also heard about the German Ardennes Offensive that became known as the "Battle of the Bulge." We were not involved directly in the battle, which was to the north of us on the Belgian and Luxembourg front. The situation there was very serious. Our part of the front in the South with the Seventh Army was of secondary importance. Support units, such as tank battalions, artillery batteries, and Army Air Corps units were relocated to the Ardennes sector where they were needed. As a result, there was a notable lack of new replacements in our company. Since we entered combat, at the beginning of November, the Morning Reports show that we had 18 privates and one T5 join the company as new replacements. Many came from other units where they were no longer needed, such as anti-aircraft artillery, and others came directly from the States right out of basic training. Nevertheless, there was a constant shortage of soldiers in our company.

I had a chance to look around at the whole company while we were in reserve. It was obvious that there were many men gone from the

company and the ranks of non-coms were filled with the promotion of PFCs and privates. At the time I did not know how many were in the company but the Morning Report of that day listed five officers and 123 enlisted men.

A memorable soldier was T. Sgt. Argil H. Warner, who was a platoon sergeant and probably the oldest man in our company. He was about 36 years old and was affectionately called "Pop" Warner by "his boys" who were about half his age. His younger brother, who was in the First Infantry Division, had urged him to transfer out of the rifle company and get an assignment in a less dangerous unit. Because of his age he could have gotten another assignment but he replied that he would not leave his boys. It happened in the vicinity of Schwangerbach, France that he was killed in action by a direct artillery hit on his foxhole. He wanted to do his duty as a soldier even if it cost him his life. The Army does not give medals for devotion and loyalty to fellow soldiers above and beyond the call of duty.

BITCHE, FRANCE

15 December 1944, we reached a wooded mountain facing the Citadel and the Maginot Line at the town of Bitche. (The French pronunciation is "Beesh," but for several reasons the Americans called it a female dog.)

From the edge of the forest, we could look across an open field of some 500 yards toward huge concrete forts where the retreating German Army had taken up defensive positions. We had no idea what we were facing from our foxholes in the woods where we had dug in. We could see concrete bunkers that had a commanding view of the entire area before them. The fortifications here were the strongest of the entire Maginot Line. We did not know that. We only knew that this was the next objective. Looking at these gray, ominous forts did not make us feel very happy. We waited for orders to attack, but the enemy positions had to be softened up first.

The Story of the Century describes the situation, as follows:

> "Now began 36 hours of air and artillery attack on the forts surrounding Bitche. Besides our organic artillery battalions, our division had five attached battalions: two of 105mm howitzers, two of 155mm howitzers and one of 4.5-inch guns, or 60 firing pieces. On call, in addition, were a battalion of 155mm rifles, a battalion of 8-inch howitzers, two batteries of 240mm howitzers, and one battery of 4.2-inch chemical mortars."

(Later, self-propelled guns of the 781st and the 824th Tank Destroyer Battalions were moved up into firing position.)

Our artillery pounded the forts with a barrage of shells. We could see the shells land and, when the air cleared, the forts had chipped concrete but were still intact. The division artillery battalion with 155mm "Long Tom" cannons was brought up to the front so that they could fire directly – point blank – at the concrete monsters. They had direct hits, but it was the same as before. We could see some shells bounce off the rounded concrete bunkers and burst in the air.

Finally, some of the heaviest artillery in the Army was brought in, and that included the 240mm howitzer. After being pounded by 240mm howitzer shells seven Germans surrendered from inside the fort. They

were driven out by the concussion and the noise, but the shelling did very little damage to the concrete forts.

Then 78 fighter/bombers were called in, and they dropped 27 tons of 500-pound bombs in a series of dive bombings in a futile attempt to neutralize and destroy their targets. After all this, the forts were still there: gray, silent, unmoved, looking benign, but deadly powerful.

We now knew that it was up to us to take those forts where the Germans were still hunkered down and waiting. For us, the expendable GIs, it was a matter of getting up to the open gun slits and the steel doors and fighting our way in to rout the enemy. The plan was to have us charge across the open field under covering machine gun and mortar fire with a smoke screen to reach the fortifications. At this point, each soldier was to carry out his own assignment. I had the task of carrying a satchel or "beehive" charge, which was a 25-pound cone-shaped charge of TNT designed to cling to a vertical or horizontal surface. This had to be strategically placed by hand, and the fuse had to be ignited. Before it exploded, I would have enough time to find a cozy spot to wait in safety.

This whole idea seemed ludicrous to me after seeing what little damage had been done before by huge pieces of Army ordnance. However, I was assured that this little device was shaped to explode with such tremendous, concentrated force that it would blow a hole in any spot. Through the opening, we could then drop lots of grenades on the defenders. Still, to me, the idea of running across that open field of fire, carrying this clumsy bomb, climbing up to a huge bunker, and setting it off seemed to be the height of absurdity. However, I knew I would try to do it. On other missions, I had known fear but I had not lost courage or determination. This time I had a mortal fear that it would be my last mission.

The other men in the platoon had their assignments. One of them, Al Lapa, had to carry a flame-thrower across the open field and try to get up to an opening in the bunker. Then he had to shoot his fiery stream inside at the enemy. He told me, "They must be crazy if they think I'm going to run at the Krauts with 10 gallons of gasoline on my back! It weighs 75 pounds and when I hit the ground the thing knocks off my helmet and slides off my back." When he complained to Lt. Taylor, someone else got the assignment.

These Maginot Line forts were so solidly built that they could only be taken attacking the enemy from the inside. Everyone was prepared to make the assault on the fort in front of us. It had to be knocked out. On an-

other bunker, other units of the division were able to blast in through the steel doors to rout the German defenders in their sector.

> "These were the forts about which Ed Clark, staff writer for *Stars and Stripes*, describing the Maginot Line, had said that the fortifications were 'stacked up gravel' and could be 'reduced to powder with a pencil.' Having read these statements, a number of the men who had attacked the forts in the Maginot Line around Bitche, sent Clark a box of pencils and wrote him saying he could have the job. Later Clark visited the area and wrote a retraction." (Story of the Century, page 92)

This situation convinced me that bombing and strafing and artillery shells alone cannot win battles and in turn cannot win wars. Even 70-ton tanks cannot do it alone. It is the little soldiers in the front line who must be there to claim the victory or suffer the defeat. All the other units have to support them so that they can take possession of the enemy's territory and defeat his forces.

Before we had to launch our attack, the situation was changed by the battle to our north.

PULLBACK

Our assault on Bitche was aborted because of the Battle of the Bulge, which began on 16 December 1944. That attack was so overwhelming that it drew on all the Allied military resources to repulse it. We could not continue our advance on the Seventh Army front without adequate artillery and tank support. Furthermore, it was learned that the German Army was preparing an attack on our front.

In the foxholes, we only knew that we were moving back and that the supply sergeant was issuing gas masks to everyone. "The Germans are going to use poison gas to stop the Americans!" was the word on the front. Would it be mustard gas, or lewisite, or phosgene? Who could remember what those deadly gasses smelled like back in basic training? After a few days, the gas masks were returned to the supply sergeant and we did not have to worry about a poison gas attack. Maybe the enemy did not intend to use gas because we had chemical mortars ready to fire back tons of poison gases. Or, perhaps, our Army "Intelligence" just had its periodic lapse.

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21 Dec 44 Left Schwangerbach Fr.1815 by foot arr Lambach Fr 2045 distance marched 4 miles.

It was time to return to the front line and relieve King Company. 1815 hours is late in the evening to start a march, and in winter, in the snow-covered mountains where there is no light but the moon and the stars, the world is shades of gray. In the lowly ranks of the privates and the PFCs where information is seldom given, no one had any idea of where we were or where we were going. In order not to get lost, we followed closely behind the soldier in front of us, and no one could talk or light a match or cigarette. It was single file through woods, across roads and open fields, and at one point we slid down the bank of a stream on the seats of our pants and waded across to the other side. There the riverbank was muddy, and we slipped trying to get up it. The man behind had to boost up the man in front of him. Most of the time each soldier had to hold onto the belt of the man in front of him because it was pitch black. We were lost!

Somehow, we finally arrived at the town of Lambach and spent the night in the schoolhouse. It was 2045. We had gone 4 miles in 2½ hours! We never found K Company but it was rumored that we had gone behind the German line and circled back to our own. It seemed that map reading was not a strong point with some of our officers.

The following morning, the battalion commander, Major Angelo Pinero, arrived at the schoolhouse in a state of barely controlled rage. In his high-pitched voice, he reamed out our company commander, Capt. Carl Alfonso, for getting us lost. We were grateful that we were still alive.

We still had to relieve K Company and headed off in daylight to find them. We came across a distant spot on the side of a hill that looked like an outpost in front of a wooded area. Lt. Taylor halted the platoon in the woods where we were and ordered another GI and me to go and check the outpost for K Company. We slowly plodded up the snow-covered hill with our heavy winter clothing, our clumsy shoe-pac boots, our rifle, and ammunition, slipping every few steps. We were about 200 yards from the outpost and still could not tell if we were looking at friends or enemies. Then we saw two helmeted heads rise slowly and two rifles appear over the edge of the foxhole. They were pointed at us! Uh-oh! In an instant, we both spun around and raced back down the hill as bullets flew at us. We fell. We rolled. We got up. We zigzagged and got back gasping to our line.

Before we moved on, a 60mm mortar crew from our heavy weapons platoon was called in to return fire to that outpost. As we watched, they sent up three or four shells that landed directly on the enemy dugout. The accuracy of our mortarmen amazed us. That finished their outpost.

We finally found K Company and took over their foxholes so that they could get relief and rest for a few days. During those times when we passed through another company hardly more than a few words were ever exchanged. It seems as though one company had gotten a reprieve and the other company had been returned to serve its time. Between the two groups, there were only feelings of common understanding of what we all experienced.

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24 Dec 44 Left Lambach Fr 1400 by motor arr Goetzenbruck Fr 1445 distance motored 8 1/2 mi.

Christmas 1944 was spent in a foxhole. We had to dig through snow and a foot of frozen ground before we reached softer earth. Then the foxhole was made about 6 feet by 6 feet and 4 feet deep. Branches of pine

trees were cut to line the dirt floor, and heavier branches were cut to cover half of the opening of the hole. This made a cozy place that gave protection and warmth.

We had a special hot turkey dinner on Christmas Day, which was received on a chow line about 100 yards behind the front line. The extra treat was a can of beer and some peanuts, and the special present was a fur-lined parka overcoat. The fur was on the inside and the rough skin was on the outside. The fur coat had a reversible cloth covering in white on one side and khaki on the other. With the attached hood, we were warm inside that coat like never before. These bulky outfits made everybody look very wide, but underneath each one there was just some skinny kid.

There were religious services also that were held in the open field just beyond the chow line. It was relatively quiet that day. Some cannon fire was heard now and then, but it was very little. What a paradox it was to be eating out in the snow with grubby, grimy hands, sitting on a log, enjoying turkey, mashed potatoes with gravy and a hot cup of coffee and saying "Merry Christmas." The religious services were brief and led by a chaplain who seldom ventured to the front on any other occasion. Nevertheless, Christmas carols were sung with clouds of vaporous breath, and it almost seemed festive. When it was over, we picked up our weapons and shuffled back to our foxholes.

We remembered how it was often said that the war would be over by Christmas. There was a popular song everyone sang, "I'll be Home for Christmas." We were not home and there was a lot more war to be fought before it was over.

LEMBERG, FRANCE - ON DEFENSE

26 Dec 44 left Goetzenbruck Fr by truck at 1500 arr at Lemberg Fr 1540 dist. motored 1 7/8 mi.

For the first time since we entered the line, we had to take up defensive positions. We no longer were chasing the Germans. We were going to dig in and wait for them to attack us, but that still meant that we had to send out reconnaissance patrols. We needed to learn where they were, what they had, and what they were doing. In the meantime, we cleaned and checked our weapons. Every man was given extra ammunition and grenades. Machine guns were brought up to the foxholes with many boxes of ammunition. Fifty caliber machine guns, which are usually mounted on vehicles such as a tank, a half-track or a truck, were brought to the front line positions with ample belts of ammunition. We were well armed to defend our line.

The main deficiency in L Company was the lack of men. We had between 125 and 130 enlisted men and six officers. Of the original number of 141 privates and PFCs, there were only about 94 at the end of December 1944. Sergeants were always replaced by privates or PFCs, so that there was always a full complement of noncoms. I was asked to be the leader of my squad at this time. To be a sergeant was not one of my burning ambitions, and I demurred. However, when I was told that it would be either me or another soldier whom I did not think was experienced, I accepted. Thus, I was an acting sergeant and my 12-man squad consisted of one soldier, Pvt. Junior P. Ogle. We were not a formidable force, but we were ready.

Losses of privates and PFCs were filled by replacements, and we had very few of them for many weeks. Nevertheless, we had the responsibility of defending a very wide stretch of the front. Foxholes were manned by two men, not three, and they were spaced about 100 feet apart. Each hole was placed to cover an open field of fire from a ridge that was to the left of the railroad tracks. We had never had such a large front to defend. If just one foxhole was penetrated, there was enough room to send an enemy company through. The gaps between us were more than we had ever had before, and we had nobody behind us in reserve in case we could not hold the line.

Forward outposts were about 50 yards in front of this main line of defense. One was to the left in an open area, and the other was to the right of the railroad tracks. Each outpost was manned by two of our men. At the left outpost were Pfc. Paul (Abe) Lincoln and Pfc. Maurice (Mo) Lloyd who had been seriously wounded on 16 November 1944. The medics healed him and he returned to the company on 11 December 1944. At the right outpost were Pfc. Alexander (Skull) Lapa and Pfc. Ernest (Ernie) Weinberger.

For a couple of days, we had nothing to do but prepare and wait. We were not sure when and if the Germans were going to attack. We thought that this was a time to rest while the Battle of the Bulge was being waged in the North. One day, feeling lonely, Lapa strolled in from his outpost wearing a German helmet that he had found – just another day of laughs in the life of an infantryman. Fortunately, he was recognized as our crazy old buddy who always seemed to have trouble staying put in one place.

We did not have anything to drink to celebrate the coming New Year. Alcohol was never issued to the men in our infantry unit. However, for this New Year's Eve, I believe one bottle of beer was given to each of us. French soldiers filled their canteens with wine and German soldiers filled theirs with schnapps, but American infantrymen had Halozone tablets to purify the water in our canteens that we sometimes filled from nearby streams. On the chow line, there often was a Lister bag of water, which was a cloth-covered rubberized sack with a spigot that dispensed chlorinated water that tasted and smelled like it came out of a swimming pool. We had to dissolve powdered coffee, lemonade or bouillon soup to make it palliative. Such was the extent of our New Year's Eve celebration.

Late in the evening of December 31, 1944, a lot of activity on the German side of the front was noticed by our men in the forward outposts. We were not at all sleepy because we had been expecting some kind of attack, but we did not know how big it would be. Strangely, no one seemed to be nervous or panicky. There was just a tense calm along our line as we waited in the icy cold, exhaling clouds of vaporized breath and moving feet and hands to keep warm. The moon was bright and the snow reflected the light that gave an eerie grayness across the land.

It was during early hours of New Year's Eve when the Germans launched their attack on the Seventh Army front. Hitler called it "Operation Nordwind." At the onset of the attack, our forward outposts were hit hard by the Germans. Lapa fired the three rounds from the bazooka he had

out of the right outpost and then kept firing his BAR until he had to retreat to the our main line of defense. Ernie Weinberger was hit with a rifle bullet that pierced his cheek and mouth and exited his other cheek. Abe Lincoln in the left outpost was also firing with his BAR when they were hit. He was in a dazed state of shock when he saw his buddy, Mo Lloyd, shot through the head with blood and brains spilling out of the wound. Lincoln instantly got out and made it back to our line and was then sent back to the Battalion Aid Station with Weinberger.

On our main line of defense, we heard the firing of burp guns and rifles. We saw our men from the outposts running back to us, and we were ready. No one in Love Company was asleep or drunk as the enemy expected the Americans to be on New Year's Eve. We were fully awake when we heard yelling and screaming as the Germans ran toward our line of foxholes. They were calling us all kinds of names, like: "dirty American bastards," but we did not mind the insults. It was the least of our worries.

Immediately, without any order to open fire, they were met with a tremendous fusillade of machine gun and rifle fire. From my position in a foxhole, I got out and crouched behind a tree to be able to see better and move easily. I fired at the gray shadows in front of me with my M1 Garand rifle without taking time to slowly aim and squeeze off each round. There were so many of them coming toward us that it was more important to fire as rapidly as possible. Furthermore, it is almost impossible to see the sights on a rifle at night. Careful aiming was hopeless and a waste of time. The firing from our line was furious and harrowing. We kept shooting and shooting and shooting. It seemed to last for hours. The Germans were drunk with schnapps and gave us very little return fire. It was hard for them to yell curses at us and fire their bolt-action Mauser rifles or their machine pistols accurately while running at us. I do not know how many enemy soldiers were hit in front of us, but I know that their attack was broken. They stopped their charge at us and moved off to our right flank. We had held fast on our line, and it became quiet after a few hours. There was sporadic small arms gunfire and artillery shelling during the following day as we stayed in our positions.

Late in the evening of 2 January 1945, a task force from the 63rd Infantry Division was sent up to take over our position. It was dark, of course, and difficult to orient oneself in this new location for the new troops. They appeared clean-shaven with spotless uniforms and weapons. They were advance units of their division that had arrived at the Vosges Mountains front in defensive positions on 22 December 1944. We placed

them in our foxholes and told them "Good Luck!" One of them who was probably 18 and just out of high school turned to me, trembling, and asked, "Where are they?" I pointed toward the enemy line and said, "They are over there about 200 yards in front." He trembled as he looked at me and sobbed quietly. There was nothing more I could say.

Later, I thought about these green, young boys sent to the front to relieve us grimy, tough, veteran dogfaces. We were all about the same age. What could I say to them? Don't worry. You'll be alright. It's only a war. Nobody gets wounded or killed. That's just noise you hear. In a little while you'll go home to your mother. Perhaps, I should have told them the philosophy of old dogfaces, like me: You've got to kill or be killed!

After two months of seeing death and destruction, I was tired of it and I felt like a very old man. I had thought for some time that the war was never going to end. Thanksgiving and Christmas and New Year's Day had come and gone, and there was no end in sight. What was the use of fighting? We had been living in the rain and snow during one of the coldest winters in recent European history. We shivered as we trudged out on patrols, and we never felt warm. Death would not have been a bad alternative. I did not tell my thoughts to any of my buddies. Besides, we had to move out to our next battle, and I had to forget such a stupid idea.

The front line on the Seventh Army front was skewed badly after the Nordwind offensive. The 117th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, which had been put into the front line on the right flank of the 100th Infantry Division, fell back five miles when the attack came. Love Company of the 3rd Battalion of the 399th Infantry Regiment held the right flank of the division line, which was now exposed and undefended. The 44th Infantry Division on our division's left flank fell back from their defensive positions also. This left our division with two vulnerable, exposed flanks, because we had held fast along most of our front. Units of the division were moved back to straighten the line. There was a lot of movement on our side to reorganize our positions. In addition, we had to fight the enemy, who was keeping up his attack with artillery and infantry assaults. There was no time to relax and leisurely establish an orderly front.

The Morning Report of 5 January 1945 Record of Events:

2 Jan 45 Left Lemberg Fr 0145 by motor Arrived at Enchenberg Fr 0230 Distance traveled 4 miles.

We left our defensive positions in Lemberg a little after midnight on the day after New Year's.

PFC. MAURICE E. LLOYD

We had lost many men in the "Operation Nordwind" battle, either wounded, killed or missing. Among the missing was Pfc. Maurice E. Lloyd. He was never listed as killed in action, because his body was never found by the U.S. Army Graves Registration. His foxhole buddy, Pfc. Paul (Abe) Lincoln, knew he had been killed but unless a body is found, a soldier is listed as MIA. Lloyd's name was engraved on the Wall of the Missing, at the American Military Cemetery in Epinal, France. At the time the cemetery was planned and completed, it was thought that all the bodies of American soldiers who had been killed had been collected and buried or shipped back home to the United States.

More than 30 years later, an Alsatian father, his son and their hunting dog were tracking through the woods outside Lemberg. The dog sniffed around the area and led them to a log-covered dugout where they found the skeletal remains of a soldier. Wearing the uniform of an American soldier and still holding the automatic rifle he died with were the remains of Pfc. Maurice E. Lloyd. When he was killed, he probably never knew what had hit him. His identity was confirmed by his dogtags and a religious medal inscribed by his girlfriend, "With Love to Mo from Billye."

When his bones were removed for burial, the mayor and citizens of Lemberg paid homage to him in a special ceremony. Later at a memorial service, his family participated in a ceremony at the American Military Cemetery in the Ardennes, where he was finally laid to rest.

According to the report of Franklin L. Gurley, the division historian, *the patron saint of Lemberg is St. Maurice who was a soldier martyr* who defended the country in 303 A.D. The irony of another Maurice (E. Lloyd) dying and being discovered in this strange way brought home to the people of Lemberg the sacrifice of this American soldier. To express their reverence in a significant way, a monument was made and placed at his *foxhole – the only such dedication of a foxhole in the entire war.*

Several explanations were given why his body was not found, but one comes to my mind: After Lloyd was killed, his body was behind enemy lines for two and a half months before American forces chased the Germans back beyond Lemberg. We did not actually retake the old posi-

tions we held on 1 January 1945. We went far beyond them in pursuit of the enemy, who had pulled back to Bitche. If the Germans knew Lloyd was in his dugout, they apparently did not bother to bury him and stick a marker by his body. It was only by accident that he was discovered so long after the guns were silenced.

TRENCH FOOT

Many men were going on sick call because of trench foot, which is a form of frostbite. This can result from not taking off combat boots, letting the feet dry in the air, and changing into dry socks. So many soldiers were getting trench foot that we heard that the big brass in the rear echelons threatened to court-martial soldiers who went on sick call with trench foot. They must have thought that that was a brilliant idea, but who would be left to man the front lines? Certainly, a sick and miserable GI at the front could use a court-martial to ease his suffering. If he was a private, what could he lose in rank and pay? How unhappy would he be in a stockade, miles from the front and served hot food and given a clean bed and a roof over his head? It would have been almost as welcome as a million-dollar wound.

In reality, no one was even threatened with a court-martial, because it was extremely difficult to prevent trench foot when you were always on the move with the enemy just a few hundred yards in front of you. Seldom did you take off your boots and change your socks if you even had a dry pair, because you never knew when you had to move out. It snowed and rained, and nothing you wore was dry. If you took off your boots, you could not easily get them back on because your feet were swollen. At night, you slept a few hours at a time in your foxhole with your boots on and with your weapon at your side. If nature called and you had to climb out of the foxhole to dig a cat-hole and relieve yourself, the time and effort you needed to put on your three pairs of socks and boots could result in an "accident." It happened that some men who had taken their boots off did not bother to put them on to go to the "latrine." They ran through the snow in stockinged feet. At least one soldier had to leave his boots behind when the Germans attacked during the night and we had to retreat.

Finally, after a week or ten days of not being able to take off my boots, I removed them and found that my feet were swollen, but I did not think it was a major problem. I felt okay otherwise, and it was nothing to be worried about. For a few days, as I walked, it seemed that there were pebbles in my shoes and I did not want to step very hard on my feet. I told one of my officers about it, and he said I must go to a doctor in the medical battalion. For the first time, I went to see the medics. When I took off my

boots and socks, the soles of my feet were thick, deeply wrinkled, deathly white, and covered with red spots. I thought they could use a little talcum powder and would be okay, but the doctor said I had trench foot and I had to go to the hospital.

I had mixed feelings about this, because I did not think I needed to go to the hospital and I did not want to leave my buddies. I thought trench foot meant that your feet turned black and your toes had to be amputated. Besides, on the way to the hospital, I saw others who had wounds and ailments that were much worse than mine. I could walk while some men were on stretchers. I looked fine, while others had bandages. I could talk, while others mumbled incoherently. I was just too healthy.

When we arrived at the hospital, a sergeant called out the name of each man in the group, alphabetically, and told them to enter. I found myself standing all alone when he got to the end of the list and had not called my name. He came over to me and said, "Pfc. Khoury, do you have relatives in Detroit?" I said, "Yes, on my mother's side, but I don't know them." He replied, "I think we're cousins. My family is Naimy. How are you doing? Trench foot? That's not bad. Take care of yourself. Good luck." With a handshake and a hug, we went our separate ways.

The hospital was in the town of Vittel that is famous for its mineral water. On the entrance to the hospital there is a plaque commemorating its service as a U.S. Army hospital during World War I. Again, this was a repetition of history with new actors filling the roles of those actors who had retired from the stage of mortal combat.

In the hospital, I found other men from Love Company who had been there for some time. Some were about to be discharged and sent back to the front, and they were not very happy. Others were in very serious condition and were scheduled to go to England or the States. Every day there was a list of new arrivals, and I asked anyone from the company about the latest news. I read the Army newspaper "Stars and Stripes" but all the reports covered the First, Third, and Ninth Army actions. For the Seventh Army, the story was always the same: "Some patrol activity on the Seventh Army front." Apparently, the newspaper did not think there was anything of importance to report in our part of the world. That was strange because the hospital was filled with so many of our guys and more came in every day.

Red Cross girls came around to each soldier to offer a toiletry kit of a razor, shaving cream and brush, toothpaste and brush, and comb. All of this was from U.S. Army supplies. They brought around a selection of

reading materials, such as the Stars and Stripes, the magazine "Yank", condensed versions of civilian periodicals, and paperback books. They also supplied stationery in the form of postcards, writing paper and envelopes that had "Red Cross" printed on it. They offered to help those who could not write or who needed help writing letters to their folks and loved ones at home. The Red Cross girls were helpful in giving time to converse, listen and build up morale among the soldiers.

The Army nurses had the difficult work of treating the sick and wounded. They did all the really vital work of giving penicillin shots, changing bandages, taking readings of temperature and blood pressure, attending in operating rooms, cleaning the dirt-caked bodies and wounds of new arrivals, and so much more. They worked long hours and saved so many lives that the doctors owed much of their success to these women. The men also knew that it was the Army nurses who were always there when they needed them. Whenever someone says the Red Cross girls did so much for our wounded soldiers, I must explain that they were not nurses. It was only the Army nurses who were part of the medical team that cared for the wounded and sick soldiers.

For the first time in military history, more soldiers died of wounds than from infection and sickness. In past wars, a wound, however slight, would become infected and usually the soldier would die. He was left where he fell, often to bleed to death. Most often, however, he died of dysentery, fever, pneumonia, malaria, or other diseases caused by bad food or bad weather conditions. Napoleon's Grande Armee was defeated more by the Russian winter and lack of supplies than by the Russian army.

Not until Florence Nightingale set up hospitals and gave medical treatment during the Crimean War was anything done for the soldiers in battle. Clara Barton founded the American Red Cross during the Civil War to help treat the soldiers in combat. Nevertheless, it was not until World War II that penicillin and highly trained and dedicated nurses and doctors of the U.S. Army saved so many soldiers' lives from sickness and disease. They were heroic in their prompt treatment of everyone, including enemy soldiers.

The hospital stay was a beautiful vacation from the front line. The best of everything was available: food, bed, shelter, and tender loving care. There were no Army routines: uniforms, weapons, saluting, formations, inspections, etc. It was just taking it easy while you recuperated. Of course, those who were seriously sick or wounded were fighting for their lives. Fortunately, most of them survived after they reached the hospital.

On the home front, the American Red Cross notified my family that I was in a hospital in France. The delegate said that it would be a nice gesture for my father to make a donation to support their organization. He promptly gave $25.00 to the delegate, who suggested that he should increase it to $50.00. Instead of $50.00 he gave $100.00!

A few days later, he received my letter from the hospital telling him not to give a cent to the American Red Cross! In my opinion, their contribution in World War II was far less than they claimed.

L COMPANY REVITALIZED

While I was in the hospital L Company was moving constantly, as the Morning Reports indicated:

12 Jan 45 Left Enchenberg Fr by motor at 1030 Arrived at Glassenberg Fr 1100 Distance motored 3 miles.

14 Jan 45 Left Glassenberg Fr 1900 by foot Arrived at Lambach Fr 1920 Distance marched 3/4 miles.

18 Jan 45 Left Lambach Fr 1800 by motor Arrived at Siersthal Fr 1810 distance motored 1 mile.

6 Feb 45 left Siersthal Fr at 1730 by foot and arrived at Lambach Fr 1750 distance marched 1 1/4 miles.

The company spent more than two weeks in Siersthal, from 18 January to 6 February 1945. Prior to that move, there were 110 men assigned to the company but 9 were on sick leave. So there were only 101 men, including cooks, clerks and officers, against the assigned number of 186 men and 6 officers.

There was a turnover of officers in a very short period of time. On 19 January, Capt. Travis V. Hopkins took over as company commander from Capt. William E. Hallman, who had replaced First Lt. Allen T. Sykes, who had replaced Capt. Carl D. Alfonso who was the original company commander until 2 January 1945. 2nd Lt. Bennett D. Taylor was transferred to I Company and 2nd Lt. Thomas E. Plante was transferred to A Company of the 399th Infantry Regiment during this time. 2nd Lt. William H. Hankling, from M Company, 399th, was the new weapons platoon leader and 1st Lt. Lawrence L. Kirton, from Anti-Tank Company, 399th, was assigned as a new rifle platoon leader.

T. Sgt. Alfred W. Coursey and S. Sgt. John S. Rode were given battlefield commissions and promoted to 2nd Lieutenants on 16 January 1945. They had been platoon sergeants that had been in combat and knew their assignments well.

The missing ingredient in the company finally arrived on 23 January 1945 in the form of 10 replacements, all privates and all riflemen. The following day, 30 more green riflemen arrived. Some brass hat in the upper echelon of the Army did not like to use the word "replacement" because the implication was that a wounded or dead soldier was being re-

placed by a healthy one. It was suggested that "reinforcement" was a better name. The idea was to hide the fact that soldiers, particularly infantrymen, get sick, wounded and killed in war. Perhaps the word "war" should have been changed to "altercation" for the sake of mothers who worried about their teen-aged sons in the infantry.

Soldiers who were wounded or sick were evacuated to medical facilities in the rear. Many of them returned to the company but most were assigned to other non-combat units. At the end of January, Love Company had a roster of 151 men but 9 were absent because of sickness or other assignment. On 6 February, there were 158 men assigned to the company when it moved out of Siersthal. Among those left behind was Pvt. William H. Kemp who came as replacement on 24 January and had a non-battle connected, self-inflicted gun shot wound of his right hand on 30 January. He did not return to the company.

Pvt. Dominick A. DeAngelo was assigned to the company on 6 October 1944, when we embarked from New York. He was with the company from the first day of combat. Then he was SIA (sick in action?) 4 January and rejoined the company on 10 January. He had a non-battle connected, self-inflicted gun shot wound of the left hand on 3 February. Though he did not leave Siersthal with the company, he did join it about a month later.

RETURN TO LOVE COMPANY

The time came when I was declared fit to return to my company. I donned my old uniform all clean and new looking. A truck took me and others, from the hospital, to the Replacement Depot, usually called the Repple Depple, at Epinal. There I was checked in and waited for transportation to my company at the front. I was curious to learn what had happened in my absence. As I looked forward to a reunion with my old buddies, I was worried whether I would be able face the hell of combat again.

Most of the men at the Repple Depple were fresh from the States and had no combat experience. They were being given some last minute training to prepare them for combat. I was unaware of this as I was walking to the mess hall for my first meal there. Suddenly, I heard a burst of machine gun fire that came from a German burp gun. Instinctively, without a split second's thought, I dove for the ground. Again the machine gun blasted away, and I looked up and found the other GIs walking to the mess hall and looking down at me in the dirt. After I got up, I learned that the captured machine gun was being fired to give the new men some idea of what they would be facing at the front. The meal I had was not memorable, but my uneasiness was.

On 1 March 1945, I returned to Love Company after being away since 7 January 1945. With my clean uniform and my clean-shaven face, I was greeted as a new replacement. Only a few of my old buddies were still in the company. Almost everyone I saw was a stranger to me. This was not the old Love Company I had left.

I learned that on 18 January 1945, my platoon leader, now 1st Lt. Bennett D. Taylor, was transferred to I Company of the 399th Infantry Regiment. That was a big disappointment for me, because I had expected to be greeted by him. He was a good leader who was always in the middle of every attack the platoon made. We had been through a lot of them together.

As I talked to the new buddies upon my return, I soon learned what had happened in the company while I was away in the hospital. Details were sketchy. There had been several battles and many of my old buddies were gone. Some were killed and some were wounded. Our ex-

ecutive officer, 1st Lt. Park Ashbrook, was killed. Al Lapa told me 50 years later how it happened:

"7 January 1945. Company L occupied some old French Army dugouts on the hills north of the town of Reyersvillier. We were separated from the Germans by a deep valley about 300 feet deep. During the day we observed German troops moving about on the next hill which was about 300 yards away. I recall setting my M1 sight at high limit and firing at the Krauts, not hitting anyone but making them scatter. We were in these positions for about 3 days. During this time, one of our guys was shot in the back by a German patrol. I can't recall his name but I remember dragging his body back to our platoon C.P. [Command Post]. During this time 3rd platoon was involved in a serious fire fight during a recon [reconnaissance] of a German position to our front. During this encounter, a fellow whose name was Clendenin [Pfc. Ralph Clendenin] received a life threatening wound to his thigh. I recall applying a tourniquet and dragging him back to our platoon C.P. where our medics took over.

"On 7 Jan 45 2 platoons were ordered to evict the Krauts from their position in order to straighten out the line. We were assisted by one tank. The attack started about 5:30 AM, preceded by an artillery and mortar barrage which lasted about 10 minutes. We had to advance from our positions over the crest of a hill which was entirely devoid of vegetation, therefore offering absolutely no cover. The tank started to advance over the crest of the hill. Some of our guys including Lt. Ashbrook stayed behind the tank as protection from the incoming small arms fire. At this time the Krauts let loose with a few 88mm rounds which exploded close to the tank. I was about 150 feet to the left of the tank and saw Lt. Ashbrook fall, evidently wounded by shrapnel from the 88s. The tank was backing up at this time and since Lt. Ashbrook was directly behind the left track and perpendicular to it, the tank backed over the lieutenant's prone body, directly over the pelvic area. From my position I could hear him scream and see his flaying arms in motion. Since there was about 12 inches of snow on the ground, his body was completely crushed as snow took up much of the compressive load. The Krauts increased the intensity of their small arms, artillery, and mortar fire and we were ordered to withdraw. We left the lieutenant on the forward slope of the hill and fell back to our starting positions. About 30 minutes later I saw the same tank approaching the lieutenant's body with 2 medics carrying a stretcher. The medics were on the side opposite from the German lines. They picked up Lt. Ashbrook and brought him back to our lines. I saw him on the stretcher before he was

evacuated. He was still alive but gravely injured. That night we evacuated the area and moved to other positions. (What a waste!)"

1st Lt. Park B. Ashbrook was killed in action 8 January 1945. He was a fine officer, one that I would have called a true gentleman and a friend. (Note: Lapa wrote that this action took place on 7 Jan 44, but I was still in the company on that day and should have been in that attack. I think that the correct date should have been 8 Jan 44 when Lt. Ashbrook was killed.)

Pfc. Alexander J. Lapa was wounded on 9 January 1945 and did not return to the company. The Morning Report listed him as "LIA," that may mean lightly injured in action. He was one of my good buddies and a brave soldier. I was sorry to learn that he was gone.

On 8 February 1945, 2nd Lt. Thomas D. Plante was transferred to A Company, 399th Infantry Regiment, after he had been on another assignment from 30 December 1944 to 4 February 1945. He was the best liked of the officers in the company, because he was not a stickler for discipline and army protocol. He was an officer who always cared about his men. We were not happy to see him go. Later we learned that he was killed in action at Bitche on 16 March 1945. In the Story of the Century, page 130, it was reported:

> "The Weapons Platoon, under 2nd Lieutenant Thomas E. Plante, moved into a stable just south of the 1st Platoon. Once inside and slightly protected from the enemy fire, Lt. Plante ... and others of the platoon tried to set up defensive fires. But the German tanks came on, their 88s hurling shells directly into the buildings where the troops had taken cover.
>
> "The leading tank fired its cannon and machine guns almost point blank into the stable. Two bazooka rounds shot by the Weapons Platoon had both missed the tank. Lt. Plante seized the bazooka and ran out of the building. He threw himself to the ground just ahead of the advancing tank and fired the bazooka. The round blew off a tread of the tank and stopped it. Lt. Plante leaped up and rushed forward to throw a grenade into the turret, but the machine gun on the tank fired a heavy burst and mortally wounded him. The ... German tanks turned tail and fled along the railroad to the southeast."

He did what I thought he would do – sacrifice his life for his men. The second highest medal in the Army, the Distinguished Service Cross, was given to him posthumously.

On 3 January 1945, Capt. Carl D. Alfonso, our company commander, left due to sickness and did not return. 1st Lt. Allen T. Sykes was company commander when I left for the hospital. Capt. Travis V. Hopkins (a.k.a. "Hoppy") was the company commander when I returned. Probably no captain in the 100th Infantry Division was better known than Capt. Hopkins. He had polio as a boy and overcame the disability by running and running until he had developed a barrel chest and tremendous endurance. Though he had a slight limp, he was in top physical condition. He was a no-nonsense officer who had a fierce look and was a tough disciplinarian. At Fort Bragg, he was company commander of I Company, whose barracks were near to L Company's barracks. Every morning before the reveille call "to get up and get out of bed" and we were enjoying the last half hour of sleep, the men of I Company would waken us. They were rousted out of bed a half hour earlier and lining up in formation in front of their barracks. Then we heard the commands: "I Company fall in! Right face! Double time – March!" It was quiet again as they jogged all over Fort Bragg before the rest of the world woke up. When Hoppy entered combat with his company at St. Remy in Novembér 1944, he was determined to lead his men up the hill against the dug-in German line. I was told that he said, "I am going to rout those Germans and get a Silver Star or a Purple Heart." When the battle was over, he was shot up and in the hospital with a Purple Heart and later was awarded the Silver Star, too.

Gone from the company was Pfc. Angelo Argiris who had spent many days in foxholes with me. He was transferred out on 23 February 1945. I remember one day, while we were in our foxhole he was chewing on a clove of garlic. I don't know where he got all the garlic, but the aroma wafted in my direction and I complained that it was polluting the air. He told me, "Garlic is very healthy for you. It can stop you from getting a cold." I was not convinced, but he insisted that I try a clove. When I bit into it, my tongue was burning and I almost spit it out. But to counteract the odor from Argiris, I chewed the garlic. It must have worked because I never got a cold. In the meantime, it is a wonder that the Germans did not locate our position by the smell.

They did, however, creep up to the foxhole of one of our men – Pfc. Charlie Strate, I am told – on 7 February 1945 at night. The voice in the dark whispered, "Hey, Joe, come here." "What do you want?" "I need your help, come here." "Where are you?" "Over here, Joe." Then Charlie went out of his foxhole to the man who was calling and was captured by

the Germans. When Capt. Hopkins heard of it, he yelled, "I'll kill that soldier when I get my hands on him if the Krauts don't kill him first!"

For various reasons, some German soldiers spoke perfect English with an American accent. In this case, Charlie should have asked for the password, which was changed every day at the front, so that he would know if he was talking to a friend or foe. The Army taught every soldier to ask, "Halt! Who goes there?" Then he asks for the password. When he receives the correct password, the stranger is told to advance, be recognized and then allowed to pass. If he does not receive the correct password, the soldier may fire at the intruder. Of course, many soldiers did not follow their orders, and Hoppy almost had a stroke when this happened. Pfc. Charlie Strate was listed as MIA.

On my return, I was assigned to the platoon of 2nd Lt. Alfred Coursey. He was a technical sergeant who was given a battlefield commission while I was away in the hospital. He greeted me with a warm "Welcome back!"

That first night, the platoon was ordered to reconnoiter the enemy line. Old buddy Lt. Al Coursey honored me by saying, "Khoury, I want you to be point on the patrol." We went out across the open area of no-man's-land, which sloped down into a small valley and up the other side where the Germans were dug in. As we drew closer, we were greeted by machine gun and rifle fire. Everyone hit the ground, and we were ordered to retreat. No one was hit, and we headed back to our line at a faster pace than we had advanced.

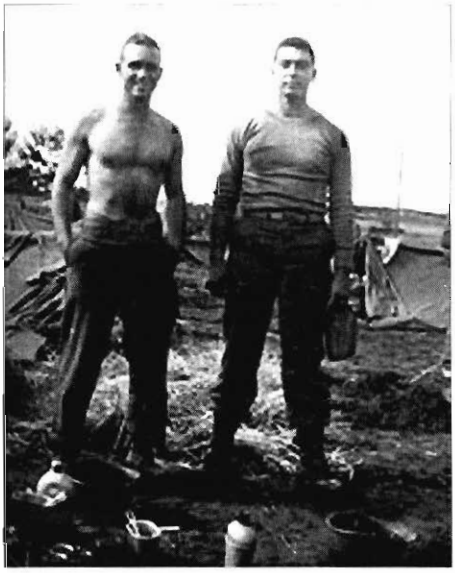
It was a very routine assignment for an infantryman but no one enjoyed being shot at. I was glad I had gone on the patrol because it quelled my fear of returning to the front. I had not lost the courage to face the enemy. Then I had time to acclimate myself to life in a foxhole because there was little other activity on our front. Both sides were dug in, just holding their positions and not launching any serious attacks. It was an unusually quiet time.

I vividly remember looking up at the sky at night from my foxhole and seeing the most beautiful panorama I had ever seen. The sky was filled with billions of stars against a clear black background, not a cloud anywhere, and it was cold. There was no moon, only shooting stars, a shower of meteors, streaking down from every direction. The Milky Way was never more brightly lit and I was like a little mole looking up from a hole in the earth. It was so magnificent that I thought heaven must be a wonder-

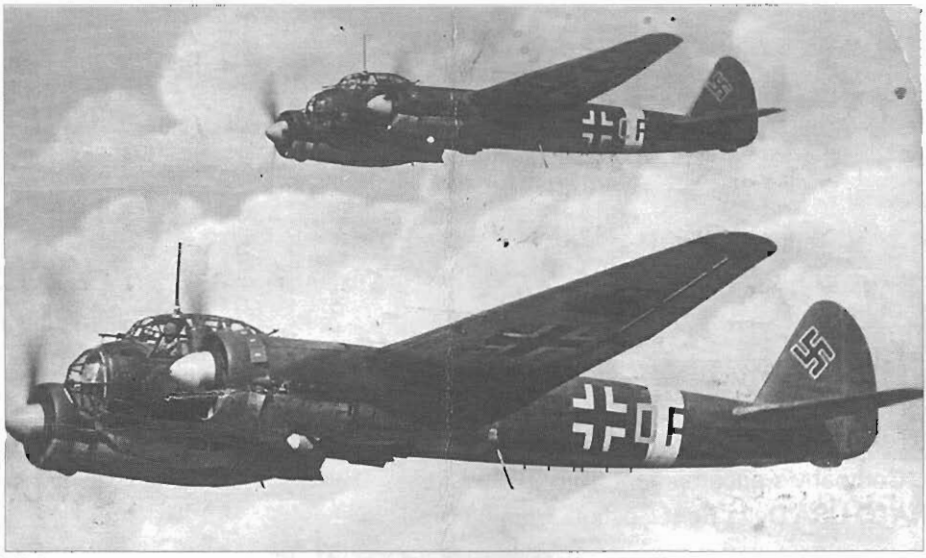
Temporary wooden barracks at Fort Bragg, N.C., that housed the 100th Infantry Division in 1943. More than half a century later, they are still in "temporary" use by the Army.

Sgt. John Baud, squad leader, at Fort Bragg in the summer of 1944. Baudwas the first soldier of Love Company killed in action, at St. Remy, France, on 14 November 1944.

L Company's encampment from 21-25 October 1944, Aix-en-Provence, France, NATO USA Delta Bear Section, Staging Area No. 1.



In photo left, Cpl. Stanley T. Cardozo, left, and Pfc. Fernando H. Erquiaga, also known as "Mo and Erky," enjoying camping with their canteens, mess kits, and helmets in front of their tent. Right, Pfc. Alexander J. Lapa, better known as "Skull," bringing a bale of hay to cover the muddy ground inside his tent. Home was never like this!



This new, unused postcard had the description on the back: "Junkers Ju 88 Horizontal und Stutzbomber der Deutschen Luftwaffe im Einsatz." It was sent home with the message: "France 11/17/44, Dear Mom and Pop, Here's a little card I picked up during my travels over here. Interesting? Love to all. Please don't worry, Johnny."

Pfc. Russell Hackett and friends digging the first of many foxholes for refuge and comfort in the picturesque Vosges Mountains in November of 1944.

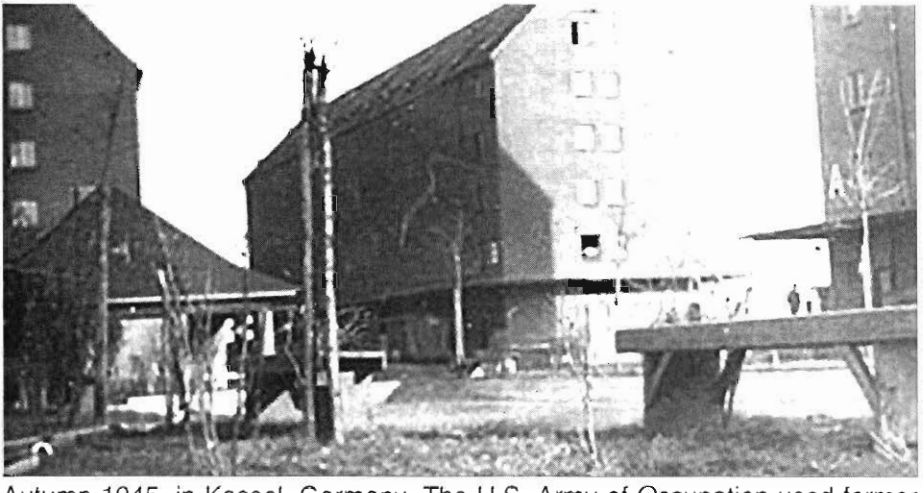
In Lemberg, France, on 9 December 1944, L Company's 3rd Platoon, led by 2nd Lt. Bennett D. Taylor Jr., was given the objective of taking this railroad crossing over the highway leading into town. Enemy forces were in strong defensive positions with rifles, machine guns, mortars, 20mm antiaircraft guns, and artillery. This photo was taken 50 years later by Alexander J. Lapa.

June 1945, at Kirschheim, Germany, Brigadier General Andrew C. Tychsen, Assistant Division Commander of the 100th Infantry Division, awarding the Bronze Star Medal for Valor to Pfc. John M. Khoury and others.

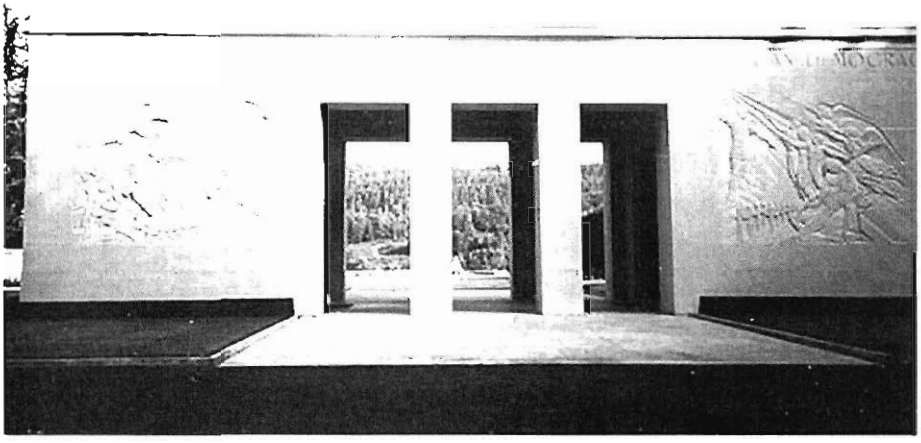
Staff Sgt. Franklin R. Saathoff, left, and Pfc. William C. White capturing the last "German" soldier at the end of World War II. Their prisoner bears a strong resemblance to Sgt. Orland W. Gabriel, Jr.

Postwar survivors of the 3rd Squad, 3rd Platoon, Love Company, 399th Infantry Regiment, in the summer of 1945, in Bavaria. Standing from left: Cpl. James A. Todd, Pvt. Junior P. Ogle, Pfc. William H. Young Jr., Pfc. John M. Khoury, and Pvt. Stanley F. Grim. Kneeling from left: Staff Sgt. Frederick A. Hafeman, Pvt. Russell H. Crump, Pfc. Pasquale P. Labriola, and Pfc. Russell V. Guinn.

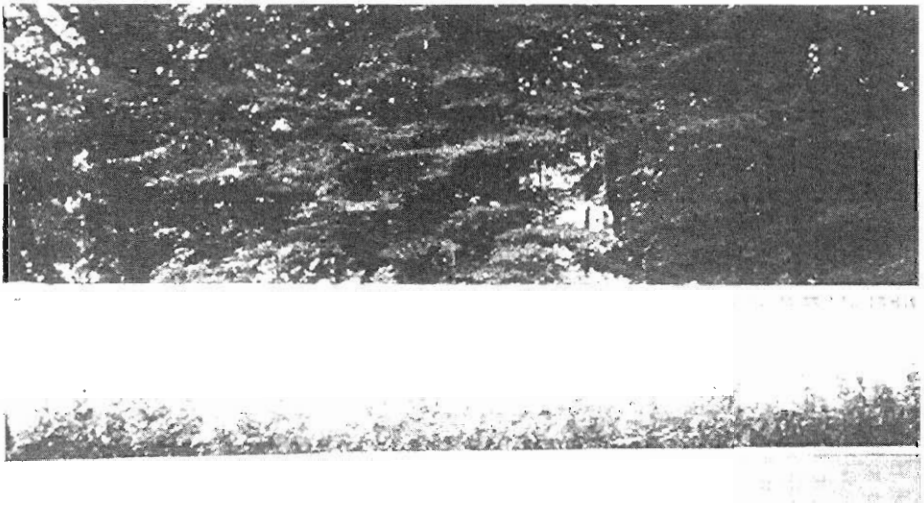
La Promenade des Anglais – with few people and fewer cars – in Nice, on the French Riviera, as seen during a furlough in the summer of 1945.



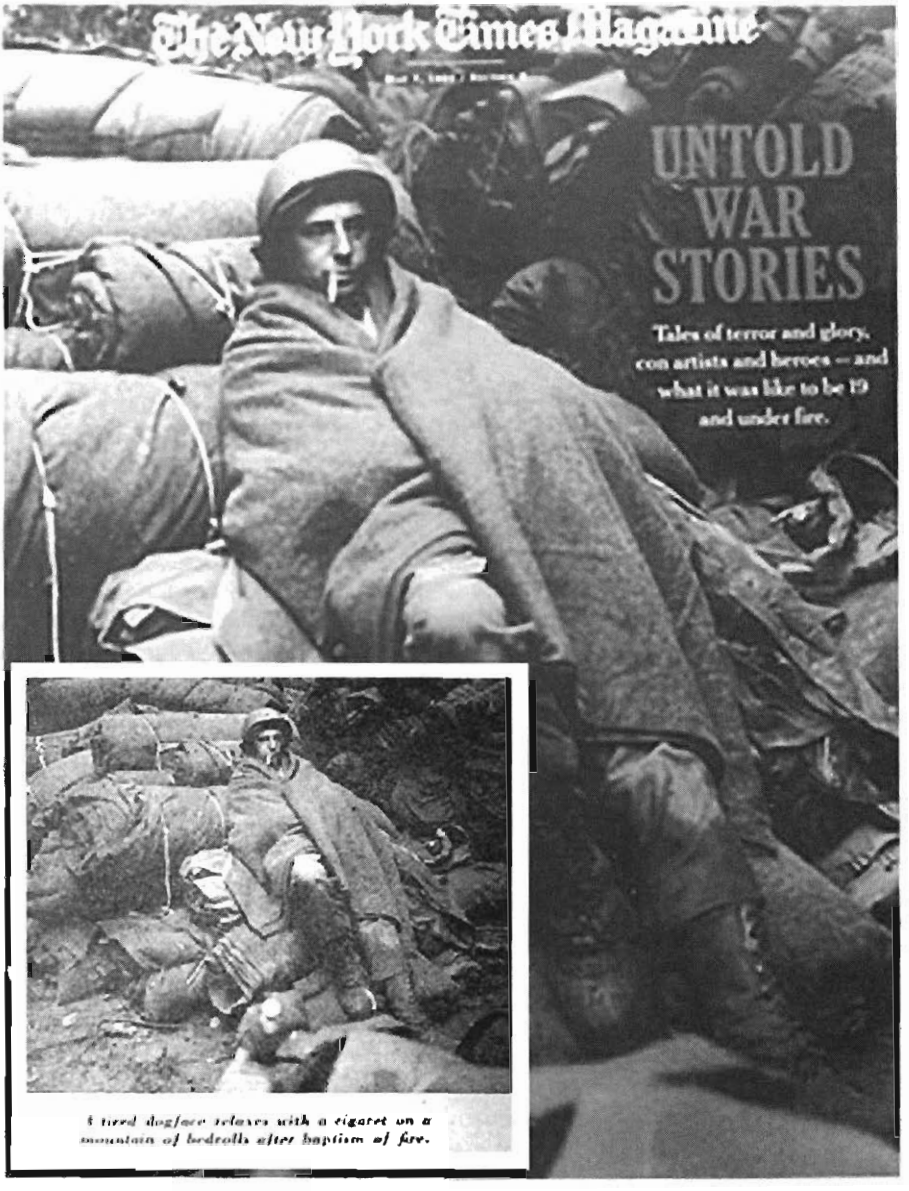
Autumn 1945, in Kassel, Germany. The U.S. Army of Occupation used former Wehrmacht warehouses to supply food, fuel, and clothing to Displaced Persons camps.



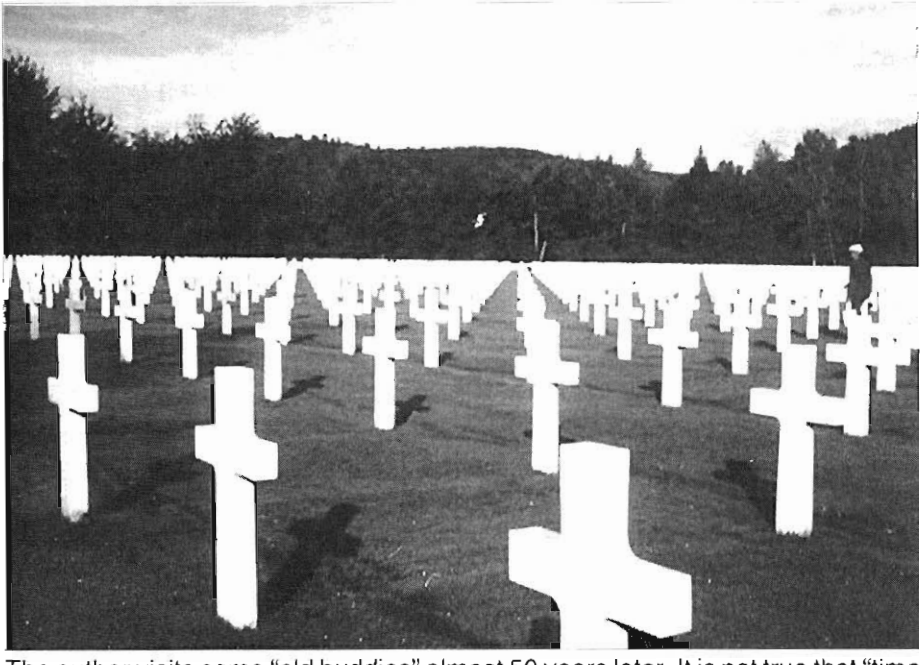
The entrance of the American Military Cemetery at Epinal, France. The bodies of American soldiers that were not shipped home to the United States are buried here. Among them are many from the 100th Infantry Division.



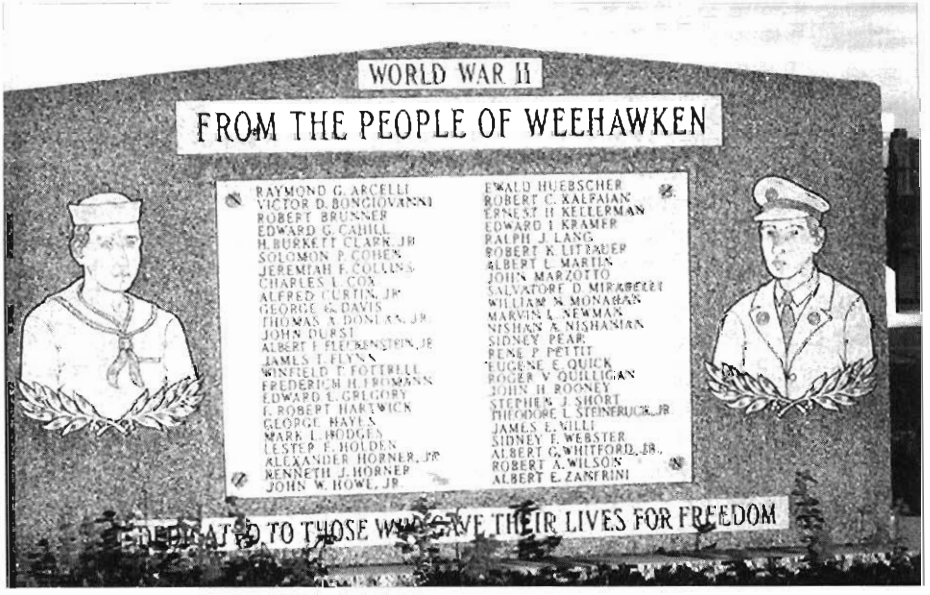
Inscribed on the wall at the Epinal cemetery: "This is their memorial – the whole Earth their sepulchre."



A photo of T-5 Frank Johnson, a member of Love Company, 399th Regiment, 100th Infantry Division, was taken by an Army photographer and appeared in "The Story of the Century" (inset), published in 1946. The photo was reprinted in 1995 on the cover of the "Special World War II Issue" of the New York Times magazine.



The author visits some "old buddies" almost 50 years later. It is not true that "time heals old wounds." We cannot ever forget the young men of our war. Our bonds can never be broken.



A memorial in Weehawken, N.J., is across from the New York pier from which the U.S.A.T. George Washington sailed for war on 6 October 1944 with most of the 100th Infantry Division on board. At the bottom of the left column is John W. Howe Jr. (Redbird) of Love Company.

ful place. Since I was alone with nobody around to talk to, I wondered if the German across from me had the same feeling.

On nights when the moon was overhead and the air was cold and cloudless, the area all around was lit with a somber grayness. At nearby foxholes, shadowy figures moved noiselessly, occasionally whispering to each other. On the ground, the snow reflected the moonlight, but the trees were gray and cast black shadows. Occasionally, a white and orange flash would light the sky and the stillness would be broken by the muffled boom of a cannon seconds later. Then there would be a response from the other side – a flash and then a boom. It was a duel of artillery against artillery. There was a war still going on.

When we heard the sound of men moving in front of us, who might be the enemy, we called for a flare to be sent up over our area. The flare would come from a mortar shell and it was timed to burst open with a bright burning light and descend slowly on its parachute. While it burned it cast the trees, bushes and everything into an eerie world of surreal shadows.

At times, the night would be changed to daylight by powerful searchlights mounted on trucks parked a long distance behind the front lines. They would aim their beam skyward at a cloud bank which would reflect the light down onto German positions in front of us.

During this period of late winter, a strange new weapon that we had never expected entered the battle zone. When we heard it, we said, "What the heck was that?" It was called the Nebelwerfer, but we knew it as the "screaming meemie." These were rocket artillery shells that were fired out of hollow tubes like the bazookas of the infantry, but they were much larger and more powerful. They were fired in clusters of several rounds at a time. As they flew in on us, they sounded like an express train, chugging in the sky, and then they made high-pitched screaming sounds before they landed and exploded. They were terrifying missiles when the Germans sent a barrage of them at us. Fortunately, they were very difficult to aim and took erratic paths in flight.

In time, we learned to accept them as just another piece of death-dealing military hardware that we had to be aware of. Frankly, we had less to worry about the screaming meemies at the front, because the Germans could not be sure where they would land. They might hit us but they could also hit their own soldiers at the front because we were only a few hundred yards apart. The rockets were not nearly as accurate and deadly as the

German 88mm artillery, which, probably, could drop a shell into a well from miles away.

It was not very long after that that the U.S. Army countered the screaming meemies with our own rocket artillery that sent barrages of shells from the back of a 2½ ton truck or from an open-topped tracked vehicle. It seems that for every new weapon that one side invents the other side will always find a counter weapon. The urgency of war usually creates the inventions that advance our knowledge and sciences. They often are blessings in the aftermath of the bloody sacrifice of millions of lives.

For the two week period from 1 March until 14 March 1945, it was relatively quiet along our front. There were regular reconnaissance patrols and artillery duels. No major attacks were launched by either side. It was an uneasy peace that was not destined to last. A deliberate and steady buildup was being prepared by the Seventh Army for a major offensive along our entire front. The only question was: When will it begin?

I felt that we had to start attacking soon. Waiting in a foxhole was boring. I was anxious to get this fighting over with because I was very sure that we were going to win the war. It had to be done sometime and now was better than later.

THOUGHTS BEFORE THE BATTLE

The war was entering its final phase. The Ardennes Offensive in the North was a disaster for the Germans, even though several U.S. Infantry Divisions were badly shattered. Operation Nordwind on the Seventh Army front did not break through as Hitler expected. Overhead, we could often see flights of American bombers, B17 Flying Fortresses and B24 Liberators, headed for Germany. They flew over in greater numbers each time. Daylight flights of 1,000 planes at a time brought cheers from the GIs in foxholes below.

As one of those GIs, I looked up and thought how different it would have been if I was still in the Air Corps. I would have been a second lieutenant, navigator/bombardier, with the responsibility of bombing cities, factories, oil fields and many other enemy targets from thousands of feet up in the sky. When it was done, I would fly back to the home airfield, give my report and take a break at the local pub or the Officers' Club. I would sleep indoors, in a bed, take daily showers, wear a clean uniform, have hot meals, receive medals and strut about as a hero. I might even have a girlfriend to keep up my morale.

Of course, I could be shot down in flames, or I might land in enemy territory and be killed by enraged civilians or be taken in as a prisoner of war. That would not be very nice but I am sure it would be better than this hole in the ground that I now have. In a war, there are many ways to fight and die, but I think no one suffers more than the dogface.

Would I be bothered by the knowledge that I was bombing cities and killing civilians: men, women and children? I am sure I would be, but I do not know. Only by being in that situation and having that actual experience would I know. Many airmen are killed on those missions and I would feel bitter at the loss of a close buddy. Yet I think that it would not seem like fighting the enemy since I would not see him except for the anti-aircraft fire and the attack of his aircraft.

Though I had become hardened to the killing of enemy soldiers that I faced, I could not fire my rifle at any unarmed civilian, especially a woman or child. Probably, I would be considered a war criminal if I did. That was not true for the men of the Air Corps who were engaged in total warfare. However, it was different for me, as an infantryman. I wore the

uniform of an Amie (the Germans called American soldiers "Amies"), which was for identification of the side I was on. This uniform gave my enemy every right to kill me. His uniform told me his identity and gave me the right to kill him also.

The infantry is sometimes called the "Queen of Battle," which comes from the game of chess where the queen is the most powerful piece on the board. She may be maneuvered to strike in almost any direction. This may be a romantic way of portraying the infantry but we are still foot soldiers fighting foot solders. Furthermore, a uniform is not a suit of armor and there is very little glory in the infantry. There is only the sense of honor to serve with other brave men. Not everyone can do it for long. For that reason, some soldiers shed their uniforms to change their identity and hope to save their lives by deserting. If they are caught by the enemy, they could be shot as spies. If caught by their own army, the penalty may be a firing squad.

Regardless of these thoughts of mine, our side was winning, and the enemy was losing his will to carry on the war. Yet, realistically, we still were fighting the war on French soil and Germany had not yet unconditionally surrendered as our political leaders demanded.

15 MARCH 1945 – SPRING OFFENSIVE

Love Company was being prepared with all the other units on the front to start a new offensive. We were brought up to almost full strength from a low of 75 privates on 3 January 1945 to 128 on 14 March 1945. Among the new replacements who arrived in late February, there were two young riflemen who were placed in a foxhole on the forward slope of our position. They were directly opposite the enemy front. Their platoon sergeant instructed them to quickly unload their sleeping bags and get down in their foxhole. One of them was taking his time and walking around unaware of any danger when a German sniper fired one shot and killed him. He was so new to the company that no one knew his name, not even the replacement who was with him. After his body was removed to the rear, the medic looked for his dogtags but could not find them. He was finally identified through the process of elimination. No one in the company ever had a chance to know him. Even fewer had even seen him. He was like a ghost. An enigma. A rumor.

For more than a week we were being prepared for the coming offensive. Weapons were cleaned and checked. Each rifleman was outfitted with two bandoliers that each held five clips of bullets, in addition to his cartridge belt with ten more clips of bullets. He had a rifle, 160 rounds of ammunition, two rifle or hand grenades and his bayonet. BAR men had extra magazines of ammunition and hand grenades. Some battle-hardened men carried a captured pistol or knife hidden in their jacket or boot.

At 0500 on 15 March, we climbed out of our foxholes and formed a long skirmish line to attack the German line. While we waited to receive the order to advance, we watched the shells of our artillery pound the enemy line. The barrage went on for a long half hour, and I thought they were taking a terrific beating. Then came the order to "Move forward!" and the long skirmish line moved slowly and steadily forward as our artillery laid down a continuous barrage of 105mm and 155mm shells that progressed up the slope ahead of us and beyond.

There was sparse enemy rifle and machine gun fire, but we were being hit by German artillery shells. We hit the ground as a shell sounded like it was coming in close to us. After it exploded nearby, we picked ourselves up and kept moving forward. Though some of our men were hit, the

rest of us moved on toward the enemy line. We could not turn back, and we could not stop the enemy shelling. We had to move forward and hit the dirt when the shells came in close. Most men had a fatalistic attitude about enemy artillery. I felt that I had been living on borrowed time since the beginning. I had come so close to being killed so many times before that I did not let it worry me now. I thought of the doughboy in World War I who only worried about the piece of steel that had his name on it. It was like being in a grim hypnotic state.

The enemy had abandoned their positions and retreated but they left behind barbed wire and shoe mines that caused some casualties. We had broken through the enemy line, and the stalemate that lasted for almost two months was over. It ended so suddenly without a pitched battle that I was surprised and relieved that they had gone.

Now we had to look forward to taking Lemberg and Bitche, again, and then the forts on the Maginot Line. That would be the next stand the Germans would make. Would they fight or retreat? When was it going to end? Fortunately, the Germans did not make a stand at the Maginot Line, and we followed forward units of the division that had entered Bitche without meeting any enemy resistance. We marched out on foot, but when we found that the Germans had retreated into the Fatherland, our pursuit was made by truck.

Many other units were in motor convoys pursuing the Germans, and the Military Police were at all the crossroads directing traffic, which came in a flood of vehicles. All the roads were two lanes wide, very narrow and winding. At one point, we were delayed by a column of the Free French Army that had been on our right flank on the Seventh Army front. They apparently had been misdirected and were making a right turn in front of us. We patiently waited as they went by. Of course, we knew that the French Army did not fill their canteens with chlorinated water like the Americans. They preferred vin rouge or vin blanc – it probably did not matter which. However, as we watched them, we saw that they had young women in the trucks with them. The women were civilians because they were not in army uniforms and the poilus were having a good time laughing and singing. What a way to run an army! Unless we were in the hospital, we never saw an American woman.

I doubt that we could have maintained discipline and fighting efficiency if we had civilian women or even women soldiers with us at the front. It could have been exciting in the beginning but with my life on the line I would find it a liability. What woman would want to sleep in a hole

in the ground in freezing temperatures, eat K rations, be filthy and probably sick, wounded or killed? There would be so many problems, such as digging a foxhole, marches, patrols, and fire fights, that I would rather be alone and just dream about a woman.

Left Lambach Fr by foot 1500 Arrived at Reyersvillier Fr 1630 Distance traveled 3 1/4 miles.

16 Mar 45 Left Reyersvillier Fr 1830 by motor Arrived Bitche Fr 1900 distance traveled 3 1/2 miles.

18 Mar 45 Left Bitche Fr by motor 1615. Arrived at Hanviller Fr 1715. Distance motored 3 1/2 miles. Left Hanviller Fr 1815. Arrived Bousseviller Fr 1915. Distance motored 1 1/4 miles.

ENTERING GERMANY

21 Mar 45 Left Bousseviller Fr at 0900 by truck. Arrived at Breidenbach Ger at 1100.

The vaunted Siegfried Line with its barrier of concrete "dragon's teeth" lay ahead and was built to stop our tanks. There was also barbed wire to stop infantry. Behind it, we expected to meet strong and resolute German units defending "The Fatherland" against our invasion. Yet the Siegfried Line was not much of a deterrent as our artillery blasted huge holes in it and no enemy stopped our advance. Our tanks and trucks rolled through unhindered.

Crossing the border into Germany was a surprise, because the houses and streets were different in style and seemed more modern than those in France. From the upper window of almost every house, a white sheet was draped, or a white flag was displayed on a pole attached to the house. No one was in the street. No one appeared at the doors or windows of the houses. The people were there, looking at us as our trucks rolled by, but they did not want to be seen. They were terrified that we would harm them or destroy their homes. That was all Nazi propaganda.

There were great numbers of displaced persons on the road who were bewildered by their sudden freedom from German factories where they had been slave laborers. They were of many nationalities: French, Russian, Ukrainian, Czech, Pole, and more. These displaced persons were taken from their homelands where their armies had been conquered by the Nazis and were transported to Germany to work in war factories, such as the Krupp Works and I.G. Farben Industries. Germany did not have enough people for both their military forces and their factories. Besides, these workers were not paid. Our Military Government people had to take care of them when the war was over and we had to run the country.

We still did not meet any strong enemy resistance. The powerful Wehrmacht that had overrun Europe seemed to have disappeared. The only remnants we saw were the streams of German prisoners that we passed along the road. They had thrown down their guns and surrendered to any American soldier they could find. There were thousands of German soldiers being guarded and marched back to makeshift prisoner-of-war camps by relatively few GIs. The war was in its final stage, but it was not

over yet. There was a lot of Germany east of these border towns that had to be taken. We had to still cross the Rhine River. That was the next great obstacle.

22 Mar 45 Left Breidenbach Ger at 1200 by truck. Arrived at Neustadt Ger at 2000. Distance traveled 60 miles.

Traveling 60 miles in 8 hours did not set any speed record, but that was a lot of territory in wartime, when we often could not gain 60 yards in 18 hours. We enjoyed the feeling of riding, instead of walking. It was like being on a sightseeing tour of the countryside. There were towns that were almost completely destroyed by Allied air raids and artillery. Railroad cars and locomotives were lying on their sides in jumbled disarray beside twisted steel rails. Burned out trucks, cars, and Panzer tanks of the Wehrmacht that had blocked the roads after being hit were pushed off to the side of the road by our bulldozers. Most of them had been victims of our aerial superiority. The horse-drawn artillery of the German army was in shambles and deserted in their retreat. The dead horses lay on their sides with their legs projected straight out in a state of rigor mortis.

23 Mar 45 Left Neustadt Ger at 0930 by truck. Arrived at Mutterstadt Ger at 1215. Distance traveled 12 miles.

Left Mutterstadt Ger at 0915 on foot. Arrived at Rheingoheim Ger 1550. Distance marched 9 miles. (25 March 1945)

The 3rd Battalion of the 399th Infantry Regiment was the first unit of the division to reach the Rhine River south of Ludwigshafen at Altripp. Love Company rode the last leg of the trip on the backs of M1 Sherman tanks. As the tanks approached the river, we could see the shipyards of the city of Mannheim on the eastern shore. We were greeted by rifle fire from across the river, which caused the tank crews to immediately duck inside and pull down their hatches. Because of these noisy, cumbersome tanks that always attracted enemy fire, we had the dubious honor of being shot at while we rode on the outside. The German snipers were several hundred yards away and not very accurate, but one rifle shot went "ping" as it hit our tank. In checking where it hit, I found that Pvt. Junior P. Ogle, who was standing next to me, had a hole in the leg of his trousers. The bullet had passed through without hitting his leg.

At this point, we dismounted and proceeded the rest of the way on foot. We crossed a park-like area and reached an embankment at the river's edge. There we took cover behind it and looked across the river at the Mannheim shipyard. We could see that the firing had come from the cab of the huge crane that faced us. Although it was a really long shot, we

opened fire on that crane and that silenced them. In the meantime, as acting squad leader, one of the men in my squad cracked from battle fatigue. He fell trembling to the ground and was wailing, "Get me out of here! I'm scared! I'm scared!" He was screaming and crying. Nothing I said could make him control his terror, even though we were relatively safe. The enemy sniper fire was not accurate and we were not in any great danger. Finally, I told the lieutenant who was my platoon leader that he had to be sent back to the rear, because he was unnerving all the other men. He left the company on 27 March 1945 and never returned.

We spent several days in Ludwigshafen while other division units passed through our position to attempt a crossing of the Rhine River. This was very fortunate for us, because we were billeted in local houses where the beds had down comforters and many of the luxuries of home. In the house I was assigned to occupy, there was a wine cellar filled with hundreds of bottles of every variety. Each of us appropriated a bottle to have with our meals and another to have without our meals. There were other items in the house, but hardly anyone took them. As combat infantrymen who walked everywhere, we had to carry anything we took, and we traveled as lightly as possible. We learned from the beginning to value only the essentials of life. The philosophy expressed by a worthy infantryman in polite terms was, "If you can't eat it or sleep with it, pee on it!"

Left Ludwigshafen Ger on foot at 1500 Arr at Maudach Ger at 1615 Distance traveled 2 1/2 miles. (27 March 1945)

31 Mar 45 Left Maudach Ger 1450 by motor. Arrived at Bruhl Ger 1610. Distance traveled 12 miles.

Easter Sunday was 1 April 1945, and I remember church services conducted in a bombed out church where the soldiers quietly prayed for peace and salvation. It was kind of eerie in the sanctuary with the hole in the roof letting in hazy streams of light over the scene. We laid our rifles on the floor and removed our helmets during the service. It was very peaceful and came like a sigh of relief.

2 Apr 45 Left Bruhl Ger 2030 by motor. Arr Seckenheim Ger 2200 . Distance motored 7 miles.

It was on this date that Pfc. Fernando Erquiaga (Erky) returned to the company. He had been severely wounded on 8 December 1944 near Lemberg, France. It was good to see him again. He told us of his stay in the hospital where he was taken care of by the Army nurses. He recounted stories of the torrid romantic trysts he had had with the nurses while he was slowly mending. The stories sounded somewhat fanciful. However, he

was a little older, in his early twenties, good looking, and had a way with words so that we could not challenge his stories. Besides, he helped divert our attention from our daily concentration on the war and that was a welcomed break.

5 Apr 45 Left Seckenheim Ger 2050 by motor arrived Mosbach Ger 2300 distance motored 35 miles.

As the morning reports of the previous 20 days show, we were moving constantly. We went from town to town, usually by truck and sometimes on foot. I do not have any clear recollection of that period. We stayed at abandoned Wehrmacht barracks on several occasions when we reached our destination.

During this period, we had crossed the Rhine on trucks over a pontoon bridge, passed through Mannheim, and continued southeast past Heidelberg. The Germans chose not to defend Heidelberg, which had been spared from bombing and artillery shells. It was a beautiful medieval town that we would have destroyed if we had to.

We proceeded to the vicinity of Heilbronn, where other units of the division were battling strong enemy forces. Our mission, as part of the 3rd Battalion of the 399th Regiment, was to maintain cover for the right flank of the division, which was exposed to possible enemy counterattack. German units in Heilbronn fought a determined defensive battle that cost many lives on both sides before the battle for the city was won by our division.

Thereafter, Love Company was assigned for a period of 15 days to the 35th Anti-Aircraft Artillery (AAA) Brigade

SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT

The company saw many towns in Germany that were heavily damaged before we passed by the outskirts of Pforszheim. This city appeared to be almost completely leveled from the intensive bombing of many Allied air raids. The Leica camera factory was located there, and some GIs went into the city and liberated highly prized cameras as souvenirs. I found a pair of German army binoculars that was of excellent quality. The binoculars gave powerful magnification and had five or six colored filters for any light condition. Though I wanted to keep it, I left it behind because it was too heavy and bulky. It was an unessential burden for a foot soldier. Some rear echelon soldier with a vehicle probably added it to his trove of liberated souvenirs.

In the second week of April, as acting sergeant, I and two of the men in my squad were given a special assignment to guard an Army Intelligence radio truck. That truck was equipped with a loop antenna on the roof and several radio receivers and transmitters inside. Four German-speaking GIs were tuning in to German Army transmissions. At this stage of the war, the enemy high command was in a desperate situation and did not bother to send radio commands in code to their Wehrmacht units. They were issuing orders on certain radio frequencies in plain language, which were being monitored by these American soldiers and forwarded to our Army commanders.

This 1½ ton Dodge truck was one of three that were situated on high grounds several miles apart. With their directional loop antennas, they each were searching to find the location of the headquarters of the enemy command post. With each truck tuned in to the same frequency at three different locations, they could each shoot an azimuth to find the direction from which the broadcast was being transmitted. By intersecting the azimuth that each truck reported they could find the exact location of the German radio transmitter. The next step was to blast that spot, which could be their headquarters, with our artillery. These four GIs in the truck were busy with the receiving and transmission of messages. They had spent much of their wartime service inside the truck and never had to do the boring Army routines or the dangerous fighting at the front line.

The job of guarding them and their truck was quite routine. We had a Jeep and followed them everywhere. When they stopped, we parked nearby and watched for any activity. At night, we had our bedrolls and took turns of two hours off (asleep) and one hour on (guard duty). It was spring in Bavaria, and we enjoyed the weather and the absence of warfare. We traveled about the countryside without any enemy in sight.

Suddenly, in the middle of an afternoon, rifle shots rang out in our direction. Someone was firing at the truck! We guards hit the ground and looked in the direction of the shots. Inside the truck, the intelligence men were in a furor. "What the hell is going on?" "Are we being attacked?" "Where's my gun?" "How does this thing work?" "Where's my helmet?" They were scrambling around inside the truck looking under their seats for their weapons. What they found were dust-encrusted pieces of hardware that had never been fired and were badly in need of oil and cleaning. They may not have even been loaded.

Out of a wooded area some distance away, there appeared a young man in a uniform without a helmet waving a rifle over his head and yelling in a language that we could not understand. We yelled back at him to drop his rifle, but he kept shouting as he came toward us. We fired a shot over his head and told him to drop the rifle. Instead, he started running toward us and waving the rifle. A second shot was fired and hit him in the chest, and he fell to the ground. We ran to him and found him bleeding from the mouth. When his shirt was removed, we found that the bullet had passed through his body. A compress and sulfa were applied to the wounds and an ambulance was called to pick him up. I don't know who he was, what language he spoke, or what unit he was from. We guessed that he may have been from an Allied unit out of North Africa. It was an accident of war and another wasted life. My only consolation was that we had to protect the men we were assigned to guard. I hoped that the poor soul survived.

The intelligence crew headed south toward the Alps. We passed through beautiful mountain areas where the air was clear and refreshing. Traveling along the road into Garmisch-Partenkirchen, we came across a clear lake that reflected the snow-covered mountain on its surface just like a picture postcard. The town was like something out of Hansel and Gretel with chalets and gingerbread houses. There were no enemy soldiers anywhere and no signs of the wreckage of war. We continued on into Innsbruck, Austria, which was a small Alpine city untouched by the fighting.

This detail lasted almost until the end of April when we had to return to our unit. I had no idea what had happened at Love Company during

our absence. It seemed that only some small units of die-hard SS troops would be resisting the inevitable end of the war. We did not think that we had missed too much. However, when we came back and were told about Beilstein, we were shocked and thankful that we had not been there. Nevertheless, I did feel guilty that I should have been there with my buddies and fought with them. It must have been that guardian angel that had looked down on me before had again placed me on that special assignment.

BEILSTEIN, GERMANY

17 Apr 45 left Mosbach Ger by truck. Arrived Unterheinrlet Ger Distance traveled 50 miles.

On 17 April 1945, Love Company, which had been brought up to full strength with replacements, now numbered five officers and 172 enlisted men present. It had assembled in an area near Unterheinrlet, preparing for an attack the next day on the high ground near the town of Beilstein. The 3rd Battalion was to be led in the attack by K and I Companies, and L Company was to follow in reserve. Everyone knew that the war would soon be over. The German Army was surrendering in droves. Wehrmacht units were disintegrating en masse. Only sporadic fire from small arms and artillery cannon were coming from last-ditch enemy soldiers.

So it came as a surprise to Tech. 4 Charles Brigandi, one of our cooks, when his friend S. Sgt. Nicholas Franzini handed his few personal belongings to him and said, "I'm not going to make it tomorrow." Charlie said, "You can't be serious. The war will be over soon and the Krauts are practically wiped out." "No. I just have this feeling about tomorrow. I have been in combat since the first day and never got wounded or sick. It will be the end for me, I feel sure about it."

Premonitions of impending death are often heard on the front lines, especially when the enemy is dug in and the battle is fierce. This time it was not like that. This was the end of the war.

Charlie told me that he did not question him, because soldiers often have feelings of doom and they usually are false alarms. Nick asked him to deliver a message to his wife: "Tell her that I love her and I was going to take up the lunch pail as she wanted." The message had a special meaning: that Nick was going to get a steady job, take care of her, and be a solid family man.

The 18 April 1945 Battle of Bielstein – as recorded in The Story of the Century:

> "With Co .K in the van, the 3rd Battalion advanced slowly over difficult terrain until it reached a road junction near the edge of the woods. At 1000, Co. K paused to combine with Co. I in an attack against the high ground to the south. This high

ground was a steep hill, covered by a patch-quilt of farmland, with pine woods near the crest. To reach the summit, the 3rd Battalion had to push through an exposed draw, and climb the hill under perfect observation from whatever enemy troops might be entrenched at the top.

"Co. K, on the left of Co. I, was the first to start across the clearing at the foot of the hill. Enemy 88mm and 120mm mortar shells were falling around them, but the Co. K men managed to make the first patch of woods and then continue across the short stretch of open ground to high ground beyond. They reached the woods at the crest of the hill with only two casualties. Co. I, following the lead of Co. K, also gained the shelter of the woods at the top of the hill with only a few casualties.

"Then, Cos. L and M moved into open ground. Leading elements were about halfway through the draw when seemingly every enemy 80mm and 120mm mortar on the Seventh Army front opened up on them.

"The ensuing attempt to climb that hill proved to be the costliest effort made by CT-399 [Combat Team - 399th Infantry Regiment] in 168 days of fighting. To the terrible mortar fire, the Krauts added artillery and small arms. Within a few minutes, hundreds of artillery and mortar shells fell on the slope and the tiny wooded area on the top of the hill. One veteran of Anzio contended after the shelling was over that the enemy barrage exceeded anything he had experienced in Italy. Our men hadn't even time to dig in. Smoke was employed extensively, but the Jerries covered almost every foot of ground with superbly directed fire.

"Fighting to reach the dubious cover of the hill, the 3rd Battalion men paid a heavy price for those few hundred yards of ground. Within less than two hours, the 3rd Battalion lost 17 men killed and 101 wounded. By 1445 hours, however, the battalion had clawed its way to the comparative shelter of the woods on the crest to the hill, and prepared to continue the attack southward to the town of Beilstein.

"But the enemy had ideas of his own. At 1500, following a severe artillery preparation, the Jerries launched a counterattack to drive us from the hill, with 60 elite OCS men and an estimated 20 in reserve. Climbing the hill from the south along a trail which wound through terraced vineyards to the summit, the Jerries came

on, seemingly oblivious to our fire. Our men used every weapon they had, even resorting to pistols. Finally, at 1600 hours, the enemy attack was broken, leaving the 3rd Battalion clinging to the top of the hill.

"...On the information of the patrol(s), Co. I moved into Beilstein at 0830 hours (20 April 1945)"

A few pertinent items regarding the attack are as follows: At the foot of the hill, there was a narrow stream that had to be crossed. In trying to leap across the stream, Mo Cardozo (Sgt. Stanley T. Cardozo) broke his ankle and could not continue up the hill with the company. I remembered that day when we were leaving the pier at 42nd Street in New York on 6 October 1944, and Mo said, "I don't expect to come back. I think it is a one way trip for me." Instead, he got his million dollar wound that day and exchanged his one way ticket for a round trip ticket.

Love Company received the heaviest shelling because it was exposed on the side of the hill after K and I Companies had already reached the summit. During the bombardment, 34 men were wounded and nine were killed, including S. Sgt. Nick Franzini, whose premonition came true. The others were Pfc. Robert P. Ahlborn, Sgt. Glenn D. Fischer, Sgt. James R. Hawkins, Sgt. Lewis D. Leslie and Pfc. John P. Stuart, all of whom were original members of the company and had survived almost six months of combat. There were also Pvt. Freeman E. Buzzell and Pvt. Bert Fields who joined us on 18 February 1945. Cpl. Andrew B. Yurko was a tall, heavy-set blond who had been with the company only since 6 April 1945 – less than two weeks.

Love Company had sustained the heaviest loss it had ever taken in a single day. One quarter of the company had been wounded or killed. Yet Love Company continued on the attack with the battalion. For its valor in this drive, the entire battalion received the Presidential Distinguished Unit Citation. Several months later, when I learned that my name had been included among those who were awarded the citation, I protested to my platoon lieutenant, but he said, "It's alright. Don't worry about it."

Probably the outstanding soldier that day was Tech. 4 George Demopolis, the medic attached to our company. He received the Silver Star medal for his heroic attention to the wounded in spite of the terrible shelling.

From Beilstein, the company moved southward on the 3rd Battalion flank along the Neckar River, passing through many small towns, in trucks and on foot, taking prisoners and clearing out enemy pockets of re-

sistance. We had to keep up the pressure on the last retreating German units.

Many years later, at a division reunion, I spoke with Jimmy Adair (Pfc. James A. Adair), who told me about his wound that day. He was lying prone when shrapnel tore off a large part of his buttocks. He spent months in hospitals as they treated him in the hope that he could walk again. The long healing process was painful and difficult. However, he was eventually well enough to get around. When I met him, he seemed to be quite normal, and he explained that he jogged every day to strengthen his legs. He felt that he was very lucky to have survived.

In 1994, Bill Young (Pfc. William H. Young, Jr.) led a 100th Infantry Division tour of France and Germany. The group visited Beilstein. Since he had been wounded there, Bill remembered it very well. However, time and nature had obscured any record of the hundreds of shells that fell that fateful day. Nevertheless, that day was commemorated in a macabre way. The group stopped at the cemetery at Beilstein and found headstones for men in their fifties and sixties and for boys in their teens who had died on 18 April 1945. They had been part of a Volksturm group and a military school that had fired on the 3rd Battalion that day. The return fire of our forces took their lives as well.

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The Morning Report of 22 April 1945 states that Capt. Travis V. Hopkins was sent to a hospital on 11 April 1945, as follows:

"Dy to Clrg Sta 619th Med Bn (NBC GSW left thigh accidentally self-inflicted) Trfd to DOP 7th A per Sec 1 Clr 33 (1945) Hq ETOUSA as of 11 Apr 45 Dy: 1542."

(Dy 1542 = Duty MOS 1542 - Company Commander)

The Morning Report also mentioned Pfc. William N. Alexander, as follows:

"Dy to Clrg Sta 619th Med Bn (NBC GSW right foot third toe accidentally self-inflicted) Trfd to DOP 7th A per Sec 1 Clr 33 (1945) Hq ETOUSA as of 11 Apr 45 Dy: 675"

Two not-battle-connected, self-inflicted wounds on the same day was quite unusual. However, there was only one bullet involved. When Hoppy was cleaning his gun, he accidentally shot himself in the thigh. The same bullet went on to strike Alexander in the foot. Though the record says Alexander had an accidental self-inflicted wound, he never fired a shot.

There were ten cases of not-battle-connected, self-inflicted gunshot wounds, accidental or otherwise, listed in the Morning Reports of Love Company during our time in combat. Five of those men returned to the company, including Capt. Hopkins. During his absence, from 12 April 1945, 2nd Lt. Roy D. Simmons was the company commander. He was our 1st Sergeant and had received a battlefield commission. He was reduced to Executive Officer when Capt. Hopkins returned on 9 May 1945. That period included the disastrous day at Beilstein. By then, the war had ended. Roy Simmons, who was with the company from the beginning to the end, was not only a good soldier, but also a very fine and respected leader.

THE WAR IS OVER

On 25 April 1945, the 399th Infantry Regiment was assigned to Seventh Army Reserve and the 100th Infantry Division was officially off the front line after 175 days of combat.

26 Apr 45 Left Waldenbronn Ger 0900 by motor Arrived at Stuttgart Ger 1100 Distance motored 12 miles.

About 3 May 1945, the company was stationed in Kirchheim, Germany. I was there on 5 May 1945 when we received the following order:

EFFECTIVE AT ONCE, 100TH INF. DIV. TROOPS WILL NOT FIRE UPON ENEMY TROOPS UNLESS FIRED UPON OR UNLESS NECESSARY IN CONNECTION WITH POLICE DUTIES. PEACE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN HQ. SEVENTH ARMY AND GERMAN FORCES OPPOSING SEVENTH ARMY REGARDING UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER BECOME EFFECTIVE 1200 6 MAY 1945. THIS ORDER EFFECTS SEVENTH ARMY TROOPS ONLY. THIS INFORMATION IS NOW BEING ANNOUNCED OVER SEVENTH ARMY RADIO AT FIFTEEN MINUTE INTERVALS.

BURRESS Maj. Gen.

The official end of the war came two days later and was greeted with barely a grunt from the soldiers of Love Company. I was in a house in Kirchheim when the radio broadcast the news. I was smoking a cigarette and having a beer and felt absolutely nothing. No one whooped or hollered or even shook hands or congratulated each other on a great victory. The broadcast was full of cheering and noise-making from Paris, London, and New York, and we did not feel a bit happy or sad, just numb. What was the meaning of it all? Were we heroes? Yes, we were still alive, but what next? We were still soldiers, and we took orders. There was no special celebration held here in the heart of Germany. The Germans were not celebrating for their own reasons. We felt no joy either. It was a quiet day almost like a holy day to be remembered in silence.

Love Company took part in defeating a defending army in the Vosges Mountains for the first time in history. It fought in the campaigns of the Rhineland, Alsace-Ardennes, and Central Europe. Its young men

were courageous and victorious despite extreme hardship and determined enemy resistance. Yet, they were not gladiators, just average Americans.

I thought of the wreckage around us: the homes, factories, churches, cathedrals, hospitals, and the tanks, trucks, cannons, wagons, and the soldiers, people, children, horses, cattle, and the fields, farms, roads, bridges, railways – the waste, ruin, and chaos. It was total madness.

All our lives had been changed forever. We had an unconditional surrender. We were the victors. Will the enemy remember what destruction we inflicted on them? Will they accept the blame for their part of this disaster? Will we ever be able to forgive and become friends again? Are we human beings or are we savages?

I felt no pleasure in victory.

A CERTAIN FOREST

Down the slope into the woods I walked,
Dried leaves, fallen branches beneath my feet.
Brilliant rays pierced as somber shadows stalked.
I could feel a terror o'er me repeat.
It was muddy cold the stream I crossed,
Followed the scout up the rising, sloped,
Distant flashes, the dark skies embossed.
Steel shards burst above, as earth I groped,
Dank smells of forest assault my nose.
A strident fusillade swept over all.
Sniper's gunsmoke from a tree arose.
Death fire from my hand bought his fall.
Bravo! Miserable fallen one!
Hail! Miserable, grim, survivor!
For God and Country, let young blood pour!
Dense forest, cold streams and gentle hills,
Ever changing through time eternal,
New leaves, new limbs, new trees and new rills.
Nothing marks our glory infernal.

(Written many years later at an Elderhostel poetry class by JMK)

FURLOUGHS

During the next three months, the Army set up programs, furloughs, and recreational activities for the men in the fighting units. Paris, the French Riviera, and Geneva, Switzerland were furlough destinations. I took a two-week furlough to Nice rather than wait for an opening on the long list of soldiers who wanted to go to Paris or Geneva. The old adage of the GI was: "Take what you can get now and to hell with the future." As soldiers in uniform, we took the train to the Riviera without paying any fares. It was a pleasure to travel lightly without a lot of military gear and watch the world of civilians pass by.

When I arrived in Nice, I was billeted in the Hotel Ruhl that the U.S. Army had leased for soldiers on furlough. It was a luxury hotel on the main avenue – La Promenade des Anglais – which runs for miles along the beach. The food was delicious and the weather was perfect. It was a memorable summer vacation in a whole different world. I was on the French Riviera where the beach was world famous. However, I was surprised that there were rocks and pebbles along their shoreline. They did not have a sandy beach as we had all along our East Coast. The surf was anemic with no big waves.

At home, American girls wore one-piece swim suits made of wool at the beach that were designed for modesty and swimming. The boys, always, enjoyed looking at the girls in their bathing suits. On the Riviera, I saw bikini bathing suits for the first time on some beautiful French girls. These two-piece outfits consisted of a flimsy printed cloth that covered the breasts that was tied in the back and another cloth of the same material that covered the crotch and rear and was tied at the sides. These girls did not go near the water. They were there to soak in the sunshine, and the men and boys were there to soak in their beauty. I hardly remembered the last time I had seen a pretty girl. The sight was a terrible strain on the nerves of weary soldiers like me who had come to the Riviera to rest and recuperate from the rigors of war.

As a diversion, there were sightseeing buses to perfume factories in Grasse. I took a bus to the House of Fragonard and learned how they made those expensive French fragrances. With the Army pay I had received, I bought presents to send home to my mother and sisters. It was

meant to assure them that I was just as normal as ever and that I had not forgotten to think of home and family. I was still the dutiful son though I could never be the same one they knew.

I also took a bus ride with other GIs to the Principality of Monaco, where we were not permitted to leave the bus. It seems that the prince did not want any rough or rowdy American soldiers spoiling the tranquility of his playground for wealthy visitors. However, we did see the Sportsman's Club and the casino at Monte Carlo from the outside as we drove by. We watched a changing of the guard by the prince's army at his palace. They were outfitted like ushers at a New York movie theater on Broadway. I thought a platoon from Love Company could have wiped out his army and taken over the place.

Without my uniform and with a large bankroll, I could have been a 21-year-old American playboy on vacation. But I was just another lonely GI who had to return to his company to rest and recuperate after two weeks.

During the war, the U.S.O. (United Service Organization) did send entertainers to boost the morale of the soldiers, but their shows were put on several miles behind the front line, of course. For a combat infantry unit to see a show, it had to be pulled off the line and then moved by truck to where the show was performed. The Army did not send any frontline infantry company to the rear to be entertained. They had another interesting show going on every day.

After the war, I saw a U.S.O. show that was presented in an open field where hundreds of GIs sat on the ground in front of a mobile stage. The entertainers wanted to please the men and did their best, although most of them were not famous and only slightly better than amateurs. Marlene Dietrich was a big attraction and very active in support of the U.S. fight against Hitler and the Nazi Regime of her homeland. Many Germans considered her a traitor. She appeared in U.S.O shows along with other stars such as Jack Benny and Bob Hope. The headliners mixed with the men and had pictures taken that could be sent home to their families. However, it was the top officers who socialized with the stars, dancers and pin-up girls, while the lowly GI was forbidden to even think about it. I found that they were quite ordinary people with all the same human imperfections. In fact, it often seemed that they were in awe of us. We were heroes to them. That was a unique experience.

AN AMERICAN IN DIJON, FRANCE

Upon my return to L Company, I learned that many U.S. Army-sponsored programs were still available. Of the programs offered, I chose courses in French language and culture at the University of Dijon (now the University of Burgundy). With three other men from L Company, I traveled by train to Dijon. When we arrived, we found that the city was not damaged by the war. The armies of both sides passed through it during the last six years without stopping to fight each other.

We were welcomed by the staff of the university and assigned rooms in the dormitory. The bed had an antique iron frame and the desk had seen many years of service. The university and the buildings were quite old, but they gave an aura of serious learning. Every program was in French, and they were not simplified or made easy to accommodate us. As a result, much of the material in the course was lost on those of us who did not know the language well enough to understand the lectures completely. We had paperback textbooks to help us. Nevertheless, we did absorb some of it and, if given more time, we might have even passed a test. Fortunately, no tests were given. As a result, the students and the faculty enjoyed the classes.

While we were at Dijon, the civilians treated us warmly. We told them in our best French that we were students at the university and studying about France. They regarded us as honored heroes and bought us drinks at the cafes. On one occasion, we were invited to join a group of three couples at their table, where we were toasted with wine. There was music and dancing and the men surprised us by suggesting that we dance with their wives or girlfriends. That was very hospitable of them and we, of course, enjoyed the opportunity to hold a girl in our arms. It was a very delightful evening.

We were also invited to join in a family dinner the following evening where we were treated like guests of honor. The apartment was large and well furnished and we were seated in the dining room around a large table. The food and wine were excellent, but I was not expert enough to fully appreciate it. I wondered if our host had mistakenly thought that we were high-ranking American officers. We were not used to such cordiality and warmth. The man of the house who had invited us was Maurice Levy,

who gave me his card. It stated that he was the Chairman of the Board of the Chamber of Commerce of Dijon. We had been feted by an important citizen of the city on that memorable evening.

One weekend, two of us took a free train ride to see the sights in the larger city of Lyon, which was not far away. At the U.S. Army service club, we obtained maps of the city and learned that there was a public swimming pool nearby. On this summer day we decided to visit it. We did not have swim suits, but for a few francs we paid the admission and rented heavy woolen swimming trunks. I went to a dressing stall to change and when I put on the trunks, I found that they were cut like a jock strap with the rear end covered. I could not pull them up much beyond my hair line, and I had to be careful not to let them fall down because they had no elastic band or belt. I felt brave walking out of the dressing room with almost nothing on, but I soon found that all the men at the pool wore the same tiny trunks. When I dove into the pool, I had the terrible feeling that the trunks had slipped off, but I managed to pull them up in time.

I came out of the pool, went to my towel and dried myself. Nearby, I noticed a pretty French girl in a sexy bikini sitting with an older woman. She was looking at me. I smiled and she smiled. Then she asked me if I knew the time. I had my wrist watch in my shoe, so I took it out and replied in my best French. This led to more conversation and introductions. Her name was Natalie LeBeau and she was with her mother. There was more conversation about the war, future plans and so forth. We talked about places in Lyon where there was entertainment. Before I had to leave, we had made a date to go to a local cabaret that night. I met them there at about 10 p.m. and the place was just filling up with patrons. There was a small orchestra and a female singer who sang sad songs of love. The messages were: "Never trust your heart," "Love never lasts," "Be happy today because tomorrow love will be gone." Everyone, especially the women, became teary-eyed after each song.

It seemed that the sadder the song the more they loved it. To complement the evening, we had a bottle of vin mousseux, which is a sparkling white wine that substitutes for the more expensive champagne. By midnight, the evening was over and the patrons were leaving the cabaret. It was a very pleasant evening because I understood that it was the French custom to have the girl's mother along for the first date. In addition, I had a chance to immerse myself in the French language and French culture. It was an extracurricular assignment I undertook to enhance my studies at the university.

I made a date to see Natalie again the next weekend. Everything went considerably better on the second date because her mother allowed her to go alone with me. She was intelligent, interesting, and very pretty. This helped me in my studies. At times, she seemed sad, very serious and quiet, but many people felt that way after the war. There was much sadness and tragedy that six years of war inflicted on individual lives. She told me that her family had come to France when the Bolsheviks took over Russia during the revolution in 1917. Life had been difficult for them because they had lost everything in the revolution. After seeing Natalie several more times, I thought that I was madly in love with her. Although I knew very little about her, that did not seem to matter, so I asked her to marry me. Why not? Other GIs were getting married to French girls and when you are lonely, it seems like a good idea. After talking to her family, she accepted.

I wrote home to tell them that I was engaged to a French girl, Natalie, and included her picture in the letter. My mother wrote back a letter of congratulations and said she was going to look for an engagement ring to send me.

In the meantime, Natalie asked about my home and family. What kind of house did we live in? How many members were in the family? Were we wealthy? Did we have servants? I did not want to give a wrong impression and replied that we were among the middle class, the bourgeoisie. We were not wealthy but not poor. The conversation troubled me because I did not know what she thought a marriage to an American would be like for her.

Shortly thereafter, the courses at the university ended and we had to leave for our Army units. I had many questions to ask Natalie about our relationship and I know she had questions, too. They had to be abruptly left unanswered. That is the usual situation in the Army – here today and gone tomorrow.

THE LONG WAY BACK TO THE DIVISION

Our stay in Dijon ended after eight weeks, and we received orders to return to our units. Our orders read: "The following enlisted men are to report immediately upon arrival to the Commanding General of the 100th Infantry Division. etc." Each of us received a copy of the order with our name listed on it.

Since no date of arrival or mode of transportation was indicated on the orders, we had to decide the best route to take for the return trip to the division, which was headquartered in Stuttgart, Germany. That was northeast of Dijon, France. One soldier in our group had relatives he wanted to visit in Bordeaux, so he decided to go to the west coast of France en route to Stuttgart. The remaining three of us decided that the best route back to our units was by way of Paris.

I do not think the 100th Infantry Division ever had any units within 100 miles of the City of Lights. It seemed appropriate to go there, just once, to further our studies of French language and culture on our way back to the division. With our traveling orders in hand, we took a train to Paris with our duffel bags. When we arrived, we were immediately directed to a kind of hotel for American soldiers. Everyone was very gracious to us and we had whatever we needed. We saw the famous tourist sights – the Eiffel Tower, the Louvre, Les Invalides, the Arc de Triomphe, the Follies Bergere, the boulevards, sidewalk cafes – and had a very good time. After three days, with money and time running out, we took another train back to the division. I don't know when the soldier who went to Bordeaux returned to the division because I never saw him again.

Upon my return, I thought it would be a good idea to have a discussion with a chaplain about the usual procedures for getting married to a French girl. At Battalion Headquarters, I spoke to the chaplain who said that I had to get permission from my company commander, and the army intelligence unit had to investigate the girl and her family before they could immigrate to the United States. This would take some time, and then there would be the waiting period before the marriage could finally be held. He said that, generally, there were few, if any, problems with these formalities.

All of this made me hesitant, because I began to wonder whether I really wanted to get married. I was just 21 and realized that I had not finished my college education. I did not know what I was going to do to a living. What would it be like to return to civilian life and start a fam. . . There were not many good jobs available before the war. Some lawyers became shoe salesmen. Some college graduates worked as letter carriers in the post office. The U.S. Government had programs such as the Works Project Administration to create jobs. I would be one of millions of veterans returning at the same time to start again. It might not be easy.

The chaplain did not try to dissuade me or encourage me. His position was neutral and I had to decide for myself. However, he had been with many soldiers who had seen combat and knew of the effect it had on their lives. I was one of them. I hungered for real affection and thirsted for normalcy. It was easy to succumb to the warmth and softness of a woman. The difficult decision to go ahead with the process was left to me, and I decided to it give it serious thought.

We then started to talk about the war that had just ended. I found the chaplain was a "regular guy" who was easy to talk to. The discussion came around to our experiences in the 100th Infantry Division and about New Year's Eve 1945. He said that at the time of the German "Nordwind" offensive, SHAEF (Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces) knew of the coming attack. In response, they decided to allow the forces on our front to withstand the attack as well as we were able. We would not receive any reinforcements, because Allied armies in the North had first priority after the Battle of the Bulge. If we could not hold back the Germans, Eisenhower and the top generals were committed to let the Seventh Army on the southern front collapse. I was astounded to hear this. That was why we did not get any replacements for so long! That was why we had so few men to hold such a long stretch of our front! The chaplain knew this and had said a special prayer for us. It must have helped because we were able to withstand the assault on the 100th Division front.

PREPARING FOR JAPAN

10 August 1945 was the date set for the 100th Infantry Division to be on alert for deployment to the Pacific Theater via the United States.

Hoppy (Capt. Hopkins) had come back to the company on 9 May 1945, and though the war was over in Europe, we had to train for combat in the Far East. Out came the U.S. Army Training Manuals on infantry tactics, reconnaissance patrols, combat patrols, care and cleaning of weapons, map reading, and on and on. We also became the jogging company that ran double-time all around our assigned area. For those of us who had just finished a long period in combat, our enthusiasm for this return to basics was less than minimal. While we were jogging one afternoon around Bavaria, I was near the tail end of the company with another laggard. Bringing up the rear was a new lieutenant who had just joined the company and had not seen any combat. He shouted at us, "Let's go! Keep up with the platoon! We have to get ready for Japan!" My buddy, who had little reverence for raw shavetails, replied, "I don't see any medals on you, lieutenant!" Normally, that would have called for some disciplinary action, but the times were different and the young officer just let it slide.

We were being taught again the basics of being an infantry soldier. We were outfitted in clean uniforms, with clean weapons. We were cleanshaven, and it was spit and polish again. Much of the reason for this was that we were performing for the German civilians who wanted to see how the American Army compared with their army. We were based in a Wehrmacht barracks, and the company, which was at full strength, fell into formation and marched in close-order drill. It may have seemed a little ridiculous, but it was necessary to prove that we were a well-trained and disciplined company. It also gave us a challenge to show that we were really terrific soldiers and proud to be in the American Army. I think that impression came across to the civilian population.

There were souvenirs in those barracks, such as Nazi flags and other Nazi paraphernalia, pistols, rifles, swords, and uniforms. Much of it was sent home by the GIs. As a lark, I sent the largest Nazi flag I could find to a classmate from college who was serving on a U.S. Navy ship in the Pacific Theater. To my surprise the U.S. Post Office delivered it. When

he received it, he wrote back that the whole ship's crew was stunned when he showed it to them fully opened.

As time went on, we got to know some of the local people, even though we had orders not to fraternize with the German people. Since we had free time to patronize the local beer hall, it was difficult not to get to know the people. Many of them wanted to talk to us about relatives in Chicago or Milwaukee or Brooklyn. The young women who had no contact with any young men for a very long time were not bashful and easily approachable, so that non-fraternization was observed with a blind eye.

We were strangely drawn together. They were not the hated enemy, but rather nice, ordinary, friendly people. And we were not the hated Amies (American soldiers), but only young, polite, fun-loving men. To me, it was a ludicrous farce. Only a few days ago, we were killing their soldiers and their soldiers were killing my buddies. Except for the Hitler Jugend, who scowled at us because they thought they were a superior Aryan race, we found little animosity from the older civilians. I felt like the Hitler Jugend, however, and had to hide my feeling of scorn for these "docile" ones who had started the war. Though that feeling has diminished over the years, it has never completely gone.

Bartering with American cigarettes was active between the civilians and the GIs. For a pack of cigarettes, we could have our picture taken in a studio by a professional photographer. Cigarettes were traded for beer, wine, and schnapps. American cigarettes were highly prized by the Germans with the smoking habit because they had been smoking ersatz cigarettes made of a leaf that tasted awful and reeked badly. Lung cancer was never considered a problem then and most people smoked. We even had our laundry done by a hausfrau for a bar of soap. Real soap was in short supply then. Despite all these minor things, it seemed that the worst of times was behind all of us.

I missed bed check one night, because I was having a good time at a local hofbrau. There was beer, music and dancing and I forgot to get back in time. As a result, I was demoted from Acting Sergeant to Private First Class. Since I had never been given the actual rank, stripes or pay, my December 1944 non-promotion was a non-demotion. My feeling was one of indifference, because it had been such a long time, I suspected that the promotion was not coming. After all, I had been rejected for OCS at Fort Knox and grounded as an Air Cadet by order of Gen. Arnold in earlier times. I felt very comfortable as a PFC.

14 August 1945 was V-J Day. The Japanese had unconditionally surrendered. Training for Love Company and the 100th Division to go to the Pacific Theater was ended.

GOING HOME?

The time had come to return home to the U.S. The order in which soldiers were to be repatriated depended upon several things, such as length of service, time served overseas, and number of medals. We had scoffed at the idea of getting medals or "tin badges" or "fruit salad" during combat. Of what use would they be if they were pinned on your grave? We never thought of much more than living from day to day and killing as many of the enemy as possible so that we could go home.

It seemed that most of the citations for medals were written up by officers for fellow officers and they usually deserved them. However, most dogfaces performed heroically, and occasionally when an application for a well-earned medal was submitted, it was returned with the letters "LD" (Line of Duty). Now that a medal earned points toward an early return home and a discharge, it had some value. Fifty-five points or more entitled the soldier to that bon voyage. I, and many others, had 54 points or less and had to bide our time until the Army could assign us to other duties.

At headquarters, orders were being cut for soldiers who were not going home with the division. They were to be assigned to other units that became the U.S. Army of Occupation. The country was under the control of a military government and had to be administered by the Army in the U.S. sector. There were displaced persons from many countries in factories and slave labor camps. Allied prisoners of war from many countries had to be cared for and repatriated. Concentration camps with victims of Nazi barbarism were in dire need of medical help and nourishment. German prisoners of war had to be interrogated before release into civilian life. The task was mind-boggling, and the help of the German civilians was needed to handle the work.

I was transferred to a Military Government unit in Kassel, Germany – the only one from my company. It was in September 1945 that I said "good-bye" to Love Company and the few old buddies that were still there. From 6 October 1944 to 8 May 1945, according to the Morning Reports of that period, 398 men and officers had been in the company for varying periods of time. That was twice the original number who went overseas.

With the exception of those who were cooks or clerks, not many were still there at the end. Some had been in the company for only a few days or a few weeks, and it was impossible to get to know them. Perhaps we spoke a few civil words on a chow line or when we were in reserve or when we were marching from one sector to another. The only time for a long conversation was in a foxhole, but you seldom got to know your buddy very well. Then, of course, he was gone and you had another green replacement in the foxhole. That is when you began to wonder when you would be wounded or killed. I was very fortunate, but I missed all those good buddies who were gone. Since I could not say good-bye to them before I shipped out, I did not feel too badly about leaving. It was not the same Love Company anymore.

Besides the memories, I had one small souvenir to remind me of my old buddies. I received a set of winter uniform ODs (olive drab trousers, jacket, and overseas cap) to replace the ones I turned in back in Marseilles before we entered combat. These were issued to us when the war ended. Of course, they were not the same ODs I had before. Inscribed in the overseas cap I received was the name "Zilliox." At first, I felt uneasy wearing the cap that once belonged to Pfc. William G. Zilliox who was killed at Lemberg on 8 December 1944. He was a BAR man who died firing his gun at the enemy. I remembered him as a tall soldier who was pleasant and just another nice young guy. I thought of asking for another cap, but decided that I could not do that. I wore it proudly in his memory until I was discharged.

U.S. ARMY OF OCCUPATION

Kassel is an important city in the province of Hesse and the home of the Hessian soldiers who fought as mercenaries for the British during the American Revolution. This city suffered great destruction during the war. Rubble was piled high along the sides of the road. Yet in many sections of the city there was only minor damage.

I was assigned to a Military Government unit on the outskirts of the city where there was a supply depot consisting of four large warehouses inside a walled compound. The personnel operating the depot were two officers, three or four noncoms and about eight enlisted men. I was placed in charge of one warehouse where I had a crew of German civilians to do the work of moving and storing the food we received by railroad freight cars and by truck. The warehouse had a rail siding and platform for the boxcars to be loaded and unloaded. Cartons of canned goods, tins of biscuits, bags of flour, barrels of lard, and assorted other goods were in our warehouses for distribution.

One older German man was selected to be my assistant and foreman of the crew. I was to fill orders for DP (displaced persons) camps from the stocks in the warehouse. It was an easy assignment, and I only had to give orders and see that they were carried out. If I found any sign of theft or pilferage, I was to report it to S. Sgt. Virgil K. Lancaster, who was our top noncom in charge of discipline. When a thief was apprehended, he was sent to S. Sgt. Lancaster for instruction on the evils of dishonesty. This took place in a basement room of the office building, where the culprit was soundly beaten by the heavy fists of our massive sergeant. Then the thief was fired from the crew. This method of communication resulted in a minimum of pilferage, so that the food and supplies in our care went almost entirely to the needy and not to the black market.

The compound was under guard at all times. However, we did not have to do any guard duty. This was done by a small detail of Polish soldiers, which gave us a lot of free time. On one weekend, a 500 pound barrel of lard which was on the end of a loading dock mysteriously disappeared. This was no small item because a truck was needed to haul it away. The guards were closely interrogated but they claimed complete ig-

norance. Some disciplinary action was taken but the culprits were never found.

Occasionally, a young worker who had formerly been in the Hitler Youth Movement – the Jugend – would act somewhat surly and make remarks or gestures to show his disdain for me as an American soldier. Since I was in charge and carried a .45 caliber automatic pistol in the holster on my belt, I did not accept such behavior. Once, I pulled out the pistol and explained to the foreman that I had been in the front lines, and I had no qualms about shooting anyone who threatened me. He took to heart my meaning and thereafter, the crew was very cooperative and respectful.

This kind of arrogance reminded me of the situation in Fort Bragg during the summer of 1944 when I was in training to be an infantryman. There was a large group of German prisoners on the base from the Afrika Corps who were being guarded by civilian soldiers like me. They were detailed to do minor work around the base such as loading or unloading trucks or road repair and so forth. They would do everything at the slowest possible pace and add jibes and laughs at guards who could not respond in any way. It seemed that they were the battle-hardened veterans to be admired by the raw recruits watching them. Even our officers seemed to defer to them and allow them to smirk and laugh at us – the poor, weak, hapless American soldier who would be destroyed by their comrades still fighting for Germany. I never forgot their grinning arrogance while they were the prisoners and we were the intimidated guards. How different it would be now if I were guarding those prisoners.

In our motor pool, we had four Jeeps, two 2½ ton GMC trucks, two Harley-Davidsons and one Indian motorcycle, two 1½ ton Dodge trucks and some German vehicles. I was curious about the German-built Ford truck, which was of medium size, and decided to drive it. It started easily, and I drove it slowly, but when I wanted to make a turn, I had to spin the steering wheel like a top before it would change direction. I never drove it again.

The motorcycles were a challenge to ride because I had to learn by doing. The Harley-Davidsons were larger than the Indian motorcycle. They were painted in the army's dull O.D. color, with a white star, and had large windshields. I had to learn to twist the left handle for the spark and the right handle for the throttle. The left pedal was the clutch and the right pedal was the brake. The gearshift, which had neutral and first, second, and third gears, was by my right hand in front of my seat. The kickstarter was by my right foot. To practice, I had to negotiate the motorcycle around

a small open area in the yard. This small clearing was situated between several piles of British hardtack biscuits in metal tins that rose about fifteen feet high.

My first attempt, after starting it and shifting into first gear by using the clutch, resulted in my crashing into a pile of biscuits. I fell off the bike as it toppled on its side and scraped the inside of my left leg. No damage was done to the machine and my injury was very minor. After several more attempts, I managed to concentrate and coordinate the intricacies of steering, manually shifting gears using the clutch, controlling the speed with the right hand throttle, braking with the right foot, and shifting into neutral when stopping. I felt that I had accomplished a tremendous feat when I could handle a motorcycle with ease.

It was exhilarating to ride out into the country where there was no traffic and speed up to 70 miles an hour. Of course, it was also rather stupid because if I had hit a rock in the road, I would have been thrown off the bike into the next world. Protective helmets were not in vogue then. The farm country air was heavy with the aroma of liquid cow manure fertilizer. Whew! It was perfume to the flying bugs of all sizes that infested the area. My face, arms, and legs were splattered with them as I sped along. I had to keep my mouth closed, too. This cooled my enthusiasm for motorcycling on a recreational basis. Incidentally, I rode all of our motorcycles and found that the Harley-Davidsons were heavy and powerful but the Indian seemed to be a peppier and faster machine.

For our small installation of about 12 men, we had a young man from Holland as an interpreter, an older German woman as cook, and a young Ukrainian woman who helped and served the food and cleaned the quarters. We had our laundry done beautifully. Our uniforms came back spotless and pressed perfectly. Even our boxer shorts had been pressed with a crease in the legs. Our food was requisitioned from the commissary of the Army Air Corps, because they had the best quality. Also, rations were ordered for 40 men, not 12, so that there was always plenty of the best food. Our cook made many German dishes: sauerbraten, beef roulade, wiener schnitzel, dumplings, potato pancakes, etc., and it was all delicious. There were also desserts and beverages. There was no chow line with the food slopped into our messkits. We had clean napkins, dishes and flatware at every meal. They were taken away afterwards to be cleaned. There was no K.P. To a civilian this would not seem to be very unusual, but for a dogface it was a bit of paradise.

Tanya, the Ukrainian D.P., was a young, pretty brunette who was subjected to teasing and flirting at every meal but she never responded to any of the passes. She was efficient and aloof. Eventually, she responded to our teasing when we learned to say "I love you" in Russian but that was all. Perhaps, she longed to go home to her family just as most of us did.

On our time off, we went to the local hofbrau where there was beer, a German band, and dancing. The Germans did not know how to jitterbug, but they waltzed furiously. The men and women spun each other around at a dizzying pace. I danced the waltz with a fraulein, and it was not anything like the Blue Danube, which is graceful and smooth. This was just brute force as we spun round and round, faster and faster until the music stopped. It was exhausting and exhilarating.

During the breaks when the band rested, Don (Pfc. Manson Allerton Donaghey) would sit at the piano and play the popular songs from back home: "I'll Be Seeing You," "Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree With Anyone Else But Me," "I'll Be Home For Christmas," "I'll Walk Alone," and others. We would sing along and feel very sentimental. One evening, a soldier came in and told Don to stop playing because he didn't want to hear it. I became incensed and stuck my face into his and said, "I want to hear it!" That was the end of his objection.

I had a date with a fraulein that was quite unusual. She invited me to attend a concert in a garden or auditorium where everyone was dressed in formal civilian clothes. With my uniform, I was also in a sort of formal attire. The classical music program was performed by an accomplished group of musicians. They were excellent and the audience applauded them enthusiastically. How did these people conduct such a destructive war and maintain the appearance of culture in the bombed-out city of Kassel? It seemed unbelievable to me, but I learned that some Germans love the boisterous beer halls and others do not.

Back at the warehouse, we were kept busy filling orders for food and supplies to DP camps. One day I was ordered to pick up a load of coal from another warehouse in Kassel. I was sent out with an army 2½ ton truck (also called a 6 by 6 because it could be shifted into gear to drive all six wheels). The canvas top of the truck was removed and the wooden benches on each side of the back were locked in an up position, so that there was an open area to receive the coal. I drove to the depot to get the load of coal. When the loading was completed, I started my return trip to our depot. The truck was now moving more slowly under the load, which may have been about five tons of coal. I had no trouble handling the truck

until I started down a hill that led into the center of the city. The truck was in gear for level ground, and as it rolled down hill it picked up speed as gravity took over. I could not drop shift into a lower gear to slow down the truck, because to double clutch I would have to shift into neutral first before I could gun the engine and shift into a lower gear. The moment I shifted into neutral, I would never have been able to shift it back into gear and I would have lost control of the truck. My only option was to apply the brakes and hope that this would slow the truck as I was careening down the hill.

In the meantime, ahead of me was the main street of the city and I had to make a right turn. A crowd of civilians was waiting on an island for a streetcar to arrive. As I turned, I was afraid I would swerve into them. I was blasting away with my horn while I was using all my strength to hold down the brake pedal and praying all the time that the streetcar was not coming. What a relief it was that my prayers were answered! I slowed down the truck on the level road and drove slowly all the rest of the way. When I got back to my warehouse compound, my heart was beating rapidly and I felt completely exhausted. Never again would I forget to shift into a lower gear before I drove a truck down a hill.

Meanwhile, at the warehouse when a train arrived with freight cars loaded with cargo for different warehouses, we had a switching engine that was used to move the cars from one area to another. A few of the soldiers learned how to operate this small diesel engine and were able to hook up a freight car and deliver it to the correct loading platform. The engine had a shed at the end of one of the lines where it was sometimes housed when not in use. At the rear end of the shed where the rails ended, there was a bumper to stop the engine from going out the back of the shed and over the edge into a gully. One morning we returned to the yard and found that the switching engine had been driven into the shed and beyond. Somehow, the engine hit the stopping block with such force that it went right through it and landed on its side in the gully behind the shed. Someone had accidentally or deliberately put the engine out of commission.

Without this engine, we had the problem of moving the freight cars to the right loading platforms as trains arrived. At first, we used brute strength in the form of the German crews, who were told to push a freight car into its proper place. This did not work out very well. The best solution we could devise was to attach one end of a steel cable to the coupling of a freight car and attach the other end to the trailer hitch of a Jeep. I was assigned to the task of pulling the freight car while driving the Jeep. This

worked very well when a freight car had to be moved to a loading platform. However, when we had to move a freight car so that it was coupled to another freight car, it became a very exciting maneuver. A freight car would have a cable connected to the trailer hook of my Jeep, and I would then pull it along the tracks toward the stationary freight car. At the last moment, I would sharply steer the Jeep off the tracks and let the freight car I was pulling slam into the stationary freight car and connect to it. This was like playing a game called "chicken."

Toward Christmas 1945, there arrived at our compound an Army Quartermaster Corps coffee-roasting truck. I did not know the Army had such a piece of equipment. At the warehouse, we had hundreds of burlap bags of green coffee beans from Central America, probably Honduras. The detail had come to roast the beans in our inventory. When the roasting began, the aroma of real coffee wafted over the entire neighborhood. The Germans went crazy. They had been drinking ersatz coffee for so many years that they had almost forgotten the aroma of the real thing. For Christmas, we made bags of about half a kilo of fresh roasted coffee and gave one to each of our workers. They were delighted and could not thank us enough.

Christmas was a great time. We had presents from home and there was a feeling of thankfulness. The wife of my foreman had knitted a white muffler, and he presented it to me as an expression of good will. What a contrast to the Christmas of 1944!

Right after Christmas, I was given a furlough and chose to go back to the Riviera. No one else from our small unit was going at that time, but I did not mind going alone. It was winter and two weeks in the sun would be a treat.

RETURN TO THE FRENCH RIVIERA

On the civilian train, there was a U.S. Army officer who was the "train commander" whose assignment was to see that the soldiers were orderly and to handle any problems that might arise. As the train neared Lyons, I had the brilliant idea to stop off and visit Natalie. However, I had to get permission from the officer in charge. I went to him and feigned motion sickness. I said that I had to get off the train because I did not feel well and that I would be all right if I could stay overnight in Lyons and catch the train to Nice the following day. He listened with a skeptical look and gave his permission for me to leave.

From the station, I telephoned Natalie and was told that she was not at home and that I should call later. I went to a U.S. Army social club in the city and was set up with a bunk for the night. When I called later, I was told that she was away and would not be back for several days. My brilliant strategy was a failure, so the following morning, I boarded a train for Nice.

I went to the Hotel Ruhl again, and everything was almost the same as it was the first time I had been there about six months earlier. Since the summer crowd was not there, it was not as exciting. The weather was fine, but there were no beachgoers. Winter and the holiday season cast a serious mood on the resort. Perhaps it was just my feeling that was restrained. I had not seen Natalie. I was alone. I had been to the Riviera in the bright summer and not the gloomy winter. It was now New Year's Eve 1945. I thought of New Year's Eve 1944, of the battle, of those who were killed, and of how I had survived. I bought a black market bottle of White Horse Scotch for $20.00, and I sat in the lobby of the hotel from dinnertime until after midnight and slowly drank the entire bottle by myself. I had never done that before and have not done it since. The liquor did not boost my spirits because I was feeling very depressed and sorry for myself. Since there was nothing much to celebrate I said, "Happy New Year" to no one in particular and went to bed.

During my stay, I had noticed that there were some married couples in the hotel on their honeymoon. They were mostly American soldiers with French brides. I was curious about them and observed how they were relating to each other. As I studied them, it struck me that at mealtime and

in the lobby, they seemed to be very distant toward each other. There was very little animated conversation or laughing. They seemed somewhat bored with each other while all around them the GIs were joking, laughing, and having a good time. I wondered: "Would that be the same with Natalie and me? What would we talk about? We hardly spoke each other's language well. Would it be a mistake to get married? We don't know each other very well. I haven't met her family and I don't even know anything about them. Are we really suited to each other?"

I was not yet 22 years old and I thought that it was too soon to try to work out all the problems in my life with the added responsibility of a wife. After all, marriage was always a permanent commitment. Divorce was never a consideration. My doubts became a final decision. I was not ready to get married!

BIDING TIME

The furlough was over and I returned to Kassel, where I was living a life of luxury for a soldier. Letters from Natalie were there also. I had to answer them, but I did not have the heart to write that I wanted to break the engagement. Should I write to tell her of all the doubts that I had about this marriage? Should I care if she became angry and hated me? What should I do? I was a coward and did not write at all.

In the meantime, my military government unit in Kassel was being disbanded. I was assigned to drive S. Sgt. Lancaster to Wiesbaden where he was to join a group that was going home. It was mid-January, and we took a 1½ ton army truck for the 100-mile trip. We started early in the morning on the Autobahn. There were no civilian automobiles, with coal-burning tanks for fuel, on the road. Only army vehicles were using the Autobahn. We arrived in time for lunch in Wiesbaden. After saying good-bye, I started back to Kassel.

It was late afternoon, but there was plenty of time until the dinner hour. There was very little traffic on the road and I was not rushed. However, dusk was at hand and I put on my headlights. As I looked at the road, it seemed to be somewhat whitish and some snow was falling. Nevertheless, I was cruising along at about 45 miles an hour because the truck had a governor on the engine so that it could not go any faster. Suddenly, the truck skidded to the left, and I cut the wheel into the skid and straightened it out. "It must have been a patch of ice," I thought as I resumed speed. Shortly thereafter, the truck skidded again and I cut into the skid to straighten it, but it skidded in the other direction, and when I cut the wheel again, the back end of the truck passed the front end and it went off to the right side of the road. It had made a 360 degree spin and landed with the right side of the truck hitting the ground and bouncing back up. I was in a daze and took some time to calculate what to do. The truck seemed to be undamaged because the engine started again after it had stalled. I put it in gear to climb out of the slight embankment, but it was stuck. The right rear wheel was in a foxhole. The Germans had dug foxholes about 2 feet wide and 6 feet long all along the shoulders of the Autobahn for miles, and my truck was trapped in one of them. Using four-wheel drive, the truck could not pull out of the hole. I was stuck.

I stood by the side of the road trying to get another truck to pull me out, but there was no traffic at all for more than an hour. Finally, an army ambulance came by and stopped. The driver saw the problem and said that he would send help later. At that moment, he was rushing to an accident. A 2½ ton truck with a load of soldiers had driven off the Autobahn from a temporary bridge. It had plunged 50 feet down an embankment.

I remembered the temporary bridges the U.S. Army engineers had put up where the Germans had dynamited them along the Autobahn. Those "Bailey" bridges did not have high sidewalls to them. You had to drive slowly across them, especially on a bad night like this.

Army trucks did not have heaters, and I had been sitting bundled up in the driver's seat trying to keep warm. It was probably about seven o'clock when I was rescued. An Army truck came with a winch, attached a cable to my truck and pulled it out of the ditch. I followed the guys in the rescue truck back to their quarters and was given a meal and a bed for the night. I sat up and talked with them about the roads and the accident. It was sad that it had happened to those GIs while they were on their way home. Later, we learned that several men were killed and many others were injured. Again, I felt that there was some guardian angel watching over me. After breakfast the next morning, I thanked my new found buddies and drove back to Kassel. When I arrived, I learned that I had not been expected to return the same day!

Our work at the warehouse depot had slowed to a minimum. I, and the other soldiers who remained at the depot, had the luxury of doing whatever we wanted. We had hardly any duties to perform. It was a delightful vacation as we waited for further orders.

CAMP TOP HAT, ANTWERP, BELGIUM, AND HOME

Finally, the time had come to pack my duffel bag and head for home. It was February 1946 and the countryside was snow-covered. I boarded a train with other soldiers from my Military Government unit, and it was a slow nonstop ride from Kassel until we reached the Belgian border. There, the train had to wait until a Belgian locomotive replaced the German locomotive so that we could proceed into Belgium. This took several hours.

When we reached Brussels, the train stopped again for a few more hours, and many of us got off and wandered around the immediate area of the railroad station. It seemed that all the souvenir shops were selling "Piss Boy" statues. I had never heard the story of this little boy who had wandered into the woods and his parents thought was lost. They frantically looked everywhere for him. When they finally found him, he was safe and calmly peeing in a stream. They were so thrilled that they had a bronze statue made of him as they had found him. Thus, there is a fountain in the city of Brussels with the statue of a little boy peeing in it. Travel can be very educational.

We reboarded the train and at last, we reached Antwerp and Camp Top Hat. This was a field with army tents by the hundreds for the soldiers who were waiting to embark for the U.S. The facilities were less than luxurious. We were back to standard army quarters: army cots, pot-bellied stove, inside an eight-man army tent and army chow. I did not complain. Life was good and I was headed home.

On 3 March 1946, we boarded the S.S. Vassar Victory. She was a later model of the wartime, mass-produced cargo ships that were called "Liberty" ships. This one was outfitted as a troop ship with bunks below decks stacked two high, a sparse dining hall, kitchen, and cramped toilet facilities. The ship was docked at a pier in Antwerp and had to move through a canal to reach the open sea. Across the canal were drawbridges for vehicular traffic that had to be raised to allow our ship to pass through. The bridges rested on concrete bulkheads when they were down. As our ship passed through the canal, the pilot managed to ram the ship into one of the bulkheads, giving the starboard side a sizable dent. This concave

dent pushed the inside wall by a stack of bunks about two feet inward. The ship dropped anchor and waited for a report on the extent of the damage. After a prolonged delay, the ship's engineers deemed that the Vassar Victory was seaworthy and could proceed on its journey. Now, the ship could weigh anchor and move on. However, when the chain was raised, there was no anchor on the end. It was left on the bottom of the canal. This made me wonder what was going to happen next.

From that point on, however, the voyage was uneventful except that I was seasick for three days. The smell of hundreds of hard-boiled eggs in the morning killed my appetite for food. When I did eat, I ran to the rail and sent the meal to the fishes. Little by little, I managed to accustom my stomach to the roll and pitch of the ship. Thereafter, I was able to ingest a little of the forgettable food that was served.

Apparently, there was no urgency to rush home to New York, because the ship's captain told us that he was going to take a course that would pass by the Azores Islands. This was several hundred miles out of our way, but he thought that it would be a memorable experience for the returning soldiers. I remember the small island of Corvo, set in the middle of a vast expanse of the Atlantic Ocean, with little white houses set on the hilly terrain. It seemed like a place set apart from the rest of the world, something like an isolation ward.

On 13 March 1946, the ship docked in New York. There were no tugboats in the harbor blasting their foghorns heralding our arrival. The Red Cross girls who gave us coffee and doughnuts when we embarked for Europe were not there to welcome us back. There were no photographers or newspaper reporters waiting to report our return. Too many soldiers had already returned so that we were just another shipload of soldiers. In fact, though I did not have enough points to return with my 100th Infantry Division, I had arrived back in the States only a few weeks after they did.

We were transported to Fort Dix, New Jersey, where we had to go through the routine of being discharged from the Army. During my final physical examination I was told that I had a large perforation of the right eardrum. Otherwise, I was perfectly healthy including my feet that had survived trench foot. After several days, I reached the final interview where my service record was examined for the information to be typed on my discharge paper. That included length of service, overseas service, battles, medals, highest rank, disabilities, etc. When the perforated eardrum was mentioned as a possible reason for a disability pension, I was asked, "Can you hear?" I said, "Yes." No disability pension. But I did not care.

The Army took back all its GI equipment: messkit, utensils, canteen, raincoat, shelter half and tent pegs, combat boots, fatigue jacket and pants, etc. It left me with my olive drab uniform, overcoat, shoes, overseas cap, socks, underwear and personal belongings in a duffel bag. Before my uniform was returned to me, the jacket, also called a blouse, was taken to a seamstress who sewed on my PFC rank, 3 year service stripe, 3 overseas stripes, 100th Infantry Division patch on the right shoulder, 7th Army patch on the left shoulder for the Army of Occupation, and on the sleeve, a diamond emblem with an eagle which was for an honorable discharge. Included with my papers was a lapel button of the golden eagle for honorable discharge to be worn with my civilian jacket. This golden eagle was sometimes called the "ruptured duck."

A train took me to Pennsylvania Station in New York and I took the subway from there to Brooklyn. I walked five blocks from the subway station to my house and felt that it was somewhat strange that everything seemed just the same after three years. The houses, stores, and people had not been in any way affected by the war. Almost all the cars were models of the 1930s because no new models were made during the war. That seemed to add to the feeling that I had not really been away at all. As I walked along with my duffel bag on my shoulder, no one paid any particular attention to another soldier on his way home.

The 1938 Buick sedan my family had purchased from a neighbor while I was overseas was parked in front of the house. That was a change because that was the first car the family ever owned. I had telephoned my mother from Fort Dix that I was on my way home. So my arrival was not a surprise. As I walked in the door, I saw that everything was the same as when I was last there on furlough. There were no special decorations, such as a sign: "Welcome Home, Johnny!" or patriotic flags or anything at all. No party or celebration was made for my arrival. However, I received many hugs and kisses from the family. Perhaps, it was better to immediately return to normal and resume our lives and relationships as they were.

I did not say anything about my war experiences and they did not ask. I did not feel in a conversational mood and did not try to initiate any small talk. In fact, I felt dejected when I should have been happy to be back with my family. They were glad that the family had returned to the way it had been years ago. That was not my feeling because I was no longer the average teenager and I wasn't sure if I was an average young adult. I could not relate to them at all.

How could I tell them how many times I had been shelled by artillery and mortars, and shot at? How could I tell them how it felt to see a buddy killed or to kill another person? They could never understand living with the bare essentials of food and clothing in rain, snow, and bitter cold for weeks and months at a time in a foxhole or a dugout. In fact, they could never really know how much of life is made up of unimportant things.

The transition from army life to being a civilian again was so hard that I could not make an instant adjustment. I had left a life that I had grown accustomed to. I had become a man and had seen and done more than most people do in a lifetime. Now, I was expected to answer to my mother and father, who still thought of me as the teenager who left home three years before. This came across to me during their conversations from the first day of my return. I was told of the hardships they had suffered because of rationing. They had shortages of meat, butter, gasoline, eggs, and other things. Nevertheless, they kept busy supporting the armed forces by sending gift packages, collecting tin foil, saving metal cans, rolling bandages for the Red Cross, knitting sweaters, scarves, and gloves, and so forth. I listened and, sarcastically, thought how difficult it must have been.

Because of the Depression before the war, many people struggled to make a living. The war brought jobs for everyone. Women took jobs normally considered men's work. Some unions took advantage of the war shortages and called strikes for more pay. Some people made a lot of money in the black market selling rationed goods. I heard many people complain that the war had ended too soon. I listened and, cynically, thought, "Why did I fight so hard to end it?"

Some years later, a neighbor who had been in a concentration camp said that the United States did not do enough during the war to rescue the Jews in Nazi death camps. His complaint was that our government knew or should have known the desperate situation there and should have done more to save them. We should have sent paratroopers and infantrymen to battle through to the concentration camps. I listened and, quietly, thought, "Was it not enough that we fought and died to win the war?"

It took many years to relegate thoughts of war to the recesses of my mind. In the beginning of my civilian life, I would hear the sound of a bus or truck backfire and I would instinctively want to dive for the ground. Fortunately, I would catch myself in time so that I did not actually fall to the sidewalk, but I always reacted by flinching. In time, that faded away and my mind adjusted to sounds of civilian life.

LOVE COMPANY REVISITED

In 1977, 22 years after the war was over, I received a copy of the 100th Infantry Division Association News in the mail. At first, I thought, "What are these guys doing? Are they fighting the war all over again? Won't they let me forget it?"

I read the entire issue of four pages and put it aside. The annual reunion was to be held in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania after Labor Day, and reservations had to be sent in by the middle of August. I put it out of my mind and did not consider attending the convention, but on Labor Day, I thought again about it. After discussing it with my wife, Grace, she suggested that we could drive there and look around. It was only 125 miles from home. I argued that there were probably more than 25,000 soldiers who had been in the division, and the chances of meeting anyone I knew were highly improbable. Besides that, we did not have reservations and would not be admitted to the convention. Nevertheless, out of curiosity, we drove to the hotel to see what it was like. It was a pleasant, summer day and we could easily drive home after our visit.

When we arrived at the Host Inn, we saw a banner draped across the front of the hotel with the division name and insignia on it. In the lobby, there was a bustle of activity and people that I did not recognize. Suddenly, I heard, "Hey, Khoury!" I looked around and to my surprise, I saw my old buddy, Willie (Bill) Young, at the other end of the lobby. He was at a table welcoming arrivals. I told him that we had just stopped by to see if there was anyone here from Love Company. He said, "Yes! Yes! A lot of the guys are here. There's Hound Dog, Skull, Gabe, Abe Lincoln, Al Coursey, Jimmy Adair, and Charlie Brigandi with their wives. Dan Downey, Roy Simmons, and so many others that you have to stay."

We were overwhelmed and said that we did not have a reservation. He took care of that and there was no problem. When we checked with the room clerk at the front desk, he found a room for us right in the hotel. It was a great reunion because I thought that I would never see any of the old company again. So many of them had left the company sometime before the end of the war that I had no idea what had happened to them. It felt great to see them alive and well.

We spent many hours recalling the events of the past: what happened to each of us after we left the company; what one remembered of a particular day; how one cheated death. The loneliness of that time was replaced by the brotherhood of veterans who had survived. I know of no one who kept a diary during combat. In my case, I did not consider it because each day might be my last. Secondly, many days were boring and with nothing to write about. Thirdly, I did not know where we were and what was happening. Finally, the idea of carrying a pencil and paper was too much additional baggage. Without the written account of my adventures, I have had to rely on resurrecting memories that have been deliberately suppressed. With the help of others, many old times have emerged from the shadows of my mind.

Since then, I have attended many reunions with my wife and made many friends of old buddies. However, the company roster is diminished each passing year and must soon fade into oblivion. At one reunion, I was reacquainted with Ray Uhl (Pfc. Raymond W. Uhl) who came to Love Company as a replacement 26 January 1945 and was seriously wounded at Beilstein 18 April 1945. He spoke of how the inevitable end would come to the men of the 100th Infantry Division. In anticipation of that event, he made a cask out of teak wood and hand-carved the emblem of the division and the insignia of the regiments on it. Inside, he put a special bottle of brandy to be presented to the last surviving member of the 100th Infantry Division. He hoped that this last soldier would drink it as a toast to the memory of all those who had gone before him. Ray died shortly thereafter and the gift he made is with other memorabilia wherever they are being kept.

At a reunion several years later, the subject of the bottle of brandy was mentioned at the business meeting. A member got up and asked, "Where is the bottle of brandy to be given to the last survivor of the division? I want to know because I expect to drink it!" "Not over my dead body!" yelled another voice from the audience. Whoever that old soldier will be, may he enjoy it and remember Ray Uhl and the rest of us.

Perhaps students of World War II will want to know something about the dogfaces, the nameless ones, who fought the battles in the rain, snow, and mud, night and day, for weeks and months. They got sick, wounded, and were killed thousands of miles from home for a cause they hardly understood. They were so young and will be forgotten, while the names of the generals and the campaigns will be etched in stone.

The May 7, 1995 edition of the New York Times Magazine was dedicated to the 50th Anniversary of the end of World War II in Europe. On the cover, there was a full-page photograph of a soldier taken during the war. On the index page it reads:

> "On the Cover: This G.I. was identified only as Cpl. Frank Johnson of Brooklyn when he was photographed during the Battle of the Bulge. The soldier had gone to a depot after his first night of combat, the anonymous photographer reported, to get blankets and ammo for his unit. Our efforts to trace Corporal Johnson have so far been unsuccessful."

When I saw the photograph, I recognized it immediately as the same one in the division book, The Story of the Century, on page 49. The caption in the book reads, "A tired dogface relaxes on a mountain of bedrolls after baptism of fire."

The New York Times later reported that they had found Frank Johnson living in Brooklyn and that he was in L Company, 399th Infantry Regiment, 100th Infantry Division. He said that he was retired and that he didn't remember much about the war. He remembered that his company commander was Capt. Dan Downey! Frank had a very poor memory because first sergeant was Dan Downey's highest grade.

As I followed this story, I was intrigued by how it developed into a saga that will be part of some future history book. Part of the story is true: Johnson was in Love Company, as reported, but then it takes some strange twists. Of the tens of thousands of photographs taken by the Army Signal Corps, how was this one selected for The Story of the Century and then how did the New York Times select the same one without seeing it in the book? Furthermore, the captions to both photographs are inaccurate. Johnson was not in the Battle of the Bulge, because our unit was on the Seventh Army Front on the southern flank and not involved in that conflict. This was not our "Baptism of Fire," because the Battle of the Bulge took place in the middle of December 1944 and we had been in combat since 1 November 1944. Finally, Johnson was our supply clerk. He handed out our uniforms and equipment when we were in Fort Bragg. Sometimes, he was not very sympathetic when someone complained that the size of the shoes or uniform did not fit. I never found a supply clerk in the Army who was soft-hearted.

When the photograph was taken, I recall that the company was on its way to the front and we passed Johnson as he was guarding our bedrolls. He looked at us, somewhat obliquely, because he knew that the com-

pany was going into combat. As supply clerk, he was excused from fighting. His job was to supply us with ammunition, equipment, and whatever we needed. Besides, he kept track of duffel bags with our personal belongings. Supply sergeants, supply clerks, kitchen crews, and office personnel were part of our infantry company, but they were not part of the fighting. Nevertheless, their work was important and they gave the soldiers in the foxholes the necessities they needed. They were the final links in the chain that extended all the way back to the factories in the United States that made the guns, bullets, grenades, sleeping bags, rations, clothing, boots, and everything else that we needed. It has been estimated that for every soldier in a foxhole, there were hundreds of people in the rear supporting him.

Ironically, like the hero in the book The Red Badge of Courage who never fired a shot or fought in a battle, T5 Frank Johnson will go down in history as the epitome of a fighting dogface in the Battle of the Bulge during World War II.

That is an appropriate ending for this story of Love Company.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Like most men who have been in combat, I felt that it was best to not think about the war since it was over and should be forgotten. I thought "nobody really cares." The most difficult problem I had was remembering what had happened in those days. No infantryman, I know, ever kept a diary of his experiences for several reasons. Firstly, what was the sense of trying to write with a pencil in a notebook that you had to carry in a protected place in your clothing while you lived in the great outdoors? If you were captured, the enemy would confiscate the diary and use any information you might have written in it. Finally, the chances were very good that your combat diary would be a very short story. Besides, you had other things on your mind.

Although I started this book with clouded memories, attending reunions of the division and meeting old buddies made me want to tell of our experiences as viewed from a foxhole. How well I succeeded, I leave to the judgment of the reader. I hoped to fulfill an obligation to honor, in a small way, the men of my generation.

At a reunion several years ago, I was fortunate to meet Thomas M. Mawn, Jr. He was not in my company, but he had a deep interest in the history of World War II and the importance of the infantry in combat. We exchanged correspondence for a few years before his death. He advised and encouraged me to seek the Morning Reports of Love Company that have been a vital part of this work.

I thank my daughter, Diane, and her husband, Stephen Seyboth. She edited this book and is responsible for making this a more professional work in grammar and punctuation. She refrained from interjecting any of her ideas or rewriting any story. He scanned and edited the old photographs to bring them back to life.

I am grateful to Alexander J. Lapa for his vivid recollections of the times, people, and events that I had forgotten. With his help, my reluctant memories were reawakened. Though they are now gone, I am indebted to William H. Young and Charles Brigandi, for their wonderful fellowship and shared memories. To all the men of Love Company, I am grateful for the time we shared as comrades.

As all writers who are married must acknowledge, I thank my wife, Grace, for her patience, encouragement, and love during the long struggle with this project.

John M. Khoury

APPENDIX A

Roster of L Company, 399th Infantry Regiment, 100th Infantry Division
8 September 1944, Fort Bragg, N.C.

Name	Rank	Mos	Duty
Simmons, Roy E.	1st Sgt.	585	First Sergeant
Kondra, Victor	Tech. Sgt.	651S	Platoon Sergeant
McCormack, Sterling M.	Tech. Sgt.	651G	Platoon Sergeant
Moran, James F.	Tech. Sgt.	651S	Platoon Sergeant
Warner, Argil H.	Tech. Sgt.	651S	Platoon Sergeant
Belt, John A.	S. Sgt.	824	Mess Sergeant
Butler, John P.	S. Sgt.	653	Squad Leader
Conroy, Clarence R.	S. Sgt.	653	Squad Leader
Coursey, Alfred W.	S. Sgt.	653	Squad Leader
DiBattista, Liberato	S. Sgt.	651G	Guide
Dean, Thomas	S. Sgt.	652	Section Leader
Ford, George P.	S. Sgt.	653	Squad Leader
Greaves, William E.	S. Sgt.	651	Guide
Greene, Harold D.	S. Sgt.	653	Squad Leader
Miele, Anthony J.	S. Sgt.	824	Mess Sergeant
Nulty, John C.	S. Sgt.	653	Squad Leader
Sparling, Chester E.	S. Sgt.	821	Supply Sergeant
Spiegler, Joseph A.	S. Sgt.	653	Squad Leader
Terwilliger, Charles M.	S. Sgt.	821	Supply Sergeant
Tyson, George F. Jr.	S. Sgt.	653	Squad Leader
Ulrich, Harold R.	S. Sgt.	653	Squad Leader
Wornick, James	S. Sgt.	652	Section Leader
Baud, John D.	Sgt.	653	Asst.SquadLeader
Brundidge, Arthur D. Jr.	Sgt.	653	Asst.SquadLeader
Campbell, Thomas E.	Sgt.	653	Asst SquadLeader
Dixon, Monroe W.	Sgt.	653	Asst.SquadLeader
Dunbar, Hollice E.	Sgt.	653	Asst.SquadLeader
Franzini, Nicholas D.	Sgt.	653	Asst.SquadLeader
Froio, Frank	Sgt.	653	Asst. Squad Leader

LOVE COMPANY

Gilfedder, Hugh	Sgt.	653	Asst. Squad Leader
Hedin, Samuel S.	Sgt.	653	Asst. Squad Leader
Johnson, Bernard M.	Sgt.	653	Asst. Squad Leader
Leslie, Lewis D.	Sgt.	653	Asst. Squad Leader
McDuffy, Martin M.	Sgt.	653	Asst. Squad Leader
Milewicz, Michael E.	Sgt.	653	Asst. Squad Leader
Tucker, Willie J.	Sgt.	653	Asst. Squad Leader
Hunt, Walter L.	Tech. 4	060	Cook
Thorick, Philip	Tech. 4	060	Cook
Bicofsky, Sam	Cpl.	405	Company Clerk
Cardozo, Stanley T.	Cpl.	745	Rifleman
Douda, Stanley	Cpl.	745	Rifleman
Kramer, Donald V.	Cpl.	745	Rifleman
Lamirand, Lloyd E.	Cpl.	745	Rifleman
Ledin, Waldemar N.	Cpl.	745	Rifleman
Norton, Charles W.	Cpl.	745	Rifleman
Brigandi, Charles J.	Tech. 5	060	Cook
Johnson, Frank A.	Tech. 5	511	Asst. Supply Clerk
Wascha, Henry J. Jr.	Tech. 5	060	Cook
Adair, James A.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Alexander, William N.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Audenino, Frank A.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Barnard, Dean S. Jr.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Binkley, Robert F.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Boggs, William W.	PFC	641	
Bohannon, Lee S.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Bolin, John H. Jr.	PFC	746	BAR Rifleman
Bower, Lloyd N.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Breuer, Adam A.	PFC	746	BAR Rifleman
Brubeck, Edwin D.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Cambigue, George J.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Chiri, Gabriel A.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Clendenin, Ralph	PFC	745	Rifleman
Cook, James L.	PFC	604	Machine Gunner
Cotton, Earl H.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Crittenden, Estil G.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Davis, Hugh F.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Davis, Threlkeld M.	PFC	746	BAR Rifleman
DeMarco, Joseph C.	PFC	521C	Cook

LOVE COMPANY

DeSanctis, Albert	PFC	504	
Downey, Daniel J.	PFC	521B	
Drye, Lonnie D.	PFC	607	Mortarman
Dyal, Owen P. Jr.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Egan, Thomas	PFC	607	Mortarman
English, John P. Jr.	PFC	746	BAR Rifleman
Erquiaga, Fernando	PFC	745	Rifleman
Ewing, Hugh F.	PFC	675	
Fortman, Walter P.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Gaffney, Thomas J. Jr.	PFC	521C	Cook
Gagnon, Joseph L.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Gloyna, Walter A.	PFC	675	
Goldman, Charles B.	PFC	504	
Greenbaum, Eugene	PFC	745	Rifleman
Hackett, Russell H.	PFC	746	BAR Rifleman
Hamer, Robert V.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Hankey, Floyd E.	PFC	803	
Haas, Samuel	PFC	745	Rifleman
Havens, George J.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Hawkins, James R.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Hickey, John M.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Howe, John W. Jr.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Hudec, John J.	PFC	675	
Khoury, John M.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Koistinin, Harold F.	PFC	675	
Kurtz, Warren F.	PFC	504	
Lapa, Alexander J.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Leone, George P.	PFC	504	
Lincoln, Paul E.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Lloyd, Maurice E.	PFC	746	BAR Rifleman
MacDonald, Douglas E.	PFC	504	
Maietta, Salvatore .	PFC	745	Rifleman
Merkle, Eugene C.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Mullen, Thomas J.	PFC	504	
Nielsen, Rolf E.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Ollis, Luke S. Jr.	PFC	745	Rifleman
O'Neill, Harry S.	PFC	676	
Paine, James G.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Paris, John H.	PFC	607	Mortarman

LOVE COMPANY

Pillion, Donald J.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Prestridge, William A.	PFC	504	
Ragan, Walter	PFC	745	Rifleman
Roberts, Billy T.	PFC	504	
Rode, John S.	PFC	746	BAR Rifleman
Rodrigues, Miguel A.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Rusche, Richard C.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Ryan, James J.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Saathoff, Franklin R.	PFC	746	BAR Rifleman
Schwarzschild, Henry	PFC	504	
Sebilian, George	PFC	745	Rifleman
Sees, Roy D.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Shofi, Robert A.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Sica, Austin B.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Skelton, Willard B. Jr.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Smith, Charles E.	PFC	607	
Sodie, Herman L.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Starbecker, Stanley N.	PFC	675	
Stuart, John P.	PFC	504	
Tidwell, Marvin Jr.	PFC	746	BAR Rifleman
Tobias, Ray V.	PFC	504	
Touri, Francis J.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Vorys, Nichols	PFC	607	Mortarman
Wallace, Joseph C.	PFC	675	
Weinberger, Ernest F.	PFC	675	
Wells, Francis G.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Wickenden, Alfred A. Jr.	PFC	504	
Wilkinson, Kenneth W.	PFC	745	Rifleman
Wilson, John C.	PFC	675	
Wolpin, Albert L.	PFC	675	
Woods, Joseph E. Jr.	PFC	675	
Worth, Arthur W.	PFC	746	BAR Rifleman
Young, William H. Jr.	PFC	521	
Zilliox, William G.	PFC	746	BAR Rifleman
Ahlborn, Robert P.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Ansel, William J.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Argiris, Angelo C.	Pvt.	504	
Bailey, William J.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Barrett, Kenus	Pvt.	745	Rifleman

LOVE COMPANY

DeAngelo, Dominick A.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
De Rosa, Joe Jr.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Dickerson, Dillroy	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Duffy, Thomas	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Fischer, Glenn D.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Gabriel, Orland W. Jr.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Godwin, Charles H.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Goodenow, Ralph A.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Gorsuch, Robert N.	Pvt.	621	
Green, Roland U.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Guldemond, Evert E.	Pvt.	504	
Huggins, James F.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Jones, Richard E,	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Klingelheber, Fred J.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Kollman, Charles H.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Kyle, Elmer R.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Lambert, S. T.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Landers, Haskell K.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Lathrop, Bertram C.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Manoogian, Nazar B.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Minnis, James E.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Morris, Austin P.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Nargi, Michael	Pvt.	060	Cook
Ogle, Junior P.	Pvt.	675	
Pszeniczny, Frank W.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Rex, George D.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Ricewick, Samuel E.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Rothgangel, Edward C.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Ruiz, Jose R.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Schrader, William H. Jr.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Smith, Lawrence W.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Sohns, Melvin L.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Spruit, William J.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Stehlik, Raymond W.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Stephens, Clifford C.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Strate, Charlie	Pvt.	504	
Tafoya, Lee J.	Pvt.	504	
Taylor, Eugene	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Tintle, Corwin E. H.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman

Weickel, Harold F.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Whitley, Barry B.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Williams, Samuel D.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Zimmerman, Chris F. Jr	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Zimmerman, Walter D.	Pvt.	745	Rifleman
Alfonso, Carl D.	Capt.	Company Commander	
Sykes, Allen T.	1st Lt.	Executive Officer	
Ashbrook, Park B.	1st Lt.		
Van Allen, Richard D.	1st Lt.		
Plante, Thomas E.	2nd Lt.	Platoon Leader	
Taylor, Bennett D. Jr.	2nd Lt.	Platoon Leader	
Markfield, Israel N.	2nd Lt.	Platoon Leader	

Note: I have not been able to verify the assignment of all the Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) numbers. (See Appendix B for MOS numbers.) Therefore, some have been left blank.

APPENDIX B

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY (MOS)

56 Mail Clerk
60 Cook
405 Company Clerk
504
511 Technician 5th grade
521 Cook
585 First Sergeant
604 Light Machine Gunner
607 Light Mortar Crewman
621
641
642 Sergeant
651 Technical Sergeant
652 Staff Sergeant
653 Sergeant
675
676
745 Rifleman
746 Rifleman, Automatic
803
821 Supply, Sergeant
824 Mess Sergeant

APPENDIX C - ABBREVIATIONS

AAA - Anti-Aircraft Artillery
Jd - Joined
add - additional
KIA - Killed in Action
Apmt - Appointment
LD - Line of Duty
APO - Army Post Office
LIA - Lightly Injured in Action
approx - approximately
Lt - Lieutenant
Arr. - Arrived
LWA - Lightly Wounded in Action
ARTC - Armored Replacement Training Center
Maj - Major
Asgd - Assigned
Med - Medical
Asmt - Assignment
MIA - Missing in Action
ASTP - Army Specialist Training Program
MLR - Main Line of Resistance
AT - Anti-tank
MP - Military Police
AT6 - Advanced Trainer #6 (Fighter Plane)
NBC - Not Battle Connected
AWOL - Absent without leave
NYPE - New York Port of Embarkation
BAR - Browning Automatic Rifle
Off - Officers
Bn. - Battalion
OCS - Officer Candidate School
Capt. - Captain
prin - principal
chgd - changed

LOVE COMPANY

Prom - Promoted
CIC - Counter Intelligence Corps
qtrs - quarters
Clrg. - Clearing
R & R - Rest & Recuperation
Cmdr - Commander
recd - received
Co - Company
Red - Reduced
conf. - confined
Regt - Regiment
CP - Command Post
Reld - Relieved
Cpl.- Corporal
Repl Dpt - Replacement Depot
CT - Combat Team
S. Sgt. - Staff Sergeant
Ctr - Center
Sgt. - Sergeant
Det - Detail
SIA - Seriously Injured in Action
dist - distance
Sk - Sick
Div.- Division
Sk LD - Sick - Line of Duty
Dy. - Duty
Sp - Special
EM - Enlisted man/men
Sta - Station
ERC - Enlisted Reserve Corps
Sv - Service
ETOUSA - European Theater of Operations, U S Army
SWA - Seriously Wounded in Action
USA – U.S. Army
TD - Tank Destroyer
Exec O - Executive Officer
Tech - Technical
Exp - Expert
Temp dy - Temporary duty
FA - Field Artillery

TNT - Trinitrotoluene
Fr. - France
Trfd. - Transferred
fr. - from
Trs - Troops
Gen Hosp - General Hospital
USO - United Service Organization
Ger. - Germany
WC - Water Closet
GSW - Gun Shot Wound
Hq. - Headquarters
Inf - Infantry

APPENDIX D

MORNING REPORTS

Every company in the U.S. Army wrote an account of each day's activities. It was called a Morning Report. During World War II, the form used had the following information:

Date of report (16 Nov 1944)
Organization (L Co. 399th Inf. Regt.)
Branch of service (Inf.)
Station or location (Baccarat Fr V32, 1- 83.6)

Morning Reports for L Company, 399th Infantry Regiment were obtained from the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, Mo. after considerable time, effort, and expense.

These copies of fifty-year-old photostats were difficult to read. Also, they were in chronological order for the 186 days of combat duty plus one week, from 1 November 1944 to 15 May 1945. (I did not request Morning Reports for times before or after that period.)

The Morning Reports is an official diary that recorded the events of each day in the company, such as the location; the number of officers and enlisted men assigned by grade, present or absent; and the total number of officers and enlisted men present. They also recorded those who were sick, wounded, missing, killed, transferred, promoted, demoted, joined or rejoined the company, absent without leave, and so forth, on that day.

"Record of Events" notations were sometimes added regarding the movement of the company during the day.

I could have reproduced the Morning Reports here in the order and condition in which they were received. However, to make them more comprehensible, I have listed the name of each soldier alphabetically with the date he first joined the company in combat. I then extracted the information that appeared on each

day's report and entered it next to each soldier's name. For instance, the day the soldier left the company would be listed on one Morning Report and another Morning Report would list the day he returned. Both items would be entered by his name with the dates. If he did not return to the company, the record would show only the date he left.

As an example, Orland W Gabriel, Jr. (Ref. No. 118) had a rank of Private. His Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) was 745 (rifleman). He entered combat with L Company on 1 November 1944 (an original member of the company). On 8 November 1944 he was lightly wounded in action (LWA) and left the company. He joined the company (returned) 11 November 1944. On the 27 January 1945 he was lightly wounded in action (LWA) and left the company. He joined the company (returned) on 4 March 1945. On 4 April 1945 he was promoted to Sergeant. His Military Occupational Specialty was (MOS) 653 (assistant squad leader). On 3 May 1945 he was promoted to Staff Sergeant MOS 652 (squad leader).

The result is a sort of combat service record. Since the service records of World War II soldiers were destroyed in a fire, this helps fill the void.

The accuracy of Morning Reports is questionable. However, when I compared information with some of the men in L Company, they confirmed that the records were generally very accurate. The few complaints I have heard were for omissions regarding sickness or wounds rather than for errors. The facts and information were reorganized here, in the present form, as perfectly as I could make them. The emphasis was on the combat record of the individual in conjunction with the military history of the company.

MORNING REPORTS FROM 1 NOVEMBER 1944 TO 15 MAY 1945 FOR L COMPANY, 399TH INFANTRY REGIMENT IN COMBAT

Ref. No.	Name	Rank	MOS	Joined	Record
1	Adair, James A.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	19 Mar 45 Temp dy XVCorps Rest Ctr Approx 4 days - Jd 23 Mar 45 - 18 Apr 45 LWA
2	Ahlborn, Robert P.	Pvt.	504	1 Nov 1944	18 Nov 44 SWA - Jd 2 Jan 45 - 20 Jan 45 Prom Pfc - 18 Apr 45 KIA
3	Alexander, William N	.Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	9 Dec 44 LWA -Jd 3 Mar 45 - 11 Apr 45 NBC GSW Rightfoot third toe accidentally self-inflicted (Capt. Hopkins accidentally fired shot causing wound)
4	Alfonso, Carl D.	Capt.	1542	1 Nov 1944	2 Jan 45 Sk LD
5	Allison, Warren J.	Pfc.	504	1 Nov 1944	27 Oct 44 Trfd Hq Co, 3rd Bn. 399 Rgt. MOS chged 745 - 21 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 1 Mar 45
6	Anderson, Orlin N.	Pfc.	745	24 Feb 1945	Repl Dpt.
7	Ansel, William J.	Pvt.	504	1 Nov 1944	18 Nov 44 SWA - Jd 17 Jan 45 - 10 Feb 45 Prom Pfc - 17 Feb 45 Prom Sgt MOS 653 - 19 Mar 45

					Temp dy XV Corps Rest Ctr Approx 4 days - Jd 23 Mar 45
8	Argiris, Angelo C.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	21 Nov 44 Sk. LD - Jd 25 Jan 45 - 10 Feb 45 Prom Pfc - 23 Feb 45 Trfd *Hq Co* 3rd Bn 399 Rgt
9	Arney, Wilbur G.	Pvt.	745	13 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt. - 25 Nov 44 Sk. LD - Jd 1 Dec 44 - 10 Dec 44 Sk LD - Jd 2 Jan 45 - 8 Jan 45 LWA - 20 Jan 45 Prom Pfc - Jd 19 Apr 45
10	Ashbrook, Park B.	1st Lt.		1 Nov 1944	10 Dec 44 Sk LD - Jd 24 Dec 44 - 8 Jan 45 KIA
11	Atkinson, James L.	Pvt.	745	24 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc - 18 Apr 45 SWA
12	Audenino, Frank A.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	29 Dec 44 Sk LD - Jd 2 Jan 45
13	Baer, Winfield O.	Pvt.	745	26 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
14	Bailey, Kenneth T.	Pvt.	745	27 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
15	Bailey, William J.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	8 Dec 44 Sk LD - Jd 21 Dec 44 - 3 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 7 Jan 45 - 11 Feb 45 LWA
16	Barnard, Dean S., Jr.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	1 Dec 44 Sk LD - Jd 7 Dec 44
17	Barrett, Kenus	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	11 Dec 44 Prom Pfc
18	Barsian, Haig H.	Pfc.	745	24 Feb 1945	Repl Dpt
19	Bates. Edward D.	Cpl.	745	20 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt

20	Baud, John D.	Sgt.	653	1 Nov 1944	14 Nov 44 KIA
21	Beaty, Claude H.	Sgt.	653	1 Nov 1944	14 Dec 44 Prom S. Sgt. MOS 652 - 9 Jan 45 KIA
22	Belt, John A.	S. Sgt	.824	1 Nov 1944	
23	Bicofsky, Sam	Cpl.	405	1 Nov 1944	
24	Binkley, Robert F.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	8 Nov 44 LWA - Jd. 17 Nov 44 - 10 Feb 45 Prom Sgt MOS 653 - 3 May 45 Prom S.Sgt MOS 652
25	Blevins, Thomas G.	Tec.4	745	20 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
26	Boggs, William W.	Pfc.	641	1 Nov 1944	5 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 8 Jan 45 - 26 Mar Trfd Hq Co 3rd Bn 399 Rgt
27	Bohannon, Lee S.	Pfc.	746	1 Nov 1944	10 Nov 44 Sk. LD - Jd 17 Nov 44 - 8 Dec 44 SWA
28	Bolin, John H. Jr.	Pfc.	746	1 Nov 1944	8 Dec 44 Sk LD
29	Bollman, Harold R.	Cpl.	745	20 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
30	Bower, Lloyd N.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	10 Nov 44 Sk. LD - Jd 20 Nov 44 - 4 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 9 Jan 45 - 23 Feb 45 Trfd Hq Co 3rd Bn 399 Rgt
31	Bradley, John J.	Pvt.	745	28 Feb 1945	Asgd Jd fr Co I 399 Rgt - 9 Mar 45 Prom Pfc
32	Brenton Henry L.	T.Sgt	.745	2 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
33	Breuer, Adam A.	Pfc.	746	1 Nov 1944	8 Dec 44 LWA - Jd 5 Feb 45 - 3 Mar 45 Temp dy XV Corps Rest Ctr - Jd 7 Mar 45 - 18 Apr 45 LWA
34	Brigandi, Charles J.	Tec.5	60	1 Nov 1944	14 Dec 44 Prom Tec 4

35	Brubeck, Edwin D.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	
36	Bryant, T.B.	Pvt.	745	24 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc
37	Bufkin, Grady H. Jr.	Pvt.	745	18 Feb 1945	Repl Dpt - 9 Mar 45 Prom Pfc
38	Butler, John P.	S.Sgt.	652	1 Nov 1944	8 Dec 44 KIA
39	Buzzell, Freeman E.	Pvt.	745	18 Feb 1945	Repl Dpt - 18 Apr 45 KIA
40	Byrd, George D.	Cpl.	745	7 Mar 1945	Repl Dpt
41	Caikauskas, Peter E.	Pvt..	745	11 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt.- 9 Dec 44 Sk LD - Jd 11 Dec 44 - 1 Jan 45 Prom Pfc - 16 Jan 45 Sk LD
42	Cairns, Robert E.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	11 Dec 44 Prom PFC - 19 Dec 44 Trfd Hq Co 1st Bn.
43	Caldwell, James Jr.	Pvt.	745	7 Mar 1945	Repl Dpt
44	Cambigue, George J.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	16 Nov 44 AWOL - Jd 27 Nov 44 - 1 Mar 45 Sk LD
45	Campbell, Thomas E.	Sgt.	653	1 Nov 1944	16 Nov 44 KIA - Due Exp Inf Pay
46	Cappadora, John J.	Cpl.	745	20 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
47	Cardozo, Stanley T.	Cpl.	745	1 Nov 1944	14 Dec 44 Prom S. Sgt MOS 653 - 18 Apr 45 LWA
48	Carlson, Gerhard	Pvt.	745	18 Feb 1945	Repl Dpt - 9 Mar 45 Prom Pfc - 7 Apr 45 Sk LD
49	Carlton, Roland H.	Pvt.	745	24 Feb 1945	Repl Dpt - 9 Mar 45 Prom Pfc - 28 Mar 45 Sk LD - Jd 8 May 45
50	Chase, William L.	Pvt.	521	1 Nov 1944	17 Nov 44 SWA - Jd 30 Jan 45 - 10 Feb 45 Prom

				Pfc. MOS 745 - 7 Mar 45 Temp Dy XV Corps Rest Ctr approx 4 days - Jd 11 Mar 45 - 17 Apr 45 Prom Sgt MOS 653
51 Chiri, Gabriel A.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	27 Jan 45 Trfd to 45th Inf Div
52 Clark, Louis J.	Pvt.	745	24 Feb 1945	Repl Dpt - 9 Mar 45 Prom Pfc - 17 Mar 45 Sk LD - Jd 23 Mar 45 - 18 Apr 45 LWA
53 Clendenin, Ralph	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	8 Dec 44 Sk LD - Jd 21 Dec 44 - 4 Jan 45 LWA - Jd 27 Feb 45
54 Cole, Ellery B.	Pvt.	745	24 Feb 1945	Repl Dpt - 9 Mar 45 Prom Pfc
55 Cole, Ernest M.	Pvt.	745	27 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
56 Colley, Howard F.	Pvt.	745	27 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
57 Collie, Dominic J.	Pvt.	745	24 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc
58 Connor, Robert E.	Pvt.	745	24 Feb 1945	Repl Dpt - 9 Mar 45 Prom Pfc - 3 May 45 Sk LD
59 Conroy, Clarence R.	S.Sgt.	652	1 Nov 1944	26 Dec 44 Prom T. Sgt. MOS 651- 1 Jan 45 MIA
60 Cook, James L.	Pfc.	604	1 Nov 1944	16 Nov 44 SWA
61 Cotton, Earl H.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	8 Nov 44 LWA - Jd 10 Nov 44 - 14 Mar 45 Trfd Hq Co 3rd Bn 399 Rgt
62 Coursey, Alfred W.	S. Sgt.	652	1 Nov 1944	26 Dec 44 Prom T. Sgt MOS 651 - 16 Jan 45 recd Apmt 2nd Lt. - 24 Jan 45

				Trfd 10th Repl Bn - Jd 31 Jan 45 - 14 Mar 45 Temp dy XV Corps Rest Ctr Approx 4 Days - Jd 18 Mar 45 - 28 Mar 45 Sk LD
63 Crittenden, Estil G.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	3 Nov 44 MIA - MIA Dropped
64 Crump, Robert H.	Pvt.	745	27 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
65 Davies, William A. Jr.	Pvt.	745	24 Feb 1945	Repl Dpt - 9 Mar 45 Prom Pfc - 18 Apr 45 LWA
66 Davis, Hugh F.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	16 Nov 44 Sk LD - Jd 22 Nov 44 - 8 Dec 44 Sk LD - Jd 26 Feb 1945 - 18 Apr 45 LWA - Jd 9 May 45
67 Davis, Threlkeld M.	Pfc.	746	1 Nov 1944	1 Jan 45 MIA
68 DeAngelo, Dominick A.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	4 Jan 45 SIA - Jd 10 Jan 45 - 3 Feb 45 NBC GSW Left hand self inflicted - Jd 11 Mar 45 - 17 Apr 45 AWOL
69 Dean, Thomas	S. Sgt.	652	1 Nov 1944	
70 DeJarnette, James W.	Pvt.	745	11 Dec 1944	Repl. Dpt - 14 Dec 44 Trfd to F Co. 399th Rgt.
71 DeJong, George C.	Pvt.	745	24 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 7 Feb 45 MIA
72 DeMarco, Joseph C.	Pfc.	521	1 Nov 1944	14 Dec 44 Prom Tech 5 MOS 60 - 1 Mar 45 Sk LD - Jd 9 Mar 45
73 DeRosa, Joe Jr.	Pvt.	675	1 Nov 1944	16 Nov 44 SWA
74 DeSanctis, Albert	Pfc.	504	1 Nov 1944	19 Nov 44 Self-inflicted GSW Rt. foot

75 Devotie, Sterling N.	Pvt.	745	24 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc - 26 Mar Sk LD
76 DiBattista, Liberato	S.Sgt.	652	1 Nov 1944	21 Nov 44 SWA - Jd 1 Feb 45 - 10 Feb Prom T. Sgt MOS 651 - 29 Apr 45 Sk LD - Jd 30 Apr 45 - 2 May 45 recd Battlefield apmt 2nd Lt.
77 Dickerson, Dillroy	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	
78 DiLorenzo, Frank J.	Pvt.	745	24 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc-4 Mar 45 LWA Not entitled to additional pay - Jd 9 May 45
79 Dismore, Herman I.	Pvt.	745	20 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
80 Dixon, Elmer R.	Pvt.	745	27 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
81 Dixon, Monroe W.	Sgt.	653	1 Nov 1944	8 Dec 44 KIA
82 Dodson, Beverly B.	Pvt.	745	27 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
83 Douda, Stanley	Cpl.	745	1 Nov 1944	8 Dec 44 MIA
84 Dougherty, William J.	Pvt.	745	20 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
85 Downey, Daniel J.	Pfc.	521	1 Nov 1944	1 Dec 44 Prom Sgt. MOS 542 - 13 Dec 44 Sk LD - Jd 17 Dec 44 - 26 Dec 44 Prom 1st Sgt
86 Drumheller, Kenneth C.	Pvt.	745	27 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
87 Drye, Lonnie D.	Pfc.	607	1 Nov 1944	14 Dec 44 Prom Sgt MOS 653 - 2 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 8 Jan 45 - 8 Jan 45 Self-inflicted GSW Right Foot NBC
88 Duffy, Thomas	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	14 Dec 44 Prom Sgt MOS 653 - 3 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd

				3 Feb 45 - 12 Mar 45 Red to Pvt MOS 504 - 15 Mar 45 Trfd Hq Co 3rd Bn 399 Rgt
89 Duke, H. V.	Pvt.	745	24 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc - 15 Mar 45 KIA Not Entitled Additional Pay
90 Dunbar, Hollice E.	Sgt.	653	1 Nov 1944	14 Nov 44 Red. to Pvt. MOS 745 - 22 Feb 45 Prom Sgt MOS 653
91 Dyal, Owen P. Jr.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	11 Dec 44 Sk LD - Jd 16 Dec 44 - 2 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 5 Jan 45 - 12 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 21 Jan 45
92 Eberts, Harry G.	Pvt.	745	2 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
93 Edwards, Leon	Pvt.	745	27 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt - 9 May 45 Trfd Hq Co 3rd Bn 399th Rgt.
94 Egan, Thomas	Pfc.	607	1 Nov 1944	
95 Ehrhard, Russell I.	Pfc.	745	2 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt - 18 Apr 45 LWA Not entitled add pay.
96 Elkins, Norman E.	Pfc.	745	2 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
97 Elmore, Warren C.	Cpl.	745	20 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
98 Encabo, Raymond P.	Pvt.	745	24 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc - 19 Apr 45 Sk LD - Jd 29 Apr 45
99 English, John P. Jr.	Pfc.	746	1 Nov 1944	21 Feb 45 temp dy XV Corps Rest Center - Jd 25 Feb 45 - 11 Mar 45 Trfd M Co 399th Rgt

100 Enriques, Gueasindo Y.	Tec.5	745	19 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
101 Erquiaga, Fernando	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	8 Dec 44 SWA - Jd 2 Apr 45
102 Ewing, Hugh F.	Pfc.	675	1 Nov 1944	21 Feb 45 Sk LD - Jd 24 Mar 45
103 Ewing, James A.	Pvt.	745	19 Feb 1945	Repl Dpt - 9 Mar 45 Prom Pfc - 18 Apr 45 LWA
104 Faulkner, Kenneth K.	Pvt.	745	18 Feb 1945	Repl Dpt - 9 Mar 45 Prom Pfc
105 Fields, Bert	Pvt	745	18 Feb 1945	Repl Dpt - 9 Mar 45 Prom Pfc - 18 Apr 45 KIA
106 Fiorini, John	Pvt.	745	12 Feb 1945	Repl Dpt - 9 Mar 45 Prom Pfc
107 First, Harry	Pvt.	745	26 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt.- 8 Dec 44 MIA
108 Fischer, Glenn D	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	26 Dec 44 Prom Sgt MOS 542 - 8 Feb 45 Sk LD - Jd 15 Feb 45 -18 Apr 45 KIA
109 Flannelly, Perry L.	Pvt.	745	18 Feb 1945	Repl Dpt - 9 Mar 45 Prom Pfc
110 Florio, Thomas A.	Pvt.	745	11 Feb 1945	Repl Dpt - 9 Mar 45 Prom Pfc
111 Ford, George P.	S. Sgt.	652	1 Nov 1944	16 Nov 44 SWA
112 Fortman, Walter P.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	
113 Franklin, Howard M.	Tec.5	745	19 Feb 1945	Repl Dpt - 3 May 45 Prom Sgt. MOS 653
114 Franzini, Nicholas D.	Sgt.	653	1 Nov 1944	4 Apr 45 Prom S. Sgt MOS 652 -18 Apr 45 KIA
115 Frasher, William A.	Pvt.	745	2 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt

116	Froio, Frank	Sgt.	653	1 Nov 1944	14 Nov 44 Red. to Pvt. MOS 745 - 20 Jan 45 Prom Pfc - 13 Feb 45 Prom Sgt MOS 653 - 4 Apr 45 Prom S Sgt MOS 652
117	Funston, John H.	Pvt.	745	19 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt -8 Dec 44 LWA
118	Gabriel, Orland W. Jr.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	8 Nov 44 LWA - Jd 11 Nov 44 - 27 Jan 45 LWA - Jd 4 Mar 45 - 4 Apr 45 Prom Sgt MOS 653 - 3 May 45 Prom S. Sgt MOS 652
119	Gaffney, Thomas J. Jr.	Pfc.	521	1 Nov 1944	16 Mar 45 AWOL - Jd 17 Mar 45
120	Gagnon, Joseph L.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	
121	Gallagher, Joseph A.	Pvt.	745	19 Nov 1944	Repl.Dpt. - 30 Nov 44 Sk. LD - Jd 5 Dec 44 -12 Dec 44 Trfd 824th TD Bn
122	Garcia, Daniel J.	Pvt.	745	19 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt - 8 Dec 44 MIA
123	Gedville, John H.	Pvt.	745	19 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt -8 Dec 44 SWA Jd 10 Jan 45 - 10 Feb 45 Prom Pfc - 3 Mar 45 Temp dy XV Corps Rest Ctr - Jd 7 Mar 45
124	Gemmell, John D.	Pvt.	745	24 Feb 1945	Repl Dpt - 9 Mar 45 Prom Pfc
125	Gersuch, Robert N.	Pvt.	621	1 Nov 1944	
126	Giacchero, Camillo F.	Pvt.	745	19 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt - 9 Jan 45 MIA
127	Gihr, Karl A.	Pvt.	745	24 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc

128	Gilfedder, Hugh F.	Sgt. 653	1 Nov 1944	16 Nov 44 LWA - 10 Feb 45 Prom S. Sgt MOS 653 - 3 Mar 45 Sk LD - Jd 7 Mar 45 - 18 Apr 45 LWA
129	Gloyna, Walter A.	Pfc. 675	1 Nov 1944	25 Feb 45 Sk LD - Jd 8 May 45
130	Godwin, Charles H.	Pvt.. 745	1 Nov 1944	16 Nov 44 SWA
131	Goldman, Charles B.	Pfc. 504	1 Nov 1944	9 Dec 44 LWA - Jd 18 Mar 45 - 18 Apr 45 LWA
132	Gomes, Cornelius R.	Pvt. 745	6 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt - 18 Apr 45 LWA Not entitled add pay.
133	Goodenow, Ralph A.	Pvt. 745	1 Nov 1944	1 Jan 45 Prom Pfc -1 Mar 45 Sk LD - Jd 8 May 45
134	Goodwin, Elmer A.	Pvt. 745	20 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
135	Goughan, Leonard L.	Pvt. 745	11 Feb 1945	Repl Dpt - 17 Feb 45 Sk LD - Jd 14 Mar 45 - 19 Apr 45 Sk LD - Jd 25 Apr 45
136	Graham, Herbert L.	Tec. 4 745	7 Mar 1945	Repl Dpt - 18 Apr 45 LWA - Jd 8 May 45
137	Grauer, Edward T.	Pvt. 745	23 Nov 1944	Repl Dpt - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc -11 Mar 45 Temp dy XV Corps Rest Ctr Approx 4 Days - Jd 15 Mar 45 - 2 Apr 45 Temp dy Ft Dix NJ 45 days R & R
138	Greaves, William E. S.	Sgt. 652	1 Nov 1944	1 Dec 44 Prom T. Sgt MOS 651- 10 Dec 44 Sk LD - Jd 29 Dec 44 - 30

				Dec 44 Sk LD - Jd 5 Jan 45 - 8 Jan 45 Sk LD
139	Green, Roland U.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	9 Dec 44 LWA
140	Greenbaum, Eugene	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	9 Dec 44 KIA
141	Greenbaum, Milton M.	Pfc.	745	6 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
142	Greene, Harold D.	S. Sgt.	652	1 Nov 1944	16 Nov 44 SWA
144	Grim, Stanley E.	Pvt.	745	20 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
143	Grimes, Chester O.	Pvt.	745	24 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 26 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 13 Feb 45 - 23 Feb 45 Trfd Hq Co 3rd Bn 399 Rgt
145	Guarino, Carmelo	Pfc.	745	19 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
146	Gugick, Charles	Pvt.	745	26 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt - 1 Jan 45 Prom Pfc - 7 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 8 Jan 45
147	Guinn, Russell V.	Pvt.	745	24 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc - 27 Mar 45 Sk LD - Jd 8 May 45
148	Guldemond, Evert E.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	4 Nov 44 LWA - Jd 15 Dec 44 - 1 Jan 45 Prom Pfc - 6 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 15 Jan 45 - 18 Mar 45 Sk LD
149	Gulledge, William H.	Pvt.	745	24 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc - 15 Mar 45 KIA Not Entitled Additional Pay
150	Haas, Samuel	Pfc.	746	1 Nov 1944	31 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 10 Feb 45 - 23 Feb 45 Trfd Hq Co 3rd Bn 399 Rgt

151 Hackett, Russell H.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	7 Nov 44 Sk. LD - Jd 11 Dec 44 - 21 Dec 44 Sk LD - Jd 22 Jan 45 - 3 Mar 45 Temp dy XV Corps Rest Ctr - Jd 7 Mar 45
152 Hackling, William H.	2nd Lt.		2 Feb 1945	Jd fr Co M 399th Rgt - 18 Apr 45 LWA
153 Hafemann, Frederick A.	S.Sgt.	652	24 Feb 1945	Repl Dpt 17 Apr 45 Sk LD - Jd 19 Apr 45
154 Halgash, Lawrence J.	Pvt.	745	19 Feb 1945	Repl Dpt - 9 Mar 45 Prom Pfc - 15 Mar 45 LWA Not due additional pay
155 Hallman, William E.	Capt.	1542	10 Jan 1945	Jd from Service Co. 399th Rgt. Asnd Co. Cmdr - 19 Jan 45 Trfd Hq Co 399 Rgt.
156 Hamer, Robert V.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	27 Nov 44 Sk. LD - Jd 30 Nov 44 - 3 Jan 45 Sk LD
157 Hankey, Floyd E.	Pfc.	803	1 Nov 1944	16 Nov 44 Sk. LD - Jd 14 Dec 44 - 18 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 23 Jan 1945 - 14 Apr 45 Sk LD
158 Harris, Ernest E.	Pvt.	745	13 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt - 20 Nov 44 SWA - Jd 2 Jan 45 - 20 Jan 45 Prom Pfc
159 Harris, Lewis N.	Pvt.	745	24 Feb 1945	Repl Dpt - 9 Mar 45 Prom Pfc
160 Havens, George J.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	14 Dec 44 Prom Sgt MOS 653 - 19 Dec 44 Sk LD - Jd 23 Dec 44 - 3 Jan 45

				Sk LD - Jd 8 Jan 45 - 27 Apr 45 Prom S. Sgt.
161	Hawkins, James R.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	4 Nov 44 Self-inflicted GSW - Jd 15 Jan 45 - 22 Feb 45 Prom Sgt MOS 653 - 18 Apr 45 MIA
162	Hayden, Preston A.	Pvt.	745	13 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt - 20 Nov 44 SWA - Jd 31 Jan 45 - 10 Feb 45 Prom Pfc
163	Haynes, Leon	Pfc.	746	20 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
164	Hedin, Samuel S.	Sgt.	653	1 Nov 1944	23 Oct 44 Prom S. Sgt MOS 652 - 16 Nov 44 SWA
165	Hickey, John M.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	16 Nov 44 AWOL - Jd 27 Nov 44
166	Hinte, Robert E.	Pvt.	745	20 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt - 9 May 45 Trfd Hq Co 3rd Bn 399th Rgt.
167	Hoon, Emory	Pvt.	745	24 Feb 1945	Repl Dpt. American Indian - 9 Mar 45 Prom Pfc -26 Mar 45 LWA Not entitled to additional pay
168	Hopkins, Travis V.	Capt.	1542	19 Jan 1945	Asnd & Jd fr Serv Co 399 Rgt. as Co Cmdr - 11 Apr 45 NBC GSW Left Thigh accidentally self-inflicted Jd 9 May 45
169	Howard, Keith L.	Pvt.	745	24 Feb 1945	Repl Dpt - 9 Mar 45 Prom Pfc
170	Howe, John W., Jr.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	9 Dec 44 LWA (Died of Wounds)
171	Howell, Darel W.	Pfc.	745	20 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt

172 Hudec, John J.	Pfc.	746	1 Nov 1944	18 Nov 44 SWA - Jd 5 Jan 45
173 Hudson, Robert L	Tec. 5	745	22 Mar 1945	Repl Dpt
174 Huggins, James H.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	14 Dec 44 Prom Sgt MOS 653
175 Humbert, Edward J.	Pfc.	745	22 Mar 1945	Repl Dpt
176 Hunt, Walter L.	Tec. 4	60	1 Nov 1944	14 Dec 44 Red to Pvt MOS 745 - 1 Jan 45 Prom Pfc - 11 Feb Trfd to 504th MP Bn
177 Inabinet, Wayne N. Jr.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	21 Oct 44 to Fin Sec Div Hq 100th Inf Div - 1 Jan 45 Prom Pfc
178 Jeske, Robert E.	Pfc.	745	2 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
179 Johnson, Arthur J.	Pvt.	745	24 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt -14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc - 27 Mar 45 Sk LD
180 Johnson, Bernard M.	Sgt.	653	1 Nov 1944	14 Dec 44 Prom S. Sgt MOS 652 - 15 Mar 45 LWA - Jd 21 Mar 45
181 Johnson, Frank A.	Tec.5	511	1 Nov 1944	
182 Johnson, Harry W. S.	Sgt.	652	1 Nov 1944	9 Jan 45 LIA - Jd 11 Jan 45
183 Johnson, Robert O.	Pvt.	745	24 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc
184 Jones, Alfred A.	Pvt.	745	24 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc
185 Jones, James W.	Pvt.	745	24 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 27 Jan 45 LWA Not due additional pay
186 Jones, Richard E	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	17 Dec 44 Sk LD - 1 Jan 45 Prom Pfc -Jd 6 Jan 45 -

				10 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 16 Jan 45 - 13 Mar 45 Sk LD
187	Karperos, Andros	Pvt.	745	6 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
188	Karsis, Michael J.	Pfc.	745	19 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
189	Kelly, Donald P.	Pvt.	745	22 Mar 1945	Repl Dpt
190	Kemp, William H.	Pvt.	745	24 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 30 Jan 45 NBC GSW right hand self-inflicted
191	Khoury, John M.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	7 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 1 Mar 45
192	Kirton, Lawrence L.	1st Lt.		8 Feb 1945	Asgd & Jd fr AT Co 399 Rgt - 20 Feb 45 Trfd I Co. 399th Rgt.
193	Klingelheber, Fred J.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	1 Jan 45 Prom Pfc - 10 Jan 45 SWA
194	Klinzing, Ralph W.	Cpl.	745	2 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
195	Koistinin,Harold F.	Pfc.	504	1 Nov 1944	20 Nov 44 SWA
196	Kollman, Charles H.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	
197	Kondra, Victor	T. Sgt.	651	1 Nov 1944	11 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 16 Jan 45 - 13 Mar 45 Battlefield Apmt 2nd Lt - 14 Mar 45 Trfd to 4th Inf Div..
198	Kramer, Donald V.	Cpl.	745	1 Nov 1944	1 Dec 44 Prom Sgt. MOS 653 - 14 Dec 44 Prom S. Sgt MOS 652 - 7 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 18 Feb 45
199	Kurtz, Warren F.	Pfc.	504	1 Nov 1944	2 Oct 44 Prom Sgt MOS 653 - 1 Dec 44 Prom S. Sgt MOS 652 - 5 Feb 45 Sk LD - Jd 18 Feb 45

200 Kvasnok, Thomas Jr.	Pvt.	745	26 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt - 1 Jan 45 Prom Pfc - 18 Apr 45 SWA
201 Kyle, Elmer R.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	17 Nov 44 Sk. LD - Jd 13 Dec 44 - 1 Jan 45 Prom Pfc - 1 Jan 45 MIA
202 Labriola, Pasquale P.	Pvt.	745	24 Feb 1945	Repl Dpt - 9 Mar 45 Prom Pfc
203 La Gesse, Francis R.	Pfc.	745	6 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
204 Lamagna, Leo	Pvt.	745	24 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc - 8 Apr 45 SWA
205 Lambert, S.T.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	1 Jan 45 Prom Pfc - 4 Jan 45 LIW - Jd 21 Jan 45 - 14 Mar 45 Sk LD 616 VD Hosp - Jd 20 Mar 45 - 30 Mar 45 Sk LD
206 Lamirand, Lloyd E.	Cpl.	745	1 Nov 1944	16 Nov 44 SWA
207 Landers, Haskel K.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	20 Nov 44 Sk. LD - Jd 13 Jan 45 - 18 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 20 Jan 45 -25 Jan 45 Trfd to DS Hq Sp Trs 100th Inf Div
208 Lapa, Alexander J.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	9 Jan 45 LIA
209 Lathrop, Bertram C.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	9 Dec 44 LWA - Jd 25 Jan 45 - 17 Mar 45 Sk LD
210 Ledin, Waldemar N.	Cpl.	745	1 Nov 1944	3 Nov 44 SWA - Jd 16 Dec 44 - 6 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 9 Jan 45 - 14 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 18 Jan 45 - 30 Jan 45 Sk LD
211 Legere, Denis A.	Sgt.	653	22 Feb 1945	Asgd & Jd fr Co. E 399th Rgt

212 Leone, George P.	Pfc.	504	1 Nov 1944	
213 Leslie, Lewis D.	Sgt.	653	1 Nov 1944	18 Apr 45 KIA
214 Lincoln, Paul E.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	2 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 15 Jan 45 - 12 Feb 45 Sk LD - Jd 16 Feb 45 Asgd Limited Asmt Personnel - 4 Apr 45 Prom Sgt MOS 653 - 18 Apr 45 SWA
215 Lloyd, Maurice E.	Pfc.	746	1 Nov 1944	16 Nov 44 SWA - Jd 11 Dec 44 - 1 Jan 45 MIA - (Body found by French hunter 30 years later in foxhole)
216 Lloyd, Orville W.	S.Sgt.	652	22 Mar 1945	Repl Dpt
217 Luna, Victor P.	Pvt.	745	23 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc - 15 Mar 45 LWA Not due additonal pay - Jd 8 May 45
218 MacDonald, Douglas E.	Pfc.	604	1 Nov 1944	28 Nov 44 Trfd Det of Pts as of 17 Nov 44 SWA - Jd 31 Jan 45
219 MacDonald, Melville J.Jr.	2nd Lt.		22 Mar 1945	Asgd fr 399th Rgt. Hq.
220 MacNeil, John E.	Pvt.	745	20 Dec 1944	Repl. Dpt - 8 Jan 45 LWA Not entitled to add pay - Jd 24 Feb 45 - 28 Feb 45 AWOL - Jd 14 Mar 45
221 MacPhail, Wallace A.	Pvt.	745	8 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt - 4 Dec 44 Sk LD - Jd 18 Jan 45 - 10 Feb 45 Prom Pfc - 7 Mar 45 temp dy XV Corps

				Rest Ctr approx 4 days - Jd 11 Mar 45 - 15 Mar 45 MIA
222	Maietta, Salvatore V.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	16 Nov 44 AWOL - Jd 27 Nov 44
223	Manchester, George	Pvt.	745	24 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc - 8 Apr 45 LWA
224	Manoogian, Nazar B.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	1 Jan 45 Prom Pfc - 18 Jan 45 Sk LD
225	Markfield, Israel N.	2nd Lt.		1 Nov 1944	16 Nov 44 SWA
226	Marlow, Robert H.	Pvt.	745	19 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
227	Marx, John F.	Pvt.	745	13 Jan 1945	Asnd fr Co.F 399th Rgt - 19 Jan 45 Trfd Hq Co, 3rd Bn 399 Rgt.
228	McCormack, Sterling M.	T.Sgt.	651	1 Nov 1944	14 Nov 44 Sk. LD
229	McDuffy, Martin M.	Sgt.	653	1 Nov 1944	14 Nov 44 Prom S. Sgt MOS 652 - 16 Nov 44 SWA
230	Mercer, John H.	Pfc.	745	6 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
231	Merkle, Eugene C.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	3 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 18 Jan 45 - 20 Jan 45 Sk LD - 12 Feb 45 Trfd 516th MP Bn
232	Messall, Farnum L.	Pvt.	745	23 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc
233	Meyer , Edward C.	Cpl.	745	19 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt - 6 May 45 DS Hq 7th A.
234	Meyer, Maurice A.	Pvt.	745	30 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt - 1 Jan 45 Prom Pfc - 18 Apr 45 LWA
235	Miele, Anthony J.	S. Sgt.	824	1 Nov 1944	

236	Milewicz, Michael E.	Sgt.	653	1 Nov 1944	1 Dec 44 Prom S.Sgt MOS 652 -7 Dec 44 SWA
237	Mills, Fred A. Jr.	2nd Lt.		28 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt. - 9 Jan 45 LIA
238	Minnis, James E.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	17 Nov 44 LWA - Jd 25 Nov 44- 11Dec 44 Sk LD
239	Moran, James F.	T. Sgt.	651	1 Nov 1944	15 Nov 44 Sk. LD - Jd 11 Dec 44 - 14 Dec 44 Sk LD - Jd 16 Dec 44- 26 Dec 44 Red to Pvt MOS 745 - 20 Jan 45 Prom Pfc - 11 Mar 45 Trfd to M Co 399th Rgt.
240	Morris, Austin P. Jr.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	1 Jan 45 Prom Pfc - 3 Jan 45 KIA
241	Moynes, Omar A.	Cpl.	745	19 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
242	Mullen, Thomas J.	Pfc.	604	1 Nov 1944	17 Nov 44 SWA - Jd 27 Dec 44 - 16 Feb 45 Prom Sgt MOS 653 - 7 Mar 45 temp dy XV Corps Rest Ctr appox 4 days - Jd 11 Mar 45
243	Murray, Jerome G. S.	Sgt.	745	20 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
244	Murry, Carroll W. Jr.	Cpl.	745	19 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
245	Nargi, Michael	Pvt.	521	1 Nov 1944	11 Dec 44 Prom Pfc
246	Nealer, Arthur S.	Cpl.	745	19 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
247	Nicholson, Harold G.	Pvt.	745	2 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt - 18 Apr 45 SWA Not entitled to add pay.
248	Nielsen, Rolf E.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	10 Nov 44 Sk. LD - Jd 12 Nov 44 - 3 Jan 45 Sk LD -

				Jd 7 Jan 45 - 3 Mar 45 Sk LD - Jd 8 May 45
249	Nigg, William G.	Tec. 5	745	23 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 23 Jan 45 Sk LD
250	Norton, Charles W.	Cpl.	745	1 Nov 1944	4 Nov 44 LWA - Jd 15 Jan 45 - 22 Jan 45 Sk LD
251	Nulty, John C.	S. Sgt.	652	1 Nov 1944	6 Dec 44 Sk LD - Jd 24 Dec 44 - 8 Jan 45 LWA - Jd 22 Jan 45 - 18 Apr 45 SWA
252	O'Berry, Charles W.	Sgt.	745	19 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
253	Ogg, Albert A.	Tec. 5	60	11 Feb 1945	Repl Dpt
254	Ogle, Junior P.	Pvt.	675	1 Nov 1944	
255	Ollis, Luke S. Jr.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	26 Mar 45 Trfd to Hq Co 3rd Bn 399th Rgt
256	O'Neill, Harry S.	Pfc.	676	1 Nov 1944	14 Dec 44 Prom Sgt. MOS 653 - 10 Feb 45 Prom S. Sgt. MOS 653 - 13 Feb 45 LWA
257	Overton, Robson	Pvt.	745	24 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc - 27 Apr 45 Prom Sgt MOS 653
258	Owens, Earl M.	Pvt.	745	24 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc
259	Paine, James G.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	11 Dec 44 LWA - Jd 8 Apr 45
260	Panasiewicz, M. L.	Cpl.	745	20 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
261	Paris, John H.	Pfc.	504	1 Nov 1944	18 Nov 44 Sk. LD
262	Parker, Harold B.	Pvt.	745	24 Nov 1944	Repl Dpt - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc - 18 Apr 45 LWA

263 Parler, William M.	Pvt.	745	24 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc - 28 Mar 45 Sk LD
264 Peck, Eugene G.	Pfc.	745	20 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
265 Percy, Morris E.	Pvt.	745	24 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 28 Jan 45 KIA
266 Perrett, Albert V. Jr.	Pfc.	745	2 Feb 1945	Asgd fr 208 FA Bn
267 Pettit, John W.	Pfc.	745	22 Mar 1945	Repl Dpt
268 Pillion, Donald J.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	1 Dec Prom S. Sgt MOS 653 - 8 Dec 44 LWA
269 Plante, Thomas E. 2nd Lt.			1 Nov 1944	30 Dec 44 to DS 2nd Repl Dpt - Jd 4 Feb 45 - 8 Feb 45 Trfd A Co 399 Rgt (KIA at A Co)
270 Poole, Curtis	Pfc.	745	24 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 15 Mar 45 Temp dy XV Corps Rest Ctr Approx 4 days - Jd 19 Mar 45 -27 Mar 45 Sk LD
271 Powelski, Elmer F.	Cpl.	745	19 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
272 Prestridge, William A.	Pfc.	504	1 Nov 1944	8 Dec 44 SWA - Jd 30 Dec 44 - 1 Mar 45 Sk LD
273 Price, Chappell Jr.	Cpl.	745	19 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
274 Prysock, Roland J.	Pvt.	745	19 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
275 Quigley, Peter F.	Pvt.	745	26 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt - 1 Jan 45 Prom Pfc - 15 Feb 45 LWA
276 Quinn, Arthur J.	Pfc.	745	19 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
277 Radice, Sebastian F.	Pfc.	745	19 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
278 Ragan, Walter	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	7 Nov 44 Sk. NBC - Jd 10 Nov 44 - 12 Dec 44 Sk LD - Jd 21 Dec 44 - 8 Jan 45 Sk LD
279 Reames, Jack O.	Pvt.	745	19 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt

280 Redfield, Dudley W. Jr.	Tec. 4	60	25 Jan 1945	Asnd fr Sp Sv Office 100th Inf Dv.
281 Reis, Ray H.	Pvt.	745	24 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc
282 Retta, Herbert S.	Pvt.	745	19 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
283 Rex, George D.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	8 Dec 44 KIA
284 Ricewick, Samuel E.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	18 Apr 45 LWA
285 Richards, J.R. Jr.	Pvt.	745	23 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc
286 Richards, Lewis F.	Pfc.	745	19 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
287 Risi, Armand	Pvt.	745	26 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt - 1 Jan 45 Prom Pfc - 3 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 5 Feb 45
288 Roberts, Billy T.	Pfc.	504	1 Nov 1944	8 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 9 Feb 45 - 19 Feb 45 KIA
289 Robinson, Lester E.	Pfc.	745	20 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
290 Rode, John S.	Pfc.	746	1 Nov 1944	1 Dec 44 Prom Sgt. MOS 653 - 14 Dec 44 Prom S. Sgt MOS 652 - 22 Jan 45 Recd Apmt 2nd Lt - 24 Jan 45 Trfd 10th Repl Bn.
291 Rodrigues, Miguel A.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	10 Feb 45 Prom Sgt MOS 653 - 25 Feb 45 Temp dy XV Corps Rest Ctr -Jd 1 Mar 45 - 18 Apr 45 LWA
292 Rohde, Harvey F.	Pvt.	745	26 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt - 1 Jan 45 Prom Pfc - 12 Feb 45 Prom Sgt MOS 653 -21Feb 45 temp dy XV Corps Rest Ctr - Jd 25 Feb 45

293 Rosio, Raymond J.	Pfc.	745	19 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
294 Rote, Frank L.	Pvt.	745	19 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
295 Roth, James G.	Pvt.	745	19 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
296 Rothgangel, Edward C.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	23 Nov 44 Sk. LD
297 Rubin, Marvin B.	Tec. 5	745	19 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
298 Ruiz, Jose R.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	17 Nov 44 SWA - Jd 21 Nov 44 - 2 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 4 Jan 45 - 10 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 14 Jan 45
299 Rusche, Richard C.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	14 Nov 44 Prom Sgt MOS 653 - 19 Dec 44 Sk LD - Jd 22 Dec 44 - 15 Mar 45 LWA
300 Ryan, James J.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	25 Nov 44 Sk. LD - Jd 1 Feb 45
301 Ryder, Thomas R.	2nd Lt.		13 Feb 1945	Asgd & Jd fr I Co, 399th Rgt - 6 Mar 45 Temp dy XV Corps Rest Ctr approx 4 days - Jd 10 Mar 45
302 Saathoff, Franklin R.	Pfc.	746	1 Nov 1944	14 Dec 44 Prom Sgt MOS 653 - 18 Dec 44 Sk LD - Jd 2 Jan 45 10 Feb 45 Prom S. Sgt. MOS 653
303 Sandekian, Matthew E.	Pvt.	745	24 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc-18 Apr 45 SWA
304 Schlachter, Alfred J.Jr.	Pfc.	745	2 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt-18 Apr 45 LWA Not entitled to add pay.
305 Schneider Thompson G.	Pvt.	745	26 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt - 10 Dec 44 Sk LD - Jd 1Feb 45 - 10 Feb

				45 Prom Pfc - 19 Mar 45 Sk LD - Jd 20 Mar 45 - 29 Mar 45 Prom S. Sgt - 18 Apr 45 LWA
306	Schrader, William H. Jr.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	19 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 18 Feb 45 Asgd Limited Asmt Personnel - 18 Apr 45 SWA
307	Schwarzschild, Henry	Pfc.	504	1 Nov 1944	9 Nov 44 Trfd Div.Hq. G-2 -17 Dec 44 Trfd Div CIC Det.
308	Sebilian, George	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	15 Feb 45 SWA
309	Sees, Roy D.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	25 Feb 45 Sk LD - Jd 3 Mar 45
310	Segal, James E.	Cpl.	745	2 Feb 1945	Asgd fr 3544 Ordnance M A M Co. - 7 Feb 45 MIA
311	Sekely, Francis T.	Tec. 5	745	19 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt - 8 Dec 44 MIA
312	Shearon, Daniel F.	Tec. 5	745	23 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt
313	Shofi, Robert A.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	16 Nov 44 SWA
314	Shont, Levon S.	Pvt.	745	19 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt - 11 Dec 44 NBC wound left foot - Jd 20 Dec 44 - 21 Dec 44 Sk LD - Jd 31 Dec 44 - 1 Jan 45 MIA
315	Sica, Austin B.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	
316	Simco, John F.	Pfc.	745	19 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
317	Simmons, Roy E.	1st Sgt	585	1 Nov 1944	15 Dec 44 Battlefield Apmt 2nd Lt. -12 Apr 45 Asgd Prin dy Co Cmdr - 9 May 45 Reld dy Co Cmdr to Co Exec O.

318 Simpson, Leland E.	Pfc.	745	19 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt - 9 May 45 Trfd Hq Co 3rd Bn 399th Rgt.
319 Skelton, Willard B. Jr.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	17 Jan 45 Trfd to Co. B 399 Rgt.
320 Skrovan, John	Pvt.	745	2 Feb 1945	Asgd fr 989 FA Bn - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc
321 Smilovich, Anthony	Pvt.	745	30 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt - 1 Jan 45 Prom Pfc - 10 Jan 45 LWA - Jd 3 Mar 45
322 Smith, Charles E.	Pfc.	607	1 Nov 1944	
323 Smith, Donald K.	Pvt.	745	2 Feb 1945	Asgd fr Hq Btry 13th FA Brigade - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc
324 Smith, Lawrence W.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	1 Jan 45 Prom Pfc - 15 Mar 45 KIA Due Combat Inf. Pay
325 Smith, Verne E.	Pfc.	745	6 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
326 Snipes, James C.	Pvt.	745	19 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt - 14 Dec 44 Prom Sgt MOS 653 - 9 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 28 Jan 45 - 22 Feb 45 Prom S. Sgt
327 Sodie, Herman L.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	10 Feb 45 Prom Sgt MOS 653 - 24 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 27 Jan 45 - 3 May 45 Prom S. Sgt MOS 652
328 Sohns, Melvin L.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	27 Dec 44 Sk LD - Jd 2 Jan 45 - 26 Apr 45 Sk LD - Jd 29 Apr 45
329 Sparling, Chester E.	S.Sgt.	821	1 Nov 1944	

330	Spiegler, Joseph A.	S.Sgt.	652	1 Nov 1944	10 Feb 45 Prom T.Sgt MOS 651 - 15 Mar 45 LWA - Jd 27 Apr 45
331	Spradlin, Harold L.	Pvt.	745	24 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc
332	Spruit, William J.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	14 Dec 44 Sk LD
333	Starbecker, Stanley N.	Pfc.	675	1 Nov 1944	9 Mar 45 Sk LD - Jd 8 May 45
334	Stehlik, Raymond W.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	1 Jan 45 Prom Pfc - 21 Jan 45 Trfd Hq Co 3rd Bn 399 Rgt
335	Steigman, Myer	Pfc.	745	23 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 27 Mar 45 Sk LD
336	Stein, Joseph	Pvt.	745	19 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt - 27 Dec 44 Sk LD
337	Stephens, Clifford C.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	9 Nov 44 Sk. LD - Jd 11 Nov 44 - 2 Jan 45 Sk LD
338	Strate, Charlie	Pvt.	504	1 Nov 1944	1 Jan 45 Prom Pfc - 7 Feb 45 MIA
339	Stratmann, Carroll C.	Pvt.	745	26 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt - 9 Dec 44 LWA (Died of Wounds)
340	Stuart, John P.	Pfc.	504	1 Nov 1944	14 Dec 44 Sk LD - Jd 2 Jan 45 - 25 Feb 45 temp dy XV Corps Rest Ctr - Jd 1 Mar 45 - 18 Apr 45 KIA
341	Swosinski, Daniel R.	Pvt.	745	26 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt - 1 Jan 45 Prom Pfc - 1 Jan 45 SWA
342	Sykes, Allen T.	1st Lt.		1 Nov 1944	3 Jan 45 Asgd dy Co. Comdr - 10 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 12 Jan 45 - Reld dy

				Co. Cmdr Asgd Exec O. - 20 Mar 45 Temp dy XV Corps Rear Echelon - Jd 4 Apr 45 - 15 Apr 45 Temp dy Hq Sp Trs 100th Inf Div
343 Tafoya, Lee J.	Pvt.	504	1 Nov 1944	16 Nov 44 SWA
344 Taylor, Bennett D. Jr.	2nd Lt.		1 Nov 1944	16 Dec 44 Prom 1st Lt. - 18 Jan 45 Trfd to I Co. 399th Rgt.
345 Taylor, Eugene	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	18 Apr 45 LWA
346 Terwilliger, Charles M.	S. Sgt.	821	1 Nov 1944	
347 Thomas, Charles G.	Sgt.	745	20 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
348 Thorick, Philip	Tec. 4	60	1 Nov 1944	20 Dec 44 Sk LD - Jd 27 Dec 44 - 3 Jan 45 Sk LD
349 Tidwell, Marvin Jr.	Pfc.	746	1 Nov 1944	27 Mar 45 Sk LD
350 Tintle, Corwin E. H.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	9 Jan 45 Sk LD - 20 Jan 45 Prom Pfc - Jd 21 Jan 45 - 15 Mar 45 LWA
351 Tobias, Ray V.	Pfc.	607	1 Nov 1944	21 Nov 44 SWA
352 Todd, James A.	Cpl.	745	22 Mar 1945	Repl Dpt
353 Touri, Francis J.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	1 Dec 44 Prom Sgt. MOS 653 - 8 Dec 44 KIA
354 Truehl, Fred H.	Pvt.	745	11 Dec 1944	Repl. Dpt - 1 Jan 45 Prom Pfc - 9 Feb 45 Sk LD
355 Tucker, Willie J.	Sgt.	653	1 Nov 1944	17 Nov 44 Sk. LD - Jd 24 Nov 44 - 14 Dec 44 Prom S. Sgt. MOS 652 - 20 Apr 45 Red to Pvt

356 Tyson, George F. Jr.	S. Sgt.	652	1 Nov 1944	10 Feb 45 Prom T Sgt MOS 651 - 15 Mar 45 Temp dy XV Corps Rest Ctr Approx 4 days - Jd 19 Mar 45 -11 May 45 Recd Battlefield Apmt 2nd Lt.
357 Uhl, Raymond W.	Pvt.	745	26 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc - 8 Apr 45 SWA
358 Ulrich, Harold R.	S. Sgt.	652	1 Nov 1944	21 Nov 44 Sk. LD - Jd 11 Dec 44 - 8 Jan 45 LWA
359 Urbanowicz, Joseph J.	Pfc.	745	23 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt
360 Vanette, Jason L.	Pvt.	745	11 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt - 17 Nov 44 LWA - Jd 1 Feb 45 - 9 Mar 45 Sk LD - 9 Mar 45 Prom Pfc -11 Mar 45 Sk LD
361 Verheecke, Walter P.	Pvt.	745	19 Feb 1945	Repl Dpt - 9 Mar 45 Prom Pfc
362 Vorys, Nichols	Pfc.	607	1 Nov 1944	18 Jan 45 Sk LD
363 Voves, William	Pvt.	745	20 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
364 Vrable, Nick	Tec. 5	745	23 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 2 Feb 45 Sk LD - Jd 19 Mar 45
365 Wagner, Robert K.	Cpl.	745	6 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
366 Wallace, Joseph C.	Pfc.	675	1 Nov 1944	2 Jan 45 Sk LD
367 Warner, Argil H.	T.Sgt.	651	1 Nov 1944	19 Dec 44 KIA
368 Wascha, Henry J. Jr.	Tec.5	60	1 Nov 1944	
369 Watts, Samuel E.	Pvt.	745	19 Feb 1945	Repl Dpt - 9 Mar 45 Prom Pfc
370 Weber, Jerome	Tec. 5	745	7 Mar 1945	Repl Dpt
371 Weickel, Harold F.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	6 Dec 44 Sk LD
372 Weinberger, Ernest F.	Pfc.	675	1 Nov 1944	1 Jan 45 LWA

373	Wells, Francis G.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	10 Dec 44 LWA
374	Wessells, Warren G.	Pvt.	745	2 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt - 18 Apr 45 LWA Not entitled to add pay.
375	West, Horace T.	Pvt.	745	24 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 12 Feb 45 Prom Sgt MOS 653 - 1 Apr 45 Sk LD
376	White, William C.	Pvt.	745	28 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt - 1 Jan 45 Prom Pfc - 17 Apr 45 AWOL
377	Whitley, Barry B.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	
378	Wickenden, Alfred A, Jr.	Pfc.	504	1 Nov 1944	8 Dec 44 MIA
379	Wiezbowski, Edmund	Pvt.	745	6 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt - 18 Apr 45 LWA Not entitled to add pay.
380	Wilbur, Francis E.	Pvt.	745	28 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt - 1 Jan 45 Prom Pfc - 8 Jan 45 Sk LD
381	Wilkinson, Kenneth W.	Pfc.	745	1 Nov 1944	19 Nov 44 Sk. LD - Jd 22 Nov 44 - 8 Dec 44 SWA - Jd 23 Feb 45
382	Williams, Horace	Pfc.	745	19 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt - 9 Feb 45 Sk LD - Jd 16 Feb 45 - 26 Mar 45 Trfd Hq Co. 3rd Bn 399 Rgt
383	Williams, Samuel D.	Pvt.	745	1 Nov 1944	8 Jan 45 Sk LD
384	Wilson, Fred M.	Pvt.	745	8 Nov 1944	Repl. Dpt - 10 Feb 45 Prom Sgt MOS 653 - 15 Feb Sk LD
385	Wilson, John C.	Pfc.	675	1 Nov 1944	27 Nov 44 Sk. LD
386	Windle, Elden	Cpl.	745	6 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt
387	Wittmer, Duane D.	Pvt.	745	6 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt

388	Wolpin, Albert L.	Pfc. 675	1 Nov 1944	8 Dec 44 Sk LD
389	Woods, Joseph E. Jr.	Pfc. 675	1 Nov 1944	3 Dec 44 Sk LD - Jd 30 Dec 44 - 1 Jan 45 MIA
390	Wornick, James	S. Sgt. 652	1 Nov 1944	26 Dec 44 Sk LD - Jd 30 Dec 44 - 17 Jan 45 Sk LD - Jd 24 Jan 45 - 11 Mar 45 Temp dy XV Corps Rest Ctr Approx 4 Days - Jd 15 Mar 45 - 4 Apr 45 Prom T Sgt MOS 651
391	Worth, Arthur W.	Pfc. 745	1 Nov 1944	19 Nov 44 Self-Inflicted GSW
392	York, Donald W.	Pvt. 745	23 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc - 2 Apr 45 Temp dy Ft Dix NJ 45 days R & R
393	Young, Robert C.	Pvt 745	24 Jan 1945	Repl Dpt - 14 Feb 45 Prom Pfc
394	Young, Willam H. Jr.	Pfc. 745	1 Nov 1944	9 Nov 44 Self-Inflicted GSW Left Foot - Jd 12 Feb 45 - 18 Apr 45 LWA
395	Yurko, Andrew B.	Cpl. 745	6 Apr 1945	Repl Dpt - 18 Apr 45 KIA
396	Zilliox, William G.	Pfc. 746	1 Nov 1944	8 Dec 44 KIA
397	Zimmerman, Chris F. Jr.	Pvt. 745	1 Nov 1944	1 Jan 45 Prom Pfc - 15 Mar 45 LWA - Jd 8 May 45
398	Zimmerman, Walter D.	Pvt. 745	1 Nov 1944	20 Jan 45 Prom Pfc - 15 Mar 45 KIA Due Combat Inf Pay

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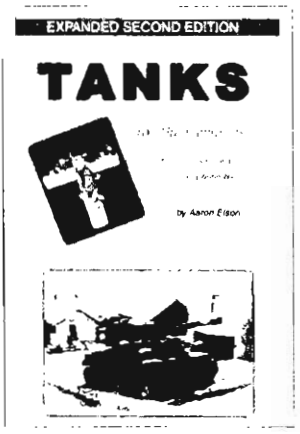

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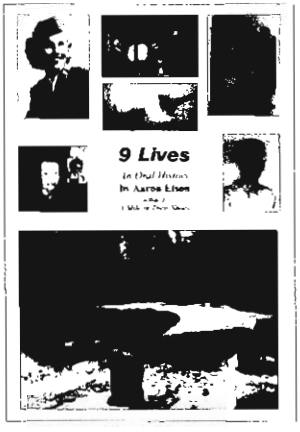

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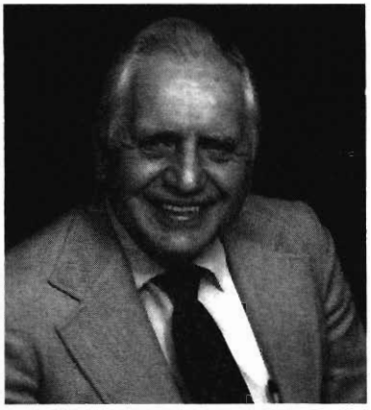

John M. Khoury was a nineteen-year-old college sophomore when he was called to active duty in the U.S. Army. He served as a rifleman in L Company, 399th Infantry Regiment, during World War II. From 1 November 1944 to 8 May 1945 he served in combat with his unit except for about seven weeks spent in a U.S. Army hospital for trench foot. He was awarded the Combat Infantry Badge, Bronze Star Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster for valor, Presidential Distinguished Unit Badge, Good Conduct Medal, European Theater Medal with Three Battle Stars, American Theater Medal, Army of Occupation Medal-Germany, and Victory Medal. His view of war comes from the subterranean level of a foxhole where all human senses are on full alert but the mind has atrophied. Technicalities and strategies of warfare are left to others while he has concentrated on the lives of the "infants" of the infantry.

ISBN 0-9727330-0-0

51495

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Printed in the U.S.A.

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