

Notes 187N, Copy 2

COL. J. J. WINN

The River House

April 4, 1966

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Interview with Col. J. J. Winn in River House April 4, 1966

I went to Ft Benning first as a student and then was assigned to 29th Infantry. Was there in fall of 1929. (Graduated in class of 1929) and then was assigned to Inf post. He was there when Mrs. Marshall gave party for Molly Winn back from Italy--this was 1930 or 1931. Later was assigned to Ft. Myer in 1937 and was there when Marshalls came in 1939. Had seen Molly from time to time. Was engaged and then ordered away. Came back for wedding at Christmas, 1940. ---****

Tells of period after Pearl Harbor. Families lack transport. Subs at mouth of Mississippi; ship sunk off Cuba. Ship bringing families went to Tampa instead of New Orleans. Three transports and five destroyers. We came in May. I came along because I had picked up malaria.

In May 1942 was assigned to Ft. Bragg. I got quarters there about August 1942. Gen and Mrs. Marshall came down and he went over to see 82d Division. Recruits coming in. Nobody in gliders. Bringing in recruits. George Lynch in charge. General Bradley trained 82d and split into two divisions.

Then Gen Marshall went to see the 9th Div and the 2d Armored Division. I went with him. Saw Gen Eddy and regimental commander at the 9th. Talked with Harmon at 2d Armd. He had played a lot of polo as I had; have thought later I should have asked to go with him. He probably would have said yes. But I didn't want to take advantage of Gen M's position.

I was on Panama championship polo team. Has played against Patton; he didn't like to be bumped.

I was for a time aide to General Fisk. Fisk asked me to go to San Francisco with him. Timberman was his son-in-law. After I finished at Benning in 1932, Gen King asked me to stay as his aide for a year.

At Ft Myer Dec 1942 for Christmas. Joined arty unit of 66th Div in Feb 1943. Div was first to get 18 year olds. I commanded arty bn at Ft Sill for a month; then went to Blanding, Fla. Molly came down in May, 1943. Mrs. Marshall came with her. We were about 50 miles from Jacksonville. That summer I moved to Ft. Robinson, Ark. Molly didn't go; visited Little Rock for two weeks; Kitty born in 1943 while I was at Sill. I was riding to hounds when I got the word and came onto Ft Myer. Feb 21 1943. Molly brought Kitty and Mrs. Marshall to Florida in May 1943.

March 1944--Division to Ft Rucker, Alabama. May 1944 Allen Brown was killed. Molly at my house in Alabama. I took leave and brought them up here.

Gen Marshall and I were cutting down a tree on June 5. He left. That night we (Molly and he and family I think) spent night with Madge's mother in New York. We read about the invasion in the paper. Gen Marshall hadn't said a word. I sent him a letter asking "How can I get in the war?"

Back with division for two days. I was in 40 miles of my hometown (Clayton, Ala). Went over to see mother. Then I was ordered over as a replacement--went alone. Sent to Cumberland Hotel;

roomed with Andy O'Meara (now European commander--full Gen). Remember the buzz bombs were just starting. Assigned to 1st Army Artillery under Gen Hart. Andy also assigned there. On June 20 went by boat to Normandy. Then to see Helmick I was given the 955th FA BN(155s). Had three commanders in 3weeks.

Gen Marshall sent me his field glasses; Bedell Smith brought them.

My battalion was Natl Guard outfit from Brooklyn (old 4th). Taken out of square division and made into artillery. I was Lt Col at the time.

We went through St. Lo. At Rambouillet, Helmick said report to Gen LeClerc--he had asked for two battalions of artillery--one medium and one light. We went through Paris with 2d French Armored Div. Went into position at St. Denis. Fired 3000 rounds with artillery stationed in streets.

My bn went across the Schwammenuel Dam.

Zeroed in on Denkmal at Leipzig.

My guns were at Le Bourget at time of liberation of Paris. CP in Fort de l'Ouest north of Paris; guns outside.

We went into area north of Paris the 28th of August; 28th Div came in through our area. I gave dinner for LeClerc artillery officers.

I was in on closing the gap at Falaise. Shot all but 50 rounds that we had. Moved from Vire up there overnight. Then went over to 4th Division.

With V Corps artillery--1st Division at Dom Butgenbach; also aided 2d Div.

Remembers going through St. Vith to Germany. Schomburg nearest point. Crossed at Customs House. I moved into it. Schnee Eifel just in front. There about a month.

Gen Middleton was at Benning when Gen Marshall was there.

I was in one position astride border with 4th, 2d, and 9th in turn.

106th was green and had a wide front. Got caught short.