

48th TAKES ST. DIE

The outfit was kept occupied at Bruyeres, with a great deal of mine work, and many bridges. Every day for a week, the road sweeping parties were reporting mines on almost every stretch of road covered.

During the afternoon and evening of November 13th, Charlie Company constructed a 60 foot dry treadway bridge below Biffontaine. The 111th Engineers had attempted to build the bridge, but their number one Brockway had slid off the shoulder of the narrow road while enroute to the bridge. As daylight approached, it became necessary to abandon the truck because of enemy action.

The bridge site was located at the foot of Le Cours Mountain, which was in the process of being consolidated when Charlie Company began construction. However, there was no opposition, and the bridge was placed and ready for traffic by 2145.

Baker Company drew two fixed bridges on the same day at Jussarupt and La Chappelle. A total of nine squads were used on the two bridges, along with the Quickway Crane to launch the stringers. The 45 foot gap at Jussarupt was ready for traffic by 1330, November 16th, and the other 45 foot bridge near La Chappelle, built under a Bailey, was ready three hours later.

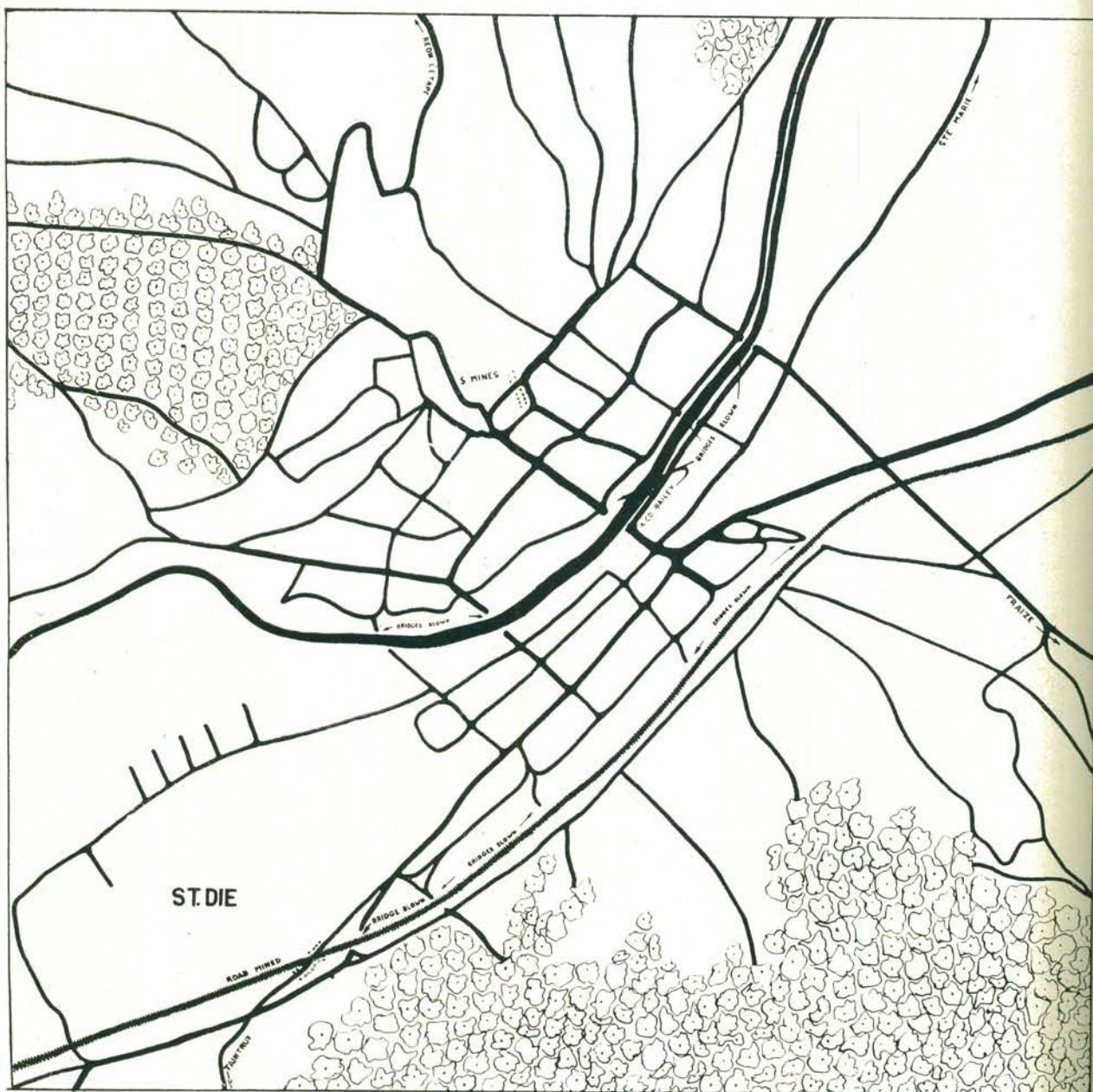
The 48th was in support of the 36th Division when the crossing of the upper Muerthe near Bruyeres was planned. The 36th Division was to cross the narrow stream and secure the high ground on the right flank of the Corps sector and to hold until the later phase of the attack could be formulated. The 48th was notified that a bridge would be necessary in the near future, to carry the traffic of the advance. Able Company was given the assignment.

Captain Snyder left for a recon of the site as soon as he received the message. He reported that the bridge consisted of three parts. One small span crossed a flume which was separated from the main body of the stream by a small wall which guided the water to a spillway. The main span of the bridge had been blown and the debris dropped into the stream. The third arch, a 25 foot span leading to the far shore had been left in good condition. The span over the flume would hold heavy traffic, but from past experiences with flat arch bridges, Captain Snyder decided to demolish the span on the far shore. This would leave a gap, from lip to lip, of 87 feet. The immediate necessity of a bridge was lessened by a by-pass that wound through the town over the river and back on to the highway at another point on the far side of the town. Because of the temporary by-pass, and the fact that the road could be used for some time as a supply road, the 48th recommended a wooden trestle bridge to VI Corps Engineer Section.

The water in the stream bed was shallow enough to permit a bulldozer to move under the span and clear out the debris. Two steel beams which supported the former arch were cut into four pieces and then dragged clear of the site by the dozer. The first and second platoons of Able Company, relieving each other, began work at 1300 on November 17th and the bridge was completed and open for traffic at 1745 on November 18th. All the time Jerry was close enough to direct mortar fire into the town, but there was no fire directly on the site.

On November 18th at 1610, Major Petree, S-3 of the 111th Engineers notified Major Munson that a bridge would be necessary in the vicinity of Gademont, about a mile in advance of Able Company's bridge in Granges. There was no Bailey immediately available, so Corporal Schrab of S-3 was sent to Mirecourt to guide a Bailey Bridge train of dukws to Bruyeres.

There was no moon, and visibility was cut to less than two feet, by the darkness and a ground haze that completely covered the valley. The dukws were guided slowly to the area. Major Munson, leading the convoy, and Private Wynkoop, following, both hit the same shell hole in the darkness and banged



their heads on the windshield with enough noise to warn Germans for miles around that something big was on the way through. But the dukws were guided safely around the hole and made their way to the site, where Baker Company, working quickly and silently, began to slide the panels into place.

The men worked through the night, and by four in the morning, the bridge was reported in place. Apparently, Jerry had been caught napping, for the bridge had been placed right on his doorstep without opposition.

Bruyeres was a town of bridges, but perhaps the strangest was the Able Company bridge at Lavaline.

No more than two platoons of Infantry had crossed the small river that led past the town, and they had moved down the road less than three hundred yards and set up outpost positions.

Able Company measured the gap, and decided that it was definitely a Bailey Bridge job.

Because of the proximity of the enemy, Operations decided that Able Company should try the job during the night. Able Company's Bailey was on dukws and the huge train of dukws would have to slip up almost to the front lines while Able Company placed the bridge.

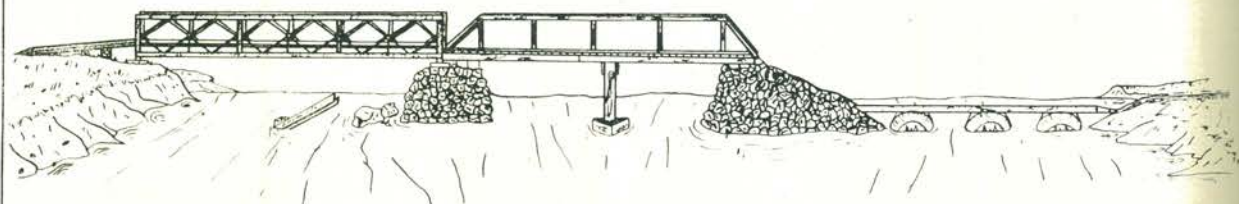
Able Company arrived at the site at dusk and took a quick look at the gap. They then moved into the cover and concealment of a railroad station to wait for darkness. The men were told not to smoke, but the order was unnecessary. The men knew that if one man so much as tripped and fell, the sound would carry to the enemy outposts. The officers were really "sweating it out" for they believed that any minute the Germans would rock the site with mortars.

It was almost nine o'clock when the first dukw started rounding the turn far off up the valley, and the men stood in the shadows holding their breath. It was impossible to see the dukws as it was so dark that they could hardly see each other, and it was getting darker all the time. The dukws were trying to follow



The 48th Moving Into St. Die

The 48th Bridges The Way



BAILEY BRIDGES

41%

PLACE	CO. A	LENGTH
HIGHWAY 48		60
HIGHWAY 48		40
CASSINO		90
CASSINO		100
SEZZE		80
TERRACINA		90
ST JULIAN		70
CORMORAND		80
DECELLES		90
LAVALINE		90
BUVE LES DAMES		150
LA CHAPPELLE		50
ST DIE		140
ST MARGUERITE		140
WOERTH		50
SAARBRUCKEN		110
SAARBRUCKEN		60
VICINITY OF		
BERTCHESCADEN		80
BERTCHESCADEN		80
BERTCHESCADEN		180
CO. B		
HIGHWAY 48		110
NORTH OF ROME		60
CADEMONT		90
ST. LEONARD		80
BERTCHESCADEN		120
CO. C		
HIGHWAY 48		110
BORGO GRAPPA		50
COLLI		130
LA CHAPPELLE		50
ST. MARGUERITE		50

FIXED BRIDGES

32%

PLACE	CO. A	LENGTH
ST JULIAN		20
ST SAVEUR		35
PREY		45
GRANGES		97
MEISTRATZHEIM		29
JEACERTHAL		31
VECOUX		60
CO. B		
ACAY		25
BOURG		25
ARBEIS		80
ARBEIS		80
VILLERSEXEL		55
LURE		48
VAGNEY		70
HAUX		30
JUSSARUPT		45
LA CHAPPELLE		45
NEIDERBRONN		35
GUNDERSHOFFEN		33
NORTH OF WOERTH		45
NORTH OF WOERTH		60
LURE		40
NEIDERBRONN		36
FENETRANGE		240
MEISTRATZHEIM		35
JACSZELL		55
STETIENNE		26
CO. C		
JULIENRUPT		60
RICHARVILLE		30
ST MARGUERITE		50
DETTWILLER		29
WOERTH		60
LURE		40
ROTHBACH		28
JACSTHEIM		54
ROT IM SEE		35
UFFENHEIM		48
AMERBACH		48
PONTAIX		50
HIRSHORN		75
ST ETIENNE		21
CO. A & B		
ST JULIAN		109

TREADWAY PONTONS

27%

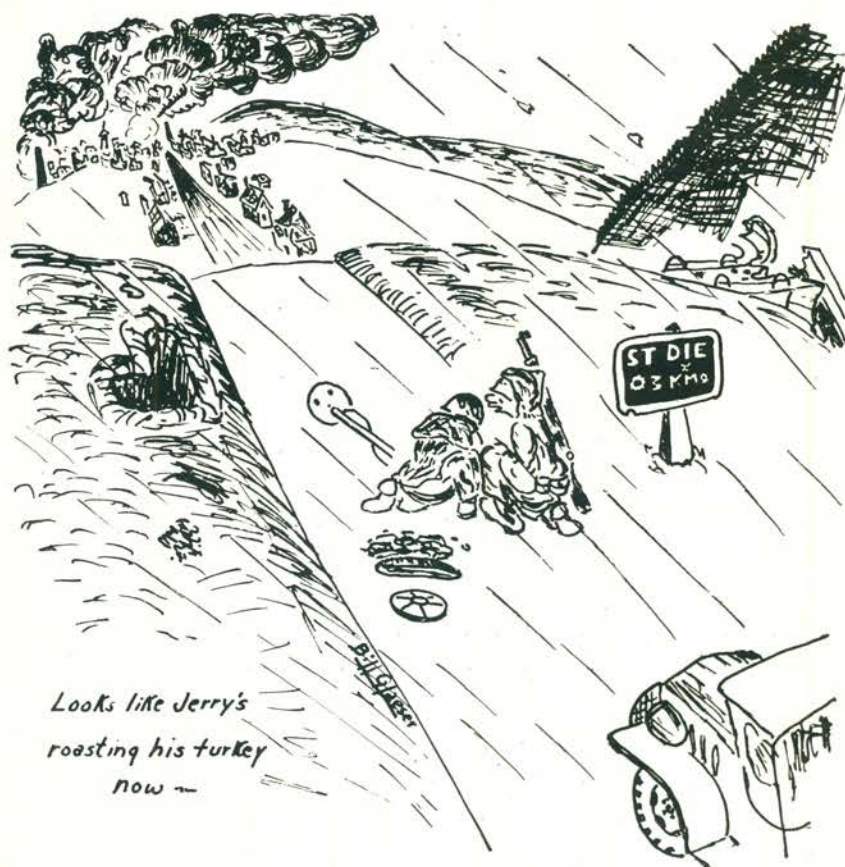
PLACE	CO. A	LENGTH
MEISTRATZHEIM		36
GUNDERSHOFFEN		48
JAECERTHAL		24
MATTSTALL		36
NEIDERBRONN		36
LONGENSULTZBACH		36
CO. B		
MANOSQUE		48
CO. C		
BIFFONTAINE		60
FRAMBOMENIL		60
MOULIN		108
CERTWILLER		36
ZINSWILLER		36
GERSWILLER		144
ANDLAU		48
ST PIERRE		48
BOBENTHAL		36
ST AMES		144
CO. A, B & C		
HEIDELBURG		425
AMBERIEU		550

the road, by just inching along and because of the darkness they could not see the road or the men ten feet ahead of them. They dared not use lights so they were travelling by sound more than anything else.

Able Company stood silently by, straining their ears for the slightest sound. The dukws made a low humming noise as they coasted down the road and it seemed to take hours for them to move. They would inch ahead and stop, then inch ahead and stop again. Guides lay on the front of each dukw and listened for the motor ahead of them and when they could not hear it, they would whisper to the driver and the dukw would drop forward a few yards. Then the driver would cut his motor and the guides would listen again. The guides and the driver, six feet apart could not see each other. It was pitch black and the dukws took almost an hour to move four hundred yards. Captain Snyder stopped the first dukw as it approached a small factory leading to the site, and assembled the dukws prior to sending them on up the road to the bridge site. Suddenly, there was a bright gleam of lights. Some dukw driver had accidentally flicked his lights on. Had Jerry noticed it? Able Company froze and waited for the whistle of mortars. There were several moments of anxious silence. No shells came in so the dukws started on again. Each dukw was led to the site separately, and unloaded. There wasn't a whisper. Able Company was doing a bridge to perfection; so far it was an engineer dream job.

The night was so dark literally, that the men of Able Company could not see their hands before their faces. The Infantry had outposted the town, and the Germans were less than three hundred yards away. A Seventh Army Correspondent who was at the site, wrote in a press release to the United States. "With the 48th Engineers of the Seventh Army in France, November 15—Company A of the 48th Engineers pulls a fast one every once in a while. They did it again a few nights ago right under Jerry's nose."

"The engineers were told that a bridge was needed just three hundred yards behind an Infantry outpost. The Germans had complete observation of the valley from hills to the north and east, and they sent an exploring shell at the bridge site every now and then. Company A prepared for a tough job that night."



"The men were pretty sure that when they started banging a Bailey Bridge together so close to the front, the Germans would round up every mortar in the vicinity to have a field day."

"The men of Company A came up in the half-light of early evening and quickly looked over the bridge site. Then they moved to the shelter of a nearby railroad station."

"It was dark when the bridge equipment came in—very dark. A light snow was falling and the night had become very cold. Lieutenant Albert F. Moritz, of Niles, Ohio, and Sergeant Russell L. DeBoer, of Hickman Hills, Missouri, guided dukws through the blackout to the site. The dukws glided in, almost noiselessly, to the quiet orders, 'Right a little'; 'Straighten her out' and 'Come on forward'. Two platoons moved away from the station and gathered around the dukws. Some of the men clambered aboard and began to pass bridge parts to the men below."

"Noiselessly Company A unloaded the parts and began to bolt their bridge together. It was so dark that the men had to remove their gloves to feel for the bolt holes in the steel panels."

"Slowly the bridge began to take form. By three in the morning it was finished. All hands joined in to roll the bridge across the gap. For ten minutes, Company A pushed and shoved and then the bridge moved across the stream and landed gently on the far embankment."

"It used to be quite a feat to put a rifle together blindfolded, but Company A's two hundred men surpassed all records when they put together a hundred foot bridge at midnight close enough to Jerry to tap him on the shoulder."

The 48th was getting to be known as the unit that could put a bridge across despite all obstacles. Colonel Thomas, VI Corps Engineer Officer, had directed that all bridges needed by the three divisions or Corps would be built by the 48th.

Lieutenant Colonel Stovall of the 111th Engineer Combat Battalion sent the following commendation to Colonel Swift for work performed for the 36th Division:

"It is my wish to commend you and the officers and men of your battalion for the outstanding manner in which you performed your duties while you were working in conjunction with the 36th Infantry Division and the 111th Engineer Combat Battalion during the month of November ..."

"At all times, when our own men worked personally with you or the men of your battalion, we were struck by your gratifying spirit of cooperation and cheerfulness. We who worked with you are certain that your organization provided the most effective and the most thorough support in combat operations that our battalion has ever received; and are equally certain that this support made a material contribution to the combat successes of the 36th Division during the month of November."

"On behalf of the officers and men of our battalion, I wish to express our appreciation for the fine spirit in which you carried out your duties with us. And—it is my hope that you will have the greatest possible success in your coming operation."

For a long while, the Seventh Army had built up its supplies along the plain before the Vosges Mountains. Now they were ready. On the 17th of November, the 48th learned of the plan that was designed to carry the Seventh to the Rhine. It was a bold plan and an ambitious one, for it would throw four divisions against a prepared defense line of minefields and pillboxes overlooking a wide river—the Muerthe. That river was the 48th's to bridge.

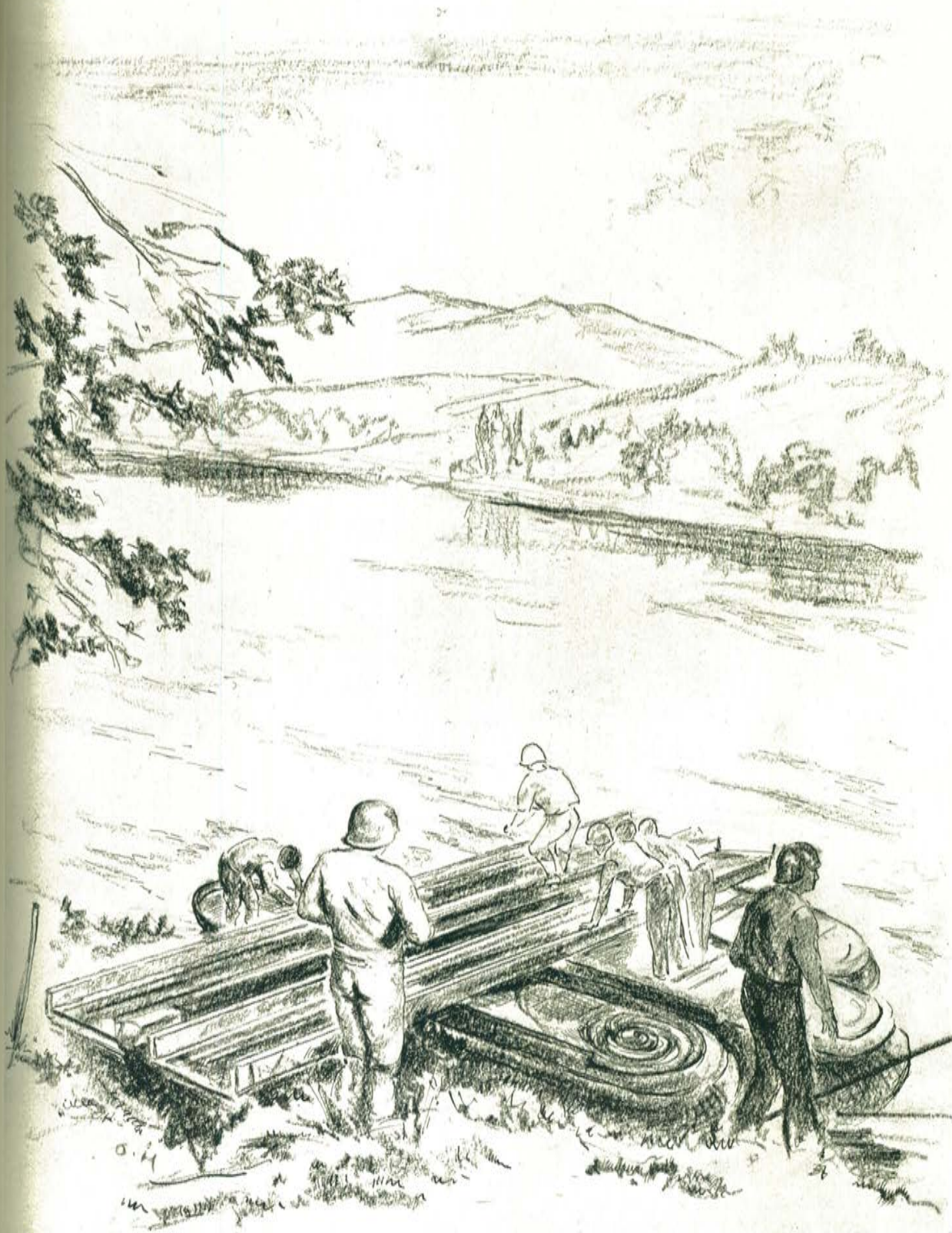
The 36th Division on the right and the 45th Division on the left were to circle the city of St. Die and capture the high ground on the flanks. Then the Third and 103rd Divisions, with the weight of added armor, were to plunge through the center and drive straight to Strasbourg through the Vosges Gap.

It was the old line buck and the 48th was the center, for the whole play depended on a 150 foot Bailey Bridge in the heart of the enemy bastion of St. Die.

It was enough to make the boys on the inside bite their fingernails for two whole divisions would be fretting about the bridge, and the success of the whole plan depended on the bridge going in and staying in long enough to get them over.

In order to avoid the ponderous traffic of the two divisions moving up, the 48th picked a protected spot behind a towering hill about two kilometers southwest of St. Die as a forward assembly area.

The vulnerable bridge train and Companies Able and Charlie moved up and set up near the town of Taintrux behind the hill.



Over the Moselle

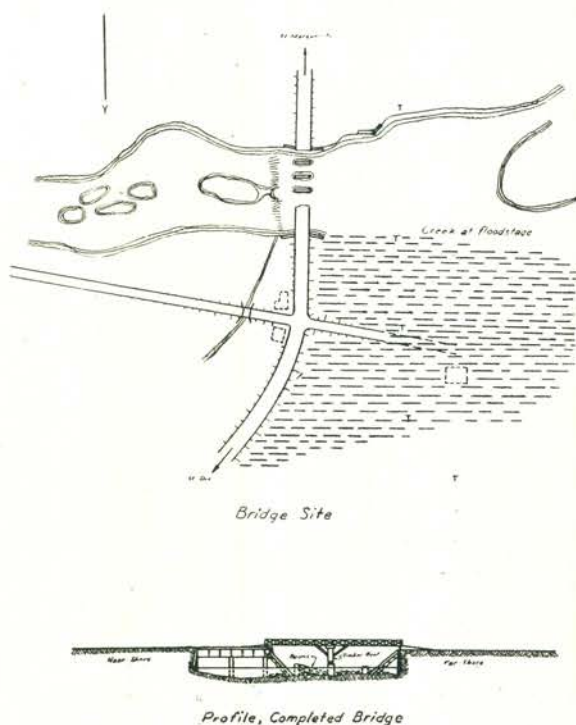
Baker Company went with a 36th Division "flying column" that was going to jump off and swing northward to outflank the town.

The city was blazing now. The French had started an abortive uprising which had been speedily rooted out. Then, in retribution, the Germans burned all of the ancient part of the city, south of the river, blew up the three railroad and vehicular bridges, and pulled back to positions overlooking the river.

The 411th Infantry of the 103rd Division was to jump off at 0645 on the 22nd, so Able Company and the bridge train were alerted. Shortly after dawn, however, the plan was called off.

The 48th thought that putting in the bridge alone would be a hard job. Without a chance at a preliminary reconnaissance, they were moving in blindly without previous preparation. Able Company should really know a lot of things, for the bridge had to go up speedily. If the approaches were blocked by rubble, or the site under fire, the train certainly couldn't be brought right to the site. Then if the span was still partially

BAILEY BRIDGE CONSTRUCTED NEAR ST MARGUERITE, FRANCE 2 NOV 44



on the bents, there would have to be preliminary blasting that would endanger the span if it wasn't done expertly. Under fire this would be a tough job. Able Company was taking a gamble—or in army terms, a calculated risk.

The 48th asked for permission to send a patrol into the town to get a look at the sites, but it was refused for security reasons. The Germans might learn that an attack was pending.

All Able Company needed was one look. The trained engineers could estimate a million things that would save hours of time when the bridge train moved in.

Major Munson, Private Naylor, and Sergeant Fred Fialkowski had been hoping to get a peek at the bridge sites somehow to augment the aerial photographs that had been sent down to S-2.

They had gotten partially into town on the morning's dry run, and the major was convinced that if he could get that far, without being shot at, he could get in the rest of the way.

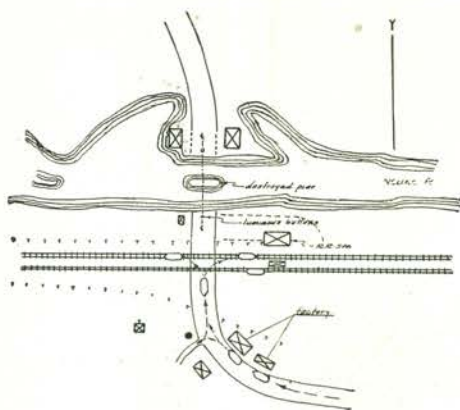
A French civilian had said that the only opposition in town was a few snipers and a roving Cossack patrol. The major borrowed a French overcoat to cover his brass, took off his hat, and walked into the city to two of the sites with French civilians, but he had to beat a hurried retreat from the last one, when a sniper took

a pot shot at him. If he caused too much alarm, he would give away the whole scheme.

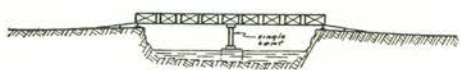
Major Munson met Lieutenant Butler, Captain Snyder and Sergeant Paquin just outside of the city, where Able Company was beginning to move back and told them the story.

Everyone was amazed and a little enthused, and after a short deliberation the group moved back into town. A civilian told them that there were Germans on this side of the river, and a German machine gun was covering the river from a white house just on the other side. The civilians guided the engineers to the riverside and pointed out the spot. Stealthily, the men slipped through the houses until they had reached a spot directly across from the house. Then they found cover and formed a firing line. At a signal from Major Munson, they opened up on the house with tommy guns and rifles and blazed away for fully five minutes. There wasn't a sign of life or fire from the suspected German position. The engineers thought that the machine gun had been withdrawn. At any rate, the bridge site might now be safe.

BRIDGE CONSTRUCTED AT LAVELINE, FRANCE 9TH, NOVEMBER 1944



Topography at Bridge Site



Profile

By ten o'clock, the Major had sent Corps a fully illustrated description of the three bridge sites, with the recommendation that the center site be used for the bridge.

Major Munson then reported his reconnaissance to Colonel Swift, and was telling about the unexpected scarcity of Germans in the supposed enemy bastion.

"Colonel," he said, "there doesn't seem to be much opposition in town at all. Why, I think we could take that whole town with one platoon."

Colonel Swift looked up and smiled, "Well, you have my permission."

"What?", asked Major Munson.

"You have my permission," the Colonel replied quietly.

The second platoon of Able Company was chosen for the job and they loaded up with machine guns, hand grenades, bazookas and bandoliers of rifle ammunition.

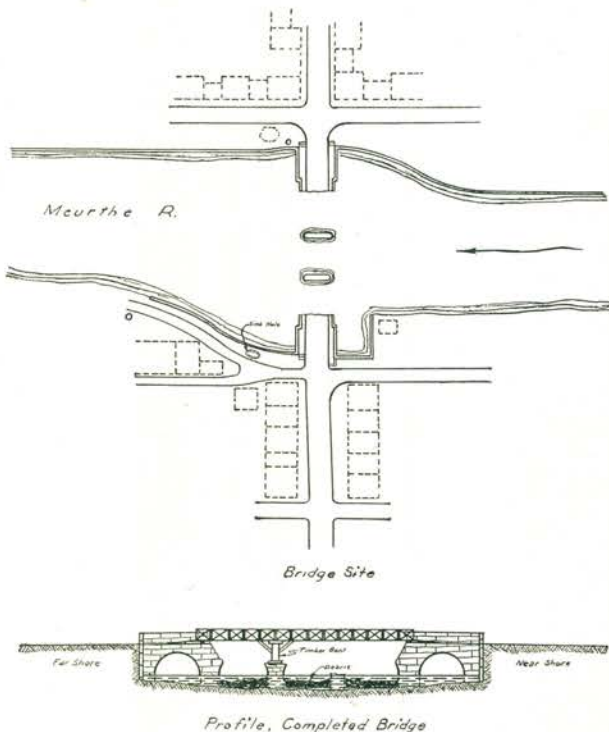
Major Munson took one squad on a shooting expedition to draw fire and estimate the enemy strength, while the other two squads remained on the outskirts of town to cover a possible retreat if it were necessary. The squad couldn't find any Germans, but they did round up thirteen FFI to add to their small task force.

The second platoon slipped down to the river and set up a firing line, while the FFI ran to the local fire station and returned with ladders. Then with the help of ladders, they started crossing the blown span of the bridge, while the platoon and FFI kept up a steady fire. Major Munson made the far bank safely, with four of the FFI following, one of whom set off a large booby trap that wounded three of the FFI men superficially. Then the second platoon quickly crossed the river and moved to the far edge of town where they outposted all roads leading to the bridge site.

Meanwhile, the rest of Able Company and the bridge train had been notified, and were already rolling into town.

By 1700, Sergeant Tschetter led the Infantry through to relieve Able Company's outpost guards. The next day, armor was crossing the St. Die bridge in a steady stream.

BAILEY BRIDGE CONSTRUCTED AT ST. DIE, FRANCE 22 NOV, 1944



TASK FORCE TRELOAR

"Task Force Treloar" left Molsheim with one squad from the second platoon, four Brockway trucks with their drivers, and enough M-2 treadway to put the Combat Command of the 14th Armored all the way to Colmar.

On the morning of the 28th of November, Lt. Hammerstrom brought two Brockways and a working party to the vicinity of Gertwiller, where he left them in an assembly area and went forward with Captain Wallace, CO of Company C of the 125th Engineers to make a personal reconnaissance of a reported blown bridge still under fire.

While on their way to the town, the Germans launched a counterattack that carried them through the town. Lt. Hammerstrom had to pass through small arms fire to return to his men. Infantry countered the German attack long enough to permit Company C to get their big Brockways and equipment turned around and retreat. The following morning, the American forces reorganized and recaptured the town. A strong outpost was placed on the far side of town, long enough for the men to get the bridge across.

T/5 Meyer and Pfc. Baker, members of Task Force Treloar said, "We had just moved into Molsheim, unloaded our equipment, ate chow, when word came that the first squad, second platoon would move out right away. Our job was to follow up the 14th Armored Division as a task force, which meant erecting treadway bridges wherever needed. We drove to Gertwiller where our seven Brockways loaded with the bridge equipment were waiting for the word to proceed to the bridge site. We expected the signal early, for the bridge site was in American hands, the town having just fallen that afternoon. But the Germans had driven our troops back and recaptured the town. We slept in a very comfortable house that night. It had been occupied by German officers only a short time before. Everyone expected to be called out at any moment. Towards the middle of the night we were awakened from our not too sound sleep by someone yelling "Diana! Diana!" We grabbed our rifles wondering what was coming off. It so happened, it was only our own buddy Gus having one of his habitual nightmares. We went back to our interrupted sleep and nothing else unusual happened that night. The burst of enemy mortars was crooning a lullaby to us as we slept in our insecurity."

"Early that morning we learned that the Infantry had retaken the town and were warned that there were still snipers around. We dismounted from our trucks and proceeded the rest of the way on foot. We advanced cautiously and quite slowly, ducking into and behind ruins whenever shells landed nearby. Luckily we reached the bridge site without casualties and without having to run the gauntlet of sniper fire, starting on our task almost immediately. The gap was thirty feet wide and would require three treadways across, each treadway being twelve feet long. We attached three together and had the Brockway pick them all up at one time. While the Brockway was picking them up the men had to stand on the hood of the truck to keep the front end down. We had one side of the bridge across; a tank covering us while we worked suddenly opened up with its thirty caliber machine gun at some snipers who were spotted in a building down the street from us. We grabbed our rifles, dispersed as best we could, and were ready to help the tankers out if possible. After a few minutes of firing by the tank two Germans came out with their hands in the air. As the firing quieted down we continued our work. We completed the other half of the bridge and our tanks raced across to give support to units of Infantry on the other side. As the tanks were crossing the bridge, German

artillery opened up again, but it wasn't long before our tanks had silenced these guns and everything came out as we planned."

As part of the 14th Armored's Task Force, the 1st squad, 2nd platoon of Charlie Company waited at their squad headquarters in Gersweiler for their next assignment. Pfc. Carroll said, "There were two locations, one somewhere across the bridge that we had just erected and the other was unknown. Whichever site was taken first that was where the bridge was to go in. It was found that heavy fighting was going on at the Geilenkirch site and it hadn't been taken as yet, so it was decided to proceed to the other site which was somewhere near-by. It was one of those dark, moonless, winter nights, and the low-hanging fog hampered our vision to a certain extent. Being in unfamiliar territory and driving among a network of roads, both good and bad, didn't make our situation any too pleasant. The shellfire was monotonously regular and the men were tense. After riding around for a couple of hours, and getting no place, the men became disgusted. The Jerry artillery was coming closer when we pulled into a town where the buildings were still burning. It was spooky driving through town, for the fires lighting up little areas and all the shadows from the flames jumping around as if they were Germans. The men were on the alert in case some of these shadows did turn into solid flesh, but we didn't see a living thing on our tour through the town. The deathly quietness of it had everyone on edge, wondering if we were riding into a trap or was some sniper drawing a bead on one of us at this very moment? Were we seeing things or were those shadows really moving? Every rifle swung around to where the movement had been. There was a person or persons unknown in that little dark street but were they friend or foe? Our fears were calmed when four G.I.s stepped out and informed us that they were on patrol. There was only a platoon of Infantry in the town patrolling it. It sure was a relief to know we weren't alone in the town. The patrol melted into the shadows again. The trucks rumbled slowly along among the many streets. On the edge of town there was a road block partially removed and the trucks eased through slowly. While waiting for our turn to follow, a shutter directly overhead was opened slowly and cautiously, just enough to allow a person to see into the street. Every rifle was aimed at the window while the men strained their eyes trying to pierce the dark window. Then the shutter closed as silently as it had been opened. Whoever it was didn't know how close he came to being shot. We expected anything from a hand grenade dropping into our truck to machine gun fire. Our truck slowly moved through the road block and the men were doubly alert and carefully watched all windows after that last incident. Further up the road there was quite a bit of G.I. equipment laying scattered about, packs, helmets, and a few jeep trailers. We learned the following day that a wire patrol had been ambushed there that evening. We drove further on and entered another small town. We came to the far end of town without seeing anyone when a civilian was seen standing off the center of the road. The jeep stopped and the sergeant asked him if the road ahead was clear. He said it was and we started slowly on again. The trucks all stopped and we could see a short way in front of us a large road block in the middle of the street, still intact making it a dead end street. Flying from the town hall building was a large Nazi flag. The Brockways turned around faster than imaginable and we drove as fast as was possible back the way we came. The civilian had disappeared and it was a good thing for him that he had because he would have caught it for directing us down a blind alley. We raced back towards Barr, and mortar shells started landing in the town we had just vacated. When in Barr we stopped at an intersection and the truck dispersed. The men unloaded and Sgt. Treloar with the jeep went ahead to recon the road and see if he could find where the bridge was supposed to be built. About five minutes later the stillness was broken by the sound of about a dozen screaming meemies coming over. They were headed for the town we had just left. We thought to ourselves, what might have happened if we hadn't been able to turn those trucks around on those narrow streets. A civilian came down the street wearing an FFI band, and he stopped by us and asked if we'd like some wine. He said his house was only a ten minute walk from there. We said no and told him to be on his way. He walked up about 200 yards and turned into a building. This seemed funny, that was no ten minute walk and what was he doing roaming the streets so late? Just then a shot came from the house he turned into which hit the middle of the street near where our truck was parked. He was either a poor shot or he meant to shoot our tires. That seemed like the signal for everything to break loose. Shooting then came from every direction. The men scattered out and I and a few others rounded a corner and ducked into an alley. A burp gun opened up along with a few rifles. It seemed everywhere we turned there was someone shooting at us. The drivers had their trucks turned around and were getting them out of there. There was only one thing to do, the trucks started

to go out the way we entered Barr, the men sprinted across the square and piled into the trucks. We started to drive to the other side of town thinking we could stop there, get organized, and wait for the jeep to return but our minds were changed by rifle fire at us from a dark building. We had to keep low all the way through town, because we were shot at all the way through town, and instead of stopping as we had planned, we had to go clear out of town before we dared stop. A few bullets hit the trucks but not many came close. German artillery fire was stepped up too. We moved on further and stopped and counted noses. Everyone was there and we had no casualties. From the sound of things there was a possible counterattack to retake the town. Moving back about five miles, we waited until Sgt. Treloar arrived. He said we must go back to the area as it was getting daylight, and no one liked riding around all night, cold and tired. Sleep was the main thing, until somebody found out where the bridge was wanted. We returned to camp and just fell down dead to the world. Captain Finnegan made a sudden appearance and said we had to put the bridge in immediately if not sooner. We staggered out and loaded on the trucks and returned to Barr. We waited in the same place where we were the night before. The buildings all had fresh bullet holes in the walls. We could hear Jerry artillery coming in, which was big stuff. We were instructed to proceed to the bridgesite in a little town named Andlau, two miles away. About a mile from town there were seventeen American tanks knocked out, and a few still burning. A retriever was dragging one out. There were many mortar shells coming in and the tanks were sitting on the road shooting into the town giving the Infantry support until the bridge went in so they could cross.

We stopped on the narrow road once, while the tanks moved aside and a couple of machine guns firing from the road were moved. We unloaded and took cover as best we could along side the tanks. Pvt. Townsend and I was laying beside a tank, firing 150 yards into town when there was a metallic ring on his helmet. I thought he was hit at first but it so happened that this tanker was throwing the shell casings over the side and one had hit Townsend. I can imagine how he felt hugging the ground while the shelling was going on and suddenly get that jar on the head. I guess he thought he got it for a moment. We took off to a different place after that. We loaded on the trucks and went past the tanks on forward. Then we ran the gauntlet of fire again, the bullets pinging off the Brockways all the way down. The treadways in the truck protected us well and we had no casualties. The bridgesite was within 100 yards of the nearest Germans and the Infantry was giving us cover and a squad of the 125th Engineers was providing ample security. Our artillery was bursting only seventy five yards away as we worked on the bridge. The location was between two rows of buildings so we had protection from small arms fire. The men really hustled then and soon had the bridge completed. T/5 Casto and another man started out to tell the armor it could roll across now but the jeep was forced to turn back after going only 300 yards past heavy German fire. There was nothing to do but sit and wait. Finally an armored car showed up, with the information that the bridge was ready for use. Tanks and



Floating Bailey

other armored vehicles raced across to hold newly won positions. We couldn't move out until darkness had come. It was nice watching that armor roll across the bridge we had just completed. We could hear the harsh explosions of German mortars as we moved away from the little ruined town of Andlau. We were not sorry to leave it either, and happy because we were going back to get some well deserved sleep. Task Force Treloar consisted of the following men: S/Sgt. Treloar, Sgt. Currie, T/4 Robertson, T/5 Gotsopoulos, T/5 Casto, Cpl. Waters, Pfc. West, Pfc. Milburne, Pvt. Townsend, Pvt. Baker, Pvt. Stallard, Pvt. Volturo, Pvt. Mitchell, and T/5 Meyer."

On the Fifth of December, the 48th was notified that we would support the 45th Division. Our right boundary would be the Vosges Mountains and our left, a line based on the City of Hagenau. The Battalion moved to the vicinity of Ingwiller.

Able Company had been ordered to build an 80 foot Bailey at Mertzwiller, so they waited for night and started up with their bridgetrain. At 2030, construction was started, but an enemy self-propelled gun was



Treadway At St. Ame

firing directly on the site. At 0045, six consecutive rounds were pumped into the engineers from an estimated range of 500 yards. The commander of the bridge train was seriously wounded. Colonel Swift called Colonel Monier, division engineer of the 45th and explained the situation to him. By order of the Commanding General, 45th Division, work ceased at 0100, and was to be resumed on the night of the 6th of December. By 0200, Colonel Monier had contacted our artillery and soon had several friendly artillery battalions searching for the gun. Meanwhile, Company F of the 180th Infantry were outposting the knoll overlooking the site. Charlie Company reported a 30 foot fixed bridge open for traffic by 1730 in the vicinity of Gumbrechtshoffen. Between 1400 and 1600, twenty 88mm shells fell near the site.

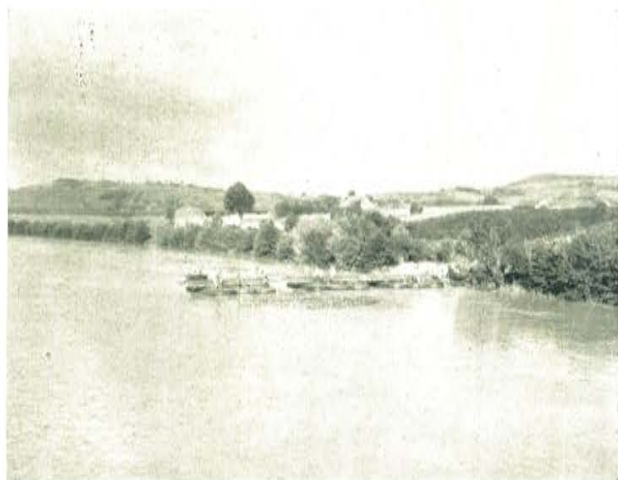
On December 9th at 1500, Colonel Monier notified Captain Thompson, liason officer, that the Infantry had cleared the town of Neiderbronn down to the road running Northeast of the town. The main opposition seemed to have been sniper fire, and the enemy still had observation.

By 1745 Able Company began construction of a 36 foot treadway at the site, while Baker Company was notified to begin construction of a wooden trestle bridge as soon as possible under the treadway at Neiderbronn. Later, two more gaps were reported in the vicinity of Gundershoffen, and Able Company was alerted with its Bailey and treadway bridge trains, to bridge them as soon as the sites were cleared of the enemy.

Able Company waited through the night and attempted a reconnaissance of the site by noon. At 1745, Captain Snyder sent the following message: "48 foot treadway bridge at Q-942 341 was in at 1700. Trestle was constructed in the center. Other gap was O.K. Some sniper fire on the site, but no casualties. Several topfmines were found, one of which was booby-trapped. A few S-mines were found in the field next to the bridge, which could be easily seen."



Work Of The 48th



Ponton Treadway



1. Fill Bridge at La Bolle
 2. Rock Piering
 3. Finished Product
 4. Pastoral
 5. Hold Tight
 6. Preparing the Abutments

7. Wooden trestles
 8. Measuring Up
 9. Julienrupt
 10. First Traffic
 11. Ready for Action
 12. The Bailey Approach

13. High Up
 14. Repairs
 15. A Hot Job
 16. Flooded Out
 17. Purple Heart Bridge
 18. Bailey over Fixed

19. St. Ame
 20. Bridge Guard
 21. Class 1 traffic
 22. Turning the tide
 23. Symetry

On December 11th Major Billups, S-3 of the 120th Engineers, requested a treadway bridge in the vicinity of Jaegerthal, and by 0600 the next morning the bridge was completed and the traffic streaming across.

That same day Baker Company reported a two-way, class 40, bridge at Neiderbronn was completed, and during the mine clearing operations on the new road assignments, 7 S-mines were deactivated, and 9 topf-mines exploded in the Gundershoffen district.

The front was still moving slowly and the Germans had time, now, to blow the few remaining bridges and plant mines, and in general make it a costly advance for us. On December 12th the bridge at Jaegerthal was completed. The Gundershoffen bridge was completed by 1230, a Bailey bridge was constructed in the vicinity of Goetsdorf at 0900, and 18 topfmines were found and destroyed. The next day two more bridges were under construction, one at Woerth, and the other under the treadway at Jaegerthal. In the meantime Charlie Company cleared mines on our road assignments.

Then at 1930 on the 15th Colonel Swift called a Staff meeting. The 45th Division was planning an offensive to hit the Siegfried Line at its weakest point. In order to accomplish tactical surprise, the 120th Engineers and the 48th were going to coordinate in building a supply line about ten miles in length, through part of the outer defenses of the Siegfried Line so that the main attack would come at an unexpected point. The Battalion CP moved into a Maginot Fort southeast of Lembach, while Company A completed one fixed bridge north of Woerth and Charlie Company another.

Late in the afternoon, the 48th was notified that there were two possible bridgesites that might be reached during the night. Both were inside Germany, but the situation was obscure. The Infantry was held up by cross-fire from two pillboxes in the Siegfried Line, and did not want the bridge built until their lines were consolidated. Company A was alerted for the job but was taken off the alert later in the evening when the 45th notified us that the bridges would not go in during the night.

On the morning of the 17th, Able Company was alerted again, and moved their bridge train into the town of Nothweiler at an assembly point and awaited the order to build, expected momentarily during the day. Friendly Infantry troops had overrun two of the four pillboxes that controlled the site, but the situation was still confused, and the Infantry did not want the bridge yet.

By the next day, more information had been returned on the bridges near Nothweiler. There were two sites. One was over an anti-tank obstacle, and the other was a blown bridge. At the anti-tank ditch, one pillbox had been reduced but another remained which still controlled the site. As yet there was no by-pass around the blown bridgesite. Infantry had attempted to cross the river during the night, but had been driven back. Lieutenant Moritz and Sergeant Fialkowski were pinned down by mortar and machine gun fire for two hours to find out this information. Able Company remained alerted.

Meanwhile, at 1615, on the 19th, Major Lowe, Executive Officer of the 120th Engineers asked for another 24 foot treadway near Nieder Schlettenbach. The situation around the site was unknown, but a liaison officer would guide the bridge train in. Fortunately, Charlie Company moved out with two Brockway trucks in case one should get mired, for the bridge turned out to be 36 feet long.

Pfc. Daniel P. Duffy of the third platoon of Charlie Company told the following story of the bridge: "Charlie Company had been following the Infantry closely for the few days preceding Christmas. We had been clearing land mines and rubble so that the Infantry could get their supplies through. It was hard work and the cold weather made the work even worse. The third platoon came in wet, tired and miserable to dinner that night. We were hoping to have a fast dinner and get in bed in a hurry. But Captain "Mike" Finnegan had a job that night for the third platoon. He told us that night, that we were going to put up the first bridge inside Germany for the 48th, and it looked like a tough job. There was a gap just over the border that was holding up our tank advance and two squads were to take two Brockway trucks up to the front under cover of darkness and try to bridge the gap during the night.

Sergeant Torigian and Sergeant Feigel told the men to go to the front of the chow line for dinner and then remain alerted to move out later in the night. The men were warned to make sure that they had enough ammunition and grenades in case they ran into any trouble during the night.

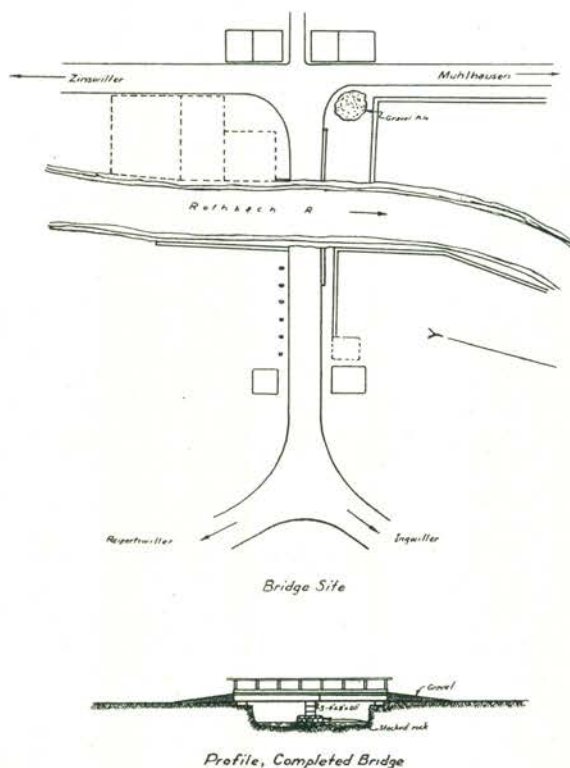
The night was excellent for the work. There was no moon. It was cold and dark when the two trucks carrying the squads, followed by the two Brockways, left the Charlie Company area and headed for Germany. The men were silent on the trucks as they sped up the road. There was no sound except the noise of the truck motors and the booming of the artillery. The convoy stopped at each cross-road and Lieuten-



ant Brooker checked his map with each road, for the convoy was close to the front now, far ahead of the artillery, and one mistake of a road might in a very few minutes take them blundering into the German lines. At one of these stops, an infantry mortar squad was firing from the side of the road. The men looked up in amazement as the strange convoy drew to a halt beside the mortar. The Infantry sergeant looked up at Lieutenant Brooker and said, "Hey, don't you know this is an outposted zone? Keep moving and don't make so much noise."

"It took almost an hour to cover the distance from the Charlie Company area to the site, for the entire convoy covered the route over rough roads in complete blackout. The site was in a valley under the crossfire of artillery from both sides, and within a hundred yards of the foremost Infantry. It looked like the third platoon was going to have a rough evening. This job had to be done fast and efficiently or the

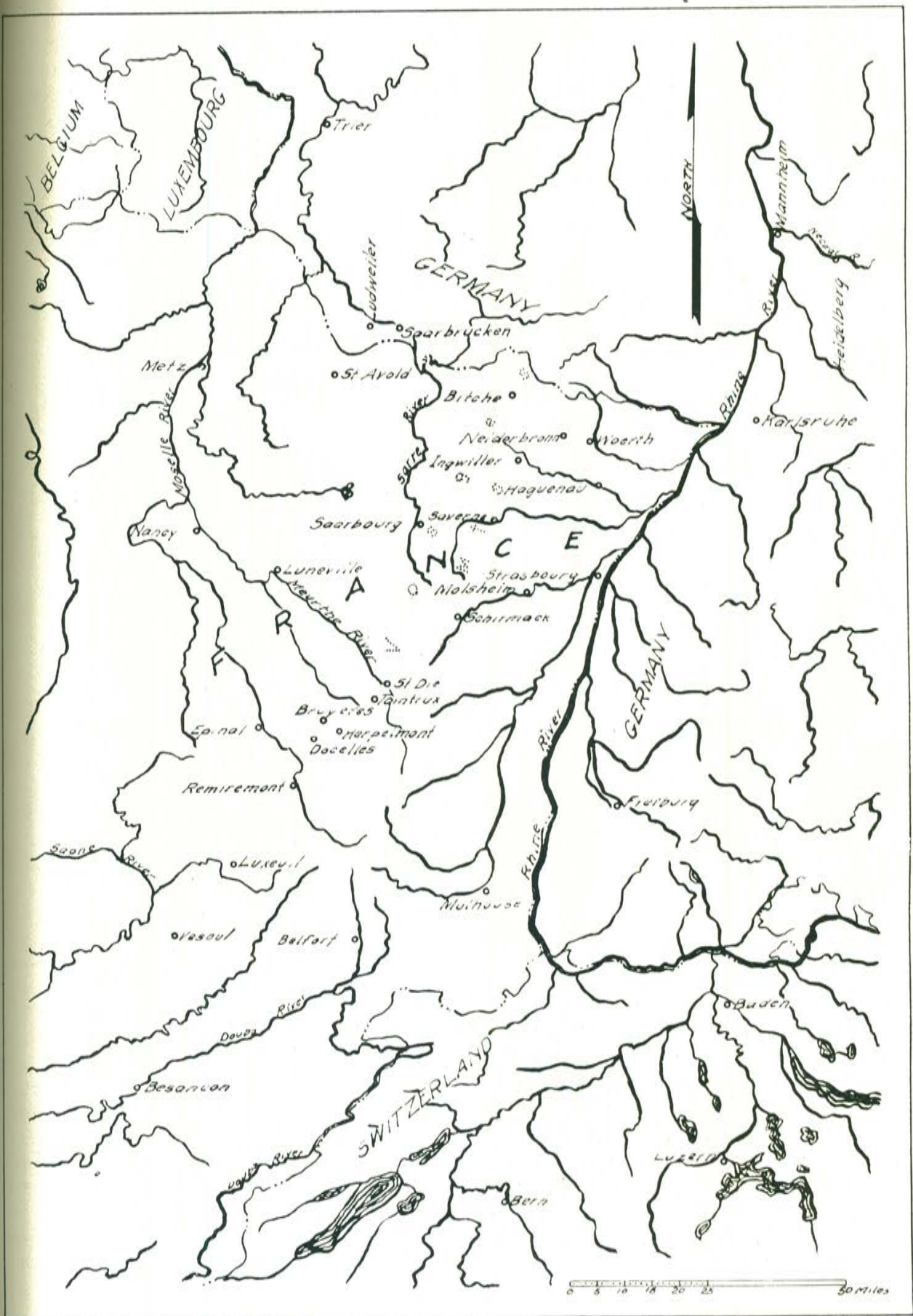
FIXED BRIDGE CONSTRUCTED AT ROTHBACH, FRANCE 8 DEC. 1944



German artillery and mortars would be down on our heads. We wanted to get it in fast and get out of there."

"The men climbed down from the trucks quickly and organized fast to get the bridge to the site. Some of the men made remarks that German ground felt like all the rest, and a couple of the men spat on the ground just for luck."

"Two tanks rumbled up, but they were stopped momentarily by an antitank ditch. The men continued to work on the bridge while a tank dozer was called up to fill in the ditch. The Germans heard the noise of the tank dozer as it chewed into the embankment, and soon a few shells began to drop in the area of the anti-tank ditch near the bridge site. A "burp gun" opened up across the valley at the third platoon, and the bullets hit the ground just a few yards short of the men. Lieutenant Brooker stopped the tank dozer. It was causing too much noise, and was giving the position of the bridge away. He decided that it was better to get the important bridge up and the men away from the site, than to save time by letting the tank dozer and men work at the same time on the two obstacles. The anti-tank ditch could wait until later, and the dozer could fill it after the bridge was up and the men had been moved to safety."

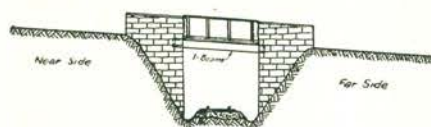
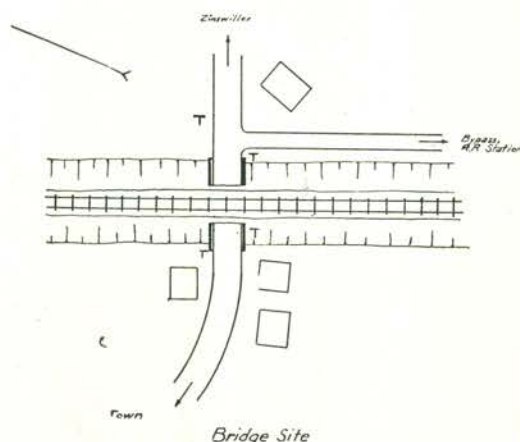


River Network of Southern France

"The work on the bridge ran smoothly. Pfc. Padgett held empty sandbags over the treadway pins to prevent noise and to keep the pins from sparking while he hammered them into place. Corporal Zoss was working under the bridge when he slipped in the darkness and fell into the creek. It was only knee-deep at the place he fell in, but he was afraid to move, for fear that he would step into a hole and go under. He couldn't swim. Pfc. Polit waded into the water and pulled him out, as the aid man went back to the trucks for blankets. The two men were wrapped in blankets and sent back to the trucks where they waited partially shielded from the cold wind."

"The men worked feverishly for two hours, and then the bridge was in. The tank dozer moved up and quickly filled in the anti-tank ditch. Then a line of tanks moved down into the valley and began to take up positions for their advance across the anti-tank ditch and the Charlie Company treadway. Charlie Company

FIXED BRIDGE CONSTRUCTED AT NIEDERBRONN, FRANCE 10 DEC. 1944



Profile, Completed Bridge

had gotten away with the work. There were some shells in the area caused by the tank dozer, but after the dozer retreated there was no more shelling. The men climbed into the trucks thankfully and the column moved back as the tanks began to fire their first rounds of the attack."

On the morning of the 20th, Able Company was still alerted awaiting to build the bridge near Nothweiler.

Two earthshaking announcements for the 48th were made during the afternoon. The first that Colonel Swift would leave the 48th to assume command of the 1175th Engineer Group. Some of the officers and men of the 48th would go with him. The second was that the 48th would revert to Army area for a rest. We had been in combat without a break for a total of 113 days.



HAPPY NEW YEAR

The retreat of the Seventh Army came to the 48th without total surprise. For almost two weeks, the 48th had formed the idea that something was in the wind. At first, the 48th was ordered to make a complete reconnaissance of the permanent fortifications of the Maginot Line. Our reconnaissance jeeps circled through the forts, and men of the Intelligence and Operations Sections passed through the areas making detailed plans and reports on all of the forts and bunkers. Other engineer units were doing the same work in their areas, and the consolidated reports were tabulated to determine the defensive line of the Maginot. Shortly after, the 48th was ordered to make a detailed reconnaissance of all bridges in our area and estimate the total amount of explosives needed to prepare each bridge for demolition. Explosive dumps were set up with traffic plans for the explosive laden vehicles to follow.

German paratroopers were being dropped behind our lines. There were not many in the 48th's sector around Lutzelburg, but there were more around the Nancy area. Nevertheless, the 48th remained on the alert to meet the threat. Uneasy Military Police stopped us along the highway and drilled us with all sorts of catch questions. "Who won the 1944 World Series? What state are you from? And who is Mickey Mouse?"

Meanwhile, there was a slight undertone of panic at the Seventh Army Headquarters. Most of the people were calm, but they were frankly worried. The Americans had three divisions in the flat Rhine Plain with the Germans pushing in the north, and the Colmar Pocket bulging in the south. If the two forces could meet, they would neatly trap the Americans and make Strasbourg another Bastogne. A total of 16 German divisions had been built up in front of the Seventh's frontline, and a rumored 20,000 troops in the bulge of the pocket below made this a double threat.

The Germans began to infiltrate our thinly-manned positions in the Hardt Mountains, and passed through our Infantry companies. Towards ten at night, they had managed to pass considerable armor through, and they were moving slowly forward. The Germans, apparently, could not be slowed with the amount of troops available in the Hardt Mountain sector, and a few more mountains would bring the attacking force into the excellent tank country of the Rhine Plain.

It was New Year's Night and the Germans were moving fast. Major Foley received a hurried call from Colonel King of the Seventh Army Engineer Section at Saverne. The 48th was to prepare for defensive action immediately in the vicinity of Saverne. The Germans had launched an attack in the Hardt region, and an unofficial report put the Germans ten miles from Saverne, headquarters of the Seventh Army. The mission of the 48th was to man the defenses of Saverne while Seventh Army Headquarters withdrew from the town. Major Foley made a quick dash to and from Army Headquarters to contact the 68th AAA Group who would remain behind with us. Then Able and Baker Companies were directed to establish nine roadblocks ringing Saverne without delay. A boundary was established through the town from Q-712 140 to Q-742 174. Able Company was to defend the west side and Baker Company the east. Each Company had 75 anti-tank mines to use in their roadblocks. Charlie Company was kept in mobile reserve.

When the 48th reached Saverne, they found the Seventh Army in a state of confused moving. The Headquarters men were hurrying the equipment of the Army into trucks in the night, and enlisted men were dashing about the grounds attempting to find their equipment.

This New Years was breaking the same as the previous one. New Year's Day would be another cold night of waiting behind machine guns through the black hours of the night, waiting for daylight. It would be

another night of excitement and uncertainty. Meanwhile, Seventh Army was making a bee-line for Lunéville over a hundred miles back across the Vosges Mountains.

We set up our guns around the town, and made our mines ready, so that they could be hastily pulled across the roads should tanks appear. Then we listened through the night, as the trucks carrying the Seventh moved out. As the night drew on, we were alone in Saverne. Ahead of us somewhere were the advancing Germans, and perhaps the scattered remnants of the old crack divisions that they had pushed back from Germany.

But morning broke clear and cold and there were no Germans. The seasoned American troops of the Seventh were making an orderly withdrawal. The German success was not so spectacular as it had first appeared.

During the long night, plans had changed. It was rumored that the entire Seventh Army was originally to retreat behind the Vosges mountains. The Colmar Pocket would be allowed to advance until it reached the Germans coming from the Siegfried Line. The two forces were to be permitted to meet and have the entire Rhine Plain. That was all that the Americans could be expected to do, for the Germans had them outnumbered. The First Army Belgium Bulge was taking all of the spare American forces to meet the on-rushing German panzers. The Belgium push had been slowed, stopped, and now the Americans were rolling it back. But all of these divisions were two or three hundred miles north, and could not be released for some time. There was no alternative for the Americans to do except to retreat to the Vosges Mountains to Bruyeres, Remiremont and St. Die. Then there would be hard fighting again for these towns.

During the night, the French had asked permission to attempt to hold Strasbourg. The town had a sentimental value to the French, although it was strategically worthless for the present operations. The French wanted to hold the town and wait until the Americans could regroup and return across the plain.

This would not fit in with the American plan to fall entirely behind the mountains, so the two armies had to compromise.

The Americans finally decided to hold a Modor River line that ran roughly between Bischhoffen and Hagenau circling northwest into the lower Hardt Mountains. Accordingly, the Americans began to fall back to the Hagenau Lines, while more reserves were requested to contain the Colmar Pocket. The ancient town of Strasbourg would be saved as well as most of the Alsace.

Morning broke cold and clear but there were no Germans. The streets of Saverne were empty until the full force of the events of the night struck the French population. Then the streets were filled with pitiful groups of people rushing to pile their personal belongings on push carts and wheelbarrows. Horses and wagons piled high with people and furniture headed west for the protection of the mountains. Houses were nailed shut, and the throng hurried to get every bit of transportation that they could find. Then they started down the roads leading away from town.

At 1030, we were relieved from our positions, and started back to our areas.

The Americans were retreating to the Hagenau Line along the Modor, the Schmidt and the Saar Rivers. This would form a water barrier reaching from Bichwiller through Hagenau to Bitche. The Seventh elected to stand along the Hagenau position and await the Germans attack.

Meanwhile, crack divisions from the Bulge area were racing through the night toward the Seventh Army danger zone. The 101st Airborne Division of Bastogne, the 75th and the 14th Armored, the 63rd and the 42nd. Here was power to halt the push.

The speedy planned withdrawal of the Seventh must have upset some German timetables for it took them some time to get their supply working over the ground taken. By then it was too late. The Seventh had moved new power into the Colmar pocket and had opened an offensive that was squeezing the pocket to the Rhine.

The crisis was past, and the whole Rhine Plain from the Swiss border to Hagenau was saved.

The 48th was "resting". It had been 130 days since D-Day when the 48th was pulled back out of the line. The men needed a break from front line jitters. It had been a hard grind and a tough one. The 540th Engineers had taken over our positions near Lembach and were caught in the sudden German advance during the following days. Word reached the 48th that the 540th had severe losses. One company of the 540th had lost some of their personnel and much of their equipment in our former bivouac near Lembach.

We had a relief of frontline tension in Lutzelsburg, but the work snowed us under. There were better than 125 miles of high-priority roads to be maintained and hotpatched, and a few days after we reached our



The 48th Rest Area

new area, heavy snows fell to make a tough job even worse. Lieutenant Moritz scoured the countryside for snow plows, and finally managed to find three old horse-drawn plows. The companies began to throw together Rube Goldberg contraptions for removing snow. Every sergeant and lieutenant had a different idea for a plow, and most of them were tried and were discarded, but a few of the weird plows were found useful and were attached to trucks to plow the roads. The snow continued to fall, and the companies raced to get stockpiles of gravel to be used as anti-skid material on all of the dangerous curves along the entire length of our road assignment.

Baker Company drew the assignment of constructing a 340 foot fixed bridge for two way traffic to replace the Bailey Bridge at Fenetrangle.

Other jobs kept coming in. One squad of Charlie Company worked forward of the 696th Petroleum Distributing Company clearing the right of way for an oil pipe line moving through Sarrebourg, Phalsbourg and Blamont. At the same time, Lieutenant Butler and a detail from Able Company checked more than 10,000 M-6 mines at ASP 418 and 420. There had been a number of casualties with the new mine. Ice had formed in the igniter well, and engineers screwing the igniter into the well had pressed the pressure plate down by attempting to screw the igniter into the ice. In checking the mines, Able Company found that 15 per cent of the mines had a sixteenth to a quarter inch of ice in the igniter wells.

The defense line along Hagenau had become almost an engineer responsibility. Literally, there were miles of minefields to be laid and hundreds of gun emplacements to be dug. All of the available engineers were working along the entire Modor River Line, and many more were needed.

On January Sixth, Colonel King of Seventh Army notified the 48th that ten new engineer battalions were arriving in the theatre from the British Isles in the near future. They would have to go into the line immediately when they arrived, but Seventh Army desired to pass them through a school supervised by an old engineer unit, so that the new men could learn first hand the problems that engineers were meeting in the war from men who had been through the campaign. On January eighth, the 48th was selected to be the school troops. On the 11th, one advance platoon of Charlie Company left for Fort De Longchamp in the vicinity of Epinal to begin preparation.

Before the 48th could begin work at the school, relief had to be effected of the present assignment which included a 125 miles of priority roads, some 62 bridges that had been prepared for demolition and 14 demolition dumps. This was to be taken over by three separate parties: XV Corps, VI Corps and the 344th Engineers, so it was not until January 15th that relief was finally completed. That same morning the Battalion moved to the forts near Epinal. Four forts were used, Fort De Longchamp, Fort Razimont, Fort De Dogneville and Fort De La Mouche. At best the forts were nothing more then concrete refrigerators. There were not enough stoves to go around at first but the men took it in good spirits and provided heat by plastering the walls with Putty and Varga girls. A few men were hospitalized in the first days due to the cold weather. The forts were terribly damp for the only ventilation provided for the most part was slits in the walls.

Major Foley immediately ordered 300,000 lineal feet of lumber for winterizing the forts. This was the beginning of a series of headaches for S-4. S-4 at that time was sending five prime movers and trailers to the engineer dump in Epinal for lumber to complete the 340 foot two way fixed bridge that Baker Company was putting in at Fenetrangle. The haul covered approximately 130 miles round trip. After 48 hours of steady hauling another order was received for some 5,000 feet of flooring. Then on top of this came the order for lumber to winterize the forts and lumber for the fixed bridge school. The engineer dumps at Epinal were completely out. The only recourse was to requisition from civilians. Lumber to supply one days needs was obtained from Baumonde Mills at Remiremont. Sergeant Gustafson was sent with a detail of five men from Baker Company to operate a saw mill at Abreschwiller. The mill was located 13 kilometers from the main road on top of a mountain. The road leading to it was too narrow and winding for anything over a two and half ton truck. The mill had to be kept in operation for twenty-four hours each day. This necessitated that "Gus" and his men work the mill by themselves at night. The operation was under the most difficult conditions. Enough snow had fallen in twenty-four hours to block the tramway which was used to haul finished pieces to the road. "Gus" and his men went to work with the shovel.

The forts needed winterizing, and electricity. Class rooms had to be hurriedly set up; training aids made or obtained. Food and supplies had to be hauled in for the other three battalions for as yet they had no transportation of their own. The S-4 drivers looked like dough-boys. They drove in dog-tired with a load at

three in the morning and soon after breakfast were out again. For an entire week this pace continued without a break.

By January 19th, only four days after the Battalion moved to Epinal, the school which had well over two thousand students, comparable to any medium sized college, began. Able Company was in charge of the Bridge School which was divided into Fixed, Bailey and Treadway bridges. Baker Company with the help of Captain Thompson conducted the mine school. In connection with this Sergeant Schrab was in charge of a mine experimental station. He set up a series of experiments to determine the effect of freezing on the detonation of mines. The Office of Mines and Booby Traps were highly interested in these experiments. The last school was the Infantry School run by Charlie Company. To assist them in this, Captain Witham of the 411th Infantry Regiment was attached to them. Captain Witham also planned a 24 day course in the 81 millimeter mortar.

The School was running surprisingly smooth considering the short time for preparation. But no sooner than things began working on all six cylinders than complications started to set in. First, Army ordered that we release 16 two and a half ton trucks to two ponton outfits. Stripped of transportation we were practically helpless. How would we transport the bridging? How would we transport the battalions from one fort to another which would have to be done at the end of each seven day period. Mine classes were held near Bruyeres where the students had practical exercises in clearing or breaching known enemy minefields. The firing ranges were also some distance from the school. To somewhat alleviate the situation we finally obtained permission to borrow eight prime movers from the 1553 Heavy Ponton Company.

Before we ever picked up the prime movers an order came attaching the 48th Engineers for operations to XXI Corps effective 0001, 24th January. So at the end of six days our school days ended.

Army needed Engineers and needed them bad. The Hagenau defenses had to be hurriedly strengthened so as to prevent a major break-through. Engineers were needed to prepare defensive positions. Bridges had to be prepared for demolition, road blocks constructed by the hundreds, mine fields laid, gun emplacements dug, and barb wire entanglements stretched. Who could be chosen to do such a job better than the Engineers for they could quickly cast aside their Castle and take on the Crossed Rifles of the Infantry.



On January 23rd, Major Foley went to XXIst Corps located at Morhange and was informed that we were attached to the 1185th Engineer Combat Group with the job of organizing defensive positions around St. Avold, and possibly to fight a delaying action along the Rosebruck, Hambourg, Haut, and St. Avold road. The mission of the XXI Corps was that of protecting the left flank of the Seventh Army. The 5th Ranger Battalion had previously manned the defenses around St. Avold; we could rework their defensive set up to suit our needs.

At 0900 January 24th, we moved from the schools at Epinal having previously turned over all the materials that we had obtained for the schools to Charlie Company of the 11th Engineer Combat Battalion. We traveled at a snail's pace; our convoy speed had been set at 15 miles per hour as the roads were treacherous, due to the thin icy surface. Though it was only 81 miles, it took us fully seven hours to get there. We had as a Battalion bivouac all the buildings of the Jaeger Caserne. St. Avold was part of Lorraine, France.

Almost upon arrival word came down that the North, South Grid Line 25 would be used as a boundary between us and the 2756 Engineer Combat Battalion. The 48th Engineers were to defend the west side. Our Able Company along with Baker Company would prepare the defensive positions while Charlie Company would be used as the reserve company and as such would maintain outposts and prepare temporary road blocks well forward of the Battalion.

On the 26th of January, the Battalion started an 81 millimeter mortar school with Captain Witham of the 103rd Infantry Division who had been with us at the school at Epinal, as the instructor. Each company designated one squad as their mortar section and all these squads were put under the control of Captain Scherr. That same day, Colonel Weiler, Commanding Officer of the 1185th Engineer Combat Group, approved the plan that we had submitted on the defense of St. Avold and set a two day dead-line for our gun emplacements and other defenses to be completed. Work was immediately concentrated on this. Later that day Colonel Weiler sent down a road assignment which included some 40 miles of priority roads. Heavy snow falls had made it necessary to use the 48th in a dual capacity, Infantry and as Engineers.

On January 24th, we were assigned to XXI Corps and on the 27th of January, only three days later, we found ourselves and the Group attached to the XV Corps.

Late on the evening of January 27th a flash message was received that we were to maintain guards continuously to observe and report air landings direct to Corps by flash message. There was some consternation about this for it read in our "A Area"; "A Area" could have meant our Able Company area, our assigned area or anyone of a number of things. Lieutenant Green immediately left for Corps to clarify this message. Upon his return we learned that "A" stood assigned area.

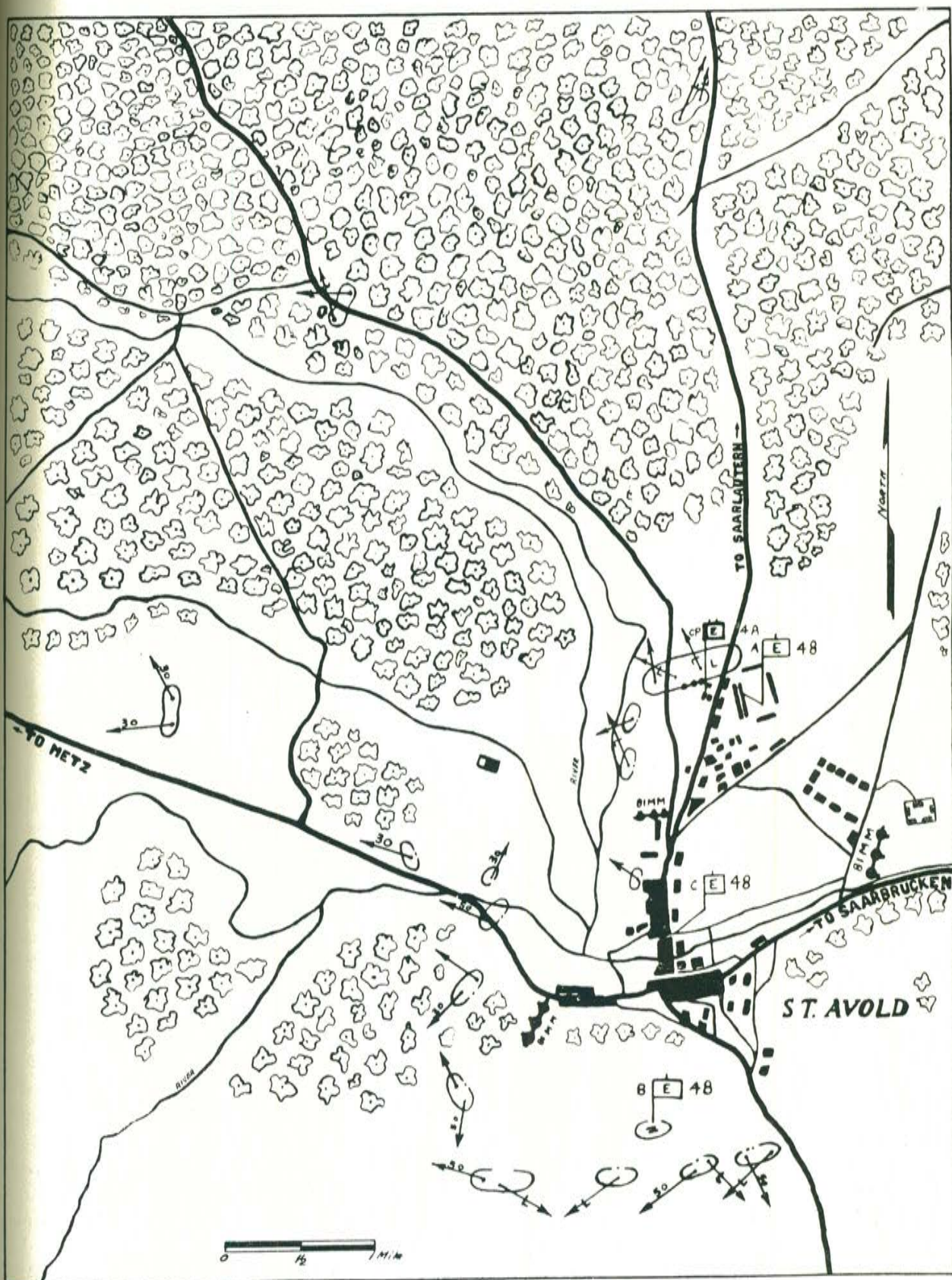
While the 48th was at St. Avold a lot of the men had a chance to investigate life in a big city in France. The 48th had been in some fairly large towns like Remiremont and St. Die, but the towns were still in the confused state when the 48th went through and were close to the front. Most of the men had never had a chance to see what happens to a French city after the war has moved on and it is left far in the rear.

Nancy recovered fast from the shock of war. At least from external appearances; it wasn't long before the stores had new plate glass windows and displays. The cash registers even kicked out little printed charge slips like the big department stores back home. The city had not been hit hard. There were a few air raids and several bombs were dropped on a big factory in the outskirts, but the center of the town was undamaged.

The center of town was the main attraction for the American soldiers. The "Main Drag" was lined with all sorts of interesting shops to explore, interspersed with even more interesting bars. For a while the Nancy beer was the best in France but it eventually took a turn for the worse after popularity spread among the ranks of the Americans. There were other rare bottles to be had around the town if you knew the intimate spots, and a lot of the visiting soldiers soon became an authority on the subject.

Another popular place was "Slot Machine Joe's" which soon took on the appearance of a drugstore in America. Joe had a lot of imported pin ball machines, complete with buzzers, bells and free games that attracted a lot of Americans who had ventured up the small side street that led to his establishment.

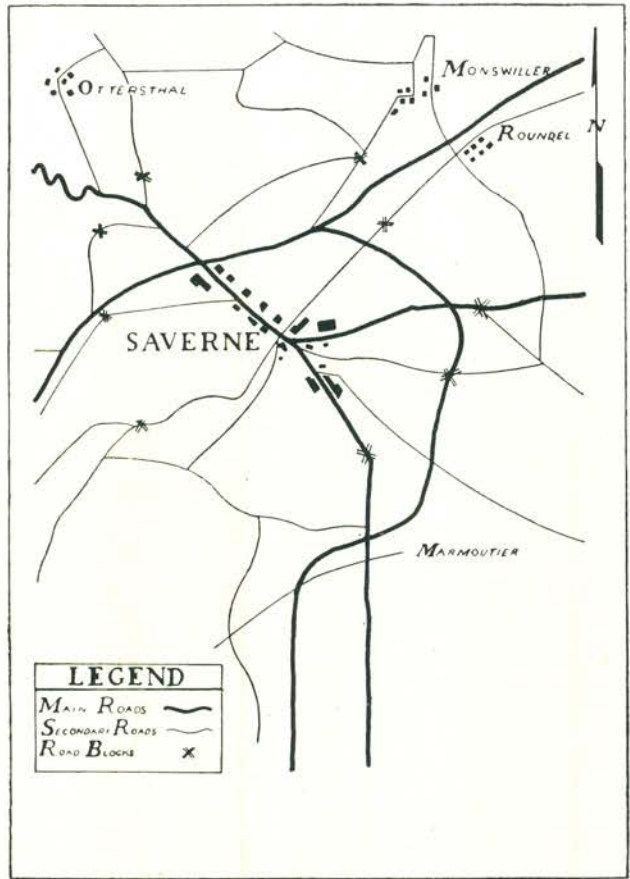
The free games were easy for the tactical Americans who knew just how much to shove a machine without flashing the "tilt" light. The laughing G.I.s would surround a machine to watch a "drugstore acrobat" push with his stomach, put his boots under the legs, and hammer the sides dexteriously, as he skillfully guided the



metal balls into the high scoring channels. For one franc, a soldier could keep a machine going all afternoon until he was tired of the sport. Then he would turn the machine over to a goggle-eyed kid who would attempt vainly to mimic his methods and end up losing all the free games.

The Red Cross Club was popular for doughnuts and coffee because the line moved fast and it was a good chance to rest and watch the Third Army move by. Who knows, you might meet a guy from your home town. Thousands of soldiers moved by but the chance meetings were rare. It was good diversion for resting, though.

Nancy was a city of beautiful women. A lot of them spoke English, and many of them spoke other languages; in the dusk of early evening, the couples could be seen laughing as they strolled up to the apartment section on the hill outside of town.



Roadblocks At Saverne

Every block had its bar or cabaret and the thirsty soldiers would drop in for a glass of beer everytime they saw an interesting looking place. That was often for almost all of the bars looked interesting. The pretty bar maids would blush at the soldiers' flattery and come to the tables with mugs full of the foaming, delicious beer. Somber little Frenchmen, sitting in quiet groups around the tables would smile, or else stare at the Americans and wonder.

Nancy had been liberated the usual way. At first the Germans came in orderly marching columns and boarded the trains at the central railroad station at night. Then the group got smaller and finally there was a ragged group that came in the cold of winter with their feet bleeding and their arms in slings. A few dropped out and stayed in town and more were helped by some sympathetic Frenchman. More hid in order to give up to the Americans. The last train waited as long as possible and then pulled out hurriedly. The next

morning, Nancy awoke to find American M.P.s at the crossroads and Americans already strolling in the streets. The city fell without much of a fight and the conquest was complete. The Germans just moved out as the Americans moved in. There was no pitched battle as at nearby Metz.

The people didn't really know war. They had been far behind most of the German occupation forces. Of course, the Germans had taken over the factories, and food and clothing were a lot more scarce, and they were glad to be free but the war was pretty uniforms and brave deeds to most of the people of Nancy.

The city was glad to welcome the Americans with their new paper francs, and happy to see the train loads of food roll in. An American would provide an interesting evening at home. All of the soldiers were prized house guests, for they had a wonderful sense of humor and could talk of the war and answer questions.

The people of Nancy liked the Americans and the town soon became a famous pass center. There was a lot to do in Nancy and twelve hours went very fast.



LUDWEILER

On January 28th, orders were given to pack up and move to L'Hopital. It was a dismal afternoon as the trucks were loaded and the convoy started for L'Hopital. Most of the men were bundled up to their necks, as it would be a cold ride, for snow had begun falling heavily and the intense cold penetrated clothing as if it were paper. The convoy went slowly because the heavy snows had made the roads treacherously slippery. The drivers proceeded carefully, but even then they were forced to fight the wheel constantly to keep the trucks on the road. The passing countryside had taken on a new appearance with the falling snow, it seemed to blend in with the trees, and the tall shadows made the picture more beautiful. The pine trees stood proud, and majestic, seeming not to feel the cold blanket that had suddenly descended upon them. We passed a pill box with its open slit staring idly at us, and friendly minefields with their red triangular disks warning, "Mines", hanging every few yards on a lone strand of barbed wire.

It was late afternoon when we arrived at L'Hopital and we scarcely had time for chow before we were rushed out to work on the roads. Our task was to clear and open the roads for traffic because the snow-storm had made the roads practically unpassable. It was a cold night; the stinging wind whipped around into our faces, and the snow fell down our necks sending cold chills racing up and down our spines. The road grader was ordered out and it was soon clearing the road of snow. Our trucks followed close behind it spreading gravel and ashes on the icy roads. All night long we worked until dawn broke through the clouds. When we arrived back in camp there were many cases of chilled backs and frozen hands and feet. It was a real night's work and everyone was glad it was finished. No sooner had we settled down in L'Hopital when it became apparent that our main mission in this town was not engineer work but Infantry. We were to adopt the defensive plan previously used by the 337th Infantry Regiment. In case of a break-through we would be committed to counter-attack. We were to begin digging emplacements and defensive positions immediately. Captain Thames made the necessary arrangements with Major Wallace of the 289th Engineer Combat Battalion, who had taken over the defense of St. Avold, and our Able Company was ordered to tie in with them on their flank.

An outsider travelling through L'Hopital in those days would have thought the Engineers were mad. It was a town of unrest and contrary actions. In one section of town, engineers were taking out road blocks while in another section they were putting them in. We were taking explosives from underneath some bridges and leaving them in place under others. We were digging emplacements and strong points, and there were rumors of a coming attack. We were constantly getting orders contrary to each other, or so it seemed. But we were all working towards a definite purpose. For instance, the 48th Engineers had been ordered by the 10th Armored Division to remove all roadblocks in the route selected for an American counter-attack in case of a Jerry break-through. But we built roadblocks in other sections where it was thought probable that Jerry might attack. The overall strategy was such that it meant all sorts of strange contradictory orders to us.

About this time the rains came. It rained steadily and soon the snow disappeared leaving swollen streams and small trickling brooks that materialized over night. This was the direct cause of the job assigned to Baker Company. A network of streams merged at a culvert on Highway N. 6, but there had been so much debris floating down the streams that it eventually stopped up the culvert; the water

began to rise menacingly. When Baker Company first made a recon of the culvert site, they realized it could only be fixed by taking the whole thing out. Since N. 6 was the main supply route it had to be done so as not to hinder the flow of traffic. They solved this problem by using two sections of treadway to be used as a bridge while the men worked underneath it. They also called for some prefabricated culverts to be used two abreast. Using the Barko Hammer they drilled one side, removed the old culvert, and put in the new one. Then they repeated the process on the other side. Working steadily for a day and a night, the first platoon of Baker Company finally completed the job.

While Baker Company was putting in their culvert, Able Company was also having their difficulties. A bridge on their section of the road threatened to break through unless a new flooring was put on. Lumber was critical material, and they were informed by S-4 that it would be some time before it arrived. Immediately, trucks were sent racing down to Abreschviller to secure it. With the drivers going at top speed, it wasn't long before the lumber arrived and the bridge was re-floored without incident.



Paging Bill Mauldin

Soon after our arrival in L'Hopital we received orders to put stock piles of slag along the highway, so it could be quickly put on the road in the event that it snowed again. The slag pit was an enormous place, with the slag piles towering about sixty feet high. Originally the trucks were loaded by a power shovel, but the second day the shovel was moved to another gravel pit, making it necessary to load the trucks by hand. Loading was begun at the bottom, and after days of steady work, there was quite a dent in the mountain of slag. The hole soon became large enough to back three trucks in and load them simultaneously. It was here that tragedy struck. Three trucks were backed up, and loading was in full swing, when suddenly the slag pile started to collapse. Tons and tons of slag slid down, almost covering the trucks. Two of the trucks pulled away instantly, but the other one was trapped. Through

the commotion of men running here and there, came the sound of two men calling for help. They were trapped in the back of the truck. Gears clashed, the motor roared, and the truck attempted to get from under the immense pile of slag that had descended upon it. Finally it pulled away and the trapped men were freed. In the meantime, the men were looking around to see if everyone was safe when someone yelled, "Where is Clatterbuck?" Immediately we looked around for him, but there was no sign of him anywhere. Quickly we grabbed shovels and began shoveling in the spot he was last seen. Five, ten, fifteen, twenty minutes passed and we had about given up hope when "Here he is", rang throughout the crowd of sweating men. We dropped our shovels and started to free his head so that he could get air. Finally we extricated his limp, blackened body, and artificial respiration was begun at once. Even as he was silently loaded into a nearby truck and rushed to the aid station men were administering artificial respiration. We all knew, even before the final word reached us, that Sergeant Clatterbuck was dead. Able Company was hit hard by his death for he was admired and respected by all who knew him. At his last rites many men from Charlie and Baker Companies were present.

The 48th liked L'Hopital. We were among the first American troops to bivouac in the town and with us had come prosperity such as L'Hopital had never seen before. There were but a few "Gast-houses" in town and all of them had their doors wide open to admit the 48th. The proprietors of these establishments always greeted us with happy, smiling faces. The bivouac areas were almost always empty at night, for in this town, the people were very hospitable. They often invited us to dine with them or perhaps have a drink or two of schnapps, and they would smile and wave at us when we went by on our trucks. In all our dealing with these people we noticed that although the German border was scarcely 100 yards away, they tried to make it clear that they were French and not German. It was an accepted fact that the town of L'Hopital had adopted the 48th Engineers.

There was an under-current preparing the 48th slowly for front line Infantry. A school for the 81mm mortar continued and the mortar squad soon knew the mortar better than their M-ls. Then the school started for officers and key noncoms on calling fire missions. We all began to realize how much the Infantry depended upon those 4.2 mortar boys. We listened intently when they told us that their new powder bundles gave them an additional half mile range. They had lost several men due to shells exploding in the barrel so they now fed their mortars by using a sleeve-like affair.

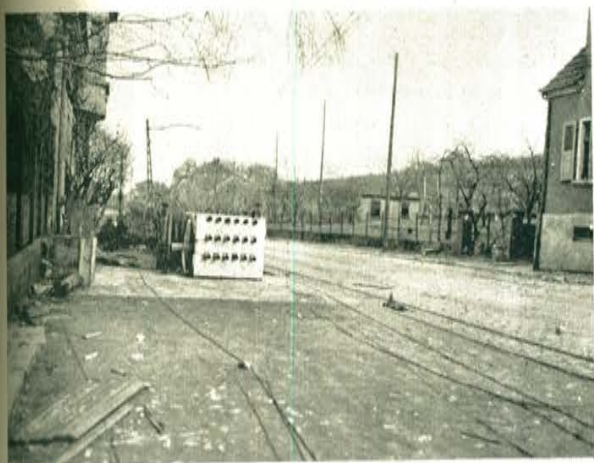
When should we use assault guns? When should we use 4.2s or 105mm Howitzers? These were a few of the things we soon learned.

By this time, our platoons kept alternating one after another every three days in front line duties. The platoon made small scale attacks, making contact with the enemy and giving an appearance of strength. Other platoons of the 48th were alternating as roving patrols. Their orders were to turn over any civilian found in the restricted area to the military government in Lauderbach, Germany. Tanks and vehicles were placed in various spots to give an impression of strength.

On the 6th of February we were ordered to attach one company to the 121st Cavalry Squadron for the purpose of relieving one of the Cavalry troops of their holding positions. This plan was to leave the 48th Engineers in the line until the elements of the 121st Cavalry Squadron had executed an organized raid. For this operation Able Company was to be used. But on the heels of this message came another rescinding it.

All these events slowly but inevitably were leading us first as front line doughboys and then as assault Infantry. So it was no surprise to us when Major Foley said at a meeting held at 1300 on February 7th: "I have been ordered to relieve B and C Troops of the 106 Cavalry Squadron and B troop of the 121st Cavalry Squadron of front-line positions on February 8th. The positions to be occupied by this battalion run East and West of Ludweiler, Germany. Our mission is to man and defend these positions so at a later date cavalry elements can push through and attack. Artillery, 4.2 chemical mortars, and at least one platoon of assault guns will remain in their present positions for our support. Initially we will use the positions already prepared, but at a later date we will change them to meet our needs."

"Captain Kincer, will relieve B and C troops of the 106th Cavalry Squadron of their positions while Captain Finnegan will relieve B troop of the 121st Cavalry Squadron. Captain Snyder will move into Ludweiler as Battalion reserve. Relief will start on the morning of February the 8th, by infiltrating small groups up to Ludweiler to take over positions, making certain that prior to going forward the



Secret Weapon



Hide-Out



Flare Gun



Scoop Battery At Work



Outpost



Roadblock

men have seen the film "Your Job In Germany." The forward CP, with S—1, S—2, S—3 and part of H&S Company will move into Ludweiler in the afternoon or night of the same day. The remainder of H&S Company will move back to a rear CP at Zimming under the control of S—4."

Soon after the meeting, Captain Finnegan and Captain Kincer reconnoitered their positions in their respective sectors and obtained the necessary information and guides from the 121st and 106th Cavalry Squadrons. In the meanwhile, Captain Thames contacted Major Cavanaugh, commanding officer of the 121st Cavalry Squadron, and worked out with him the necessary details for the relief. The final arrangements were that the 342nd Field Artillery Battalion, one company of 4.2 mortars, one assault gun platoon and the 419th Armored Anti-Tank Battalion were to support us. Two recon cars were also to remain for our use.

At 1200 on February 8th, the 165th Engineer Combat Battalion relieved us of our assignment in the L'Hopital area. During the course of the day, the film "Your Job In Germany" was shown several times in a theatre in L'Hopital. After each showing Major Foley spoke to the men, "We will soon enter the Saar Basin. The region by its own volition became a part of Germany after a plebiscite of ten to one. The Army policy of non-fraternization with German civilians will be strictly enforced."

Throughout the day one vehicle, and then another left for Ludweiler. After a few minutes driving we passed a concertina wire fence that marked the border-line between France and Germany. We then drove through Lauderbach, Germany, where the MPs were carrying tommy-guns. This was the first time that the 48th was entering a place where the people didn't exchange greetings with us.

Ludweiler was a town that stretched north and south along the valley. The main highway ran directly through the town. On the left of the road the town went abruptly up hill. The hill was marked with many caves that the town's people had dug to scurry into during a bombing. On the righthand side of the road was a swampy flat-land which was divided by a winding stream. We soon knew the hills, the monument, the school house and the guillotine road block.

Ludweiler gave us the shivers; it was a ghost town. You could walk through the houses and find them completely furnished, but never meet a solitary person. The only inhabitants that still clung to the town were cats, dogs, goats, and other animals. The quiet was depressing. It seemed as if children should be running or playing about. There should be people going to the stores. The place should have been alive with people but here it was all emptiness. When we first entered Ludweiler we felt as did the Count of Monte Cristo, on his return from prison, "revenge is sweet!" We were fighting on German soil. Every shell we threw, every shot we fired would tear into Germany itself. The Germans in order to reach us, would have to destroy their own buildings and land.

We moved through the streets of Ludweiler slowly for the very stillness of the town seemed to effect us. Making our way up the main street, we soon were at our positions. The first few hours were spent in getting acquainted with our code names, positions, and the general layout of the defenses. Then with a few paternal words of advice the Cavalry men left. The first night was as expected. Everyone heard Germans creeping up on them, machine guns firing all night. Many flares were sent up, and our mortars and assault guns were given a vigorous workout. All night long there were whispers, "Give me a flare at 32 position," or "Give us a battery, one round, concentration 22." The men in the dugouts, trying to sleep, were constantly in fear of being awakened, and no one slept any too well. On the whole, everyone spent a very restless night. As the days passed, the tenseness left and the call for artillery and flares became less frequent, and only occasionally were machine guns heard. We came to know the surrounding countryside better than our own homes. Directly ahead of us, within shouting distance, lay Geislautern, then came Wehrden and across the Saar river the industrial city of Volklingen — all in German hands. Then came a succession of mountains, huge and seemingly impregnable. In these towns ahead, an occasional Jerry could be seen.

But the ground a few hundred yards in front of us was what kept us at nerves edge from dusk to dawn. We all knew the pill box, the PW cage, the Brewery, and the synthetic oil plant. We all knew hill 283, for there the Germans were well dug in. The square of Geislautern was one of our mortar targets as well as the road just above Ludweiler where noises resembling tanks were frequently heard.

The night is what aged us. We were beginning to imagine all sorts of things. Then one night some sort of creature was heard stealthily creeping up the slope near the Able OP of Baker Company. The men

waited nervously until the figure could be dimly seen in the almost pitch black night. We opened fire. Instantly there was a faint cry, closely followed by the drumming of hoofs of a very frightened horse!

One day when Lt. Brooker of Charlie Company went out to his forward OP, having been previously instructed on calling in fire missions. He quickly oriented himself on his map and wrote on one edge of the map, the coordinates of his forward OP. Then suddenly he jerked erect as he saw some German snooping around in front of him. He hurriedly wrote down the coordinates and excitedly called them in, his first fire mission. Just then Captain Finnegan came and he noticed that Lt. Brooker's face was all clouded. Captain Finnegan bellowed out, "What the hell is wrong with you?" Lt. Brooker replied, "I'm sweating it out. I just called in a fire mission and I'm not sure which coordinate I gave, out there where the Jerries are — or right here!"

The night of February 14th was an eventful one and it caused many gray hairs in the Battalion. A report came in to Captain Thames from the 116th Cavalry Squadron's platoon that was attached to us, "that a noise resembling wagons was heard." Higher Headquarters immediately became concerned that it might be horse drawn artillery. Lt. Maines, in charge of the 116th Cavalry platoon, who was at the road block, phoned in a second time, "Tanks are coming down the highway towards the road block." Lt. Maines then ordered his platoon to put on their combat packs and be ready to fight or evacuate, depending upon the orders that followed. Meanwhile, Captain Thames with two phones, kept directing heavy concentrations of mortars, assault guns, and 105s, which just plastered the road up and down for well over an hour. One battalion of 105s had their guns faced so that they could not fire our mission. They were quickly given the order to turn their battery so it could fire on the target. Colonel Foley, who was then in the S-3 office, alerted Able Company, the reserve company, to be prepared to move out with bazookas to meet a tank attack. Nothing more was heard about it until a little later when a report came in "An enemy patrol was flushed! Wagon movement is heard going back." We can just imagine the German high command being rather elated about all the excitement this caused. A few days later, a Jerry was captured and from him Corps learned that he had carried a message to one of their headquarters to turn on a record on their loud speakers which simulated noises of wagons and tanks moving. A good Hollywood sound director could really cause havoc on the front lines. Why the Army is missing a good bet like that leaves many of us puzzled.

Early the next day, Sgt. Lucas and Sgt. Iden of Baker Company, leading two separate patrols, filed past Baker Company's OPs and headed out into Jerry territory. Their purpose was to probe enemy positions and return with vitally needed information. They hadn't been gone long when we heard gunfire from the direction of Hill 283. It kept up for some minutes, and then gradually it began to die down until only an occasional shot could be heard. Finally, even that ceased. It seemed like an eternity before the patrols came back. Sgt. Iden's patrol came in first. They reported flushing five Germans in the fire fight that occurred, they killed four and seriously wounded the fifth. Sgt. Iden's patrol had returned intact and now all that remained was the other patrol. We waited anxiously for their return, and finally after four hours had elapsed some of the men returned. They reported, "The officer took three sergeants and went ahead, instructing us to wait for their return. We waited four hours. Then we decided to take steps towards finding them, but we found no trace of them."

That night enemy activity was greater than usual, but as far as practicable we held our fire in hope that the missing men might have been pinned down and would make their way back under cover of darkness. Next morning, with the rising sun, our hopes for the safe return of the lost officer and the three sergeants sank, and it had to be assumed that they were "missing in action." It came as a blow to us for Sgt. Lucas was admired and well liked by everyone in Baker Company, and the loss cut us deeply.

Meanwhile Able Company was having its troubles, as was related by member of the third platoon. "For some time the enemy had been slipping into a certain area in which we had built a road block, with the purpose of neutralizing the mines we had planted. The mission of our patrol which consisted of one squad of the first platoon and one squad of the third platoon, was to intercept and capture as many of the enemy patrol as possible."

"We left the forward CP just before nightfall, and made our way up to a house which overlooked the road block and also a German held town. We carefully planted booby-traps about 100 yards in front

of the house, with the hope that when Jerry did come, he would kick one off, and warn us. We then took positions in the house."

"Hour after hour went by, with nothing happening until dawn streaked the sky. At approximately 0545, feeling certain that if Jerry was coming at all he would have been here by now, we got ready to go back to our CP. Our intentions were short lived, however, for just then we heard one of our booby-traps explode. Immediately everyone dropped everything but their rifles and rushed to the windows. We were instantly greeted with a withering hail of lead which came through all the windows. Pvt. Maruskin and Pvt. Taylor spotted a group of Krauts slipping up with some shape charges. Evidently Jerry knew we were there and intended to demolish the place with us in it. Maruskin and Taylor also saw the Krauts carrying American tommy guns, and employing them effectively to keep our squad pinned down. In another room, Pvt. Johnson and Pvt. Meese managed to get off a couple of shots. Further down the hall, Corporal Carnes, fearing the possibility of being surrounded, took up a position in the rear of the house. All of a sudden the Krauts opened up with bazookas. Two or thres shells ripped



Water Barriers Ahead

through the roof, just missing some of the men. When their bazooka ammunition ran out, they began to plaster the place with hand grenades. We could hear them bounce off the roof and walls and then fall harmlessly to the ground. However, the Jerries had more success with their grenades than they did with their bazookas, because they succeeded in landing one in the room that Sgt. Meyer and Pfc. Mad-den occupied. The grenade landed underneath a chair which had recently been evacuated by Meyer, exploded, wrecked the chair and sent fragments through the wall. One piece caught Meyer. Pfc. Bartkoviak ran in to see if anyone was hurt and as he was about to leave we heard a whistle blow outside. Looking out, he saw that the Krauts had departed. We waited awhile, and then ventured outside to look around. Their demolition charges were still laying with some of their unused grenades. It was our opinion that the Germans thought it best to leave rather than fight it out in broad daylight. After making sure they wouldn't be back, we returned to our CP. After that hectic morning we were glad to go back and get some chow and a little shuteye."

Most of the days passed by in dreary monotony, and the nights although long, were unusually quiet. Except for a few nights like the one Pvt. Gatanis, of Baker Company, recalls: "It was on a dark February night and we were covering a draw with a 30 cal. machine gun when suddenly a mine detonated in front of our position. Cpl. Scherger quickly let go with a burst and then I took over and let go with another burst where I thought the explosion came from. Everyone was out of bed looking for his rifle prepared for anything. Pfc. Miller got on the phone and asked for a flare, and soon afterwards the scene exploded into a weird light. We didn't see a thing but we did hear some cats in the field having a good time. That is, all except the poor cat that had detonated the mine."

That same night a German came up to a hole occupied by Pvt. Maruskin. It was so dark a night that with the combination of darkness and surprise neither of the men could take advantage of the moment. The Jerry recovered first and was gone in a flash. The men on the position soon sprayed the area in front of the position with a deadly hail of fire. The German had disappeared, however, and the next morning the men found the reason why. A tunnel had been dug from the top of the hill and it came out at the base somewhere in town. Captain Snyder gave the order to seal the tunnel so that we wouldn't be taken by surprise again. A few days later he ordered it opened again for our own use. Corporal Marcon took care of blowing it and the men worked all night getting it opened, but it was never used. The tunnel didn't have any supports and the men figured that if a shell hit on the top of the hill it would probably cave in and they would be trapped with no means of escape.



SCOOP BATTERY

Upon our arrival in Ludweiler we were confronted with many problems. We were ordered to have our own mortar support, and at that time we had no trained mortar men. So we had to use the untrained men of the 48th. A squad was quickly called from Able Company. They began an exhaustive four day training period, which, under ordinary circumstances, would have taken four weeks. The men picked from Able Company were Sgt. Barker, T/5 Johnson, Pfc. Jenkins, Pvt. Zangara, Pvt. Schunk, and Pvt. Gobin, all under the leadership of Captain Scherr. In those four days were crammed all the possible information that was available, and all that the men could absorb. The men worked and studied hard and at the end of the four days they were ready to fire the mortar.

The men were anxious to try out their new found knowledge and were practically sitting on pins and needles waiting for their first fire order.

Sgt. Barker relates, "With Captain Scherr as our observer we were ready to fire. Our first target was an improvised pill box that the Jerries were using for a machine gun emplacement. It was located 1000 yards in front of the OP. We were pretty excited when the OP gave the fire order but we let go with the first round, and much to our surprise and chagrin it landed about 100 yards in front of the OP. We corrected our sights, to the accompaniment of a lot of cursing from the OP, and let go with another round. This time we made a direct hit, and after that we made a succession of direct hits on the pill box."

"Later," said Sergeant Barker, "we fired on different targets, one of which was a Jerry OP in a house at the edge of town. After many direct hits the house caught on fire. Then Jerry threw in some counter-battery fire and with some luck tore half the roof off the OP. Luckily, though, no one was hurt. It did cause a few shaky hands and a few cases of nervous indigestion, and an abundance of silent thanks."

"One day OP 33 of Able Company reported a sniper constantly firing from a house down below, about four or five hundred yards in front of them. Occasionally the dirt would fly up practically in the face of the observer and a bullet would rip into the pill box. They also noticed, that although there was no wind, the shutters were opening and closing periodically about every hour. So putting two and two together they figured out that the sniper was in that house. They immediately called for mortars. The first two shells were close misses but the third one knocked the shutters off on the balcony window. Just then Colonel Foley came up and asked where we were shooting. We had just pointed at the house when suddenly two more shells came in and the shingles seemed to leap into the air. Other than that there seemed to be no effect at all from those shells. Then suddenly the whole rear end of the house seemed to collapse all at once. We believed it just about stopped that sniper for the rest of the day anyway."

"Just a few minutes after this took place Captain Snyder came up to the OP. Seeing Captain Snyder, Colonel Foley asked him if there was anything in particular that he would like to have shelled. Captain Snyder, pointing to the house with the pink shutters replied, "That one is— ——" That is as far as he got when he saw how little of the house was still standing and no pink shutters left."

The general mission of the mortar men was to constantly blast the enemy with harassing fire throughout the night, while in the daytime, they fired on troop concentrations, sniper positions, and Jerry OPs. The usual amount of shells used in one day was approximately 150 rounds and the sum total

used all during the time the 48th was in Ludweiler was approximately 1500 shells. To the Germans, on the receiving end, it totaled almost a million headaches. From a captured PW it was revealed that once when the mortars shelled a CP of a platoon of German snipers, the bursting shells had killed two and wounded eight men of a ten man squad. This had taken place close to the PW camp, and it had turned out that this PW camp was to become one of the two favorite targets of the mortar men. The other was the Brewery at Geislautern, proving that we meant to keep the Germans from having any fun at all.

Captain Scherr, along with Corporal Kellum of Charlie Company, was at OP 33 one night when they heard some strange noises coming from the direction of the road. Immediately he phoned for the mortars. Presently, he heard the familiar boom of the mortars. They landed almost 900 yards away from the target. Captain Scherr became angry and called down, "Get on the ball back there." "Ycs sir, I'll get it right in your hip pocket if you want it there," came the angry reply. Captain Scherr called for one round of phosphorous, 700 yards, no deflection. "Okay," came the reply, "On the way." They heard the whistling sound of the shell and all of a sudden they saw a huge geyser of phosphorous burst about fifty yards in back of them. Indeed he had put that one almost in the captain's back pocket.

One night, the OP called down to the mortars, I hear tanks coming down the road. Give us a battery one round, and hurry." Immediately the mortars swung into action, and three shells went screaming over on to the road. Then silence. The OP reported, "All quiet, you must have hit it." The next morning, upon investigation of the spot where the noise of the armor had come from, they found—an overturned wagon once filled with potatoes. Somewhere there is one civilian that won't use that wagon again to loot the houses in the vicinity.

The fire orders of Scoop Battery were not orthodox. Listening in one time we heard the following conversation:

Captain Scherr calling "Guns."

"Guns," answering.

"Give me 300 more elevation, left 25, one round phosphorous, let me know when you are ready to fire."

"All ready, Sir."

"Let her go."

"On the way."

The day was split by a loud booming and the next minute a shell would come whistling overhead to land somewhere in the Brewery in Geislautern.,

"Right in there!"

These actions were the climax of two weeks of intensive training. During those two weeks, the students had mortars, mortars and more mortars. They had been promised that and that is all they got. Captain Witham, from the 103rd Infantry Division, was in charge of the mortar school, and his policy was, "Give them what is important and forget the rest." A squad from each company had been designated as the mortar section and on February 13th the three squads proceeded to Epinal. They had no sooner disembarked from the trucks when their training started. They were immediately given a lecture by Captain Witham who told them time was short and there was much to learn. There were a thousand and one details to master before they could even attempt to fire the mortars.

The days slipped by swiftly, and with the passing of time, their knowledge increased. They were given the nomenclature of the M4 sight, the 81mm mortar, the score card, practice setting up the mortar, range estimation, fire orders, sighting in, night firing, and countless other necessities.

Then finally the training was over, and the three squads of mortar men returned to Ludweiler. The pace set during the last two weeks had been fast and furious, but now was to come the acid test. This was the time to put their training into effect against the enemy. Now would come the real thing.

They had two short barreled, bastard mortars and also two long range mortars capable of reaching the Saar River. During the time the men worked, there was a state of constant competition on the mortars. Each member of the four mortar squads tried to fire it the fastest. Finally after weeks of observation it was decided that Pfc. Gatanis from Baker Company could load and fire a mortar faster and more efficiently than anyone in the Battalion. One time Captain Scherr called down to change the range

from 3400 to 1500 and change to 40 mils in deflection. Captain Scherr had just put down the phone when suddenly the words "On the Way" came over it. In just a few seconds, Gatanis had changed the elevation, deflection, and fired. It was one of the many times that he astounded his superiors with his speed and adaptability.

Most of the days were just routine. The OP finds the target, calls down for a battery one round, and sets the range. Then would begin the hard job of waiting for the return mail. Usually the Germans would throw back a few rounds of counter-battery fire. They hardly ever caused any damage, but occasionally they did succeed in putting a qualm of fear in the men. It was just such a case that happened in Baker Company. Pfc. Gatanis was bringing back chow to Pfc. Nigro, when the Germans threw in a few shells. Gatanis immediately ducked under a nearby truck making sure he didn't spill any of the food. They were hitting pretty close and Gatanis was beginning to feel very uncomfortable in that awkward position. When the shelling stopped, he crawled from underneath the truck. He had just started walking again when he noticed a GI standing by the doorway of a nearby house shaking like a leaf. Gatanis recognized the symptoms and offered him some coffee. The GI greedily accepted and almost downed it in one swallow. Then he nonchalantly turned to Gatanis and said, "That coffee really hits the spot on a cold day like this!"

Captain Scherr experienced a narrow escape one day when he was sitting in the attic of a house. It was during one of those almost daily counter-batteries thrown over at us, when a 120mm mortar shell came whistling over and landed in the room across from him. He thought that he had better make tracks and make them fast, for he expected the next one to come right over and land in the room with him. The rest of the men were scattered throughout the house when the shell came in, and to this day no one can explain how they got down to the basement so fast. It was done with exceptional speed and it is hard to determine what means they took to get down.



Scoop Battery

The mortar section was often called upon to give support to the patrols going out each day. There were many times when the patrols ran into trouble, called back for mortar support, and received it in a matter of minutes. Sometimes, before going out, the patrols would ask the mortar section to lay down a barrage in some other sector, thereby diverting the Germans' attention to that direction while they probed the enemy's strength and positions.

One German soldier, formerly of the 1st Battalion, 860th Regiment, 347th Infantry Division, was a little tired of our artillery coming over night and day, so he decided to let himself be captured. He gave himself up to Charlie Company. He was more than willing to tell a few tales only he asked that no word be given out that he had given up. Retribution to his family would follow if the German Army knew he had given up. He revealed valuable information. He told us the location of Holz mines, and the CP of the 3rd Company, which was in the Brewery. The Brewery served as a food distribution point. One man from each squad procured the next day's rations at 2000 to 2030 hours. That night the Germans drew their respective rations, but they were given an extra large helping of mortar shells with it. Captain Scherr and his mortar men attended to that.

Although the men of the mortar squad had been given very little training, they performed as if they were backed by years of experience. They could set the range, load, fire, and dismantle every piece of the mortar and put it back together again in a hurry. Above all, they were cool, and could handle any situation that arose in a calm manner. Take the case of Pfc. Miller and Pfc. Cole. They had just been ordered to fire a round from the 81mm long-range mortar. They got a shell and dropped it into the barrel of the mortar and hit the ground. Nothing happened, the shell didn't go off. Quickly Pfc. Cole walked over to it, reached in and extracted the dud, placed it aside for further inspection, grabbed another shell, dropped it down the barrel, and hit the ground again. This time it went off.

The men of the mortar squad were always on the alert, and no order coming through the phone had to be repeated. As soon as the phone buzzed, the men would head for the mortars, and await the range estimations. The mortar squads that took part in the defense of Ludweiler had done a magnificent job; it gave us a good feeling to be able to phone back for some mortar support and get it in a matter of seconds.

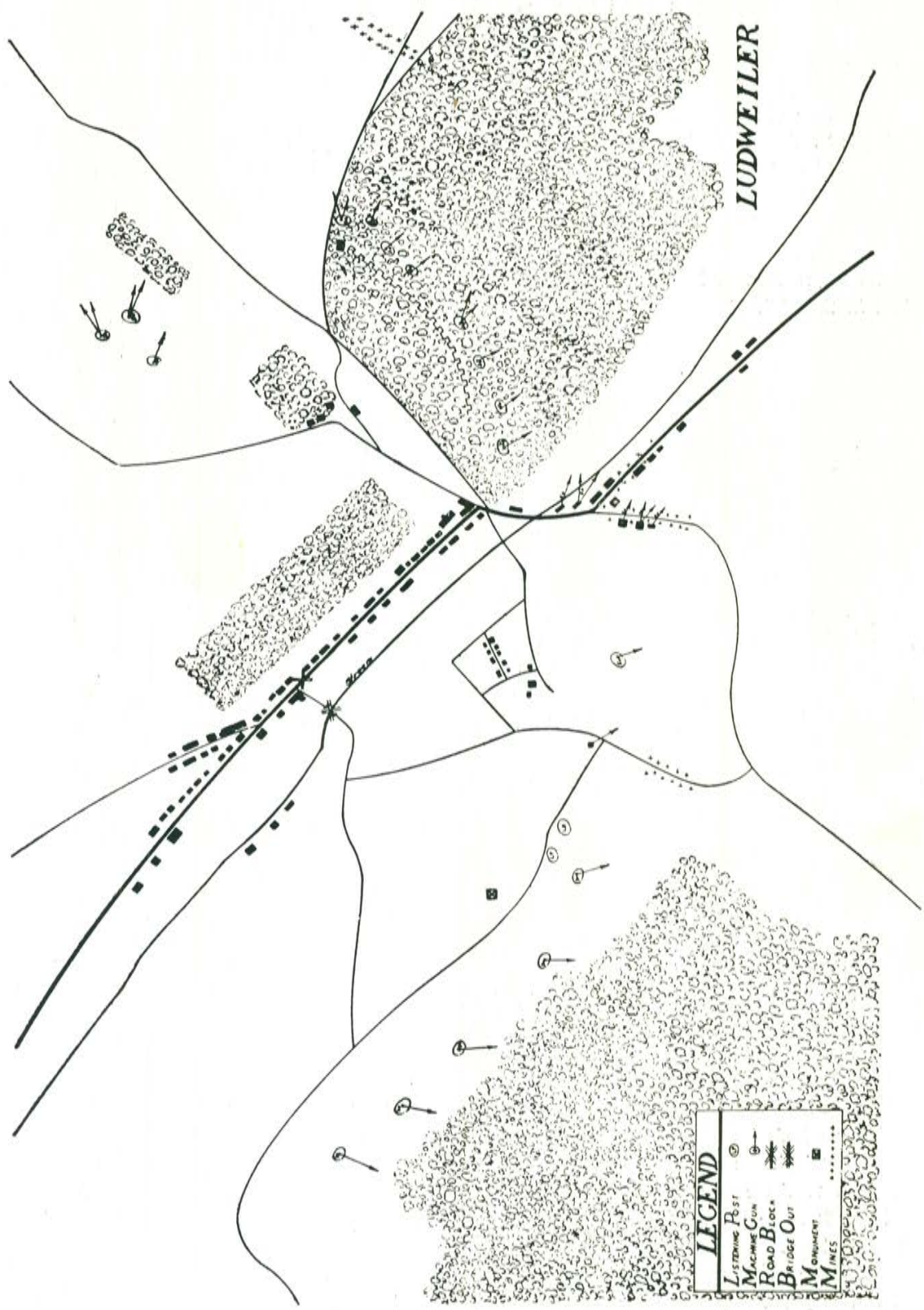
To break the quiet, the Jerries would drop in some shells, mostly in a vain attempt to knock out the mortars. There was much counter-battery fire then, for our mortars would rake enemy territory continuously and the only way for the Germans to retaliate would be through counter-battery fire. Most of it was considered merely a nuisance, but occasionally they would turn out to be serious. No one could tell in what section of the town the shells were going to land; they seemed to probe the entire town, searching for our mortars. No place in town was out of their reach; one moment their shells would be landing in Baker Company's area, and the next moment they would drop a shell in one of Able Company's OPs. The powder train from a rocket shell smashed through the roof of a house where a group of men from the 822nd Tank Destroyers were quartered, wounding one of the men in the leg. Scoop Battery, the 48th Engineers' mortar squad, received, at intervals, counter-battery fire. On one occasion they reported 14 shells falling near the mortars.

The greatest worry that everyone had was: Will there be hot chow tonight? Hot chow was a very important thing to the men of the 48th up there on the hill. All night long they would look for the sunrise, so they could go down and enjoy a hot cup of coffee to warm them up a little. The food was the greatest morale builder then. You could measure the morale by the way the food was prepared, and also the quantity. We were thankful that, unlike assault Infantry, we were able to have hot chow brought to us almost everyday, rain or shine. Ludweiler, being as barren of life as the Sahara Desert, gave us plenty of room for an auxiliary kitchen. The food was cooked down in the company mess, and then transported to our own platoon kitchen. Army chow as the facts go, is nourishing, but sometimes not too tasty. The men were constantly on the prowl to secure any kind of vegetables they could possibly find. They would sometimes come back with onions, lettuce, or perhaps some tomatoes, in bottles or otherwise. We gave thanks that the German civilians were kind enough to leave behind them well stocked cellars. Add these ingredients to the army chow, and the cooks will scarcely recognize the results. There was an abundance of potatoes and we were constantly having French fried potatoes at all hours of the day and night. Sometimes between meals you could look down the street and notice the smoke coming out of

LUDWEILER

LEGEND

Listening Post	⊙
Machine Gun	⊙ →
Road Block	⌵
Bridge Out	⌵
Monument	⊠
Mines	*****



practically all the chinneys. The men, to appease their between-meal-hunger, were cooking spuds again. The men really went for the chow after two or more hours on an outpost in that cold weather. There was always the feeling that you could go down and enjoy a hot meal in a comparatively comfortable German house. Sometimes, though, all was not mild and serene. Such was the case that happened in Able Company. Lt. De Boer, acting Burgermeister, requisitioned the house next to the forward CP for our mess hall. Able Company, living in style, christened the house "The Brown Derby". Pfc. Anderson was appointed mess sergeant and immediately began his duties by gathering equipment from the neighboring houses. Looting is "verboden", and so this equipment was "requisitioned", according to the army rules and regulations. It included dishes, cups, silverware, pots, pans, and whatever else went to make up a mess sergeant's dream. Pfc. Anderson had things running smoothly but suddenly for no apparent reason, he resigned, leaving the job of mess sergeant to someone else. At which point T/5 Tate assumed the duties as chief cook and bottle washer. Being new at the job he made many mistakes, and as yet he could not measure the amount of ingredients going into the meal; he put too many potatoes in this and too little onions in that. His biggest mistake, however, was building too big a fire in the cook stove one day. The



large amount of smoke spilling forth from this chimney must have attracted the wrong people, for it wasn't long before our chow was being flavored by a dash of artillery and flak shells, which henceforth came at every meal. It became so bad that the men lost their appetite and T/5 Tate received jeers and curses wherever he went. Then one day after dinner while he was straightening things up for the evening meal, three shells landed almost in the back door of the kitchen. For almost twenty minutes the shells exploded and sent shrapnel screaming around through the house. There were many more shells landing, but the rest were scattered around the area. They caused little damage, but by this time the men were blaming everything on poor Tate.

The most important thing in Ludweiler was our communications. It brought us closer together and made us feel just a little bit safer. The terrible nights on post were made just a little easier by the fact that there were telephones in practically all of the dugouts. These phones were connected to the platoon CP, from there to the company CP, and from the company CP, the mortars could be notified or a flare called for. It made the men less jittery to know that all they had to do was pick up the phone and call back, and almost immediately aid would be on the way. The Communications Section of the 48th was responsible for all lines running to these positions. There were twenty-one different lines to attached units and outposts. Day and night our lines were broken by enemy shell fire or cut by our own tanks as they swung around into position. Many times these wires had to be repaired under direct enemy observation. The men in the companies maintained their own line while the men in Headquarters Company

maintained the lines to the companies and attached units. Besides these, the switch-board had to be operated twenty-four hours a day and the radios were also kept in continuous operation with the rear CPs. The importance of communications here could only be appreciated by those who depended on it, such as our forward observers who directed artillery, the outposts who reported enemy activity, and those who directed operations.

There was hardly a time when the town was being shelled by the Germans that some of our lines weren't out. Many times T/4 Mallen and Pfc. Mozingo returned with a piece of shrapnel that had sliced the line. T/4 Teel of Able Company can also attest to the time that one of the company's outpost lines was cut at a place where it ran through the woods. Knowing there was no reason for it being broken here, Teel, upon closer inspection, found faint marks of hob nailed footprints belonging to a German soldier. This was the only report of Jerry cutting our lines but there were probably several instances where he tapped them - an old trick by which the Germans could obtain first-hand information.

Patrols went out quite frequently and at times they ran into some Germans; usually someone was hurt. There were no medics along with the patrols, for they believed "the minimum amount of men along, the better it is". So the medics had to be handy when the patrols came in, to treat any wounds sustained in battle. "One day", Pfc. Pezzenti recounts, "I had just taken a bath, and had slipped into my old dirty clothes again, when there came a hurried call to go up to Able CP of Baker Company with my medical kits. I quickly gathered up my kits and raced up the hill. I was immediately shown to the scene of the accident, and administered first aid to those who were wounded. There were two men hurt! They had stepped off the path on their return from their patrol, and had encountered one of our anti-personnel mines. The shrapnel from the mine had hit both men and they were lying in the field, writhing in agony."

There was just one small consolation about all the sweating out we were doing up in Ludweiler. It was a very small consolation, but still one we could be a little thankful for. We were up on the hill, as Infantry, and for the time were no longer engineers. We had left our engineer equipment back with the supply room and kitchen. We no longer had to worry about cleaning them. The tools had to be kept clean from rust, but there were no men available to clean them. All the men from the kitchen and supply rooms were on the hill, and the ones left behind were on guard constantly. Our tools would become our worry again when we got off the hill, but this matter would be taken care of when the time came.



SWEATING IT OUT

The days were moving serenely past, and everyone, including the Germans, seemed to have sunk into a state of inactivity. The men were beginning to feel a little better. Life once more was becoming bearable. The weather was even co-operating with nice sunny days and moonlight nights. We no longer had to bundle up to our necks, in order to go out. Things were definitely taking on a better complexion.

The men on the hill were keeping exceptionally clean. There were shower details frequently, and everyone would be looking forward to taking a nice hot shower. When someone would yell, "Shower Detail, let's go", it seemed the whole company, if not on post, would respond. Laundry facilities even improved. It seems that the company commanders were forever being asked for permission to go to L'Hopital to pick up laundry. It was a very perplexing problem to the CO's, for never in the history of the 48th had there been such a demand on cleanliness.

Yes, things were definitely looking up for the 48th. Movies were shown in Ludweiler. It was unusually good for morale, and made us forget for a moment about the war and the hell going on outside. Pictures like "To Have or Not to Have" and "Hi'ya Beautiful" took us for an hour and a half back to America.

To top it off, one sunny day late in February, three men came walking up the hill close to our dugouts. We paid little attention to them, for visitors were always coming up there to look over our positions. For some reason these men seemed more interested in us than the positions and soon we were engaged in conversation with them. They told us something that set us back on our heels. "We are USO workers and have two girls down in Lauderbach waiting to come up and entertain you." With those words our morale jumped sky-high; then his next words brought us down to earth again. "We were ready to come up and entertain you, but the Colonel couldn't take the responsibility of allowing the girls to endanger themselves." With those words our hearts literally broke in two. Imagine real American girls wanting to come up to the front lines! Such was the hand of destiny that rules all men.

One day we were issued a strange item called "Panels". They were rolls of glossy oil cloth in appearance, with one side colored yellow and the other side pink. We were given definite instructions to place them in the fields closest to the enemy and placed so that they would be plainly visible from the air. That was our first hint of things to come. The next day we heard the steady drone of planes, causing all eyes to focus on the sky. There they were, going into the same tactics they had employed at Cassino, only this time they were much closer. We first checked to see if the panels were placed right, then sat back and relaxed to watch the show. They came in like streaks of silver lightning, just above our positions, with their machine guns spitting. We saw the bombs fall away, then the planes turned and climbed rapidly. One after another they came in, dropped their bombs, and zoomed away. There were a few answering bursts of 20mm anti-aircraft fire but little or no damage was done to the planes. For almost an hour they circled, machine gunned, dive bombed, and then finally left. Presently we saw thick black smoke rising slowly upward, signifying that the pilots had done a good day's work. The next day the planes were back using the same methods, only this time they used the still burning objects as a beacon for the attack. Again they had a field day and we hoped they would continue to have it every day. We later learned that the smoke was caused by a direct hit on a large oil tank by the railroad, and we also learned that the train supposedly carrying in replacements and 88s wouldn't run for quite awhile. The planes kept coming back almost every day after that. It became almost an ordinary occurrence to look

up and see a couple of bombs come whistling over our heads, and see streaks of red leaping from the planes' eight machine guns.

However, on February 19th the men of Charley Company thought the world was coming to an end. "There were quite a few of us", said Cpl. Van Winkle, "standing in front of the CP. We were watching the airplanes bomb and strafe the Kraut's positions just forward of our frontline when all of a sudden there came a terrifying scream, and everyone took to the prone position. There were two dull thuds almost simultaneously and we felt the ground under us shake with the shock. Instantly we headed for better cover in case the bombs were delayed action bombs. But luck was with us and we came out of our holes and continued to watch the air show. Some of the fellows directed a stream of curses at the planes overhead and we all kept a wary eye on them throughout the rest of the day. On later investigation we found that the bombs had landed less than a hundred yards away from our CP building. If they ever went off there wouldn't have been much left of us or our quarters."

By this date, it was almost a certainty that a push was soon to begin. As yet "H-Hour" was not set, but the men of the 48th suspected it would not be long before it was. There was a feeling of tense anticipation among the men. That constant thought kept circling through their minds "Was this to be another Mt. Porchia, or why do we have to push, we are engineers not Infantry?"

Briefly we were told what our mission in the coming attack would be. We were to gap our own minefields, to make an attack using a platoon to draw enemy fire so as to assist the main attack of the 101st Cavalry Squadron; to relieve elements of the 276th Infantry of positions that they were to seize, and to defend positions southeast of Furstenhausen.

Initially, Able Company was to hold its present positions. One squad at "H Hour" would be sent forward to prevent any enemy infiltration. Able Company was then to move forward and establish a new defense line. Baker Company, initially, was to hold its present positions and at dusk on the evening preceding "D Day" they were to gap the friendly minefield just forward of them. After the 101st Cavalry Squadron had passed through the Baker Company lines and secured its initial objective, and Charlie Company had moved forward and secured the right flank of the 101st Cavalry Squadron, Baker Company would assemble in the vicinity of Ludweiler as Battalion Reserve.

Charlie Company at "H Hour" was to send out one platoon along the Ludweiler - Gieslautern road and engage all enemy contacted. All weapons were to be employed to draw enemy fire, thus diverting their attention from the main attack on the left flank. The remainder of Charlie Company was then to move forward, tying in with the 101st Cavalry Squadron on the left and Able Company on the right flank.

On February 18, Able Company relieved a platoon of B Troop, 116th Cavalry Squadron of the road block, but almost immediately the Cavalry remanned the road block, as the operation was to be delayed until the 21st or 22nd of February.



Able Company At the Saar

In preparation for the attack a number of patrols were sent out. Some with the mission of determining the strength of positions and the location of mines, others to bring back PWs. On February 19th, Charlie Company sent out a ten-man patrol led by Lt. Fahringer, Sgt. Plowman and Sgt. Currie, to reconnoiter the buildings and bridges in the forward area. The patrol reported that the 80-foot bridge across the Rossel River was still intact and sandbagged on the friendly side. That same day at 1300, still another patrol from Charlie Company advanced along the Ludweiler-Gieslautern road to the first road junction and they found concertina wire stretched across the road and mines nearby.

On February 24th, Lt. Brooker, and Sgt. Brahmer led a patrol forward to recon enemy positions and defenses. The patrol consisted of two sections under Sgt. Harry Jirak, an expert tommy gunner, and Sgt. Arno Lamb. The remainder of the patrol consisted of Pfc. P. John P. Updegraff, who carried an automatic burp gun, Pfc. Richard Polit, carrying a tommy-gun, and the sharp shooting rifle men, Pfc. James Anderson, Pvt. Paul Dellospedale, Pfc. Paul Monzula and Pfc. Dan Duffy and the Browning Automatic rifleman, Sgt. Edward Johnson.

Here is the account of Pfc. Duffy. "We were to penetrate into enemy territory and reconnoiter the area. That is to find out where and how strongly the enemy was dug in without tipping them off. It was a rather ticklish job, but had to be done so that we would have the information for the coming operations. We headed out into no-man's land with the lieutenant in the lead. On his orders the patrol was split in two. One half would look after the other and provide protection when they crossed an open section or any dangerous spot. Each man moved carefully and swiftly, watching out for booby-traps, mines and snipers. They were ready to go into action in a split second in case an enemy machine gun opened up. Tension was high. Our orders were not to fight unless attacked, or if there was no other way out. We double-timed across open spots and crawled to a better position to observe and listen for signs of enemy activity. The noncoms were noting features of the terrain and writing hastily on their maps."

"It didn't seem that our luck could last forever, as we moved deeper into enemy territory, but by this time the enemy's gun positions, their road blocks and minefields had been located on our maps. The high tension we were all under had relaxed somewhat, and we were now getting ready to withdraw, when the enemy opened fire on us. Being on the ground already was a break because the bullets went whistling harmlessly over our heads. We waited for the command to fire or to withdraw, but neither was given for a bullet had found its mark, wounding Lt. Brooker. Sgt. Brahmer, sensing that something was wrong, crawled under fire to the lieutenant and then gave the orders to withdraw. He assisted Lt. Brooker out of danger. Sgt. Lamb acted as rear guard with his half of the patrol and moved his men out."

Meanwhile, Able Company was having their troubles with snipers, too. "There was a sniper," Pfc. Titcomb relates, "who came up to our positions in an anti-tank ditch almost every night and fired on us. The ditch was so located that it was impossible to see into it from anyone of our positions. It gave the sniper a perfect opportunity to harass us. He would creep up at night, fire a few rounds at any unwary engineer and then retire. We tried constantly to get a bead on him but he was as elusive as a shadow. Our first warning would be the whine of a bullet followed by the sharp crack of a rifle. He was considered a nuisance rather than a threat, for he caused no injuries. It was difficult to find his position from the report of his rifle as the nearby houses acted as a sounding board and would throw the sound back and forth, until we could but guess the direction. Then one day Cpl. Marcon thought he knew the position from which the sniper was firing, and set out to get him. The first day he took up a position a little late and the sniper had already left. However, determination burned strongly in Cpl. Marcon so the next day he took up his position again overlooking the house where he thought the German was concealed. He aimed his bazooka, and fired a few rounds. He was laying there with the binoculars to his eyes observing the damage he had done with his elbows resting on the ground when the sniper got a bead on him and fired. The bullet hit Cpl. Marcon in the arm, and the shot broke his forearm. During the time he was there, until the medics brought him back, he had lost a considerable amount of blood. He was quickly evacuated to the aid station."

The days kept going by with constant rumors of the coming attack. Fortunately for us, though, it was being postponed. We began to relax again and some even believed that it would never materialize. Then, just as we were beginning to breathe easier, there came some reports that started us worrying again. German patrols were more active than usual. They were getting bolder and fire fights were occurring

almost daily. The patrols were constantly probing our positions, testing our strength. Higher headquarters again went into a dither, they began to suspect an attack by the Germans. Then on February 25th their suspicions became a certainty. The 165th Engineer Combat Battalion, the unit on our right flank, captured a German soldier. Upon incessant interrogation he revealed that at 1400 on the 25th of February, the Germans planned to launch an attack on the hinge town. Higher headquarters believed the hinge town to be Ludweiler. The 48th was notified immediately and placed on the alert. All positions were strengthened, the attached platoon and our artillery and mortar support were ready. Jerry would have a nice reception waiting for him if he tried to break through here. Then, 1400 hours came and went, still all was quiet.

The weather at this time was fairly kind to us. It was dry weather and the men were thankful for it. But sometimes a gift can also back fire. The countless vehicles traveling Ludweiler's broken streets would suddenly find themselves engulfed in a huge cloud of dust. The dust rose in such huge proportions that it could easily be seen by any vigilant German observer. Consequently, we often found ourselves in the midst of an artillery barrage. Major Foley issued orders to Charlie Company to move because they were bivouaced next to the main road, and sometimes shells meant for a vehicle would plow through Charlie Company's area.

Sometimes, even our own artillery would join in to break the quiet of Ludweiler. At dusk one evening, fragments from 105mm shells kept landing on Ludweiler. The sound, and all the data we could gather indicated that the shells were not coming from the direction of the Germans. A hurried check revealed that the shells were coming from our own artillery and had been set off prematurely by their



Observation Post

Pozit fuze. The "Pozit Burst" was a new shell that worked on the principal of the electric eye. When the shell left the gun, a mechanism created an electric wave around the projectile and when this wave was broken it burst the shell.

At Ludweiler it didn't work, as there were many hills and high tension wires on poles and the shells would burst behind our lines. We believe the use of "Pozit Burst" was promptly discontinued after that episode.

All this while, the attack was still in the back of our minds. We were literally sweating it out. The hardest part was not knowing when it would come off. There were many rumors, but they proved to be groundless. Each time an order came down giving the date, another one followed close on its heels rescinding it. We considered each time it was called off just another 24 hours of grace.

Then on March 1st, orders were received which relieved us of the attachment to the 116th Cavalry Squadron, and we assumed complete responsibility for the defense of the sector we occupied.

On March 4th, we received a surprise in the form of a public address system being brought up to our road block. The speech was preceded by a five minute artillery barrage from all of our support guns. When the barrage lifted, the announcer spoke eloquently in German urging all Germans to give up this fighting for a useless cause, and to desert now. He went on to say, "We will give you the best treatment. Don't fight us any longer." Then came another artillery barrage as extra encouragement. The German's answer was 29 rounds of 105mm and mortar shells. Soon after this, our artillery shot over some surrender passes. It was a nice stroke of undermining, but all in vain. The Jerries were not to be outdone, they fired about a dozen rockets into Ludweiler with their propaganda leaflets. In their leaflets they tried to convince us how useless the struggle was. How we were battering our heads against a stone wall when we were trying to penetrate the Seigfried Line. The leaflets were good reading.

That same night the Jerries were feeling us out in various places. The night was filled with sounds of machine gun and rifle fire. Jerry probed and searched to find a weak spot in our lines, but in all places he was met with gunfire. Then at 0545, S-3 received a hurried call from Baker Three at the road block, "Two enemy patrols directly forward of us." Immediately our assault guns went into action, they dropped a number of shells in the vicinity of the patrols. They were thought to have left, but suddenly a green and red flare shot up and burst almost directly over the road block, and bathed the position, in a ghostly purplish glow. This must have been a pre-arranged signal for artillery fire, for shortly after it, in came ten rounds of 105mm which fell dangerously close to the road block. Close on the heels of the artillery came one round from a bazooka directed at our machine guns, however, the projectile hit a post and discharged prematurely. In the morning, an enemy bazooka and a Very Pistol was found just a few yards forward of our road block. The men saw then, that if the post had not been there it probably would have been the end of one of our machine guns and the gunners. The 48th's luck was running true to form.

On March 6th at 1640, the company commanders were gathered in Major Foley's office, to get the final details of the event that had been dreaded — — the Attack! Briefly Major Foley outlined the plans. "The 101st," he said, "plans to carry on the attack in the early morning of the 7th of March. Able Company with one squad from Baker Company would relieve the platoon of the 101st Cavalry Squadron of the road block positions and by dusk they would also relieve Charlie Company on the 50 cal. machine gun positions. Baker Company was to proceed at once to gap the friendly anti-personnel minefield in front of its positions for passage of the 101st Cavalry Squadron. During the night enough men were to be posted to keep the gaps adequately protected."

At dusk that day Baker Company swung into action. The mine detectors were brought up, and while the protective security moved out in all directions, the work began on clearing the gap. They proceeded without a hitch, and then with darkness rapidly closing in on them, they went back into their own lines.

That night, since constant vigil had to be kept on the gaps, a patrol of three men was posted. It was a terrifying experience to go forward past the forward outpost into the black night, walk silently into the even blacker forest, kneel for a few moments listening for any sound that might betray the presence of the enemy, and then silently make your way back to your own lines again.

Everything was in readiness, the stage was set; all it lacked now was the players for this fateful drama of life and death. That night we wondered what would be the outcome of this drive? How many men



"Our Hill"

has Jerry got against us? Would we batter our heads against a stone wall just as the Germans said we would? Then late that night word came, "Attack delayed for at least 24 hours."

Those words gave us heart, we could look forward to seeing another day dawn without fear of it being "D Day!"

Then on March 7th Major Foley announced that the 8th of March had been designated as "D Day" and "H Hour" was to be at 0706. An artillery barrage was to commence at "H Hour" and lifting at "H" plus 15 minutes. In addition, harassing fire was to continue on Hill 283. A platoon of 4.2 mortars was attached to us for our support and was to reinforce the platoon from the 2nd Chemical Battalion, already attached to us.

That night, ambush parties from Able Company took up positions fifty to seventy-five yards forward of the front lines. They were to prevent the enemy recon parties from infiltrating into our positions and from obtaining information on the coming operations.

Meanwhile, at Baker and Charlie Companies, the noncoms were briefed on what part they and their men were to play and everyone was alerted for the jump-off in the morning.



We Lifted Enough Mines To Pass 17 Armored Divisions

During the night we heard the steady drone of a plane. We knew it was German from the throb in his motor and we assumed it was the famous "Bed Check Charlie" coming around to tuck the boys in. It gave us food for thought as this was about the first time he had ever paid a visit to Ludweiler. Were the Germans on to our move? Were they expecting us? Only time would tell!

Late that night the orders were changed again. A message had come in to Battalion Headquarters rescinding the March 8th "D Day" order and instructing the 48th to be prepared for the same mission on the 9th of March.

On March 8th, another one of those now daily company commanders and staff meetings disclosed that the operations had been indefinitely cancelled. The men were overjoyed but their happiness was short lived. They received the disconcerting news of "One platoon of the 116th Cavalry Squadron plans

a practice maneuver through Baker Company positions on hill 247. Guides from Baker Company would lead the platoon through the friendly minefield to their jump-off spot, remain with the platoon until the mission was completed and guide them back through the minefield."

It sounded simple! What were the thoughts behind that scheme? What did they intend to gain by that practice maneuver? There did not seem to be any rhyme or reason behind it, we could only guess at the outcome. Everyone suspected that it was just a move to draw fire, but no one really knew. We did, however, know that we were to be relieved after this operation, and we hoped nothing in this coming operation would go amiss.

"The next morning," tells T/5 Frank J. Walker of Baker Company, "it came as scheduled, promptly at 0730 the first gun fired! After that the whole heavens seemed to resound with the thunder of our artillery. For thirty minutes they threw volley after volley into Geislautern, on enemy positions, and even into Volklingen. Then after the barrage lifted the tanks came rushing up on the left of Able OP. The second one became mired in the soft mud and only after racing his motor three or four times was he able to get out. They raced up to the edge of the woods, fired a few rounds, and then hastily retreated. After they had gone everything suddenly became quiet, everyone was waiting for something we knew was bound to come. Then all at once it came, with a loud whistling scream, a large shell, judged to be a 170mm, landed with a crash scarcely thirty yards from Able OP. The second one landed somewhere over by our 32 position, after that they began arriving by the dozens. They seemed to be landing everywhere, we thought our number was up. We feverishly prayed for the end of this barrage, but still they kept coming and we thought it would never end. Then finally it did stop and we all gave silent thanks that no one was hurt. If this "practice maneuver" was to draw fire they succeeded admirably."

Charlie Company at that time was also having its troubles. They were sleeping soundly at seven-thirty when they heard the first sounds of battle, instantly they awoke and jumped out of their beds. Believing it was the Germans counter-attacking, they hurriedly dressed, ran for their rifles and took off down the stairs on the double. Down at the bottom of the stairs, they were confronted by a bunch of laughing recon men. It seems that the Cavalry men were informed about the fake attack but somehow it had slipped their mind. They didn't tell Charlie Company about it. The boys from Charlie Company didn't think it was funny until a long time after they had a chance to cool off and think it over.

Later that day we reverted back to the control of the 1150th Engineer Combat Group, and were relieved from our Infantry mission. We were veterans now and just as the 106th Cavalry had given us a little advice on our arrival, we in turn gave our successors a few helpful hints. We felt very proud as we went down the hill for the last time. We had taken all Jerry could hand out and we could still come out with a smile and laugh it off. We had laid our shovels and picks aside and had unslung our rifles, to prove that we were combat soldiers not only in name. We had come through 31 nights and days of uncertainties and once we were glad to get back to our own trade — — Engineering.

On March 10th at 1010, we cleared Ludweiler and convoyed to Lixing—Les St. Avold, where we enjoyed a two day rest before getting back to engineering work once more.



OPENING THE WAY

The 10th of March found the Battalion far behind the lines in the vicinity of Lixing, France. At least it was far behind for the men of the 48th. With occupation of a rear area, the usual army details began to come in. The Battalion constructed over 2500 feet of two-way road for the 59th General Hospital, salvaged concertina wire and pickets, removed artillery duds from a mine field near Falquemont and improved a ration dump for the 93rd Quartermaster.

But in spite of the engineer tasks that the 48th was receiving, there was an undercurrent of waiting for things to come. A new attack was scheduled to cross the Saar River, and the men of the 48th reasoned that they would be there when the attack came.

On the 14th of March, seven trucks with pole-type trailers were sent to transfer ponton equipment. It was a hint of what lay in store for the 48th.

We did not have to wait long. At 1330 on the 15th of March, Colonel Foley arranged a meeting with officers of the 1553rd Heavy Ponton Company to discuss the best possible means of transporting heavy ponton equipment on the 48th's flat-bed trailers. During the day, M-1 treadway of the 88/16 Genie Company, a French Heavy Ponton Outfit, was attached to the 48th for future operations. There was enough bridging for 360 feet of treadway.

The following day, Colonel Foley met with staff officers and company commanders, to discuss the coming operation. "An unopposed crossing of the Saar River is contemplated," the colonel said. "If the crossing is made, and the bridgehead is established without too much opposition, the 48th will construct an estimated 251 foot of treadway across the river, as soon after the assault troops have crossed as possible. An officer will be designated to act as liaison with the 70th Division Engineers located in Merlebach, and keep the 48th closely informed on all developments. Baker Company will remain alerted, ready to move out for the construction on a few minutes notice. An assembly area for the Baker bridge and for the bridge trucks must be located during the evening of March 16th. Schu mines are reported in the vicinity of the bridge site. All men of Baker Company are to be notified of the Schu mines and cautioned to stay on the roads."

Baker Company readied their ponton equipment and prepared to build the bridge across the Saar.

On the 17th, Baker Company was taken off the alert. The original plans to build a ponton bridge across the Saar River were changed. The entire attack of the 70th Division to establish a bridgehead was called off. Instead, Charlie Company would build a treadway.

On the 18th, the 70th Division announced their plan for attack. They would cross the Saar River with one regiment on D plus one, after the main attack had carried the Saarbrücken positions, south of the Saar River. At first H Hour was set at 0700, but was changed later to 1230. Charlie Company was to move at H Hour with the 270 feet of bridging to a forward assembly area. Colonel Foley would remain with the 270th Engineers for the order to build.

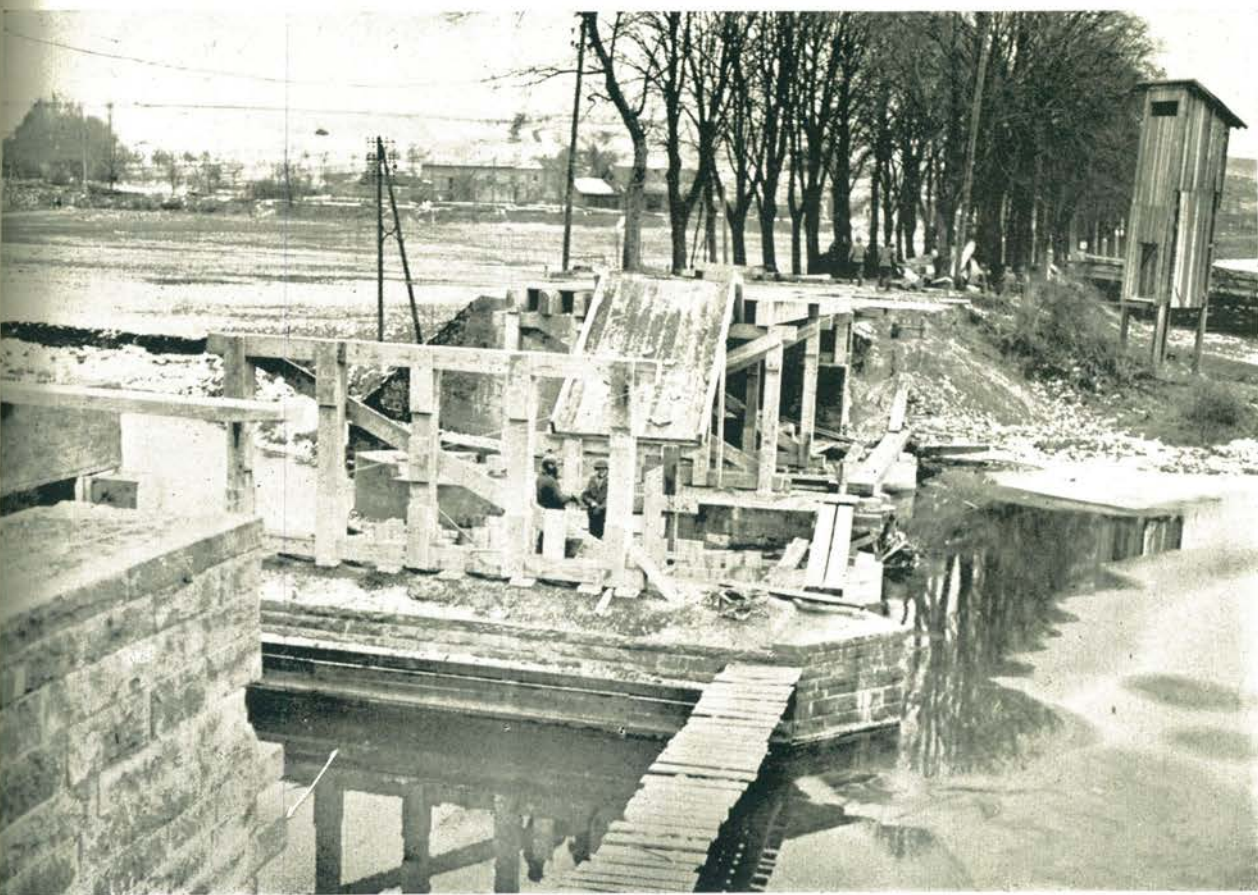
At 0500 the 70th Division crossed the Saar River. Two companies crossed East of Volklingen, but the main push was near Lousenthal where one Battalion succeeded in crossing. The bridge train, waiting in Merlebach was brought up immediately and the construction begun. All through the morning, the big rubber rafts were inflated and the steel treads placed across them. By 1430 in the afternoon, the 144 feet of M-2 treadway was open for traffic.

Meanwhile, Able Company had gone with their Bailey Bridge train with the main push near Saarbrücken. The big push had hardly started and the first doughboys were beginning to cross through the German line near Saarbrücken when Able Company received the order to build a Bailey Bridge in the vicinity of the town.

Captain Snyder and Lieutenant Butler alerted their bridge train and left their company area to attempt to get into town and make a reconnaissance for a bridgesite where the Bailey could be launched. One Infantry Regiment blocked the road into town from the North, where the outfit had reached its phase line and was waiting until the others had reached their objectives before pushing on. Regimental Headquarters told the two officers that there were no Americans in town as yet and refused their request to pass through the Infantry into town for a reconnaissance of the bridgesites.

Captain Snyder and Lieutenant Butler stood on the low hills with the Infantry and looked at the town for a moment. They wanted to get into town badly. Able Company needed a look at the site. It was bad business to take a cumbersome bridge train and a company into an unknown situation. The entire train with all of the men would go blundering into the site without any idea of the work to be done or the amount of enemy fire on the site that could be expected.

So Captain Snyder elected to try another route into town. Perhaps another Infantry commander might permit him to pass through the front line. Another road led in from the northeast, and by doubling back and coming up again, the two officers were able to find the road, and start towards Saarbrücken from another direction. An Infantry Battalion was waiting, on a hill about two miles from the town, for orders to move in. The commander listened to Captain Snyder's plea for a few moments, and then gave him permission to pass through the Infantry lines.



St. Marguerite

The two officers started down the road into town. A line of Dragon's Teeth marched across the field and the two men passed warily through a break in the line. The outer Siegfried defenses passed around through Saarbrücken, and the men moved through the obstacles. Down the road there was a minefield. It was unmarked, but the officers could see the mines on the ground. There were pillboxes and gun emplacements, but they were all unmanned.

The Infantry were far behind now, and the two officers congratulated themselves that they had not drawn fire.

Soon they were upon the first houses of the town. The two men walked carefully now, for they believed that if there was going to be any opposition, the German soldiers would have concealed themselves in the first houses of the town in an attempt to defend it. But the houses were completely empty. There was no sign of life in the town. The civilian population had been evacuated when the new advance threatened to engulf the town and had moved back further into Germany.

The two officers moved down the street to the first corner. Upon turning the corner they froze against the wall of a house. Just around the corner there was a thick concrete air raid shelter, and just outside, a stove was burning merrily. If a fire was burning, it meant that the man who lit it was not far away. With no civilians in town, the fire could only belong to German soldiers. But how many, was the question that bothered Captain Snyder and Lieutenant Butler. There might be a whole company or a platoon inside the concrete bunker.

The two officers stood in the doorway and debated whether to rush the place or not. Captain Snyder had a carbine, and Lieutenant Butler had only his sidearm and a hand grenade. They were beginning to think the best thing to do was to beat a safe retreat and come in again with the Infantry.

Just then a German soldier stepped into the doorway of the bunker and yawned at the two officers. When he opened his eyes again he was looking at Captain Snyder's carbine pointed at his stomach. The officers ordered the German across to their doorway and asked him how many Germans were in the concrete bunker. The German told them that he was a guard, and was alone. Lt. Butler dashed across the street and ran into the bunker. There was some scuffling around inside for a few minutes that worried Captain Snyder, but Lt. Butler finally appeared in the doorway with a German rifle.

The lieutenant crossed the street and came back a few minutes later with a bicycle.

The small force started for the river again. First came the German with his hands over his head, and then Captain Snyder with the carbine pointed in the small of the German's back, and then Lt. Butler, weaving circles around the two men with the bicycle.

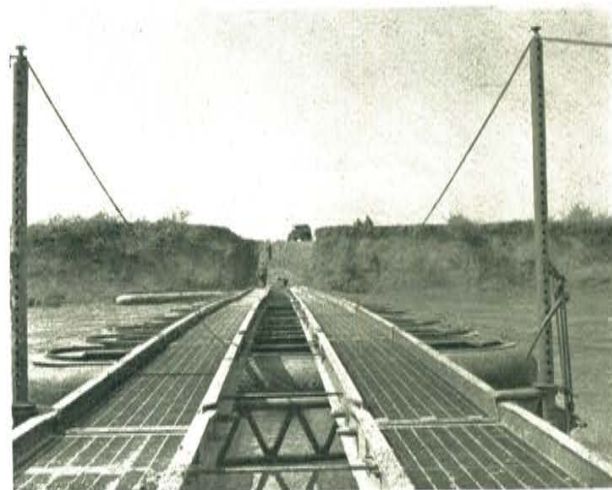
The men were passing a row of houses when they heard noises in the cellar, and as they stood covering the house, the door burst open, and three Germans rushed out with their hands above their heads. They were ordered into line with the other prisoner, and proceeded once more through the town in the direction of the river. Another surprised German soldier was making his way across an intersection with a pail of hot stew when the patrol came upon him, he didn't argue. He raised his hands and fell into line with the others.

Now Captain Snyder and Lieutenant Butler had five prisoners and still a long way to go before they reached the river. They stood in the middle of the street among their prisoners and held a council of war. They decided that even if they reach the river and found the gap where the river could be bridged, they certainly could not walk out among the rubble of the blown bridge and string tracing tape to mark the gap, while five German soldiers looked on interestedly. Besides, the man with the hot stew, that they had met at the intersection, volunteered the information that there was a central chow kitchen somewhere in the direction that they were heading. It would be a fine thing if they should bump into a long German chow line.

They decided to walk back. The procession turned around and headed out of town through the same streets that they had taken previously. When they reached the road outside of town, the first Infantry patrols were moving down the road to start into the town.

The engineers turned over their five prisoners and explained the situation in the town to the Infantry. Since the two 48th Officers had already been in the town and were familiar with the streets, it was decided that they should lead the two Infantry patrols to the river. Lieutenant Butler took one platoon, and Captain Snyder the other, and the two patrols decided to start down parallel streets to the river.

Meanwhile, Colonel Foley arrived on the outskirts of town and the two officers reported their reconnaissance and their plans to him. And then, with the two platoons, they started into town again. Lieutenant



Ponton Treadway Training



St. Marguerite



Sambre River



Opening The Way



Along The Neckar



Baker Company at Jagdzell



On To Berchtesgaden

Butler and his platoon reached the river without incident and crossed the blockhouses to the blown bridge to await Captain Snyder and the others. Meanwhile, Captain Snyder and two Infantry scouts were ahead of the main patrol moving down the street. At an intersection, they saw a German soldier a block away. They called to the German to surrender, but the man started to run. They opened fire, and the German threw up his hands. Another German soldier turned the corner up the block, and the two advanced with their hands above their heads to meet the Captain and his men.

When Captain Snyder reached the blown bridge, he found Lieutenant Butler and his platoon waiting for him. Two spans of a former concrete bridge were blown. There was a large gap that would require ninety feet of bridging, and another gap that would need sixty feet.

The two officers left the Infantry at the site, and returned again through the town for their jeep, which had been left on the outskirts of town. On their way, they reported again to Colonel Foley, and explained the situation of the two bridges. Captain Snyder only had enough for one bridge, so Colonel Foley sent back to Baker Company to bring up the second span.

Then the two officers began to look for a better road to the site, over which they could guide the big trucks carrying the bridging. Shortly after, the company arrived, and the men began to remove a roadblock that would allow the trucks to pass.

The Bridge train swung through town and reached the river as the Infantry was preparing to cross and outpost the site. The men worked through the night, and by seven in the morning, the two spans were complete for Class 10 loads. The men who had worked throughout the night returned to their company for a well earned rest, and a reserve squad was brought up to reinforce another shattered arch with a wooden bent. This was completed by noon, and the bridge was open for Class 40 traffic.

The 48th rushed across the river into Germany. The new drive started slowly for the first few days, and then suddenly, it seemed that the Americans were everywhere. Armored Divisions made huge slashes into the enemy lines and plunged through far into the rear. The Infantry followed behind fast. We were constantly moving. There were endless miles of roads to be swept for mines, and miles of roads to be patrolled and maintained.

The orders were to push ahead, and all outfits were taking it literally. They were dashing ahead with no thoughts of the supplies or proper tactics. The plan had been to have the XXI Corps flanked by the VI Corps and XV Corps and then have them cut in front of the XXI Corps pinching it out of the line. The plan worked admirably, and the 48th, with other elements of the XXI Corps moved around to the right in another sector near Bitche. Leaving one platoon back at Gersweiler to maintain a treadway bridge.

On March 22nd we received the usual orders to pack up and move. It was another one of those long moves, 70 miles of dusty road. We moved slowly and caught the full brunt of the dust streaming back from the convoy ahead of us. That night at 1830 we pulled into a large open area hedged in by trees, close to Hansviller.

The next day found the 48th on the road again, heading towards Munchweiler. That night, orders were received to open the main road from Munchweiler, Annweiler, Landau, north to Neustadt without delay. The air corps had done a good job and had trapped a long line of horse-drawn German carts. Practically every wagon in the column had been blasted. The wreckage of this former German column was strewn over the entire length of the road. It completely blocked the concrete highway, and it was necessary for this road to be open for traffic as soon as possible. Baker Company worked all through the night with two D-7s on the road from Annweiler to Landau and Neustadt, while Charlie Company put two platoons and a D-7 on the road from Munchweiler to Annweiler. It was a gruesome job, for the heat had decayed the horses exceptionally fast and the stench was nauseating. Quite a few men were taken sick, and everyone after that job had a suspiciously green face. By 0530 on the 24th of March the roads were opened for two-way traffic, except in small towns between Annweiler and Landau, where only one-way traffic was possible.

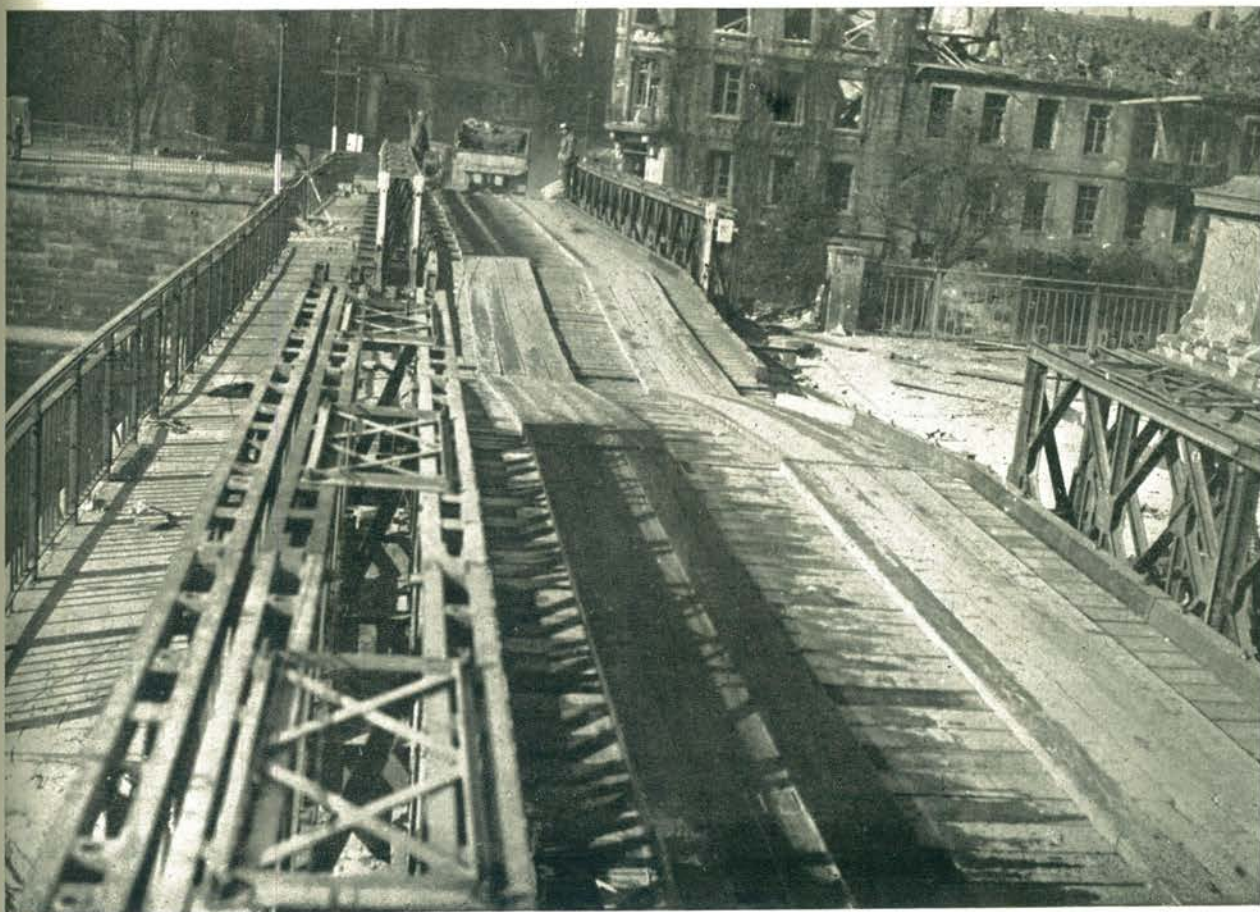
We no sooner settled down in Munchweiler when the orders to move came. We moved to the town of Ober Hochstadt. Our old assignment had been taken over by the 289th Engineer Combat Battalion, and we were given another one. The new assignment was the main road from Neustadt to Weingarten. It was another rush job, and work began almost immediately. The road was swept for mines, fourteen road blocks

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were removed, debris was swept off the roads and two squads were sent out to collect all the brass the Germans had left behind in their disorderly retreat. Then once more, we were relieved by the 290th Engineers.

That same day we began a temporary attachment to the 1175th Engineer Combat Group, commanded by Lt. Colonel Swift, former commander of the 48th. Our task with the 1175th Engineers was to help repair 13 blown culverts and bridges on a double track railroad, from Seinweiler to Leideshein. Colonel Swift took a reconnaissance by plane and reported they could be repaired with two culverts and fills. For spans not over 14 feet, timber stringers could be used, and for spans over 14 feet, steel beams must be used. Upon the arrival of this information the 48th started work. Corrugated culverts, steel beams, timber, and quickway cranes were hauled in. The bulldozers ponderously roared into action, and everything was proceeding satisfactorily. The culverts were being put in, Able Company confiscated all railroad cars, and bomb and shell craters were rapidly being filled. Then suddenly on March 28th, word was received from Colonel Swift, "I just got a call from XV Corps. They want the 48th in their bivouac area by 1500 today. Pull off your jobs at once, leave track and other railroad tools and materials on the jobs, we'll pick them up. Send a liaison officer to your group headquarters at once to obtain further details. You have done a good job. Thanks a lot."

We were brought back to our bivouac area where the rest of the details were known. We were alerted for a move across the Rhine River at 1930 to assembly area "A". The traffic, however, was so heavy across the Rhine that our convoy was delayed and it was almost one-thirty before we finally pulled out and crossed the Rhine. We passed over a bridge, 1028 feet long over the Rhine River, built by the 85th Engineers.



Saar River Bailey

The crossing of the Rhine! For many months this had held a certain dread, the words "Rhine River" were always accompanied by thoughts of a fiery crossing, under artillery barrages, machine gun fire, and planes strafing. But now we crossed the Rhine on a bridge built by another engineer outfit, and the night was quiet and only the soft sound of water rushing against the ponton boats could be heard. It was so vastly different from what we had expected.

Assembly area "A" turned out to be in the vicinity of a town called Sharof. The front was still moving swiftly and everything was kept ready for instant departure. The trucks were always gassed up, rations kept on the trucks. Bailey bridge equipment was also kept loaded on trucks ready to pull out and head for a bridge site.

Then once more we were pulled back into our area and were ready to move again. We pulled into our new area at Wohlgelegen at approximately 1700 on the 30th of March. The news from the front was encouraging. The 10th Armored Division and the 63rd Infantry Division were meeting very little organized resistance. The VI Corps had crossed the Rhine River south of Mannheim, and the XXI Corps had also pushed ahead considerably.

Then one of the biggest jobs in the history of the 48th came in. Corps wanted a ponton bridge put up across the Neckar River in the vicinity of Heidelberg. Immediately the equipment was gathered, and a reconnaissance of the bridgesite was taken. The bridgesite at that point was 420 feet in length. We had already picked a bridgesite in the vicinity of Ladenburg, but Corps insisted on Heidelberg, so we had to switch over. Major Munson went to guide the bridge train down to Heidelberg, and one platoon of Able Company with a D-7 went to work on the construction of the approaches on the far side of the Neckar. Then the bridge train arrived and Baker and Charlie Companies started to work. They unloaded the balk and chess, trestles, shoes and the boats. One after another set of ponton boats were launched, and the bridge was steadily inching across the water. Able Company on the other side was building the far side approaches and now they were also building trestles. The big lumbering trucks, carrying the bridge, drove up, were unloaded and drove off. Then suddenly there were no more trucks and we still needed an additional nine boats to complete the bridge. Quickly the boats were sent for, but in the meantime, there would be a delay, and the construction of the bridge was at a standstill.

After a short while, the additional ponton boats arrived, and the bridge was rapidly nearing completion. The traffic was crossing the river on a ferry, started and maintained by the 48th. It alleviated the critical transportation problem somewhat. The ferry was doing a good job, and many jeeps, trucks, and men were being ferried across. A half track approached the ferry and every available man was rushed on to the ferry to counter balance the half track. The half track began to inch on the ferry when suddenly the whole rear end seemed to raise up and the half track slipped off into the cold water of the Neckar. The half track was too heavy for the small ferry. However, another half track came along and pulled the submerged vehicle out of the water. This was the only incident that marred the perfect record of the 48th's ferry.

In the meantime the bridge was coming along in fine shape. It wasn't long before it was completed, and the traffic started to roll across. It was a good job, but a few minutes after the completion of the bridge, Pfc. Steifer was standing up in a truck when a low hanging wire caught him under the chin and jerked him from the truck. He fell under the wheels of a ponderous ten ton trailer. Everyone on the truck yelled for the driver of the prime-mover and trailer to stop, but it was too late. The trailer had run over Steifer and killed him instantly. Pfc. Steifer was missed a great deal by the men of Able Company for they couldn't replace all the swell laughs he had brought them, and all the fun they had had together.

A tired bunch of Engineers pulled into their bivouac areas to get some sleep that night, for the 48th had been at work for twenty-four hours in one stretch. We were notified as soon as we arrived in our bivouac areas that we were going to move again in the morning. We did not mind because as some fellow put it, "Every move we make brings us that much closer to home."

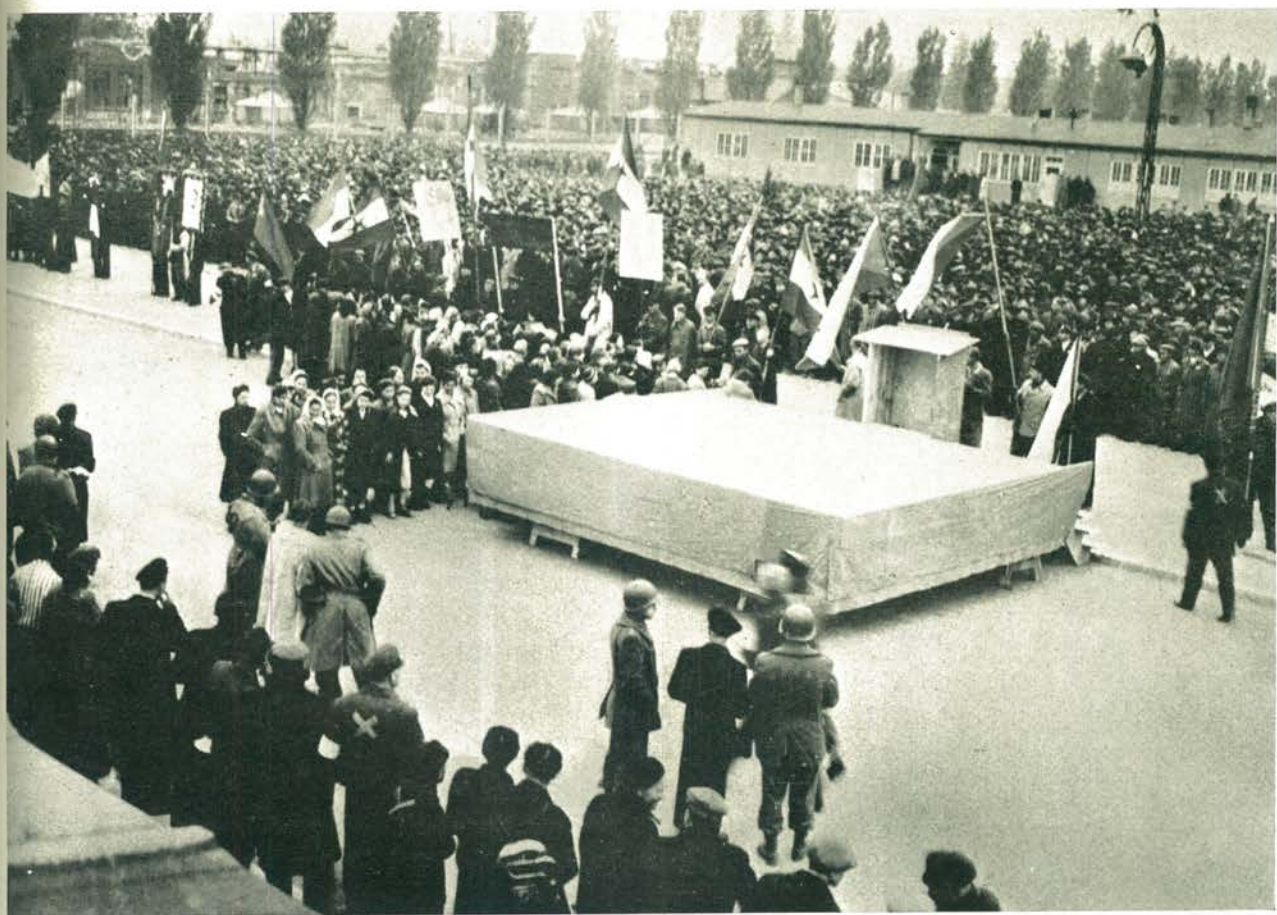
That same night, a Lt. Colonel from the 36th Engineers came into Headquarters in search of a boat to evacuate some injured men along the Neckar River near Mannheim. The Medics were notified and Sergeants Mayo and Gustafson of S-4, were placed in charge of the boat crew. Captain Snyder, T/4 Kreuzer, and Pfc. DeDominico went down to the scene of the accident, leaving Captain Cassidy to arrange for ambulance service and evacuation. They found that half of the Autobahn bridge had been blown, and in the darkness four vehicles had run off into the gap and had dropped thirty feet to a blown abutment. Ten men had been

injured, five of whom had already been hoisted to the top of the bridge by rope. One man had been killed, and the other four could only be moved by litters.

A quick examination was made to determine which patients needed to be evacuated first. It was difficult loading and unloading, but finally after much sweating, the job was completed. This was the Medics first experience at combined land and water evacuation and they were thankful that it was carried out without any unfortunate incidents. The injured men were all from the 71st Infantry Division.

The next morning, in between the hours of nine and eleven, the Battalion moved to the vicinity of Beerfelden. It was another long drive; a distance of fifty miles, and we had no sooner settled down in our new area than our assignment came in.

It was on this assignment that Lt. Weil and five men from Able Company had a narrow escape. Their assignment was to clean the road of debris and battered German vehicles and to fell any trees that appeared in danger of falling. The 290th Engineers had the same assignment, theirs beginning where ours ended. Lt. Weil took five men and a truck to show them the road they had to cover. Upon reaching the end of Able Company's stretch of road, they came upon the 290th engaged in the task of clearing a huge tree from the road. A number of trees had been partially cut by the Germans but there hadn't been time for them to plant charges. It was a very windy day and the huge trees swayed precariously. Lt. Weil stopped the truck, and walked over to the officer in charge of the 290th's working party. They were talking about their assignments, when suddenly someone yelled, "Look out." The two officers whirled just in time to see a gigantic tree come crashing down on the road between them and Able Company's truck. Lt. Weil was just wiping the sweat from his forehead and congratulating himself on his good luck, when three Germans stepped out



May Day At Dachau

of the woods, waving a white flag vigorously. Lt. Weil, never was one to let opportunity slip through his fingers, he immediately put the Jerries to work on the tree that had fallen.

The next day we were on the move again, our next bivouac area was Waldurn. It was just another one of those moves from one assignment to another, or so it seemed. It started out with the usual engineer jobs, reinforcing a bridge, graveling a road into a hospital, sweeping the roads for mines, and maintaining them.

Then on the fourth of March, we received orders from Colonel Downing, commanding officer of the 1150th Engineer Combat Group, "Cease your present engineer work and prepare to move south. Assemble all companies in bivouac areas and drop present work; you will be assigned another mission."

It was another one of those Infantry moves that the 48th seemed destined to get. Our task was to withstand a possible enemy thrust from the South or East of Gerichstentten. We were to recon the roads in that area and locate the ones that could be used for rapid movement of troops and to find locations for road blocks in case the enemy thrust became imminent.

We cleared our old bivouac at 1500 and proceeded towards Gerichstentten, and arrived there after a brief ride. We spent one uncomfortable night there, everyone alert, waiting for something to happen, but nothing materialized. The next day we were relieved and sent back to Waldurn. Once more the 48th's luck had run true to form and we escaped without a casualty.

Again we turned back to our engineer work, or so we thought. A report came in that there were some isolated SS guerillas in Able Company's vicinity. Able Company was assigned the task of flushing them out. Captain Snyder and his jeep driver, Pfc. Manning, went on a recon in that vicinity. They had travelled quite a distance without mishap when suddenly they were shot at! Manning drove his jeep wide open down the road when they encountered more of the SS troops in a barnyard. Forced to stop the jeep, Pfc. Manning and Captain Snyder jumped out and began firing at the Germans. The SS troops dashed for the farmhouse, firing at the two Americans. Suddenly, there was no answering fire to the Germans' guns. Realizing that this meant the two Americans were out of ammunition, the SS troops came out and captured Captain Snyder and his jeep driver.

"What followed was a strange thing," said Captain Snyder, "considering that these men were from the most hated and feared branch in the whole German Army. They treated us kindly, taking only our G.I. equipment and American cigarettes, which they exchanged for German ones. They left our personal belongings such as watches and rings. They burned our jeep and took us to the farmhouse, putting a guard at the entrance."

"After a short time word came that American tanks were coming in our direction. The SS men were afraid to leave us so they took us to the forest, where they kept us for several hours. A German officer told us we could leave, provided that we didn't return. He said, "If you had injured one of my men with your shooting, you would have been shot before this." They made me and my jeep driver leave five minutes apart. At my request, they furnished me with a guide and I walked back to camp in the pouring rain."

"The driver, who received no guide, arrived at the bivouac area two hours before I did."

Charlie Company sent out numerous patrols in an effort to find the location of the SS troops but they proved to be as elusive as a shadow. The German civilians had not seen them since they left with Captain Snyder and his jeep driver, Manning. Finally Charlie Company was forced to call off the search.

The following days were composed of Engineer tasks and moving almost every day. We bivouaced in Tauberbischofsheim, Rottingen, Rothenburg, Michelbach, Bopfingen, Dillengen and Crailsheim. There were innumerable engineer jobs done, filling pot holes, building culverts and bridges, strengthening shoulders, by-passes were constructed and a host of other small jobs.

Everything was quiet and serene. The front was still moving along at a fast pace, not meeting too much resistance, and we were following closely behind. We were unable, though, to actually catch up with the front. We would move right up with the Infantry to build a bridge, and by the time we completed the bridge the Infantry would be miles ahead of us again.

That is, everything was quiet and serene until we moved close to Augsburg, and for a couple of days the Infantry was having a tough time. The Jerries had fortified themselves well here, and they were not sparing the ammunition. They meant to hold here at any cost. This was the situation when the 48th moved up.

LEST WE FORGET

On the 28th of April, two columns of Infantry from the 42nd and 45th Divisions, riding on vehicles and trucks of all descriptions, rolled down from the northwest and shortly after noon liberated 32,000 inmates from the infamous Dachau Concentration Camp.

Dachau lay some 8 kilometers northwest of Munich and was one of the many camps of extermination that had dotted German occupied Europe. Its grey walls towered well above ten feet, and its gigantic smoke stacks were visible for many miles around. Endless streams of smoke were continually pouring forth and the dust of death was blown around by the wind. The surrounding countryside was almost entirely covered by the dust that floated to earth.

We were told by a Hollander who had been a prisoner there for four years that the reason the Americans had found so many prisoners at Dachau was because the SS troopers did not have a chance to move them back. The Americans had advanced so rapidly that before word could come through to the prison camp, they were already engulfed in a band of steel.

Better than a hundred men who had fought against General Franco in Spain had escaped from the camp and managed to pick up weapons and actually engaged the SS troopers in a pitched battle. "Trusties" working outside the barbed wire enclosure, Poles, French, and Russians, seized the SS troops and exacted full revenge from their tormentors. Scores of SS were taken prisoners and dozens were slain as doughboys in a tearful rage at the sight of the camp's horrors, went through the SS barracks spraying it with lead from their machine guns. However, many of the SS troopers managed to escape before the Americans arrived.

On arriving at Dachau we parked in front of the gates leading to the crematory. We wished that every German over here would have been forced to see what we saw. We wished that every complacent, smug individual that was pursuing the war for his own selfish end had been there. The magnitude of the horror and suffering could never be exposed in words and even we, eye witnesses, found it almost unbelievable. We were stunned and jolted. That men could have sunk so low that they could take the lives of others in mass and in cold blood sounded maniacal, but such are the cold straight facts.

We had as our guide, one of the men who had stoked the furnaces of the crematory. His eyes blazed and took on the grimmest expression as he described in detail what went on. First he guided us to where the bodies were stored. There was no need of leading us there for the air was heavily laden with a most nauseating, decaying odor, coming from two large chambers. Whenever the wind blew from the north, the terrible odor would sweep over to where the prisoners were kept and it would strike fear into their hearts. Would they be the next scheduled to die? Heaped in these two rooms were hundreds of decaying human bodies, chalk white, razor thin, with their faces showing the most horrible expressions, conveying what tortures they must have undergone. If you had seen disease ridden bodies stacked stark naked, each tagged around the big toe as if they had been a flock of chickens that had been slaughtered and priced, the full horror of this would have hit you.

The prisoner who had been in charge of hauling the dead to the furnaces had, with his men, transported more than 9,000 persons in the last three months. How many more had been brought to the crematory will probably never be known.

The Germans had systematized mass extermination. Three methods of mass murder had been perfected by the SS. For those especially troublesome, the gallows were used. The second method was machine gunning.





Bridge At Heidelberg

Those sentenced to be thus killed were forced to strip in a small wooden structure and then were made to walk down a path, stark naked, to one of two enclosures. It was in back of one of these enclosures that Corporal Breiner of our Battalion had been once confined. He had been tormented by such treatment as being hung by his fingers, until he passed out from the constant pain. Once, in the enclosure, the condemned men were forced to kneel against a prepared embankment, where SS troopers gleefully and in cold blood machine-gunned them. Other prisoners would then be used to haul the dead bodies to the large storage rooms where they were kept until enough bodies had accumulated to warrant starting up the huge furnaces. One of the many incidents described to us was that of 96 Russian Officers who had been forced to undress and then made to kneel on slats which were over the blood seepage pit. They were then riddled from behind with machine gun bullets.

The third and quickest method was that of the gas chamber. Among those so commonly eliminated were women. They were told to undress as though they were going to take a shower. Instead they were ushered into the gas chamber, the door locked, and gas would come hissing into the room. There were a number of women at the camp that had just recently arrived. Fortunately for them, the train bringing them to Dachau had been delayed because of the American bombers. Just as they arrived the American Infantry broke through and liberated them. All these women had been scheduled for the gas chamber soon after their arrival.

To make doubly certain that none of the prisoners would escape, a large number of German police dogs were kept. Like their masters, they were vicious and blood-thirsty, and roamed through the grounds. These dogs were highly trained in murder, and frequently they had the opportunity to put their training into use.

The SS had diabolically made mass murder highly profitable. Near the gas chambers they had hundreds of urn shaped pots. These containers were filled with ashes which supposedly were the remains of the persons named on the covers. This, of course, was all a hoax, for each time they cremated they placed in each of the furnaces three persons. To the family of the one cremated a letter was written telling of the death of their loved one and for a price such as 5,000 marks his ashes could be had. The more marks the family paid, the fancier the container and the more ashes placed inside.

An inmate scribbled on a wall, "This is the camp where you enter by the door and leave by the chimney." In those few brief words the inmate had condensed the whole system of Dachau.

The conditions in the camp defies all description. Typhus was rampant. We saw prisoners empty out a pail that they had defecated in, then fill the same pail with water from the canal and drink it. The canal, itself, which flowed from the Amper River was contaminated by six thousand graves on the high ground. The Germans had many ways of killing off the prisoners—starvation being common. We saw one prisoner with a piece of bread and others took after him like madmen trying to grab a piece of it. There were hundreds of cases where the inmates were so crazed with hunger that their animal instincts became predominate.

It is impossible to adequately describe these starving men, they looked scarcely human, and dull eyes stared from gaunt faces. There was nothing but bones beneath the taut skin of so many of them, there were no swelling muscles which men usually have. They dragged themselves around and some were about as animated as the barracks walls. They were like walking dead men with almost the last vestige of hope gone.

Even when you've seen it, it seems almost beyond comprehension. It is shocking to see human beings with brilliant minds and skillful hands reduced to a state where only blind instinct keeps them alive.

The day that many of us from the 48th visited the camp was May Day but to the 32,000 inmates it meant so much more. They were celebrating their liberation. The camp was international in that every country was represented there. One by one, the people from the different countries would parade by, displaying their flag at the head of the column. Many who seemed so lifeless, as if they had been brought back from the dead, now walked with pride. The Germans had tortured, starved and beaten their bodies, never-the-less they were unable to dampen the fire within them. These people marching by proved that the men and women of the free countries of the world possessed a spirit that Germany could never take away from them even in the confines of Dachau.

As we left the camp we passed some fifty boxcars that were on a siding. Car after car was crowded with dead who had died enroute. The cars were stacked high with the dead. On the ground outside of the boxcars were also bodies, strewn around. In one car, corpses of men and women were entangled, showing what conditions they had to endure in their transportation. One man had his leg amputated near the hip and

a piece of paper was all that was wrapped around the stump. The faces of the dead were contorted in agony, revealing the suffering they had been forced to undergo. We who have seen all this will not forget. That such horrors as Dachau had been permitted by the Germans showed us what course of action to pursue in dealing with those responsible.

Dachau and all the many other concentration camps will burn long in the memory and hearts of mankind. If there are simple hearted fools who still claim that the Germans are, for the most part, peace loving and kind, they should have the opportunity to visit Dachau.

Dachau, though, was not the only place where German cruelties were perpetrated; there were countless other tales brought to light with the liberation of American troops.

Geneva Convention—you've heard of it, but have the Germans heard of it? This is what three American PWs went through. They were three of a group of thirty, which in the rapid retreat of the Germans, were left behind or escaped somehow.

The first one questioned, Joseph Buckely, who is but a skeleton, kept repeating that they ought to shoot every Gestapo member. He had been beaten and ridiculed by them. "The atrocities they committed should mean their complete extermination", he said. "This would be the proper disposal for their breed." Joseph Buckely had this to say, too, "The front-line medics treated me and the aid I received from them was similar to that given to a Jerry soldier. Upon reaching the prison hospital at Eppenheim the German inhumanity was encountered. The major at this place systematically starved the patients for he hated the Americans. Eight to twelve men were rationed on a loaf of German bread per day, with little or nothing else. The bread which was like sawdust, actually tasted like angel food cake to us——we could never get enough of it. As for medical treatment, the only treatment given us was from an American doctor there. This one doctor seem-



Finished Product

ingly went on forever without rest, all hours of the night he was up and on the go. Still he could not give us all the care and attention our wounds required because he was not given enough medical supplies. One patient, whose leg was amputated, died from gangrene because of no antiseptics."

When the American bombings became too persistent in Eppenheim, about seventeen of the PWs were hitched to a wagon which normally would be pulled by two horses. This was to be a punishment; the harder the bombers hit Germany the worse the punishment became. It was only because the will to live was so strong in these men that they were able to survive.

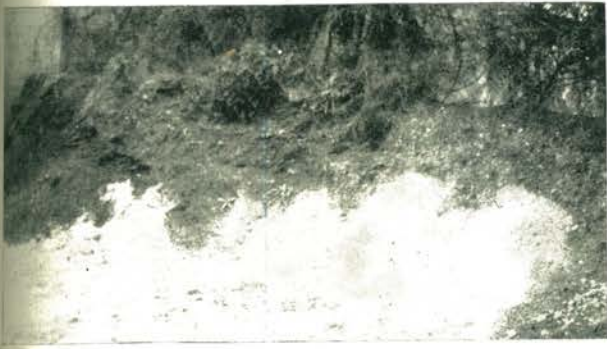
They were marched from twenty to thirty miles from sunset to dawn. The men had been so famished that on seeing potatoes in the gutter or the fields, they would snatch them up and ravenously eat them. Their stomachs became so shrunk that a couple of the men became deathly sick and began to get spasms. During the nine days of walking, only five days rations were given to the men. During the day, they would be so crowded in a barn that they would not have room to stretch out and sleep, so they would prop against each other and sleep. It was towards the end of this march that Buckely and eight others escaped and hid out. The Germans were retreating but Buckely noticed that some German soldiers remained behind and when the Americans came into the town, the German soldiers changed into civilian clothes.

One thing that Joseph Buckely was especially bitter about was that the Germans never registered him as a PW, therefore, he never received a Red Cross package. The loss of the Red Cross packages was a blow for on these the prisoners were so dependent. Without these packages, and only existing on German rations many of the American PWs would not have survived.

Two other boys told us a bit of what they went through. They were from the 2nd Battalion, 314th Infantry, and were caught on the south bank of the Rhine River on the 19th of January, 1945. The Germans



Piled Clothing At Dachau



Place Of Firing Squad



Bodies of Executed



SS Guards



SS Guards

MAY DAY AT DACHAU



Celebration



Prisoners



Liberation



Born At Dachau

in searching them would first feel the wrist for wrist watches and look for wallets before they would look for a weapon. The fur liners from the American combat jackets were highly prized by the Germans and the shoe laces were taken from most of them.

It wasn't until one or two o'clock in the afternoon on the third day of capture that the American PWs got their first meal, consisting of barley soup, and this was poured into the Americans' steel helmets, four or five men eating from each helmet. After that, their diet consisted of thin barley or potato soup, but "Try and chase the barley or potato down." There was just enough in each helmet to let you know that it was supposed to be soup and not dishwater. Seven men were given one loaf of bread a day. According to the Geneva Convention, a prisoner is supposed to be fed equal to a German soldier. These men estimated that they received one half to one quarter, and at times even less, than a German soldier got.

Movements always meant added misery. It wasn't unusual to be closed in a boxcar and held there for thirty-six hours without food or water, and for a latrine a small box was provided in the corner of the car. Thanks to Polish or Russian workers on the railroad, who sneaked water to them through the cracks of the boxcars, thus they were able at times to get water to drink.



For a time, these two American PWs worked on a farm where they put in sixteen hours of strenuous work per day. There was no such thing as getting sick. If you were sick, they would laugh at you and tell you to go back to work and stop trying to get out of working. One PW had a blister on his foot, but no treatment was given and it became badly infected. The only treatment, then given, was hot water that was put in one of three buckets. These buckets were used during the night by some 25 Americans as a latrine, as the Americans were locked into two rooms. A bandage was finally provided for the infected foot. These prisoners said that this was typical of the treatment the American PWs suffered at the hands of the Germans.

On May 27th, 1945, 7th Army sent down a memorandum to the 48th Engineers, reading, "Sergeant Lucas was liberated recently and is well". When Sergeant Lucas was captured on February 15th, 1945, while on patrol at Ludweiler, Germany, he was shot in the foot but unlike a great number of the American soldiers that were captured he received fairly good treatment and it wasn't long before he was cured.

In July, 1945, we heard from Pvt. Charles Basham's mother the welcome news that her son was coming home. He had been captured by the Germans in the battle for Mount Porchia more than eighteen months ago.

BERCHTESGADEN

During the Seventh Army's drive for Heidelberg, the Neckar River Valley promised to be the next major obstacle in its advance. The Neckar was not a large stream, and there were many bridges, but if they were blown, the water obstacle would be enough to slow the rapid advance of the Army.

Fred Fialkowski, recon sergeant of the 48th, was told to make a reconnaissance of the Neckar bridge in Hirschorn some distance below Heidelberg. The American forces had taken half of Heidelberg, but the Germans were still in control of the other side of the river. Pfc. Chapman and Sgt. Fialkowski swung their jeep through a mountain road to the south, so that they would meet the Neckar River road well below the German-held city of Heidelberg. It was one o'clock in the morning when they started to find out if they could get through to the bridge during the morning. They rode for an hour through the mountains without a sign of either Germans or Americans. Then, up ahead, they saw a recon column on the road. There was a roadblock, and the recon was waiting. The Germans had the road zeroed in, and the recon was going to wait until the Germans pulled back or were flanked by another column scheduled to start down the Neckar River road from the direction of Heidelberg. The recon did not want to lose any men walking into a tightly held position, when it was sure to be enveloped easily later in the day. Sgt. Fialkowski and Pfc. Chapman agreed that there was nothing that they could do there. They could not get around the roadblock, and they did not want to wait all day for the enemy position to be enveloped. Fialkowski and Chapman started back to the 48th, and reported the situation to S-2. The recon team was told to get some sleep because they might have to try it again later, in the morning.

Sgt. Arthur Attleson was coming off guard. He checked in at S-2 in time to hear the last part of the recon story before he turned in to rest from his watch at the guard post. Sgt. Attleson was a little man but he was powerfully built. He had been radio operator for the recon team for a long while. Attleson liked to box, and he would often take on two or three men for three rounds each and tire them all before he would begin to show signs of weakening. Attleson was considered a good boxer by the men in the company who knew the sport. He was fast and had a jabbing boxing style that would keep him moving in circles around his opponents. Sgt. Attleson had a few fights before he came into the army, and press clippings said that he showed a lot of promise.

He entered the contest in the lightweight class for the 48th Engineers, and boxed several times in Dijon, France. Every week-end he would take off for Dijon, and come back a couple of days later. The men would ask him if he had won, and he would smile and say yes. Then one day, orders came to S-1 placing Attleson on D. S. He was going to Marseilles to box as Seventh Army Champion in the lightweight class.

The "Stars and Stripes" said that he won this fight, too, and announced that the winners would go to Rome for the ETO championships. There were several write-ups about him in the "Stars and Stripes." He showed promise and looked like a good bet for the lightweight crown, the papers said. Sgt. Attleson boxed in Rome and won. He was the ETO Lightweight Champion.

Some time later, Sgt. Attleson returned to the 48th and took up his old job again as radioman of the recon team.

While Attleson was resting in S-2 after coming from guard, the recon was ordered out again. Information on the Hirschorn bridge was vital, and the way might be open now. Sgt. Fialkowski was sleeping after the early morning recon, but it was decided to send him out again. Cpl. Weinberg, the second radioman of the

team, was to go with him. Sgt. Fialkowski reported into the Intelligence Section and said that Weinberg was still asleep. He had gone with another team during the night, and had been without sleep, too. Sgt. Attleson told Fialkowski not to wake Weinberg. Attleson put on his helmet, picked up his sub-machine gun, and followed Fialkowski to the jeep.

The two men started up the road that Fialkowski had followed earlier in the morning. When they reached the roadblock, they found that the recon column had moved on. The two sergeants removed some mines around the roadblock, and then got into their jeep and drove on. They caught up to the column a little further along the road.

After a short discussion, the recon agreed that the two teams were looking for almost the same objective, so two jeeps, and an armored M-8 fell in with the two men from the 48th to attempt to reach the Hirschorn bridge.

The teams passed through Neckarsteinach and Neckargemund. They were the first American soldiers in both towns. In Neckarsteinach, they saw an unarmed German soldier moving across the street and captured him. A short search of the houses produced eight more, so the team loaded on their nine prisoners and started again for Hirschorn.

The team reached a house on the outskirts of town less than two kilometers from the bridge. They stopped at a house to see if they could get any information about the Germans. They had already liberated two towns and the lack of Germans along the river bank was beginning to wear on the men's nerves. They might go too far and get surrounded.

One of the recon men went over to the house and asked if there were any German soldiers in the vicinity. The people answered that they had not seen any all day.

No sooner had the man returned to the team with this information, when the men spotted eight Germans shoving a wooden boat out into the river less than a hundred yards down the river from the house.

A sergeant from the 103rd Recon pulled his pistol from its holster and began to fire in the water ahead of the Germans, trying to turn them around. As soon as he opened fire, everything broke loose on the other bank. A German tank hidden on the far bank, dropped a 75mm shell into the team and the men scrambled for cover. A German machine gun opened up and began to spray the vehicles. The crackle of small arms beat on the vehicles to cover the Germans crossing in the boat.

The Americans were caught in a bad place. They were on the open road above the river with no cover or protection, and the high bank of the mountain in back of them.

Attleson and Fialkowski leaped into a roadside ditch and opened fire on the Germans in the boat. The boat rolled over and the Germans disappeared in a flurry of fire that splashed the area. One of the jeeps was mounting a machine gun, and a recon man jumped to the jeep and opened fire on the other bank. He had gotten off about fifteen rounds when a bullet hit him between the eyes and toppled him to the street. Another recon man crouched low, picked him up, put him in the jeep, and attempted to turn the jeep around. Bullets slammed into the jeep and hit the soldier. The jeep crashed into the bank out of control.

The M-8 armored car swung its 50 cal. machine gun on the Germans' machine gun nest on the other side of the river and silenced it with a quick burst. The Germans put another 75mm shell into the M-8, low in the chassis, and knocked it out.

Meanwhile Attleson and Fialkowski had made sure that none of the eight Germans in the boat broke water after it turned over. Then they began to fire at the huddle of Germans on the other bank. Attleson saw a tree nearby, put another clip in his submachine gun, and then started for the tree. He got off about twenty rounds when one bullet hit him in the palm of his hand and drew a furrow up to his elbow where the slug came out. Attleson dropped to the ground as Fialkowski ran to him. The bullet had ripped Attleson's watch from his wrist.

Fialkowski pulled Attleson to the cover of a jeep and put a tourniquet around his arm and poured sulfa powder into the wound. Then he pushed Attleson into a jeep and turned it around. The Germans attempted to hit the jeep as Fialkowski sped down the road.

Along the road, Fialkowski ran into a recon CP and told the medics about the other wounded. One of the medics gave Attleson morphine, but there was no doctor at the CP. Fialkowski hurried on. A little while later, he found a 63rd Division ambulance which took Attleson to the hospital.



Baker Company At Work

Sergeant Attleson kept asking Fialkowski about his watch during the entire ride, and Fialkowski promised that he would return and look for it.

The next day, Sergeant Fialkowski went to the spot and searched the entire area for Attleson's watch. He met the recon near the site and asked them about the watch, but they had not seen it. The recon told him that they had lost one man killed and two severely wounded in the fire fight, besides losing an armored car and two jeeps. The recon estimated that the Americans had not only killed the eight Germans in the boat, but an additional twenty on the far side. Attleson's watch was never found.

Augsburg is a name that will linger long in the memories of many men of the 48th for it was there that they had one of the roughest and toughest jobs they had ever encountered. The Third Division planned to outflank Augsburg from the north. In order to accomplish this they would need Infantry support rafts and at least one bridge across the Lech River. This operation had been planned well in advance and the 48th was chosen to support the Third Division. Charlie Company was to build the bridge, while Able Company was to construct and operate the Infantry support rafts.

Captain Scherr and Lieutenant Moritz of Charlie Company were to make a recon of the Lech River and canal about five miles north of Augsburg, to check conditions there. During their recon they came across elements of the 7th Infantry Regiment. Despite the fact that he had no orders to do so, a Tech Sergeant offered to take ten of his men and accompany the officers on the recon. His offer was gratefully accepted. This offer is a standard example of the spirit of comradeship that exists strongly in the minds of all combat troops. Each would go to any extreme to help the other out. Captain Scherr, with a word of thanks to the Infantry, set out with the Infantry following close behind the two engineer officers.

Making their way along the river they came upon a bridge which was intact, but upon examination, it was found that the bridge had already been set for demolition. A number of 100 pound bombs had been used for the purpose. The men continued to work their way along the river, observing the terrain as they moved along. The road was in good condition and there were 20 foot banks along the river. Another bridge was sighted and they made their way towards it. Suddenly the lead scout spotted two Jerries on this side of the river. The Jerries spotted the patrol, too, and took off, making their escape good by plunging into the thick underbrush. Close by the bridge was a house and the Infantry Sergeant outposted it to cover the advance of Captain Scherr and Lieutenant Moritz.

The officers then worked their way towards the bridge. After going a short distance, they could see that the first span, on land, was intact, but they wanted to get behind the first pier on the water's edge and ascertain the condition of it and the rest of the bridge. They ran about 70 yards across an open stretch and took cover behind some debris. Lieutenant Moritz stuck his head up to look around when a bullet whizzed by his head. The Jerries then discovered the men covering the officers and the two men found themselves in the field of fire from both sides.

They decided to vacate the position as soon as possible. During a lull in the shooting, Lieutenant Moritz made a break for cover, about 50 yards distant, rifles and machine guns opened up and kicked dust at his heels but he reached a place of safety without getting hit. From his position, he motioned to Captain Scherr to stay put. Things then quieted down a bit and the captain decided to chance a dash for Lieutenant Moritz's position. He stuck his head up a little and two bullets zoomed over his head, he ducked down and decided to stay put even if it meant waiting until darkness fell. The Infantry boys had bettered their positions by this time, and with them covering the captain, he made a dash for safety. The Germans opened up with their machine guns but luckily he wasn't hit. The captain decided to push the recon no further and turned around and headed back. On the way back, they de-activated the bombs at the first bridge. Then the party broke up and Captain Scherr and Lieutenant Moritz returned to the forward CP and made a report.

Late that night Lieutenant Peternel, Sergeant Silvestri and Sergeant Fialkowski were ordered to make a further recon. They contacted the 7th Infantry Regiment and requested the Operations Section to furnish a Battle Patrol. The Battle Patrol consisted of a Sergeant and five men equipped with BARs and hand grenades. All reports from previous patrols in that sector had stated that the Autobahn bridge was totally demolished.

The trio from the 48th teamed up with the Battle Patrol and set off on the recon. Debris was scattered all around and it was impossible to construct a floating bridge. The gap was too great for a Bailey Bridge as the gap was about 300 feet. Pressing the recon on, they located a sight for a floating bridge, about two

hundred yards down from the blown bridge. They weren't altogether satisfied with the site so they decided to look further. At about one o'clock in the morning, the party discovered a dam intact about 500 yards downstream. In an eerie stillness that prevailed, they approached the dam under a bright moon. Lieutenant Peternel spotted the figure of a man on the opposite shore, who scurried away before fire could be directed towards him. Lieutenant Peternel then decided to check the dam to ascertain its usefulness in the coming operations. Feeling somewhat like a clay pigeon in a shooting gallery, the lieutenant made a rapid check of the dam and hastily scrambled back to land. The dam could be used for Infantry crossing, but vehicles would not be able to drive over it.

Their next mission was to look for a spot where they could cross the canal and locate a site for an assault crossing. They found a cat walk which had been used for a conveyor in a rock quarry, and they crossed it without trouble aside from scaring two civilians at their approach.

The 30th Infantry was in a little town near and planned to place their men on the other side of the river while the bridge was being constructed. The Infantry got across and took up positions.

Meanwhile Lt. Peternel contacted Captain Scherr and explained the situation also showing him the site. The Infantry had evidently made contact with the Germans for small arms fire could now be heard. The site was about three miles below the area Captain Scherr had been over earlier. After seeing the site Captain Scherr went back for his company and Lt. Peternel left to report to Captain Thames of S-3.

Lt. Peternel's jeep had no sooner started off when the Germans opened up with a very heavy fire, using 88s, ack-ack, and aerial bursts. There were approximately 100 shells during the time it took the jeep to cover less than a half mile.



Replacement

After explaining the situation to Captain Thames, Lt. Peternel went to inspect the bridge site again to find out if it would be strong enough to carry tanks, after the gap was bridged.

It was planned to carry tanks across on the rafts while the bridge was being constructed. Lt. Mailey of Able Company accompanied Lt. Peternel and Sgt. Silvestri to the site. The location was too steep for building a raft so further recon was made up stream. However, all the while, the near shore was subjected to the deadly fire of 88s. The sound of the jeep starting brought stinging machine gun fire towards them. They quickly brought their jeep into comparative safety of a little sunken road and parked for a short time while the bullets whistled overhead, and thudded into the bank behind them. After a letup in the firing they headed the jeep for the Autobahn, parked it, and set out on foot. They had not gone very far when they found an excellent site, with gentle sloping banks, about 300 yards upstream from the blown bridge on the Autobahn. Lt. Mailey went at once to get his platoon to begin construction on the rafts.

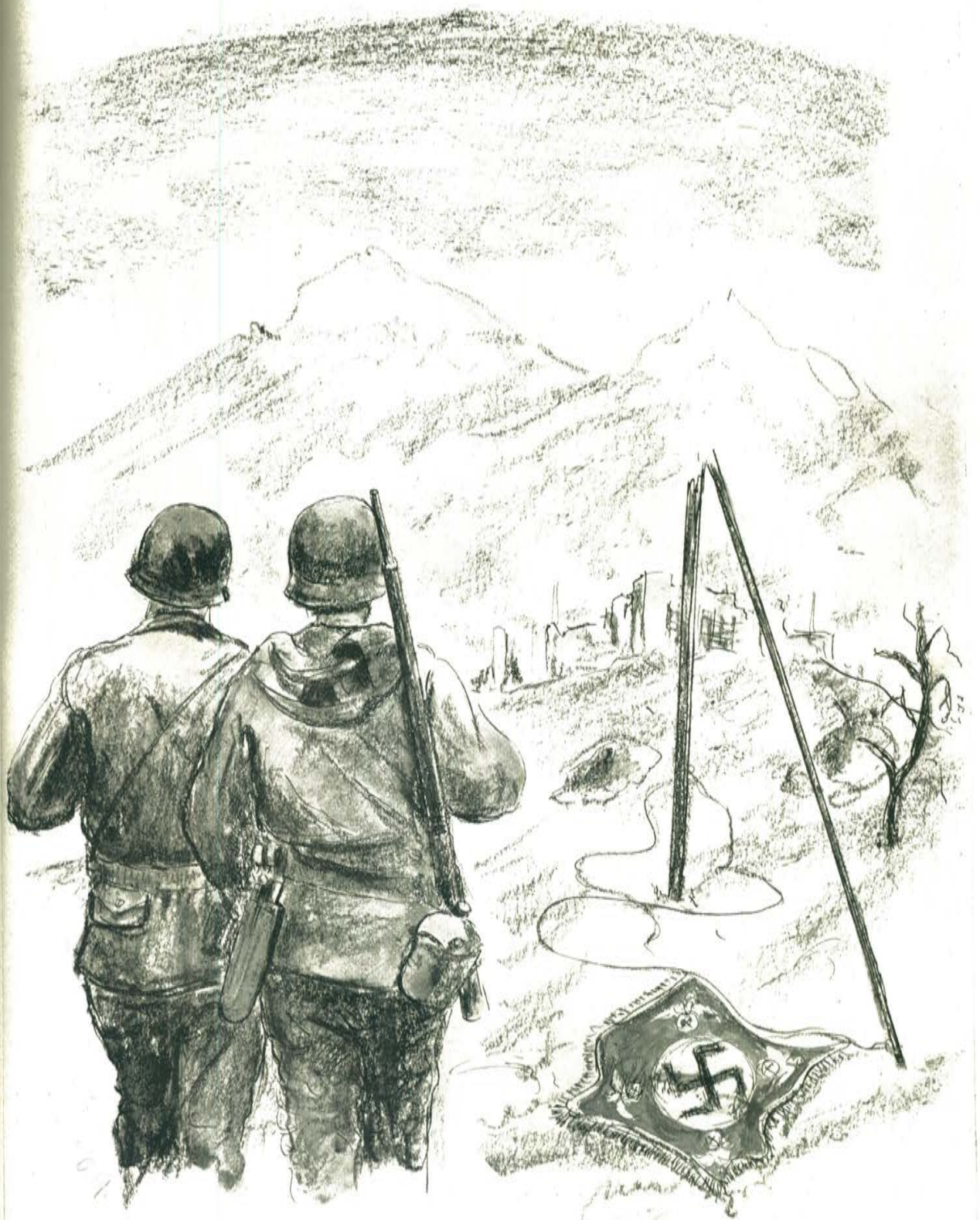
Despite the nearness of the enemy and the constant shelling, the 48th was going to build a bridge and an Infantry support raft. The men of Able and Charlie Companies knew they had their work cut out for them, and they were told in advance what their jobs would be, so there would be no fumbling. It wouldn't be easy and the men were tense and nervous, expecting the worst.

As Charlie Company was walking towards their site they came to a bend in the road. Sergeant Plowman was in the lead. As the sergeant rounded the bend, he almost walked into a tank with its gun pointed directly at him. Freezing in his footsteps, he broke out in a cold sweat as he peered through the murky darkness, looking for the markings on the tank. Recognizing the familiar white star, he relaxed and began to breathe normally once more. Soon after, Charlie Company was already at work on the raft.

The third platoon of Able Company had drawn the assignment of building the raft and had quickly set to work to negotiate the task. They worked hard, and fast, and soon the raft was completed. When they decided to test it, the motor was started and the crossing began, but the raft had gotten only half way across when the motor quit. The raft started drifting down the middle of the fast moving stream, hit the blown bridge and became entangled in the mass of steel and wreckage. The men worked feverishly to dis-engage it for the Germans had commenced laying in 88s and aerial bursts. Shell fragments sent geysers of water into the air, drenching the men. The men tried vainly to start the motor, but each time it was started it brought down another barrage. They finally gave it up and crawled along the blown bridge for the shore. Shells were raining in now, and it kept up for an endless period, seeming never to stop. Finally it became apparent that further work was impossible, so at the first opportunity the men were sent back.

Meanwhile down on the Charlie Company bridgesite a smoke screen had been laid down, to temporarily blind the Germans to our activities. The first few hours everything was quiet and the men worked at ease, under the cover of the smoke. One section of the bridge was already put in place and the second section was about ready to be put in. The lumbering Brockways were backing up when suddenly the sky over head was blackened by a heavy barrage of aerial bursts. The red hot shrapnel pierced the smoke screen, thudded into the ground, bounced off the Brockways, and smashed into the floats. The men of Charlie Company held on and continued work, but it was no use, the shelling was too heavy. Tanks opened up nearby, firing point blank at the bridgesite. There was very little cover available and the men dove under the trucks and cranes, huddling together, expecting at any moment to have a shell crash into them.

The barrage raised havoc with everything. Corporals Kellum and Mensack were wounded and immediately evacuated. At last the barrage lifted, and the men walked down to the site to see the extent of the damage. Again the tanks opened up and laid down a vicious and accurate barrage. When the smoke cleared once more, four more men were found to be injured. In addition to the loss of manpower, four Brockways, a crane and an air compressor, and all but two floats were knocked out. The German fire had been deadly effective. Not many men ventured to leave their places of dubious safety but those that did, found themselves caught in another barrage, the heaviest yet. The noise was deafening and the shells were getting closer and closer. When the shelling ceased there was hardly a square foot of ground untouched by shell-fire. It was impossible to build the bridge now, because of the losses we had sustained, so we were forced to return to camp.



The men of Able and Charlie Companies both agreed that it had been the most merciless shelling they were ever in, and were lucky to have come through alive.

Later, they received the only cheerful news of the night; the Infantry had captured a bridge intact and the raft and bridge would not be needed. At that news many men breathed a sigh of relief, thinking they would not have to go back to that hot spot again.

Our next task was not long in coming. Orders came down from Higher Headquarters, "Two regimental combat teams, one from the 7th Infantry and the other from the 30th Infantry, were taking off for Munich in the morning, one platoon from the 48th will accompany each, with Brockways."

Baker and Charlie Companies each furnished a platoon and immediately made their way towards the task forces.

"It was a cold and stormy night," relates Pfc. Minch of the 2nd platoon of Baker Company, "in April, that S/Sgt. Mc Daniels rushed into our room with the news that we were headed towards Munich with a task force. Most of us had already retired and it was with extreme displeasure and discomfort that we got up and rolled our bed-rolls. When we were ready to move out, we discovered six Brockways had been attached to us for this operation and were right behind us. The night was fairly dark so we proceeded



B Co. Bailey-Berchtesgaden

slowly and it was two o'clock when we finally reached our appointed meeting place in Augsburg. The rest of the night was spent in getting twenty winks and then early the next morning we set out again."

"About five miles outside of Augsburg we met up with the task force and quickly fell in line. The task force was going slowly and we had a chance to take in the scenery. It was a beautiful country for it wasn't even touched by the fingers of war. The only grim reminder was the white flags hanging out of the windows of houses. Slowly we crept along, and occasionally we'd hear the distant rattle of a burp gun and then the answering blast of one of our machine guns. There was a whole battery of Nebelwerfers dug in along-side of the road. They had been deserted, but almost every gun was spiked and the breech on each was blown apart. We saw groups of Jerries come out of the woods holding white flags of surrender high in the air and others just walking unescorted down the road with all the fight taken out of them."

"Sometimes we would see some civilians, quickly taking advantage of the defeat of their country, looting German vehicles that were left abandoned. During the afternoon we passed one of our half-tracks burning along along side of the road. A reminder that we too must pay the price of victory. Then about four o'clock we heard gunfire to our rear, we turned and saw red tracers streaming into the air towards four Jerry planes that had appeared out of nowhere. We quickly dispersed in the fields and watched the show. The planes were seeking a hole in the seemingly solid wall of flak going up at them, but try as they might, the planes couldn't penetrate the flak. Soon it became apparent to the pilots that it was a hopeless and suicidal task, and they quickly did an about face and went back in the direction from which they had come. The rest of the day was uneventful and a dismal evening closed in on us."

"That night the heavens must have been angry with us for it was the worst night we ever spent. It rained, snowed and hailed, and it was cold and miserable. Then to add to our already miserable situation there came a report that the task force had been cut off, and to be prepared for anything. A little later we were told that the Infantry was in the fields on our left and again we were told to be on the alert. However, it turned out that both were false alarms and were probably the products of someone's imagination. Then suddenly dawn came and with it came the welcome news that we were relieved of our assignment. Still we could not help but feel a pang of regret that we could not be in on the final assault on Munich, which was only eight kilometers away. So as soon as the platoon of the 165th Engineers relieved us we turned around and proceeded back to our bivouac area."

Meanwhile Charlie Company, who by that time had already joined the second task force, was also having trouble with the weather. The wind and the rain were beating down unmercifully on the men, and everyone was chilled right to the bone. There was one consolation and that was, they were getting closer and closer to the city where Hitler first started his famous "Beer Hall Putsch." The men were looking forward to driving through this infamous city. Then suddenly word came that they were also being relieved. There was a lot of cursing, for they had gone through a lot of foul weather to reach the objective, and now almost within sight of Munich they were forced to turn around and head back. The men in the 1st platoon of Charlie Company must have thought "Is there no justice in this world?"

The rest of the companies were being assigned the normal engineer tasks. Filling pot holes, strengthening shoulders, and just general maintenance of roads. With the return of the platoons on the task forces we moved from our present bivouac areas in Augsburg to a town called Furstenfeldbruck. The bivouac area in Furstenfeldbruck, for Charlie and Baker Companies, were through the courtesy of the Luftwaffe Officers. They were large houses with spacious rooms and had all the comforts of home.

It was while the 48th was bivouaced here that XXI Corps started a PW cage almost directly behind Baker Company's area. Every day thousands of Germans poured into it, until the whole field was covered with them. Liberal estimates on the amount of prisoners were approximately thirty thousand. Some men feared having so many prisoners so close to their bivouac area, for thirty thousand prisoners breaking out, even though unarmed, could cause plenty of damage before they were rounded up.

On May 3rd, Able Company sent a platoon to accompany another task force. "The task force," recounts Sergeant Boye of Able Company, "was made up mostly of the famed "Screaming Eagle Division"—the 101st Airborne. Their mission was to advance on Berchtesgaden along a mountain road. This was the famous National Redoubt where Hitler had planned to gather some of his crack divisions and claimed he could hold out for many months. On one side of the good road the mountains rose up sharply, seeming to touch the sky, while on the other side there was practically a straight drop, hundreds of feet

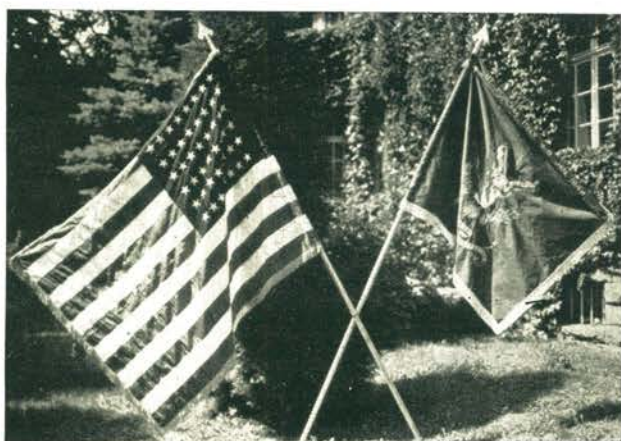


'Ernie Pyle' Bridge-A Co.



A Co. Bailey-Berchtesgaden

below. It was a good two-way road and it was spotted all along with bridges. Able Company followed the Infantry with a bridge train that they hoped to never use. Before they had advanced very far that illusion was sadly broken. The Infantry had encountered a blown bridge. It was not a long span and the bridge was quickly put in without incident. We hoped that not all the bridges were blown, but a silent fear crept over us, that once more we would probably be wrong. All along the way we noticed the mountains, and thought it was very lucky for us that there were not many fortifications here. There were excellent places to have built pill boxes and we were glad that the rapid advance of the American Armies did not give the Jerries time to prepare any. The next day, after a short advance, we were held up once more by two blown bridges. The one on the main road was a long span while the one on the side was much smaller. It was decided to build a Bailey Bridge over the smaller span but it also meant building a by-pass to the main road as the road to the side was narrow and curved. We started to work while the Infantry advanced and soon we heard the familiar "music" of small arms fire. It was a difficult site for a bridge, but we got the job done. A few hours later, it was found that a road going into Berchtesgaden from the opposite direction was open as the 3rd Division had already entered the city. We packed up and took off for Berchtesgaden in the early hours of the morning. We traveled all day up and down the moun-



tainsides. The snow, at points, formed almost perfect road blocks. It had rolled down from the mountainsides and had come to rest in the middle of the road. It was a heavy pull on some of our trucks but we finally made it, and bivouaced in Berchtesgaden."

"Then it came! It sent cold chills running up and down our spines. Another blown bridge! We cursed and swore but we got right to work, and a few hours later the bridge was completed. The men of Able Company named this bridge, "The Ernie Pyle Memorial Bridge," as a tribute to the man who stood by the combat soldier and who made it a lot easier for him."

Meanwhile, Baker Company was also given a Bailey Bridge to construct. The job was an urgent one and all the men were immediately called off their previous tasks. The bridge was a 120 foot, triple, single. It was a tough job in-as-much as only twenty-five men were used to build it. The rest of the men were at the loading point. The job was done with a minimum of bickering or trouble, and before many hours had elapsed the bridge was up and ready for traffic.

The way to Berchtesgaden was open. The 48th had literally bridged the last miles to it. As we traveled along towards Berchtesgaden we noticed bridge after bridge with that same sign, "Built by the 48th Engineers." We had a perfect right to bivouac in Berchtesgaden.

All along the way we noticed small dejected groups of "Supermen," wearily shuffling along, some were staring in awe at all the concentrated might that opposed them. Mile after mile went by and finally we hit the last stronghold of Hitler-Berchtesgaden. There, Hitler used to come in his spells of meditation and plan some new horrors to inflict upon the unsuspecting world. Now his home and favorite beer gardens

were being used as American bivouac areas. Hitler's private stock of wine was invaded by a bunch of thirsty G. I. s.

That very night we received the word that sounded around the world. The Germans had surrendered unconditionally. The war was over! The news the 48th had waited for almost twenty months, at last it was here. Hitler and all he stood for was dead. Throughout all of Europe there prevailed a spirit of rejoicing.

However not in Charlie Company. There still remained routine work and new jobs to be done. On the morning of May 7th, the second squad of the first platoon was told to get their 30 cal. machine guns, ammo, rifles and load up on the truck with their bedrolls.

"We didn't know where we were going," said Pfc. Joe D. Hall, "but we did get our first hint when we were told to tie a white flag on the machine gun mount and one on the aerial of the jeep. This was to be a 'Truce Trip.' We were to make it known to those German soldiers who were in hiding, that their country had accepted unconditional surrender."

"We moved out of our bivouac area at about 11 o'clock, but before we were half-way to our destination, the squad truck broke down. Lieutenant Moritz called Updegraff, Shelley and myself to accompany him on a recon in his jeep. We left the rest of the squad and traveled for a long time, passing Baker Company and



many of our bridges. We were stopped once and told that Able Company was still working on a bridge and we couldn't go on. So we turned around and moved up another road leading into the Alps mountains. We traveled quite a distance, noticing there were no GIs or their vehicles, but it was nothing suspicious, as we had gone many miles before without spotting an American vehicle. Suddenly, as we rounded a bend, we came upon a jeep with a white flag, parked by the side of the road. As we came up to the jeep we were halted by three German soldiers. We were, by this time, sure this was a ticklish spot. What if these Germans did not want to surrender? They had us outnumbered, and I could see two menacing machine gun snouts peering out of the underbrush further up the road. They could cut us to pieces before we could turn around. All except one, got out of our jeep and walked to the other jeep. We found two Americans there, much to our relief, from the 101st Airborne. They told us that we had better get out of there as their officer was talking to the colonel of some SS troops trying to get them to surrender, and was not making much headway. One of the Germans on guard was a sergeant, and he told us in broken English that he was glad to see us Americans and not the Russians. The sergeant told us we could not pass so we obligingly turned around and went back. We were glad to leave and round that bend for not until then did we feel safe from those two machine guns. It was a relief to get back to the company area, for we thought our number was up when we came across those SS troopers, who had the reputation of never giving up."

However, the end of the war didn't mean the end of work for the 48th. Able Company found themselves still engaged in completing their last Bailey Bridge. Baker and Charlie Companies were still maintaining roads, clearing away debris, spreading gravel and many other engineer tasks.

The end of the war didn't necessarily mean the end of heartbreaks either. For one more tragedy struck at Able Company. It was while they were occupied with the task of opening a road for traffic, that the 1st platoon ran into a bridge that had been blown over a swiftly moving stream. Immediately work commenced on the bridge. It was soon discovered that in order to level out the abutment they would have to blast. The charges were quickly set and blown, after which the men came and gave it the finishing touches. Suddenly the ground beneath them gave away and the men were sent hurtling down to the water and rocks below. The dazed and shaken men, who were able to struggle to their feet, found two of their buddies almost completely covered with dirt and rock. The men dug feverishly to release the trapped men. After a hard struggle they were finally uncovered and brought up to the road for first aid. Then it was discovered that one man was missing.

The dazed men were tired but once more they began digging for their lost comrade. The men dug with heavy hearts for it was almost a certainty that no one could live buried under all that rock and dirt. The men dug for what seemed an eternity, but in reality was only a few minutes; the body was uncovered and brought up to the road. One of the men had just recently transferred from the Medics and he reverted back to his old calling and rendered first aid once more. Despite the length of time their buddy had been covered up, the men still hoped against hope, that by some miracle, he might still be alive. After an examination it was found that he was dead.

So it seemed that even after the cessation of hostilities, the grim specter of death and injury hovered over the 48th. One man was killed and seven injured, two seriously enough to make their return to the 48th very unlikely.

On July 7th, Sniper was killed. Sniper was a good soldier. He was born under fire in the shattered remains of the fortress town of Cassino, and spent the rest of his happy life flirting with death with Charlie Company.

One day, Captain Reardon, Charlie Company's commander, was making a reconnaissance in the town of Cassino when he heard muffled yelps coming from the rocks of what had once been a house on the outskirts of town. He crossed over and began to dig in the rubble and uncovered a litter of four brown and black mongrel puppies. He gathered them in his arms and brought them back to the company. They were just a few days old, and their eyes were still closed, but under the faithful care of Pfc. Jaggard, they were nursed until they could see. Then they were given out to each platoon as mascots. "Duke," the black sheep, went to Headquarters platoon. "Peachy" went to the 1st, "Sniper" went to the 2nd, and the other sister, "Berlin Bitch," went to the 3rd platoon. The men grew fond of the tumbling puppies and they began to grow like weeds as several men in each platoon took over the added responsibility of bringing their messkits full of food back to the platoon area after each meal. Then things began to happen. "Berlin Bitch" developed distemper and died at San Vittore. "Peachy" disappeared and was gone for a week before one of the men found her tied up with a rope in a barn. She looked as though she had been deliberately starved. The men tried to nurse her back to health again, but to no avail. She could not regain her former strength and died soon after. It was on the drive to Rome that "Duke" developed worms. The men consulted Captain Snyder, the Battalion Surgeon, and tried all sorts of home-made remedies. One man broke a cartridge of rifle ammunition and fed the dog gunpowder in response to pleas that it was the best medicine. For weeks the men struggled with the dog, but eventually, they had to get rid of him. "Sniper" was the sole survivor of the litter, but he, too, had his troubles. "Sniper" developed fits and the men took him to a veterinarian to get him medicine. Sniper hated the medicine and seemed to know with uncanny instinct when it was medicine time. He would make himself very scarce around the company area, but Sergeants Treloar and Robertson would hunt him down relentlessly, and force the medicine down his throat. After a few weeks of this treatment, Sniper was soon romping around the company area again.

The company was in the remains of San Vittore for some time, and the men of the company had developed a hungering thirst for vino, so it was only natural that Sniper should be addicted as were his buddies in Charlie Company. Sniper soon began to like the Italian wine, too, and the men would pour him a drink any time they took one themselves. For a while, Sniper could not comprehend his capacity, and after an evening with the boys, he could not quite place his paws where he wanted them when he walked. He felt very foolish and would collapse and grin at the men until someone took pity on him. Then the men would gather him in their arms and carry him to his bed. They would tuck the blankets under his chin, and pat him softly, but Sniper wasn't aware of this. He was already asleep.

But Sniper was a smart dog. He soon learned his capacity and he would always become a little unsteady, but he remained a gentleman about drinking.

Sniper was rated Master Sergeant by authority of the company commander on a special order for his "good work and faithfulness," but he was busted a few days later for going AWOL.

As the 48th moved, through Italy up to Rome, Sniper became less of a second platoon mascot. He would stay close to the orderly room or go out with the other platoons to work. He became a company mascot, for all of the men were fond of him.

When the 48th left for invasion training, the men were worried. They could find no directives about dogs in the water-proofing instructions, and it looked for a long while, as though Sniper would have to remain in Italy. But the men had a vino session with Sniper one night and found a plan to take him on the invasion.

A second echelon was coming in after the assault waves, and some of the 48th's heavy equipment would come in with the later wave. So Sniper was given to Pfc. Helgeson and Pfc. Pflaum to hide on the ship until they could get the equipment off.

Pflaum and Helgeson smuggled Sniper aboard ship and waited for the beach to be cleared and the second echelon to move in. Sniper was really worried. He wanted his old friends in Charlie Company who were out



on the beach, and he worried the entire voyage. He was a happy dog when he finally caught up to Charlie Company about ten days after the invasion.

Sniper liked the French countryside far better than his Italian environment at Cassino, and he grew fat and sleek as the 48th drove through France. At Baumes-les-Grottes he acquired a dislike for Sherman tanks, and after a five minute battle with one, he had to make a strategic withdrawal with a skinned leg. Corporal McAullife, a medic, took Sniper into his care for several days until Sniper was again placed on duty status.

With V-E day in Berchtesgaden came the point system and the men were wondering if Sniper had enough to be redeployed back to his home in Cassino. He had been in four major campaigns in four different countries, under fire for eighteen months, and had been wounded twice. The men figured out that Sniper had a total of 104 points.

The happy career of Sniper came to a sudden and tragic ending. Corporal Peck was holding Sniper in the front seat of a truck while a detail from Charlie Company was speeding along to work. Suddenly, Sniper saw something that excited him and he dove out of the window. He hit close in beside the truck, and the rear wheels passed over him.

Sniper will always be remembered in Charlie Company for the many times he made them laugh when they needed laughter more than anything else.

The war was over for the 48th. Aside from accidents, there would be no more casualties. It was an immense relief to know that there would be no more whistling 88s or bridges slipped up to the front lines noiselessly as star-shells hovered overhead.

The 48th prepared to enjoy Berchtesgaden. Baker Company moved into the barracks of the Elite SS troops who had guarded Hitler. Across the valley Hitler's house, perched on the mountaintop, was in plain view from Baker Company's area. Headquarters moved into the world-famous Schiffmeister Hotel at Königsee, a few kilometers away from Berchtesgaden. Charlie Company was bivouaced on the shore of a beautiful lake in Zell-am-See, Austria, and Able Company was bivouaced in the town of Berchtesgaden, itself.

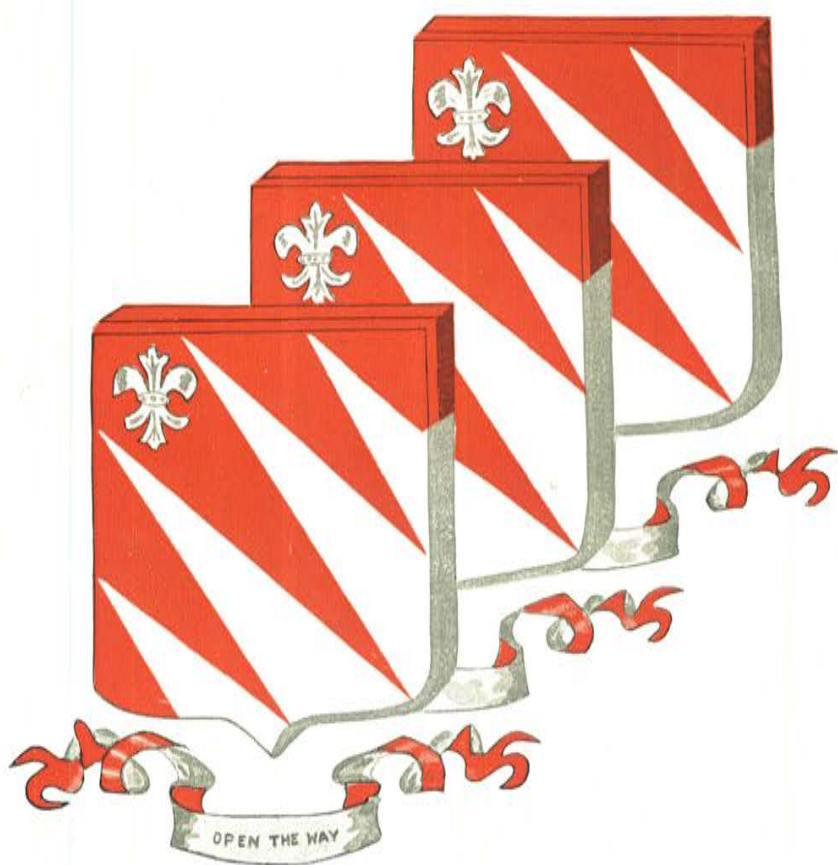
The country was magnificent. The snow-capped mountains rose sharply to the clouds, and tiny roads twisted through the cool valleys. Alpine houses nestled among the mountains and interesting foot paths led through the forest and mountains. The entire area was a place of serene peace and exquisite beauty. It was a perfect place to celebrate the end of a long, hard campaign.

The 48th didn't stay long in the vicinity of Berchtesgaden. Shortly after, the 48th moved into the Neckar Valley in small towns near the city of Heidelberg to await redeployment. The Battalion was declared Class Four—to return to America and be deactivated. Then a theatre policy was announced that troops who had served in the Italian campaign as well as the fight through France to Germany would be used as occupational troops. This meant that for the men of the 48th, they would either return home to be discharged or else they would be called to serve in the Army of Occupation in Germany. At any rate, there would be no more fighting for the men of the 48th.

During summer the swimming was fine in the Neckar Valley. There wasn't much work, and the men had many hours to lie in the warm sun along the banks of the river or go swimming in the many pools in the valley. There were frequent passes to Paris, Brussels, Nice, and London. There were schools and USO shows and interesting trips and parties.

The 48th fought a tough war, and the men got the rest that they so richly deserved. No finer location could have been chosen, than the Neckar Valley, for a place of rest.





ARE WE AN ORPHAN?

LOOK AT ALL WHO HAVE ADOPTED US!

ARMIES



3rd



5th



10th



4th

7th CORPS



15th



6th



2nd



21st



NEW ZEALAND 10th

DIVISIONS



3rd



36th



34th



45th



88th



85th



44th



63rd



103rd



71st

101st

ARMORED UNITS

4th1st ARMORED100th12th ARMORED70th14th ARMORED

AND ALL THESE TOO:

TASK FORCE 8180
TASK FORCE BUTLER
TASK FORCE ALLEN
COMBAT COMMAND BAKER
COMBAT COMMAND ALLEN
6th ARMORED RECT.

40th ENGR. (C) SHORE BN.
1108th ENGR. (C) GROUP
1185th ENGR. (C) GROUP
1150th ENGR. (C) GROUP
1175th ENGR. (C) GROUP
540th ENGR. (C) RECT.
756th TANK BN.

101st CAVALRY GROUP
108th CAVALRY GROUP
116th CAVALRY SQUADRON
121st CAVALRY SQUADRON
91st RECONN SQUADRON
117th RECONN SQUADRON

TASK FORCE 48

UNITS THAT WERE IN SUPPORT OF US:

DETACHMENT FROM 62nd SIGNAL BN.
DETACHMENT FROM 202nd M.P.
8th BEACH BN.
74th SIGNAL CO.
1st M.P. DETACHMENT
66th TOP SURVEY PLAT.
465th CONTACT PLAT.
3rd PLAT. CO. C. 378th ENGRS.
DETACHMENT FROM CO. D. 378th ENGRS.
147th DUKW. CO. FROM 831st DUKW. BN.
1553rd HEAVY PONTON BN.
16th ARMORED ENGRS.
198th ENGR. TDWY. CO.
3340th DUKW. CO.

SCHOOL AT EPINAL
11th ENGRS.
286th ENGRS.
289th ENGRS.

629th DUKW. CO.
1514th WATER SUPPLY
378th ENGRS. CO. A
1st PLAT. B TROOP 106th CAV. SQ.
3rd PLAT. E TROOP 101st CAV. SQ.
1st PLAT. A TROOP 101st CAV. SQ.
ONE PLAT. TD CO. 822nd TD BN.
ONE PLAT. 4.2 MORTARS, 2nd CHEM. BN.
FRENCH TDWY. BR. CO. (CO DU GENIE)
1019th TDWY. BR. CO.
549th LIGHT PONTON CO.
677th LIGHT EQUIPMENT CO.
832nd DUKW. CO.
1020th TDWY. BR. CO.
ONE RECON. PLAT. 101st CAV. SQ.

UNITS IN SUPPORT OF US AT LUDWEILER:

CORPS ARTY.
26th DIV. ARTY.
802nd FIELD ARTY. BN.
342nd FIELD ARTY. BN.
92nd FIELD ARTY. BN.
419th ARM'D ARTY. BN.
93rd ARM'D ARTY. BN.
2nd CHEM. MORTAR BN. (4.2)
E TROOP 106th CAV. SQD. (ASSAULT GUNS)
E TROOP 116th CAV. SQD. (ASSAULT GUNS)
E TROOP 121st CAV. SQD. (ASSAULT GUNS)





A Big Blow



Eberbach



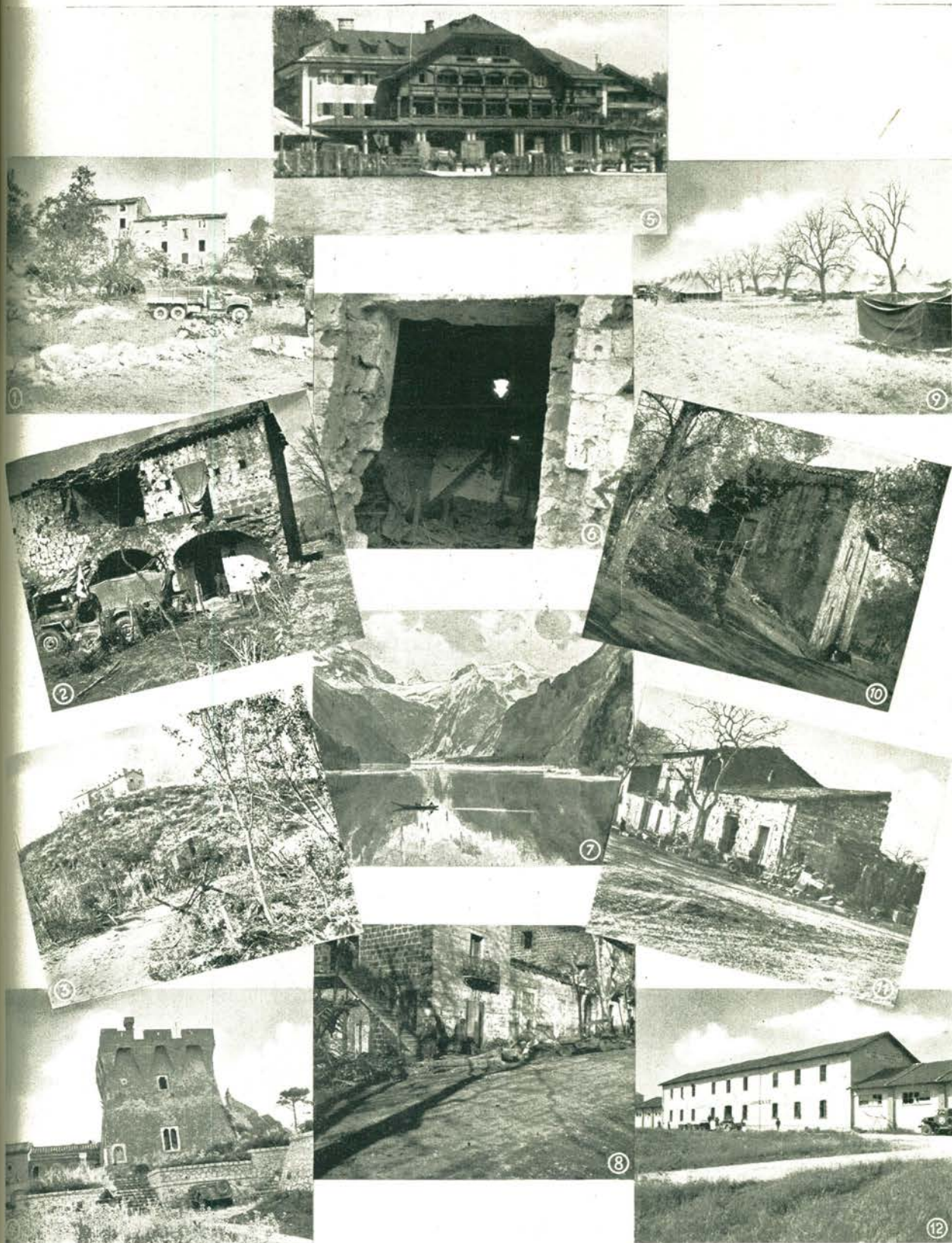
Mule Park On The Trail



Col Du Rif Blanc



Make Way!



BIVOUACS

1. In The Valley
2. CP At Mt. Porchio
3. Castle Pellegrini

4. Itri
5. Schiffmeister Hotel
6. Mignano

7. Konigsee
8. Mignano
9. Airola

10. Coli
11. Cassino Days
12. Borga Grappa

MORALE BOOSTERS?

Again you are in front of an obstacle.
This time it is the Westwall, the
Siegfriedline. Do you remember the
times when your Allies, whose pre-
cious skin you have to save now,
were going to hang their washing
on the Siegfriedline? Now try to
hang your soaked kit on the wire
entanglement! We will give you a
heartily welcome!
Not only pillboxes and barbed wire
will await you, but an unshakable
wall of men who are ready to defend
their country. Courage and resolve.
We are ready to do our utmost.

American boys!

Now, is this the nice war in Europe
that has been promised to you?
Is this the famous promenade through
the countries of the Old World,
known to your wealthy fellow-citizens
from their pre-war trips
through Europe?
Those at home were talking of the
"nice war", of the promenade —
You are standing in front of ever-
new obstacles.
Many of them you have overcome.
Thousands of tomahawks with the
names of your dead comrades are
the result.

Well, Kid

Why are you fighting in Europe?

Why are you risking your neck?

Do you still believe that the nasty
Nazis want to invade the Western
Hemisphere?

Remember, that's what Wall Street
and its stooges told you in order to
get you in a fighting mood.

Now, that no right-thinking man still
believes that damned lie, they say
that Germany has to be smashed.



RICH MANS WAR (SERIES)
POOR MANS FIGHT





"Courtyard" At Mignano



Selice



Sabaudia



Ailano



Visitor In The Motor Pool



Mignano

AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

MEDAL OF HONOR

By direction of the President, under the provisions of the act of Congress, A Medal of Honor was awarded posthumously by the War Department in the name of Congress to Sergeant Joe C. Specker.

Sergeant Joe C. Specker, ASN-37383959, Company C, 48th Engineer Combat Battalion, United States Army. For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at risk of life, above and beyond the call of duty, in action involving actual conflict. On the night of 7 January 1944, Sergeant Specker, with his company, was advancing up the slope of Mt. Porchia, Italy. He was sent forward on reconnaissance and on his return he reported to his company commander the fact that there was an enemy machine gun nest and several well placed snipers directly in the path and awaiting the company. Sergeant Specker requested and was granted permission to place one of his machine guns in a position near the enemy machine gun. Voluntarily and alone he made his way up the mountain with a machine gun and a box of ammunition. He was observed by the enemy as he walked along and was severely wounded by the deadly fire directed at him. Though so seriously wounded that he was unable to walk, he continued to drag himself over the jagged edges of rock and rough terrain until he reached the position at which he desired to set up his machine gun. He set up the gun so well and fired so accurately that the enemy machine gun nest was silenced and the remainder of the snipers forced to retire, enabling his platoon to obtain their objective. Sergeant Specker was found dead at his gun. His personal bravery, self-sacrifice, and determination were an inspiration to his officers and fellow soldiers."

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

Ben (NMI) Santjer, T/5, 37307336, Company "C", 48th Engr Combat Battalion, is awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, posthumously, for gallantry in action. On the night of January 7, 1944, in an assault up the center of Mt. Porchia, Italy, in full view of the enemy, T/5 Santjer was one of the first of his group to reach the summit. Once there, he immediately took part in a fire fight at close range with enemy personnel in the rocks. T/5 Santjer exposed himself courageously time and again to draw fire away from the rest of his party, allowing them to maneuver advantageously. Although wounded twice by grenades thrown from a distance of no more than 20 feet, he continued to operate his rifle and was seen to shoot three enemy and bayonet a fourth. He was killed at close range by fire from a machine pistol. His outstanding courage in the face of great odds was an inspiration to the officers and men who were with him. His performance was in the highest tradition of the Corps of Engineers and of the military service. Entered service Bejou Minnesota next of kin: Kate Santjer, Mother, Rt. 1, Bejou, Minnesota.

Orville O. Munson, Major (then 1st Lt. with Company A), Hq., 48. Engr Combat Battalion. For extraordinary heroism in action on 6 January 1944. 1st Lt. Munson led his company in darkness through mined and shelled areas to the foot of Mt. Porchia, Italy. He acted a point of the column and was often far in advance and alone in enemy territory. He encountered two enemy machine gun nests from which he drew fire, but he extricated his company by leading his men in a circular path around the enemy positions. During this action he killed one German at close range with his submachine gun. Later, he encountered an enemy patrol and was captured. With a gun at his back he shouted a warning to his men and prevented their walking into ambush. At this time a hand grenade exploded nearby, a fragment striking 1st Lt. Munson in the shoulder. He fell to the ground and feigned death. His captors took his submachine gun and left the area. 1st Lt. Munson rose, picked up a carbine, and captured two prisoners before returning to his company. The courage displayed by 1st Lt. Munson prevented the ambush of his company and also enabled his men to capture six of the enemy patrol. His performance reflects the heroic traditions of the Corps of Engineers.

Harry M. Thames, Captain (then 2nd Lt.), 01113476, Company "C", 48th Engr. Combat Battalion, for gallantry in action. During the period Jan 7-9, 1944, for two days and two nights, Lt. Thames, commanding the 2nd platoon of Co "C", 48th Engr (C) Bn, was in great measure responsible for the successful taking and holding of the important crest of Mt. Porchia, Italy. In the initial assault upon the mountain Lt. Thames led and controlled his platoon up the right slope of the enemy held crest. During this period he himself killed three enemy, one

at point blank range, before his carbine jammed into uselessness. Picking up a discarded '03 rifle, he shot two more enemy during this phase. On the following day, Lt. Thames led a portion of a scouting party on a successful raid against enemy snipers, and, at a range of 400 yards, he killed a sniper with a shot through the face. Later, the sniper was found to have been armed with a LMG 34, and around him were several belts of expended ammunition. He had caused considerable casualties among American troops prior to his death. On two separate occasions, although unwilling to leave the scene of action but obedient to the orders of his Company Commander, he took important messages through mined and shelled areas to his Battalion Commander. Throughout the entire engagement Lt. Thames' leadership and courage were in the highest tradition of the Corps Engineers and of the military service. Entered service from Austin, Texas.

SILVER STAR

Woodrow W. Reeves, 2nd Lt. (then S/Sgt.), Company B, for heroism in action. As a volunteer for a special combat patrol, Sgt. Reeves was among the first American troops to enter Rome, recording the time and place of entry at 1420 hours, 4 June 1944, at Porta Ferba, Via Tuscalano. His unit spearheaded the attack on the city of Rome, and by its daring action secured valuable information for the attacking troops and facilitated their entry into the city. Throughout the engagement Sgt. Reeves distinguished himself by his coolness, bravery, and aggressive action.

Herman L. Crisup, T/5, 36425407, Medical Detachment, 48th Engr. Combat Battalion, for gallantry in action. During the assault on Mt. Porchia, Italy, an engagement lasting two days and two nights T/5 Crisup, Medical Detachment, 48th Engr (C) Bn, distinguished himself by work of a character above and beyond his ordinary duties. Without sleep for the entire period, T/5 Crisup set up an aid station at the foot of the mountain until wounded. For the entire period of the battle, there were no infantry aid men on the scene, all having been killed or wounded. With only his personal supply of medical equipment, T/5 Crisup treated every casualty brought to him off the mountain, leaving his improvised aid station only to go to the assistance of wounded who could not be moved. He and his patients were under constant enemy fire, and at one time a mortar shell killed nine men grouped, immediately adjacent to his aid station. He organized litter parties and evacuated wounded continually until he himself became a sniper casualty while treating a patient on the slope of the mountain. No exact count can be taken of the wounded that he treated, infantry and engineers alike. For almost the entire engagement, he was the only aid man functioning in the battle area. His performance is in the highest tradition of the Medical Corps and of the military service. Entered service from Decatur, Illinois.

Fabian T. Godell, T/4, 31194834, Company "C" 48th Engr Combat Battalion, for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services, from 15 Dec to 21 Dec 1943, northwest of Mignano, Italy. He operated a D7 bull-dozer on hazardous, difficult and urgent engineer work. He worked extremely long hours—during all of daylight and through out the night on two occasions. His work was performed on a high exposed railroad right of way which was being converted into a military road. The entire roadway was a defile open to direct enemy observation and accurate observed artillery fire. His bull-dozer was a continuous target for enemy fire. For three days weather conditions made earthwork extremely difficult. Through the night Dec 19-20, 1943, he performed bull-dozer work in an advanced location reducing the obstacle presented by a demolished viaduct. Enemy artillery fire was directed at the sound of his machine throughout the operation. Enemy infantry patrols had been well inside this location on previous nights. His determination to beat the task, his courage under artillery fire, and his devotion to duty evidenced by unhesitating and cheerful work for long hours were an inspiration to the men of the battalion and contributed materially to the successful accomplishment of the mission. Entered service from Walton, Michigan.

Linwood Tanner, T/Sgt. (then T/5), 34451668, H & S Company, 48th Engr Combat Battalion, for exceptionally meritorious conduct in performance of outstanding services, from 15 Dec to 21 Dec 1943, northwest of Mignano, Italy. He operated a D-7 bull-dozer on hazardous, difficult and urgent engineer work. He worked extremely long hours—during all of daylight and throughout the night on two occasions. His work was performed on a high exposed railroad right of way which was being converted into a military road. The entire roadway was a defile open to direct enemy observation and accurate observed artillery fire. His bull-dozer was a continuous target for enemy fire. For three days weather conditions made earthwork extremely difficult. Enemy infantry patrols had been well inside this location on previous nights. His determination to beat the task, his courage under artillery fire, and his devotion to duty evidenced by unhesitating and cheerful work for long hours were an inspiration to the men of the battalion and contributed materially to the successful accomplishment of the mission. Entered service from Roseboro, North Carolina.

Robert L. Sheldon, T/5 (then Pvt.), 39826070, H & S Company, 48th Engr Combat Battalion, for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services, from 15 Dec to 21 Dec 1943, northwest of Mignano, Italy. He operated a D-7 bull-dozer on hazardous, difficult and urgent engineer work. He worked extremely long hours—during the daylight and throughout the night on two occasions. His work was performed on high exposed railroad right of way which was being converted into a military road. The entire roadway was a defile open to direct enemy observation and accurate observed artillery fire. His bull-dozer was a continuous target for enemy fire. For three days weather conditions made earthwork extremely difficult. His determination to beat the task, his courage under artillery fire, and his devotion to duty evidenced by unhesitating and cheerful work for long hours were an inspiration to the men of the battalion and contributed materially to the successful accomplishment of the mission. Entered service from Boise, Idaho.

John H. Gularte, T/5 (then Pfc.), 39104151, Company "B", 48th Engr Combat Battalion, for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services from 15 Dec to 21 Dec 1943, northwest of Mignano, Italy. He operated a D-7 bulldozer on hazardous, difficult and urgent engineer work. He worked extremely long hours—all during daylight and throughout the night on two occasions. His work was performed on a high exposed railroad right of way was being converted into a military road. The entire roadway was a defile open to direct enemy observation and accurate observed artillery fire. His bull-dozer was a continuous target for enemy fire. For three days weather conditions made earthwork extremely difficult. Through the night Dec 19-20, 1943, he performed bull-dozer work in an advanced location reducing the obstacle presented by a demolished viaduct. Enemy artillery fire was directed at the sound of his machine throughout the operations. Enemy infantry patrols had been well inside this location on previous nights. His determination to beat the task, his courage under artillery fire, and his devotion to duty evidence by unhesitating and cheerful work for long hours were an inspiration to the men of the battalion and contributed materially to the successful accomplishment of the mission. Entered service from Brentwood, California.

Maxwell V. Jonah, 1st Lt., 0-1113281, Company "B", 48th Engr Combat Battalion, for gallantry in action. On Dec 20, 1943, he supervised the operation of two bull-dozers working during daylight to clear and roughgrade railroad right of way into a military road. He was present on the site throughout the work. He voluntarily rode and walked with the forward bull-dozer during the most hazardous part of the work. The task took 6 hours, during all of which he was under direct enemy observation and intense artillery fire and intense periodic automatic weapons fire. At one point he was within 800 yards of enemy machine gun positions and was 100 yards in advance of our infantry outposts. At one time he received a volley of 21 rounds of enemy artillery in one minute and thirty seconds; three minutes later he received a volley of 24 rounds in two minutes. He resumed work at once after each volley. In spite of the fire he coolly continued to direct the operation of the bull-dozers, finishing the task in a minimum of time. He encouraged and gave his operators confidence, and had them resume work at once each time the artillery ceased. The plain cold courage he displayed achieved the successful accomplishment of his task, which was urgent and essential to the fulfillment of the battalion's mission, and was an inspiration to the men of the battalion. His performance was in the highest tradition of the Corps of Engineers and of the military service, and was in accord with the highest standards of officer conduct in combat. Entered service from Newtonville, Mass.

Francis L. Stall, T/5, 37307330, Company "C", 48th Engr Combat Battalion, for gallantry in action. During the period Dec 15 to Dec 21, 1943, he operated a bull-dozer under enemy observation and artillery fire directed continuously at his equipment. On Dec 20, 1943, he operated his bull-dozer during daylight to clear and roughgrade railroad right of way into a military road. The task took 4 hours, during all of which he was under direct enemy observation and intense artillery fire. In spite of the fire he coolly continued to operate his bull-dozer, finishing the task in minimum time. He ran his bull-dozer off the right of way (since there was no cover) only when artillery became too dangerous to the equipment and resumed work at once each time the artillery ceased. The plain cold courage he displayed achieved the successful accomplishment of his task, which was urgent and essential to the fulfillment of the battalion's mission, and was an inspiration to the men of the battalion. His performance was in the highest tradition of the Corps of Engineers and of the military service. Entered service from Beaulieu, Minnesota.

Percy L. Hamm, T/5, 36425259, Company "B", 48th Engr Combat Battalion, for gallantry in action. During the period of Dec 15 to Dec 21, 1943, he operated a bull-dozer under enemy observation and artillery fire directed continuously at his equipment. On Dec 20, 1943, he operated his bull-dozer during daylight to clear and roughgrade railroad right of way into a military road. The task took 6 hours, during all of which he was under direct enemy observation and intense artillery fire and intense periodic automatic weapons fire. At one point he was within 1000 yards of enemy machine gun positions. At one time he received a volley of 21 rounds of enemy artillery in one minute and thirty seconds; three minutes later he received a volley of 24 rounds in two minutes. He resumed work at once after each volley. In spite of the fire he coolly continued to operate his bull-dozer, finishing the task in minimum time. He ran his bull-dozer off the right of way (since there was no

cover) only when artillery became too dangerous to the equipment and resumed work at once each time the artillery ceased. The plain cold courage he displayed achieved the successful accomplishment of his task, which was urgent and essential to the fulfillment of the battalion's mission, and was an inspiration to the men of the battalion. His performance was in the highest tradition of the Corps of Engineers and of the military service. Entered service from Chapin, Illinois.

Elmer D. Lucas, Sgt., 35445739, Company "B", 48th Engr. Combat Battalion, for gallantry in action. On Dec 20, 1943, he operated his bull-dozer during daylight to clear and rough-grade railroad right of way into a military road. The task took 6 hours, during all of which he was under direct enemy observation and intense artillery fire and intense periodic automatic weapons fire. At one point he was within 1000 yards of enemy machine gun positions. At one time he received a volley of 21 rounds of enemy artillery in one minute and thirty seconds; three minutes later he received a volley of 24 rounds in two minutes. He resumed work at once after each volley. In spite of the fire he coolly continued to operate his bull-dozer, finishing the task in minimum time. He ran his bull-dozer off the right of way (since there was no cover) only when artillery became too dangerous to the equipment and resumed work at once each time the artillery ceased. The plain cold courage he displayed achieved the successful accomplishment of his task, which was urgent and essential to the fulfillment of the battalion's mission, and was an inspiration to the men of the battalion. His performance was in the highest tradition of the Corps of Engineers and of the military service. Entered service from True, West Virginian.

Harold G. Penders, T/5, 32845118, Company "A", 48th Engr Battalion, for gallantry in action. During the period Dec 15 to Dec 21, 1943, he operated a bull-dozer under enemy observation and artillery fire directed continuously at his equipment. On Dec 20, 1943, he operated his bull-dozer during daylight to clear and rough-grade railroad right of way into a military road. The task took 6 hours, during all of which he was under direct enemy observation and intense artillery fire and intense periodic automatic weapons fire. At one point he was within 800 yards of enemy machine gun positions and was 100 yards in advance of our infantry outposts. At one time he received a volley of 21 rounds of enemy artillery in one minute and thirty seconds; three minutes later he received a volley of 24 rounds in two minutes. He resumed work at once after each volley. In spite of the fire he coolly continued to operate his bull-dozer, finishing the task in minimum time. He ran his bull-dozer off the right of way (since there was no cover) only when artillery became too dangerous to the equipment and resumed work at once each time the artillery ceased. The plain cold courage he displayed achieved the successful accomplishment of his task, which was urgent and essential to the fulfillment of the battalion's mission, and was an inspiration to the men of the battalion. His performance was in the highest tradition of the Corps of Engineers and of the military service. Entered service from Rochester, New York.

Virgil W. Treloar, S/Sgt., 37307399, Company "C", 48th Engr Combat Battalion, for gallantry in action. On the night of Jan 7, 1944, S/Sgt. Treloar was in the fore-front of his company in an assault on Mt. Porchia, Italy, and by his courage and conduct was an inspiration to the men with whom he was associated. In collaboration with his platoon commander, he controlled his assault party in its advance to the summit, directed rifle fire, and encirclement against numerous enemy personnel thereon, and was a key man in taking and holding the entire summit of the mountain. Later in the engagement he voluntarily acted as a reconnaissance scout alone and under enemy sniper fire. Throughout sixty hours of constant battle operations he served in many capacities, accomplishing work that would have been done by officers if the officers had not become casualties. S/Sgt. Treloar's courage, patience, and continual alertness constituted a performance of great merit which was in the highest tradition of the Corps of Engineers and of the military service. Entered service from Aberdeen, South Dakota.

Mark F. Reardon, Captain, (then 1st Lt.), 01102005, Company "C", 48th Engineer Combat Battalion, for gallantry in action. During the period Jan 7—9, 1944, inclusive, for two days and two nights, Lt. Reardon was in great measure responsible for the successful taking and holding of the center portion of Mt. Porchia, Italy. Commanding the 1st and 3rd platoons of Company "C", 48th Engr Combat Bn, he organized and led the initial assault line up the center of the mountain. The advance was made in full view of the enemy. Reaching the summit the first of his group, he directed fire and encirclement against enemy personnel and positions in the rocks. He killed two enemy, at a range of 20 yards before his carbine jammed. For the remainder of the night he was unarmed but continued to direct the fire fight, leaving the summit early in the morning only to obtain a weapon. Later in the engagement he established and maintained defense lines along both left and right flanks of the mountain and shot one sniper with an M1 rifle at a range of 200 yards. Throughout the engagement Lt. Reardon's leadership and courage were in the highest tradition of the Corps of Engineers and of the military service. Entered service from New York, NY.

Courtney P. Hollar, Jr, 1st Lt, 0-1101874, Company "A", 48th Engr Combat Battalion, for gallantry in action. On the night of January 6, 1944, in an assault on Mt. Porchia, Italy, Lt. Hollar, as second in command of an engineer company, distinguished himself by his personal valor and devotion to duty. He assembled and controlled both flank elements of his platoon in its advance up the hill in the face of enemy mortar and small arms fire. When the company was ambushed by an enemy patrol and the Company Commander wounded, Lt. Hollar immediately assumed

command and directed the successful withdrawal of the company to another position. He himself maintained liaison with the infantry elements on the hill. He remained in the battle and on the scene as commanding officer without relief for two days and another night, continually disregarding his own safety to go up and down the line reassuring and encouraging his men. When officially relieved he was the last engineer officer to leave the crest of Mt. Porchia. His performance was in the highest tradition of the Corps of Engineers and of the military service. Entered service from Shippenburg, Penn.

John W. Katzbeck, 1st Lt, 0-1101520, Company "C", 48th Engr Combat Battalion, for gallantry in action. From January 7-9, 1944, for two days and two nights, Lt. Katzbeck commanded his company in the taking and holding of Mt. Porchia, Italy, and though injured, refused to leave the scene of action until the mission was successfully terminated. After bringing the entire company through mined areas to the base of the mountain under heavy enemy artillery and mortar fire without a casualty, he immediately directed his men in a successful assault which captured the summit of the mountain and held it all the following day and night. On Jan 8, 1944, though injured in the spine by mortar fire, he refused evacuation and remained with his company. Unable to walk, he directed the protection of both flanks of the mountain against the threat of strong counter-attack for a night and a day. Only when his unit was officially relieved did he leave the scene, and then after organizing the entire column of march. His devotion to duty and performance under fire were in the highest tradition of the Corps of Engineers and of the military service. Entered service from Chicago, Illinois.

Henry J. Paquin, Sgt., 36104843, Company "A", 48th Engr Combat Battalion, for gallantry in action. On the morning of Jan 6, 1944, Sgt. Henry J. Paquin, the Weapons Sgt of Company "A", 48th Engr Combat Battalion, was walking in front of his platoon as his company was advancing to make its initial thrust on Mt. Porchia, Italy. While crossing a stream one of the men in Sgt Paquin's platoon stepped on an S-Mine and injured his legs severely. Seeing that the Medical Aid man was working on some other injured men several hundred yards in the rear and heedless of the danger of other S-Mines in the area, Sgt. Paquin made his way to the injured man and dragged him from the stream. He coolly administered First Aid, severed the dangling foot from one leg and applied tourniquets to both legs, and assigned several men the detail of carrying the wounded man to the rear. All during this operation enemy mortar shells were exploding nearby. Sgt. Paquin's great courage and presence of mind undoubtedly saved the life of this injured man. He then rejoined his platoon and moved on to complete his assigned mission with them. His gallant act under shellfire earned him the respect and admiration of the officers and men of his battalion and was in the highest tradition of the military service. Entered service from Iron Mountain, Michigan.

Donald F. Buckley, 1st Sgt, 35418140, Company "A", 48th Engr Combat Battalion, for gallantry in action. During the night of January 6, 1944, 1st Sgt Donald F. Buckley, Company "A", 48th Engr (C) Bn, was in the leading elements with the company commander on their advance to attack Mt. Porchia. During the advance the company encountered very harassing enemy artillery fire at which time two platoons were separated from the leading elements of the company. Sgt. Buckley without regard to his own safety, and acting on his own initiative, walked through a mine field and led the two platoons safely back. Upon his return to the leading elements of the Company, Sgt. Buckley learned that the company commander had proceeded to the base of Mt. Porchia to receive further orders. Knowing the objective of the company, and again acting on his own initiative, Sgt. Buckley took up the point to lead the entire company through another mine field. While passing through this mine field, an S-Mine was set off, injuring Sgt. Buckley and three other members of the company. Sgt. Buckley, heedless of his own wounds, crawled back through the mine field and reported to one of the company officers the location of the injured men and indicated a possible safe path through the field. As a result of his heroic actions the entire company safely cleared the mine field and continued on to accomplish its objective; the injured men were evacuated without loss of life. His performance was in the highest tradition of the Corps of Engineers and of the military service. Entered service from Marion, Ohio.

Francis J. Brahmer, S/Sgt. (then Sgt.), 36265359, Company "C", 48th Engr Combat Battalion, for gallantry in action. During the period Jan 7-9, 1944, for two days and two nights, during intense enemy artillery barrages, Sgt. Brahmer skillfully lead his determined section through hazardous mined and mountainous terrain. His mission being to support the right flank of his company which was to attack and take the right of Mt. Porchia. Sgt. Brahmer had been informed that somewhere near the summit of the hill a German machine gun nest was emplaced. This machine gun nest had caused harassing fire on the company and wounded some of its men. It was necessary to rid the hill of this opposition in order for the company to advance and accomplish its objective. Immediately, Sgt. Brahmer set forth to accomplish this mission. Nearing the top of the hill in complete darkness, he located the enemy. He then had two alternatives open to him: one to take a defilade position safe for himself, but without a satisfactory field of fire for his machine gun; another directly under the enemy's keen observation in the open, affording an excellent field of fire. He chose the open position moved forward



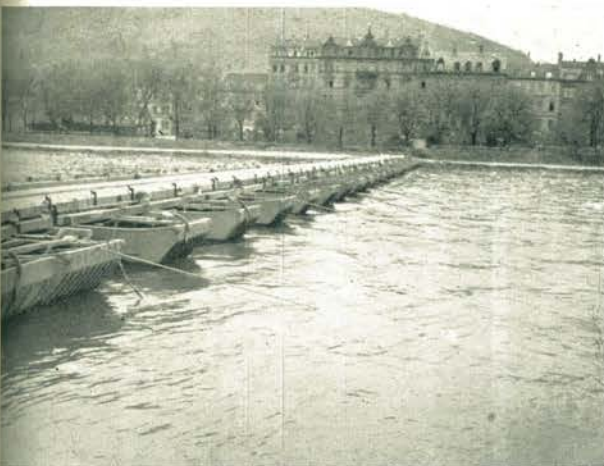
"Near Shore Transom"



"Twenty-Four Hour Service"



"Construction Underway"



"Fleet At Anchor"



"Near Shore Transom In Place"

tediously under consistent enemy fire, set up his gun and silenced the nest; thus enabling his company to advance. After having accomplished his mission, he reported to his company commander who ordered him to get some rest; however, for six hours he voluntarily took part in a search for snipers, who had been harrasing the company with small arms fire. His gallant action, without doubt, saved the lives of many of his comrades. Sgt. Brahmer's untiring efforts and coolness under fire are a great credit to himself, and is in the highest tradition of the Corps of Engineers and of the military service. Entered service from Medford, Wisconsin.

Blanchard O. Olson, S/Sgt, 36194930, Company "A", 48th Engr Combat Battalion, for gallantry in action. On the morning of Jan 7, 1944, S/Sgt. Blanchard O. Olson, Company "A", 48th Engr Combat Battalion was with the forward elements of his company at they were withdrawing from an engagement on Mt. Porchia, Italy. The point of the company was then ambushed by an enemy patrol. Sgt. Olson worked his way up to within twenty yards of the German patrol and attempted to fire on them, but found that his carbine would not operate. A grenade thrown by a member of the German patrol exploded nearby, wounding him in the leg. Heedless of his wound he crawled forward and administered first aid to one of his company officers who had been wounded in the face by the same grenade. While so engaged, he was further wounded by a gun shot wound in the arm. In spite of his wounds he continued to assist the officer and guided him down the mountain to an aid station. The coolness under fire and devotion to duty shown by S/Sgt. Olson were in the highest tradition of the Corps of Engineers and of the military service. Entered service from Sagole, Michigan.

Richard F. Stern, Sgt, 32527983, Company "A", 48th Engr Combat Battalion, for extra-ordinary heroism in action. On the morning of Jan 7, 1944, Sgt. Richard F. Stern, Company "A", 48th Engr Combat Battalion was in the forefront of his company in its initial assault on Mt. Porchia, Italy. During the advance the entire company was pinned down by strong enemy machine gun and rifle cross fire. A complete enemy encirclement of the company seemed imminent. After consultation with his company commander, Sgt. Stern stood erect in full view of the nearest enemy machine gun nest and spoke loudly to its crew in German, calling upon them to surrender and telling them that they were surrounded and outnumbered by American forces. The machine gunners refused and as Sgt. Stern translated their answer to his commander, they resumed their intense fire. Sgt. Stern remained erect under fire until ordered to take cover. Later in the engagement, the forward elements of the Company were ambushed by an enemy patrol in the woods. The company commander, in the point, was wounded, and, with several wounded NCO's, lay on the ground in heavy cross fire from German machine pistols and American small arms. Seeking once more to save the situation by a ruse, Sgt. Stern ran into the center of the contested area and shouted to the enemy to cease fire in German. He told the men of his company also to cease fire. By so doing he gained complete silence in the darkness of the wood at night. In German, he told the enemy he was friendly and asked them where they were from. They answered, "Poland", "Austria", "Yugoslavia", etc. He told them that further resistance was useless since they were surrounded. At this point six of the ambush party dropped their weapons and came out with arms up to surrender. Stern then asked them where his company commander was. They answered that one of their officers had taken him away a prisoner. This later proved to be false as the company commander escaped in the brush. Stern then marched his six prisoners off and the company proceeded without further ambush. Sgt. Stern's coolness and presence of mind under fire helped his company escape almost complete destruction or capture, and aided greatly in the successful accomplishment of the company's mission. His performance was in the highest tradition of the Corps of Engineers and of the military service. Entered service from Corona, New York.

Russell DeBoer, Sgt. 37223459, Company "A", 48th Engr Combat Battalion, for gallantry in action. On the night of Jan 6, 1944, Sgt DeBoer was with his company in its initial assault on Mt. Porchia, Italy. During the advance to the base of the mountain and throughout the attack on the mountain itself, Sgt. DeBoer was out in front instilling courage in the men and shouting words of encouragement as he urged them to advance. He roved up and down the line helping each man to remain calm and reassuring then as he passed. His resourcefulness and skill in placing his men in position undoubtedly prevented many casualties. He continually exposed himself to enemy mortar and small arms fire in order to assure himself that his men were safe and properly placed. During the withdrawal from the hill he remained behind in order to assist one of his men who had been wounded. His actions throughout this engagement not only exemplify his loyalty to his comrades, but also his skill and courage as an individual soldier. His performance is worthy of the highest emulation. Entered service from Independence, Mo.

Steve J. Marcon, T/5, 36265160, Company "A", 48th Engr Combat Battalion, for gallantry in action. On the night of Jan 7, 1944, Company "A", 48th Engr Combat Bn was attached to the 6th Armored Infantry and assigned the mission of retaking Mt. Porchia, Italy, after an enemy counter-attack. T/5 Marcon was one of the first men to reach the crest of the hill in the advancing wave of American troops. He made his way up the mountain, well in advance of the other men of his company, in the face of deadly and accurate German small arms



German/Railroad Gun At Eberbach



Unmanned Pillbox



End Of The Trail



Coming In To Surrender



The Last Mile



The Siegfried Line

fire. Throughout the advance he continually shouted words of encouragement to the other troops and urged them on. After the hill had been taken, he refused to rest, but made his way from outpost to outpost through the remainder of the night, relieving the other men in order that they might get some rest. On the following day, still without rest, he made several trips to obtain water and supplies for his comrades. His tireless efforts inspired the men of his company and were in great measure responsible for the successful accomplishment of the company's mission. His performance is deserving of the highest praise and is an added enrichment to the heroic traditions of the American Soldier. Entered service from Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Dixie E. Snider, Capt, 01685273, MC, 48th Engr Combat Battalion, for gallantry in action. On the afternoon of Jan 2, 1944, at about 1600, two enlisted men of the 48th Engr Combat Bn. were walking along the railroad right of way which had been converted into a military road. Upon reaching a point about 300 yards north of the Mignano Station, enemy shells burst close by; shrapnel injuring both men. Capt. Snider, being informed of the incident, immediately set out for the site in a jeep, despite the fact that observed enemy artillery fire was brought to bear upon any vehicle on the road. Upon reaching the injured men he coolly proceeded to administer medical aid. While administering first aid, at least eight shells burst within forty yards of him, and he himself was wounded by fragments of shrapnel. When the ambulance which had been sent out arrived on the site, he coolly supervised the loading of the wounded men. As the ambulance drove off, four more shells landed within ten yards of the vehicle. The prompt, courageous treatment administered by Capt. Snider did the maximum that could be done toward saving the lives of these men. His voluntary and unselfish actions were a credit to the Medical Corps and in the highest traditions of the military service. Entered service from Frankfort, Kentucky.

Andrew J. Goodpaster, Lt. Colonel, 021739, CE, Hqs, 48th Engr Combat Battalion, for gallantry in action. On the morning of 8 Jan, 1944, when his Battalion was acting as Infantry in then assault on Mt. Porchia, he was requested by the Commanding Officer of the 6th Armored Infantry to advise upon the organization of the guard for defense. While engaged in this mission, he and the Infantry Battalion's Commander were wounded by the same shell. Lt. Colonel Goodpaster rendered first aid to the infantry officer and saw to his evacuation, then in spite of his wound, searched for and found the next in command and spent several hours with him going over the defensive situation before he made his way back for treatment. His action was above and beyond the call of duty and was in the finest tradition of the Corps of Engineers and of the military service.

Charles M. Boye, Sgt. (then T/5), 32704450, Company A, 48th Engr Combat Battalion, for gallantry in action. T/5 Boye was a medical aid man in the initial assault on Mt. Porchia, Italy. He advanced with his company and stayed well to the front during the assault and capture of Mt. Porchia for two days and two nights, Jan 6 and Jan 7. During the advance on the mountain and the attack on the mountain T/5 Boye was on the spot at all times making sure the wounded were being taken care of and evacuated. On three separate occasions he advanced across open terrain under enemy small arms and mortar fire to render first aid to men who had been wounded. Throughout the battle he exposed himself continually to enemy fire in order to stay with his company of Engineers soldiers, rendering aid not only to them but also to men of the 6th Armored Infantry who were also taking part in the assault on the mountain. Later in the engagement as his supplies dwindled, he improvised from German first aid bandages, which had been captured, and carried on his work until further supplies were forwarded. His devotion to duty and heroic and unselfish actions are a credit to the Medical Corps and to the military service. Entered service from Brooklyn, New York.

Paul C. Manning, Pfc, 37384208, Company "A", 48th Engr Combat Battalion, for gallantry in action. On the night of 17 March, 1944, Pfc. Manning was driving a jeep and was parked on Highway 6 between Mt. Trocchio and the Rapido River awaiting orders from his Commanding Officer. This area was under a withering enemy artillery barrage at the time and Pfc. Manning had pulled his vehicle to the side and had taken cover in a ditch. A bursting shell seriously wounded a soldier working nearby. With complete disregard for his own safety, Pfc. Manning left his position of comparative security and proceeded to where the wounded man lay. While assisting the wounded man, at least five shells burst within thirty yards of him. He rendered emergency first aid to the wounded man and evacuated him to the nearest aid station and then returned to his post. His unselfish actions and coolness under fire which proably saved the life of the wounded man, are a credit to the military service and are deserving of the highest emulation. Entered service from Odessa, Missouri.

Gordon L. Brooker, 1st Lt., 01112051, CE, Company "C", 48th Engr Combat Battalion for gallantry in action. On 20, 21, and 24 February, 1945, near Ludweiler, Germany, Lt. Brooker led patrols into enemy territory to obtain vital information regarding enemy installations. On 24 February, having reached the patrol objective without enemy contact, he went alone deeper into enemy territory in order to secure more information. While making observations from a forward point, he was seriously wounded by enemy small arms fire. Motioning to his men not to come to his assistance, he returned to them and, despite his wound, directed a safe withdrawal without further casualties. His unselfish actions were an inspiration to his men and in the highest tradition of the Corps of Engineers. Entered service from Amsterdam, New York.



Heidelberg

Leonard L. Olsen, Sgt., Company C, 48th Engineer Combat Battalion. For gallantry in action on 7 January 1944. During a night assault on Mt. Porchia, Italy, Sgt. Olsen led his small group of five men to the summit in face of enemy rifle and machine gun fire. He then assisted his officer in directing fire and encircling enemy personnel among the rocks. He personally shot six of the enemy with his rifle, but was wounded in the head, chest, and leg by two German grenades thrown at close range. He continued to operate his weapon until his ammunition was expended, after which time he made his way down the mountain alone. His coolness under fire provided an inspiration to his men and his performance was an example of courage and fortitude.

James W. MacDowell, 35324429, Technician Fifth Grade, Medical Detachment, 48th Engineer Combat Battalion, for gallantry in action. On the afternoon of 7 January 1944, two men of the 48th Engineer Combat Battalion were injured by enemy shell-fire about 300 yards north of Mignano Station on the railroad right of way which had been converted into a military road. The Battalion Surgeon was informed of the injury to these men and, while getting ready to go to their aid, Technician Fifth Grade MacDowell volunteered to go with him to assist in treating and evacuating the wounded men. He, with the Battalion Surgeon, proceeded to the site in a jeep, in spite of the fact that concentrated, observed, enemy artillery fire was being brought to bear on any vehicle on this road. While assisting the Battalion Surgeon, at least eight shells burst within 40 yards of him, shell fragments wounding the Battalion Surgeon. When the ambulance which had been sent out arrived on the site, he coolly assisted in loading the wounded men. As the vehicle drove away, four shells burst within ten yards of it. The courageous assistance rendered by Technician Fifth Grade MacDowell made it possible for the Battalion Surgeon to do the utmost that could be done toward saving the lives of the wounded men. His voluntary, unselfish, and gallant actions were deserving of the highest emulation and were in the highest tradition of the Medical Corps and of the military service.

Alfred L. Kincer, 01101905, Captain (then first lieutenant), Company B, 48th Engineer Combat Battalion. For gallantry in action on 7 January 1944, in the vicinity of Mt. Porchia, Italy. Called upon to bolster an infantry attack on Mt. Porchia, Lieutenant Kincer led his platoon under intense enemy artillery and mortar fire to the crest of a rocky slope which was under direct enemy observation. Realizing the importance of his position to the defense of whole mountain, and despite the fact that he had very few men and was low on ammunition, he held his position through three heavy enemy artillery and mortar barrages, for two days and nights until reinforcements arrived. The determined action of Lieutenant Kincer, in holding this vulnerable position with his meagre force, contributed considerably to the successful consolidation of the newly-won position. The high order of courage and initiative displayed by Lieutenant Kincer reflect credit upon himself and the entire military service.

Robert L. Overcash, 35630287, Sergeant, Company B, 48th Engineer Combat Battalion, for gallantry in action. During an attack on Mt. Porchia, Italy, on 7 January 1944, Sergeant Overcash volunteered as a scout to precede his platoon up the slope on the left flank and search out machine gun positions. Upon reaching the top he went over the summit and proceeded down the far slope where he was brought under intense and accurate artillery and mortar fire. He remained at his position on the far slope observing to the front until ordered to return to a defensive position back down the slope, with the remainder of his platoon. When the barrage lifted he voluntarily returned to his forward position and helped establish and hold a machine gun position on the far side. The courage and initiative displayed by Sergeant Overcash on this occasion reflect great credit upon himself and the entire military service.

Sanford M. Tolchinsky, 15322461, Corporal, Company B, 48th Engineer Combat Battalion, for gallantry in action. During an attack on Mt. Porchia, Italy, on 7 January, 1944, Corporal Tolchinsky volunteered as a scout to precede his platoon on the right flank up the slope and search out enemy machine gun positions in his sector. Upon reaching the summit he proceeded down the far slope where he was subjected to intense and accurate enemy mortar and artillery fire. He held his position under fire observing the front and watching for enemy movement until ordered to return to his platoon back down the slope. When the barrage lifted he voluntarily returned to his position and helped establish and hold a machine gun position in the face of enemy mortar fire in order to protect an important observation point and to cover a draw which was the probable line of approach of an impending enemy counter-attack. The courage and initiative displayed by Corporal Tolchinsky on this occasion reflect great credit upon himself and the entire military service.

Richard G., Pedro, 39104122, Private First Class, Company B, 48th Engineer Combat Battalion. For gallantry in action on 15 February 1944, near San Vittore, Italy. When a shell fell about three feet from the front of the truck he was driving, showering its occupants with flying shrapnel, and wounding nine of the men, Private First Class Pedro, although he had been hit himself, managed to get the truck to the side of the road, after which he proceeded further along the road, still under intense artillery fire, secured an ambulance, supervised the loading of the wounded and accompanied them to the first aid station. After receiving treatment for his own wound, which he had refused until the others were taken care of, he voluntarily returned to the site of the shelling, retrieved his truck and defiladed it behind a building. The high order of courage and initiative displayed by Private First Class Pedro on this occasion reflect credit upon himself and the military service.

Francis X. Buckley, 01101758, First Lieutenant, Company B, 48th Engineer Combat Battalion. For gallantry in action on 7 January 1944, in the vicinity of Mt. Porchia, Italy. Called upon without notice to bolster an infantry attack on Mt. Porchia, Lieutenant Buckley led his platoon under intense enemy artillery and mortar fire to the crest of a rocky slope which was under direct enemy observation. Realizing that he held the commanding observation point to the probable route of an impending enemy counterattack on the left flank of the mountain, he held and defended this position with his meager force, for two days and nights, through three intensive artillery and mortar barrages, until his position was consolidated. The high order of courage and initiative displayed by Lieutenant Buckley on this occasion reflects credit upon himself and the entire military service.

Tommy (NMI) Googoo. 19138498, Sergeant, Company B, 48th Engineer Combat Battalion. For gallantry in action on 7 January 1944, in the vicinity of Mt. Porchia, Italy. Ordered by his platoon commander to furnish a scout to proceed in advance of the platoon to search out enemy machine gun positions, Sergeant Googoo volunteered for the mission, and worked his way up the mountain, exposing himself to enemy artillery, mortar, and machine gun fire. Reaching the top he was immediately subjected to fire by a German 88-gun, but despite the fact that four shells landed within 50 yards of him, he remained at his post until ordered to return to a defensive position back down the slope. The high order of courage and initiative displayed by Sergeant Googoo on this occasion reflect great credit upon himself and the entire military service.

Florian H. Schreiner, 36265299, Sergeant, Company B, 48th Engineer Combat Battalion, for gallantry in action. During an attack on Mt. Porchia, Italy, on 7 January 1944, Sergeant Schreiner volunteered as a scout to precede his platoon in the attack. Advancing across an open field which was mined and under enemy artillery and mortar fire, he came so close to a friendly barrage that he was showered with sparks from bursting phosphorous shells. When this barrage lifted he worked his way up the slope, exposing himself to enemy artillery, mortar and machine gun fire in order to search out enemy machine gun emplacements. Although several shells burst dangerously close to him he continued his advance until ordered to return to a defensive position back down the slope. The high order of courage and initiative displayed by Sergeant Schreiner on this occasion reflect credit upon himself and the entire military service.

LEGION OF MERIT

Andrew J. Goodpaster, Lt. Colonel, Hq., 48th Engineer Combat Battalion. For exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services from 15 December to 21 December 1943, northwest of Mignano, Italy. He organized, supervised, and carried to a successful conclusion the difficult and hazardous task of converting a railroad into a two-way class 40 highway, under adverse weather conditions, observed artillery fire, and small arms and automatic weapons fire. His determination, courage, and devotion to duty were an inspiration to his men and were directly responsible for the successful accomplishment of the mission.

Dean E. Swift, Lt. Colonel, Hq., 48th Engineer Combat Battalion (then 125th Armored Engineer Battalion, 14th Armored Division). For exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services in organizing and supervising rescue work in connection with the all-time high water flood of the Arkansas River, 11 May to 27 May 1943, in which his efforts and professional knowledge saved many lives and much property. He planned and directed the construction of two pontoon bridges over dangerous flood waters in order to provide support for temporary water mains to carry water into Fort Smith, Arkansas, when that city's water supply was completely out off. By his zeal and energy Colonel Swift efficiently controlled his partially trained battalion in these efforts, thereby displaying high professional and leadership qualities.

Joseph E. Foley Jr., Lt. Colonel, CE, 0460508, 48th Engr Combat Battalion, for exceptional meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services during the period 1 January, 1945 to 11 March, 1945. Lt. Colonel Foley planned for and supervised the operation of the Seventh Army Engineer School to train Engineer Battalions newly arrived in the European Theater. To implement the course of instruction at the school he supervised the conducting of experiments on the effect of freezing on mines. Shortly after, while his battalion was being employed as infantry, he supervised the formation of a battalion mortar section, and, by hazardous personal reconnaissance, he organized and directed the setting up of positions for the defense in the assigned sector. His performance throughout was in the highest tradition of the Corps of Engineers and the military service. Entered service from Philadelphia, Penna.

PURPLE HEART

Pvt. James A. Anderson, Venafrò
Pvt. Edward Seibolt, Venafrò
Cpl. George Metcalf, Venafrò
Sgt. Marvin Wright, Colli
Chester Campbell, Cpl. (KIA), Venafrò
Patsy Di Paolo, Pfc., Venafrò
Pvt. Michael J. Milkovich, Venafrò
Pvt. Joseph Wallace, Mignano
Pfc. Arthur Marston, Mignano
S/Sgt. William I. Moore, Mignano
Sgt. Frank Maruskin, Mignano
Sgt. Theodore Marsink (KIA), Mignano
Pvt. Dennis F. Shannon, Mignano
T/4 Anthony G. Scavone, Mignano
T/5 Frank A. Kantz (KIA), Mignano
T/4 Rudolph Tisovich (KIA), Mignano
T/5 Norman E. Brachman, Mignano
S/Sgt. R. C. Sumner, Mignano
Pfc. William H. Moyer, Mignano
T/4 Phillip L. Schmidt, Mignano
Pvt. Milton Rowland (KIA), Mignano
Pvt. Dominic T. Piscatelli (KIA), Mignano
Pfc. Rufus W. Johnson, Mignano
Pfc. Jack L. Shelley, Mignano
M/Sgt. Leonard T. Womble, Mignano
Pvt. Paul E. Posedly, Mignano
Pfc. David J. Sackman, Mignano
Pfc. Willis Carroll, Mt. Porchia
Sgt. Olen McKnight, Mt. Porchia
T/5 Alvin Albers, Mt. Porchia
Cpl. Charles Hanus, Mignano
S/Sgt. John D. Castelloe, Mignano
T/5 Leroy Lyons, Mignano
Pfc. Salvatore Merante, Mignano
Pvt. Henry P. Martin, Mignano
Pfc. John H. Gularte, Mignano
Sergt. Norman Nyback (KIA), Mignano
T/4 Everrett O. Stear, Mignano
Pfc. Dominic Bersano, Mignano
*1st.Lt. Orville O. Munson**, Mt. Porchia*
T/5 Rufus Steifer, Mt. Porchia
Capt. Richard J. Van Campen, Mignano
S/Sgt. Joseph H. Goetz, Mt. Porchia
Pfc. Murry C. Kiser, Mt. Porchia
1st.Sgt. Donald Buckley (KIA), Mt. Porchia
(Cassino Valley)
S/Sgt. Levi Jacobs (KIA), Mt. Porchia
S/Sgt. Blanchard O. Olson, Mt. Porchia
Pfc. Lawrence R. West, Mt. Porchia
Sgt. Elmer Lefevre, Mt. Porchia
Pvt. Isidore L. Pikula, Mt. Porchia
Pvt. Ralph Austin, Mt. Porchia
Pfc. Edward Jankowski, Mt. Porchia
Pfc. Mosezell Hiett, Mt. Porchia*
T/5 Bernard Olsen, Mt. Porchia
2ndLt. Francis J. Kratch, Mt. Porchia*

Lt.Col. A. J. Goodpaster, Mt. Porchia*
T/5 Herman L. Crisup, Mt. Porchia
Sgt. Leonard Olsen Mt. Porchia
Pfc. Glamann, Clarence, Mt. Porchia
Pvt. John J. Szeker, Mt. Porchia
Pvt. Frederick A. Royce, Mt. Porchia
Sgt. Joe C. Specker (KIA), Mt. Porchia
Pfc. Harry J. Wendel, Mt. Porchia
Pvt. Otto Steinberg (KIA), Mignano
Pfc. Harl Mayle, Mt. Porchia
T/5 Ben Santjer (KIA), Mt. Porchia
Pfc. Ralph W. Leslie (KIA), Mt. Porchia
Sgt. Robert Salino, Mignano
Cpl. Vernon Snodgrass, San Pietro
Pvt. Tom M. Morris, San Pietro
2ndLt. Russell M. Finnegan, Mt. Porchia*
Sgt. Elmer W. Lucas, Mt. Porchia, Italy*
Pvt. Paul M. Mull, Mignano, Italy*
T/5 Clarence Jackson, San Pietro, Italy
Pvt. Edward Turner, Pozzilli, Italy
1stLt. John Katzbeck, Mt. Porchia, Italy
*1stLt. Alfred Kincer**, Mt. Porchia, Italy*
Pfc. Leonard C. Drezwicki, Mt. Porchia, Italy
Cpl. Joseph H. May, Mt. Porchia, Italy
Pfc. Arthur T. Kalisewski, Mt. Porchia, Italy
Pvt. Francis Cunningham, Cervaro, Italy
Pvt. James F. Shrum, Cervaro, Italy
Pvt. Anthony Riggio, Cervaro, Italy
Pvt. Keith Shofner (KIA), Mt. Trocchio, Italy
1stLt. Tom W. Emerson, Cassino, Italy
2ndLt. Jerome W. Pribyl, Cassino Valley, Italy
Sgt. Leland E. Grossman, San Michele, Italy
Cpl. Harry J. Jirak, San Michele, Italy
Pvt. Lee O. Obar, San Michele, Italy
T/5 Charles O'Neill, Cassino, Italy
Pfc. Charley Bing, Cassino, Italy
Pfc. Richard G. Pedro, Cassino, Italy
Pvt. Bernard E. Keith, Cassino, Italy
T/5 John Maki, Cassino, Italy
Pvt. George W. Wykle, Cassino, Italy
Pvt. James Miller, Cassino, Italy
Pfc. Truman McCrackin, Cassino, Italy
T/5 Robert L. Sheldon, Cervaro, Italy
Pvt. Frank S. Bonanno, San Michele, Italy
Pfc. Peter J. Hustler, San Michele, Italy
Pvt. Roland L. Mead, Cassino, Italy
Sgt. Onnie A. Manikko, Cassino, Italy
Pfc. Arne Pohja, Cassino, Italy
Pvt. Benjamin Presnell, Cassino, Italy
Pvt. Michael Kron, Cassino, Italy
Pvt. Paul E. Tavernaris, Cassino, Italy
S Sgt. Cecil E. Russell, Cassino, Italy
Pvt. Herman Bounds, Cassino, Italy
Pvt. Pete P. Nava, Cassino, Italy
Pvt. Parino Moss, Cassino, Italy
Sgt. Florian Schreiner, Cassino, Italy

Cpl. Bernard Kreuzer, Cassino, Italy
 2ndLt. Robert G. O'Leary, Cassino, Italy
 Lt.Col. Dean E. Swift, Cassino, Italy
 Pvt. Christopher Nelson (KIA), Mt. Porchia, Italy
 Pvt. Joseph J. Gromalski (KIA), Mignano, Italy
 Pfc. Herman Hilger, Mignano, Italy
 1stLt. Courtney P. Hollar, Spigno, Italy
 Capt. Mark F. Reardon, Terracina, Italy
 Pfc. Raymond B. Allen, Santa Maria Infante, Italy
 Pvt. Howard A. Webb, Santa Maria Infante, Italy
 Cpl. Howard Johnson, Santa Maria Infante, Italy
 Pvt. Arnold Johnson Santa Maria Infante Italy
 T 5 Albert E. Mende, Santa Maria Infante, Italy
 Pvt. Charles A. Baird, Selice, Italy
 Sgt. Gerald T. Mohr, Spigno, Italy
 S/Sgt. Clarence Krava, Spigno Italy
 Pfc. Abraham Gardener, St. Raphael, France
 Pfc. Vernon G. Sorenson, St. Raphael, France
 Pfc. Henry P. Rydz, St. Raphael, France
 Cpl. Delbert D. Chambers, St. Raphael, France
 Pfc. Howard J. Stracener, St. Raphael, France
 Pfc. William G. Melcher*, St. Raphael, France
 Sgt. Eugene Pearson, Besançon, France
 T/5 Neylon, Thomas J., Baume Les Dames, France
 1stLt. William J. Butler, Lure, France
 Pvt. Phil Spampanato (KIA), Raddon, France
 Cpl. Fritz E. Owens, Raddon, France
 T/5 Willie T. Bolcerek*, Raddon France
 Pvt. Edward L. Copp, Raddon, France
 Pvt. Mario N. Felicione, Raddon, France
 Pvt. Walter H. Saathoff, Raddon, France
 Pvt. Arno O. Lamb Julienrupt, France
 Pvt. Ronald E. Bouyea*, Julienrupt, France

Cpl. Bernell L. Petermann*, Julienrupt, France
 Sgt. John L. Abrams, Julienrupt, France
 Pfc. Ralph Haight, Julienrupt, France
 Pvt. Edwin Kantola, Mt. Porchia, Italy
 T/5 Patsy DiFolco, Bruyeres, France
 Pfc. Wilford Stagner, Bruyeres, France
 Pvt. Richard J. Curran, Bruyeres, France
 Sgt. Andrew L. Phillips, Mandray, France
 Pvt. Bernard L. Freagon, St. Die, France
 Pvt. Henry R. Hommel, Taintrux, France
 1stLt. William A. Smith, (KIA), St. Die, France
 Pfc. John M. Woodcox, St. Die, France
 Pfc. Robert L. Taylor, Taintrux, France
 Sgt. George R. Torigian, Ludweiler, Germany
 Pvt. William D. Merryman, Molsheim, France
 Pvt. Clifford Townsend, Andlau, France
 T/4 Jacob Robertson, Andlau, France
 Pfc. Donald E. Hall, Blamont, France
 Pfc. Stanley Waychunas, Laval, France
 Pvt. Warren Fekeith, Ludweiler, Germany
 Pfc. Clyde Meyer, Ludweiler, Germany
 1stLt. Gordon L. Brooker, Ludweiler, Germany
 T/5 Carl C. Gomoll, Ludweiler, Germany
 Cpl. Steve Marcon, Ludweiler, Germany
 T/5 Otto Honeycut, Ludweiler, Germany
 T/4 Arthur H. Attleson, Hirschorn, Germany
 S/Sgt. Francis J. Brahmer, Gersthofen, Germany
 Cpl. Robert A. Kellum, Gersthofen, Germany
 Cpl. Paul J. Mensack, Gersthofen, Germany
 Pfc. James J. Flanigan, Mt. Porchia, Italy
 Pfc. Francis P. Carroll, Mt. Porchia, Italy
 Cpl. Loyal C. Peck, Gersthofen, Germany
 T/5 Jessie W. Reynolds, Gersthofen, Germany

*—Indicates Oak Leaf Cluster For Purple Heart

(KIA)—Killed in Action

BRONZE STAR

T/4 Clair K. Mallen
 Pfc. William A. Purdy
 Pfc. Arnold C. Muller
 Cpl. Loyal C. Peck
 Pfc. Daniel P. Duffy
 T/4 Clayton S. Earnhart
 Pfc. Lupe G. Savala
 Capt. Eugene F. Scherr
 M/Sgt. James W. Tierney
 T/5 Clarence F. Hastreiter
 T/5 Charles L. O'Neill
 T/4 Harold E. F. Schrab
 Pfc. Harry L. Nelson
 S/Sgt. James B. Iden
 T/4 Edward M. Saraniero
 1st Lt. Charles F. Haley
 Pfc. John N. Woodcox

1st Lt. Robert C. Conklin
 T/5 Edward C. Casto
 Pfc. James J. Madden
 S/Sgt. Walter C. Fritz
 S/Sgt. Virgil W. Treloar
 T/5 Charles D. Gotsopoulos
 Pfc. Paul C. Manning
 Capt. John W. Katzbeck
 Capt. Howard R. Mardin
 T/5 Rex E. Bass
 2nd Lt. Wilbur Tully
 Capt. Harry M. Thames
 S/Sgt. Willard R. Tschetter
 Capt. William O. Snyder Jr.
 1st Sgt. Fred W. Silvestri
 S/Sgt. Mark W. Plowman
 S/Sgt. Olen C. McKnight
 S/Sgt. Fred A. Fialkowski

T/5 Harry J. Wendell
 T/5 Arthur P. Walker
 T/4 Mercer W. Clatterbuck
 S/Sgt. Antonio Rotondo
 S/Sgt. Thomas A. Green
 Capt. Thomas J. Cassidy
 Pfc. Mario N. Felicione
 Sgt. Charles W. Hanus
 S/Sgt. Enoch Carver
 S/Sgt. Melvin N. Pritchett
 S/Sgt. Henry W. McDaniel
 Major Orville O. Munson
 1st Lt. George T. Carter
 Sgt. Charles M. Boye
 Lt.Col. Joseph E. Foley
 Capt. Russell M. Finnegan
 Capt. William A. Lester

IN MEMORIAM



Keith D. Shofner



Abraham Gardener



Vincent Detommaso



Milton Rowland



Rufus E. Steifer



Phil. Spampanato



Chester R. Campbell



Mercer W. Clatterbuck



Otto W. Steinberg



Joseph J. Gromalski



Edward L. Nelleny



Frank A. Kantz



Rudolph Tisovich



Levi J. Jacobs



Dominic T. Piscitelli



Donald F. Buckley



Christopher C. Nelson



Charles J. Hermann



Joe C. Specker



John E. Martin



Tagged for the Ovens.



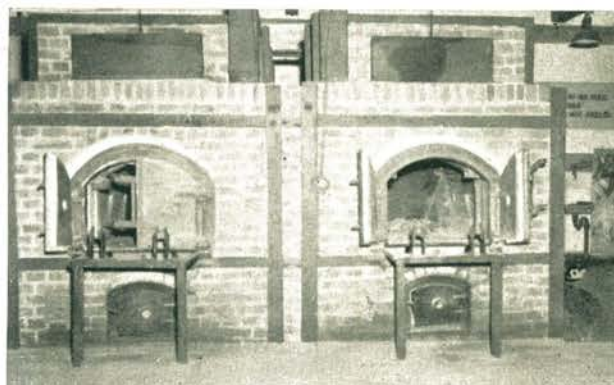
Starved Bodies in a Railroad Car.

DACHAU

"WE FOUND IT ALMOST UNBELIEVBLE"



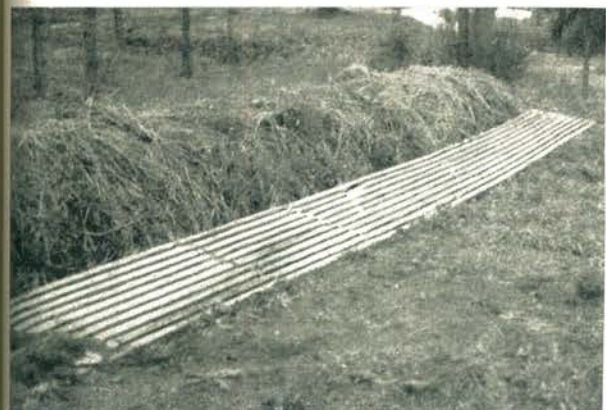
Freshly Executed.



Crematorium.



The Crematory and Gas Execution Chamber.



Where Russian Officers Knelt and Faced the Firing Squad.



May Day at Dachau.

MEN OF THE 48TH

OFFICERS



Lt. Haley.



Lt. Dawson.



From L. to R.: Mr. Swift, Capt. Cassidy and Capt. Snider.



Warrant Officer John D. Swift.



Lt. Phelan.



1st Lt. Octavius M. Hooker.
Mr. John D. Swift.



S-2. Captain Schowalter.



Captain Van Campen.



Captain Thompson.

Captain Snider.



Captain Reardon.



Lt. Williard.



Captain
Thames.



Captain
Busch.



PFC Purdy, jeep driver.



"Mauldin."



1st Sgt. Hoopes,
H&S Topkick.



Pfc. Basham released from
PW Camp on April 20th,
1945.



PFC Nielsen.



S/Sgt. Sheeley, first supply
sergeant of H&S company.



1st Sgt. Hubert L. Fosbinder,
Co. "C."



Pfc. Jaeger, Co. "C."



T/4 Baxter M. Nash,
"H&S" Co.



Capt. Mardin,



Lt. Hammerstrom.



L. to R.: Lt. Buckley, Capt. Reardon,
Lt. Kincer.



Able Co. Officers
at Mignano, Italy.



Battalion Officers at Selice, Italy.



Lt. De Boer,



Captain Robert C. Conklin, S-4.



Captain Eugene F. Scherr Co, Co, "C".



1st Lt. Octavius Hooker.

H&S COMPANY



Communications Section: Standing L. to R.: Cpl. Forster and Sgt. Mallen. Kneeling L. to R.: T/Sgt. Valentine, Jr., and Sgt. Price. Sitting L. to R.: Sgt. Rogers and Sgt. Sarretelli. Inserts: Upper Left: Cpl. Joel. Lower Left: Sgt. Wood. Lower Right: Pfc. Mozingo.



S-3: Standing L. to R.: 2nd Lt. Dubow and Capt. Thames. Kneeling L. to R.: T/Sgt. Warren, Pfc. Flory, T/4 Schrab and T/5 Miller. Sitting L. to R.: Sgt. Saraniero, Pfc. Boulas and Pfc. Riney.



S-1: Standing L. to R.: CWO Jenkins, M/Sgt. Tierney and 1st Lt. Green. Kneeling L. to R.: Sgt. Earnhart, Cpl. Plesic, Cpl. Bartlett and Cpl. Givin. Sitting L. to R.: Cpl. Jarvis, Cpl. Coviello and Cpl. Glaeser. Inserts: Top: Sgt. Dvorak. Bottom: T/Sgt. Goodman.



S-2: Standing L. to R.: T/5 Hanson, 1st Lt. Peternel and T/4 Naylor. Kneeling L. to R.: S/Sgt. Fialkowski, Pfc. Boyd, T/Sgt. Smukler and S/Sgt. Tchettters. Sitting L. to R.: Pfc. Nielsen, Pvt. Chapman and T/5 Weinberg. Insert: T/5 Neylon.



S-4: Standing L. to R.: T/5 Doyle, T/Sgt. La Fratta and T/5 Hopper. Kneeling L. to R.: Pfc. Onufrychuk, Pfc. Alfano, T/5 Qvern and T/5 Nauenburg. Sitting L. to R.: Pfc. Boros, T/4 Gustafson and Pfc. Beitz.



Heavy Equipment, H&S Company. Standing L. to R.: Pfc. Gordon and Cpl. Mull. Kneeling L. to R.: Pfc. Dugan, T/Sgt. Tanner and Pfc. Caynor. Sitting L. to R.: Cpl. Teeters, Cpl. J. Miller and Cpl. Difalco.



H&S. From L. to R.: T/5 Neylin, S/Sgt. Tschetters. Sitting: Pvt. Bernstein.



Motor Pool, H&S Company. Standing L. to R.: Sgt. Jones, Cpl. Papik, Cpl. J. Miller, Sgt. Groby, Sgt. Clifton, Cpl. Porter, Sgt. Snodgrass, Sgt. Dailey, M/Sgt. Blankenship, Sgt. Scavone and Cpl. Davis. Kneeling L. to R.: Sgt. Gianunzio, Sgt. Kile, Sgt. Bullard, Cpl. Sackman, Sgt. Buesking and Cpl. Paisley.



Medics, H&S Company. Standing L. to R.: Pfc. De Dominico and T/4 Jolly. Kneeling L. to R.: T/5 O'Neil, T/4 Kruezer and T/5 Merryman. Top Left: T/3 Sporleder. Top Right: S/Sgt. Russel.



Headquarters, H&S Company. Standing L. to R.: Pfc. Norwood, Cpl. Pontoski and Cpl. Hendricks. Sitting L. to R.: Cpl. Van Pembrouck, Cpl. Sohadja and Sgt. V. Taylor.



S-2 and S-3. Standing: PFC Boyd. Sitting L. to R.: S/Sgt. Tschetters, T/Sgt. Smukler. Kneeling: PFC Woodcox.



Heavy Equipment, H&S Company. Standing L. to R.: Cpl. Brammell, Cpl. Truluck, Cpl. Nipper, Cpl. J. Miller and Cpl. DiFalco. Kneeling L. to R.: T/Sgt. Tanner, Cpl. Sahadja, Cpl. Mull and Cpl. Gularte.



ABLE COMPANY

Left:

1st Sqd, 1st Plt. Top Left: Sgt. Boye. Top Right: Cpl. Carter. Standing L. to R.: Pfc. Melcher and Pvt. Baker. Kneeling L. to R.: Pfc. Stracener, Pfc. Joehnk, Pvt. Grave and Pfc. Rapoza. Sitting L. to R.: Pvt. Leary, Pvt. Will, Pvt. Gagne, Pvt. Hamlin and Pvt. Skeels.



1st Sqd, 2nd Plt. Top Left: Sgt. Bice. Top Right: Cpl. Meade. Standing L. to R.: Pfc. Oberle, Pvt. Gobin and Pvt. Presnell. Kneeling L. to R.: Pvt. Zangara, T/5 Temple, Pfc. Hersfield and T/4 Yoder. Sitting L. to R.: Pvt. Terma, T/5 Williams, Pvt. Hayslett, Pfc. Schunk and Pfc. Karweski.



3rd Sqd, 3rd Plt. Top Left: Sgt. Kobza. Top Right: Cpl. Tate. Standing T/4 Person. Kneeling L. to R.: Pfc. B. Martin, Pfc. Herron and Pfc. Volsteadt. Sitting L. to R.: Pfc. Thomas, Pfc. Piazza, Pvt. Maruskin and Pfc. Lamareaux.



3rd Sqd, 2nd Plt. Top Left: Sgt. Barker. Top Right: Cpl. Hinzman. Standing L. to R.: Pvt. Elliot and Pfc. Hoover. Kneeling L. to R.: Pfc. Kron, Pfc. Currier, Pfc. Natole, T/4 Lauschner and T/5 N. Johnson. Sitting L. to R.: Pfc. Little, Pvt. Busie and Pfc. Jenkins.



1st Sqd, 3rd Plt. Top Left: T/4 Meyer. Top Right: T/5 Carnes. Standing L. to R.: Pfc. Finn, Pfc. Bartkeviak and T/5 Edwards. Kneeling L. to R.: Pvt. Barnes, Pfc. Johnson, Pfc. Chardi and T/5 Lean. Sitting L. to R.: Pfc. Madden, Pfc. Meese and Pfc. Fedeli.



Headquarters Platoon.

Upper Left:
1st Platoon. Insert: S/Sgt. Rotondo.

Upper Right:
2nd Sqd, 1st Plt. Top Left: Sgt. Loebig. Top Right: Cpl. Rydz. Standing L. to R.: Pfc. Newman, Pvt. Roney and T/5 Di Poolo. Kneeling L. to R.: Pfc. Coutz, Pfc. Holbert, Pfc. Schmidt and Pfc. Bertine. Sitting L. to R.: T/5 Martele, Pfc. Arcure and Pfc. Spears.



2nd Platoon. Insert: S Sgt. McKnight.



3rd Platoon. Insert: S/Sgt. Carver.



3rd Sqd, 1st Plt. Top Left: Sgt. Van Der Veer. Top Right: Cpl. Shephard. Standing L. to R.: Pfc. Dolish and Pfc. Myron. Kneeling L. to R.: Pfc. R. Martin, Pfc. Spruce and T/5 Saracusan. Sitting L. to R.: Pfc. Defnall and Pfc. Quaderers.



3rd Squad, 3rd Platoon.



Right: Top Left: S/Sgt. Pritchett. Top Center: 1st Sgt. Sylvestri. Top Right: Pfc. Manning. Kitchen Force: Standing L. to R.: Pfc. W. Anderson and Pfc. Kemnitz. Sitting L. to R.: T/5 Gouveia, T/4 Thibedeaux, S/Sgt. Krava, T/5 Elliot and Pfc. L. Anderson.



2nd Sqd, 2nd Plt. Top Left: Sgt. Ordoyne. Top Right: Cpl. Nelson. Standing L. to R.: Pfc. Landman and Pvt. Griffin. Kneeling L. to R.: Pvt. Ward, Pfc. St. Julien and T/5 Masterson. Sitting L. to R.: Cpl. Ford, Pfc. H. Miller, Pfc. Zimsack, Pfc. Holt and Pfc. Makela.



2nd Sqd, 3rd Plt. Top Left: Cpl. Dorchinez. Top Center: Sgt. Dejml. Top Right: Cpl. Brissette. Standing L. to R.: Pfc. E. Anderson and Pvt. Kantola. Kneeling L. to R.: Pvt. Barnes, Pfc. O'Beirne and Pfc. Sprott. Sitting L. to R.: Pvt. Brumberg, Pfc. Duprey, Pfc. Purcell and T/5 Berkery.

BAKER COMPANY



2nd Sqd, 1st Plt. Top Left: Sgt. Phillips. Top Right: Cpl. Josi. Standing L. to R.: Pfc. Miller and Pfc. Moore. Kneeling L. to R.: Pfc. Edwards, T/5 Hudie and Pfc. Gatanis. Sitting L. to R.: Pfc. Savala, Pfc. Morris, Pfc. Cole and Pfc. Sharp. Bottom Left: Pvt. Bing. Bottom Right: Pvt. Crabtree.



1st Sqd, 1st Plt. Top Left: Sgt. Hanus. Top Right: Cpl. Sjostrom. Standing L. to R.: T/5 C. Jackson, Pfc. Keith and Pfc. Maldonado. Kneeling L. to R.: T/5 Martinez, Pfc. Builder, Pfc. Brainard and T/5 Erlanson. Bottom Right: S/Sgt. Iden.



Kitchen Force. Top Right: Pfc. Dzialo. Standing L. to R.: Pvt. House, Pfc. Hoyle, Pfc. Long and Pvt. Maze. Sitting L. to R.: T/5 King, T/4 Stear, S/Sgt. Langford, T/4 Jick, T/5 Morra and Pfc. Carlton.



Motor Pool. Standing L. to R.: T/5 Himminghoefer, Pfc. Kile and Pfc. Killmeyer. Kneeling L. to R.: Pfc. Norrid, Pfc. Guay and Pfc. Jorgenson. Sitting L. to R.: T/5 Laughlin, Sgt. Dudley, S/Sgt. Green, T/4 Beatty and T/5 Bass.



1st Sqd, 3rd Plt. Top Left: Sgt. Jirak. Top Right: Cpl. Kinser. Standing L. to R.: Pfc. Krout, T/5 Wendel and Pfc. Strosnider. Kneeling L. to R.: Pfc. Polit, Pvt. Feigel and Pvt. Williams. Sitting L. to R.: Pfc. Hannon, Pvt. Obar, Pfc. Villaloboz and T/4 E. Johnson.



3rd Sqd, 2nd Plt. Top Left: Sgt. Kellum. Top Right: Cpl. Seidelman. Standing L. to R.: Pfc. Nelson and Pfc. Banker. Kneeling L. to R.: Pfc. Glunt, Pfc. Woessner, T/5 Larson and Pfc. Johansen. Sitting L. to R.: T/5 E. Hall, Pfc. Fekeith, Pfc. Shrum, Pfc. Banks and T/5 Paulo. Bottom Left: S/Sgt. Plowman. Bottom Right: S/Sgt. Treloar.



3rd Sqd, 3rd Plt. Top Left: Sgt. Nedrick. Top Right: Cpl. Burns. Standing L. to R.: Pfc. Padgett and Pfc. Jensen. Kneeling L. to R.: T/5 Zoss, Pvt. Walker and Pfc. Strahm. Sitting L. to R.: Pfc. Anderson, Pfc. Monzula, Pvt. Dellospedale, T/5 J. Reynolds and T/5 Samaneigo.



1st Sqd, 1st Plt. Top Left: Sgt. Grossman. Top Right: Cpl. Felicone. Standing L. to R.: Pfc. Weller and T/5 Beyer. Kneeling L. to R.: Pfc. Beidler, Pvt. Radziewicz and Pfc. Restante. Sitting: Pfc. Kaliszewski, T/4 Rigdon, Pfc. Copp and T/5 Buerger.



3rd Sqd, 1st Plt. Top Left: Sgt. Shreiner. Top Right: Cpl. Shreger. Standing L. to R.: Pfc. Gomez and T/5 Wynkoop. Kneeling L. to R.: T/4 Maki, Pfc. Bernstein, Pfc. Brown and Pfc. Turner. Sitting L. to R.: Pfc. Fitchett, Pfc. Wykle, Pfc. Meredith, Pfc. K. V. Smith and Pfc. Quaranta.



1st Sqd, 2nd Plt. Top Left: Sgt. H. Johnson. Top Right: Cpl. Head. Standing L. to R.: Pvt. Bill and Pfc. Waychunas. Kneeling L. to R.: T/5 White, T/4 Peterson, Pfc. A. Johnson and Pvt. Materese. Sitting L. to R.: Pfc. Damron, Pfc. Null, Pfc. Allen, Pfc. Maus and Pfc. Webb.



2nd Sqd, 3rd Plt. Top Left: Sgt. Tolchinsky. Top Center: S Sgt. Fritz. Top Right: T/5 Mattson. Standing L. to R.: T/4 Murphy and Pfc. Hack. Kneeling L. to R.: Pfc. Howell, Pfc. C. McCrackin and Pfc. Ewell. Sitting L. to R.: Pfc. Jaurez, Pfc. Froreich, Pfc. Karlovich and Pfc. Caverly.



3rd Sqd, 3rd Plt. Top Left: Sgt. Kall. Top Right: Cpl. Jenkins. Standing L. to R.: T/5 Pleasant, Pfc. Scatta and Pfc. Onnela. Kneeling L. to R.: Pvt. Hale, Pfc. Billingsly, Pfc. Perry and Pfc. T. McCrackin. Sitting L. to R.: Pfc. Henry, Pfc. Anderson, T/5 Leiker, Pfc. Hall and T/5 Warcup.



"Baker Company At Work."



"Completed Bridge."



Mortar Squad. Standing L. to R.: Cpl. Josi, T/5 Hudic, Pfc. Miller and Pfc. Gatanis. Kneeling L. to R.: Pfc. Nigro and Pfc. Cole.



2nd Sqd, 2nd Plt. Top Left: Sgt. Flynn. Top Right: Cpl. Robinson. Standing L. to R.: Pfc. Hamilin and T/5 Walker. Kneeling L. to R.: T/5 Marashin, Pfc. Eakins and Pfc. L. A. Smith. Sitting L. to R.: T/5 E. Jackson, Pfc. Shedd, T/4 Ponder and Pfc. Yeager.



2nd Platoon.



3rd Sqd, 2nd Plt. Top Left: Sgt. LaRosa. Top Right: Cpl. Malon. Standing L. to R.: T/5 Froom, T/5 Lussier and Pfc. Benavides. Kneeling L. to R.: Pfc. Minch, Pfc. Harp, Pfc. Muller and Pvt. Strickland. Sitting L. to R.: Pvt. Kandle, Pfc. Erich, Pfc. Shannon and Pfc. Owens. Bottom Center: S/Sgt. McDaniels.



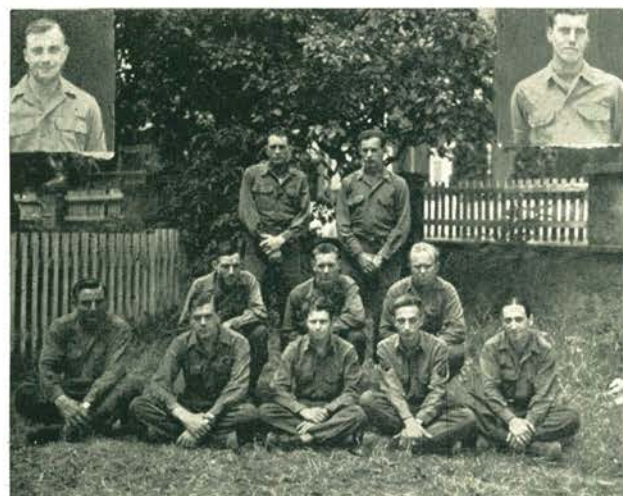
1st Sqd, 3rd Plt. Top Left: Sgt. Dean. Top Right: Cpl. Veronda. Standing L. to R.: Pfc. McGrath and Pfc. Abrams. Kneeling L. to R.: Pvt. Bell, Pfc. Tenorio and Pfc. Barr. Sitting L. to R.: T/5 Hebert, Pfc. Hogan, Pfc. Opferman, Pfc. Roetter and T/4 Overcash.



Upper Left: Motor Pool. Kneeling L. to R.: T/5 Grimm, S/Sgt. Youngmeyer and T/5 Walker. Sitting L. to R.: Pfc. Porter, Sgt. Matta, Pfc. Buchholz and T/4 Godell.

Upper Right: Company Supply. Standing L. to R.: S/Sgt. Westermann and Pfc. Reynolds. Sitting L. to R.: Pfc. Helgeson, Pfc. Stagner and Pfc. Pflaum.

Left: Kitchen Forge. Standing L. to R.: Pfc. Yore and Pfc. Thomas. Kneeling L. to R.: Pvt. Ortega, Pfc. Flanigan, Pfc. Mayorga and Pfc. Stevens. Sitting L. to R.: T/5 Gomoll, T/4 Dock, T/4 Taylor, T/4 Look and T/5 Tapio.



3rd Sqd, 1st Plt. Top Left: Sgt. Skibitzki. Top Right: Cpl. Waters. Standing L. to R.: Pfc. Leslie and Pfc. Rerecich. Kneeling L. to R.: T/5 E. Smith, Pfc. Grub and Pvt. Willingham. Sitting L. to R.: Pfc. Straub, Pfc. Cowan, Pfc. Diggs, T/5 Berndt and Pvt. Schustman.



2nd Sqd, 1st Plt. Top Left: Sgt. Rea. Standing L. to R.: Pfc. Cunningham and Pfc. Shelley. Kneeling L. to R.: T/5 Frank, Pfc. Sandusky, Pvt. J. Johnson and Pfc. J. Hall. Sitting L. to R.: Pvt. Stein, Pvt. DeLauder and T/5 Richards. Bottom Left: S/Sgt. Getz.



Upper Left: Mortar Sqd, 1st Plt. Standing L. to R.: Pfc. Leslie, T/5 Berndt, T/5 Richards and Pfc. Cunningham. Kneeling L. to R.: Sgt. Rea and T/5 Beyer.



Upper Right: Mortar Squad. Standing L. to R.: Sgt. Kellum, Pfc. Glunt, T/5 Larson, Pfc. Woessner and Cpl. Seidelman. Sitting L. to R.: Pfc. Johansen, Pfc. Fekeith, Pfc. Banker and T/5 Paulo.

Right: 1st Sqd, 3rd Plt. Standing L. to R.: Pfc. Reynolds, Pvt. Obar, Pfc. Burney, T/5 Nedrick, Pvt. Villaloboz, Pvt. Wallace, T/4 Johnson and Cpl. Jirack. Sitting L. to R.: Sgt. Torigian and Pfc. Strosnider.



1st Sqd, 2nd Plt. Top Left: Sgt. T. West. Top Right: Pfc. Baker. Standing L. to R.: Pfc. Stallard. Kneeling L. to R.: T/5 Meyer, Pfc. Bouchard and T/5 Gotsopoulos. Sitting L. to R.: Pfc. Rhule, Pfc. Volturo, Pfc. Mitchell and Pfc. J. West.



2nd Sqd, 3rd Plt. Top Left: Sgt. Lamb. Top Right: T/5 Petersen. Standing L. to R.: Pfc. Durko. Kneeling L. to R.: Pvt. Craig, T/5 Bouyea and T/5 Boschi. Sitting L. to R.: Pfc. Walsh, Pvt. Jacobae, Pfc. R. White and Pvt. Terrell.



L. to R.: T/4 Schmit, Pfc. Brounce, T/5 Moyer and T/5 Van Winkle., Headquarters Platoon.



L. to R.: S/Sgt. Brahmer, T/5 Vogel and Pfc. Updegraff of Hqs, 3rd Plt.



2nd Sqd, 2nd Plt. Standing L. to R.: Pvt. Mulkerin and Pfc. Haight. Kneeling L. to R.: T/5 Casto, T/5 Eye, Pfc. Johansen, Pfc. Thompson and T/4 Robertson. Sitting L. to R.: T/5 Jokinen, Pfc. Carroll, Pvt. Crabtree and Pfc. Honkala.

GOING HOME



H&S, From L. to R.: Pfc. Woodcox and Pvt. Brown.



Rotation: From L. to R.: T/5 Fleming, T/Sgt. Mayo and Sgt. Stern.

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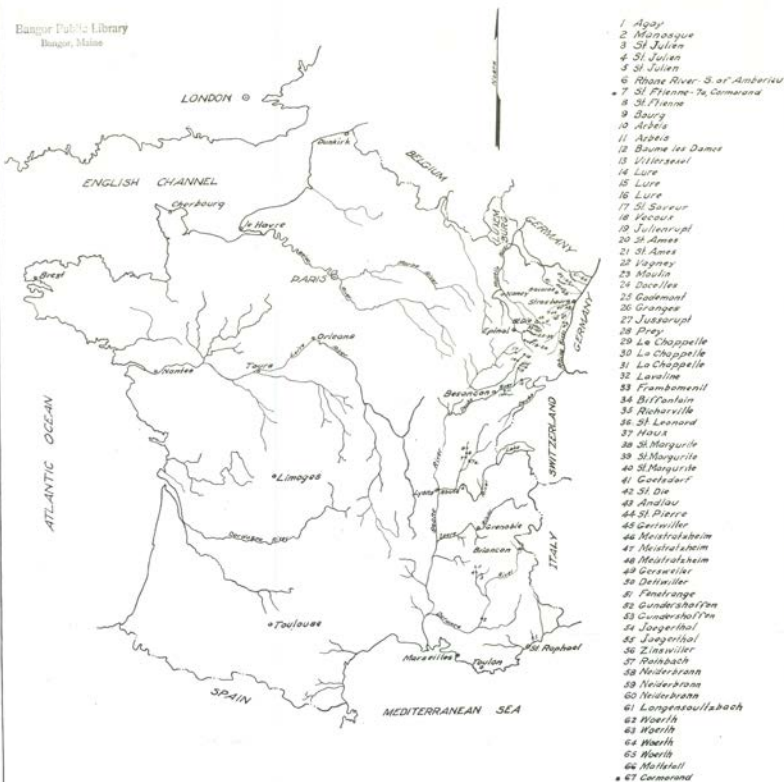
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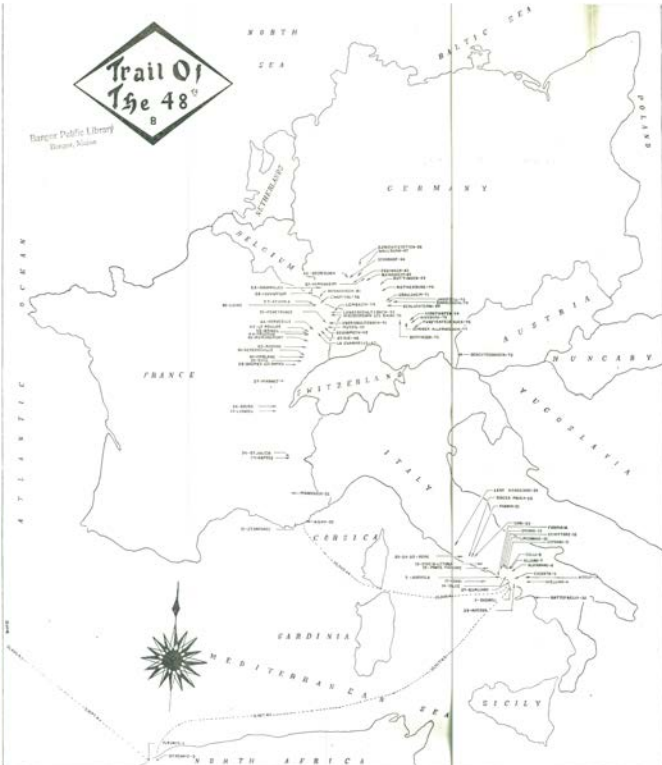


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