ARMY MEMOIRS

WORLD WAR II

WILLIAM B. WHITING

ARMY MEMOIRS

WORLD WAR II

by

WILLIAM B. WHITING

CAPTAIN FIELD ARTILLERY

U. S. ARMY

Serial Number 0464682

"ARTILLERY PROMPTLY IMPRESSED FRIEND AND FOE ALIKE AS THE OUTSTANDING COMBAT BRANCH OF THE AMERICAN GROUND FORCES."

EISENHOWER'S LIEUTENANTS
by Russell F. Weigley
page 127

".... AND IT WAS AT FALAISE THAT THE SUPERIORITY OF AMERICAN ARTILLERY SHOWED ITSELF AS NEVER BEFORE. IT WAS, WITHOUT DOUBT, THE MOST EFFECTIVE ARM OF THE AMERICAN GROUND FORCES. THE GERMANS, WHO DID NOT HAVE GREAT RESPECT FOR THE AMERICAN ..... --- AND ON A ONE-TO-ONE BASIS, EVEN LESS FOR AMERICAN ARMOR --- WERE ENORMOUSLY RESPECTFUL OF THE AMERICAN ARTILLERY."

THE G.I.'S WAR
by Edwin P. Hoyt
page 475

".....THE EMPLOYMENT OF GUNS IN MASS, THE ACCURATE DELIVERY OF CONCENTRATED VOLUMES OF FIRE, AND THE PROWESS OF FORWARD OBSERVERS IN ADJUSTING SHELLS ACCOUNTED FOR ARTILLERY UNITS' GREAT SUCCESS.....AXIS PRISONERS WHO HAD FOUGHT AGAINST OTHER ARMIES TESTIFIED TO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF U.S. ARTILLERY FIRE..."

CLOSING WITH THE ENEMY
by Michael D. Doubler
pages 18 and 19

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER TITLE	NUMBER OF PAGES
List of Maps	1
Foreword	1
ROTC	2
Ft. Bragg	1
Ft. Sill	2
Ft. Bragg - Again	2
Ft. Benning	5
Ft. McClellan	1
Camp Rucker	2
Tennessee Maneuvers	1
Camp Gordon	3
Camp Shanks	1
Embarkation Roster of 802nd FA Battalion July 1, 1944	6
Crossing the Atlantic	2
Wales and England	3
France - August 14 to September 8	4
Lorraine	31
The Ardennes	12
Alsace - The Colmar Pocket	11
Germany	13
Army of Occupation	10
Coming Home	3
Postscript	3
Unit Shoulder Emblems	2
Artillery Weapons of World War II	1
Characteristics of US 105 mm Howitzer WW II	1
Characteristics all Artillery Weapons WW II	1
US Army Field Rations World War II	1
US Army Pay Scale World War II	1
Table of Organization US Infantry Division WW II	1
Commendation Letters	5

LIST OF MAPS

DESCRIPTION	LOCATION
Foreign Travels of the 802d FA BN	After Wales and England
Normandy June-July 1944 (4)*	Before France page 1
Northwest France, 1-13 Aug 1944 (3)	After France Page 1
Northwest France, 14-25 Aug 1944 (3)	After France Page 4
Northwestern Europe, 26 Aug - 14 Sept 1944 (3)	After Lorraine Page 1
France 1944 (4)	Before Lorraine Page 2
XII Corps Right Wing, 10-21 Sept 1944 (2)	After Lorraine Page 2
XII Corps Attack of 22 Sept 1944 (2)	After Lorraine Page 5
Operation Market-Garden (4)	After Lorraine Page 6
Forêt De Grémecey (2)	After Lorraine Page 7
Northwestern Europe, 15 Sept - 7 Nov 1944 (3)	After Lorraine Page 15
Advance in the 35th Div Zone, 8-15 Nov 1944 (2)	After Lorraine Page 20
XII Corps West of the Saar River, 18-30 Nov 1944 (2)	After Lorraine Page 24
XII Corps Operations, 1-20 Dec 1944 (2)	After Lorraine Page 26
Northwest Europe, 8 Nov - 15 Dec 1944 (3)	After Lorraine Page 31
The Ardennes Offensive (4)	Before Ardennes Page 1
The Ardennes Area, 16-25 Dec 1944 (3)	After Ardennes Page 1
Ardennes, The Southern Shoulder, 22-26 Dec 1944 (1)	After Ardennes Page 2
Ardennes - Widening the Bastogne Corridor (3)	After Ardennes Page 3
The Ardennes Area - 26 Dec 1944 - 16 Jan 1945 (3)	After Ardennes Page 12
S.E. France, Reduction of the Colmar Pocket, 20 Jan - 9 Feb 1945 (3)	After Alsace Page 5
The Siegfried Line (4)	After Alsace Page 11
West Central Germany - The Rhineland Campaign (3)	After Germany Page 3
Germany 1945 (4)	After Germany Page 7
Germany - Advance to the Elbe and Mulde Rivers (3)	After Germany Page 8

*Maps taken from the following texts -

1. United States Army in World War II-
   a. The European Theater of Operations,
      The Ardennes: Battle of the Bulge
      by Hugh M. Cole

2. United States Army in World War II
   a. The European Theater of Operations,
      The Lorraine Campaign
      by Hugh M. Cole

3. Campaign Atlas to the Second World War,
   Europe and the Mediteranean.
   United States Military Academy
   Department of History

4. World War II in Europe – An Encyclopedia
   David T Zabecki, Editor
   Garland Publishing, New York 1999

FOREWORD

These recollections of my days in the U.S. Army were written many years after the war. I have tried to make everything that is written accurate, as it happened, based on the battalion history from official daily logs, my numerous letters to my wife, Jeanie, almost daily at some periods, and from some reasonably clear memories that don't seem to fade.

It is important to understand the feeling in this country in 1941. Prior to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 the general population was more or less sympathetic to the British and Europe in general in their unfortunate situation, but we were mostly isolationists or more accurately non-interventionists with no interest in going to war to save them or the rest of Europe. There was also sympathy for China and enmity towards the Japanese for what they had been doing there for several years, but there was no thought of our going to war over China. It has been estimated that prior to Pearl Harbor 70%-80% of Americans were strongly opposed to America entering the war. In fact, there was widespread alarm that President Franklin D. Roosevelt's policies and actions were deliberately dragging the country into the war against its will.

But Pearl Harbor changed all of that and roused our national patriotism. By what many consider the greatest error of the war, Japan had changed a sleeping tiger into a fierce and mighty enemy.

And so several million young men soon were serving in the armed forces, some eagerly, some willingly, and some unwillingly. I was in the willing group, feeling that it was my patriotic duty. I did not enjoy being in the army, and was anxious for the thing to be over and to get out, but I was glad I was in. In later years I realized it was a very interesting and meaningful three and a half years of my life, and over the intervening 40 odd years I have benefitted much from that experience.

For two successive winters, weather was a large factor in my life. From mid-December 1943 to February 29, 1944 I was on maneuvers in Tennessee, and the winter of 1944-1945 I was in combat in Europe. Winter always reminds me of the Battle of the Bulge in Luxembourg and Belgium and the Colmar Pocket. Where I was we had snow on the ground from December 22, 1944 until the first week of February 1945 along with very cold weather. During that time we had two full moons with clear skies two or three nights, and those conditions bring it back to me without fail. You will not be able to imagine what it was like for us unless you read that portion of this account on a very cold winter evening with seven or eight inches of snow on the ground. So make a note to get this out again on such a day and re-read those pages. And, of course, everything was considerably worse for the infantry.

I hope you will find this interesting. □

RESERVE OFFICERS TRAINING CORPS
1938 - 1942

My first exposure to the "army" was as a brand new freshman at Cornell University (Ithaca, NY) in September 1938. Cornell was (and still is) a land-grant college and as such in the 1938 era was compelled to require all male students to enroll in the U.S. Army's Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) training and instruction for two years, known as basic training. I was entered in the College of Mechanical Engineering and was (automatically) assigned to the Field Artillery group.

Training amounted to one afternoon session each week from 1:30 to 4:00. It was an introduction to the army and the field artillery. We had close order drill (marching), and went through the motions of loading and aiming an artillery field piece. The latter was a "French 75" from World War I, with a 75 mm bore. It had large wooden "wagon" wheels and was intended to be horse drawn. At the time it seemed to me to be an ancient relic of a long ago war, but in 1938 that war had only been over for 20 years.

After completing the basic two year ROTC course one could and was encouraged to sign up for two more years for the advanced course. Successful completion of the full four years resulted in one being commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army Reserves.

War in Europe started on September 1, 1939 when Germany invaded Poland. I was still at our summer cottage on Squam Lake, (Holderness, NH) and remember hearing about the invasion on the radio. At the time I did not know how this was to affect me, but I was not unaware of its importance. At the time I was a carefree 18 year old. I went back to Cornell about three weeks later to begin my sophomore year. By the end of that school year (June 1940), the Germans, after months of almost no activity on their western front, had invaded Denmark, and Norway, and in a matter of a few weeks were in the process of thoroughly defeating the French and the British, over-running Holland and Belgium in the process. The French were defeated, and the British were forced (and permitted) to evacuate what remained of their European troops at Dunkirk, and were thus able to stay in the war. It seemed possible that the United States would sooner or later be drawn into this European war, though there were strong feelings for and against. While the general populace (70%-80%) were against active involvement, including Congress, President Franklin D. Roosevelt and some of his cabinet had appeared to have made up their minds that the U.S. must enter the war. In any event it seemed prudent to me to sign up for the second two-year ROTC program so that if we did go to war I would go in as a 2nd Lieutenant rather than as a private, and I signed up for the advanced ROTC program. I did not know at the time that both the Army Air Force and the Navy would be handing out commissions to my class, especially the engineers, as graduation approached in 1942. As things turned out I have always been glad that I signed up for the two years of advanced training and ended up in the artillery.

The advanced ROTC program involved two classroom hours and one full afternoon session each week. The instruction was more serious and included ballistics, trajectories, and of course fire direction with an elaborate sand terrain table, and other aspects of artillery and military training. It also included a six week stint at an army camp between our junior and senior years. The Cornell group, along with similar groups from Princeton and St. Bonaventure colleges, went to Pine

Camp, near Watertown, NY, now called Camp Drum. There was a Regular Army armored division in the main camp area and our ROTC group was in a separate area. We lived in pyramidal tents on wooden platforms. On field exercises we filled all of the roles in a field artillery battery, with different assignments each day. You could be battery commander one day and on KP (kitchen police) the next. In general we lived an army life. We fired French 75's on the firing range with all of us acting as different members of gun crews, and at other times observing and adjusting the impact of the shells in the target area. That was the most interesting thing we did. It was not great but started our preparation for what was to come. We had a good time.

While I was at Pine Camp my uncle, Eugene L. Brine, husband of Josephine Clare, my mother's next younger sister, was with the armored division in the main part of camp. I never managed to get over to see him but one Sunday morning he came to see me. He was a Lt. Colonel in the Regular Army, and he created quite a stir when he came to our battery area and walked down the battery street! He was a very nice man, and had been in the army since about 1917, but unfortunately not destined to play a role in the war, getting a medical discharge the following year.

By the time our six weeks was over, the United States had been proclaimed to be in an unlimited state of emergency, and Germany and Russia were at war.

During my senior year at Cornell, on December 7, 1941, a Sunday, about mid-afternoon, I was in my study working with the radio on when they interrupted the program and announced that the Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, and that meant the U.S. was at war.

We were permitted to complete our senior year. That spring Jeanie and I decided we would get married later that year, depending on circumstances. I graduated the end of May, 1942, and was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant in the U.S. Army Reserves. The army advised that I could expect to be put on active duty in approximately 30 days. □

8-1722

WAR DEPARTMENT

THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE

WASHINGTON

MGL 1348

IN REPLY REFER TO AG 201 Whiting, William Bradford (12-10-41)RA

May 15, 1942

SUBJECT: Appointment under Section 37, National Defense Act, as amended.

Through: Professor of Military Science and Tactics, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.

A 0-464682
R.O.T.C.

To: 2nd Lt. William Bradford Whiting, FA-Res., King of Prussia Road, Radnor, Pennsylvania.

1. By direction of the President, you are appointed and commissioned in the Army of the United States, effective this date, in the grade and section shown in address above. Your serial number is shown after A above.

2. You will not perform the duties of an officer under this appointment until specifically called to active duty by competent orders.

3. There is inclosed herewith a form for oath of office, which you are requested to execute and return promptly to the agency from which it was received by you. The execution and return of the required oath of office constitute an acceptance of your appointment. No other evidence of acceptance is required.

4. This letter should be retained by you as evidence of your appointment as no commissions will be issued during the war.

Inclosure:
Form for oath of office.

By order of the Secretary of War:

Copy for: C. G., A.G.F.
(FA)
C. G., 2nd C. A.
C. G., 3rd C. A.

Major General,
The Adjutant General.

CLASS OF SERVICE

This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.

WESTERN UNION

1201

(30)

A. N. WILLIAMS
PRESIDENT

NEWCOMB CARLTON
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

J. C. WILLEVER
FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

SYMBOLS

DL=Day Letter
NT=Overnight Telegram
LC=Deferred Cable
NLT=Cable Night Letter
Ship Radiogram

The filing time shown in the date line on telegrams and day letters is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination

1942 JUN 20 PM 6 32

AC321 TWS GOVT PAID 3 DUPLICATE OF TELEPHONED TELEGRAM=

WASHINGTON DC 20 436P

2ND LT WILLIAM B WHITING=

CARE M F WARNER 111 ABERDEEN PL CLAYTON MO=

ORDERS ISSUING PLACING YOU ON ACTIVE DUTY FA REPLACEMENT TRAINING CENTER FTBRAGG NC EFFECTIVE JUNE THIRTIETH STOP THAT DATE PROCEED CARLISLEBARRACKS PA TEMP DUTY FOR PHYSICAL EXAMINATION END SPKBR=

TORREY NYC NY.

FA.

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

FORT BRAGG - 1942

In June 1942 I went to St. Louis to visit Jeanie and her family while I waited for my orders. The orders arrived about a week later. I was to report to Carlisle Barracks, Carlisle, PA for physical examination on June 30 and from there to the Field Artillery Replacement Training Center, Ft. Bragg, Fayetteville, NC.

There was a delay of several days at Carlisle because of a spot on one of my lungs, but this was waived by a review group in Washington and I proceeded to Ft. Bragg, arriving there about the 10th of July.

As I stepped off of the airconditioned train in Fayetteville I was greeted by 100 F. heat and high humidity, a preview of many days like it to come. I thought I was in the deep south.

Training at Bragg was intensive. We were grouped together, all reserve officers right out of college. We lived in Bachelor Officers Quarters (BOQ) with an officers mess. We were trained in all of the functions normally performed in an artillery battery by enlisted men. This included gun crew positions and functions, gun maintenance, truck driving day and night, towing and backing with trailers or guns, truck maintenance, and so forth. This was to make us knowledgeable of all of the tasks in a gun battery, except cooks and medics. We also had exercises with gas masks in small frame buildings filled with the then common or expected gases that we might encounter in combat. We had rigid inspections of our quarters. We also had some instruction in small arms and safety procedures at the firing range.

This was my introduction to the new basic U.S. Army artillery field piece, the 105 mm howitzer, with which I was to serve for the next three and a half years. At this time we did not know much about artillery pieces, but it was obviously far superior to the French 75's we had worked with previously. It turned out to be an excellent gun, and was the principal artillery weapon of the U.S. Army in World War II. The shells were 105 mm (about 4 inches) in diameter and 30 plus inches in length. The projectile was a little less than half of the total length, probably 16 inches or so. The projectile nose was equipped with a fuse that could be set for quick, delay, or timed setting.

The training at Bragg lasted eight weeks and was very thorough. It was a good indoctrination into army life. The battery latrines contained no partitions, just long rows of back to back toilets, and rows of wash basins along the walls. The only interior walls were the shower enclosure, about 20 by 20 feet with numerous shower heads. I was introduced to body crabs, chiggers, and scorpions. I was not fond of North Carolina.

At the end of the eight weeks we were transferred to Ft. Sill in Lawton, Oklahoma, for more advanced training. □

FORT SILL - 1942

I arrived at FT. Sill about September 11, 1942. Enroute from Bragg to Sill I had gotten an extra couple of days and gone by way of my home in Ithan, PA, near Philadelphia, to pick up my car and drive to Sill from there. I wanted to have my car as Jeanie and I had been making plans to be married after I finished at Sill. Planning was difficult as I did not know exactly when I would finish nor where I would be sent.

Fort Sill was the headquarters of, and for the almost exclusive use of, the U.S. Army field artillery. It was the center for all research, development, experimentation, test firing of new artillery weapons, methods, and so forth related to artillery, and was also the location of the Field Artillery School. This was World Headquarters for the U.S. Army Field Artillery.

The group I was in, totalling about 60, consisted of reserve officers, mostly 2nd Lieutenants like me right out of college. There were a few higher ranks, 1st Lieutenants and Captains, sent back for refresher. As late as 1940 and into 1941 the light artillery piece of the army had been the French 75 (mm) and it was horse drawn. The new weapon was the 105 (mm) and the artillery was virtually 100 percent motorized. Fire direction procedures were also changing. The officers who had been out of college for five or six years and recently put on active duty needed to be brought up to date. A little over half had come from Ft. Bragg like I did, and the next largest group were from Camp Roberts, California, the west coast equivalent of Bragg. We were in Battery Officers Class (BOC) No. 72. There was a new class every week and the course lasted 12 weeks. There was an identical but entirely separate class each week in an entirely separate area for qualified enlisted men, called Officers Candidate School (OCS), and on successful completion they were commissioned 2nd Lieutenants Army of the United States, a slight but important difference from Reserve Officer. Other branches of the service had similar schools and training, and throughout the arm the graduates and newly commissioned 2nd Lieutenants were unkindly referred to as "ninety day wonders". A 2nd Lieutenant was not a rank of high esteem. It is important to note that the graduates of these schools were to be the core of the fighting leadership, with the troops doing the fighting as opposed to being in higher headquarters, of the U.S. Army in the years ahead.

We lived in wood and tarpaper shacks with concrete floors, each housing six men. They were arranged five in a row on each side of the battery street, with bath and latrine building at one end and an administrative building at the other. We had reveille early (6 AM) and a full day of instruction until 5 PM. On several occasions we had night exercises, including night driving of trucks using only the "cat's-eyes" lights of the trucks and trailers. We had rigid inspections every morning right after breakfast, and our shacks, cots, and personal effects in foot lockers, had to be kept in a most neat, precise, and clean manner. Meals were in a large central mess hall, and there was a recreation building. Toilet and bathing facilities at the end of the battery street were the same as at Bragg; privacy had left my life for the time being.

The course of instruction was directed entirely at the duties of an officer in a field artillery battalion, such as running a firing battery, directing observed artillery fire, operating a battalion fire direction center, surveying, vehicle and equipment maintenance, and so forth. The army expected any officer to be able to fulfill any function within his branch and according with his rank. In our case this meant primarily battery officers. In addition to field exercises there was classroom instruction with

written and other tests to evaluate our performance, although I believe one would have had to do very poorly not to be satisfactory, at this stage of our training. There was no worry of failing.

One week before the course ended it was standard procedure for orders to be posted on the battery bulletin board, indicating each officer's assignment. The class one week before ours all went to desert maneuvers in California, so we had no idea what to expect. As it turned out we all more or less returned to our previous posts, Ft. Bragg or Camp Roberts Field Artillery Replacement Training Centers.

We had learned early that our course would end and we would all depart Ft. Sill on December 1. Jeanie and I had made reasonably firm plans to be married at her home in Clayton (St. Louis), MO on December 4. My orders to Ft. Bragg worked out perfectly, and I applied for and got a ten day leave between stations. In addition, I was allowed six days travel time to drive there from Sill. Jeanie and I were married at 8:00 PM on December 4, 1942, at her home at 111 Aberdeen Place, Clayton, MO, with all immediate members of both our families present. We then proceeded leisurely to Ft. Bragg, where I reported for duty on December 20, 1942. □

FORT BRAGG - AGAIN - 1942

On December 20, 1942, I reported for duty (again) at the Field Artillery Replacement Training Center at Fort Bragg, Fayetteville, NC, and was assigned to the Fifth Field Artillery Training Regiment. I was assigned to temporary duty with one of the batteries. When I reported to my assigned battery commander he was over-joyed to see me, came quickly from behind his desk, at first I thought to greet me, but walked right past me to the duty roster posted on the inside of his office door, erased a name and put my name down as Officer of the Day (OD) for the 24 hour period beginning at 5:00 PM on December 24th. Such is the army - the lowest rank gets the least pleasant duty. For Jeanie and me, married only two weeks, I was to spend Christmas eve and almost all of Christmas day as OD, checking the guard in the battery area, and Jeanie would be alone in the hotel, in Fayetteville, where we did not know anybody. As it turned out, one of the bachelor officers in the battery offered to take over for me after lunch on Christmas day, so we had part of the day together. We did not know that it would be three years before we would have Christmas together again.

The housing situation in Fayetteville and the surrounding area was impossible. Many, many, too many soldiers and their families for too few apartments, houses, or other living accommodations. We lived in the only decent hotel in town (expensive) until Jeanie found a room in a private home, where we shared the one bath with numerous other people. In about two weeks she found a brand new small home, and persuaded the builder to let us have it even though it was not quite finished. She rented the bare necessities of furniture. The house was quite small, living room, kitchen, bath, and one bedroom, on one floor. Cooking was over a two burner table-top mounted kerosene fueled unit, the hot water heater also was kerosene fired and stood in the open in one corner of the kitchen. There were no kitchen cabinets. Central heating for the entire house was a cast iron coal fired pot-bellied stove in the hall. Jeanie made all of the arrangements, got everything we needed, food, furniture, coal, etc,. We considered ourselves very fortunate. Jeanie was magnificent in adapting to the drastic change in her style of living. We had lived quite sheltered, cared for lives up to that point.

It was at this time and place and under these conditions that Jeanie cooked the first meal ever for her. I do not remember those early meals at all, so they must have been all right. Four weeks married, I probably was not too critical. I had from Saturday noon until Monday morning roll call (7:00 AM) off and I do remember one weekend day we made a cake (from scratch, no mixes in those days) and baked it on the flat top of the pot-bellied stove in the hall. It was very good.

One of the things that happened in this house with the rented furniture - I was bitten by bedbugs but Jeanie was not. It took a few nights to figure out that bedbugs were the culprits. We did not want to know where the rented bed had been previously as we had few options.

A Replacement Training Center is used for the basic training of raw recruits (draftees or enlistees) straight from civilian life. This was their first exposure to the ways of the army. It consisted of training in the "basics" of army life, from standing at attention, marching (close order drill), making beds, cleaning barracks, policing the area (picking up litter of all sorts), kitchen police, immunization shots, and many other trivial and important activities The most important, and for some the most difficult, thing to learn was that the army now "owned" them, they had few rights and privileges not given to them by the army, that no order was too ridiculous, and that nothing nice could come to them without the good grace of their officers and non-commissioned officers

(NCO'S). Of course we all had to learn this, given the unquestioned freedom we had enjoyed all of our lives as civilians. Your commanding officers were the givers of all good things, and bad ones too.

It was my lot to be assigned to a negro or black battalion of inductees. There were no integrated units, large or small, in the army of WWII. I think less than 5% of the artillery were black units, and they had white officers and black NCO's. I was in this 5%, atleast temporarily. I did not like it and was uncomfortable the whole time, though I personally never had any trouble with any of them. Most of the harsh and strict treatment was dished out by the NCO's, who were permanently assigned at Bragg FARTC. I did a lot of close order drill with them, as did the non-coms, and they were very good at it. I sort of enjoyed it myself, barking out the commands, which does not sound like me. In close order drill the unit was arranged in four ranks (lines) of 12 to 15 each, and the basic march was in column of fours. To add interest to an otherwise fairly dull activity, someone somewhere had come up with the practice of splitting up the column with each "row" or rank going in a different direction - one to the right, one to the left, one to the rear, at separate commands a few seconds apart, and the fourth continuing straight ahead, all in cadence so they remained in step. At correct intervals each rank was ordered "to the rear March" and as they reached their proper positions relative to each other they were ordered to the right, left, or rear, and if all went well they were all in the proper position at the same instant and marching in the original column of fours. Also, they could be ordered to count cadence - one, two, three, hut, which they shouted out. It was not long before the NCO's made up jingles to use in place of the cadence beat, as did the GI's. (The term "GI" stood for Government Issue, to include everything the army issued from trucks to blankets to you name it. It soon became a generic name for an army enlisted man, but not in a pejorative sense.)

It was not enjoyable duty, and fortunately did not last long. After about three weeks there was a notice asking artillery officers to volunteer for the Tank Destroyers, a fairly recent branch origination. In desperation I applied. In any such application, any higher commanding officer up the chain of command can throw your application in the trash can, and I guess one did, as I never heard another word about it.

Fortunately, my good break came soon after, and I was ordered on January 15 to report to the 802nd Field Artillery Battalion, Fort Benning, Columbus, GA, effective January 18, 1943. □

1. Whiting

RESTRICTED

TPA-Travel by privately owned automobile is authorized. DS for travel is authorized AR 605-180.

HEADQUARTERS
FIELD ARTILLERY REPLACEMENT TRAINING CENTER
FORT BRAGG, NORTH CAROLINA

SPECIAL ORDERS)
NUMBER 12)

January 15, 1943.

E X T R A C T

X X X X

20. The following named officers are asgd to the 802d F. A. Bn, Ft Benning, Ga, eff Jan 19/43, and WP fr Ft Bragg, NC, to Ft Benning, Ga:

Atchd, Unasgd, Hq & Hq Btry, FA RTC, (on SD with orgn indicated)
2ND LT JAMES S. GOODWIN, 01170754, FA, 4th FATng Regt,
2ND LT HAROLD MOSS, 01172562, FA, 3rd FATng Regt,
2ND LT THOMAS C. QUIRK, 0460451, FA, 3rd FATng Regt,
2ND LT ROBERT VANTINE, 0460459, FA, 4th FATng Regt,
2ND LT WILLIAM B. WHITING, 0464682, FA, 5th FATng Regt.

TC will furn the necessary T. TDN. TPA. Under Auth of Transfer Orders No. 2899, Hq Repl & Sch Comd, AGF, Birmingham, Ala, dtd Jan 12/43. FD 31 P 431-02 P 431-03 A 0425-23.

X X X X

By command of Major General CUBBISON:

GEORGE R. NEWTON,
Major, A.G.D.,
Asst. Adjutant.

OFFICIAL:

George R. Newton

GEORGE R. NEWTON,
Major, A.G.D.,
Asst. Adjutant.

RESTRICTED

Lt. Whiting

HEADQUARTERS
802D FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION

Fort Benning, Georgia,
January 22, 1943.

SPECIAL ORDERS)
:
NUMBER 14)

1. 2D LT ROBERT VANTINE 0460459 802d FA Bn is asgd to Btry C 802d FA Bn and will rpt to CO thereof for dy. This O asgd to 802d FA Bn effective January 19, 1943, by Par 20 SO 12 Hq FARTC Ft Bragg NC dated January 15, 1943. Departed old Sta January 20, 1943, and reported for dy with this bn January 21, 1943.

2. 2D LT JAMES S GOODWIN 01170754 802d FA Bn is asgd to Btry B 802d FA Bn with princ dy as Asst Ex O and will rpt to CO thereof for dy. This O asgd to 802d FA Bn effective January 19, 1943, by Par 20 SO 12 Hq FARTC Ft Bragg NC dated January 15, 1943. Departed old Sta January 20, 1943, and reported for dy with this bn January 21, 1943.

3. 2D LT THOMAS C QUIRK 0460451 802d FA Bn is reld fr asgmt to Hq 802d FA Bn, asgd to Btry A, 802d FA Bn, and will rpt to CO thereof for dy.

4. 2D LT WILLIAM B WHITING 0464682 802d FA Bn is aptd Asst S-2, princ dy.

5. 1ST LT VIRGIL C BLUMHORST 0405261 802d FA Bn is aptd Asst Adj 802d FA Bn for the period January 25 - 30, 1943, inclusive.

By order of Lt Col HEAD:

H L BALL
WOJG 802d FA Bn
Asst Adj

OFFICIAL: H. L. Ball

H L BALL
WOJG 802d FA Bn
Asst Adj

FORT BENNING - 1943

On January 20, 1943, I reported for duty to the 802d Field Artillery Battalion, at Fort Benning, Columbus, Georgia. It is customary to report to the commanding officer. In this instance the Battalion CO was not in his office, so Sergeant Major Gwin showed me into the Artillery Group commanding officer, Colonel Hugh G. Elliott. The "Group" at the moment consisted of only one battalion, the 802d. The CO of the 802d was Lt. Col. N. Landon Head.

Colonel Elliott seemed old to me, though he was probably 55 to 60. He looked old for his age, with gray hair, jowls, and was somewhat paunchy. He was regular army but I don't think he was a West Point graduate.

He received me matter-of-factly, but not unpleasantly, as I presented my 201 file to him. An officer's 201 file was a pink card, approximately eleven inches square, that contained an unbelievable amount of pertinent information about the individual officer. He commented that I was a graduate engineer, and then stated "You are our new survey officer" in what I thought was a pleased tone. Thus began my two and a half years as Survey Officer for the 802d FA Bn. (There was a brief interruption a year later. An officer was transferred in from Ft. Sill survey school, and Col. Head made him survey officer and transferred me to A Battery. The new survey officer, Lt. Clifford, did not work out satisfactorily after three months and I was transferred back as survey officer.)

Later that day I met Lt. Col. Head, the battalion commanding officer. He was much more the type and age I expected as Bn CO. He was average height, slender, pleasant in appearance, about 33 years old (which seemed old to me then), was pleasant but somewhat gruff, no doubt required because of his position as CO, but he was not unfriendly. He was regular army, class of 1932 at West Point.

At this point I was a very green, inexperienced, 2nd Lieutenant, with much to learn about the army, army life and customs and procedures, and about all kinds of people. I had much to learn about how surveying was done by the U.S. Army Field Artillery (I had the basic knowledge of this from Ft. Sill and a course in surveying I had had my freshman year at Cornell).

The 802d was a separate battalion, not part of a division, the basic organizational unit of the army. Its guns were 105 mm howitzers. The battalion was being used at the Infantry School at Ft. Benning as a demonstration unit, shooting live ammunition in a number of "canned" infantry-artillery instructional exercises to acquaint the infantry officers-in-training in the proper use and role of artillery in close support of infantry in battle. Fort Benning was World Headquarters for the U.S. Army Infantry branch. This demonstration activity filled up less than one quarter of our time. The other time was spent in unit training and our own field exercises, the latter usually without firing.

The demonstrations for The Infantry School occupied very little time for me and my survey section. Field exercises also used little of our time, and so I had plenty of time to get into my new job as survey officer. An artillery battalion consists of five batteries - a Headquarters Battery, three gun batteries (A, B, and C), and a Service battery. Headquarters Battery was made up of the battalion headquarters people such as personnel and medics, the fire direction group, the survey

section, communications group. Headquarters Battery had three officers as battery officers to run the battery. In addition there were Battalion Staff officers, not assigned to the battery, that were the battalion CO's staff - an S-2 (Intelligence), an Asst. S-2 (Survey), an S-3 (Operations, Training, and Fire Direction), an Asst. S-3 (same duties as S-3), and two Liaison Officers (general utility functions for the CO in training and served as liaison to the Commanding Officer of the unit we were supporting in combat), and two air observer pilots. In addition there was an S-4 who was responsible for all supply functions. Technically he was a staff officer but in addition he was battery commander of Service Battery.

As Asst S-2 I was a staff officer with no responsibilities in a battery. In addition to my survey work I also assisted the S-2 in his intelligence functions, which were not especially important in an artillery unit. I was the junior officer on the battalion staff, and as such got many miscellaneous assignments of short duration.

The day after reporting I was shown my desk in headquarters and started getting settled in, hoping I looked like I knew what I was doing, which was far from the case. 1st Lieutenant Virgil Blumhorst, then a Ln Officer, gave me a very friendly welcome, which made me feel good. Soon the chief of the survey section, Staff Sergeant Jack Fleishman, came in and introduced himself to me. He was dark haired, average height and build, with an easy smile and a kindly manner. He was from Pittsburgh, PA, and was about 27 years old. We hit it off right away.

Sergeant Fleishman would be Survey Sergeant and we would serve together until after VE Day, May 9, 1945. He would be a very good friend to me and an excellent survey sergeant throughout our service together. No other individual contributed as much to make my army life bearable, pleasant, and successful, as did Sgt. Fleishman. He was meticulous in his personal appearance, clean living, straight forward, totally honest and reliable, recently married and a devoted husband. He was very hard working, precise, extremely careful and correct in our survey work, took excellent care of our surveying equipment, and kept a watchful eye on the seven men in our survey section. Some of the rougher elements kidded him for being fussy, a fuddy-duddy, mother-hen type to his section. To me he was as perfect in his job as survey sergeant as I could want. My nature was to be equally careful and precise in our work, and he and I worked together very, very well. We were good friends and always got along extremely well. We served together over two and a half years, and in all that time never addressed each other as anything but Sgt. Fleishman and Lt. (or Capt.) Whiting. At the time it did not seem strange, it was the way things were in the army.

I decided that the first thing I needed to learn was what kind of a survey section I had, what and how much they knew, how good they were, and get to know them as people. I wanted to observe them run a survey with no input from me. I knew nothing about the history of surveying in the 802d. I knew something about surveying and was very strong in trigonometry. I knew the theory well but was not sure just how things were actually done in the field. Very few of our field exercises involved firing, so the first exercise we went on (just a day or two after I got there) I had Sgt. Fleishman conduct the survey as he was used to doing and I observed.

Surveying is basically starting from a known point in a known direction, measuring distance, direction, and relative elevation to successive visible points until you reach the point you are trying to locate by survey. It soon developed that the individual who had previously been functioning as survey officer knew little about surveying and made no attempt to learn more. The

section seemed to know what they were doing, but their methods were not good. The two methods most needing correction were the measuring from point to point with a steel tape, and then plotting the finished survey on grid paper with pencil, protractor, and straight edge. The former was slow and difficult and error prone, and the latter was imprecise.

So I suggested to Sgt. Fleishman that we triangulate virtually all distances, and when finished we calculate the coordinates of each point and end up with the calculated coordinates of the final point, and locate it on the grid from these coordinates. The triangulation idea was accepted without question, even though only two people in the section knew trigonometry. There were strong reservations about the coordinate idea, but Sgt. Fleishman wanted to try it. We had all of the necessary trigonometry and logarithm tables, and so I began trigonometry lessons for the section, which went quite well. It was not necessary that everyone in the section understand and know how to do the calculations, but the more the better, and in the end all but two mastered it. We had ample time for this, as the section was available to me almost all of the time for training.

At some point in this schooling we went on another field exercise and we triangulated the distances and calculated the coordinates. The next morning Sgt. Fleishman came to me and said the previous evening he had plotted the survey as they normally did, being as precise as he could be, and the calculated and plotted points were so close that he was convinced that the calculation method was better. By this time it had become apparent to me that I had an excellent section, particularly Sgt. Fleishman, but also Technician 4th Class (Sgt.) Fletcher, and Corporal Dillon.

Two months after my arrival we had a full-fledged field exercise with actual firing of the guns, including conducted fire by various officers on visible targets. Colonel Elliott was conducting the exercise and Colonel Head and the rest of us would perform our normal battalion functions. General gun battery locations were selected by Colonel Elliott and final locations were selected by Colonel Head and each battery Commanding Officer. Colonel Elliott then selected a suitable observation post about two miles to the front with a view of the firing range impact area, and from there he selected about ten targets three quarters of a mile or so out on the terrain in front of us. We were to get the guns in firing positions, run a telephone communications network, survey the number two gun of each battery and the targets, set up a fire direction center, and when all was ready, Colonel Elliott would direct that any one of the three gun batteries would fire its #2 gun on any one of the ten targets, and so forth. After that, individual officers would conduct fire on any unsurveyed target as selected by Colonel Elliott. One of the requirements of an artillery officer was to be able to bring fire on any visible target within range. This was the fundamental skill expected of an artillery officer. In combat, we did not have to survey in targets, as excellent maps were available in all of the areas I was in in Europe and targets could be located quite accurately from map coordinates for subsequent adjustment.

The exercise went as intended, with all members of the battalion performing their functions. It was a beautiful day, bright, sunny, mild, no wind, ideal conditions for the exercise and our survey. And so the section and I surveyed in the gun batteries and targets, completed our calculations, and turned in to the fire direction center all of the pertinent information. The prospect of the gun batteries actually firing on the results of our survey, with most of the battalion officers and the fire direction team observing (we were all up on the Observation Post on a hilltop), and it being my first such effort since joining the 802d, added a fair amount of tenseness for me. But I enjoyed it more than anything I had done in the army up to that point, and was confident we had done our work well. Sgt. Fleishman was right beside me and I could tell he was nervous too.

When everything was ready, all of the battalion officers except one Executive Officer at each gun battery were at the Observation Post. In addition a few communications people, the fire direction center, and all of my survey section, were assembled on the observation post (OP). We all had our field glasses at the ready, and were clustered loosely around and behind Colonel Elliott as he selected one of the numbered surveyed targets and designated which battery was to fire (one gun only). He then selected one of the officers to adjust subsequent rounds as required until shells effectively hit the target. Once the Fire Direction Center (FDC) had the target's number and knew which battery (#2 gun), they had the necessary information from our survey to know the distance and direction from gun to target, and the difference in elevation between gun and target, and they translated that into gunsight settings. If our work was done correctly the shell would land close to the target, within a normal dispersion pattern for that powder lot and current atmospheric conditions. There was little wind. If any calculation of ours was incorrect, or got transposed incorrectly, the shell would not land as hoped. Of course, the FDC and the firing battery and gun crew had to do their jobs correctly also. An error of one half degree in direction would cause the shell to land 45 yards to the side of the target at the distance we were firing that day (a little over three miles).

The settings were quickly relayed by phone to the battery, and equally quickly the battery said "ready to fire". The Colonel gave the command to fire and a few moments later the telephone operator reported "on the way". We all were viewing the target through our binoculars. At the end of the expected time of flight (about 15 seconds) the shell landed just a few yards from the target. There were two or three seconds of silence and then Colonel Elliott turned half way around to Colonel Head behind him, and loud enough for all of us to hear, and in a tone of slight disbelief, said "Head, that never happened before!". They then fired individually the number 2 guns of the other two batteries at the same target and they both shot in perfectly also. They then fired on other surveyed targets with different batteries with the same success. It was a great day for Sgt. Fleishman and me and our section, especially for me. Starting then, we never had a faulty survey, and we ran many surveys between then and May 1945. It became routine for the survey to be correct and taken for granted. I had found myself a job that I truly liked and that no other officer in the battalion wanted, and I would have it till the war ended.

Subsequently I heard from several sources that 802d had never had surveys that were correct. The officer previously in charge of survey was very well liked by everyone, and admired by Sgt. Fleishman, but the surveys were always wrong. Colonel Head seemed pleased to have me as his Survey Officer, although he never said anything.

When Jeanie and I first arrived in Columbus in January and went to the "available housing" clearing house, we got a two room share-the-bath so-called apartment in a house with people named Hogg. We had a combination kitchen-eating room and living-bedroom room, and we shared the refrigerator and the bathroom with others. It was not very satisfactory, but it always took time to find a decent place. An officer and his wife (Lt. Elmer Manson and Marie) that we had known very briefly at Ft. Bragg had preceded us to the 802d and were living in half of a two apartment house. When the army people in the other half were transferred we moved in, thanks to the efforts of the Mansons. This worked out very nicely. It was a one story bungalow, split down the middle into two apartments, one bath for the two apartments. From front to rear we had a living room, then the bath, a bedroom, and finally the kitchen-eating room. The kitchen was really an enclosed porch converted to a kitchen. By our later standards it was not much of a place, but

compared to what was available it was quite satisfactory. Another 802d officer and his wife (the Vantines) moved into a house three doors down the street, and we were comfortable and happy there. Manson, Vantine, and I were able to share rides to the post every day, and Jeanie had two friends nearby. It was very nice.

At about this time, the battalion was alerted to the fact that it was soon to be replaced by another battalion as school troops. This shook up the battalion as they had been there for quite awhile, they were used to the soft and safe life. The married officers and enlisted men had had time to find living quarters for their wives (and families), and there was a certain smugness in their lot. Quite a few officers suddenly applied for transfer to some school or another and soon left.

On March 30, 1943, the battalion moved from their barracks area in Ft. Benning to a tent camp in a remote area on the military reservation, and the new school troop battalion moved into the 802d's former area. There was nothing there when we arrived so the first thing we had to do was to create our tent camp and make it livable. We never really fully succeeded. To make things even worse, the area was so remote all personnel were restricted to camp from Monday morning reveille until Saturday noon. All in all it was not the 802d's finest hour while I was with it. Our time was spent in training, physical fitness, and in preparation for the Army Ground Forces Test that all units had to pass prior to overseas duty. Occasionally we shot demonstrations with the other battalion, and during one demonstration one gun in B Battery suffered a "muzzle burst", killing two crew members and wounding three others. A "muzzle burst" happens when the projectile explodes immediately as it leaves the tube of the gun, caused by a defective fuse in the projectile.

We stayed in "tent city" until the end of June. We constructed an obstacle course, and everyone was required to go over it daily. We hiked a lot in preparation for the required 25 mile hike that was coming up. We were in good snake country, especially rattlesnakes, which was a little disconcerting to me, particularly during the night exercises in wooded areas. We were all happy to leave that place.

June 10, 1943 I was promoted from 2nd Lieutenant to 1st Lieutenant, a large prestige step. Few things got less respect than 2nd Lieutenants.

We moved back into barracks in the main part of Ft. Benning on July 1st, and continued training there until July 20, when we were transferred to Ft. McClellan, Anniston, Alabama.

I forgot to mention, Jeanie was now six months pregnant. □

RESTRICTED

Symbols: AUS—Army of the United States.
DP—By direction of the President.
AD—Active Duty.
AAF—Army Air Forces.

Special Orders)
No. 161)

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington, 10 June, 1943

EXTRACT

Par. 15. Announcement is made of the temp promotion of the following named officers to the grades indicated in the AUS with rank fr date of this order:

2nd Lt to 1st Lt

William Bradford Whiting 0464682 PA

By order of the Secretary of War:

Official:
J. A. ULIO,
Major General,
The Adjutant General.

G. C. MARSHALL,
Chief of Staff.

© ALTRO SANFORD

FORT McCLELLAN - 1943

Fort McClellan, Anniston, AL, was a one day motor march from Columbus, GA. I was permitted to drive there with Jeanie in our own car. The battalion had something just under 100 vehicles and that made quite a convoy. We arrived 21 July 1943.

Fort Mc Clellan was an Infantry Replacement Training Center, and we were being sent there to fire artillery demonstrations for the trainees. An IRTC was the place they assigned brand new inductees or enlistees to give them their basic training as infantry soldiers. Some basic training is basic to all branches, but most is geared to the branch, in this case infantry. It was a very rigorous three months. In addition to basic infantry soldiering, the recruits must be built up physically and worn down mentally. Of all arms, the infantry must be in top physical condition, able to march many miles with heavy packs, rifle, machine guns, ammunition, and so forth. And they must go through the mental conditioning of converting from civilians to soldiers, of realizing that the army now owns them and they must respond instantly to the most ridiculous or impossible orders without question. As infantrymen they are almost sure someday to be ordered to do something that every fiber of their being tells them is going to get them killed and they must do it. An inductee's first three months in the military is an adjustment.

Demonstration firing required little of our time and we used the remainder in intensive training of our own. Some training covered the same ground for the fifth or sixth time, such as medical first aid. Some was brand new like crawling at night under a barbed wire infiltration course with live machine gun fire a few feet above us and ground explosive charges going off a few feet to the side of us. We knew the army was taking extreme care not to harm us and reassured ourselves that nothing could go wrong.

After being in Anniston about two weeks the post hospital advised us that they would not have room for Jeanie as a maternity patient at her due time in October. (They would have room for Capt. Sparks' wife in October). We had not found a satisfactory place to live, just a room and bath in a very nice elderly lady's very nice house. It was nice but not enough. It had been extremely hot and humid and very uncomfortable for six and a half months pregnant Jeanie. So we decided she must go home to her parents home in suburban St. Louis, MO, to live and have the baby. She would rejoin me when she could. Col. Head gave me leave and we drove to St. Louis about the middle of August, staying overnight in an unbelievably inadequate place along the way. After we had been there a few days, and my leave was just about up, she started having labor pains, and after many hours, Bethie was born on August 20, 1943 at almost exactly 8:00 PM. Bethie weighed only four pounds. Jeanie's mother and I got a very quick look at her as she was rushed to the premature baby incubator in the nursery. I got a two day extension to my leave and then returned to McClellan and the 802d.

It was not a noteworthy time at McClellan, and no one was sorry to leave on October 20, when we were transferred to Camp Rucker, Enterprise, Alabama. □

CAMP RUCKER - 1943

Camp Rucker was (and is) in the southeast corner of Alabama, near the small town of Enterprise, and about twenty miles from the larger Dothan. We were truly in the deep south now, only about twenty miles from the Florida panhandle and fifty miles from the gulf of Mexico.

At the time Enterprise was a small town; only the main street through town and one block to each side were paved. In the "center" of town, at the main cross-street, the townspeople some years past had erected a small statue to the "Boll Weevil" for having destroyed their cotton crops, which led them to switch from growing cotton to growing peanuts, which ended up making them considerably more prosperous than they would have been growing cotton.

We arrived on October 20, 1943, and though we did not know it, we would only be there two months. We continued with more training and night exercises, and started Army Ground Forces (AGF) Tests. Around mid-November, Ruth Dunbar (a good friend of Jeanie's and Lieutenant Diz Dunbar's wife) found a ground floor apartment for us in an almost brand new house that was very nice. Jeanie and three month old Bethie came down by train to Montgomery, where I met them. We then took another train to Enterprise. The people moving out of our apartment were a day or two later leaving than anticipated, so we spent one night on the living room floor of Captain Sparks and wife's small apartment. They had a brand new baby also, born on schedule in October. It was very nice of the Sparks' to take us in. We were all pretty much mutually supportive. Our apartment was very nice, and we did have an enjoyable month there together, although I was away a lot on night exercises. It was my first month of real fatherhood. Bethie was a very good baby, and we were very happy.

My clearest memory at Rucker was the formal inspection of the battalion by the Corps Commander and his staff. For this event we cleaned, polished, and shined vehicles and equipment for a week beforehand. All vehicles and our Table of Organization (TO) equipment articles were laid out or otherwise displayed on a large parade ground, every item in its prescribed place. This included everything - trucks, trailers, guns, kitchen equipment, instruments, and so forth, down to pup tents and tent pegs. It was an unbelievable display. All items that were alike were lined up in precise and prescribed rows over stakes located by our surveyor's transit and driven flush into the ground, specified, tape-measured distances apart. Everything was clean and shiny beyond belief. Truck engines were steam-cleaned, copper fuel lines polished, truck undersides, wheels, tires, everything cleaned. At the conclusion, the Commanding General felt the need to single out the one vehicle that warranted special commendation as the most outstanding. He meant well, but unfortunately he selected the one vehicle (out of the 100 or so) that would not run and had to be pushed onto and off of the field. He did not know that and it really did not matter. This was an exercise so that he could see how well we were taking care of government issued equipment. But we did enjoy this bit of irony.

Three or four months after I came to the 802d the battalion received a new 2nd Lieutenant, a Lieutenant Clifford, from Fort Sill, fresh out of the OCS and then the Survey Officer School. Initially he was assigned to a firing battery. In early November he was made Asst. S-2 (Survey Officer) and I was transferred to A Battery as Reconnaisance Officer. I was not happy at this change, but not terribly unhappy, sensing that it was temporary. Colonel Head did not say it was

temporary, in fact he said nothing to me about it. In any event it did not work out. Clifford did not get along with Sgt. Fleishman and the section, and on the first AGF test after he took over the survey was unsatisfactory. Sgt. Fleishman was most unhappy, and came over to A Battery frequently to tell me how bad things were and how he wished I would come back as Survey Officer.

On December 4th Jeanie and I celebrated our first wedding anniversary. Her father had saved a bottle of the wedding champagne for the occasion, and she had brought it down with her. During and after dinner we drank it all and reminisced and concluded that with all of its army-related difficulties it had been a wonderful year.

I was now Reconaissance Officer of A battery. It was a good battery with good officers (this applied equally well to B and C batteries) and I did not mind the change. The Battery Commander was Captain Harold E. Fleetwood, a nice guy, about 30 years old, 25% Indian, and a good, smart, conscientious officer. We got along well but were never close friends. The other officers were great, Jim Teehan, John Trapp, and Bill Romeiser. We had some good times together under less than the best of circumstances and surroundings.

Early in December we were alerted for transfer to the Tennessee Maneuver Area, and on December 15 we left Camp Rucker for Tennessee, arriving there on the 17th. The night of the 15th it snowed, very unusual for that part of Alabama, and it stayed cold all the way up to Tennessee, with about an inch of snow on the ground. □

TENNESSEE MANEUVERS - 1943/44

We arrived in the maneuver area late on December 17, 1943. The weather was cold and wet, with a little snow on the ground. Our first night in bivouac, the CO of C Battery, Captain Ivy C. Pitman admonished his battery not to grouse about the weather, that they had to learn to "take it", that this was going to "separate the men from the boys". The next morning Captain Pitman was evacuated with frost-bitten feet and we never saw him again.

Maneuvers are the ultimate training exercise. Not the least of which is the training for the headquarters staffs of the divisions, corps, and army, in the many problems they face in actual military operations. For us it was more a conditioning to functioning and living on a continuous basis out-of-doors, coping with the elements in all types of weather. We were to participate in the last four operations (weeks) of the maneuver in progress, then bivouac in the maneuver area for two weeks, and then join the next maneuver for the first four weeks.

It rained and snowed much of the time during the ten weeks we were there, from mid-December until the end of February. The temperature was never much above freezing and there was a lot of mud. We learned a lot about living outdoors in miserable weather, which helped us a year later in Europe, when we had similar but worse weather. There were no buildings to take refuge in, and during the active exercises, which were three or four days each week, the monitors and umpires would permit no fires. Other times we were permitted to have campfires. In addition, nearly everyone could get 24 hour passes from Saturday PM to Sunday PM with truck transportation to Nashville and a bath and a warm room every weekend. New 2nd Lts Bill Corry and John Cox joined us Dec. 24th.

For our second Christmas as a married couple, Jeanie was in Enterprise with Bethie and other wives, expecting that the battalion would return there after maneuvers and holding onto our apartment, and I was camping out in the wilds of Tennessee. Sometime in January it became apparent that we would not return to Camp Rucker and Jeanie gave up the apartment and took Bethie to St. Louis and left her with her parents temporarily, and then came to Nashville and stayed there until maneuvers ended for us about February 28, 1944.

On February 10 I was transferred back to the Battalion Staff as Assistant S-2 and Survey Officer. I was delighted and it was all the nicer because Sgt. Fleishman and the section were genuinely glad to have me back. Considering the dismal performance in surveying in the 802d prior to my arrival, the poor performance under my temporary replacement, and the perfect record while I was survey officer, I think Colonel Head had concluded that as far as he was concerned I was the only one around who could handle the job. I was happy to have him think that, and did all I could to keep it that way. It may have saved my life. In any event, I was glad to be back at my survey job and back with the survey section. They were a good bunch of guys and we got along very well.

We were ordered to Camp Gordon, Augusta, Georgia, and arrived there February 29, 1944. □

CAMP GORDON - 1944

We arrived at Camp Gordon, Augusta, Georgia, on February 29, 1944, and were there until late June. This was by far the best station for the 802d since I joined them (January 1943), especially for Jeanie and me. Augusta was the first southern city where we were stationed that we really liked. Spring seemed to arrive almost as soon as we got there. It was a wonderful spring. Jeanie and I had a very nice, small house, all to ourselves, no sharing anything with others, in a first class residential neighborhood, and we had Bethie with us. Almost all married officers' wives were there, and as a group we did a fair amount of partying with the other lieutenants and wives. It was a nice time for us.

I was back as survey officer and that was where I belonged.

We continued with more AGF Tests, small arms firing, bazooka training, threw a few hand grenades (more difficult than it looks), and generally prepared ourselves for shipment overseas, when and where the army chose. At that time there were a few army divisions in the Pacific area, more in Africa and Italy, and for some reason I think we all assumed we would go to Europe. Many outfits had been sent to England in preparation for the invasion and subsequent fighting in northern Europe.

We were over our T/O (Table of Organization) strength in junior officers (2nd Lieutenants) and some classifications of enlisted men, and this was the time that all those not chosen to go overseas had to be separated out to other outfits. We had final physical exams, shots, and so on. My fitness was questioned because of high blood pressure, but it was waived and I was approved. Each battery CO and Colonel Head kept the people they considered the best, or the most agreeable, or whatever, and the others were transferred out. I was not involved in this selection process, but agreed almost completely with the final selections. This was accomplished without difficulty for those of us who stayed. I am sure there were some among the transferees who were disappointed and some who were happy to get out of an outfit about to be sent overseas. In the year I had been with the 802d I had seen about 30 officers, mostly 2nd Lieutenants come and go for one reason or another. Among the group that stayed with the 802d, I am certain everybody felt we had a first rate outfit. For most of us, Colonel Head was still somewhat of an unknown quantity. He had been under Col. Elliott's domineering shadow until we left Benning. He was only 33 or 34 years old and at times I wondered about his self-confidence, not so much in his ability or judgement.

About June 1st we were alerted that our orders for overseas shipment were imminent. Shortly thereafter we learned that the battalion would leave Camp Gordon on June 24th by train for our POE (Port of Embarkation). We turned in all of our equipment, everything except our personal equipment. All new equipment would be issued to us in England. If we had been going any place but England I would have been very disappointed. I wanted to go to Europe, but not Italy.

My mother and father came to Augusta on June 22 by train. My father drove our car back to their home in Ithan, PA, near Philadelphia, and my mother, Jeanie and Bethie went to Philadelphia by train. The battalion was going to Camp Shanks, near Nyack, NY, 30 miles or so north of New York City on the west side of the Hudson River, as our staging area for our Port of Embarkation, New York City. It was hoped that circumstances would permit Jeanie and me to meet in NYC a few evenings before we shipped out, but this was something we knew nothing about. The time

came when Jeanie had to drive me to the post, and the final goodbyes in that little house where we had had such a wonderful three months were very hard. Bethie was just ten months old.

Needless to say the battalion was getting itchy, as June 6 had been D-Day, the day the American and British forces had landed on the coast of France in Normandy. The beachhead was expanding as many thousands more troops were being landed every day. We knew we were scheduled to go there and were anxious not to arrive too late and miss out. That did not seem likely as by the 20th of June things did not seem to be progressing all that well on the beachhead. Also, I think we all had a feeling of lets get on with it and get it over, and get back to civilian life and on with our lives.

While we were at Camp Gordon there was some shuffling of officer assignments as Colonel Head made his final organizational arrangement for combat. The final command line-up was -

Commanding Officer - Lt. Col. N. Landon Head
Executive Officer - Major Owen L. Sparks
Battalion S-3 - Major Harold E. Fleetwood
Battalion Asst S-3 - Captain Robert A. Miller
Liaison Officer - Captain Robert H. Hurd
Battalion S-2 - Captain Thomas H. Brugh
Battalion Asst S-2 - 1st Lt. William B. Whiting
Battalion Surgeon - Captain Jacob Danish

CO Hdqtrs Btry - Captain David W. Canon
Comm. Officer - 1st Lt. William E. Park
Motor Officer - 2nd Lt. Bruce M. Clark, Jr.
Air Obs. Pilot - 1st Lt. John R. Newcomb
Air Obs. Pilot - 1st Lt. George H. Robertson
CO A Battery - 1st Lt. Frank W. Murphy
Exec. Officer - 1st Lt. John M. Trapp
Recon. Officer - 2nd Lt. William A. Romeiser
Motor Officer - 2nd Lt. James P. Teehan
CO B Battery - Captain Virgil C. Blumhorst
Exec. Officer - 2nd Lt. Richard F. Taafel
Recon. Officer - 2nd Lt. William W. Corry
Motor Officer - 2nd Lt. John S. Cox
CO C Battery - 1st Lt. Karl E. Gemes
Exec. Officer - 1st Lt. Jack H. Dick
Recon. Officer - 1st Lt. Henry F. Dunbar
Motor Officer - 2nd Lt. Wyatt B. Wood
CO Svce Btry & S-4 - Captain Osborne B. Jones
Bn Mot. Officer - 1st Lt. Clarence A. Dermont
Munit. Officer - 1st Lt. Harold Moss
Train Comm. - 2nd Lt. Edmund K. Gibbons

That was to be our line-up until November. When we sailed we had 29 Officers and approximately 450 enlisted men.

There was an interesting thing that happened, not related to the army, that I should mention. The house we were renting was very small, built in front of and off to side of a quite large house, not a mansion but a large house. It was as if the owners of the large house built it for an unmarried daughter or an elderly parent, who could live there, somewhat at home but still have their own home. We rented it from an elderly lady, probably about 60, and the rent as I remember was $60 a month. After we had been there for a couple of months she asked if we were the Whitings that were related to William Borden. Jeanie explained that my father and William Borden were cousins, but had grown up so close together that they were more like brothers. William Borden had received a trust of $750,000 from his father as part of the divorce settlement between his father and mother. In his early twenties, William Borden set off on a journey to India, and during a brief stopover in Egypt became ill and died. His will left all of his money to the Presbyterian Missions. Our landlady was a devout and enthusiastic Presbyterian, and in view of William Borden's generosity she decided to forgive us our last months rent.

Finally, after three weeks of hectic preparation the Battalion was ready to depart from Camp Gordon and we boarded the train at approximately 1000 hours on 24 June 1944. □

CAMP SHANKS - 1944

We arrived near Camp Shanks mid-afternoon on June 25th. I say near as we had to march about two miles to the camp area, wearing our woolen Class 'A' uniforms including neckties on a hot afternoon. We only had wool clothing as we were going to Europe, which was not considered hot enough to warrant our taking khakis (cotton), and this turned out to be correct.

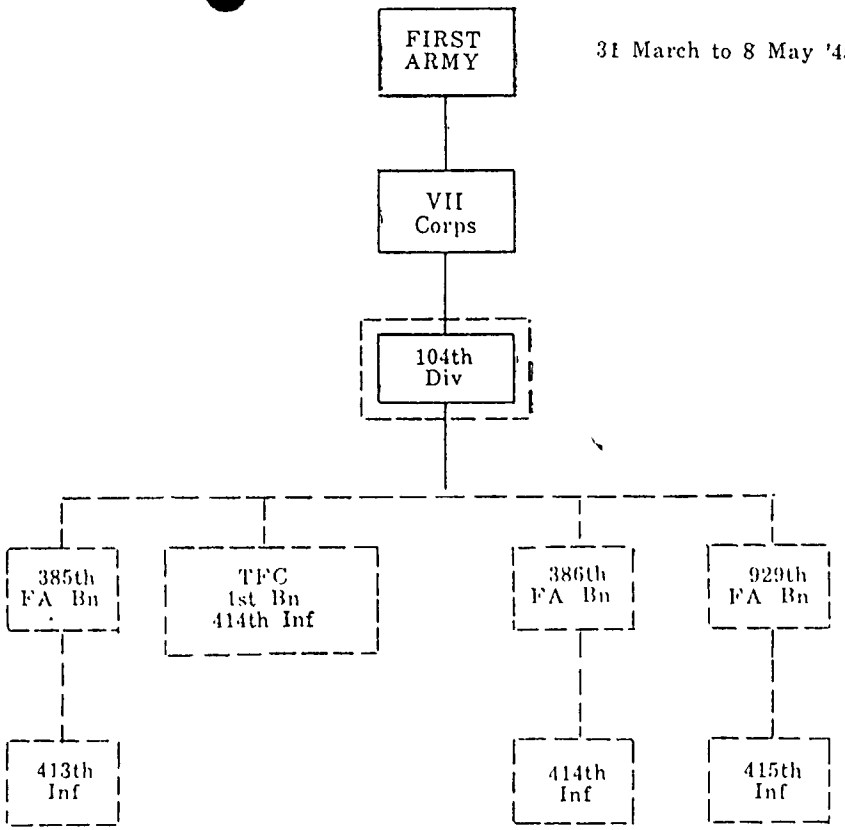
Camp Shanks is near Nyack, NY, about 30 miles north of New York City, on the west side of the Hudson River. Activity at this staging area was mostly keeping everybody busy until time to board ship. One training exercise we did have to do was climb down rope netting on a mock-up of the side of a ship, with life jackets on.

We were only there six days, and the only incident I remember was one short stint as Mess Officer at the large permanent mess hall. We had nothing to do with the operation of the mess, but the transient troops supplied the manpower to keep the eating area clean and set-up. One night I was the officer-in-charge from 10 PM until 6AM to be sure the detail of enlisted men did their work properly, such as mopping the floor, filling the condiment containers on the tables, and so forth. It was a large mess hall, seating 3000-4000 people at a time. I was the supervisor and in that role happened to get into a friendly conversation with a corporal who was part of the permanent station complement. The only part of the conversation I recall was his saying that Herbert Hoover was the cause of World War II. Hoover was head of the relief activities in Europe right after WW I, and if he had not dispensed the food as he had in Germany, different people would have come to power in Germany (Communists), and things would have been much different, or some such reasoning. He was a real, live, communist, the first I had ever met.

I got a pass one night and called Jeanie and we met in New York. The next night she and Ruth Dunbar were going to meet Diz (Dunbar) and me, but we did not make it. That evening we were on our way with the battalion to a ferry in Hoboken, NJ, which took us across the New York harbor to our troopship in Brooklyn. Once alerted for loading we were not allowed to telephone or communicate with anyone outside the camp, so we could not call or get word to either of our wives to tell them we would not be there.

We boarded our ship just before dark on July 1, 1944. On the dock by our ship there was a military band and a Red Cross truck with coffee and donuts, served to us by several young Red Cross girls.

We boarded the ship and got our bunking arrangements, and as soon as I was free for the night I went to my bunk and went right to sleep. □



FIRST ARMY HQ RELIEVED BY NINTH ARMY HQ 8 MAY '45. NO CHANGE IN BATTALIONS ATTACHMENT WITHIN THE ARMY.

EMBARKATION ROSTER
802d FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION
1 July 1944

("x" denotes personnel no longer with organization on 9 May, 1945)

Name	Rank	Duty
Head N. Landon	Lt. Col.	Battalion Commander
Sparks, Owen L.	Major	Battalion Executive
xFleetwood, Harold E.	Major	S-3
Hurd, Robert H.	Capt.	Liaison Officer
Brugh, Thomas H.	Capt.	S-2
Miller, Robert A.	Capt.	Asst. S-3
Whiting, William B.	1st Lt.	Asst. S-2
Danish, Jacob M. MD	Capt.	Battalion Surgeon

HEADQUARTERS BATTERY

(Battery Headquarters)

Name	Rank	Duty
Canon, David W.	Capt.	Battery Commander
Patrick, Clarence	1st Sgt.	First Sergeant
O'Donnell, Edward J.	Cpl.	Battery Clerk
Darone, John	Pvt.	Orderly
Smart, Richard E.	Pvt.	Machine Gunner
xBurns, Richard A.	Tec. 5	Battery Mail Clerk
Roberts, Alva H.	Sgt.	Radio Operator
xCrispino, Phillip	Cpl.	Battalion Mail Clerk
Lynch, Patrick	Pvt.	Driver
xBrooks, Franklin W.	Pvt.	Field Lineman
Monk, George W.	Pvt.	Driver

(Operations Platoon)

Newcomb, John R.	1st Lt.	FA Liaison Pilot
Robertson, George H.	1st Lt.	FA Liaison Pilot
Gwin, Marvin J.	M/Sgt.	Battalion Sgt. Major
Van Loan, Edward C.	T/Sgt.	Operations Sgt.
Hercun, Walter J.	Tec. 4	Headquarters Clerk
Oftedahl, Melvin L.	S/Sgt.	Chief Computer
Prosba, Jacob	Sgt.	Battalion Agent
Tuttle, Henry	Tec. 4	Driver
Carpenter, Lewis A.	Pvt.	Machine Gunner
xCarroll, Roger J.	Pvt.	Wireman
xMcDowell, James R.	Tec. 5	Computer
Zajicek, Jack F.	Pvt.	Computer
Tolbert, Edgar R.	Tec. 5	Driver
Priel, George	Pfc.	Driver
Tomasco, Henry A.	Pfc.	Driver
Remington, Clayton E.	Tec. 5	Driver
Jackson, Jessie E.	Pvt.	Machine Gunner
xWargo, John	Pfc.	Machine Gunner
Bruno, Earl T.	Tec. 4	Horizontal Control Oper.
Katz, Leonard I.	Pvt.	Radio Operator
Urich, Harry E.	Pvt.	Radio Operator
Rowland, Kenneth H.	Pvt.	Driver
Hartley, John	Tec. 4	Vertical Control Oper.
Fleishman, Jack	S/Sgt.	Survey Sgt.
xKehoe, Ralph T.	Tec. 4	Survey and Instrumentman
Rumsey, Bennie R.	S/Sgt.	Survey and Instrumentman
Dillon, Edward G.	Pfc.	Survey and Instrumentman
Rollo, Joseph	Pfc.	Survey and Instrumentman
Batton, Harvey, S.	Pfc.	Driver
Fletcher, Carden A.	Tec. 4	Survey and Instrumentman
Friedlander, Charles	S/Sgt.	Medical Detachment
Kenney, David J.	S/Sgt.	Medical Detachment
McCay, Ralph	Pfc.	Medical Detachment
Miccoli, Martin	Cpl.	Medical Detachment
Nasbe, Roderick	Tec. 3	Medical Detachment
Priest, James	Pfc.	Medical Detachment

(Communication Platoon)

Name	Rank	Duty
Park William E.	1st Lt.	Asst. Comm. Officer
Clark, Woodrow W.	T/Sgt.	Communications Chief
Surrett, Warren G.	Sgt.	Message Center Chief
Uliana, John H.	Cpl.	Message Center Cpl.
Letchworth, John M.	S/Sgt.	Wire Sgt.
Ramsey, Clifton R.	Cpl.	Switchboard Operator
Mahaney, Jeremiah E.	Cpl.	Field Lineman
Lowman, William C.	Cpl.	Field Lineman
Walker, Leon A.	Tec. 5	Field Lineman
Straus, Solmon	Pvt.	Driver
Smith, Connie B.	Pfc.	Driver
Nichols, Carl F.	Pvt.	Field Lineman
Smith, Lamar	Pvt.	Driver
Wright, Jehu	Tec. 5	Switchboard Operator
Vita, William	Pvt.	Switchboard Operator
Haire, Carl W.	Pvt.	Switchboard Operator
Frappier, Arthur R.	Pfc.	Driver
xHorwatt, Steve	Pvt.	Field Lineman
Dewberry, Luke D.	Pvt.	Field Lineman
Whittemore, Henry J.	Pvt.	Field Lineman
xStevens, Kenneth L.	Pvt.	Field Lineman
xCussio, Santo J.	Pvt.	Field Lineman
Van Duyne, Howard C.	Pvt.	Field Lineman
Callan, James	Tec. 5	Field Lineman
xUlrich, James E.	Pvt.	Field Lineman
xVan Winkle, John L.	Pvt.	Filed Lineman
Crooks, Robert C.	Pvt.	Field Lineman
Williams, James H.	Pvt.	Switchboard Operator
Hogsed, Wayne R.	S/Sgt.	Radio Sgt.
Clarke, James A.	Sgt.	Machine Gunner
Kolb, George L.	Tec. 5	Radio Operator
Tucker, James A.	Pvt.	Radio Operator
Ruppeiko, Paul K.	Tec. 4	Radio Repairman
Fleigenspan, Morris	Tec. 4	Radio Operator
Gaboda, James	Tec. 4	Radio Operator
Pirelli, Raymond T.	Tec. 5	Radio Operator
Silverman, Hyman H.	Pfc.	Radio Operator
Walker, Russell R.	Pvt.	Radio Operator
Moore, Roy T. B.	Pvt.	Radio Operator
Patterson, Charles	Pvt.	Radio Operator
Ciardo, Sarro J.	Pfc.	Radio Operator

(Maintenance and Personnel Sections)

Clark, Bruce M., Jr.	2nd Lt.	Battery Motor Officer
Ball, Homer L.	CWO.	Personnel Officer
Dienst, Edward A.	T/Sgt.	Personnel Sgt. Major
Price, Robert O.	Tec. 4	Personnel Clerk
Lannoy, Raymond J.	Tec. 5	Morning Report Clerk
Frenette, Charles J.	Tec. 5	Classification Clerk

Name	Rank	Duty
Wilk, Joseph A.	S/Sgt.	Mess Sgt.
Brown, Nelson J.	S/Sgt.	Motor Sgt.
Kull, Carl C.	S/Sgt.	Supply Sgt.
Sneddon, Peter	Tec. 4	Cook
Warren, Homer D.	Tec. 4	Cook
Gonzalez, Joseph R.	Tec. 5	Cook
Vuley, Ralph J.	Pfc.	Cook's Helper
Hatfield, James L.	Pvt.	Orderly
Beal, Otis L.	Pvt.	Driver
Dunbar, John M.	Pvt.	Driver-Air Ground
Cloonan, Joseph S.	Pvt.	Mechanic-Air Ground
Kyle, Everette J.	Pvt.	Machine Gunner
Raysinger, Calvert L.	Tec. 3	Mechanic—Air Ground
Bowling, William F.	Tec. 4	Mechanic
xKozsukany, Stephen, Jr.	Tec. 5	Mechanic

BATTERY A

(Battery Headquarters)

Name	Rank	Duty
Murphy, Frank W.	1st Lt.	Battery Commander
xKnox, Joe	1st Sgt.	First Sergeant
Shapiro, Morris L.	Cpl.	Battery Clerk
Burgess, Eugene	Tec. 5	Driver
xCallahan, William J., Jr.	Tec. 5	Battery Mail Clerk
xStamey, Lon L.	Pfc.	Driver
Duke, Kenneth	Pvt.	Cook
xZalewski, Henry J.	Tec. 5	Instrument Operator

(Battery Detail)

xRomeiser, William A.	2nd Lt.	Battery Recon. Officer
Tamarelli, Albert E.	S/Sgt.	Chief of Detail
xBowman, Gilbert P.	Cpl.	Battery Agent
Kerney, Ralph C.	Cpl.	Instrument Cpl.
Spearman, Columbus, S.	Pvt.	Machine Gunner
McGrath, Daniel J.	Cpl.	Section Cpl. 1
Arnold, James C.	Cpl.	Section Cpl. 2
Hinton, David L.	Cpl.	Wire Cpl.
Booth, David	Pvt.	Cannoneer
xDenton, Roland M.	Pfc.	Driver
Pollard, Jack C.	Pvt.	Driver
Saine, Owin B.	Pvt.	Machine Gunner
Fisher, Walter G.	Pvt.	Machine Gunner
Darby, Wallace L.	Tec. 5	Radio Operator
Schmitt, Edmund R.	Pfc.	Radio Operator
Samples, Hylon H.	Pvt.	Radio Operator
Novak, Edward J.	Tec. 5	Switchboard Operator
xYork, Shirley D.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Lyle, Joseph H.	Tec. 5	Driver
White, Marlin J.	Tec. 5	Field Lineman
Persutti, Dominic	**Pfc.**	**Medical Detachment**

2

Name	Rank	Duty
Kilinski, Edward J.	Pfc.	Field Lineman
Nedimyer, Robert R.	Pfc.	Field Lineman
Turner, Alvin G.	Tec. 4	Field Lineman
Foust, Gillis W.	Pvt.	Field Lineman
Dalton, Haskell	Pvt.	Field Lineman
xParsons, James F.	Pvt.	Field Lineman

(Firing Battery)

Trapp, John M., II	1st Lt.	Battery Exec. Officer
Boyer, Vernon E.	Tec. 4	Artillery Mechanic
Vanetsky, Alex	Pfc.	Instrument Operator
Cravey, Daniel L.	S/Sgt.	Chief of Section
Harrelson, Frank B.	Cpl.	Gunner
Hurst, Raymond	Pfc.	Cannoneer
Salerno, Carmine	Pfc.	Cannoneer
Ransom, Peter L.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Bass, William	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Palermo, Arthur C.	Pvt.	Field Lineman
Munn, Dallas A.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Humble, Bentley C.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Garland, James H.	Tec. 5	Driver
Furr, Max G.	Sgt.	Chief of Section
xThornton, Bradford L.	Cpl.	Gunner
Rowland, Orville N.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Milo, Henry E.	Pfc.	Cannoneer
Sperling, Benjamin B.	Pfc.	Cannoneer
xDean, Lawrence M.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Watson, Robert W.	Pfc.	Cannoneer
Meyer, Leonard F.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
xPolani, John J.	Pvt.	Field Lineman
Steffy, Harlan E.	Pfc.	Driver
Mitchell, Robert K.	Sgt.	Chief of Section
Germann, Arthur W.	Cpl.	Gunner
Carden, Oscar D.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Buchanan, William E.	Pfc.	Cannoneer
xKelley, William A.	Pfc.	Cannoneer
Morgan, George M.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Shoultz, Johnie W.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Sanders, Clyde A.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
xFraser, Donald A.	Pfc.	Cannoneer
Lamar, Joseph B.	Tec. 5	Driver
xWhite, Lawrence C.	S/Sgt.	Chief of Section
Werley, Dill H., Jr.	Cpl.	Supply Clerk
Violante, Riggerio	Cpl.	Gunner
Gallops, John Z.	Pfc.	Cannoneer
Hightower, Joe E.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Wilson, Broadus G., Jr.	Pfc.	Cannoneer
Wittrock, Joseph C.	Pfc.	Cannoneer
xMatthews, Richard A.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Morris, John G.	Pvt.	Cannoneer

Name	Rank	Duty
Thompson, James L.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Davis, Floyd W.	Tec. 5	Driver
Murton, Douglas B.	Sgt.	Ammunition Sgt.
xBurkholder, Domer W.	Cpl.	Machine Gunner
Armato, Mike J.	Pvt.	Driver
Sansing, Cecil P.	Pvt.	Driver
Fleming, William E.	Pfc.	Machine Gunner
Pinner, William H.	Pfc.	Machine Gunner
xShirley, F. L.	Pvt.	Driver
Gilreath, Raymond J.	Pvt.	Ammunition Handler
Hunzeker, John C.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Levy, Foy R.	Pvt.	Ammunition Handler

(Maintenance Section)

Teehan, James P.	2nd Lt.	Battery Motor Officer
Fabry, Stephen P.	S/Sgt.	Mess Sgt.
Wright, Luther	S/Sgt.	Supply Sgt.
Heuston, Donald V.	Sgt.	Motor Sgt.
Hayes, William F.	Tec. 4	Cook
Petty, James A.	Tec. 5	Cook
Atkins, Walter R.	Pfc.	Cook's helper
James, Henry F.	Pvt.	Driver
Rice, Richard I.	Tec. 4	Mechanic

BATTERY B

(Battery Headquarters)

Name	Rank	Duty
Blumhorst, Virgil C.	Capt.	Battery Commander
Millraney, James F.	1st Sgt.	First Sergeant
Currie, Frederick M., Jr.	Tec. 5	Battery Clerk
Austin, Henry T.	Tec. 5	Battery Mail Clerk
Watson, William J.	Tec. 5	Mechanic
xAbles, Marvin	Pvt.	Orderly
Taylor, George, Jr.	Pfc.	Cook
xToomey, John J.	Pfc.	Driver

(Battery Detail)

Dick, Jack H.	2nd Lt.	Battery Recon. Officer
Guy, William F.	S/Sgt.	Chief of Detail
Burkey, Charles A.	Cpl.	Battery Agent
Hagan, John B.	Cpl.	Scout Cpl.
Knox, Andrew M.	Cpl.	Machine Gunner
Armstrong, John W.	Cpl.	Computer
Asaro, Frank	Cpl.	Scout Cpl.
Webb, Harold H.	Cpl.	Wire Cpl.
Brown, Audy B.	Pvt.	Driver
xPeck, Charles W.	Pvt.	Driver
xGunter, Arthur E.	Pvt.	Driver
Corbin, Pringle L.	Pfc.	Machine Gunner
Rumbaugh, John	Pfc.	Medical Detachment

3

Name	Rank	Duty
Lee, Duward F.	Pfc.	Machine Gunner
Cyran, John J.	Tec. 5	Radio Operator
Scott, George W.	Tec. 5	Radio Operator
Langley, Odell W.	Pvt.	Radio Operator
Morton, Isaac S.	Tec. 5	Switchboard Operator
Rutherford, J. D.	Tec. 4	Radio Operator
xHiller, Nathan, J.	Pfc.	Field Lineman
Graham, Harry K.	Pvt.	Field Lineman
Yarbrough, Shelly L.	Pvt.	Driver
Herron, Leonard W.	Pfc.	Driver
Davies, William D.	Pfc.	Field Lineman
Wilson, Forrest L.	Pvt.	Field Lineman
Brown, Edward	Tec. 5	Driver

(Firing Battery)

Taafel, Richard F.	2nd Lt.	Battery Exec. Officer
Bandell, Gordon W.	Tec. 4	Artillery Mechanic
Phillips, William B.	Pfc.	Instrument Operator
Elwood, Ward	S/Sgt.	Chief of Section
King, Andy W.	Cpl.	Gunner
Burris, Joshua	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Norman, Edward	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Muszynski, John J.	Pfc.	Cannoneer
Lee, Frank E.	Pfc.	Cannoneer
Moffett, John T.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
xDiden, Gilbert T.	Pfc.	Cannoneer
Browder, David C.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Duckett, David W.	Pvt.	Driver
Grissom, Lawrence R.	Cpl.	Chief of Section
Southard, James F.	Cpl.	Gunner
Stapleton, Francis A., Jr.	Pfc.	Cannoneer
Dove, Daniel C.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
xCulwell, William H.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Fowler, Jessie L.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
xCapo, Anthony C.	Pfc.	Cannoneer
Parton, Grady W.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
xSewell, Haywood W.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Wright, Theodore	Pvt.	Driver
Izzo, Pasquale L., Jr.	Sgt.	Chief of Section
Collyer, James W.	Cpl.	Gunner
Rutledge, Clyde S.	Pfc.	Cannoneer
Suski, Chester	Pvt.	Cannoneer
xGreene, Kyle L.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
xDriessen, Thomas E.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Croken, Arthur J., Jr.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Bingham, Willodean H.	Pfc.	Cannoneer
xSingleton, John H.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
xWeaver, Harley H.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Hill, Mitchell S.	Pvt.	Driver
xMobley, Samson	Sgt.	Chief of Section

Brandt, Roy E.	Cpl.	Gunner
Spano, Eugene A.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Adkins, William L.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Vashon, Clarence L.	Pfc.	Cannoneer
Spardone, Daniel V.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
xCooper, Arnold W.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Boling, Willie C.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Cleveland, Robert C.	Pvt.	Driver
Wright, John H.	Sgt.	Chief of Section
xWinstead, J. D.	Cpl.	Machine Gunner
Kemmer, Eugene S.	Tec. 5	Driver
Goforth, Joe D.	Pvt.	Ammunition Handler
xUliase, Joseph	Pfc.	Machine Gunner
Clevenger, Lester E.	Pvt.	Machine Gunner
xSeabolt, Clyde	Pvt.	Ammunition Handler
Rainwaters, Everette	Pvt.	Ammunition Handler
Guess, James T.	Pfc.	Ammunition Handler
Wilson, Wilbur B.	Pfc.	Ammunition Handler

(Maintenance Section)

Cox, John S.	2nd Lt.	Battery Motor Officer
Cariker, Elmo C.	S/Sgt.	Mess Sgt.
Simeone, Joseph A.	S/Sgt.	Supply Sgt.
Allen, Ernest	Sgt.	Motor Sgt.
Liningston, Rosser E.	Tec. 4	Cook
Collins, Jack D.	Tec. 5	Cook
Knighten Raymond E.	Pfc.	Cook's Helper
Coward, James E.	Pfc.	Driver
Allen, J. W.	Tec. 4	Mechanic

(BATTERY C)

(Battery Headquarters)

Name	Rank	Duty
Gemes, Karl E.	1st Lt.	Battery Commander
Mauck, James W.	1st Sgt.	First Sergeant
La Cour, Arthur B., Jr.	Cpl.	Battery Clerk
Metcalfe, Francis A.	Tec. 5	Battery Mail Clerk
Williams, Andrew T.	Pvt.	Orderly
xWhite, Samuel E., Jr.	Pvt.	Machine Gunner

(Battery Detail)

Dunbar, Henry F.	1st Lt.	Battery Recon. Officer
Sampson, Norman H.	S/Sgt.	Chief of Detail
Thayn, Floyd L.	Cpl.	Battery Agent
Freeman, Woodrow W.	S/Sgt.	Asst. Chief of Detail
Grigg, Joseph E.	Cpl.	Machine Gunner
Rehman, William E.	Cpl.	Radio Operator
Jones, Clyde L.	Sgt.	Reconnaissance Sgt.
Tremblay, Gerard E.	Pvt.	Field Lineman
Ellis, Reuben A.	Pfc.	Field Lineman
Cornichuk, Alexander	Pfc	Medical Detachment

4

Miles, Harvey L.	Tec. 5	Machine Gunner
Knight, Clifford C.	Pvt.	Machine Gunner
Anderson, Emmit P.	Pvt.	Cook
Harrell, Herbert	Tec. 5	Radio Operator
Jones, John P.	Pfc.	Radio Operator
Woodland, James L.	Pfc.	Radio Operator
Henderson, James W.	Cpl.	Switchboard Operator
Rumbaugh, Walter A.	Tec. 4	Radio Operator
Garrett, Jesse L.	Tec. 5	Driver
Brooks, Paul E.	Tec. 5	Machine Gunner
Vestal, David W.	Pvt.	Driver
Nicks, Alvin B.	Pvt.	Switchboard Operator
Ullery, Roy E.	Pvt.	Field Lineman
Zimmer, Carl G.	Pvt.	Ammunition Handler
Reed, Thurman T.	Pfc.	Field Lineman
Duckworth, Harmon H.	Pfc.	Driver

(Firing Battery)

Wood, Wyatt B.	2nd Lt.	Battery Exec. Officer
Bullard, James D.	Tec. 4	Artillery Mechanic
Beers, William T., Jr.	Cpl.	Recorder
Couch, Benjamin P.	S/Sgt.	Chief of Section
Hungate, Harold J.	Cpl.	Asst. Chief of Section
Wrenn, John C.	Pfc.	Cannoneer
Sluder, Ronald E.	Pfc.	Cannoneer
Egan, William H.	Pvt.	Driver
McGlynn, John L.	Pfc.	Cannoneer
Ghent, Jefferson D.	Pvt.	Machine Gunner
Bumgardner, Fredirick C.	Pvt.	Driver
Creekmore, Paul	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Griffin, Odie L.	Tec. 5	Driver
Azzarolo, Joe	Sgt.	Chief of Section
Norman, Eugene	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Lake, Glen	Pfc.	Cannoneer
Brewer, Northan	Pfc.	Cannoneer
Hicks, Claude	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Ashburn, James F.	Pfc.	Driver
Washburn, Maynard C.	Pvt.	Diver
xBranstetter, Arthur B.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Whitman, Joseph W.	Pvt.	Cook
Carpenter, Ben F.	Tec. 5	Driver
Stephens, Howard A.	Sgt.	Chief of Section
Beddington, Guy R.	Cpl.	Gunner
Burrow, Jessie T.	Pfc.	Gunner
Peach, Hobert T.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Nichsich, John	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Lawrence, Charles S.	Pfc.	Cannoneer
Fleming, Benjamine A.	Pfc.	Cannoneer
Leatherwood, William R.	Pfc.	Cannoneer
Grove, Aubrey, D.	Pfc.	Mechanic
Steinhebel, Norbert	Pfc.	Cannoneer

Long, Clarence	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Eady, Ezra I.	Tec. 5	Driver
xHall, Baxter H.	Sgt.	Chief of Section
Allen, J. L.	Cpl.	Gunner
Crain, Larue O.	Pfc.	Cannoneer
Clark, Steward	Pfc.	Gunner
xJones, Harold C.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
McLean, Leslie	Pvt.	Gunner
Bartolomucci, Nunzio L.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
xLashley, Angus	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Wenzel, Albert E.	Pvt.	Ammunition Handler
Grant, Cranford	Tec. 5	Driver
Smith, Raymond R.	Sgt.	Driver
Vene, John J.	Sgt.	Chief of Section
Moskun, John	Pfc.	Driver
Gore, Everett	Pvt.	Mechanic
McMichael, Willie	Pvt.	Driver
Starnes, Ernest	Pvt.	Cannoneer
Porras, Miguel	Pvt.	Ammunition Handler
xBlaylock, Alvin H.	Pvt.	Cannoneer
xSmith, James S.	Pvt.	Driver
Rhea, Dow	Pvt.	Cannoneer

(Maintenance Platoon)

X Corry, William W.	2nd Lt.	Battery Motor Officer
Griffiin, James H.	S/Sgt.	Mess Sgt.
Bertele, Charles R.	S/Sgt.	Supply Sgt.
xEvans, William B.	Sgt.	Motor Sgt.
xSmallwood, James C.	Pfc.	Driver
Wilson, Starling W.	Tec. 5	Cook
Scott, Dewey F.	Pvt.	Machine Gunner
Lowery, Erskine H.	Pvt.	Driver
Petty, Lawrence A.	Tec. 4	Mechanic

SERVICE BATTERY

(Battery Headquarters)

Name	Rank	Duty
Jones, Osborne B.	Capt.	Battery Commander (S-4)
Heath, Robert J.	1st Sgt.	First Sergeant
Speiser, Harold T.	Cpl.	Battery Clerk
Manistroski, Joseph	Tec. 5	Driver
Reintjes, Herbert	Tec. 5	Battery Mail Clerk
Capagrossi, Samuel B.	Pfc.	Radio Operator
Bishop, Redwine	Pfc.	Battalion Supply Clerk
Bolea, Patsy	Tec. 5	Mechanic
xGarcia, Moises G.	Pvt.	Orderly.

(Service Platoon)

Dermont, Clarence A.	1st Lt.	Battalion Motor Officer
Gillette, Joseph A.	WOJG.	Asst. S-4
Alinger, Ernest A.	T/Sgt.	Battalion Supply Sgt.
Esposito, Pasquale	Pfc.	Medical Detachment

5

McClintock, William	S/Sgt.	Asst. Bn. Supply Sgt.
Beda, Joseph S.	Cpl.	Ration Clerk
Wills, John T., Jr.	Pfc.	Battalion Supply Clerk
Johnson, Clifton L.	Pfc.	Driver
Hensley, Harry	M/Sgt.	Battalion Motor Sgt.
Raymer, Claude E.	Cpl.	Machine Gunner
Wagner, Irving	Cpl.	Supply Parts Cpl.
Wenzel, Frank J.	Pfc.	Machine Gunner
Grantham, Harvey P., Jr.	Tec. 4	Mechanic
xHall, Everett M.	Tec. 4	Mechanic
xWhite, Johnny	Tec. 5	Mechanic
xLehmkuhl, Edward W.	Tec. 5	Mechanic
Cordaro, Francis T.	Tec. 4	Welder
Grove, Cecil V.	S/Sgt.	Battery Supply Sgt.
Henderson, Raymond W.	S/Sgt.	Mess Sgt.
James, Norman L.	S/Sgt.	Battery Motor Sgt.
Chadwick, Floyd M.	Tec. 4	Cook
Corigliano, Henry A.	Tec. 5	Cook
Booth, Robert C.	Pvt.	Ammunition Handler
Troendle, Carl	Tec. 5	Mechanic
Smulski, Theodore J.	Pvt.	Machine Gunner
Schafer, Woodrow P.	Tec. 4	Mechanic
xKirton, Paul F.	Pvt.	Ammunition Handler

(Ammunition Train)

Moss, Harold	1st Lt.	Munitions Officer
Gibbons, Edmund K.	2nd Lt.	Train Commander
Davis, Floyd J.	S/Sgt.	Battalion Munitions Sgt.
McCloskey, Francis T., Jr.	Cpl.	Battery Agent
Bittner, Elmer E.	Cpl.	Machine Gunner
Carroll, Norman F.	Pfc.	Driver
xSnowdeal, Willis, A.	Pvt.	Machine Gunner
Wrotniak, Richard	Pfc.	Machine Gunner
Fulmer, Wilson E.	Pvt.	Radio Operator
Alvis, Robert L.	Sgt.	Chief of Section
xSmith, Roy B.	Tec. 5	Driver
Sanders, Smithy A.	Pfc.	Driver
West, John H.	Pfc.	Driver
Johnson, William E.	Pvt.	Ammunition Handler
xSexton, Patrick H.	Pvt.	Ammunition Handler
Grzeszcak, Joseph J.	Cpl.	Machine Gunner
Signorelli, Benjamin F.	Pvt.	Ammunition Handler
Brown, William C., Jr.	Pfc.	Cook's Helper
Hanscom, Frank R.	Pvt.	Ammunition Handler
Dempsey, Thomas J.	Sgt.	Chief of Section
Casey, Hubert P.	Tec. 5	Driver
Cannon Herbert H.	Pvt.	Driver
Wyatt, Harry E.	Pfc.	Driver
Ingersoll, Clare E.	Pvt.	Ammunition Handler
xPavlin, Mirko J.	Pfc.	Ammunition Handler
Frazier, Kenneth C.	Pvt.	Ammunition Handler

Chalmers, Robert	Pvt.	Ammunition Handler
Wilcox, John D.	Pfc.	Driver
Walsh, John J.	Pvt.	Ammunition Handler
Brady, James O.	Sgt.	Chief of Section
Adam, Andrus	Tec. 5	Driver
Scott, Russell H.	Pfc.	Driver
xJohnson, Vance E.	Pfc.	Driver
Signorello, Peter J.	Pvt.	Ammunition Handler
Raymer, L. C.	Pvt.	Ammunition Handler
Pyles, John A.	Pvt.	Ammunition Handler
xOwens, Clarence E.	Pvt.	Ammunition Handler
xPence, Clifton	Pvt.	Ammunition Handler
Doucette, John C.	Pvt.	Ammunition Handler
Francis, Everett E.	Pvt.	Ammunition Handler

HEADQUARTERS
XII CORPS ARTILLERY
APO 312, U S ARMY

AG 201.22 12 December 1944
SUBJECT: Commendation.

TO : All XII Corps Artillery Units.

1. The performance of the Corps Artillery Battalions during the present offensive has met the highest possible standards.

2. From the start of the offensive on 8 November 1944 to the present time, each battalion has fought hard and well. The enemy has been not only the German, but also the rain, the cold, the mud—all the concentrated discomforts of a winter battlefield. It has not been easy, but every obstacle has been overcome.

3. Many times the guns have been in such forward positions as to be exposed to small arms fire, but at *all* times the guns have been where they can destroy German personnel and equipment.

4. This has been possible only because each individual made it so. The wiremen laid an incredible number of miles of wire. The forward and air observers put rapidly and accurately the power of our artillery where it could kill the most Germans. Night and day, service trains kept moving an unending stream of supplies. The cannoneers stood kneedeep in mud day after weary day to serve their pieces. This is a proud accomplishment.

5. We stand now on the border of Germany. There is still more rain, still more cold, still more mud, still more Germans to be overcome. But the end is inevitable. It remains now but to accomplish this final mission in the same magnificent manner that the Corps Artillery has made its standard.

S&T JOHN M. LENTZ,
Brigadier General, U. S. Army,
Commanding.

6

CROSSING THE ATLANTIC - 1944

When I wakened in the morning (1 July 1944) we were already out at sea. After boarding the evening before and depositing my gear in my assigned cabin, I took a quick look around the ship, and since I had no duties that night, I went to bed and right off to sleep, even with all of the excitement and the others in my cabin. I heard nothing all night and when I awoke I got up right away. I went out on deck and we were out at sea, out of sight of land. It was a gorgeous, bright, sunny morning, calm as a mill pond. We were part of a large convoy, with barrage balloons flying above some of the ships. The convoy was in three columns, about 20 or so ships to a column. It was a sight to see! It was said our escort consisted of one cruiser, several destroyers and destroyer escorts, and one baby flattop or aircraft carrier. In the convoy were other transports, freighters, tankers, ships of all description.

Our ship was a French ship, the S.S. Colombie, formerly a luxury liner, small, and now converted to troop transport. The crew were all French.

The officers were in cabins up on the deck, refitted with double decker bunks with matresses, for four or six people depending on the cabin size. We were quite comfortable though crowded. There were no chairs, tables, or other furniture in the cabins, just double decker bunks.

The enlisted men were in large compartments, perhaps one hundred to a compartment. They were on bunks without matresses, arranged three high, with not quite enough room to sit up, and narrow walkways between tiers. Far from what anyone would consider comfort. I was a "compartment commander" with a little over 150 men and 7 officers under me. My compartment included Service Btry, half of C Btry, and 40 men from another outfit. The officers were Lieutenants Moss, Dermont, Wood, Clark, Gibbons, and two from the other outfit. It involved some headaches, all minor.

We shared the ship with two other artillery battalions and a group of air force pilots and crews, a total of about 1800 or so.

All in all we got one of the better ships, I think. We ate in shifts and there were only two meals a day. But the food was excellent and there was a lot of it. Dinner the first night out consisted of fruit cocktail, soup, half a boiled lobster, filet mignon, potatoes, two vegetables, salad, dessert, coffee, and fruit. Breakfasts were along similar lines. We sat at tables and ate off plates, no messkits for us. There were salt water showers available, and fresh water wash basins.The trip was uneventful, no bad weather or enemy activity, everybody could be out on deck during the day, total blackout at night, plenty of card and dice games everywhere on the ship at all times, a relaxing trip. There was a loudspeaker system on board, mostly used for instructions to the crew, and of course in French. Every day at noon it was announced "Il est exactement midi". And of course there were the expected fire and abandon ship drills.

Our route took us across the north Atlantic and around the north of Ireland. About the eighth or ninth day the sea changed from blue to green when we entered the Gulf Stream, and in the afternoon of July 11th we could just make out the coastline of Ireland to our south. On the 12th of July we arrived at Greenock, Scotland, early in the morning, in the Firth of Clyde, another beautiful morning. I could not get over how green the country looked, almost unreal. After we

anchored, two teenage boys in a small rowboat, were just off our ship asking for oranges and other fresh fruit, and a fair amount was thrown to them or near them.

We stayed on board for two days in the harbor waiting for our train, and on the 14th we disembarked. Our train was there, as was a Scots Highland band and a Red Cross Clubmobile with several young, pretty, American girls.

We boarded the train and headed for Wales. □

WALES AND ENGLAND - 1944

Our train was a regular English train, the coaches had eight or so compartments running cross-wise, with exterior doors and windows on one side. We left Greenock about 10 AM and arrived at our destination about 9 PM that evening. Britain was on double daylight saving time so it was still quite light at that latitude. We got off the train at a small city called Abergavenny, in Wales, near the English border. There we boarded double decker buses for the five mile trip to the town of Court-y-Gallen. We were about 25 or 30 miles north of Cardiff.

Our camp at Court-y-Gallen consisted of temporary buildings and Nissen huts with concrete floors, wooden slat beds with straw mattresses and no springs.

Our battalion was assigned to the 33rd Field Artillery Group, who we had known at Gordon, in the XII Corps, in the Third U.S. Army. Our mission was to draw all of our tactical equipment, meaning everything other than our personal gear. This was a large undertaking, but fortunately the people running this operation there were well organized and it went smoothly. All of the new equipment, of hundreds of categories, had to be serviced, preservatives removed (cosmoline ?), tested to make sure of proper functioning, modified as battle conditions had dictated. We prepared for movement to France. We were told it would take about three weeks.

Not only were we on double daylight saving time, we were also at about 52 degrees north latitude, making the daylight hours all the longer; it was light until 11:00 PM.

Every day details of men went out to depots all over southern England and Wales, collecting the many items we needed, guns, trucks, trailers, instruments, cooking equipment, ammunition, and so on. The roads were narrow, especially for our trucks, we were driving on the left side of the road, and almost all roadside highway signs had been changed to be incorrect to confuse any enemy invaders or parachutists, all of which made travel by jeep or truck challenging.

By July 15th we were receiving mail from home, and on that day I received three letters from Jeanie, one each from my mother and Jeanie's mother and father. I was very fond of my in-law parents. They had been extremely nice to me in the two years I had known them. On the 16th I was able to send Jeanie a telegram to let her know we had arrived safely. It was not until the 27th that I received a letter from her stating that she had heard from me.

My section collected all new instruments and other gear, and checked them all thoroughly for proper operation and calibration. Dillon was promoted to Corporal. Sgt. Fleishman had some ear trouble, requiring several days in the hospital, and causing me considerable concern as I did not want to lose him. Sgt. Kehoe had back trouble and I wondered how long he would last. Sgt. Fleishman and I were talking about who might be sent out as a forward observer, and as a Lieutenant I was a probable candidate. He said that if I got sent out he would go with me, but for me not to ask for it. I did not consider it too likely that I would be sent out.

Some of the the American soldiers were doing things in England that disturbed us. One of the airborne divisions that had participated in the D-Day landings on June 6th had been pulled out of combat and sent back to England for rest, replacements, and training after about 30 days of very hard combat. They were reported to be committing all sorts of brutal crimes against Britishers and

Americans alike. There was also considerable friction between white and black Americans soldiers. There was no integration between white and black units. Virtually all black units were "service" type units, not combat units. White American's could not tolerate the sight of a black consorting with the white English girls, as such a thing was unheard of in the states at that time, and there was much trouble over it and other frictions. On Aug 4th Lieutenant Dermont and Sgt Hemsley were in a nearby town, about 2 AM, when a blacked-out jeep went by at about 60 miles an hour. Dermont and Hemsley went after it in their jeep, catching it when some sheep blocked the road. Dermont ordered the four black US soldiers out of the jeep. They bounded out with .45's in their hands, forced Dermont and Hemsley to turn their backs, gun-whipped them, stole their money, took their jeep, and left them lying on the road.

On the advice of a friend I bought a "tanker" combat suit at the PX. It was heavy outer wear, government issue for armored units, lined trousers that came up to mid-chest with shoulder straps, and a lined jacket. Both were very warm and water repellent, and I felt strange buying them in mid-summer. The outfit cost $16. I only wore the trousers a few times, but I wore the jacket constantly after cold weather arrived in November.

After August 1st the war news from Normandy was extremely encouraging, and the Third US Army under General George Patton was advancing almost unchecked, with the Germans in Normandy starting to become surrounded. At that time we were in the Third Army and expected to cross very shortly.

Finally, when we had all of our gear, each vehicle was measured and weighed (with its load), and so marked for the people loading the ships in which we would cross the English Channel. In addition each vehicle had to have painted on its front and rear bumper in a specified location its battalion, battery, and individual number. It was all handled very efficiently, and we had the best part of five hundred of us to do it.

On August 10, at 0430 hours we left Court-y-Gallen by motor convoy for the Southampton assembly area, where, among other things we changed all of our money to French "invasion" francs. This was paper money printed and guaranteed by the U.S. government. At about 0300 hours we were ordered to proceed to the dock area. One of my memories of this was a lengthy roadside halt in a suburban residential area and the homeowners coming out in the middle of the night in their nightclothes and bathrobes with hot coffee for all and friendly conversation.

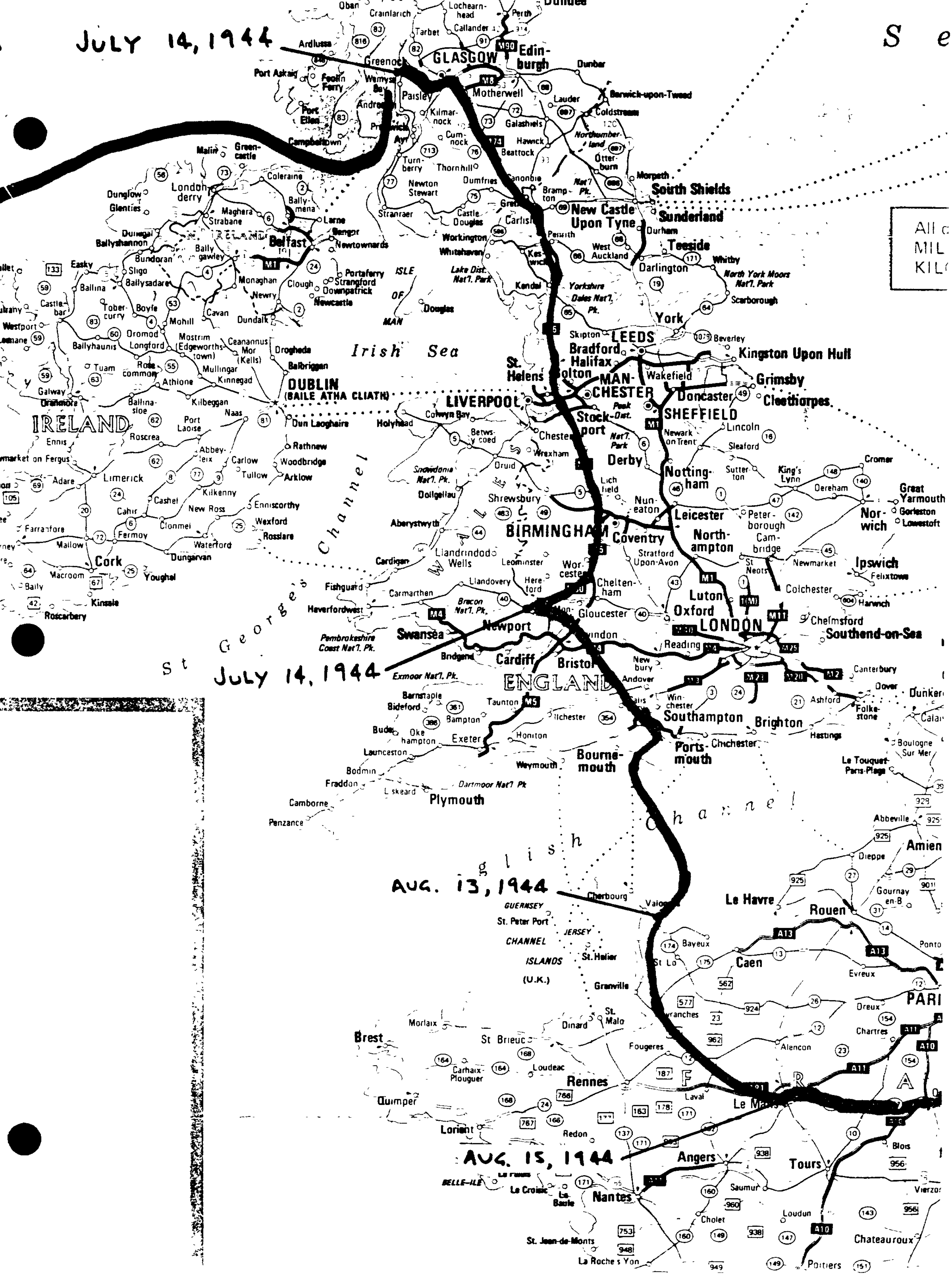
We loaded ship on the August 11th. Headquarters, A, and B batteries were on one Liberty ship, Service battery on another, and C battery on an LST (Landing Ship Tank). An LST had a drop down segment in the bow, making a ramp, lowered after it ran ashore, and all vehicles were loaded backwards and in the reverse order they were to disembark. Vehicles were loaded in the ships as close together as possible, with scant inches between, and it took quite awhile. On Liberty ships, everything is hoisted on and off, and this also took time. The entire harbor area was intensely busy, all doing one version or another of exactly what we were doing. The air seemed full of planes coming and going, but no enemy planes.

We were aboard the S.S. Louis Kossuth, and left Southampton at 0800 hours August 12. We arrived off the coast of Normandy at 2100 hours, at Utah Beach, one of the D-Day landing beaches (Fourth Infantry Division, the division that the 802d was split off from when the division was transformed from the old square division to a triangular division). The next day, C Battery

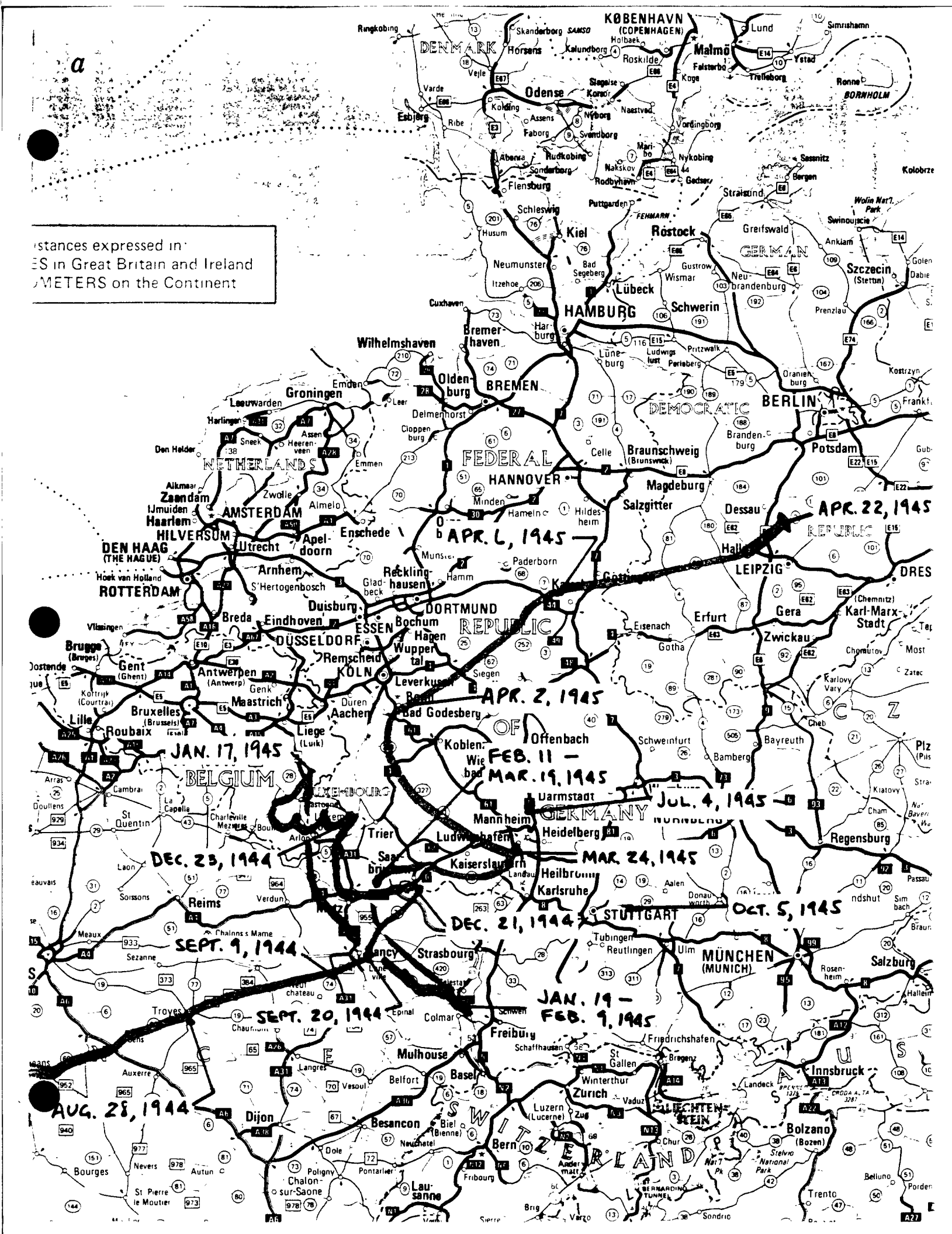
was able to unload directly from their LST on to the beach, but the rest of us had to be hoisted from our Liberty ships into LST's for the final 300 - 400 yards to the shore. It was just another day for the crew of the Liberty ship, no urgency, but they were skillful in the unloading. I remember that evening that they sat down to a meal that under any circumstances would be considered a very large and deluxe meal - steak and the works, pie and ice cream, and so forth. Meantime we opened our individual "K" ration cartons, an individual ration that came in a small box, similar in size to a Crackerjack box but plain olive drab color, and heavily waxed for protection against moisture. It contained a tin of cheese or something similar, a packet of crackers, and a packet of powdered flavoring for our water. The contrast between the Liberty ship crew's living conditions, potential danger, and pay, and our anticipated living conditions, potential danger, and pay, was a shock to my young, idealistic mind. The Merchant Marine crews were not in any way part of the armed forces, could quit any time the wished at the end of any voyage, and were paid about six or seven times as much as the army soldiers.

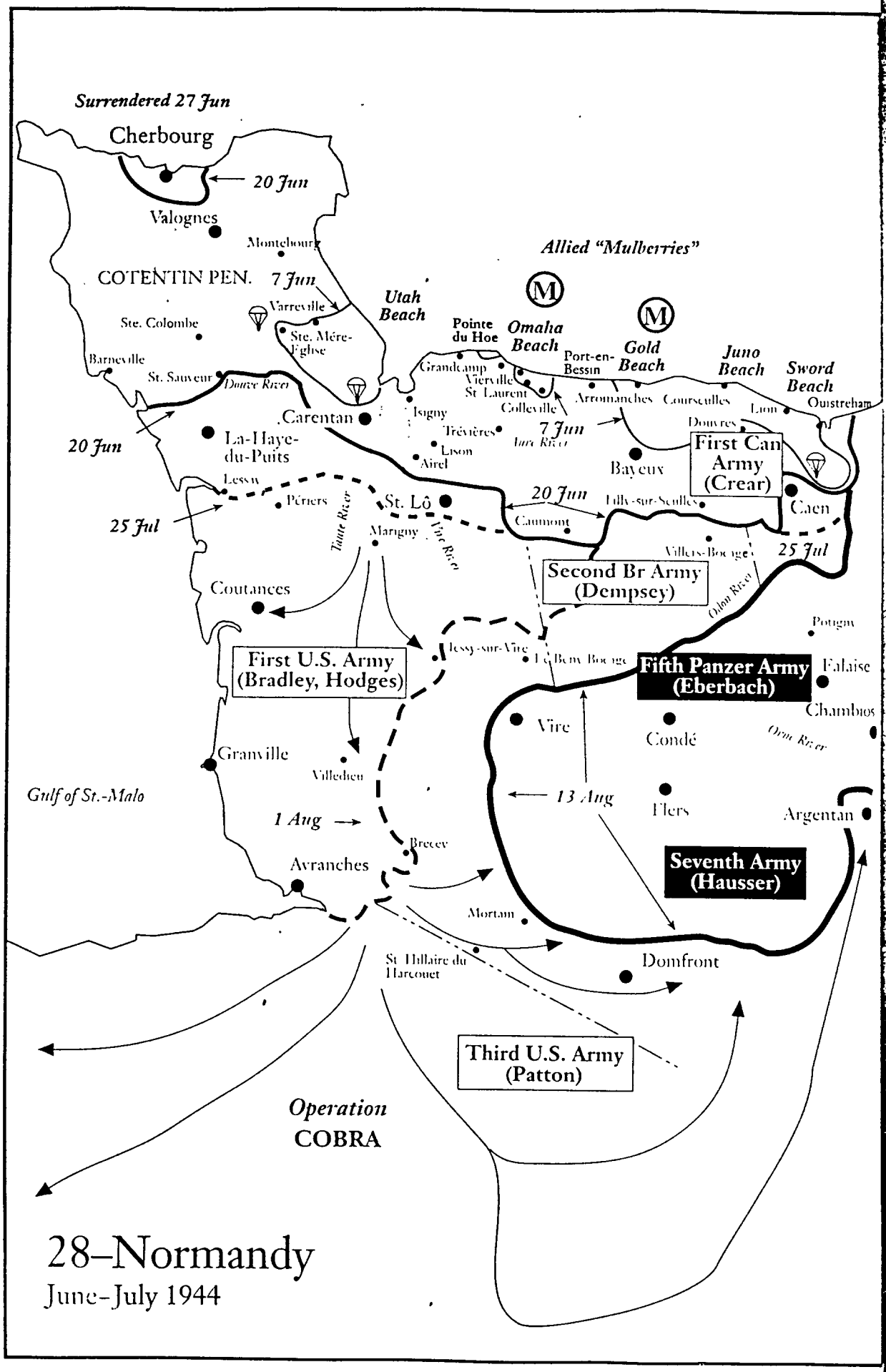
By the afternoon of August 14th we were all ashore and bivouaced near the small town of Foucarville, a few miles away. As we left the beach itself I saw a small sign off to the side of the road marked "minen".

> *We were part of the XII Corps, Third Army, under General George S. Patton. The war situation at this time was that the First U.S. Army had broken through the German lines just east of St. Lo about three weeks previously, driven southwest to the south west coast of the Cherbourg Peninsula, providing an opening through which the Third Army poured its troops as fast as they could. By August 14 the Third Army had overrun the Brittany Peninsula, were as far south as Angers on the Loire river, as far east as LeMans, and had a pincer encircling the German army from the south, driving north to seal off their escape route by meeting the British under General Montgomery's command at Argentan. In fact the Third Army had captured Argentan that day.* □



JULY 14, 1944
JULY 14, 1944
AUG. 13, 1944
AUG. 15, 1944
GLASGOW
Edinburgh
Greenock
Paisley
Motherwell
Ayr
Dunbar
Berwick-upon-Tweed
Perth
Oban
Crainlarich
Tarbet
Callander
Ardlussa
Port Askaig
Campbeltown
Kilmarnock
Cumnock
Turnberry
Thornhill
Dumfries
Newton Stewart
Stranraer
Castle Douglas
Carlisle
Lauder
Coldstream
Galashiels
Hawick
Beattock
Otterburn
Morpeth
Brampton
South Shields
New Castle Upon Tyne
Sunderland
Durham
Teeside
West Auckland
Darlington
Whitby
North York Moors Nat'l. Park
Scarborough
Penrith
Workington
Whitehaven
Keswick
Lake Dist. Nat'l. Park
Kendal
Yorkshire Dales Nat'l. Pk.
York
Skipton
LEEDS
Beverley
Bradford
Halifax
Kingston Upon Hull
Wakefield
Grimsby
St. Helens
Bolton
MANCHESTER
Doncaster
Cleethorpes
LIVERPOOL
Stockport
Peak Dist. Nat'l. Park
SHEFFIELD
Lincoln
Newark on Trent
Colwyn Bay
Holyhead
Betws-y-coed
Chester
Wrexham
Derby
Sleaford
Nottingham
Cromer
Snowdonia Nat'l. Pk.
Druid
Dolgellau
Lichfield
Sutterton
King's Lynn
Dereham
Great Yarmouth
Gorleston
Lowestoft
Shrewsbury
Nuneaton
Leicester
Peterborough
Norwich
Aberystwyth
BIRMINGHAM
Coventry
Northampton
Cambridge
Llandrindod Wells
Leominster
Stratford Upon-Avon
Newmarket
Ipswich
Felixtowe
Cardigan
WALES
Worcester
St Neots
Fishguard
Llandovery
Hereford
Cheltenham
Colchester
Carmarthen
Brecon Nat'l. Pk.
Luton
Harwich
Haverfordwest
Gloucester
Oxford
LONDON
Chelmsford
Swansea
Newport
Southend-on-Sea
Pembrokeshire Coast Nat'l. Pk.
Reading
Bridgend
Cardiff
Bristol
Newbury
Exmoor Nat'l. Pk.
ENGLAND
Andover
Canterbury
Dover
Barnstaple
Bideford
Taunton
Winchester
Ashford
Folkestone
Bampton
Ilchester
Southampton
Brighton
Bude
Okehampton
Exeter
Honiton
Portsmouth
Chichester
Hastings
Boulogne Sur Mer
Launceston
Bournemouth
Weymouth
Le Touquet Paris-Plage
Bodmin
Fraddon
Liskeard
Dartmoor Nat'l Pk
Plymouth
Camborne
Penzance
English Channel
Abbeville
Amiens
Dieppe
Gournay en-B
Cherbourg
Valognes
Le Havre
Rouen
GUERNSEY
St. Peter Port
JERSEY
CHANNEL ISLANDS (U.K.)
St. Helier
Bayeux
St Lo
Caen
Evreux
Granville
Avranches
Dreux
Morlaix
Dinard
St. Malo
Brest
St Brieuc
Chartres
Fougeres
Alencon
Loudeac
Carhaix-Plouguer
Rennes
Laval
Quimper
Le Mans
Lorient
Redon
Blois
Angers
Tours
BELLE-ILE
La Croisic
La Baule
Nantes
Saumur
Vierzon
Cholet
Loudun
St. Jean-de-Monts
Chateauroux
La Roche s Yon
Poitiers
Irish Sea
St George's Channel
ISLE OF MAN
Douglas
IRELAND
N. IRELAND
Belfast
Londonderry
Coleraine
Ballymena
Larne
Bangor
Newtownards
Strabane
Maghera
Dunglow
Glenties
Donegal
Ballyshannon
Bundoran
Ballygawley
Portaferry
Strangford
Downpatrick
Newcastle
Sligo
Ballysadare
Monaghan
Newry
Clough
Easky
Ballina
Tobercurry
Boyle
Castlebar
Westport
Cavan
Dundalk
Mohill
Oromod
Longford
Mostrim (Edgeworthstown)
Ceanannus Mor (Kells)
Drogheda
Balbriggan
Ballyhaunis
Tuam
Roscommon
Athlone
Mullingar
Kinnegad
DUBLIN (BAILE ATHA CLIATH)
Galway
Ballinasloe
Kilbeggan
Naas
Dun Laoghaire
Port Laoise
Roscrea
Ennis
Abbeyleix
Carlow
Rathnew
Woodbridge
Arklow
Limerick
Adare
Tullow
Kilkenny
Cashel
New Ross
Enniscorthy
Wexford
Rosslare
Cahir
Fermoy
Clonmel
Mallow
Waterford
Dungarvan
Cork
Youghal
Macroom
Kinsale
Roscarbery


a
stances expressed in
ES in Great Britain and Ireland
METERS on the Continent
KØBENHAVN
(COPENHAGEN)
DENMARK
Malmö
Lund
Odense
Esbjerg
Kiel
Rostock
Lübeck
HAMBURG
Schwerin
Bremerhaven
Wilhelmshaven
Oldenburg
BREMEN
Groningen
Leeuwarden
Emden
Delmenhorst
Cloppenburg
Celle
Braunschweig
(Brunswick)
Magdeburg
Salzgitter
Dessau
BERLIN
Potsdam
Szczecin
(Stettin)
Greifswald
Stralsund
Neubrandenburg
Prenzlau
Oranienburg
Lüneburg
Ludwigslust
Perleberg
Pritzwalk
Bad Segeberg
Neumünster
Itzehoe
Husum
Flensburg
Schleswig
Rendsburg
Cuxhaven
Harburg
GERMAN
DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLIC
FEDERAL
REPUBLIC
OF
GERMANY
NETHERLANDS
BELGIUM
LUXEMBOURG
SWITZERLAND
LIECHTENSTEIN
AUSTRIA
CZ
HANNOVER
Minden
Hameln
Hildesheim
Paderborn
Munster
Hamm
Gladbeck
Recklinghausen
Osnabrück
Göttingen
Halle
LEIPZIG
DRESDEN
Chemnitz
Karl-Marx-Stadt
Gera
Zwickau
Erfurt
Eisenach
Gotha
Kassel
Fulda
Marburg
Giessen
Wetzlar
Siegen
Wuppertal
Hagen
Bochum
DORTMUND
ESSEN
Duisburg
Eindhoven
Breda
DÜSSELDORF
Remscheid
KÖLN
Leverkusen
Bonn
Bad Godesberg
Koblenz
Wiesbaden
Frankfurt
Offenbach
Darmstadt
Mannheim
Ludwigshafen
Heidelberg
Karlsruhe
Heilbronn
Kaiserslautern
Saarbrücken
Trier
Metz
Nancy
Strasbourg
Colmar
Freiburg
Mulhouse
Basel
Belfort
Besançon
Dijon
Auxerre
Troyes
Reims
Verdun
Sedan
Charleville
Mézières
Cambrai
Arras
Douai
Lille
Roubaix
Tourcoing
Kortrijk
(Courtrai)
Gent
(Ghent)
Brugge
(Bruges)
Oostende
Antwerpen
(Antwerp)
Bruxelles
(Brussels)
Maastricht
Aachen
Düren
Liège
(Luik)
Namur
Charleroi
Mons
Valenciennes
Douai
Laon
Soissons
Meaux
Chalons s Marne
Sezanne
Epinal
Langres
Vesoul
Chaumont
Nevers
Bourges
Autun
St Pierre le Moutier
Poligny
Chalon-sur-Saone
Pontarlier
Dole
Neuchâtel
Biel
(Bienne)
Lausanne
Fribourg
Bern
Luzern
(Lucerne)
Zug
Zürich
Winterthur
Schaffhausen
St Gallen
Bregenz
Friedrichshafen
Ulm
Reutlingen
Tübingen
STUTTGART
Donauwörth
Aalen
Nürnberg
Bamberg
Bayreuth
Schweinfurt
Würzburg
Regensburg
Passau
Landshut
MÜNCHEN
(MUNICH)
Salzburg
Rosenheim
Innsbruck
Landeck
Bolzano
(Bozen)
Trento
Belluno
Brig
Sion
Sierre
Andermatt
Chur
Vaduz
Sondrio
Varese
Como
Milano
Torino
Genova
Savona
Ventimiglia
Nice
Cannes
Marseille
Toulon
Aix
Avignon
Lyon
Grenoble
Chambéry
Valence
Saint-Etienne
Clermont-Ferrand
Limoges
Poitiers
Angoulême
Bordeaux
Toulouse
Montpellier
Nîmes
Perpignan
Barcelona
Zaragoza
Pamplona
Bilbao
Burgos
Valladolid
Salamanca
Madrid
Toledo
Ciudad Real
Cordoba
Sevilla
Malaga
Granada
Murcia
Alicante
Valencia
Tarragona
Lisboa
Porto
Coimbra
Evora
Faro
Ponta Delgada
Funchal
Las Palmas
Santa Cruz de Tenerife
Palma
Ibiza
Mallorca
Menorca
Cagliari
Sassari
Palermo
Catania
Messina
Reggio
Napoli
Bari
Brindisi
Taranto
Roma
Pescara
Ancona
Bologna
Firenze
Pisa
Livorno
Genova
Milano
Torino
Venezia
Trieste
Udine
Bolzano
Innsbruck
Salzburg
Graz
Klagenfurt
Wien
Bratislava
Budapest
Zagreb
Ljubljana
Beograd
Sofia
Plovdiv
Varna
Bucharest
Constanta
Iasi
Cluj
Timisoara
Craiova
Ploiesti
Galati
Brasov
Sibiu
Arad
Oradea
Suceava
Chisinau
Odessa
Kiev
Lviv
Minsk
Vilnius
Kaunas
Riga
Tallinn
Helsinki
Oslo
Bergen
Stavanger
Kristiansand
Stockholm
Göteborg
Malmö
Gotland
Visby
Reykjavik
Dublin
Cork
Belfast
Glasgow
Edinburgh
Newcastle
Leeds
Manchester
Liverpool
Birmingham
Cardiff
Swansea
London
Southampton
Portsmouth
Plymouth
Bristol
Norwich
Ipswich
Cambridge
Oxford
Reading
Brighton
Dover
Canterbury
Calais
Boulogne
Le Havre
Rouen
Caen
Cherbourg
Brest
Quimper
Lorient
Nantes
Saint-Nazaire
La Rochelle
Rochefort
Bordeaux
Biarritz
Bayonne
Pau
Toulouse
Carcassonne
Perpignan
Montpellier
Marseille
Toulon
Nice
Ventimiglia
Genova
Milano
Torino
Bologna
Firenze
Roma
Napoli
Bari
Brindisi
Taranto
Palermo
Catania
Messina
Cagliari
Sassari
Ajaccio
Bastia
Corte
Porto Vecchio
Bonifacio
Calais
Boulogne
Le Havre
Rouen
Caen
Cherbourg
Brest
Quimper
Lorient
Nantes
Saint-Nazaire
La Rochelle
Rochefort
Bordeaux
Biarritz
Bayonne
Pau
Toulouse
Carcassonne
Perpignan
Montpellier
Marseille
Toulon
Nice
Ventimiglia
Genova
Milano
Torino
Bologna
Firenze
Roma
Napoli
Bari
Brindisi
Taranto
Palermo
Catania
Messina
Cagliari
Sassari
Ajaccio
Bastia
Corte
Porto Vecchio
Bonifacio
APR. 22, 1945
APR. 1, 1945
APR. 2, 1945
JAN. 17, 1945
FEB. 11 –
MAR. 19, 1945
JUL. 4, 1945
DEC. 23, 1944
MAR. 24, 1945
OCT. 5, 1945
DEC. 21, 1944
SEPT. 9, 1944
JAN. 19 –
FEB. 9, 1945
SEPT. 20, 1944
AUG. 28, 1944



28–Normandy
June–July 1944

FRANCE - AUGUST 14 to SEPTEMBER 8

The 802d FA Bn arrived in France on August 14, 1944, and that night we bivouaced a few miles inland from Utah Beach, near the small town of Foucarville.

This is a brief summary of events in northern Europe from the invasion until August 14. The invasion of France began on "D-Day", June 6, 1944, on the north side of the Cotentin Peninsula, generally between Caen on the east and Carentan on the west, a distance of about 50 miles. The American forces under General Omar Bradley were from Bayeaux west and the British under General Montgomery (English) were from Bayeaux east. In the American sector the landings occurred on Omaha Beach on the east and Utah Beach on the west. Omaha was very hard going the first day with the outcome in doubt for half of the day, Utah was comparatively easy, or at least not difficult. The British landings over their three beaches, Gold, Juno, and Sword, were also relatively not difficult. Once the forces had fought their way inland a few miles, the Americans were entirely in the Bocage or hedgerow country, a man and nature made (over the years) terrain ideally suited to defense. The British forces had about half hedgerow country, and half open terrain well suited to attacking forces and the use of armor. The Americans enlarged their beachhead and widened it to across the peninsula (June 18), and soon controlled the area all the way out to the Cherbourg tip, capturing that city on June 27. The American forces then turned south all along their front and pressed relentlessly forward, with heavy casualties. After much hard fighting and many casualties by the Americans in the difficult hedgerow country, and a considerable lesser amount of fighting by the British in the much more favorable terrain, on July 24 the Americans reached a point where General Bradley felt he could launch his breakthrough attack out of the hedgerows and release his armor into favorable terrain. This he did a few days later and by August 1 he was streaming General Patton and his (Patton's)Third Army through this opening on the right side of the First Army. Once the breakthrough occurred it was the mission of the Third Army and General Patton to get as many troops through as rapidly as possible, send one corps west to secure the Brittany Peninsula, and send the other two in a wide sweeping arc, the inner corps to sweep in behind the German army still facing north against the British, and meeting the British at Argentan, thus encircling and capturing what remained of the German Seventh Army, probably 100,000 men; the second or outer corps would protect the right flank of the army by securing the east-west line running along the north side of the Loire River. At this time, General Montgomery (English) was still in command of all ground forces in northern France, British and American, and he decreed that Patton's Third Army forces would stop at Argentan, and that the English and Canadian forces would rapidly advance south through Falaise to Argentan. As it turned out, Patton's troops were in Argentan a day early and could have continued north out toward Falaise, but he was ordered to stop at Argentan. It also turned out that Montgomery's forces were not able to, or at least did not, get anywhere near Argentan, permitting about half of the German troops to escape to fight another day. In the following

few days we heard much about the Falaise-Argentan Gap or Pocket. The controversy continues to this day and probably will for some time to come.

In any event, that was what was going on around August 14 when we arrived in France and became combat operational. Both the invasion and battle for Normandy were over. The remnants of the German Seventh Army were fleeing to the northeast for escape across the Seine River, almost entirely on foot, to form a line of defense. In our case we were in the XII corps in the Third Army, and on August 15 were ordered to proceed to the French city of LeMans. The XII Corps was the right flank of the Third Army, and thus the right flank of the Allied armies in northern France at that time. We were to advance as rapidly as possible to the east along the north side of the Loire River and guard against attack from the German forces in the south of France.

On our way from the beach area to LeMans we passed through a number of towns we had been reading about in recent days and weeks, scenes of some very hard fighting, such as St. Mere Eglise, Carentan, Coutances, and Avranches, all showing much damage and destruction. From there on the destruction was slight, as would be expected in fast moving, mobile combat.

An army unit, such as ours, was not merely instructed to go to a certain destination. Because of the great quantity of new troops arriving, plus the considerable troop movement caused by the very fluid battle situation, each unit was given a prescribed road route and a time to start from the Initial Point (IP). Our route took us through a lot of small, rural towns, and we had the distinct feeling that the people were very happy to see us. As we went slowly through the towns, a lot of fresh fruit was given or tossed to us, and there was much waving and cheering. After a confusing trip, with some trucks breaking down, a part of the battalion getting separated, we were all eventually reunited in a bivouac area near the village of St. Mars de Lacquenay, about 10 miles southeast of LeMans, for the night of August 15. The weather had been excellent for several days. There had been no sound of battle so far.

The next day we were attached to the 182d FA group (for administrative functions), who assigned us to the 35th Infantry Division, who would give us all of our tactical orders and instructions. We were to add extra artillery fire to their own division artillery. This was fortunate for us as the 35th had been in action for several weeks and was an experienced, tried, and proven division.

We were in the second, or outer corps I mentioned earlier, and our function was to protect the right flank of the Third army as it advanced to the east toward Germany. Our right (southern) boundary was the Loire River, the advance was lead by the 4th Armored Division, followed by the 35th Inf Division to clean up pockets of resistance bypassed by the armor. On the left of the XII Corps was the XX Corps with a similar troop make-up, and we advanced together.

That is what we did from then until the 9th of September. We met very little resistance, and in fact only fired our guns on the enemy once during the time. Our position areas during this time -

August 15	- near LeMans
August 16	- near St. Calais
August 17-19	- near Chateaudun
August 20	- near Orleans
August 21	- Orville La Jacquinnie

August 22-24	- near Montargis
August 25-27	- near Chuelles
August 28	- near Troyes
August 29	- near Rovigny
August 30	- near Briel
Aug 31 - Sept 8	- Villey-en-Trodes

On the 23rd we fired our first mission against the Germans - enemy infantry and automatic weapons holding a bridge north of Montargis. Our fire was reported back to be very effective.

Nothing big happened during this time but a number of little things are worth mentioning. We had two flying artillery officers in our battalion who flew the Piper Cub observation planes. They did not come from England with us, but instead flew their own planes over, after getting them equipped with extra fuel tanks. They (Lieutenants Robertson and Newcombe) joined us on the 16th. Lieutenant Bill Park and I took "baths" in nearby streams on the 18th and the 27th, our first since leaving Wales, and our last for two months. The battalion received mail for the first time since Wales on the 27th, and I got two letters from Jeanie and one from my father, all written August 8th or 9th.

All during this time there was trading between the Americans and the civilians, - chewing gum, cigarettes, candy for brandy, wine, fresh eggs, chickens, and so forth. We had come from England supplied with cold rations for three or four weeks. For the first two we had "K" rations, which came in a box slightly larger than a Cracker Jacks box. The box, as I described earlier, was dark olive drab and heavily waxed to keep out moisture, and contained a small tin of processed eggs and cheese or bacon and cheese, some crackers, a packet of dried coffee or dried lemon juice to flavor our water, a chocolate bar, a few cigarettes. It soon got very tiresome. The second two weeks we had "C" rations, which were much better and included all of the above plus a small can of stew, which we heated in water in the can in our helmets over small gasoline burning stoves that each section had. On the 19th the survey section swapped with civilians for six fresh eggs and two live chickens. This was prepared and shared by all, and I was invited to join in. It was delicious. Fresh fruit was plentiful and easy to obtain. On dry, sunny days eating outdoors, sitting on your helmet, wasn't too bad, except the yellow jackets were out in strength.

During this time the Third Army overran two German army liquor warehouses. On September 1 every man in the Third Army was given a bottle of brandy, and several days later a bottle of champagne.

During August it was warm and sunny, but as we got into September we had quite a bit of rain. The first night in a new position there was always the debate of whether to put up your tent. There was a certain amount of effort both putting it up and taking it down, and if it did not rain it was all for nought. The night of the 19th there was a surprise rain and a number of people, including me, were caught. I slept in a sleeping bag with a heavy canvas outer wrapping, but rain found a way to get inside. Once ones bedding got wet, given our living conditions, there was much difficulty in drying it, especially if the rain continued into the next day. On the 22nd it rained with strong winds; my tent stayed up but Sgt. Fleishman's blew down, and it rained all the next day. Each enlisted man got one half a pup tent, each officer got a whole pup tent. Much of the time I pitched my tent with my section rather than with the other Headquarters Battery and

Battalion Staff officers, although we were all within 50 or 60 yards of each other. We were supposed to spread out so that if shelled one shell would not injure too many people.

It became apparent that there was not much enemy in front of the Third Army. It also became apparent that the Third Army was running out of supplies, the critical shortage being gasoline. Rumor quoted General Patton (Commanding General Third Army) that given adequate supplies he would be in Berlin in two weeks. It did seem that the war was almost over.

To our north, Paris was liberated by the US First Army in late August.

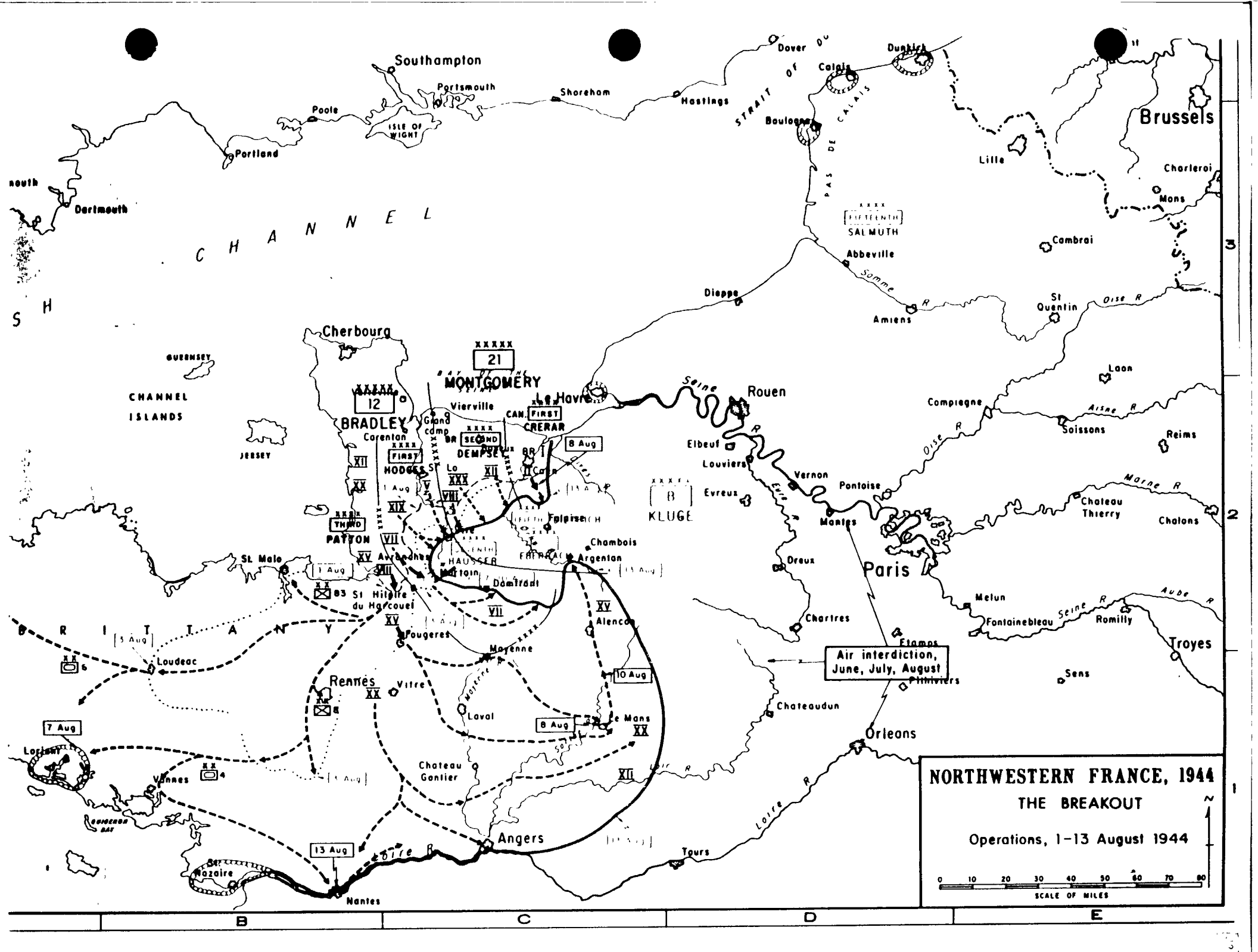
But it was also rumored that the supplies we needed were being given to British General Montgomery for his drive up the allied left flank along the coast to capture Antwerp so that port could be used to ease the overall supply shortage.

> *One important event was the landing in southern France just east of Marseille on August 15 of the American Seventh Army forces. Their landings went very well and soon the German troops in that area were more or less rushing pell-mell north up the Rhone River valley. While they were heading in our direction they were not considered a threat as they were being pressed from behind by our troops and harassed by the FFI (French Forces of the Interior), a guerrilla operation with outside help and very effective, and they were also being closely watched by the American Air Force fighter planes. As these German troops approached our location they were swinging east just north of Switzerland and heading for the Vosges mountains in Alsace.*

At 0700 hours on September 9 the battalion left for Colombey-Les-Belles, about 85 miles due east, and about 15 miles southwest of the city of Nancy. For the previous two weeks the 4th Armored Division and the 80th Infantry Division had been carrying the battle to the Germans while the 35th Inf Division and ourselves dropped out in echelon to cover the right flank. Now the 35th and ourselves were to be committed to the active fighting alongside the 80th, the 4th Armored Division out in front of both of us. The 4th Armd Division was one of the outstanding units in the European Theater of Operations (ETO). A truly great division. In any event we were about to catch up with the war in earnest.

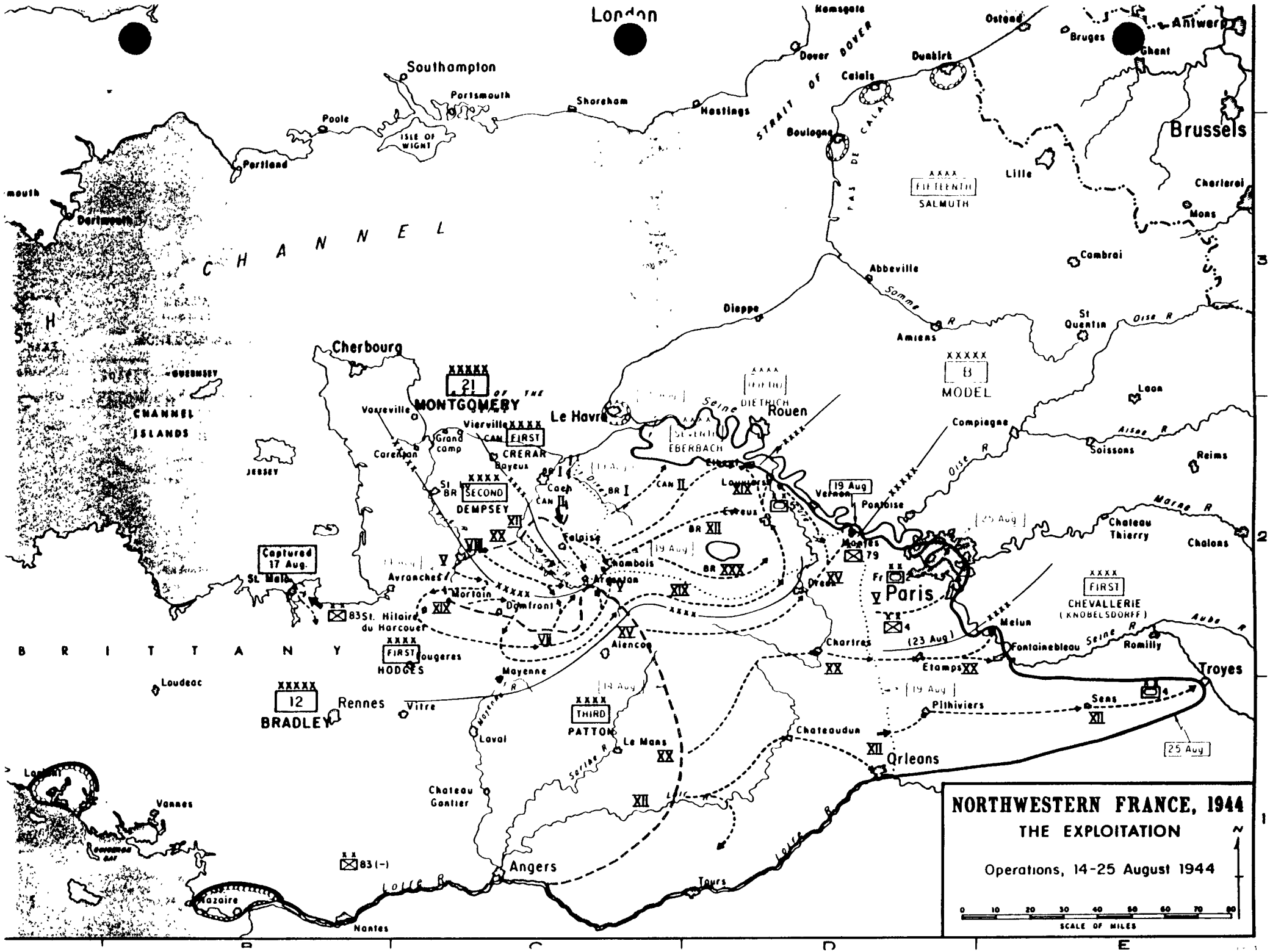
At this time there were many rumors of the imminent collapse of the German army on our front.

Thus ended our mad chase across France, about 300 miles as the crow flies. □


NORTHWESTERN FRANCE, 1944
THE BREAKOUT
Operations, 1-13 August 1944
SCALE OF MILES
0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80
Air interdiction, June, July, August
CHANNEL
STRAIT OF DOVER
PAS DE CALAIS
CHANNEL ISLANDS
GUERNSEY
JERSEY
BRITTANY
Southampton
Portsmouth
Poole
Portland
Dartmouth
Isle of Wight
Shoreham
Hastings
Dover
Calais
Boulogne
Dunkirk
Brussels
Charleroi
Mons
Lille
Cambrai
Abbeville
Amiens
St Quentin
Dieppe
Cherbourg
Le Havre
Rouen
Elbeuf
Louviers
Evreux
Vernon
Pontoise
Mantes
Paris
Dreux
Chartres
Etampes
Pithiviers
Orleans
Chateaudun
Melun
Fontainebleau
Romilly
Troyes
Sens
Chateau Thierry
Chalons
Laon
Soissons
Reims
Compiegne
Tours
Angers
Nantes
St Nazaire
Lorient
Vannes
Loudeac
Rennes
Vitre
Fougeres
St Malo
St Hilaire du Harcouet
Mayenne
Laval
Le Mans
Alencon
Argentan
Chambois
Falaise
Vierville
Grand camp
Carentan
Domfront
Avranches
Mortain
Vire
Caen
Seine R
Somme R
Oise R
Aisne R
Marne R
Aube R
Loire R
Eure R
Mayenne R
Sarthe R
Vilaine R
Orne R
Dordogne R
BRADLEY
MONTGOMERY
DEMPSEY
CRERAR
HODGES
PATTON
HAUSSER
KLUGE
SALMUTH
FIFTEENTH
FIRST
SECOND
THIRD
CAN. FIRST
12
21
B
1 Aug
3 Aug
5 Aug
7 Aug
8 Aug
10 Aug
13 Aug
83
6
4
B
C
D
E
1
2
3

The route of the 802nd Field Artillery Battalion during the phase shown on this map, starting at the beach was -

Carentan
Avranches
LeMans
Chateaudun
Orleans
Pithiviers
Sens
Troyes


NORTHWESTERN FRANCE, 1944
THE EXPLOITATION
Operations, 14-25 August 1944
SCALE OF MILES
0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80
London
Southampton
Portsmouth
Shoreham
Hastings
Dover
Ramsgate
Ostend
Bruges
Antwerp
Ghent
Dunkirk
Calais
Boulogne
Brussels
Lille
Charleroi
Mons
Cambrai
Abbeville
Amiens
Somme R
St Quentin
Oise R
Dieppe
Le Havre
Rouen
Seine
Compiegne
Laon
Soissons
Reims
Aisne R
Marne R
Chateau Thierry
Chalons
Paris
Melun
Fontainebleau
Romilly
Troyes
Sens
Pithiviers
Etampes
Chartres
Orleans
Chateaudun
Tours
Angers
Nantes
Saint Nazaire
Vannes
Lorient
Loudeac
Rennes
Vitre
Laval
Mayenne
Fougeres
Le Mans
Alencon
Argentan
Falaise
Evreux
Vernon
Pontoise
Mantes
Dreux
Cherbourg
Caen
Bayeux
Carentan
Grand camp
Vierville
Isle of Wight
Portland
Poole
Dartmouth
Channel Islands
Guernsey
Jersey
Brittany
Avranches
Mortain
Domfront
St. Hilaire du Harcouet
St. Malo
Captured 17 Aug.
Chambois
Aube R
Seine R
Loire R
Sarthe R
Mayenne R
Aure R
Oise R
Somme R
Strait of Dover
Pas de Calais
XXXXX 21 MONTGOMERY
XXXX FIRST CANADIAN CREERAR
XXXX SECOND DEMPSEY
XXXXX 12 BRADLEY
XXXX FIRST HODGES
XXXX THIRD PATTON
XXXX FIRST CHEVALLERIE (KNOBELSDORFF)
XXXX FIFTEENTH SALMUTH
XXXXX 8 MODEL
XXXX SEVENTH DIETRICH
XXXX EBERBACH
83 St. Hilaire
83 (-)
79
4
19 Aug
23 Aug
25 Aug
A
B
C
D
E
1
2
3

SEPTEMBER 10, 1944

From 1630 - 1800 hours the battalion moved to new positions in the vicinity of Cientrey, about 12 miles farther east, 3 1/2 miles from the Moselle River, and 10 miles south of the city of Nancy. We had advance warning and the advance parties went out ahead, and we completed our survey before dark. We were reinforcing the fires of the 216th FA Bn in support of the 137th Inf Regiment, 35th Inf Division.

Once the gun batteries were in position, our calculations finished, and the FDC set up, the guns were registered. The #2 gun of the center battery was fired on an identifiable point on the ground and on the map and adjusted to compensate for minor discrepancies in the survey, map, powder lot, wind, or whatever, in order to make the subsequent firing as accurate as possible. This part of France had been fought over a number of times and had been thoroughly mapped, and we had ample supplies of very excellent maps, at the correct scale for our needs. The maps were contoured which permitted easy determination of the difference in elevation between the guns and the target.

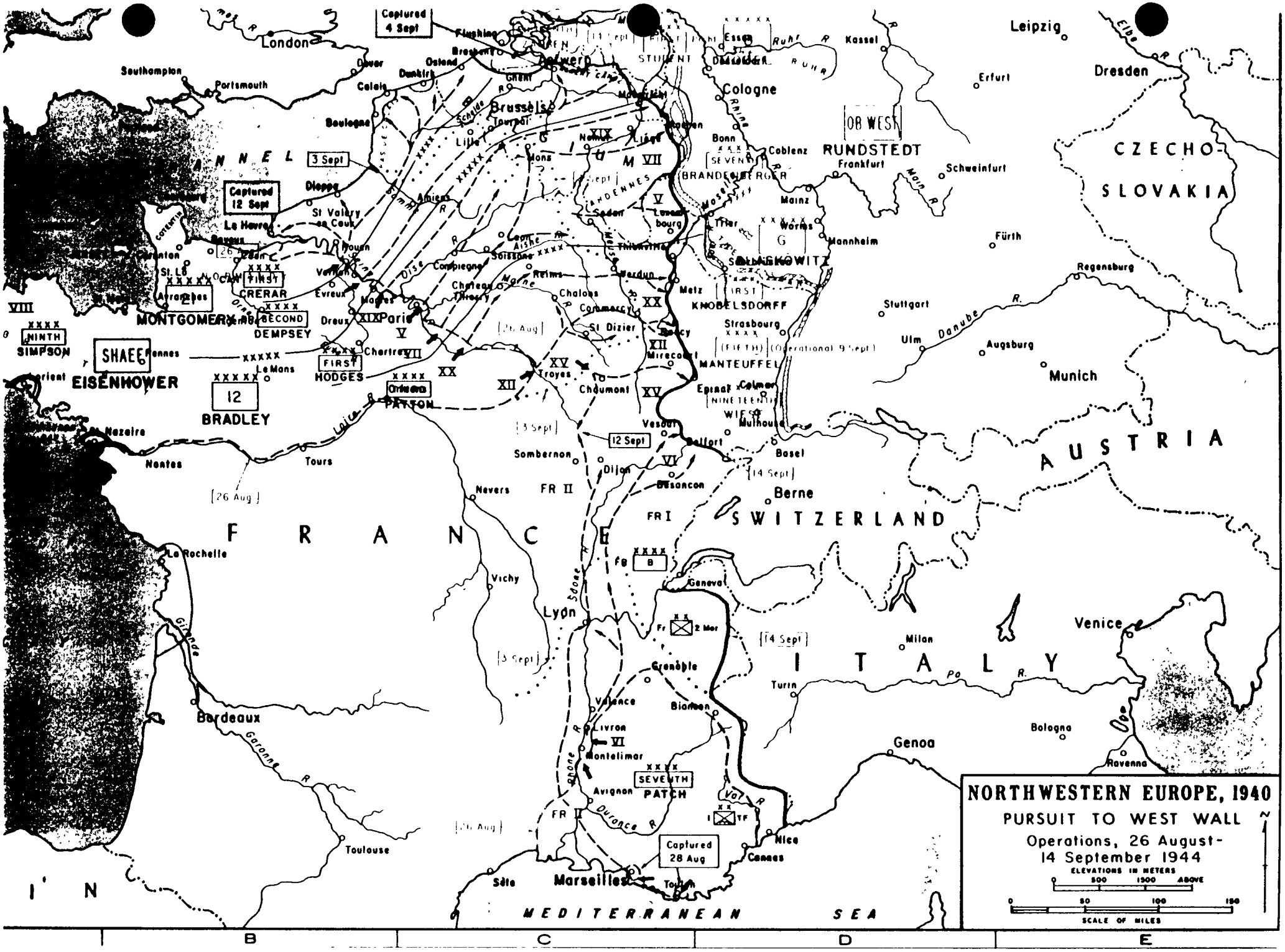
An attack was planned for early the next morning, and the infantry had sent us certain targets they wanted shelled prior to their jumping off. Each designated target was given a number, and thus the infantry was able to call for "Concentration No. so-and-so". We had all of the gunsettings prefigured, enabling shells to land on the target within one minute, or at a predesignated time. We were to fire prior to the attack, beginning at 0330 the next morning. Three forward observers (FO's) were sent out to the 137th Inf Regiment, and each was assigned to an infantry company for the attack. (Lts Bill Romeiser, John Cox, and Diz Dunbar were the FO's).

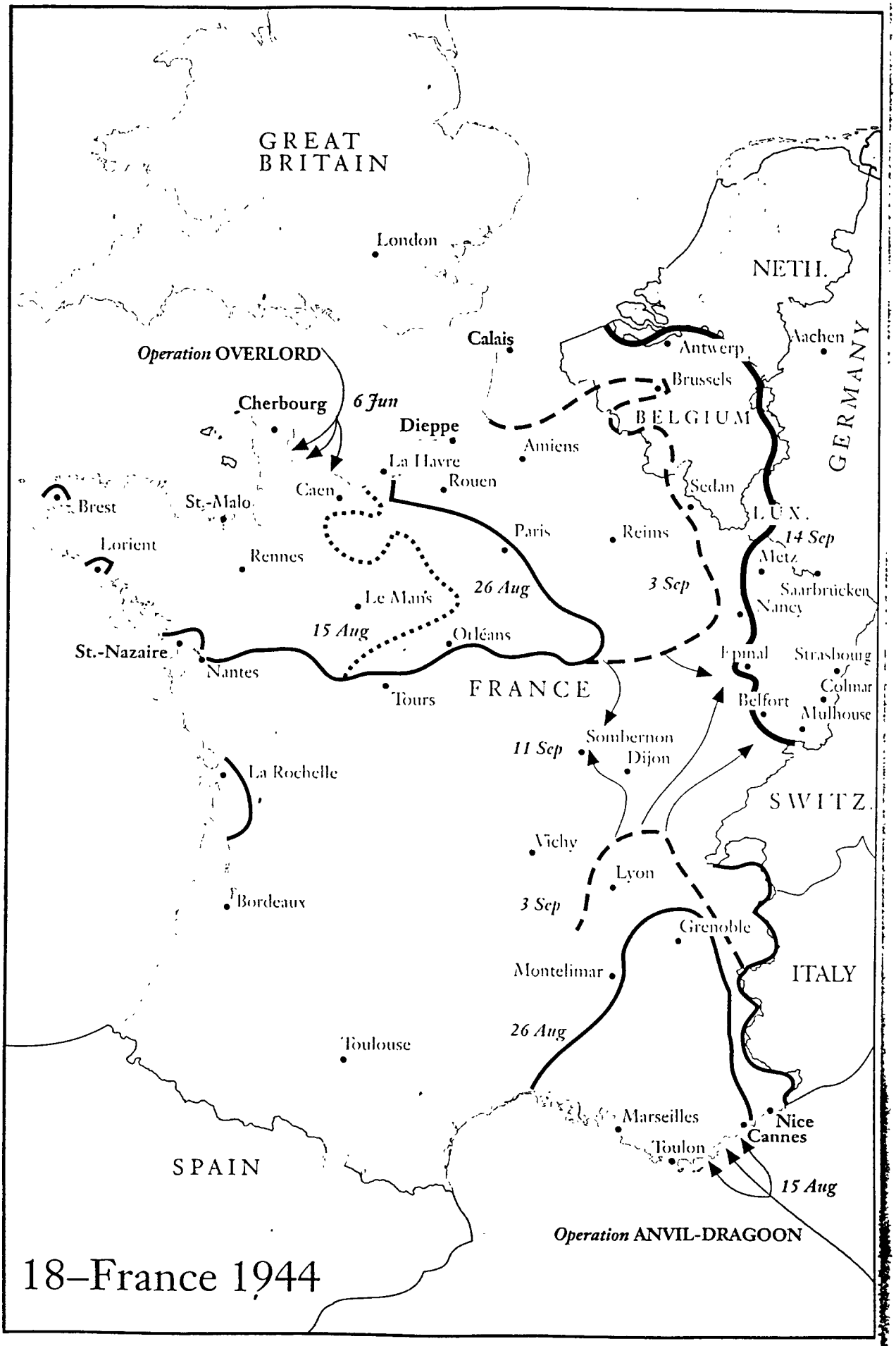
It was interesting to us that we were supporting the infantry regiment on the extreme right of the 35th Division, who were on the extreme right of the Allied armies in northern France. There were no American troops to our right except the 42d Cavalry Group with an Armored FA Bn. There were only a few Germans, as the ones coming from southern France were still some miles away and not coming towards us.

The 35th Inf Division attacked at daylight on the 11th, with the 134th Regiment on the left and the 137th on the right. The 137th Regiment got a foothold on the east bank of the Moselle River but were soon pinned down by intense machine gun fire. John Cox was with the lead company as artillery observer. The infantry were unable to advance because of enemy fire, and Cox was on the river bank, half in and half out of the water, adjusting fire on the enemy all day, both our battalion and the 216th FA. His artillery support enabled the infantry to hold their positions until reinforcements could cross over after dark. He was later awarded the Silver Star for this action. The battalion fired 31 missions our first day in real combat.

While this was going on Combat Command B (CCB) of the 4th Armd Division swung around our right, a few miles to the south, and made two crossings of the Moselle.

During the night of the 11th/12th the Engineers floated a pontoon bridge across the 170 foot wide river, and by the morning of the 12th there was considerable infantry and armor in the bridgehead,


NORTHWESTERN EUROPE, 1940
PURSUIT TO WEST WALL
Operations, 26 August-
14 September 1944
ELEVATIONS IN METERS
500 1500 ABOVE
0 50 100 150
SCALE OF MILES
FRANCE
SWITZERLAND
AUSTRIA
ITALY
CZECHO-SLOVAKIA
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
ENGLAND
London
Southampton
Portsmouth
Dover
Calais
Boulogne
Dunkirk
Ostend
Flushing
Breskens
Antwerp
Brussels
Ghent
Tournai
Lille
Mons
Namur
Liège
Aachen
Cologne
Bonn
Coblenz
Frankfurt
Mainz
Worms
Mannheim
Kassel
Essen
Düsseldorf
Erfurt
Leipzig
Dresden
Fürth
Schweinfurt
Regensburg
Stuttgart
Ulm
Augsburg
Munich
Strasbourg
Metz
Trier
Luxembourg
Sedan
Verdun
Reims
Soissons
Compiègne
Amiens
Abbeville
Dieppe
St Valery en Caux
Le Havre
Rouen
Evreux
Caen
Bayeux
St. Lô
Cherbourg
Alençon
Dreux
Paris
Chartres
Le Mans
Rennes
Orléans
Troyes
Chaumont
Chalons
St Dizier
Epinal
Colmar
Mulhouse
Belfort
Vesoul
Dijon
Besançon
Sombernon
Nevers
Vichy
Lyon
Geneva
Grenoble
Valence
Bourgoin
Livron
Montelimar
Avignon
Marseilles
Toulon
Nice
Cannes
Sète
Toulouse
Bordeaux
Nantes
Nazaire
Lorient
Tours
Le Rochelle
Basel
Berne
Milan
Turin
Venice
Genoa
Bologna
Ravenna
Po R.
Danube R.
Rhine R.
Ruhr R.
Elbe R.
Main R.
Meuse R.
Seine R.
Loire R.
Somme R.
Aisne R.
Marne R.
Oise R.
Saône R.
Rhône R.
Durance R.
Garonne R.
Gironde
Scheldt R.
Moselle R.
Saar R.
Mosel R.
Vaal R.
Captured 4 Sept
Captured 12 Sept
Captured 28 Aug
3 Sept
12 Sept
14 Sept
26 Aug
SHAEF
EISENHOWER
12
BRADLEY
NINTH
SIMPSON
FIRST
HODGES
SECOND
DEMPSEY
CANADIAN
CRERAR
MONTGOMERY
PATTON
SEVENTH
PATCH
OB WEST
RUNDSTEDT
BRANDENBERGER
SCHLESWIG
KNOBELSDORFF
MANTEUFFEL
WIESE
STUDENT
FR I
FR II
FR III
FR IV
Fr
2 Mor
TF
B
XIX
XX
XXX
XXXX
XXXXX
V
VI
VII
VIII
XII
XV
G
M



18–France 1944

and the 137th advanced and moved to their right and made contact with them, and after a brief counter-attack the Germans withdrew. We only fired 7 missions on the 12th.

On the 13th we fired a thirty minute preparation from 0630 to 0700, just prior to the infantry attack, and then fired 25 missions during the morning, approximately 600 rounds, as the attack progressed. Many of these missions were conducted by our air observer, Lt. Robertson. At 1330 the battalion crossed the Moselle on a pontoon bridge to new positions about two miles east of Crevechamps, in the area of the heavy fighting for the initial bridgehead. Crevechamps was heavily damaged and still burning when we passed through. There was considerable war damage and destruction in our area and much battle debris all around. The area was strewn with all manner of US and German equipment. The men in our outfit started collecting war souvenirs. Our Medics recovered and evacuated three wounded infantrymen near A Btry position. We also had our first incoming artillery fire from the Germans, but no damage was done.

There was a canal alongside the Moselle, just to add to our troops' difficulties, but canals were quite narrow compared to the river.

We learned of the difficult time the 80th Division on our left had had the previous week crossing the Moselle 10 or so miles north of Nancy. The enemy had stiffened considerably during the week the Third Army stood still for lack of gasoline.

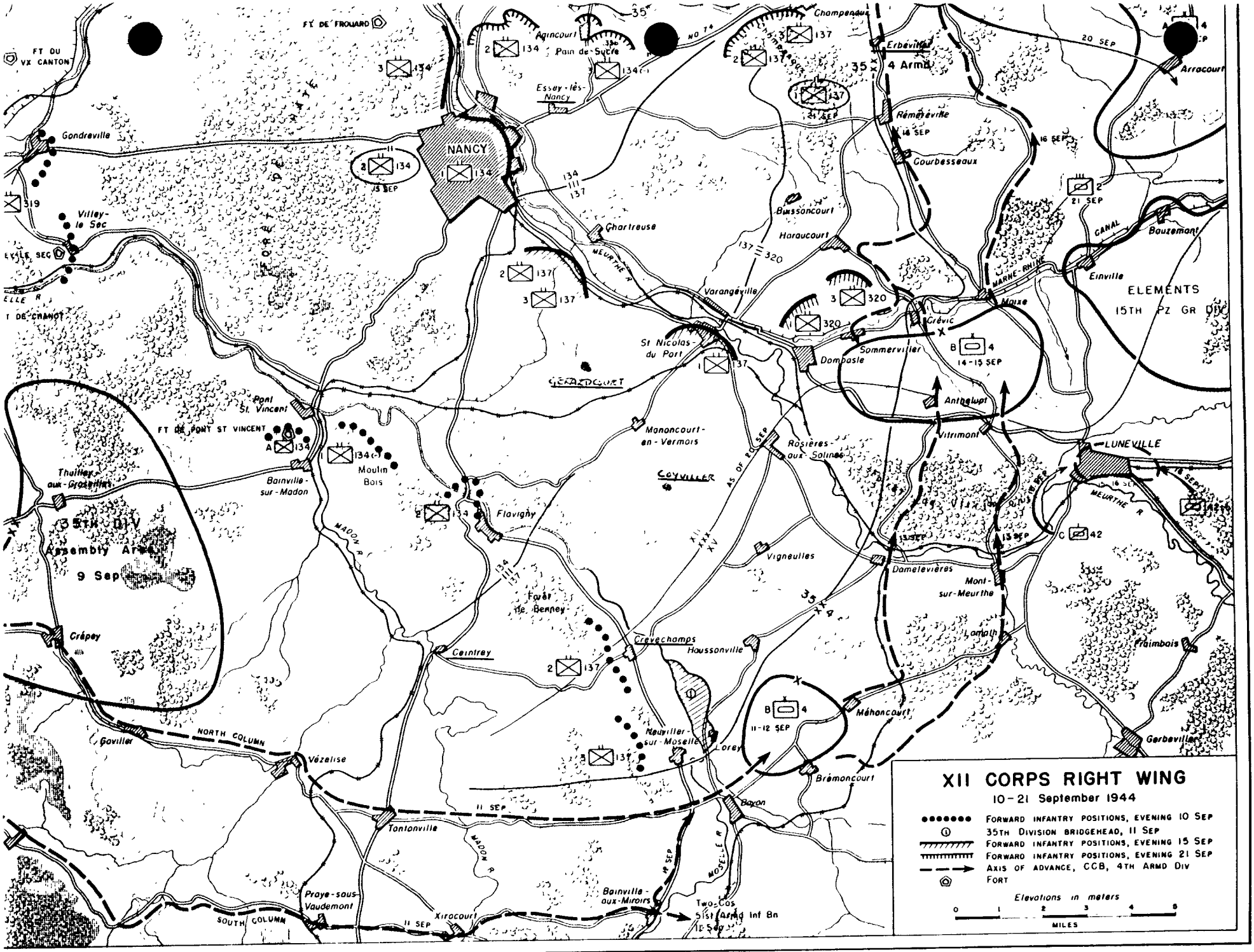
September 14th was a relatively quiet day, firing only six missions. It rained hard all day and at 1800 hours the battalion moved to positions near Coyviller, about seven miles to the north. A Btry captured three Germans in their new position shortly after arriving. Gave us pause to realize they no doubt were there when we were running our survey prior to the arrival of the battery. Jeanie's letters told me that she knew we were in France. Round trip mail took a month.

September 15th we stayed all day near Coyviller, firing 19 missions. Lts Corry, Wood, Teehan, and Park went out as forward observers, and the ones who were out came back to their batteries. Here we had a demonstration of discipline. Lt Park was the Bn Communications Officer, a specialty, and as such might never be sent out as an FO, the most hazardous job in the artillery, as the FO is normally close alongside the infantry company commander or one of his platoon leaders. Park had spent a long and frustrating night supervising the laying of telephone wires to the headquarters with whom we were required to stay in contact. One or more of the lines did not work, which meant that someone had to start at one end and walk the wire with it slipping through his hand until he came to the break or fault. Sometimes the wire was not broken or cut, but only one strand was damaged, making the fault more difficult to locate. Typically, the lengths of these lines were from 1/2 to 2 miles. This was done in total darkness and in the rain. There was always considerable pressure, when we moved, to get completely operational as quickly as possible. Park had just completed a long and frustrating night, doing a lot of wire walking himself, and was heading for his pup tent, bedroll, and sleep. On the way, his battery commander (HQ), Dave Canon, asked what Park (at that moment) thought was a stupid question or request, and told him so and continued on to his tent. Shortly thereafter he was roused and ordered to prepare himself to go out as an FO. This lesson was not lost on Park or myself. Nobody really wanted to go out as an FO, given his druthers. An FO is exposed to considerable danger, and the living conditions were harsh. When you were with the infantry there were no pup tents, sometimes not even blankets, you spent much of your time in a foxhole, with several inches of water in it in wet weather. There often was no hot food or hot coffee, and "going to the bathroom" was awkward,

LORRAINE CAMPAIGN MAP VIII
XII CORPS RIGHT WING
10-21 September 1944

Battalion Positions-

10-13 Sept	Cientrey
13 Sept	Crevechamps
14 Sept	Coyviller
15-20 Sept	Gerardcourt
20 Sept	Essay-Les-Nancy
20-23 Sept	Cercueil
23-26 Sept	Erbeviller



Printed by Defense Mapping Agency Topographic Center

MAP NO. VIII

inconvenient, and dangerous. The infantry was almost constantly being shelled or shot at in some form or another. Nobody really wanted to be with the infantry. Park was thus advised rather effectively to watch how he spoke to his commanding officer. But there was another message also. We were new to combat, and there was a certain amount of stress, and if we all went around snapping at the people around us, conditions would become impossible and the morale and efficiency of the Bn would suffer. We all learned very quickly how much better we had it than the unfortunate guys in the infantry.

At 2000 hours the Bn moved to near Gerardcourt, about two miles south of Nancy. We had very little warning, so this meant running the survey in the dark and in the rain, making for slow going. It was late by the time we finished the calculations and gave the FDC the necessary information. By the time I found a reasonably dry place and had put up my tent I could not muster the necessary interest in digging a foxhole. Unknown to me, a medium gun battery had gone into position about 1/2 mile directly to the rear of our HQ area, and at some point in the night started firing, probably adjusting, which jolted me awake. I thought we were being shelled and I wondered whether to get up and dig a hole or not. I had not yet been shelled, so the loud firing worried me for awhile.

September 16th was a pretty big day for the 802d. We were in direct support of the 2nd Bn 137th Inf Regiment, which crossed the Meurthe River at dawn, with the 3rd Bn on their right and the 1st Bn on the far right. Once across the river they could see the Germans preparing for a strong counter-attack supported by tanks on the front edge of some woods 3/4 of a mile or so to their front. Park was with them and could see the enemy, but realized that as the enemy advanced he would lose sight of them behind some ground obstruction. He radioed the FDC and requested air observation giving the map coordinates. One of our observation planes was already in the air, Lt Robertson flying and Lt Romeiser observing. They quickly picked up the advancing enemy formation and Bill Romeiser adjusted the 802d on them. Once this was done and precise coordinates known, a total of nine battalions were firing on the Germans in a matter of two or three minutes, including some 155 mm and 240 mm Corps artillery. It was a massive amount of artillery on one target area and the effect was devastating. Our battalion alone fired a total of 491 rounds. It was a classic example of optimum use of artillery in support of the infantry. Eight enemy tanks were knocked out and the casualties to the enemy infantry were severe. The enemy were then shortly attacked by one company of tanks and one of tank destroyers, inflicting more heavy casualties. This incident was written up in the ETO issue of the Stars and Stripes, the official Army newspaper, and the promptness and accuracy of the artillery barrage were credited with saving the US forces heavy casualties and preventing the re-capture of Nancy by the Germans. The incident is also noted in the official U.S. Army Historical Division book on the Lorraine Campaign (p. 93). Robertson and Romeiser were given much credit in the Stars and Stripes, and they later were both given the Silver Star.

Sgt William Guy, a member of the FO team, was slightly wounded by a German shell fragment, and became the first member of the 802d to be awarded the Purple Heart, the medal given to those wounded in battle.

A total of 42 missions were fired on the 16th, with excellent results reported.

The city of Nancy proper was occupied by the 1st Bn of the 134th Inf Regiment, on the immediate left of the troops we were supporting.

It rained heavily all afternoon and into the night, flooding many areas in the battalion area.

On the 17th things were relatively quiet by recent standards, with twelve missions fired on enemy counter-attacks. The 137th Inf Regiment vacated several buildings in Gerardcourt where they had housed their headquarters and Colonel Head moved our headquarters into them. This was our first use of buildings for the CP/FDC or for shelter, and it was great. I lived with the survey section in an empty house - no furniture - with our bedrolls unrolled on the floor. Once organized, I took the opportunity to brush my teeth, wash my face and hands, and shave - the first time in several days.

We were ordered to have all of our 2 1/2 ton trucks emptied and ready on call to haul infantry troops as part of a fast breakthrough in support of armored spearheads. We had about 35 such vehicles, and all were unloaded of equipment, ammunition, and supplies. Rain continued heavy and constant. It was nice to be indoors.

On the 18th all of our trucks were assembled first thing in the morning, ready to move on call to haul infantry. Plans were changed and about noon we were ordered to move the battalion to new positions three miles NW of Nancy. We were assigned to the 410th FA Group, and were now in support of 134th Inf Regiment of the 35th Inf Division.

The 18th was my brother's 25th birthday, in the Air Force in the States but no longer flying. He had been in flight training, bombardier training, and navigator training, but did not make it. He was now a non-flying, administrative officer (1st Lt).

The next morning at 0800 hours, the Bn Executive Officer, Major Sparks, myself and three other officers, and 72 enlisted men (drivers), took our 36 trucks to the CO of the 320th Inf Regiment to transport troops. After waiting several hours we were sent to the CO of the 137th Regiment, same mission. At 1630 hours we were released to return to our battalion. We assumed that the bold thrust into enemy territory had been abandoned, but were told nothing. In our absence the battalion had fired 21 missions, with three tanks destroyed and heavy enemy casualties.

Early on the morning of the 20th the battalion moved to positions on the Nancy airport at Essay-Les-Nancy, arriving at 1000 hours. We were re-attached to the 182d FA Group and were to support the 134th Inf Regiment. This was probably our strangest and worst gun position, spread out on an airport. We were firing in support of the infantry on a hilltop about 1 1/2 miles north of us and we could see the shells land from anywhere in the battalion area. Obviously the Germans could see us, especially the muzzle blasts, and sure enough we received some shelling. Fortunately the Germans had little artillery at this location on that day, and no damage was done.

There were several wrecked German aircraft scattered around the runways, and the airport had been destroyed by our air force. There were many German signs around, such as "Rauchen Verboten" (Smoking Forbidden), and a number of signs containing the word "Luft" which we knew meant air or flying, as in Luftwaffe.

The hilltop we could see changed hands back and forth several times. Lt Bill Corry was an FO with the infantry. Late in the afternoon a truce was called to permit each side to come out and remove their wounded. Opposing infantry soldiers may hate each other fiercely, but there is a

kindred spirit in knowing they each have the worst job their army has to offer, and all wish they were somewhere else.

We left the airport at 1300 for positions near the town of Cercueil. CP/FDC was in the town school building, and many or most of the residents had vacated the town so there was shelter for all. A total of 20 missions were fired. It was overcast all day but no rain.

By September 21st we got the bad news that the Third Army was again running out of gasoline and ammunition, only this time it was worse than earlier. Almost everything available was going to General Montgomery and the 21st Army Group he commanded for their drive, with some going to the U.S. First Army to help protect Montgomery's right flank. Word from Third Army headquarters through the grape vine was that General Patton was very upset. Patton and his staff were quite critical of Montgomery and believed that the Third Army would show considerably more results if the supplies were given to them. Relative performance of the two up to this point made this credible.

In our area, resistance was stiffening considerably. The XV Corps was now on the right of the XII Corps, but their troops were some 10 or 12 miles from our positions and we knew little of their activity. Part of the time the 4th Armd Division was on the right of the 35th, but they moved quite a lot and ranged far and wide so we never knew their whereabouts at any given moment. The 6th Armd Division arrived from Brittany and became a part of the Third Army again, and the XII Corps. It had been being wasted in Brittany containing Germans holed up in one of the ports, totally inappropriate use of an armored division. The XVth Corps on our (XII Corps) right consisted of the 79th Inf Division and the 2nd French Armd Division (Deuxieme Division Blindee or DDB as it was known). Both were experienced divisions.

On the 21st we were alerted for a possible counter-attack from our right (or rear depending on which way we were facing); the 4th Armd Division was more or less on our right, but they were not maintaining a slow moving front as was the 35th Division in front of us, but were very mobile and fast moving over a considerable area. The Germans apparently wanted to cut behind the Third Army from our southeast and cause all kinds of trouble for the American advance. Fortunately, the 4th Armd attacked the counter-attacking forces and drove them off with a severe mauling.

On the 22nd, my section and I ran a survey for the XIIth Corps survey officer, tieing certain units together. He was very pleased with our work and the quickness, and complimented us, saying we had done an excellent job. That was nice, not all high commands were lavish with praise.

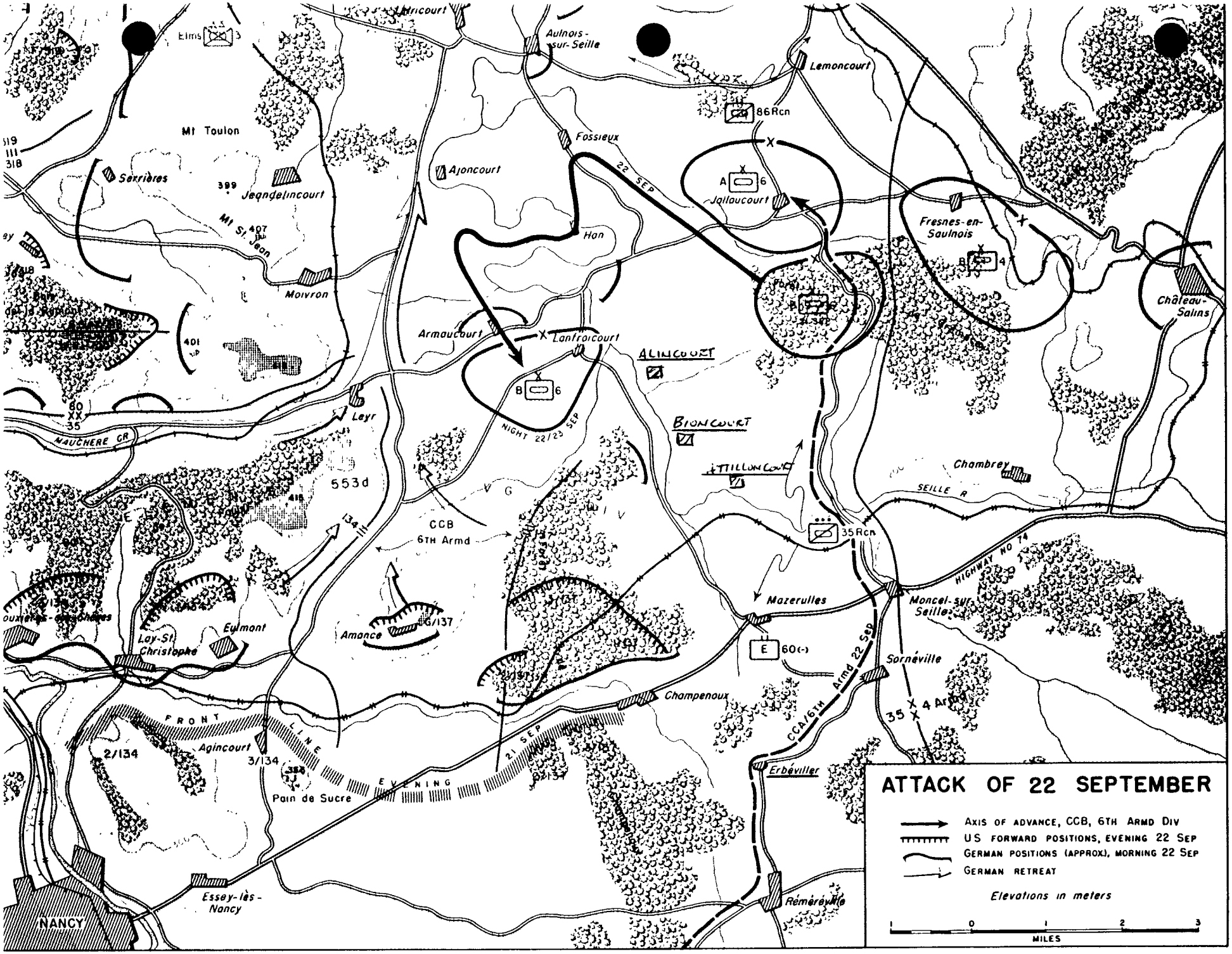
The "attack" phase for Third Army was over for the time being, and in our area we were in the process of limited objective attacks to secure our bridgehead over the Moselle and Meurthe Rivers and to establish a suitable defense line against enemy counter-attacks, and at the same time concealing this from the Germans and appearing to pose a threat of attack to prevent some of their troops on our front being moved to other fronts. We did not know how long this phase would last. The battalion only fired 10 missions total over the 21st and 22nd.

Unbeknownst to us, while the 4th Armd Division was countering the counter-attack, the 6th Armd Division moved in on the right of the 35th Division, the division we were supporting. The 6th Armored's Combat Command B (CCB) broke through the thin enemy lines there on the 21st

LORRAINE CAMPAIGN MAP XI
ATTACK OF 22 SEPTEMBER

Battalion Positions-

23-26 Sept Erbeviller
26 Sept - 5 Oct Attilloncourt
6 Oct - 14 Oct Alincourt
15 Oct - Nov 8 Bioncourt



Printed by Defense Mapping Agency Topographic Center

MAP NO XI

and their CCA followed on the 22nd, both ending up about 4 miles behind the German troops in front of the 137th Inf Regiment we were supporting.

On the morning of the 23rd we participated in a 50 minute artillery preparation fired from 0530 to 0620 hours, on enemy positions in front of the 137th, just prior to their attack. At the same time, CCB attacked the Germans from the rear. The attack was successful.

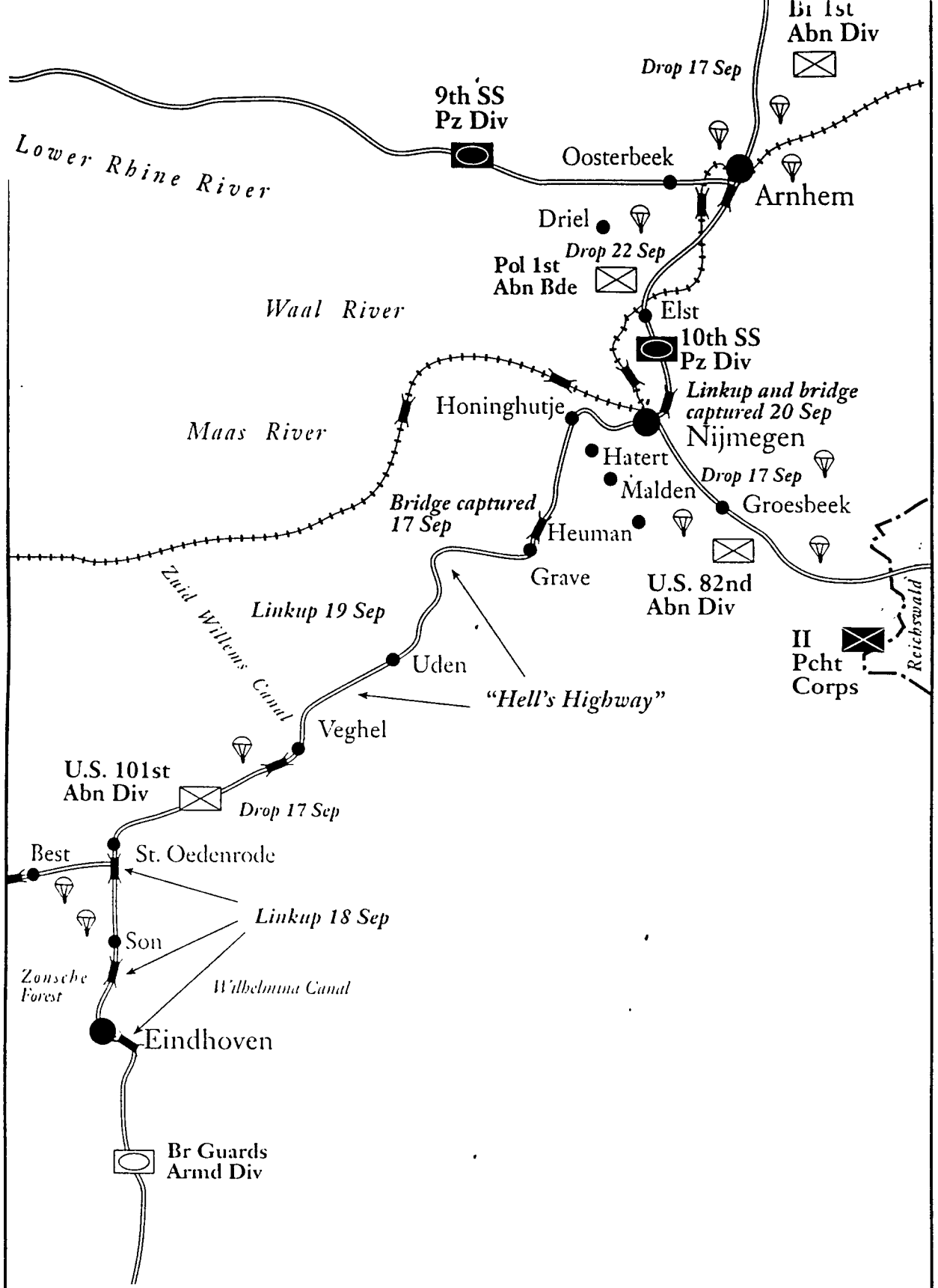
At 1400 hours the battalion moved about 7 miles east to the town of Erberviller, 8 or 9 miles due east of Nancy. These small rural farm villages were eye-openers for me. They were like hamlets, all of the houses were in the village, not on the farmers' individual farms. All of the houses and barns were contiguous on both sides of the road. Often there was only one road in the village. The buildings were fairly close to the road, sidewalk distance away, but in almost every village there was a setback far enough for the creation of a huge manure pile. Barns were part of the main buildings. The people were not much in evidence, but were what I thought of as peasants. It seemed a poor and dreary existence. Even considering that this was fall, and a very wet one, and we were not seeing the area under favorable conditions, the atmosphere was of gloom and dreariness.

The Colonel and I were out reconnoitering that afternoon and came across a small isolated shack, a little larger than a telephone booth, with a dead German soldier inside. The German was not badly disfigured, sitting on a box leaning against the corner, but not pleasant to look at. The Colonel insisted on looking for souvenirs, which had no interest for me.

We had heavy rain all day on the 23rd. Surveying in the rain was not difficult but it was unpleasant. It was hard to keep our notes dry. All of our instruments had to be carefully dried and cleaned up before putting them away. Half of the section did that while three or four of us did the calculations. However, we were no longer eating "C" rations, but real food prepared by the HQ Btry mess truck. Also, in Erberviller I slept with the survey section in a hayloft one of the guys had claimed for us - dry and comfortable.

September 24th and 25th we stayed in Erberviller and did no firing. The main battle in our area was about ten miles to the east of our position and involved mainly the 4th Armd Division, turning back a desperate counter-attack by the Germans. The 4th Armd was successful or the Germans would have been in our area. We knew little of what was going on there, but all was quiet where we were, enjoying our hayloft, with heavy rain both days. On the 24th I went to a church service in a barn, hearing the distant muffled sounds of war and the peaceful sounds of livestock in the barn. It was said there were no athiests in the combat zone.

According to the Stars and Stripes (the Army newspaper and pretty good), Montgomery's daring attack on Arnhem had failed, but the surviving 1/4 of the British Airborne division had made it to the British lines. The others of that division were tragically lost. Rumor had it that it was an ill-conceived operation, dropping three airborne divisions (two American and one British) in front of Montgomery's forces, who had shown remarkably little aggressive fighting previously, as compared to the Americans, especially Patton. Montgomery's reputation among the Americans hit a new low, even lower than after the Arganten-Falaise Gap fiasco. It appeared to have been poor generalship, including Eisenhower for agreeing to the operation (called Market-Basket). It was disconcerting to us in the combat area, as confidence in the high command was very important.



3–Operation MARKET-GARDEN

17–26 September 1944

Donald S. Frazier

From my limited contacts, the troops in the Third Army seemed to have confidence in General Patton, and were proud to be in his army.

Mid-afternoon of September 26th we were ordered to move to Attilloncourt, about 7 miles to the north. Other traffic on the roads delayed us somewhat and we did not arrive in new positions until after 1800 hours. The CP/FDC was located in the village school building. No firing and the rains continued off and on all day.

We did not have advance warning, and with the late move and shorter days we did another night survey. Fortunately the rain had let up, but everything was wet. We were in an area fought over only a few hours earlier, so we were concerned about possible German stragglers hiding out. Our surveying took as direct a route as possible across country from one battery position to another, usually a mile or so, and the eight of us got somewhat spread out. We were not worried but were conscious of the possibilities. The shielded lights we used at night slowed us up quite a bit. One long stretch that night went through a field of closely spaced plants about three feet high. I was the lead individual, and must admit the thought did occur to me that quite a few people could hide in there very easily. Once completed we went to the CP/FDC to do our calculations, then gave the necessary information to the FDC. The mess crew saved food for us when we were late, and after that we looked for places to sleep. All of these little villages were pretty much alike, and to me, depressing. We were in the province of Lorraine, which we Americans considered French as did the French and most of the inhabitants, but the Germans considered German. Virtually all of the residents had evacuated, but we did not enter their homes, only their barns, for shelter. The Germans had posted signs here and there reminding their troops that this area was not French but German and to act accordingly.

September 27th was bright and sunny, the first we had had in some time, and warm. Around noon, C Btry, about 1/2 mile from town, was attacked by a small group of enemy infantry who had somehow gotten through a gap in our infantry. Available men from HQ Btry were sent to help, and C Btry shifted their guns around slightly for direct fire on the attackers. We were supporting the 137th Inf Regiment, and they soon sent a small infantry force at the attackers and made short work of them. It was tense for awhile.

Lt. Newcombe, one of our air observer pilots, was slightly wounded in the hand when his plane was hit by AA fire during one of his flights. We fired a total of 32 missions; enemy resistance was definitely stiffening, evidenced by numerous small counter-attacks against the infantry directly in front of us, some with some degree of success. The Third Army was not attacking as such, but trying to straighten out its lines and secure its positions on the east side of the Moselle River.

The enemy attacks that began on the 27th continued for the next several days, in an attempt (in our area) to drive the Americans out of the Foret de Gremecey, a large wooded mass two miles to our direct front. The Germans nearly succeeded. For four days the fighting was intense with heavy casualties on both sides. Much of it was in the woods with considerable close-in fighting, and infiltration of each others' lines at night. On the 29th the 320th Inf Regiment was thrown into the battle from division reserve immediately in front of us and our mission was changed to support their counter-attack. Lts. Dunbar and Romeiser were sent out to them as forward observers. The Germans launched a night attack and the fighting was confused and intense in the woods with much intermingling. Bill Romeiser was making his way back through the woods in the virtually pitch dark, along a firebreak, to the infantry company command post for instructions and on the

LORRAINE CAMPAIGN MAP XXI
FORET DE GREMECEY

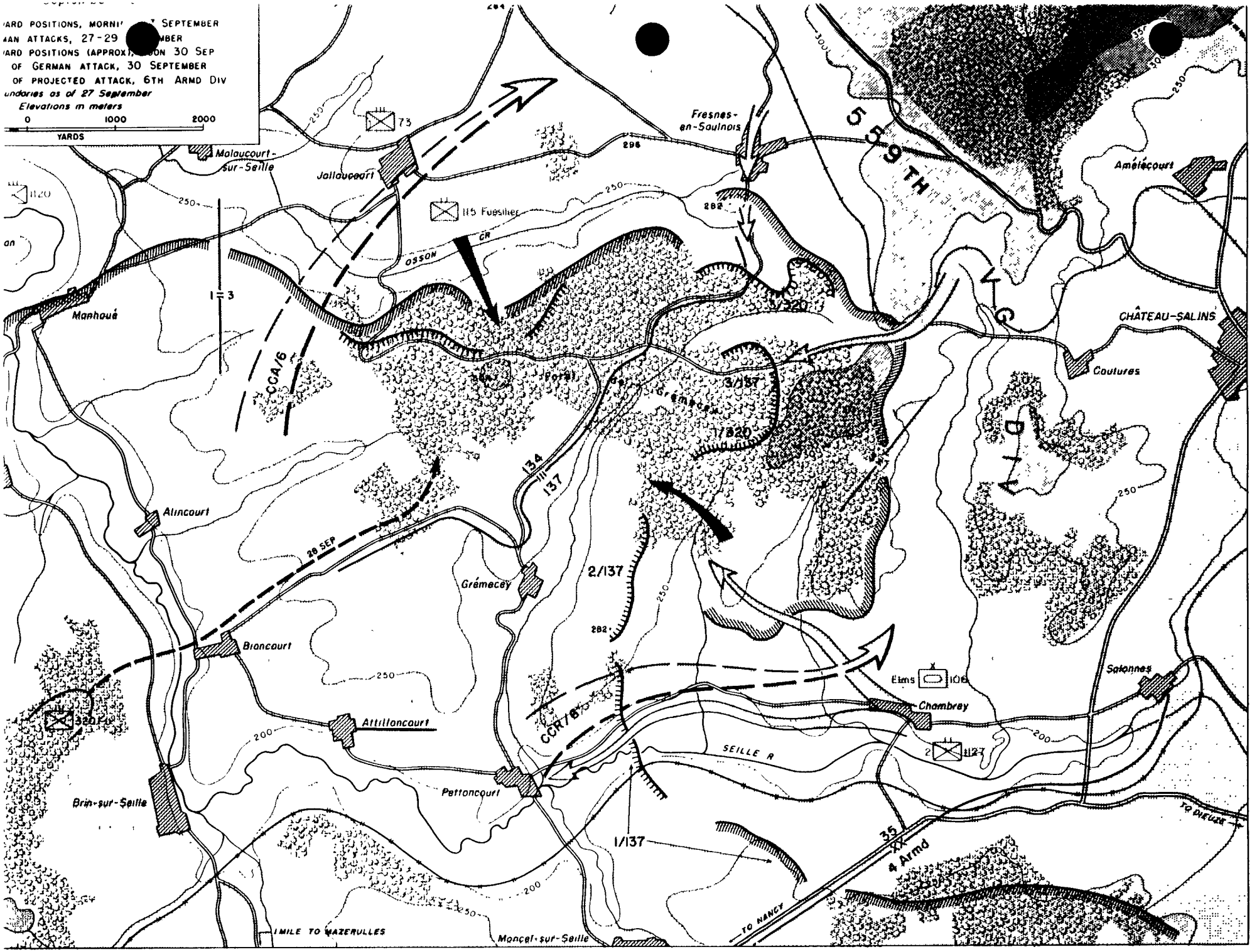
Battalion Position -

27 - 30 Sept Attilloncourt

LEGEND -

- Forward U.S. Positions Morning 27 Sept.
- German Attacks 27 - 29 Sept.
- Forward U.S. Positions Noon 30 Sept.
- Axis German Attack 30 Sept.
- Axis of Projected Attack, 6th Armored Div.

Scale : 1 inch = 1300 yds


ARD POSITIONS, MORNI SEPTEMBER
AN ATTACKS, 27-29 MBER
ARD POSITIONS (APPROX) ON 30 SEP
OF GERMAN ATTACK, 30 SEPTEMBER
OF PROJECTED ATTACK, 6TH ARMD DIV
undaries as of 27 September
Elevations in meters
0 1000 2000
YARDS
Malaucourt-sur-Seille
Jallaucourt
Fresnes-en-Saulnois
5 9 TH
Amélécourt
115 Fusilier
OSSON
CR
Manhoué
CCA/6
Forêt
Grémecey
3/137
1/820
CHÂTEAU-SALINS
Coutures
134
137
Alincourt
28 SEP
2/137
Grémecey
Biancourt
Elms
106
Chambrey
Salonnes
Attrilloncourt
CCR/6
SEILLE R
Pettoncourt
Brin-sur-Seille
1/137
35
4 Armd
TO DIEUZE
TO NANCY
1 MILE TO MAZERULLES
Moncel-sur-Seille

MAP NO XXI

way in the dark helped a soldier who seemed to be stumbling and disoriented only to find when he got back to where a tank destroyer vehicle and its crew were that the guy was German. The tank destroyer group said something about shooting him, whereupon the German ran off to a nearby ditch saying "nicht schiessen". Bill went after him meanwhile trying frantically to get his Colt .45 out of its holster. He soon overtook the German and persuaded him to go with him and surrender, which he did. Finally, Patton intervened and committed the 6th Armd Division from XII Corps reserve to help, with CCR attacking on the right of the 35th and CCA attacking on the left in a partial encirclement, the combined attacks of all troops occurred on October 1st and the Germans forced to withdraw after much more hard fighting. Once the positions were secured, the 6th Armd withdrew and turned them over to the 35th. The infantry regiment we were supporting, the 137th, had its fighting strength reduced from 900 soldiers to 484 in four days. We did not know it yet, but the Third Army then halted its offensive and went on the defensive in our area for approximately five and a half weeks.

As far as the 802d and I were concerned, certain things of interest happened during this time. B Btry received enemy shellfire on the 28th, as did Hq and the Bn airstrip. I personally came under artillery fire that day for the first time, though fortunately it was not very close, about thirty yards away. Our position was in a sort of projection in the front, and this made us subject to artillery fire from both the east and the north. We were generally firing to the northeast. A small group of us were standing on the edge of town when we heard the shells coming and begin to land. None of us had been under fire before, and we all dove for the ground in different directions. I ended up on the wrong side of a protective mound. No damage was done but it was sobering. Lt Bruce Clark received a slight wound from enemy AA fire while up as an aerial observer with Lt Robertson. The airstrip and A Btry received some enemy shelling but there were no damage or casualties. In five days we fired 98 missions. It rained almost every day, to some degree.

On the 29th I received a new radio operator - Corporal Urich - technically to replace Sgt. Rumsey. Sgt. Rumsey was not a surveyor, but was assigned to us as an all-around good person who could fill in most any place in the battery in a pinch, and the Bn and Hq Btry did not want to lose or demote him. He had been chief of section of the battalion anti-tank gun section before that section had been deleted from an artillery battalion's T/O. And I still had Rumsey. Rumsey had been doing some grousing about the war, the army, and so forth, and was getting tiresome. No one was enjoying what we were doing, but we kept our complaining to each other to a reasonable level, mostly making the army or the war the butt of jokes. Cpl Urich was a very nice guy, old by our standards (30), a very pleasant and friendly person, intelligent, reliable, with a positive outlook, and all in all a pleasure to have in our section. Technically he was my radio operator, but I made him my jeep driver since Sgt. Fleishman always rode in the rear seat of my jeep next to the radio. All of us could drive, operate the radio, or do just about anything we might likely be called upon to do. One exception was that Sgt. Fleishman was not a good driver. Cpl Urich was born and raised in Austria until he was 15 or so, and naturally spoke excellent German.

At this time the general overall picture on the Third Army front was as follows: starting from the north in Luxembourg, about 20 miles east of Luxembourg City, were the 83rd, the 90th, and then the 5th Infantry Divisions, all in the XX Corps, ending at Pont-a-Mousson; then the 80th Inf, the 35th Inf, and then the 4th Armd Divisions, in the XII Corps, ending at a point halfway between Nancy and Luneville; 6th Armd Division in reserve; then the XV Corps with the 79th Inf and the 2nd French Armd Divisions, their southern boundary ending at Baccarat. The

width of the army front was about 95 miles. Later historical records would show that while the allied high command considered the Third Army drive very secondary to their main effort to the north, the Germans considered Patton's army their major threat and at that time concentrated more troops in front of him than elsewhere on their western front.

From October 1st to the 5th we stayed in Attilloncourt, firing 15 to 20 missions a day as the infantry in front of us continued to consolidate their position for good defensive dispositions. Each mission was now about 16 rounds. Gasoline and ammunition were being strictly rationed.

On the 3rd we were permitted to begin issuing ten hour passes to 5% of our personnel to Nancy. On the 4th, Lt Bill Park and I went with the group for that day. He and I decided to pass up a shower and sightsee instead. We went to a movie, and had lunch. I tried to find a present for Jeanie (no luck), and we relaxed wandering around town.

The Bn was officially informed that the Third Army was going to do no more attacking, would go on the defensive indefinitely, because of the severe shortage of gasoline and ammunition in the European Theater of Operations (ETO). Whatever was available would go to the British for their unfinished business at Antwerp, a port desperately needed but presently being denied us by the Germans. We would not dig in precisely where we were, but would be organized in a few days. This was obviously bad news, as we had already learned what a one week halt had permitted the Germans to do on our front, and what they might do with several weeks inactivity on our part did not bear thinking about. We had been thinking that the war was not going to last much longer, that the Germans were fighting a last ditch battle and would soon give up. So this was not good news.

On October 6th we moved to our more or less permanent positions for the duration of the lull, near the town of Alincourt, about four miles to the northwest. We were to support the 134th Inf Regiment, to our left, instead of the 137th. The infantry front line was generally in the front of the Foret de Gremecey in our area. None of the batteries were near enough to a town to permit using the barns for shelter. Hq Btry and the CP/FDC were in a large pasture and we were all sleeping out in the open in pup tents. Everybody dug slit trenches or foxholes to about two feet below grade and pitched the tents over the holes, the depth to provide protection in event of enemy shelling. Colonel Head had picked up a black two door Mercedes car that had been abandoned by the Germans for lack of gasoline, and he was sleeping under the car. The CP/FDC was in a special tent for that function, totally blacked out and with a "light" lock so that no light showed even when someone was entering or leaving. We had a small portable gasoline driven electric generator for lights. The tent was not large but was ample and made a very good FDC. Out in the open people were fairly widely dispersed, in case of shelling, probably in an area 50 yards square. My section was on the far edge and I was on their far edge. Not everybody dug in the first day, but that night we had intermittent interdiction fire on the nearby road intersection (two small country roads) next to one corner of our pasture, so the next day everybody dug in. I made a trench long enough and wide enough to lie in on my back and covered it crosswise with empty ammunition boxes (two 105 shell/projectiles came in one wooden box, carefully cradled, the boxes were approximately 10" x 6" square and 3 feet long), mounded dirt on the boxes and covered that with my pup tent, and added a few small tree branches on that. The entrance hole was at my feet and I could just barely sit up once inside. It was not good at all, but both armies sent out patrols at night, and there were too many stories about slitting throats at night while people were asleep that

I figured I would see that that did not happen to me. Probably much exaggerated but I decided to take no chances. We all slept fully dressed, shoes and all. This was our worst bivouac situation in some time and we expected to be there quite awhile. Fortunately we were wrong and were only there for nine days.

On October 7th the Red Cross Clubmobile visited us for a couple of hours, visiting each battery. Three pretty American girls handed out coffee and donuts along with friendly conversation to all. I was their escort officer, meeting them at a designated place and leading them to each battery in turn. It seemed strange to have them there, but it was pleasant. The days were getting noticeably shorter and fall had arrived.

On the 8th, Sgt Fleishman and I went up to the Foret de Gremecey, in the area of the troops we were supporting (134th Inf) to locate, set up, and man, a suitable observation post (OP) for the battalion, which was to be manned only in the daylight hours, as a supplement to the FO's. It was certainly not necessary, but the Colonel or someone higher up thought it would be a good idea, and I was elected. I did not mind, in fact enjoyed doing it, and Sgt Fleishman wanted to go with me. He always wanted to go with me on whatever assignments came my way. The forest was a couple of miles wide and about a half mile deep, all on our side of the hill. We proceeded to the general area as far as we could go by jeep, found an infantry company commander, told him what we intended to do, and asked for suggested locations, which we got, and proceeded. His troops were along the front of the woods the full width of his assigned sector, and we went a short distance beyond his last outpost to the left. Their only activity at that time was night patrols behind the German lines to gather information and try to be forewarned of anything they, the Germans, might be up to. As an artilleryman and a mile or two behind the actual fighting, it was interesting, hair-raising, and mind-boggling, to hear them talk about such hazardous activity and the things they encountered. Among other things they were asked to do was to go out and bring back prisoners for questioning. This meant they had to creep up on some unsuspecting German without him hearing them, grab him, and get him away without his friends hearing anything. Also, the Germans had wires strung about, a foot or so off the ground, with tin cans tied to them so that if some bumped into it accidentally, the Germans would hear the cans rattle and know, and sometimes respond by lobbing a grenade at the sound. It is difficult to describe the total darkness of the nights. There was not a light to be seen anywhere. On a clear night there was some skylight, and we had had very few of them in the past few weeks, otherwise no light at all. Those going out on patrol did not wear helmets, they removed any metal from their persons that might reflect any light, and even put black tape over the luminous faces of their wrist watches. The guys on patrol had to advance to the German lines, which were outposted with trip wires mentioned above, avoid outposts and mine fields, penetrate the front line, and wander around behind these lines for several hours observing locations and activities of supporting troops, determining if there appeared to be any type of troop build-up, and so forth. Then they had to make the return trip before dawn light, where they had to then approach their own lines (hopefully their own platoon or at least company) where they had to prevent their own trigger-happy friends from shooting them. Of course there was not one continuous front with someone posted every three feet - there were very large gaps in the front. Needless to say,I was very happy to be in the artillery. But we did set up our OP and manned it numerous days, seeing very little of the enemy we knew to be in Jallaucourt, something over a mile away across a shallow valley.

On our trips back and forth from our location to the OP it was apparent that there were dead soldiers in the Foret de Gremecey from the recent battles that had not been found. The odor of decomposing human bodies was strong and distinctive.

During the night of October 9th our general battalion area received 8 or 10 rounds of enemy 280 mm artillery fire. One landed near C Btry and made a hole large enough to conceal a small truck in. Passing overhead they sounded like freight cars flying through the air. We realized they were not aiming at us, but that was small comfort. There were more on the night of the 10th. Higher headquarters suggested that the shelling was coming from a "railroad" gun, a long range gun mounted on a railway flatcar, and concealed in a tunnel during the daytime. Third Army headquarters was sure the Germans were shooting at them in Nancy, about ten miles to our southwest, and we were instructed to spread camouflage netting over such shell holes so that the Germans would not be able to tell from aerial reconnaissance where the shells were landing and thus would not be able to make the necessary corrections to their gun settings. We knew the Germans had a 280 mm railroad gun capable of shooting a 560 pound projectile a distance of 39 miles. Among other places it had been used at Anzio and there was known as "Anzio Annie". I did not think the Germans were using aerial reconnaissance as they had so few planes. They could have been using sound and flash observation, or getting information from a civilian with a radio. The sound of those shells going through the air was awesome. They went over our heads three nights in a row, landing not far away, and then I guess the Germans corrected their gunsights. We were convinced there were German sympathizers in our area. In any event, however the Germans were doing it they soon succeeded in hitting Third Army headquarters area in Nancy, and pounded them several nights running.

On the 9th the 80th Division advanced up even with the 35th so we were no longer sticking out in the front. They had been held up by the Metz fortifications holding up the divisions on their left, the 5th and the 90th. Metz had still not been taken as Patton considered it too costly to take by frontal attack and planned to encircle it in due time, but brought the 80th up anyway.

During this time the rain continued. We had not had two days in a row without rain in three weeks, and had been getting rain 5 or 6 days a week. We ate our meals standing in the rain many times, at which time we ate fast. Living outdoors left something to be desired. The foxholes and gun pits were filling with water and mud was everywhere. Some guns had to be moved. We were firing from 200 to 500 rounds per day as requested by the infantry.

The 26th Infantry Division moved in on the right of the 35th, replacing the 4th Armd Division, who had been on the go since about August 1st, had suffered many casualties, and whose equipment was in need of major maintenance.

On the 14th the battalion was inspected by an army inspection team, and they found some evidence of inadequate maintenance of some equipment, mainly the guns, but we came out pretty well considering the weather and general conditions.

The next day, Hq Btry, the CP and FDC moved into the nearby town of Bioncourt, about one half mile to the south. We guessed that the army inspectors saw how we were living (unnecessarily) and told Colonel Head to move us into town and out of the weather. The CP and the FDC and the Bn Staff officers moved into the only public building in the town, the combined Mayor's office and school building, a tremendous improvement over the pasture. The rest of Hq Btry were housed in

nearby barns, and the Mess truck was in a hay barn at the corner, about 50 yards from the CP. We even had an indoor toilet, though I preferred to go outside as it wasn't much and did not have running water. Almost all civilians had left town. As the junior officer on the battalion staff I got last choice of rooms. I was choosing for Lt Park and myself, as he was away at the time. There was one room that no one else wanted because it was cluttered up and had an odd odor. It did have a nice wood stove in it and the window glass was unbroken, so I took it. I cleaned it up and moved some of the junk out of it, and moved my stuff in. The next morning I collected some firewood and started a fire in the stove. I put my shaving water on the stove heat up. While I was shaving, Colonel Head happened in and decided that no one would sleep in the room, it would instead be used by all Hq officers to wash and shave in. I moved in with Major Fleetwood.

In 1969, on a trip to parts of France, Germany, and Switzerland, Jeanie and I visited Bioncourt. It seemed to have changed very little.

Btry C moved to a new gun position on higher ground. Their original position had become unusable. The gun crews were working hard to maintain their guns and personal gear in good condition, and improving their living conditions by erecting log parapets around the guns, and then digging underground living quarters. People were pretty clever in making the best of nothing. But it was far from pleasant.

On the 16th, Pvt Toomey, B Btry, was killed returning from taking an FO party up to the infantry positions in the Foret de Gremecey. Coming out of the woods, just behind the crest of the hill, he turned right (toward the Germans) instead of left, and almost immediately ran over American mines put in the road by our troops as a defensive measure. His body was recovered after dark. This was the same road Sgt Fleishman and I took to our OP many times. He made the wrong turn and was so close to the front lines there was not time to stop him.

On another trip to Europe in 1985, Jeanie and I again visited Bioncourt, and I took her up to the Foret de Gremecy. The woods had changed so much, and my memory was too vague, for me to find our old OP.

The passes to Nancy continued, and on the 19th, Captain Dave Canon (CO Hq Btry) and I went to Nancy for the afternoon. We had a few beers in a place with an orchestra playing American music, and tried to buy some trinkets for home to no avail. There were a number of American troops stationed in Nancy since Third Army moved its forward headquarters there, plus some rear-echelon back-up units, and visitors like Dave Canon and me. Dave Canon was from Alabama, one of our several Auburn graduates, probably about 28 years old, somewhat short, an intense and conscientious battery commander and a good one. He was a nice guy and we were friends, but not close friends.

For about three weeks we and the 35th Division and the 80th Division had been on the east side of a small river, the Seille, with only a few bridges across it, one about every two or three miles. Army headquarters had been concerned that the Germans would blow a dam upstream (Etang de Lindre) holding back a large lake, which would lead to flooding in our rear and hinder our attack. The river was already high from all of the rain the past several weeks, so Army decided to blow the dam ahead of time so that the water would recede sufficiently before the attack. The army engineers with their bulldozers had been busy constructing levees along both sides of the river where flooding was feared and on the 20th the dam was bombed. We had drawn several days

supplies in anticipation of being cut off from our source. Flood waters reached our area on the 23rd and the levees worked as intended, the engineers continuing to work on them just in case. In the event of a counter-attack by the Germans at that time we would not have retreated.

On the 22nd while at the OP Sgt Fleishman and I watched a U.S. fighter-bomber (P-47) attack an enemy ground position. Our view was across the shallow valley towards Jallaucourt as always, and we could see the plane dive at and attack some German installation behind a hill behind Jallaucourt, presumably artillery or anti-aircraft, the direction of his dive being away from us, and the bottom of his dive being out of our sight behind the intervening hill line. A few seconds later the rising plane reappeared as one large ball of fire, climbed a few hundred feet, banked over, and plunged to earth, again out of our sight. Shortly after there was a large explosion and much smoke. There was no parachute.

On October 26th I sent out laundry, including the flannel OD (olive drab) trousers (GI) that I had been wearing since England. They came back clean and neatly pressed. All of the clothing I wore was standard government issue, except for my tanker jacket, which was issued only to the tankers. I bought the tanker jacket and pants at a PX in England on the advice of someone, and it was good advice. It did not need washing as I had only been wearing it since the weather turned cold, and I would not have risked losing it.

On October 27th Lt Bill Park and I went to Nancy again - saw a movie and a GI stage show with an orchestra, all good and enjoyable. We also took baths, my first since our swim in the stream in August. On the way out of town we were stopped by MP's (Military Police) and they made us put the top of our jeep down -"army regulations in the combat zone and didn't we know there was a war on?" Normally we kept the tops up unless we expected to go into a particularly hazardous area. It was truly only a top - it came up the back, over a bar, and then forward to the top of the windshield - there were no sides at all. A few miles up the road we put it back up.

Also on the 27th the battalion had another visit from the Red Cross Clubmobile, with three Red Cross girls and coffee and donuts. As the junior officer on the battalion (read Colonel's) staff I got a lot of unusual assignments, and escorting the Red Cross girls from their previous outfit to our battalion and then battery to battery was one of them, as I mentioned earlier. Captain Bob Miller agreed to take over for me so I could go to Nancy with Park. From reports I got when I got back, Colonel Head, Major Fleetwood, and Miller took very good care of and were very attentive to the three girls during their visit to the 802d.

October 28th was a very interesting day. Two Medical Corps officers (Administrative) came to the battalion and lectured to most of the officers and many of the NCO's in the Hq Btry mess barn about the war to date. One discussed all theaters and fronts except our front, northwestern Europe. The other discussed our front. Both of these fellows were obviously very interested in doing this, and went around from outfit to outfit giving these lectures, in the Third Army. It appeared they did it on a voluntary basis and seemed very well informed. The one who talked about our front was much more interesting to me. One of his major subjects was to explain why he, the Third Army High Command, and General Patton, all thought that the Allied High Command (General Eisenhower et al) made a serious error in dropping the paratroops in Belgium and Holland and making the major attack in front of General Montgomery's troops instead of in front of General Patton's Third Army, referring to the recent Market-Basket fiasco. They stated rather convincingly that Montgomery was a great planner and talker about "all-out attacks" and

"full-blooded thrusts", but that he never actually produced such attacks, and his attacks almost always failed by a wide margin. As examples he cited Montgomery's performance in Sicily, at the Mareth Line in North Africa, his unbelievably poor showing in Normandy where it took him six weeks to capture Caen which he was supposed to capture (by his own plan) on D-Day, his failure to close the Falaise-Argentan Gap, and the fact that he still had not cleared the Scheldt Estuary to permit the use of the desperately needed port of Antwerp. Rather, he said, this big effort in manpower and supplies should have been made in front of and by General Patton, a proven fighting, aggressive, and successful, general and commander of troops, who at the time had had relatively weak and disorganised enemy forces opposing him, and almost surely would have gone to the Rhine and possibly beyond. We knew little of the grand strategy, but we believed the lecturer's portrayal of Montgomery was accurate and not exaggerated. We had had the feeling in September that the resistance in front of us was weak, so what he said did not seem unreasonable. Also, we did know that the Nancy-Metz area was a natural and historical route for war between France and Germany. There was a slight feeling that we were getting propaganda from Third Army, the war as seen by General Patton. We remembered hearing in early September that Patton had said that given the troops and supplies he would have us in Berlin in two weeks. None-the-less, their presentation made some sense, and there seemed little question that General Montgomery was not an aggressive leader.

> *This was somewhat confirmed a few weeks later on when we and other troops were questioned by French civilians as to why we had stopped when we did, that there were relatively few Germans in front of us at that time.*

On October 29th Sgt Fleishman and I were at our OP on the front of the Foret de Gremecey. In all the time we had spent there we had never seen anything we could fire at, an occasional messenger coming into or going out of Jallaucourt on a motorcycle, or an individual German scurrying about, but nothing that was worth expending our rationed shells. But on this day we thought we saw the gun of a German tank on the edge of town, and were given permission to adjust on it. Behind our OP position about ten feet was a large concrete bunker, left over from WWI, too far back in the woods for us to use as our OP, but comforting if we should ever be shelled by the Germans. We radioed the coordinates of our target to the FDC and soon we were advised "on the way", and almost immediately a shell landed about twenty yards to our left rear. We were startled and scared and dashed to the bunker, wondering how the Germans had seen us. After a minute or so with no more shells landing, we came out and radioed the FDC what had happened and explained that we had been unable to observe the first round they had fired and requested they fire again. Once again we were told "on the way" and once again a shell landed right where the first one had. We were startled again, but now knew what had happened. We radioed the FDC to check Si (pronounced ess-eye). There were three settings on the gun - deflection for direction, elevation for range (distance), and Site for the difference in elevation between the gun and the target, the latter being known as Si. The FDC reported back that the gunner had set his Si 100 mils too low, and by coincidence Sgt Fleishman and I were in line with the trajectory from gun to target. After this correction was made we proceeded with the "tank" , but whatever it was it moved before we could get close.

It was reported by Pvt ---- that his friend Pvt Pack had drowned trying to cross the swollen Seille River in the rear of our position. A search was made and the river dragged but the body was not found. It was believed that the swift flood waters had carried the body downstream, and that it would be found in a few days.

During this time until November 7, things remained quiet in our area. The rains continued almost every day, and the report was that this had been the wettest October in Lorraine in 50 years. Even so, the Seille River had gradually receded to near its normal level.

A few rounds of enemy artillery landed in B and C Btry areas, and we were convinced that some of the civilians were radioing our positions to the Germans. A few days later, twelve rounds landed again in C Btry area and ten in Hq Btry area, the latter landing at the road junction outside the barn in which Hq mess was located, about 50 yards from the CP/FDC building. No injuries or damage.

As a special treat, the 182d FA Group Hq had arranged with civilian sources in Nancy to get enough champagne for all members of all of the battalions under its command. As the junior staff officer I got this one more unusual assignment, to make arrangements with Group for the Bn. The ration was to be one-half bottle per man. The bottles had to be returned. This big event was to occur on November 7th.

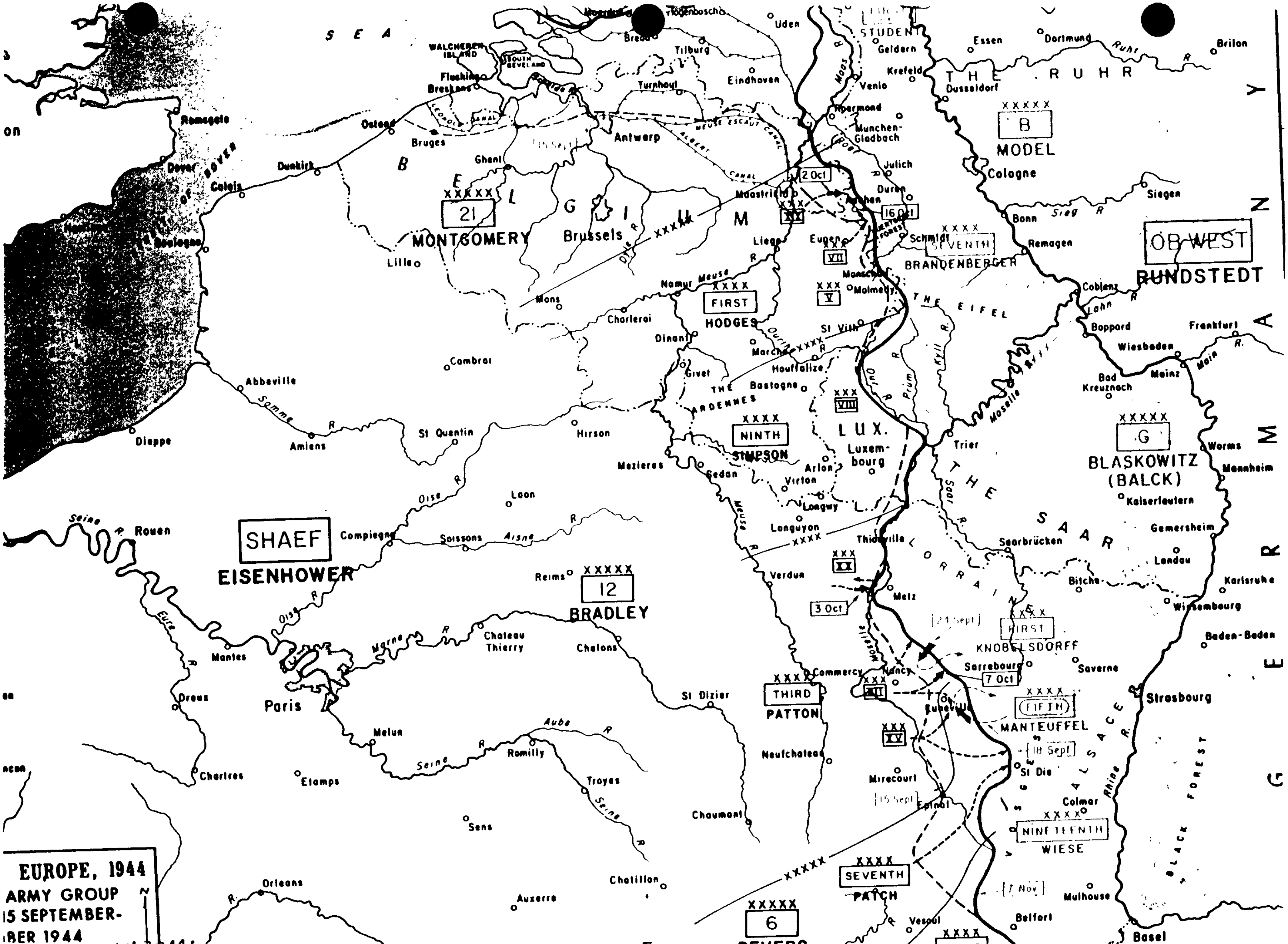
On the 7th we fired two missions, one of which was with propaganda shells. These were special shells with some of the powder removed and surrender leaflets (in German) inserted in the projectile, urging the German soldiers to surrender.

Also on the 7th, Lt Art Munkenbeck rejoined the 802d, at his and Colonel Head's requests. Jeanie and I were very good friends of Art and his wife, Jane, in the states. He joined the 802d in the fall of 1943. Art was a graduate of Dartmouth College, about two years older than I was. He was a very, very funny guy, and very likeable, as was Jane, and we had many good times together during Tennessee maneuvers and at Augusta. He was left behind with others when we were forced to cut down to T/O (Table of Organization) strength just before being shipped overseas, and had subsequently been shipped over as a replacement. He first wrote to me in early or mid-October from a replacement center in England, and asked me to tell Colonel Head he was in Europe and would like to rejoin us if there was a vacancy. Colonel Head requested him through channels and he joined us.

Also on the 7th, I got the champagne from Group and distributed it to all batteries, with strict instructions to save all the bottles, that I would be back the next day to pick them up. (Of course, I did not do any of the work; I had a detail and a truck and just supervised). That evening the junior officers in Hq group, Park, Clark, Newcombe, Munkenbeck, and I, had a great time. Art Munkenbeck got an erroneous view of the war his first night in the combat area.

The champagne issue timing was unfortunate. A few hours after it was issued we were alerted that the long awaited offensive in the Third Army sector would commence at 0800 the next morning, November 8th. Or perhaps the timing was not all bad, as a half a bottle per man was not enough to reduce any one's effectiveness, and there was not a whole lot for us to do until early the next morning.

> *The general allied situation in northwest Europe at this time was the First Canadian Army at the extreme north (or left), then the British Second Army, these two armies under General Montgomery in the 21st Army Group; then came the American Ninth, First, and Third Armies under General Bradley in the 12th Army*


EUROPE, 1944
ARMY GROUP
15 SEPTEMBER-
BER 1944
15 SEPT. — 7 NOV. 1944
SHAEF
EISENHOWER
21
MONTGOMERY
12
BRADLEY
6
DEVERS
FIRST
HODGES
NINTH
SIMPSON
THIRD
PATTON
SEVENTH
PATCH
B
MODEL
OB WEST
RUNDSTEDT
G
BLASKOWITZ
(BALCK)
SEVENTH
BRANDENBERGER
FIRST
KNOBELSDORFF
FIFTH
MANTEUFFEL
NINETEENTH
WIESE
STUDENT
THE RUHR
THE EIFEL
THE ARDENNES
LUX.
THE SAAR
LORRAINE
VOSGES
ALSACE
BLACK FOREST
BELGIUM
GERMANY
SEA
15 Sept
2 Oct
16 Oct
3 Oct
24 Sept
7 Oct
18 Sept
15 Sept
7 Nov
Walcheren Island
South Beveland
Flushing
Breskens
Ostend
Bruges
Ghent
Antwerp
Turnhout
Tilburg
Breda
Eindhoven
Uden
Geldern
Venlo
Krefeld
Essen
Dortmund
Brilon
Dusseldorf
Roermond
Munchen-Gladbach
Julich
Duren
Aachen
Schmidt
Cologne
Bonn
Remagen
Siegen
Coblenz
Boppard
Frankfurt
Wiesbaden
Mainz
Bad Kreuznach
Worms
Mannheim
Kaiserlautern
Gemersheim
Landau
Karlsruhe
Wissembourg
Baden-Baden
Strasbourg
Saverne
Colmar
Mulhouse
Basel
Belfort
St Die
Maastricht
Liege
Eupen
Monschau
Malmedy
St Vith
Namur
Dinant
Charleroi
Mons
Brussels
Lille
Marche
Houffalize
Bastogne
Givet
Luxembourg
Arlon
Virton
Longwy
Longuyon
Thionville
Metz
Verdun
Saarbrucken
Bitche
Sarrebourg
Nancy
Luneville
Commercy
Mirecourt
Epinal
Vesoul
Neufchateau
Chaumont
St Dizier
Chalons
Reims
Chateau Thierry
Soissons
Compiegne
Laon
Hirson
Mezieres
Sedan
St Quentin
Cambrai
Amiens
Abbeville
Dieppe
Rouen
Mantes
Dreux
Chartres
Paris
Etamps
Melun
Romilly
Troyes
Sens
Auxerre
Chatillon
Orleans
Ramsgate
Dover
Calais
Dunkirk
Boulogne
Trier
Schmidt
Meuse R
Maas R
Roer R
Rhine R
Ruhr R
Sieg R
Lahn R
Main R
Moselle R
Kyll R
Prum R
Our R
Ourthe R
Saar R
Somme R
Oise R
Aisne R
Marne R
Seine R
Aube R
Eure R
Leopold Canal
Albert Canal
Meuse Escaut Canal
Hurtgen Forest

Group; and finally the American Seventh Army and the French First Army under General Devers in the 6th Army group. The Canadians finally controlled most of Walcheren Island on the north side of the Scheldt, and mine sweepers were able to start clearing the Scheldt Estuary, in preparation for opening the great port of Antwerp for allied shipping. The American First Army had captured Aachen, the first city captured in Germany.

At 0300 every artillery battalion in the Third Army commenced firing on pre-arranged targets, and continued for three and a half hours. At 0600 the infantry began moving forward, probing the German positions, which the Germans had had five weeks to prepare, to dig in, to mine, and otherwise make it as costly as possible for our troops to advance. As soon as it was light I was at our OP in the front of the Foret de Gremecey, looking at Jallaucourt, the object of the attack in our area, and watched what I could see of our attack. The infantry making the attack were on my left and would attack Jallaucourt from left to right in my field of view. I was there on the chance that I would be able to see some enemy activity not visible to our FO's, and be able to fire. Sgt Fleishman and I never did see anything of consequence, just a few Germans scurrying about on the right side of town as our infantry supported by tanks approached from the left.

We had to leave the OP as I had to be back at the Bn and collect the empty champagne bottles from the batteries and return them to my counterpart at group. This had to be done by 1400 hours as I had to go with the Bn advance party when new gun positions were to be selected and then begin the survey. All of the batteries had cooperated and had collected all of their bottles. I returned the lot to the officer at group (rank of major) with only two missing out of about 250 total, which I thought was pretty good considering the conditions, when he asked "where are the corks?" I had not realized that the corks had to be returned. The major got quite upset and insisted that I return to the battalion and collect the corks. In fact, he ordered me to. I told him that was not possible and explained about the advance party, new gun positions, and the survey. He was very angry, and I was a little put out myself as I was certain he had not asked that the corks be returned. Any other day over the previous five weeks it might have been possible to recover most of the corks, even with all the mud, but that day there was just no possibility. He said he would report me to my CO for disciplinary action. When I returned to the battalion I told Colonel Head about it, and that was the last I ever heard of it. And the Colonel and I had more serious matters on our mind at that moment.

The infantry attack went slowly that day. The massive artillery preparation had softened up the Germans somewhat, especially their artillery. But they had had five weeks to prepare for the attack they knew was sure to come. They were well dug in, entrenched in buildings, and had all approach routes well mined. It was hard going for the infantry. They captured Jallaucourt by noon, but were unable to advance very far beyond it. The weather was terrible - we had been having excessive rain for weeks and had all day rains on the 6th and 7th. It was raining on the 8th during the attack, so the air force was not able to help. All vehicles had to stay on the roads, as they bogged down in the mud otherwise.

Our advance party went from Bioncourt to Jallaucourt, and arrived there about 1500 hours. On the way we crossed the shallow valley I had been looking at from the OP for several weeks. Just before we got to the small stream at the bottom of the valley, just off the road on the right hand side, was the body of a dead German soldier. He was lying face up. His face was dark blue-black and partially decomposed. He had apparently been killed when the Germans retreated through

that area five weeks previously, and since our troops had not advanced that far, he had been lying there in no-man's-land for five weeks. The cool weather kept him from being worse, but it was the worst sight I had seen.

As we continued, there was a disabled tank on the far side of the small bridge over the narrow stream at the bottom of the valley. The tank had a damaged tread and could not move. Its crew was there, waiting for their ordnance people to come and make the necessary repairs.

On that day we had a smaller than usual advance party, everybody jammed into four jeeps, with their tops down, as we knew we would be close behind the infantry and the fighting front. The approach road was under enemy observation, or likely was, as the enemy had not been pushed back all that far. As we entered it, Jallaucourt showed considerable damage from the shelling and fighting. Several buildings were burning and/or smoldering in the rain. The sound of battle was closer than we were used to, in fact it seemed to be on the far edge of town. In a small town like Jallaucourt that was not very far. German mortar shells were landing sporadically in the fields on either side of us. This meant that our gun positions would have to be on our side of town, and I had visions of the mines the Germans must have spread all over in the area we would be occupying. It seemed to me that there was no tactical reason for moving our guns that day as they could have supported the infantry for another day easily from where they were. The attack had moved slowly and was about to quiet down for the night in about two hours. We were much closer to the front line that we had ever been. But, Colonel Head had his orders so we proceeded to select gun positions. When this was done we reassembled and started back to the battalion. Normally, I would have had my section with me and we would have stayed behind and commenced surveying. Colonel Head had not considered the area secure enough for such a large party, so they had been left behind, as were people of each battery reconnaissance group.

We started out of town, back the way we had come in. The Colonel was in the front jeep and three of us in the second, the other people in the two following jeeps. About 150 yards out of town the Colonel's jeep took a burst of fire from a German burp gun (machine pistol) or light machine gun through the windshield. We all stopped instantly, leaped out of the jeeps and into a shallow drainage ditch at the side of the road. The ditch had about three inches of water in it but that was of no consequence. It soon turned out that the Colonel's jeep had not come to a complete stop, but had speeded up and kept going down the road, and had made it across the small bridge and beyond. The rest of us, still in the ditch, could not figure out where the firing had come from, and it did not fire again. We had been going at about a 45 degree angle toward our rear and the shots had come at us from the front of our jeeps. There should not have been any Germans in that area to shoot at us. An occasional mortar shells kept landing in the field to our right, well away from us, but I was concerned that whoever fired the shots could see us and adjust the mortar onto us. Not a very realistic fear, but it crossed my mind. I thought the firing had come from a Schmeiser, or machine pistol, and therefore the German(s) could not be very far away. Others thought it came from a machine gun and could be quite a distance off. We could see that the damaged tank had been removed, and concluded its presence had kept us from being fired on earlier. None of us had been exposed to small arms fire and were undoubtedly too timid. It was becoming dusk and we more or less felt there was no hurry to move as we would soon be able to leave under cover of darkness. We kneeled in the ditch, gradually gaining courage, when we noticed a reserve company of the 137th Infantry walking up the road toward us (and the front beyond). It was certain that whoever fired at us would not do so with a company of infantry there,

so we got in our jeeps and went on back to the battalion. The infantry guys must have thought we were a strange bunch.

It was dark when we got back to the battalion. The move had been delayed until the next day, to everyone's relief.

That day the Bn fired 47 missions, a total of 819 rounds, a high for the previous several weeks. It was a hard battle for the infantry and they needed all of the help we could give them.

> *Many years later, in the fall of 1989, at a reunion of the 802d FA Bn in Nashville, TN, there were four of us present who had been in the advance party that had been pinned down in the ditch. They were Frank Murphy, Virgil Blumhorst, and Karl Gemes, CO's of A,B, and C Batteries respectively, and myself. I got them all together at one point and we each gave our own version of what happened that afternoon, and all versions were different. I was the only one who thought we had been fired on by a Schmeiser machine pistol, the others thought it was a machine gun, and there were other differences. Frank Murphy's version was the most dramatic.*
>
> *Two years later, at another battalion reunion, Joe Rollo, one of my section, said he was my jeep driver that afternoon and remembered it well.*

The next day, November 9th, at 1300 hours we were ordered to move to new positions near Jallaucourt. These were not the same positions selected the previous day as the town was definitely clear of Germans and it was possible to select better positions. We had ample time for a daylight survey.

Getting out of our old positions proved to be much more difficult than anyone had expected. After five weeks of almost continuous rain the positions and access in and around them had become almost impassable. All of our vehicles had four wheel drive plus front winches, and it still took two trucks (prime movers) to get each gun out to a hard surface road. A few really bad ones could not even be moved by an Engineer bulldozer and it took an M-10 tank to finally get us 100% out. It took five hours to get the entire battalion moved about three or four miles to the new positions, and it was after dark before everyone was in the new position and ready to fire.

My worry about mine fields was for nothing. Not one mine was hit by the battalion.

By mid-morning of the 9th, Combat Command B of the 4th Armd Division had attacked through the breach created by the 137th Inf Regiment. It was in two columns and swung behind the German positions, bypassing where it could. The 137th Inf followed and mopped up the German bypassed strongpoints, mostly fortified villages. It was hard and slow going, with the Germans putting up strong resistance wherever they could along the way. It gave us a great confidence to be supporting two experienced and competent divisions like the 35th Inf and the 4th Armd. We fired 456 rounds that day. It rained all day and was colder.

We stayed in Jallaucourt most of the next day, firing 14 missions totalling 373 rounds. Late in the afternoon the Bn moved to new positions near the town of Coutures, about six miles to the east, and closed there after dark. This was a lateral move from the left side of the division area to the

right side. We were now supporting the 134th Inf Regiment, as they appeared to have the more difficult situation ahead of them. The FDC was set up in a cellar, adequate but not very good. The 26th Inf Division was on the right of the 35th, and was also attacking.

About 30 rounds of enemy artillery landed in B Btry position as they arrived, but there was no damage. Coutures was badly damaged by the earlier fighting and shelling, and there were a number of dead livestock, mainly cattle, around. Also, the Germans had horse-drawn artillery and some of their horses had been killed, a sad sight. Tough weather for a survey or anything else - mixed rain, sleet and snow all day.

The kitchen truck was outdoors, as opposed to being in a barn. We went down the chow line in almost total darkness in the rain. Then we stood in the rain in the dark while eating, and ate as fast as we could before everything turned to a wet, soggy mush. At least the food was hot when we started. We ate in that manner numerous times that November-December.

We stayed in Coutures all day on the 11th, Armistice Day of WWI, and left on the 12th at 1730 hours. In the two days we had fired some 50 missions totalling 649 rounds. We had intermittent mixed snow and rain both days. The snow did not accumulate. Early in the afternoon of the 12th the advance party went out to select new battery positions, more or less normal procedure when the front was moving. The batteries stayed in their firing positions while the advance people organized for the new positions. Almost all of the preparation was our survey and the laying of telephone lines, both of which took time. The object was to minimize the time the guns were not in a firing position ready to fire.

In spite of early starts it was always close whether we got the survey completed before darkness, the days getting shorter and shorter, and the weather poor. But I had an excellent section. We knew what we were doing and we were good at it. Everyone was glad to be in the survey section and they worked together very well.

The maps we had were excellent. I had discovered we could locate the #2 gun position on the map by inspection to within a pin diameter, with a relatively short survey from a point identifiable on the ground and on the map. The maps also had contours, so we did not need to concern ourselves with elevation. This left us with only a directional traverse to run to tie the three batteries together. This made our work much faster and more accurate, as the maps were more accurate than a survey we would have run with the instruments, weather, and time we had. On the 12th we had snow or rain all day, snow while we were surveying.

The guns could have fired without either the survey or telephone. The FO would have designated the target from the same map by coordinates (as he did in any case), and the guns fired on a magnetic azimuth. It would not have been accurate and the adjustment would have taken some time, but it could have been done. And we had reasonably good radios that could have replaced the telephone. Armored divisions and their self-propelled artillery no doubt operated without surveys much if not most of the time. But the survey tied all three batteries together and with the map, and an adjustment of one gun in the center battery made the battalion ready to fire on any target within range in less than 30 seconds from the request. This applied to all artillery battalions within range of any target. Getting the request to other battalions took longer than translating the request into action.

The conduct of the fighting had changed somewhat, caused by our forced pause and the deteriorating weather. Because of the weather, all vehicles were restricted to roads. Tanks and other armor could not go cross-country as before. This and inclement weather made it attractive to the Germans to fortify each village. Almost all of the buildings were constructed of masonry. So the Germans made strong points out of villages and forests and an occasional prominent hill. Every day the Americans would advance on and drive the Germans out of the next village. It was hard and bitter fighting, and costly to attacking troops. And the Germans feared General Patton as our most able commander and weighted the number of troops in front of Third Army accordingly.

On our move from Couture to Vaxy, about six miles, we went through Chateau Salins. It was one of the larger towns and was bitterly defended, requiring much house-to-house fighting. The houses in the villages were contiguous, and this often meant starting at one end, chopping a hole in the common wall to the next house, throwing through a hand grenade, and then enlarging the hole and crawling through. It was not easy. Chateau Salins was bitterly contested and badly damaged.

Vaxy was just another typical small village and considerably damaged. Colonel Head adopted as standard procedure moving Hq Btry and the CP/FDC into villages, with the three gun batteries scattered around it, and Service Btry three or four miles to the rear, often in the town the rest of us just vacated. There were enough buildings with intact roofs that everybody in Hq Btry and some in the gun batteries could find a dry place to sleep. Virtually all windows were gone, but we used blankets for black-out screens, and were quite comfortable. The buildings, almost all homes or barns, had the standard European red ceramic tile roofs, affording us protection from enemy shelling, if there had been any. The shells blew holes in the roof, but at least they exploded at the roof line. Most of the shelling in our area was cross-road interdiction, since the Germans had no way of knowing where we were, other than civilian sympathizers with radios and that was not common. Of course they could have missed the crossroad and hit us by mistake. Some of the towns were small and severely damaged which made finding dry sleeping spaces for nearly 100 people difficult. The colonel usually chose the most suitable building for the CP/FDC, and it often had room for Hq Btry and BN Staff officers to sleep, but not always. Being the junior staff officer made me the last one accommodated, and being out surveying while the headquarters was being set up did not help. But I was very fortunate and did not have to worry about this. Sgt. Fleishman and the survey section were pretty good about locating adequate sleeping space and I was always welcome to stay with them. Sgt Fleishman reminded me of this almost every day. We had a good relationship and it added much to alleviate otherwise trying conditions. The whole section treated me better than I could have hoped for.

But for some reason on that night I chose wrongly and shared space with Major Sparks and Captain Dave Canon. That was very strange company for me as I was usually with other Lts or with Captain Bob Miller (Asst S-3), or with my section. Sparks and Canon were both nice guys, but not close friends. We were in a badly damaged building, on the second floor, and most of the roof had been shot off. Our room had a complete ceiling, but the rain dripped through in a few places. The room was only about 12' by 12'. We blacked out the open window with blankets and had a gasoline type lantern for light. We also had a small wood fire in a two gallon galvanized bucket sitting on three bricks on the floor for warmth. The smoke from the fire plus fatigue sent Canon and me to our sleeping bags on the floor fairly early. Major Sparks had been writing his wife, Kay, and drinking fairly steadily from a bottle of whiskey, and continued to do so as we faded. In the morning we were awakened by a drunken Major Sparks accidentally kicking over

LORRAINE CAMPAIGN MAP XXVIII
ADVANCE IN THE 35th INFANTRY DIVISION ZONE
8 - 15 November 1944

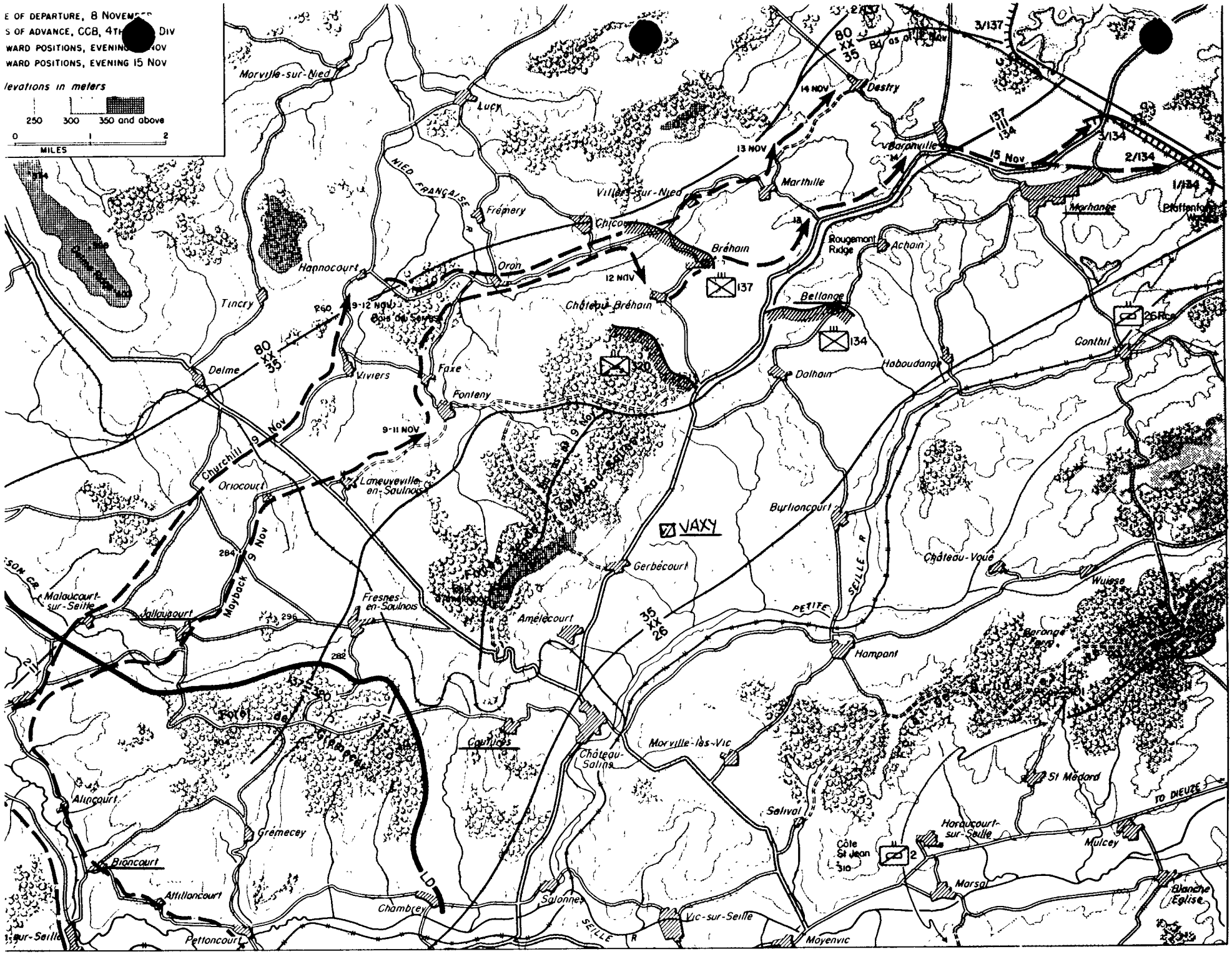
Battalion Positions -

15 Oct - 8 Nov	Bioncourt
9 Nov	Jallaucourt
10 - 12 Nov	Coutures
12 - 14 Nov	Vaxy
14 - 16 Nov	Bellange
16 - 18 Nov	Morhange
18 Nov	Harprich

LEGEND -

-- Line of Departure 8 November 1944
-- Axis of Advance, CCB 4th Armored Division
-- Forward U.S. Positions Evening 12 November
-- Forward U.S. Positions Evening 15 November

Scale: 1 inch = 1.6 miles



MAP NO. XXVIII

the fire bucket, which was still going. We got up fast. Major Sparks was our Executive Officer, next in command to Colonel Head, and a long time officer with the 802d. He was a nice guy, and well thought of, but the general situation seemed to be getting to him. I vowed I would not share a room with him again.

Canon and I left our smoke filled room and headed for Hq mess, and found an inch of snow on the ground, and colder temperatures. It melted as the day warmed up.

November 12th was Jeanie's father's birthday, and I believe he was 56 years old. I could not have asked for a better father-in-law, though at that time I did not know him as well as I would in later years. Somewhere he found a pair of rubber galoshes, and sent them to me. They were a tremendous joy and saved my feet all manner of grief in the terrible wet weather. I almost never took them off.

We stayed in Vaxy until late in the afternoon of the 14th, firing 54 missions totalling 1400 rounds. This was a lot of firing, showing the intensity of the fighting.

A "mission" was firing on any target, and could originate from any of several sources, most commonly from our FO's or air observers. Prior to an attack the infantry designated areas by map coordinates, each area was given a number, and fire could be requested by "Concentration" number, on request or for a prearranged time. The artillery battalion we were reinforcing could also call for fire, and group occasionally did the same. With the range of artillery and the number of battalions in a given area, and the communications net, it was not uncommon to have eight battalions fire on one target. Most targets did not warrant that intensity, but it did happen. Each battalion had twelve guns, and we were all tied into a common map. One of our more unusual firings were T-O-T's (time on target). In that instance each battalion was instructed the time their first rounds of shells were to hit the target. Each battalion then figured all of their gun settings, and from tables read the time of flight. The time of flight was then subtracted from the initial impact time, and that determined when the battery would fire. The object was to have all initial rounds of shells from all battalions land on the target within seconds of each other. The firing would continue at so many rounds per minute and for so many minutes, as directed. We were told the effect was devastating, and it must have been. We were also told that the U.S. artillery was the best in the world, and we were quite willing to believe that. John Cox, one of our regular FO's, told of German prisoners inquiring about our "automatic" artillery.

Late in the afternoon of the 14th the battalion moved to positions near the town of Bellange, about five miles to the northeast on the road toward Sarreguemines. The rain and cold continued.

Mail came through fairly regularly. It took two to three weeks each way to and from the states, and and in neither direction did it arrive in chronological order. Often three or four came together and then a several day gap. But there was nothing to compare with the joy and pleasure everybody got from the mail. We were very restricted in what we could write home as to where we were or what we were doing. I was overly conscientious in observing the restrictions, making my letters fairly dull. It was ridiculous to impose such strict censorship, as the Germans knew within 24 hours what troops were in front of them. I should have been more inventive in circumventing the rules. But the letters from home were great. Packages started arriving by early November, including packages of food, and they were especially welcome. The army food was not too bad, all things considered, and was well prepared by our Hq Btry mess, but the cookies,

candies, and other rich things we were not getting were much enjoyed. Living outdoors so much and being on the go a lot we seemed to burn up a lot of calories. The army issue food included a lot of dehydrated vegetables, potatoes, eggs, and so forth. The mess gang were good but there were limits to what they could do with what they got. And we ate at odd times in odd places, often standing up and using a truck fender as a table. The packages of food were much enjoyed, usually at quiet times and shared with others.

The 4th Armd Division was still leading the way, at least partly, for the infantry, and the attack continued to make progress, though painfully slowly for those involved. The attack toward and on Morhange was extremely hard fought and costly to the 134th Inf Regiment, under terrible conditions of rain and snow against determined German troops fortified in the villages. I did not see how they got men to do what the infantry was asked to do.

I did all of my moving about in my jeep. For weather protection it had a windshield and a canvas combination top and back. The back had a window opening but no glass. It was cool and breezy. By this time we were all wearing long woolen underwear, woolen (flannel) trousers and shirts, sweaters, scarfs, field jackets, knitted woolen skull caps under our helmet liners and helmets, all of which was government issue. In my case I wore my tanker jacket bought at a PX in England, as did a few others. And I wore the galoshes that Jeanie's father had sent me over my GI shoes. The powers that be apparently had not expected the war to continue into cold weather, so none of the troops had adequate cold, wet weather footwear, just normal GI boots smeared with "waterproofing". There was a great deal of "trench foot", especially in the infantry. In general, I found the government issue clothing to be quite satisfactory for the intended duty. The lack of proper footwear seemed to be poor planning by the higher ups, not the fault of the Quartermaster Corps.

We stayed in Bellange until late afternoon of November 16th, firing 600-700 rounds a day in support of the infantry attacks. Each village was a terrible battle, and the next day another battle for another village, and so forth. We hoped the high command knew what they were doing.

The fighting tended to quiet down as soon as it was dark. The weather was so bad that most of the fighting centered around villages. Both sides had 85-90% of their men indoors out of the weather, with the remaining 10-15% outposted 150 yards or so around the village outskirts on guard duty, and the guards were rotated every couple of hours. All of these men were so exhausted by the end of the day it was very difficult for the guards to stay awake, scared or not. They were almost always posted in twos or threes.

Late afternoon of the 16th the battalion moved to the much larger town of Morhange, another 4 or 5 miles to the northeast. Hq Btry and the CP/FDC was in a former German army barracks in town. The gun batteries were on the edge of town and located near buildings so that most of the men could get some shelter. The town had been taken the previous day and the front was about a mile to our northeast.

We stayed in Morhange on the 17th, and our mission was changed to supporting the 137th Inf instead of the 134th Inf. It appeared that Morhange was an "objective" and now that it had been achieved a day of semi-rest had been proclaimed. The 134th was pulled out of the line and back into Morhange for dry clothes and hot food. The infantry had been attacking steadily since November 8th, ten days continuously, under very difficult weather conditions, and body and mind

can only take so much without a day off to get dry and warm and away from the shelling or threat of shelling. We fired only nine missions. About ten rounds of enemy artillery landed near Hq Btry mess truck during supper, close but no damage, and delayed supper briefly.

I was told that we were attacking over the exact same ground that the French did in August 1914. They got as far as Morhange and then were driven back to Nancy, and eventually beyond. Probably there was more fighting here later in WWI.

On the 18th the attack on our front resumed, the Bn firing a total of 895 rounds, including an hour or so preparation prior to the infantry attack. Lt. John Cox was out as an FO and wounded in the arm by a shell fragment. He was able to stay with his infantry unit until dark, conducting fire, and then withdrew to the infantry aid station. Late in the day we moved four or five miles to the northeast near the town of Harprich, but not in it. The FDC was set up in German dugout, not very adequate. There was no rain on the 18th, but no sun either.

On the morning of the 19th, John Cox returned to our Bn aid station and Captain (Doc) Danish sent him back to the Evac Hospital. Lt Art Munkenbeck, out on his first mission as an FO, was slightly injured when enemy shelling caused the building he was in to collapse, partially on and around him. A few rounds of German artillery landed in A Btry area but no damage. Several enemy planes were over our area, fairly low, but did no strafing or bombing. However, every AA outfit within miles had a go at them (at no apparent success) with tracers going at them from all angles from machine guns, and 20 mm AA guns. A minute or so after they had gone, several 20 mm shells landed in the CP area. Every shell that was fired at a plane and missed came down somewhere and exploded, and we happened to get a few. We had an exciting few minutes but no damage.

We participated in a T-O-T with 18 other FA battalions on the town of Gros-Tenquin late in the afternoon. That was an awful lot of fire power. The town was also attacked by fighter-bombers, and set on fire with white phosphorous by the infantry mortars. After previously resisting bitterly, the Germans in the town surrendered to the tanks and infantry advancing after the bombardment without resistance, totally stunned. The 4th Armd Division had been moved to the right to assist the 26th Division, and the 6th Armd was now attacking with the 35th Division in our front.

We heard news of our former friend, Captain Ivy C. Pitman. He froze his feet on the first night on maneuvers in Tennessee December 1943, and was evacuated, after proclaiming "This weather will separate the men from the boys". He was given a medical discharge and a disability allowance of $150 per month for life for his frozen feet. To put this in perspective, at that time General Eisenhower, Supreme Allied Commander in the European Theater was being paid $1000 per month. No rain again today, but cloudy, cold and windy.

Around noon on the 20th we moved three or four miles to the northeast, near the double town of Berig-Vintrange. For some reason A Btry gun position was selected right at a road junction on the main road. I thought it a poor position and too close to the road because of the danger of random interdiction fire, and too easily identified and located by a civilian agent of the Germans. We had had no advance notice and the batteries were moving into position as we were running our survey. Several members of my section and I were just a few yards outside where the #4 gun was to go. It was the left gun and in this instance furthest from the road. The battery was going through the various tasks involved in a new position. The guns had not yet arrived, but there was

much activity in the area. I happened to be looking towards the #2 gun position stake when one of the battery jeeps drove through near it, hit a mine, and blew straight up with the front end pointing straight up and the rear about four feet off the ground. It fell back down on its rear and fell to one side. The only occupant was the driver (Pfc Denton) and he fell clear. We all, about ten of us, including Captain Murphy, the battery CO, ran over to assist Denton, who was badly dazed, no doubt suffering concussion from the blast. Captain Murphy was one of the first to get there, and I was right behind him. Denton was lying on his back, stunned and barely moving but with his eyes open. As Murphy went down and leaned over him, Denton saw Murphy and said "I'm sorry, Captain Murphy". He was immediately evacuated. He survived but never returned to duty with the 802d. For the rest of us, the immediate concern was how many more mines were still there. Several were subsequently removed by the Engineers but there were no more explosions.

The infantry attack was continuing and we fired 26 missions totalling 566 rounds. Rain returned, all day but not heavy.

During the night of the 20th an unoccupied barn in Hq Btry area caught fire. Men in the adjoining barn were moved, but the fire did not spread. The fire was extinguished by the heavy rain. The smell of burning and smoldering damp straw was unpleasant, and seemed to be present in many of the towns.

Late in the day on the 21st we moved another four miles to the northeast to near the town of Erstroff, and stayed there until the 25th. There was heavy fighting on our front, under the worst of conditions, and the going was slow. It rained every day.

It was necessary to construct platforms of logs and planks in the gun pits to keep the guns from sinking and/or moving backwards with the recoil. The gun barrel recoiled about three feet at each firing, cushioned by a pneumatic tube, but the gun carriage itself was not supposed to move. The gun rested on its two wheels and the two ends of its split trail. In transport the two halves of the trail were together. In firing position the two halves were spread about 20 odd degrees to each side. The end of each half of each trail was equipped with a large spade, at right angle and pointing down. These spades were dug into the ground and prevented the gun carriage from moving backward from the firing recoil. In dry earth the spades worked fine, but in mud they had to be backed with logs approximately 15 inches in diameter and five or six feet long. The gun and its sight can not be permitted to move once they are sighted in, as that would give an erroneous sighting on their aiming stake, and inaccurate firing. If the gun did move, it had to be manhandled back to its correct position, or re-layed (aligned).

November 23rd was Thanksgiving Day, and the noon meal was roast turkey and all of the trimmings. The rain did not help, but the army had supplied us well and the Hq mess cooks did a great job.

November 23rd was also my 24th birthday. By some totally unimaginable coincidence, considering the irregularity and unpredictability of mail from home, on my birthday I received two birthday cards from Jeanie, one from my daughter Bethie, and one each from my mother and father. And also three letters from Jeanie. Not a bad birthday all things considered.

November 24th was a quiet day, only eight missions totalling 141 rounds. Lt Robert Kent rejoined us as a replacement. He was with us in the states, but was one of several officers left behind when

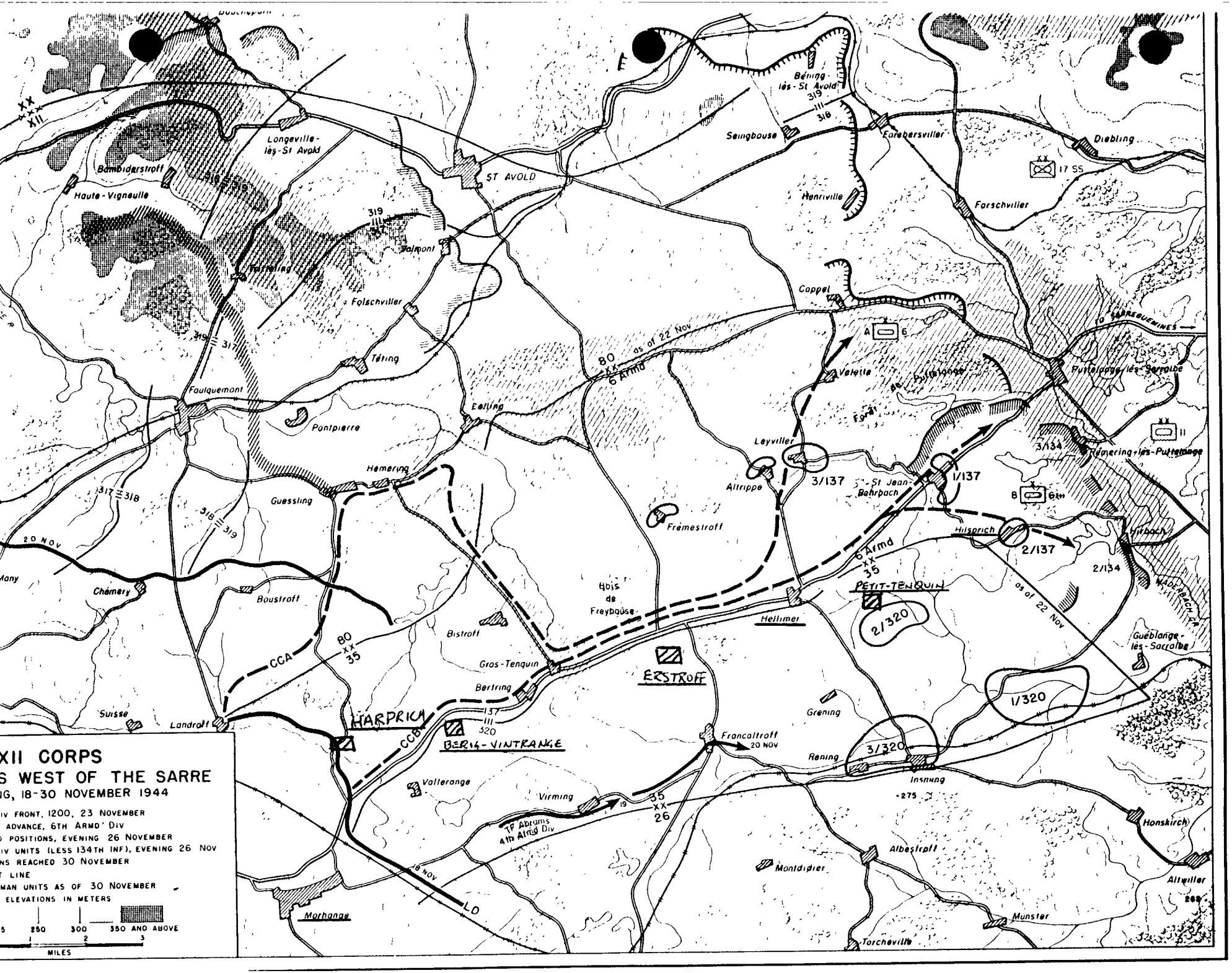
XII CORPS - LORRAINE CAMPAIGN MAP XXXV
OPERATIONS WEST OF THE SARRE (RIVER)
Left Wing, 18-30 November 1944

Battalion Positions -

16 - 18 Nov	Morhange
18 - 20 Nov	Harprich
20 - 21 Nov	Berig-Vintrange
21 - 25 Nov	Erstroff
25 Nov - 1 Dec	Hellimer
1 - 3 Dec	Petit-Tenquin
3 - 6 Dec	Hilsprich
6 - 8 Dec	Hambach

LEGEND -

- — 80th Div Front 1200, 23 November
- — Axis of Advance, 6th Armored Division
- — Forward U.S. Positions Evening 26 Novemberpp
- — 35th Division units (less 134th inf.) evening 26 Nov.
- — Positions Reached 30 November
- — Maginot Line


XII CORPS
S WEST OF THE SARRE
IG, 18-30 NOVEMBER 1944
IV FRONT, 1200, 23 NOVEMBER
ADVANCE, 6TH ARMD DIV
POSITIONS, EVENING 26 NOVEMBER
IV UNITS (LESS 134TH INF), EVENING 26 NOV
NS REACHED 30 NOVEMBER
T LINE
MAN UNITS AS OF 30 NOVEMBER
ELEVATIONS IN METERS
250
300
350 AND ABOVE
MILES
Longeville-lès-St Avold
Bambiderstroff
Haute-Vigneulle
ST AVOLD
Béning-lès-St Avold
Seingbouse
Farébersviller
Diebling
Henriville
Forschviller
Folmont
Folschviller
Téting
Faulquemont
Pontpierre
Cappel
Valette
Puttelange-lès-Sarralbe
Leyviller
Altrippe
3/137
St Jean-Rahrbach
1/137
Rémering-lès-Puttelange
Hemering
Guessling
Frémestroff
Hilsprich
2/137
2/134
Chémery
Boustroff
Bois de Freybouse
PETIT-TENQUIN
2/320
Hellimer
Bistroff
Gros-Tenquin
ERSTROFF
Guéblange-lès-Sarralbe
Bertring
Suisse
Landroff
HARPRICH
BERIG-VINTRANGE
Francaltroff
Grening
1/320
Rening
3/320
Insning
Valterange
Virming
Honskirch
Albestroff
Montdidier
Altviller
Morhange
Munster
Torcheville
CCA
CCB
LD
6 Armd
as of 22 Nov
20 NOV
19 NOV
TF Abrams
4th Armd Div

MAP NO. XXXV

we cut down to T/O strength just prior to coming overseas. He was tall, dark, young, smart, and pleasant, but I did not know him well.

On the 25th we fired 11 missions totalling 277 rounds, and late in the afternoon moved to new positions near the town of Hellimer, another three miles up the road towards Saarguemines. We stayed there until December 1st, with virtually no firing. The front line was the west side of the Maderbach River. The advance had stopped momentarily. The 6th Armd had taken over the front of the 35th and the 35th put in reserve for resting and training replacements. From November 8th to the 28th the 35th (and 6th Armd) had advanced approximately 27 miles, at a cost of 3000 casualties.

Early in the morning on December 1st we were released from the 182d FA Group and attached to the 26th Inf Division, the division to the right of the 35th. Around noon we were moved to the town of Hinsingen, about six miles to the southeast. We arrived at our new positions to find that the front was only about 800 yards in front of us. All of the batteries were organized for close-in defense in cooperation with the infantry. Three hours later we were released from attachment to the 26th Division and re-attached to the 182d FA Group. We were attached to the 35th Division and assigned to reinforce the 216th FA Bn in support of the 320th Inf Regiment. Our new position was near the town of Petit-Tenquin.

Things were quiet on our front for several days. On the 2nd, Sgt Fleishman and I set up an OP on a hill back of the front. We were on a small hill and saw nothing. But just before dusk and closing down the OP we saw a German V-1 flying bomb a few hundred yards to our right. It was quite low and slow moving and was heading toward the rear area of the 26th Division. The Germans had used thousands of these against London, but I had not heard of them using them against front line troops. The chance of it hitting anything were almost nil, but it was interesting for us to see it. We were in or approaching the French Maginot Line area, but so far had seen nothing of interest.

The rain continued and the mud kept getting worse.

On December 3rd we moved to near the town of Hilsprich, six miles further along to the northeast. The town had been fought over a few days before and was a smoking ruins. The CP/FDC was in a house near the church. The gun batteries had much trouble getting their guns in position because of the mud, with rain and sleet all day. I tore my raincoat, a dark green slicker, getting into my jeep. The butt of my Colt .45 went through it.

Things picked up on December 4th with 37 missions totalling 488 rounds. Lt. Jimmy Teehan was out as FO. The Bn received its first quota of passes to Paris. The 4th was Jeanie's and my second wedding anniversary.

On the 5th we fired 19 missions and 307 rounds. We were nearing the Saar River and the Germans were putting up stiff resistance, with considerable help from the rain and mud. The poor infantry had to keep slugging it out in the cold, wet, miserable weather. I was very grateful to be in the artillery.

On the 6th we moved to the town of Hambach, a move of 8 miles, firing 23 missions and 369 rounds before leaving Hilsprich. Lt Bill Romeiser went out as FO, relieving Jimmy Teehan. We

were now 3 or 4 miles southwest of the city of Sarreguemines. A group of us slept in a detached farm building. It was dry but had rats that ran over us during the night. And the rain continued.

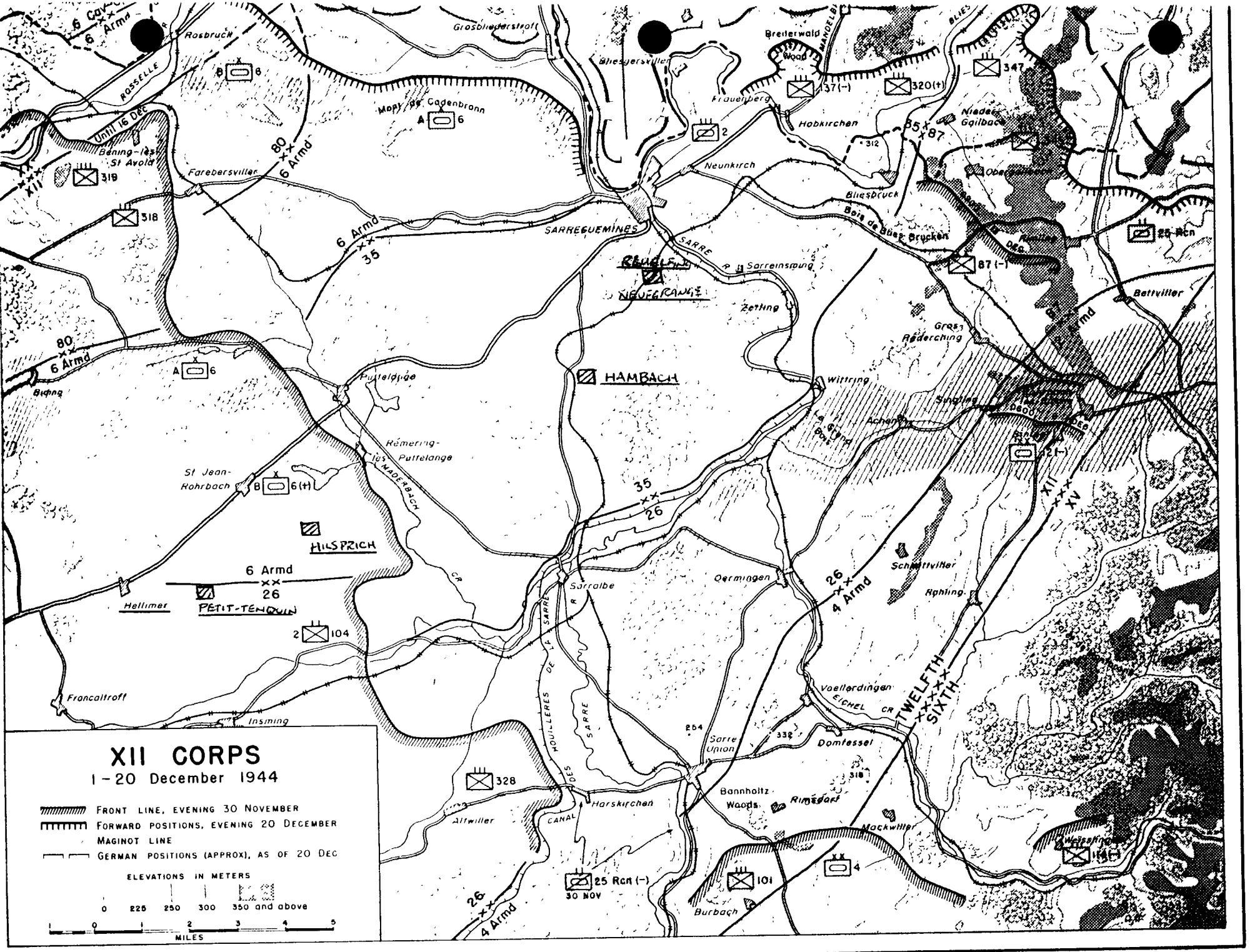
On the 7th we all moved into other quarters. We had somewhat grown accustomed to seeing dead German soldiers, and by this time did not give them more than casual glances. I had not seen any that were badly disfigured or dismembered. Even though they were the enemy, once they were dead you could no longer hate them. You could not help but remember they were or had been someone's son, husband, father, brother. Usually their wallets had been removed from their clothing, rifled, and discarded on the ground, with family pictures scattered. Often their ring fingers had been cut off for the ring. Any pistols they had had were gone. It was sad but not upsetting. But I never did get accustomed to seeing dead American soldiers. We did not see many, as the Graves Registration people were close behind the infantry and removed them promptly. When we arrived at the little farm out-building the previous day there was a dead American soldier about 40 feet away, across the narrow road from the entrance doorway. He was an American sergeant, lying face down in a shallow depression in about three inches of water. There was no visible damage or wound, but he appeared to have been dead when he hit the ground. It really bothered me, and perhaps others, as we did not talk about it. It may have been that with his face obscured he looked just like the rest of us. We all dressed alike and we could have been looking at ourselves, or may be it was because he was lying face down in the water. We reported him and he was picked up early the next morning.

The rain continued and it seemed to be getting colder. December 7th was the third anniversary of Pearl Harbor.

On December 8th we moved about two miles to the northeast, between the towns of Neufgrange and Remelfing, and were about two miles south of Saarguemines. Saarguemines was not as large as Nancy, but was a city and much larger than the small farming villages we had been seeing. The Bn CP/FDC and Hq Btry were in a large country/farm home, obviously the home of well-to-do people. The home had not been badly shot up and we were quite comfortable. The weather had turned everything into one huge quagmire. Vehicles had to stay on the roads, foxholes filled with water as fast as they were dug, and gun positions were mudholes. The front winches on the trucks were put to much use. Tanks near our CP supported the infantry with both their cannons and machine guns with direct fire as the infantry crossed the Saar River about a mile to our northeast. Six rounds of enemy shells landed in the Hq Btry area but there was no damage.

The 35th Inf Division that we had been supporting for many weeks had theoretically been resting, but some had come back in the line for the assault on the Saar River. This was part of a three division attack to cross the river by the XII Corps. The 80th Inf on the left, 6th Armd in the center, and the 35th Inf on the right. Saarguemines sat at the confluence of the Saar and the Blies rivers, with part of the city on the west side of the Saar and part on the east side. It was an industrial city and most of the industrial buildings had been fortified. By the 8th the 6th Armd and the 35th Inf controlled the west side of the Saar and half of Saarguemines. There was a day's wait for the 26th Inf Division of the XV Corps to come alongside on the right of the 35th.

In the past week, Major General John S. Wood had relinquished command of the superb 4th Armd Division, suffering from battle fatigue. He had commanded the division in combat from late July and the breakout, all across France, and through the intense fighting from the Moselle River onward. He was considered to be a brilliant division commander. A few days later the entire


XII CORPS
1 - 20 December 1944
FRONT LINE, EVENING 30 NOVEMBER
FORWARD POSITIONS, EVENING 20 DECEMBER
MAGINOT LINE
GERMAN POSITIONS (APPROX), AS OF 20 DEC
ELEVATIONS IN METERS
0 225 250 300 350 and above
MILES
Rosbruck
Grosbliederstroff
Bliesgersviller
Breiterwald Wood
Frauenberg
Hobkirchen
Niedaeg Gailbach
Mopy Gr. Cadenbrann
Until 16 DEC
Bening-les-St Avold
Farebersviller
Neunkirch
Bliesbruck
Bois de Bliesbrucken
SARREGUEMINES
SARRE
Sarreinsprung
Zetting
NEUFGRANGE
Bettviller
Gros Rederching
HAMBACH
Wittring
Puttelange
Rémering-les-Puttelange
St Jean-Rohrbach
HILSPRICH
Hellimer
PETIT-TENQUIN
Sarralbe
Oermingen
Schmittviller
Rahling
Voellerdingen
Domfessel
Sarre Union
Bannholtz Woods
Rimsdorf
Mackwiller
Harskirchen
Altwiller
Burbach
Francaltroff
Insming
Biding
TWELFTH
SIXTH
25 Rcn (-)
30 NOV

MAP NO. XXXIX

division was relieved by a brand new armored division, the 12th. The 4th apparently had lost many battle hardened troops and much equipment and was deemed to need rest and rehabilitation. It was a superb division.

We fired 30 missions totalling 401 rounds on the 8th.

On December 9th our CP was somewhat engulfed in smoke most of the day, created by the 35th Division in an attempt to conceal their Engineers from enemy observation and fire as they constructed a Bailey bridge across the Saar. The wind did not cooperate fully and the Engineers were subjected to quite a bit of fire. The infantry had crossed earlier on a badly damaged bridge and in assault boats, but the Engineers were under observation from hills and other high ground still held by the Germans. We were changed to supporting the 137th Inf Regiment, and Lts Wood and Dunbar went out as FO's.

At 1645 hours the battalion fired TOT's with seven other battalions on three enemy gun positions by Lt Robertson, one of our air observation pilots. These were our first rounds fired into Germany. The totals for the day were 7 missions and 137 rounds.

On the 10th Lt Bill Romeiser and Pvt. Abney, a member of his FO team, were wounded and evacuated. Bill Romeiser was wounded by shell fragments in the arm and leg. We were told his wounds were not serious (?), that he would not lose his arm, but he did not return to combat or the 802d. In the infantry such an arm wound was known as the "million dollar wound"- not real bad but enough to get one sent home.

> *In 1990, at one of our 802d FA Bn reunions, Bill told me that the arm wound had damaged a nerve and after recuperation for several months he was given a medical discharge. He said he had also been wounded in the back of his right thigh, but the doctors had decided to leave the shell fragment in there. Sometime in the mid-1980's it began to move around and bother him and he had it removed.*

A wounded German was turned over to Captain Murphy, CO of A Btry, by a civilian. The German thought it was safer than surrendering by himself. We had not heard of prisoners being shot by U.S. soldiers, but I am sure it happened. Or perhaps the Germans were saying so to discourage their soldiers from surrendering too readily. A great many German prisoners had passed through our area in the preceding month, being marched to the rear under infantry guard. Most of them did not seem unhappy. They were happy to have survived the war. Some had been on the Russian front and fighting for several years. To be captured by the Americans (or Amis as they called us), in contrast to capture by the British, French, or especially the Russians, was known to the common German soldier as the "golden capture". One prisoner marching through our area was reported to have said to one of our guys that he was luckier than the American, since he was going to America and our guy was going to Germany and more combat.

On the 10th we fired 26 missions totalling 657 rounds. On the 11th the figures were 21 and 489. Rain both days.

On the 12th the battalion was assessed 5% of enlisted personnel for transfer to the infantry. Infantry casualties had been very heavy for the previous six or seven weeks and replacements slow. All non-infantry units were assessed. Each battery CO would have liked to unload his worst

goof-offs and other undesirables, but Colonel Head would not permit it, probably on orders from above. Some, quite a few in fact, volunteered. About 90% of casualties in the ground forces were in the infantry, and of course their living conditions were unimaginable. The U.S. Army policy was to keep a division in the line and make up for casualties by supplying replacements. Thus an American infantryman knew he would be there until he was killed, was wounded, went batty, or survived to the end. To volunteer for such duty seemed the height of folly to me. Survival in the infantry was only partly skill, overwhelmingly it was pure chance. In any event, I thought I detected some smartening up by some of our guys after the infantry call.

On the 12th we fired 23 missions totalling 489 rounds. And it rained all day.

On the 13th we fired 14 missions totalling 961 rounds, quite a bit. Two missions alone totalled 368 rounds were repelling German counter-attacks. No rain, but cold and foggy all day.

On the 14th we moved to the eastern outskirts of Saarguemines, crossing the Saar on a make-shift bridge built over the partial wreckage of a large concrete railway bridge the Germans had done their best to destroy. We ended up near an insane asylum and the CP/FDC was in the basement of the asylum, a large building. The city had been bitterly defended by the Germans, building to building fighting, and there was much damage. Most damage had been from aerial bombardment sometime previously.

I continued to take my turn in charge of the FDC, always on the night shift with a skeleton crew. I enjoyed it, as I enjoyed all of the technical aspects of artillery - the surveying, map reading, fire direction tables, and other required details in trying to land a forty (or so) pound shell within five yards of a target 3 to 8 miles away. There were some very nice people in the FDC section and it was pleasant as well as interesting. In any event we were never really off-duty; we were on 24 hours a day 7 days a week. Our firing on the 14th was 21 missions, 584 rounds. The rain continued.

On December 15th the 35th Division MP's (military police) captured five German soldiers in the tower of a building close by our CP, on a tip from a civilian. A member of A Btry FO team was wounded by machine gun fire and evacuated.

The asylum provided a nice place to wash my face and hands, shave, and brush my teeth in comfort. I usually did this every three or four days, some situations being more satisfactory than others. This was not done in a lavatory with normal indoor plumbing, but in our normal manner with water in our helmet. The weather on the 15th was clear and cold, a big improvement.

Food packages were coming in the mail with regularity, and sharing was widespread, usually within sections. I normally shared with the Hq officers and my section, as they did with me. The candy and cookies were much enjoyed, but the big hit was fruit cake and we consumed lots of it.

During this time the infantry in front of us was having some very hard fighting. The 137th Inf Regiment we were supporting were on the division left and had the job of clearing Saarguemines on both sides of the Saar and then attempting to cross the Blies River. This river looped around in a large arc, and there was considerable high ground and steep embankments on the German side in our area. The Blies was also the German border at that point, and the river was swollen from all

the rain. German resistance seemed to get even more fierce as they were driven back onto sacred German soil.

The 87th Inf Division replaced the tired and understrength 26th Division on the right of the 35th. The were brand new and performed well.

Lt Kent was in the CP on the evening of the 16th, after returning from a three day stint as FO. He told us that the infantry company he was with, at one point one night flatly refused to get in their assault boats and cross the Blies River. These boats are flat bottomed with little freeboard, known to capsize easily under fire, and were otherwise minimum for the duty. The infantry man with all his clothing and gear could not swim or even stay on the surface, and once in water too deep to stand up in they usually drowned. In narrow and shallow canals they were known to sink to the bottom and walk out, but the Blies was 60 feet wide and too deep. In this instance the river was running faster than normal, with steep banks on the far side, the Germans were well dug in with good observation and using parachute flares providing brilliant illumination. These were battle hardened and weary combat infantrymen who thought the crossing was extremely dangerous and foolhardy and they refused to go. They resisted all threats and finally a roll call was taken and recorded for future punitive action. But what could the army do to an infantry company. These guys already had the worst job the army could offer.

One member of a C Btry FO detail was wounded but did not require evacuation.

The 16th was a big mail day, as some old and strayed mail caught up with us. I got two packages and 15 letters, all mailed between November 8th and 13th. Mail normally took 14 to 18 days. One unusual item in the mail was a fact sheet from a fraternity brother and classmate of mine at Cornell, Bob McCann, noting what the fraternity brothers were doing. Bill Davison, my roommate the first half of sophomore and junior years (he flunked out both years at mid-term), had had an army reserve commission from Culver Military Academy. He went into the army in the spring of 1941 after leaving Cornell and had participated in the North African, Sicily, Salerno, and Anzio invasions and subsequent campaigns. He had been wounded twice, the second being sufficiently serious to send him back to the states. Others were doing all sorts of military things, as our class was just the right time. McCann was an officer in the Ordnance Branch of the Army, and stationed in Detroit, not really tough duty.

The 17th was a heavy day, firing a total of 860 rounds, as the Germans fiercely defended encroachment of the Fatherland. One member of A Btry FO detail was wounded by a shell fragment and evacuated. Robertson's observation plane was hit several times by 88 mm shell fragments, no serious damage but it shook him up. The German 88 mm gun was a high velocity, flat trajectory, gun that could be used either for anti-aircraft defense of cities, or as a field artillery weapon. It was the Germans' most common and best gun.

Our mission was changed to direct support of the 2nd Cavalry Group, who moved in on the left flank of the 35th Division to cover that flank. Captains Hurd and Brugh went out as liaison officers with the 2nd and 42nd Cavalry Squadrons, both first rate and experienced outfits.

December 18th was another heavy day, firing 838 rounds. Rain returned.

On the 19th the unlucky 5% of enlisted personnel left for the 95th Inf Division Training Center at Metz. A total of 22 including several volunteers. We wished them goodluck - they were going to need it. Less firing, only 274 rounds.

The 20th was another heavy day, firing 778 rounds. We also fired some "propaganda" shells into enemy lines, containing "safe conduct passes" through our lines for those who wanted to surrender, not that they needed them. Some of the firing was in repulsing a German counter-attack in mid-afternoon.

Late in the day we received word of a large German counter-attack about a hundred and thirty miles to our north in the First Army sector, in the Ardennes area of Belgium and Luxembourg. All we learned was that it had started three or four days previously and was quite serious. The weather turned colder.

December 21st started out normally, but was to be anything but. The battalion fired 644 rounds during the course of the day. The big news was we were alerted fairly early for a move to Luxembourg. Colonel Head and a small advance party from each battery left at 1030 hours for Leudelange, Luxembourg. The remainder of the battalion was to prepare to leave as soon as we were relieved, probably late in the day.

About 1700 hours it started to snow, not heavily but steadily, and it stuck. We were ordered to be ready to leave about 2230 hours. The Seventh Army, on the right of the Third Army, was widening its front to the left to take over area now being manned by the Third, taking over a few of the troops that were there in the process, but almost all of the Third Army was to go north. The Third Army was to pull back slightly, turn 90 degrees to its left and move 100 miles to the north, where it would then attack the south side of the German penetration. We could not leave until the Seventh Army troops were in position. There was a lot of troop movement going on.

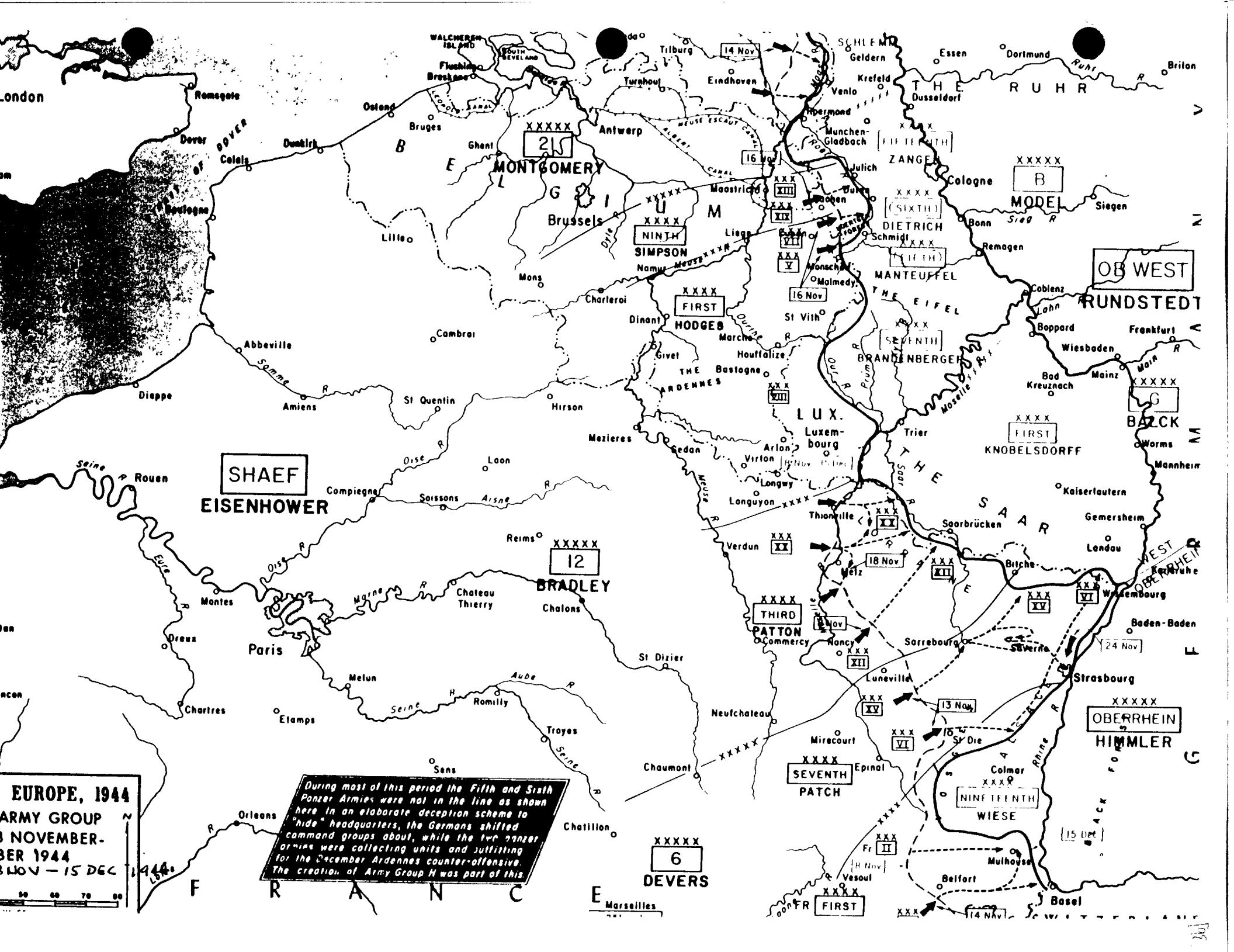
We were given a precisely prescribed route from our position in Saarguemines to the rear area, and then north to Luxembourg. A point was designated as our initial point (IP), and there was a specific time for our first vehicle to pass this IP. There were many troops to move over a limited road network, and maximum utilization of these roads required careful planning and timing. Our total trip to the point of meeting Colonel Head and the advance parties was expected to be about 110 miles.

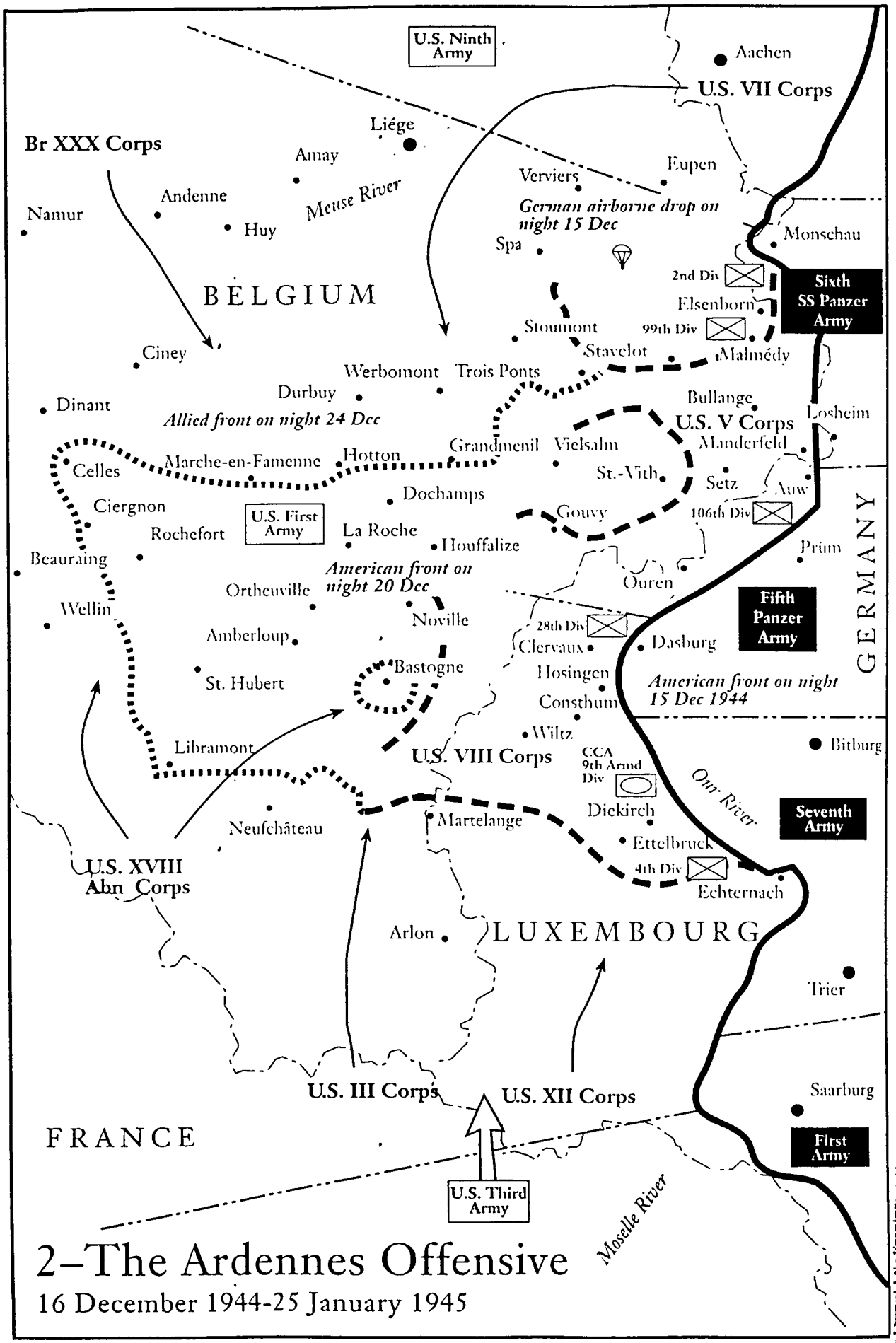
My function in the move was to go an hour ahead of the battalion with a truckful of men to be put out as "route markers". These "lucky" individuals were to be dropped off one by one at intersections where our prescribed route turned off the then current road. When the battalion arrived the route marker would indicate with a shielded flashlight where the trucks were to turn, and he was picked up by the last truck in the 90 truck convoy. The trucks would be using blackout lights only (except the lead vehicle), and would travel slowly enough for the truck behind to keep up. It was expected that gaps would occur, especially under the snow conditions we had that night. Obviously, if I didn't do my job correctly the battalion would not end up where planned or at least when planned, and might get snarled up with another convoy. I had my jeep, Cpl Urich, and Sgt Fleishman, and a truck with twenty five or so men. It was as dark a night as possible, snowing and with no skylight. We drove with our dim lights, and we had flashlights. Other than our own lights, we did not see a single light, near or far, that whole night. Nor did we pass any troops or see any other living soul. It was snowing and the temperature was well below freezing.

There were reports of Germans in American uniforms and speaking perfect English having been parachuted behind our lines somewhere. It was a long, cold, tense, and memorable night for all of us. All went well, and it began to get light about 0800 hours. I arrived in Leudelange mid to late morning and met the Colonel. The battalion arrived an hour or so later. I was standing beside Colonel Head as the Bn Exec's command car, the lead vehicle, stopped nearby, and he called out to Major Sparks, "Good job, Major!". My reaction was that he should have said that to me, as the major probably slept all the way and his driver merely followed the route markers.

But it was a job well done all around. 160 road miles, 15 hours, with 90 vehicles, one or two inches of snow on the roads, most of the trip in the dark on the shortest day of the year, and all on two lane blacktop roads.

We were now in Luxembourg, about four miles southwest of Luxembourg City, and were about to enter the battle on the south side of the German penetration in the Ardennes. □


EUROPE, 1944
ARMY GROUP
8 NOVEMBER-
BER 1944
8 NOV — 15 DEC 1944
SHAEF
EISENHOWER
21
MONTGOMERY
12
BRADLEY
6
DEVERS
OB WEST
RUNDSTEDT
B
MODEL
G
BAZCK
OBERRHEIN
HIMMLER
FIRST
HODGES
NINTH
SIMPSON
THIRD
PATTON
SEVENTH
PATCH
FIFTEENTH
ZANGEN
(SIXTH)
DIETRICH
(FIFTH)
MANTEUFFEL
SEVENTH
BRANDENBERGER
FIRST
KNOBELSDORFF
NINETEENTH
WIESE
FIRST
During most of this period the Fifth and Sixth Panzer Armies were not in the line as shown here in an elaborate deception scheme to "hide" headquarters, the Germans shifted command groups about, while the two panzer armies were collecting units and outfitting for the December Ardennes counter-offensive. The creation of Army Group H was part of this.
London
Dover
Calais
Boulogne
Dunkirk
Ostend
Bruges
Ghent
Antwerp
Brussels
Lille
Mons
Charleroi
Namur
Liege
Maastricht
Aachen
Eindhoven
Tilburg
Turnhout
Venlo
Roermond
Munchen-Gladbach
Julich
Cologne
Bonn
Siegen
Remagen
Coblenz
Boppard
Wiesbaden
Frankfurt
Mainz
Bad Kreuznach
Worms
Mannheim
Kaiserlautern
Gemersheim
Landau
Karlsruhe
Baden-Baden
Strasbourg
Colmar
Mulhouse
Basel
Belfort
Vesoul
Epinal
St Die
Saverne
Sarrebourg
Saarbrücken
Bitche
Trier
Luxembourg
Arlon
Virton
Longwy
Longuyon
Thionville
Metz
Verdun
Nancy
Commercy
Luneville
Mirecourt
Neufchateau
Chaumont
Chatillon
Sens
Troyes
Romilly
Melun
Etamps
Chartres
Dreux
Paris
Mantes
Rouen
Dieppe
Abbeville
Amiens
St Quentin
Cambrai
Laon
Soissons
Compiegne
Reims
Chalons
Chateau Thierry
St Dizier
Mezieres
Sedan
Hirson
Givet
Dinant
Marche
Houffalize
Bastogne
St Vith
Malmedy
Monschau
Geldern
Krefeld
Essen
Dortmund
Dusseldorf
Briton
Marseilles
Orleans
Seine R
Somme R
Oise R
Aisne R
Marne R
Aube R
Meuse R
Moselle R
Rhine R
Ruhr R
Sieg R
Lahn R
Main R
Saar R
Lauter R
Sauer R
Our R
Prum R
Lys R
Dyle R
Sambre R
Eure R
Loire R
Rhone R
Lippe R
Maas R
Scheldt R
Albert Canal
Meuse Escaut Canal
Leopold Canal
Walcheren Island
South Beveland
Flushing
Breskens
THE RUHR
THE EIFEL
THE ARDENNES
THE SAAR
LUX.
BELGIUM
FRANCE
GERMANY
SWITZERLAND
BLACK FOREST
WEST OBERHEIN
DOVER
15 DEC
14 Nov
16 Nov
18 Nov
13 Nov
24 Nov
14 Nov



2–The Ardennes Offensive

16 December 1944-25 January 1945

THE ARDENNES - 1944/1945

DECEMBER 22, 1944

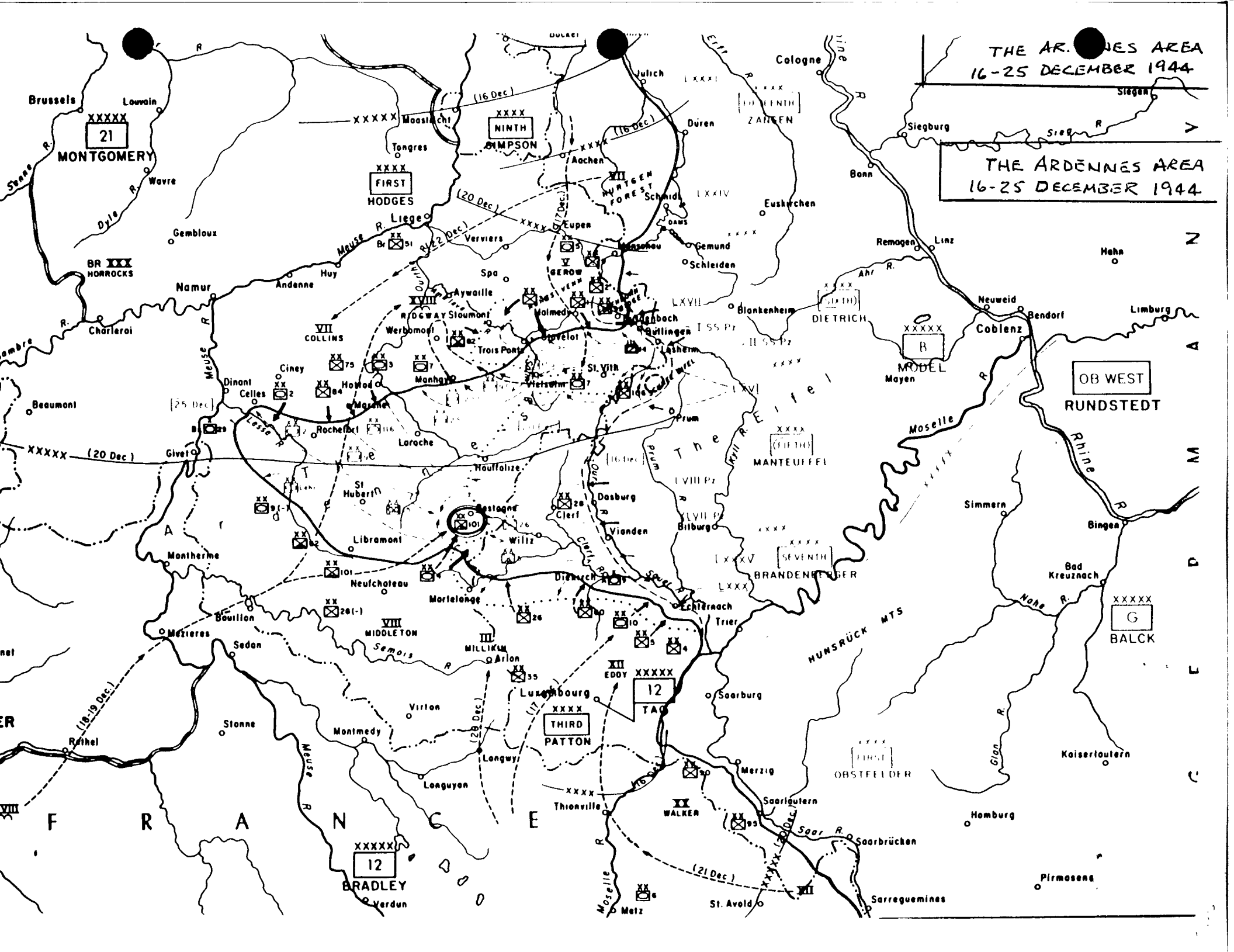
The battalion arrived about noon and we were in a field outside the town of Leudelange, Luxembourg, about 4 miles southwest of Luxembourg City. It was cold and there was two or three inches of snow on the ground and it was snowing lightly. We were soon guided into an assembly area for rest and lunch. Fortunately it was adjacent to a large woods and we could get in the woods and out of the cold wind.

In the afternoon the batteries went into position near Gladbach and the Bn CP/FDC was in a beer hall in the town of Mosdorf. Apparently the entire XII Corps moved north and we were still assigned to them. We did no firing.

> *The general situation was that the Germans had amassed a large force unbeknownst to the Allied High Command. It had been located on the German side of the Ardennes, opposite a front some 70 miles wide that the American First Army was holding with a thin line of troops, as they did not expect enemy action in that area. On the morning of December 16th the Germans launched a massive attack through the Ardennes, catching the thin line of troops and everyone up to and including Eisenhower totally by surprise. It took several days to sort out what was going on. The troops of the First Army fought extremely bravely and well, especially in small unit delaying actions. The main thrust was in the north, and the Americans there were able to hold the northern shoulder and were very effective in denying and delaying the Germans until additional troops arrived. We were facing the southern side of the penetration, and here the German attack had also been overpowering but somewhat less than in the north, this secondary German attack protecting the southern flank of their main attack.*

We did no firing on December 23rd as we were not really close to the action. After dark the battalion moved to new positions near Altrier, Luxembourg, assigned to the 5th Infantry Division, reinforcing the firing of the 50th FA Bn. The 5th was another first rate division. It was a slow and difficult motor march over snow covered frozen roads. It was a clear night with a bright moon and with the snow on the ground it was quite light, which helped with the move and with our survey. We were in a friendly country, and the civilians had not all moved out, so we had to be careful which buildings we used. The BN CP/FDC was in an attic/loft. We were about 4 miles southwest of Echternach, Luxembourg, which was behind the German lines.

The 5th Infantry Division had been moved up from the Metz area, and was a veteran division. Echternach was the south shoulder of the German penetration, the front lines going out to the south in one direction and to the west in the other. The front was actually about three miles west of Echternach and the 5th Division mission was to push the Germans back and out to the north and east of the city. Echternach was bordered on the northeast by the Sure River, which was also the border between Luxembourg and Germany. Our gun positions were arranged for firing generally to the northeast and prepared to fire to the north and the east or anything in between. Echternach had been occupied by the American 4th Division just prior to the attack and had been driven back in the first three or four days. The 5th Division came up from its former location and took over the right half of the 4th Division front. Things were still hectic, as we received more


THE ARDENNES AREA
16-25 DECEMBER 1944
THE ARDENNES AREA
16-25 DECEMBER 1944
XXXXX
21
MONTGOMERY
BR XXX
HORROCKS
XXXX
FIRST
HODGES
XXXX
NINTH
SIMPSON
XXXXX
12
BRADLEY
XXXXX
12
TAC
XXXX
THIRD
PATTON
XXXXX
B
MODEL
OB WEST
RUNDSTEDT
XXXXX
G
BALCK
XX
WALKER
XII
EDDY
VII
COLLINS
VIII
MIDDLETON
III
MILLIKIN
V
GEROW
XVIII
RIDGWAY
(SIXTH)
DIETRICH
(FIFTH)
MANTEUFFEL
(SEVENTH)
BRANDENBERGER
(FIRST)
OBSTFELDER
Brussels
Louvain
Wavre
Gembloux
Namur
Charleroi
Huy
Andenne
Liège
Verviers
Spa
Aywaille
Stoumont
Werbomont
Trois Ponts
Malmedy
Stavelot
St. Vith
Vielsalm
Manhay
Houffalize
Bastogne
Libramont
Neufchateau
Marche
Rochefort
Laroche
Givet
Dinant
Celles
Ciney
Beaumont
Mézieres
Bouillon
Sedan
Rethel
Stonne
Virton
Montmedy
Longuyon
Longwy
Arlon
Luxembourg
Thionville
Metz
Verdun
Saarburg
Merzig
Saarlautern
Saarbrücken
St. Avold
Sarreguemines
Pirmasens
Homburg
Kaiserslautern
Bad Kreuznach
Bingen
Simmern
Trier
Echternach
Diekirch
Vianden
Clerf
Dasburg
Prüm
Bitburg
Maastricht
Tongres
Aachen
Eupen
Malmedy
Monschau
Gemünd
Schleiden
Düren
Julich
Cologne
Euskirchen
Bonn
Siegburg
Siegen
Remagen
Linz
Neuwied
Coblenz
Bendorf
Limburg
Hahn
Blankenheim
Mayen
Bitburg
Saar R.
Moselle R.
Rhine R.
Meuse R.
Sambre R.
Dyle R.
Ourthe R.
Lesse R.
Semois R.
Sûre R.
Our R.
Prüm R.
Kyll R.
Ahr R.
Erft R.
Sieg R.
Nahe R.
Glan R.
Lauter R.
Schwarz R.
Clerf R.
Eifel
HUNSRÜCK MTS
HURTGEN FOREST
FRANCE
GERMANY
(16 Dec)
(17 Dec)
(20 Dec)
(22 Dec)
(25 Dec)
(18-19 Dec)
(23 Dec)
(21 Dec)

rumors than news. We could not grasp how the defeated Germans had been capable of such an attack and the continued hard fighting. At that time it was still touch and go as far as we could determine. The Germans were fighting very hard.

On the 24th we fired 33 missions totalling 690 rounds. It was very cold and clear, and our air force was out in strength, a tremendous help. The air force had difficulty telling friend from foe as there was no fixed front. We had brightly colored luminescent panels, about three feet by six feet, that rolled up when not in use, that we put on top of our vehicles to identify ourselves to the fighter pilots. The panels did not always prevent American planes from attacking American positions. The American fighter-bombers almost always flew in groups of four, and the Germans were always single planes. We on the ground had no trouble telling friend from foe. There was no German airforce (Luftwaffe) of any consequence. Probably more American positions were attacked by American planes than by German. We had a standard joke that if there was a single plane above us we did not have to worry as it was German. If there were four planes above us we did have to worry as they were sure to be American. One day we saw four American planes diving on and strafing and bombing an American position we knew was a nearby American artillery unit. That was back in Lorraine. It was rare that that happened. The American fighter-bombers were of tremendous help to the infantry and tankers, no question about it, even though there were occasional mix-ups.

On the 25th (Christmas Day) we fired 42 missions totalling 1201 rounds, our high to that time. The Germans were attacking rather than retreating and accordingly offered themselves as targets. The fighting was very fierce and bitter. The weather stayed clear and cold, not getting above freezing, much better for us than the previous weeks. For some reason we had to extend our survey to the rear and tie into Corps, even though the maps we had were excellent.

It was here we experienced for the first time the German rocket launcher. It launched six rockets at one loading, with about one or two seconds between rockets. The rockets made a weird and frightening sound passing through the air. The projectile packed more of an explosive punch than a normal artillery shell, and was made of plate steel rather than cast iron. It fractured into a few large pieces rather than many smaller ones, as did an artillery shell. They were a scary thing and fortunately there were not many of them. They were quickly known as the "Screaming Meamies", and the launcher as the six fluted organ that played the "Purple Heart Blues". It seemed that other U.S. troops had run into this rocket before but we had not heard of it.

On the 25th we had roast turkey and all of the trimmings at noon, very well prepared by our Hq mess. Otherwise it was just another day in combat. That was Jeanie's and my third Christmas as married - the first one I was OD at Ft. Bragg, the second I was on maneuvers in Tennessee, and the third I was in Luxembourg.

The cold weather was not pleasant but was better than the chilly wet we had been having. We were in and out of buildings, and even though the buildings had no heat or windows they were warmer because there was no wind. I was wearing, from inside out, regular cotton underwear, long john woolen drawers, two long john woolen undershirts, regular GI woolen OD shirt and trousers, two wool sweaters, and my tanker combat jacket; one or two pairs of wool socks, GI boots and galoshes; and a GI knitted wool skull cap under my helmet and liner; and heavy lined gloves. Feet were the most difficult, almost impossible to keep them from being cold.

THE ARDENNES CAMPAIGN MAP IX
THE SOUTHERN SHOULDER
22 -26 December 1944

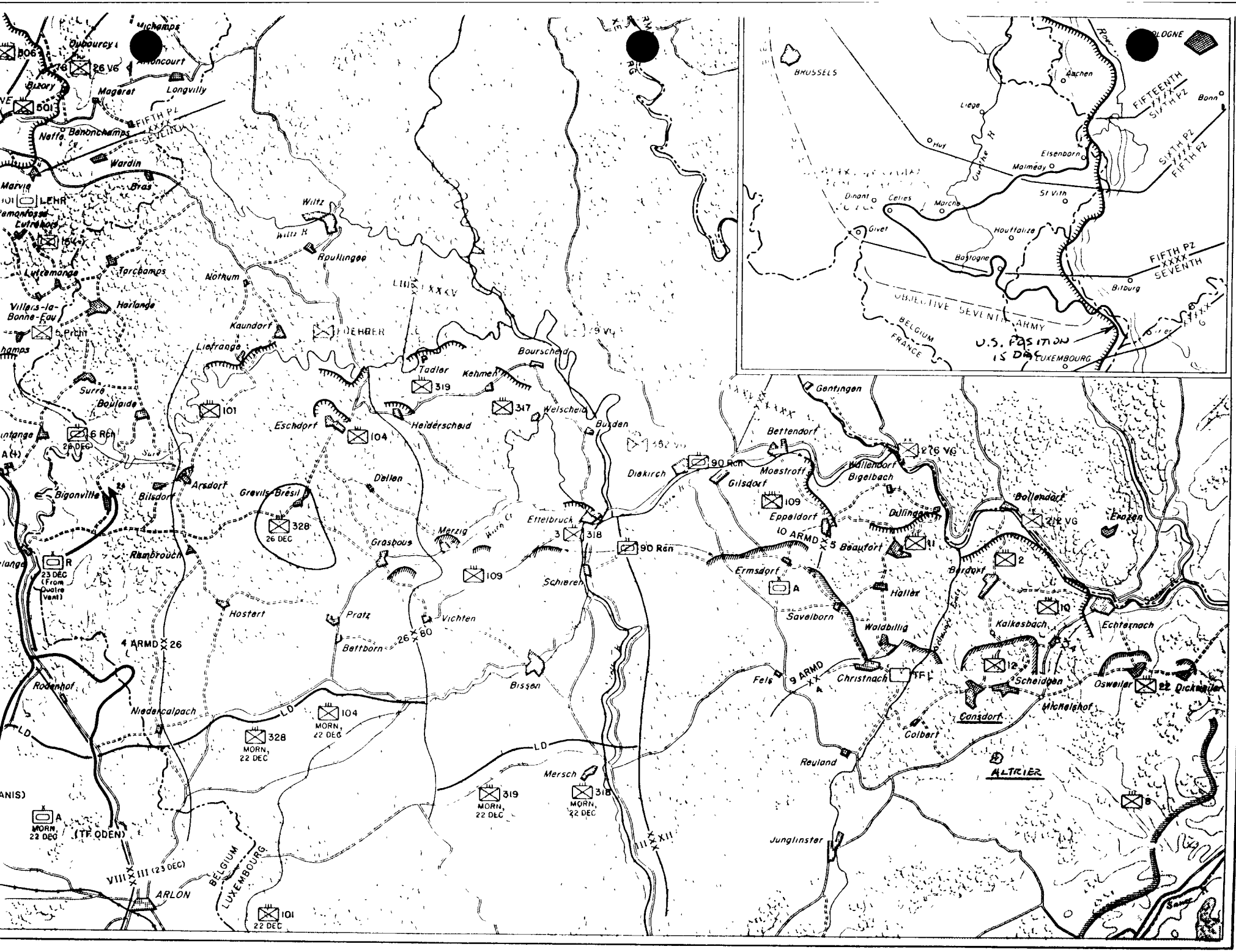
Battalion Positions -

23 - 25 Dec	Altrier (Luxembourg)
26 Dec - 2 Jan	Consdorf (Luxembourg)

LEGEND -

- U.S. Positions evening 21 December
- U.S. Positions evening 26 December
- Axis of U.S. Armored Attack
- LD - Line of Departure
- German Units as of 26 December

Scale: 1 inch = 3.3 miles



Published by Defense Mapping Agency Hydrographic/Topographic Center

MAP IX

On the 26th we moved two or three miles to the northeast, near the town of Consdorf. We fired 41 missions totalling 915 rounds, another big day. The 5th Division was making slow but steady progress against the Germans.

Lt Jim Teehan, one of our regular FO's, was out as an FO and received a slight scratch or furrow across the top of his head from a machine gun bullet that made a hole going in the front of his helmet and one in the rear coming out. It grazed his head while passing through the air space in his helmet created by the helmet liner webbing. The impact knocked him down and he was unconscious for a few seconds, but otherwise none-the-worse for wear. He vowed to wear the helmet till the end. *(He did that and took it home with him at the end of the war. It is now on display as part of a WW II Memorial in Springfield, MA).*

Weather remained clear and cold.

Corporal Dill H. Werley went out on an FO detail from December 24 to the 27th. His group was with "L" Company, 12th Infantry Regt, 5th Infantry Division. On the first day they captured Consdorf, and on the last day captured Berdorf. In his account, L Company started out on the 24th with 186 men and six officers. When the company was relieved four days later the it consisted of 17 men and two officers. The others had been killed, wounded, suffered shell-shock, frozen feet, or for some other reason had been evacuated.

On December 27th we were alerted to the probability of a German attack in force and that our infantry might be forced to give ground, and that alternate gun positions had to be selected about three miles to our rear. All preliminary preparations were made and the survey run in the event it became necessary. We also made detailed plans for close-in defense for all battery areas. The big attack eleven days previously convinced most of us that we did not know what the Germans were capable of. It was unsettling, as for two or three months we thought the war was virtually over. We fired 23 missions totalling 339 rounds. The weather stayed cold.

On the 28th there was a slight realignment between the 5th Infantry Division and the 4th Infantry Division and we were then supporting the 4th Infantry, from our same positions, as of 1600 hours. The 802d FA Bn was originally a part of the 4th Infantry Division at Ft. Benning, and was spun-off when the division was transformed from a square division to a triangular division. All of the old divisions went through this. This changed the division from four infantry regiments and artillery battalions to three of each. This happened in January 1942, a year before I joined the 802d. Some of the "oldtimers" in the 802d visited friends in the nearby 42d FA Bn of the 4th Division.

Also on the 28th, General Lentz, XII Corps Artillery Commander, presented decorations and awards awarded to date to those 802d people present to receive them at a brief ceremony in the local churchyard.

I found an abandoned folding canvas cot and made it mine, and planned to sleep on it from then on in preference to the floor. Not a big deal as I was used to the floor.

The weather stayed very cold. We fired 21 missions totalling 418 rounds.

THE ARDENNES CAMPAIGN MAP X
WIDENING THE BASTOGNE CORRIDOR

27 December 1944 - 2 January 1945

Battalion Positions -

23 - 25 Dec	Altrier (Lux. see map IX)
26 Dec - 2 Jan	Consdorf "
3 - 4 Jan	Morhet (Belgium)
5 - 7 Jan	Freux-Minel "
8 - 12 Jan	Remagne "
13 Jan	Richoival "
14 Jan	Flamierge "
14 - 15 Jan	Savy "
16 Jan	Longchamps "
16 Jan	Compagne "

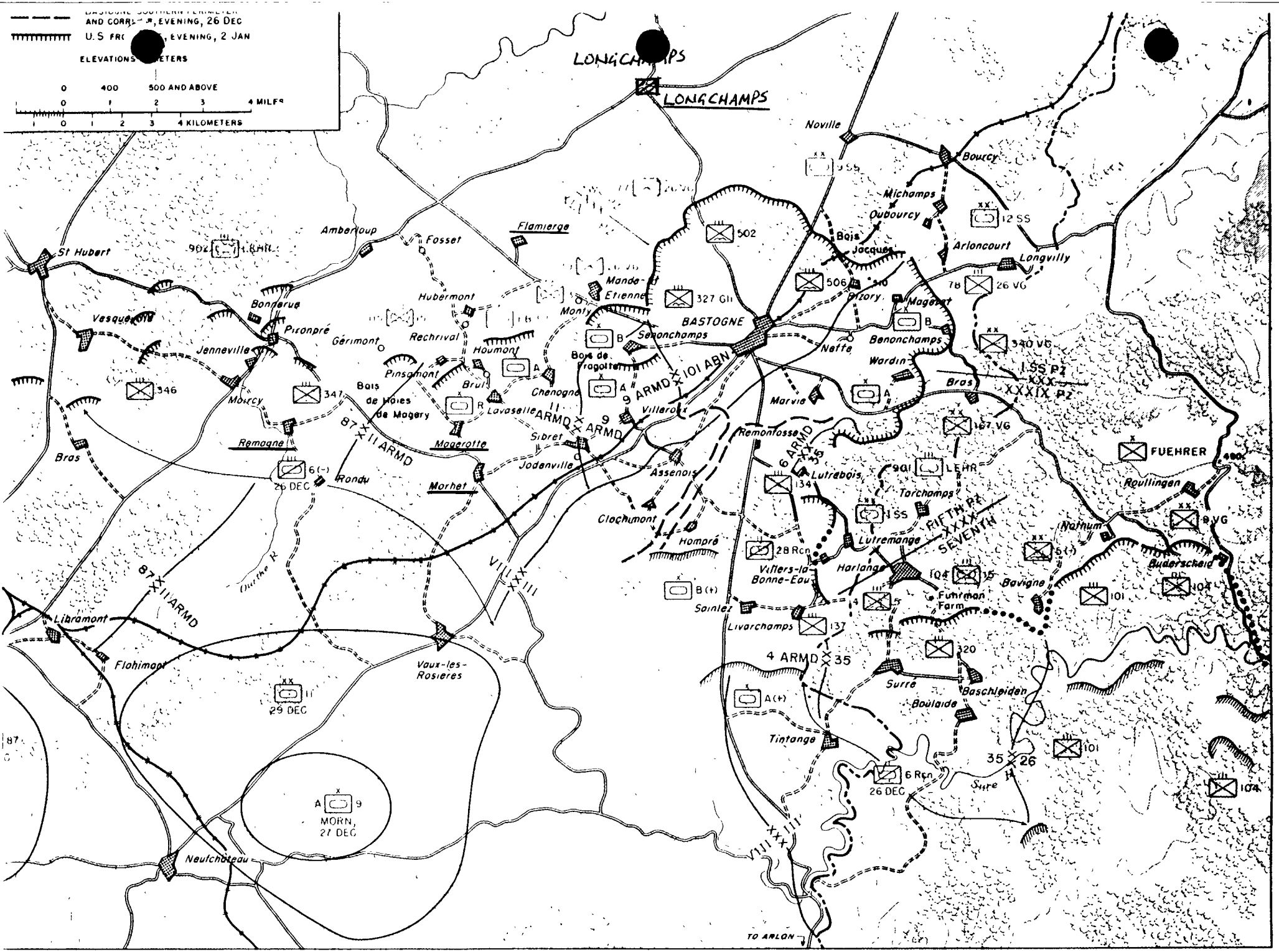
LEGEND -

—U.S. Front line evening 26 December

—Bastogne southern perimeter and corridor evening 26 Dec

—U.S. Front line evening 2 January

Scale: 1 inch = 2.5 miles


AND CORR, EVENING, 26 DEC
U.S FR, EVENING, 2 JAN
ELEVATIONS METERS
0 400 500 AND ABOVE
0 1 2 3 4 MILES
1 0 1 2 3 4 KILOMETERS
LONGCHAMPS
Noville
Bourcy
Michamps
Oubourcy
Bois Jacques
Arloncourt
Longvilly
Mageret
Bizory
Neffe
Benonchamps
Wardin
Bras
Marvie
Remonfosse
Lutrebois
Torchamps
Lutremange
Harlange
Villers-la-Bonne-Eau
Funtmon Farm
Bavigne
Nothum
Roulingen
Buderscheid
FUEHRER
Surre
Baschleiden
Boulaide
Tintange
Livarchamps
Sainlez
Hompré
Clochimont
Assenois
Villeroux
Jodenville
Sibret
Chenogne
Bois de Fragotte
Senonchamps
BASTOGNE
Mande-St Etienne
Monty
Flamierge
Fosset
Amberloup
St Hubert
Bonnerue
Pironpré
Vesqueville
Jenneville
Gérimont
Rechrival
Hubermont
Houmont
Pinsomont
Bois de Haies de Magery
Bruil
Lavaselle
Mourcy
Remagne
Rondu
Morhet
Magerotte
Bras
Libramont
Flohimont
Vaux-les-Rosieres
Neufchateau
Ourthe R
Sure R
MORN, 27 DEC
29 DEC
26 DEC
TO ARLON
87 XII ARMD
11 ARMD
9 ARMD
101 ABN
6 ARMD
4 ARMD
35
26
FIFTH PZ XXXX
SEVENTH XXXIX PZ
I SS PZ XXX
VIII XXX
VIII XXX
502
327 GR
506
902
346
341
6(-)
134
901 LEHR
1 SS
28 Rcn
104
15
137
320
101
104
6 Rcn
A(+)
B(+)
12 SS
78
26 VG
340 VG
167 VG
9 VG
6(+)

MAP X

We heard that elements of the 4th Armored Division had broken through the German ring surrounding Bastogne two days previously, providing some relief to the outstanding defenders there, and the promise of considerably more to come.

On December 29th we fired only eight missions totalling 319 rounds. The front in our area was no longer in doubt. Enough troops had been moved north, and while the infantry fighting was as difficult as always, our troops were making slow but steady progress and forcing the Germans back. I had tremendous confidence in General Patton, and considered him the best American army commander. This was based on absolutely nothing but my own feelings or wishful thinking. But it was comforting to me, and I'm sure to many others, in our position, to have confidence in our commanding general.

On the 30th we fired 27 missions totalling 777 rounds, mostly interdictions and harassing fire. The fighting on both sides was becoming more limited in scope, but at the same time becoming more bitter and vicious. The Germans probably because they were now on the German border, and the Americans because of the feeling that the Germans were defeated and should give up and put an end to the killing. Word of the "Malmedy Massacre" had spread very fast throughout the American Armies, causing the Americans to be even more enraged than before. The unit massacred by a German SS Panzer unit was a battery from an artillery sound and flash battalion. What had happened was the artillery battery was proceeding south to a new position, well behind where they thought the front was, when they met the leading elements of attacking German SS armored forces. They were captured, lined up in snow covered field, and mowed down by a machine gun concealed in the back of a truck. Following this, German officers and NCO's walked among the victims and shot in the head those not already dead. Remarkably, some Americans survived by "playing dead" and reached American lines and reported this atrocity. News of this caused widespread rage among the American troops, and no doubt other Germans paid for the actions of this group of SS troops.

One of my regular functions was to make shell reports, or shell-reps, for all enemy artillery shelling in or near the Hq Btry area. Making these reports required a visual inspection of the impact crater or shell hole. With a little experience one could tell the bore of the gun, take a reasonably accurate compass direction from which the shell was fired, and determine the approximate angle of impact. The information was phoned back up the chain of command to Corps Artillery. From this information they would back-plot from the point of impact, and from the angle of impact and gun size were able to approximate the enemy gun position. Similar reports from other units and locations provided several back-plots, and their convergence provided a fairly accurate location of the firing position. Map terrain details in the suspect area helped refine the position location. Artillery air observers were alerted to be on the lookout in the area, and Air Force fighter-bombers were sometimes asked to attack the positions. In any event, shell-reps were part of our counter-battery effort, and I was the shell-rep individual for our Hq Btry area. It was not a large activity as we were not shelled often. The more recent the shelling the more useful the information. We only reported shelling we actually witnessed. I was expected to make my inspection and report as soon as the shelling ceased. The Germans had a nasty habit of stopping briefly and then resuming. There was no way of telling when they had "ceased". Sgt Fleishman almost always went with me, though he did not have to. We normally waited ten minutes or so, and then made our inspection as quickly as possible and got out of the area.

In Consdorf the CP/FDC was in one of the buildings on the south side of the only street going through town. On my way to mess for breakfast I noticed German artillery was making an air adjustment over the curve in the road about 100 yards beyond where the mess truck was located. It was high enough and far enough away that it was not dangerous to us, and only a few rounds were fired. But it was unusual. An air adjustment was made when you could not see the ground in the area you wished to fire on from map data. The air bursts were quite visible and were observed from two mutually visible known map locations, and were triangulated. That located the actual shell trajectory, and after corrections were made the guns were ready to fire from map data, with reasonable confidence of accuracy. Nothing was as good as observed fire, but many times that was not possible. I was puzzled as there was nothing in our area worth shooting at, certainly not us. About mid-morning several of us were sitting in a barber shop next door to the FDC, and heard shelling in the field out behind the row of buildings on our side of the street, 60 or so yards away. They seemed to be making a muffled sort of explosion. The street went towards the front, so as we faced in that direction the shells were landing to our right. The shelling had stopped for about four minutes when Colonel Head said to me "Whiting, when are you going out and make your shell-rep? What are you afraid of? Just to show you, come on, I'll go with you". He was not being nasty or critical, it was just friendly banter or needling. So I got my compass, and we put on our jackets and out we went. There was about four inches of snow on the ground, it was cold and overcast, but still and quiet. We walked through the backyards of the building, climbed through a three strand barbed wire fence, and reached the impact area in less than a minute. The shells had landed not far from our buildings, directly behind them, but far enough away that we were not concerned about them. The reason for the muffled sound was obvious. The shells were armed with "delay" type fuses rather than "impact" type. Each projectile made a perfect, round, tunnel into the ground for three or four feet before exploding, and then created a rise in the ground, or a mound, about five feet in diameter and about 18 inches higher than the surrounding ground at its high point. I could insert my gloved hand with thumb and smallest finger extended in opposite directions into the cylindrical tunnel, so the shell diameter was ten inches, or 240 mm. It was equally easy to measure the angle of impact and direction of origin, and count that there were four guns firing and they had fired a five salvo barrage. In a minute or two I told Colonel Head I was through and we should go back. He had been looking at other shell "holes" while I had been taking my measurements, and replied that I should "wait a minute, what's your hurry, I'm looking for a souvenir for my two boys". So we poked around another few minutes, there were no "souvenirs", and we were standing a few feet apart when we heard the enemy guns fire. It was very distinct and we both knew instantly what it was. Where we were was very quiet, and they were very large caliber guns aimed directly at us, across a valley. The sound from a firing gun is very directional. They were firing "battery right" (or left), one gun at a time, with about one second between firings. We heard each gun quite clearly and understood what it meant to us. Without a word we both hit the ground, knowing that if the time of flight was 15 seconds and it took the sound about half of that to reach us, we had very little time until the shells would start to land. We were as flat as we could get in the snow. It seemed almost instantly that the shells started to land, about 20 yards short of us, and they were firing battery right. In my earlier inspection I had noticed a shallow excavation about 12 feet square and a foot deep that a farmer had dug but not used for the winter storage of rutabagas, about 30 yards to the side, in the direction away from our buildings. One of the things one learned very early was always to be aware of any nearby ditch, trench, or hollow of any sort, for such occasions. I said "Colonel, I am going over to that rutabaga hole", and got up and ran to it, as we had heard the guns fire a second time. I dove into the hole, and as it had several inches of ice under the snow I slid all the way across until my helmet hit the other side. I looked back to see if Colonel Head was following me,

but he was still where I had left him. The second round of shells were landing as I looked at him, and I saw him and the ground under him rise (mound) from a shell explosion directly beneath him. It must have landed within three feet of him to have gone in at about a 45 degree angle and exploded directly under him. Since I had been about three feet from him a few seconds before, I was glad I had gone to the rutabaga hole. After that salvo he ran over to join me. Colonel Head was a brave and more or less fearless man, but when he joined me he was almost as white as the snow. The first volley had landed 20 yards short of us, and the second volley right at our position, so the third would logically be 20 yards beyond us. A normal creeping barrage, each volley 20 yard greater range than the previous until five salvos were fired. Having made this observation instantaneously and without conscious effort, I told the Colonel I was taking off, and I ran as fast as I could towards the guns, and after 50 or 60 yards swung to the left towards the rear of the row of buildings. I managed a small tear in my trousers going back through the barbed wire fence. I did not know what Colonel Head did, and did not see him again for over an hour. He never mentioned the incident to me ever. He never joked at me about shell-reps again. The Germans were firing delay fuses because they knew we were in buildings, from a civilian spy probably. It had to be us they were after. There was a battery of "longToms" (155 mm guns as opposed to howitzers) about a mile back up the road to Altrier, too far away to have been their target. It was fortunate for the colonel and me that they were firing delay fuses and that none of them misfired "quick". Shells that size exploding on the ground had tremendous concussive force. And the one shell landed awfully close to Colonel Head. I learned much later they were indeed 240 mm guns, firing projectiles that were approximately 26 inches long, weighing 352 pounds. Awesome.

We had several more inches of snow in the afternoon of the 30th, and by evening it had turned very cold

December 31st was a fairly quiet day. We stayed in Consdorf and fired 9 missions totalling 266 rounds. Hq area was shelled again, about daybreak, but there were no casualties or damage. The Red Cross Clubmobile visited the battalion and we were all served coffee and donuts, and smiles, by three pretty American girls Also, some old mail caught up with us today. For me, letters from Jeanie dated between November 17th and 24th. Mail usually took 15 or 16 days, not 43.

Lt Bill Park came up to me in the afternoon and asked me if I wanted to take a bath. He had found a house in a nearby town that had very recently been abandoned by the owners, so recently that the hot water was still hot. We were in Luxembourg, a friendly country sympathetic to the Allies, and had to treat their homes and possessions with care. So he and I collected clean underwear, socks, soap, shaving gear, and went to the house and each had a hot bath. The house had suffered some damage, but we were careful and merely enjoyed the facilities in the owners absence. The water heater was in the large bathroom near the tub and was still "on", so we had ample hot water. This was my first bath since Nancy in late October. The one before that was in Wales in early August.

It was New Years Eve but we had little to celebrate. I was duty officer in the FDC that night and on Third Army orders, we and all other artillery battalions in the Third Army fired a twenty minute barrage at assorted enemy positions, starting one minute after midnight.

January 1st, 1945, was another fairly quiet day, with only eight missions totalling 210 rounds. Major Fleetwood, Bn S-3 and third ranking officer in the battalion, was evacuated in the early morning hours, diagnosed by Captain Doc Danish as having acute appendicitis. We did not know

how long he would be gone, or even whether he would ever return. People were returned to duty after wounds much more serious than having one's appendix removed, but we did not know what complications might have occurred. I wondered who would fill his job while he was gone, but Capt Miller (Asst S-3) could easily handle his main function in the FDC.

Also on January 1st, the guy considered by many to have one of the safest job in the battalion, Cpl Phil Crispino, was injured, and rather severely. The reports were that he might not make it. He was the battalion mail orderly, and every day drove his jeep to the Corps Mail Depot, quite a few miles to the rear, and collected our mail and brought it to Service Btry, where he sorted it and it was picked up by the batteries on their regular supply run. On this particular day he got entangled with an American armored unit moving from one location to another and the convoy was attacked by several enemy planes, bombing and strafing, and he was hit. Corporal Crispino survived but did not return to the 802d. He attended the very first small battalion reunion in Columbus, GA in 1986 but none of the subsequent and larger reunions.

One enemy plane flew over our area several times, but did nothing. We had never been attacked by enemy planes, nor had we seen any nearby units attacked by German planes. It was not unusual for a single, slow moving, German plane to fly over our area at night, as well as the rest of the U.S. front, starting back in Lorraine east of Nancy. Being pitch-black night and no lights anywhere, we could not figure out what they could see, but weather permitting that plane seemed to come pretty often. The plane engine had a distinctive rumble, and as always was referred to as "Bed-check Charlie".

On January 1st we officially completed six months of foreign service, entitling us to wear one hash mark on our left sleeve. Little did I know that I would be entitled to two more before I got home.

The weather continued very cold and there were several inches of snow on the ground.

On January 2nd, at 1400 hours, we were detached from the 182d FA Group and the XII Corps, and moved west and assigned to the VIII Corps, but still Third Army. I left with the advance party about 1600 hours, and the battalion followed an hour later. The roads were icy and slick and the battalion had some difficulty with the combination of slippery roads and blackout driving. Our new positions were about six miles south and west of Bastogne. We were to support the troops holding open the west side of the corridor cut through by the 4th Armored Division in the relief of Bastogne.

On the morning of January 3rd, the battalion spent from 0200 to 0700 hours in an assembly area, and moved into positions near Morhet, Belgium, about 0800. Initially we were supporting the 11th Armored Division, but soon learned that they were to be relieved by the 17th Airborne Division the next day. The 17th A/B was fresh from England, with no combat experience, a sobering situation for us. We had always had the good fortune to support not only experienced divisions but good ones. The 17th A/B would no doubt be a good division after two or three weeks, but in the meantime we expected them to be somewhat ragged.

The 17th A/B arrived by truck all day long. Airborne troops were armed to the teeth, with machine pistols, hand grenades, daggers in their boots, and so forth. They are trained to be over-self-confident, as they needed that for their normal function of jumping out of a plane into

enemy territory, often at night. It did not increase our confidence to hear what they were going to do to the Germans, they would take no prisoners, and other unrealisticly boastful statements. And it certainly did not help when Colonel Head returned from a briefing and meeting with the Division Artillery Commander and his artillery battalion commanders. At the discussion of the next day's attack the Division Artillery commander said in effect "I want that town levelled - each gun will fire one round". That amount of fire would have done little more than break a few roof tiles. The airborne artillery gun was a 75 mm "pack" howitzer, so named as it was originally designed for use by mountain troops where it was dissembled into several pieces and transported by "pack" animals. It was a fairly light artillery weapon. I admit I was uneasy.

Many years later, in 1988, after moving to Hopkinton, NH, I discovered one of my neighbors, Bob Vallari, had been in the 17th Airborne Division at that time (and later).

The Bn CP/FDC was in a farmhouse. There was a regular wood door from the kitchen into the barn, with cattle and other livestock in the first part of the barn. The kitchen had more odors than cooking odors.

The weather was very cold, with wind and intermittent snow most of the day. About four inches of snow had accumulated by evening.

We began to hear stories of booby-traps left behind by the Germans as they withdrew, and received official notice from higher headquarters to be alert for them. Apparently all manner of objects were being booby-trapped - weapons, bodies, furniture and other objects in houses. Booby-traps were worrisome things, as the most innocent article could be booby-trapped, and the slightest disturbance could set it off, often with fatal consequences. Mines were worrisome also, but we had not encountered many.

On the morning of the 4th the A/B infantry attacked at 0815, after a ten minute artillery preparation, during which we fired 225 rounds. Lts "Woody" Wood and Jim Teehan were out as FO's with the 192d Parachute Infantry. The inexperienced A/B troops lived up to our expectations. They test fired their weapons just prior to attacking, and had a very rough day against determined, seasoned, enemy troops. That evening the Germans counter-attacked and the A/B infantry started pell-mell out of the town they had fought all day to capture. The Germans used several tanks in the night attack, and even though tanks were not very effective in night fighting, they terrified the inexperienced A/B troops. Woody and Teehan were in the town with them and were largely if not completely responsible for halting their flight and convincing them they could hold the town. Both had gained the confidence of the infantry during the day's fighting with heavy and accurate artillery fire against the Germans, and proceeded to destroy the German night counter-attack with artillery fire from our battalion and others. Several of us were in the CP that evening, listening on the radio to Woody and Teehan conducting fire and describing what the paratroopers were doing. It was touch and go for awhile, and the outcome was in doubt. For awhile there was talk of alerting the batteries of the possibility of an infantry attack. Altogether, the Bn fired 1538 rounds that day, a new high.

Both of our FO's, Lts Wyatt B. Wood and James P. Teehan, were awarded Oak Leak Clusters to their previously awarded Bronze Star Medals, for this action.

Other big news on January 4th was a letter from home to Sgt Fleishman that his wife had had a baby boy on December 19th and all was well. He was a very happy man.

More snow, wind, and continued cold.

On the 5th, we moved about five miles farther west and were attached to the 87th Infantry Division. I went with the advance party at 0800 hours. The 87th Division was relieving the 28th Infantry Division and we were to occupy the gun positions of the 107th FA Bn of the 28th Division. They moved out, and we moved in, one battery at a time, so that fire was not interrupted. The 28th Infantry Division was the Pennsylvania National Guard division. It had recently been fighting in the tragic Hurtgen Forest fiasco and had suffered almost total destruction of its infantry. From there it had been sent to the "quiet" Ardennes front to receive and train new infantry replacements, and recuperate. (The same was true of the 4th Infantry Division we had supported earlier). It had not had time to do this completely and was spread over an area three times the width of a normal division front. It was badly mauled by the initial German attacks starting December 16th, although it fought well in small units and was successful in delaying the German attack while withdrawing and remained a cohesive fighting unit. The 107th FA Bn had suffered several infantry attacks in its gun positions since December 16th.

Our positions were near the town of Freux-Minel, Belgium, near the southwest corner of the German penetration.

That night I was on duty in the FDC and read and reread Jeanie's letter of December 20th, which gave me among other things the stateside reaction to this German offensive, now nicknamed the "Battle of the Bulge" to soften its "seriousness" to the American public.

We fired one registration and one preparation totalling 183 rounds.

The snow and cold continued. We now had about eight inches of snow on the ground.

We stayed there on January 6th and 7th, firing 18 missions and 942 rounds on the 6th, and 10 missions and 318 rounds on the 7th. There was no change in the weather.

In the early afternoon of January 8th we moved to new gun positions about one mile east of the town of Remagne. The new positions were only a mile or so from our former positions, and were about ten miles west of the major city of Bastogne. The short trip took much time, with delays caused by heavy traffic and icy roads. A number of trucks slid off the road into ditches, not because of fast or careless driving but because of the side slope or high crown of the road.

We had light, intermittent, snow all day, and it was very windy and cold. Sixteen missions totalling 358 rounds fired on the 8th.

On the 9th the Colonel appointed Capt Hugh Brugh (S-2) to fill Major Fleetwood's position as S-3. No one was appointed to fill the S-2 job. We really did not need an active S-2 (Intelligence), but the Table of Organization (T/O) called for one. I was a logical contender, though there were other 1st Lts (Dunbar and Dick) whose date of rank preceded mine and thus out-ranked me. I preferred being the Asst S-2 or Survey Officer, although S-2 carried the rank of Captain, which had a base pay of $200 per month instead of $150 for a 1st Lt, not an inconsequential amount at

the time. Brugh was certainly not the most qualified of the choices available to Colonel Head for the S-3 job, in fact he probably was not really qualified. But he was concientious and hard working, had a good attitude, was friendly and likable, and he pleased Colonel Head. He was also suitable if the assignment was only temporary until Fleetwood returned. We had heard nothing of Fleetwood's condition.

I was on FDC duty the night of the 9th. It came around more frequently after Fleetwood's departure. There usually was not much going on, just a few concentration settings to prepare with the batteries. If there was any real activity the regular FDC crew was called.

The snow and cold continued, by now there was 11-12 inches on the ground.

The 10th and 11th were fairly quiet, with very little firing on the 11th. The Germans had long since stopped advancing their deepest penetration and by this time were withdrawing troops out of the "bulge". It was a fighting withdrawal, attempting to get as much of their personnel and equipment out as they could. In our front the Germans were trying to hold the south side of the retreat corridor until their troops further west could be withdrawn. The US First Army was pushing down from the north and we were pushing up from the south in an attempt to close the "bulge" at the middle.

The bitter cold continued and we had more snow on the 11th. A total of 800 rounds fired in the two days.

On January 12th, at about 1000 hours, we were relieved from attachment to the 87th Infantry Division and re-attached to the 17th Airborne Division. The reconnaisance parties and my section left for the new area about 1130 hours and the battalion closed into the new positions about 1730 hours. We moved to near Magerotte, a few miles to the east, but were still west of Bastogne, reinforcing the fire of the 681st A/B FA bn. The Bn had a difficult move because of other traffic and the icy roads. Surprisingly, tanks and other tracked vehicles were more or less helpless on icy roads, unable to go up even slight rises and slipped sideways off the roads if there was any crown. All of the roads were narrow two lane roads.

There was continuing concern of enemy booby-traps as our troops continued to push the Germans back and there were considerable enemy dead and abandoned vehicles, tanks, and artillery.

In the bitter cold the dead froze very quickly, often in odd positions. That day I saw a dead German frozen rigid in the act of climbing through a barbed wire fence. It was so unusual that I looked at him closely to see what was holding him up and could see nothing. His clothing was barely hooked on the barbed wire

The weather was clear and cold.

On the 13th, B and C batteries moved to new positions near the town of Richoival, moving one at a time after our survey was completed to minimize the interruption of fire. In the new position a truck in C Btry hit a mine, blowing off the rear wheels and bogie, but no one was hurt. There were many mines in the area and A Btry did not move because the Engineers had not removed the mines from their anticipated area. We did no firing except to register in the new positions.

In the mail there were two letters from Jeanie, one dated Nov 20 and the other Dec 19, 54 days for one and 25 for the other. Also a letter from my mother and one from Frank Brandon, a good friend from high school days. Frank by this time had completed college and dental school and was a dentist with the 45th Infantry Division somewhere to our south in the American Seventh Army. He joined them in 1943 in Sicily. Also in the mail were six packages of food. The food packages were great as always. Constant living in the cold, even though adequately dressed, rich delights like chocolate candy and fruitcake were especially enjoyed. Army mess served no desserts in combat.

It was bright and sunny all day, and cold.

On January 14th we made two moves. While still attached to the 17th A/B Division in the morning we moved to Flamierge. In the afternoon we were relieved from attachment to the 17th and attached to the 11th Armored Division, and moved to the town of Savy, on the northwest outskirts of Bastogne. Flamierge had been badly damaged by heavy fighting a few days previous. There was much evidence of heavy fighting that had gone on in the area. Many damaged and some destroyed tanks in the snow covered fields, and many American and German dead about. Most of the German dead had had their pockets rifled, for the money in their wallets. Other personal papers and snapshots were scattered on the snow. It was sad to see their snapshots, of and with family and loved ones on happy occasions. The infantry assumed that anything of value left on the bodies would be appropriated by the Graves Registration troops who come and collect the dead, so why shouldn't they take it. War in the front lines was a brutalizing business, and self-preservation necessitated that one become callous and hardened. It was no pleasure to look at dead Germans, much as I hated them for prolonging an obviously lost war.

With the 11th Armored Division we were reinforcing the fire of the 490th Armored FA Bn of CCA. Lt Wood was sent out as FO with CCA, and Capt Hurd went to the 490th AFA as Ln Officer.

In part of the 11th Armored Division sector they were relieving some portions of the 101st Airborne Division. The 101st A/B had fought long and well for about four weeks in and about Bastogne, denying the city to the Germans. They and a few other troops from other outfits did a magnificent job, especially during the first ten days when they were totally surrounded.

The 101st A/B personnel were still in the area when we moved in. As I entered one farmhouse I noticed one guy sitting there, slowly and methodically honing his knife. They were a tough bunch and had been through a lot. The 101st parachuted in Normandy on D-Day, early in the morning, in the dark, and fought there for about 30 days in the Normandy battles. They landed behind the German lines in Market/Basket, Montgomery's ill-conceived operation in September. They were trucked into Bastogne on December 17th or 18th, just before the Germans surrounded the city. Normally the A/B troops were used on hazardous missions of intense combat but short duration, as contrasted to regular infantry or armored troops who go on day after day for months of constant and often intense combat.

On the 15th we stayed in Savy, firing 35 missions totalling 604 rounds. The big drive in our immediate front was toward Houffalize, about 11 miles north of us, for a link up with the U.S. First Army pressing down from the north. Our troops were attacking hard under very adverse

weather conditions, and the Germans were putting up fierce resistance to keep a corridor open to allow their troops to withdraw. It was extremely cold with more snow.

During the morning of the 16th we moved to Longchamps and were hardly in position when we were ordered to Compagne, a few miles further north. In the process we were relieved from attachment to the 11th Armored Division and attached to the 333rd FA Group. The attack was going well. Just prior to leaving Savy, A Btry received four rounds of 155 mm "friendly" artillery fire. No harm was done but the move was delayed slightly. Some outfit made a very large error and I'm sure someone was severely reprimanded.

Once in position in Compagne, C Btry captured six Germans in a nearby woods. They were unarmed and wanted to surrender. A civilian brought another German to B Btry and surrendered him. All were wearing some parts of American uniforms, and the Germans no doubt hid out until our infantry had passed through. Wearing parts of American uniforms might get a German soldier shot by the infantry, as the infantry would assume the uniform had been taken off of an American prisoner who probably needed the article for warmth.

There was light snow in the afternoon and evening.

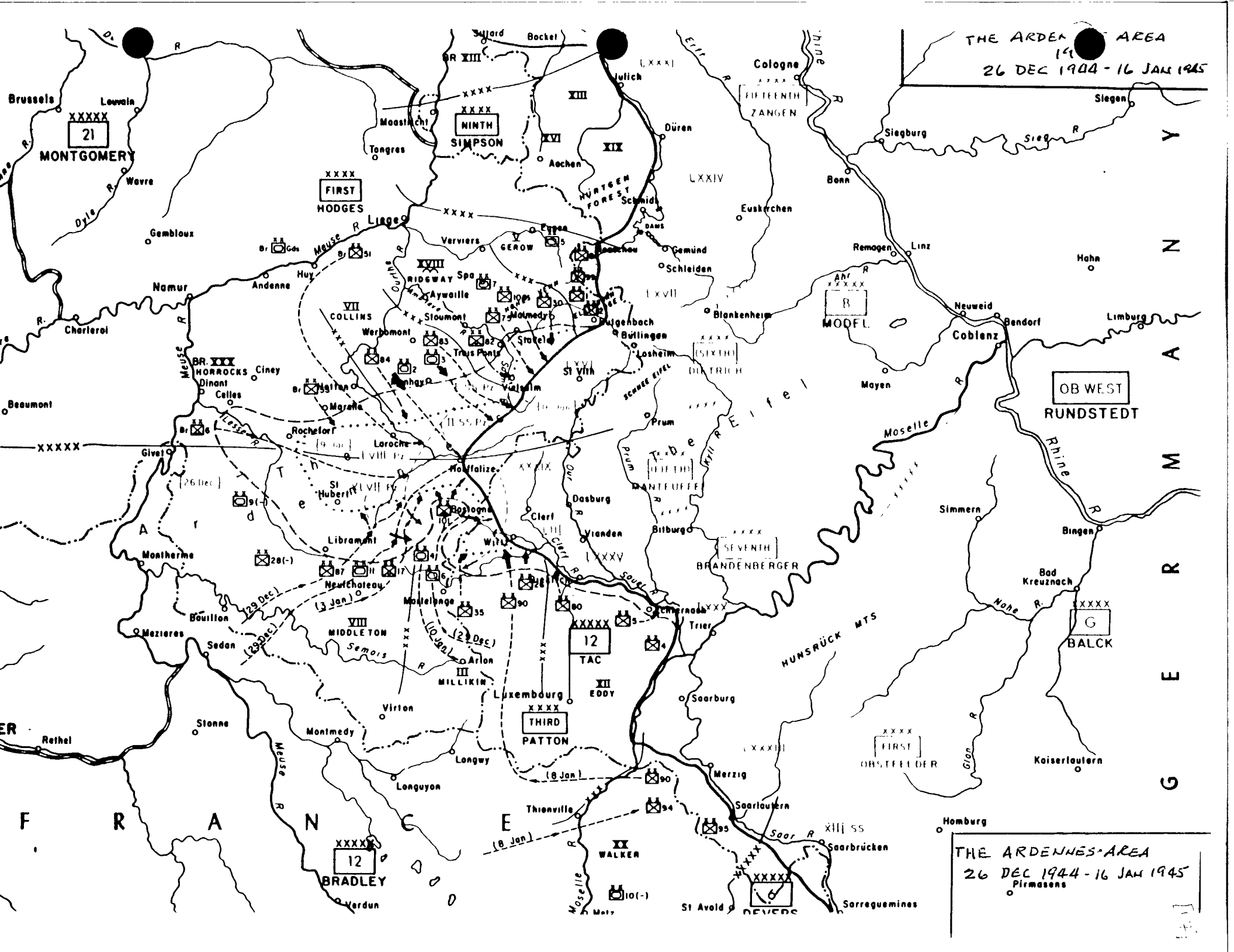
The U.S. First and Third Armies made contact early on the 16th at Houffalize, a few miles to our northeast, by elements of the 11th Armored Division and the 84th Infantry Division from the north. Symbolically, the "Battle of the Bulge" was over.

On January 17th, at 1500 hours, the 802d FA was relieved from assignment to the U.S. Third Army in the U.S. 12th Army Group, and assigned to the U.S. Seventh Army in the U.S. 6th Army Group.

We had been forewarned of this change and advance parties had departed early in the morning. In that instance I stayed with the battalion and the battalion continued to fire in support of the 11th Amrd Division until 1300 hours.

It was a long, cold, motor march, south to the Vosges Mountain area. We were sandwiched in between elements of the 10th Armored Division, who were also heading south. Finally, that night we were halted by not being able to get by the 10th Armored Division CCB. Major Sparks decided we would spend the night in the town of Messancy, Belgium. Except for one person per truck, everyone found some place to sleep, mostly in civilian homes at the homeowner's invitation or atleast willingness. I ended up with my section and others in a comfortable hayloft.

> *The "Battle of the Bulge", or the Ardennes, as it is more formally called, was a tremendous battle for both the Americans and the Germans. There were approximately 600,000 Americans and 500,000 Germans involved. U.S. forces suffered 81,000 casualties of all sorts, and the Germans 100,000. This was a larger battle than Normandy, and compressed into four and a half weeks, and fought under very adverse weather conditions. There were no British troops involved in the fighting.* □


THE ARDENNES AREA
26 DEC 1944 - 16 JAN 1945
21
MONTGOMERY
FIRST
HODGES
NINTH
SIMPSON
FIFTEENTH
ZANGEN
B
MODEL
OB WEST
RUNDSTEDT
SIXTH
DIETRICH
SEVENTH
BRANDENBERGER
FIRST
OBSTFELDER
G
BALCK
12
TAC
THIRD
PATTON
12
BRADLEY
XII
EDDY
XX
WALKER
VII
COLLINS
VIII
MIDDLETON
III
MILLIKIN
XVIII
RIDGWAY
BR. XXX
HORROCKS
Brussels
Louvain
Wavre
Gembloux
Namur
Charleroi
Beaumont
Givet
Dinant
Celles
Huy
Andenne
Liège
Verviers
Spa
Aywaille
Stoumont
Werbomont
Trois Ponts
Malmedy
Stavelot
Vielsalm
St Vith
Bastogne
Marche
Rochefort
Laroche
Houffalize
St Hubert
Libramont
Neufchateau
Bouillon
Mezieres
Sedan
Rethel
Stonne
Verdun
Virton
Montmedy
Longwy
Longuyon
Arlon
Luxembourg
Thionville
Metz
Mouzon
Clerf
Vianden
Diekirch
Echternach
Trier
Saarburg
Merzig
Saarlautern
Saarbrücken
Sarreguemines
St Avold
Homburg
Pirmasens
Bitburg
Prüm
Dasburg
Gerolstein
Daun
Mayen
Koblenz
Bonn
Cologne
Jülich
Düren
Aachen
Eupen
Monschau
Euskirchen
Remagen
Linz
Neuwied
Bendorf
Limburg
Hahn
Siegburg
Siegen
Simmern
Bingen
Bad Kreuznach
Kaiserlautern
Schleiden
Gemünd
Blankenheim
Bullingen
Losheim
Malmedy
Maastricht
Tongres
Sittard
Bocholt
Erft R.
Rhine R.
Meuse R.
Dyle R.
Lesse R.
Ourthe R.
Sûre R.
Clerf R.
Sauer R.
Prüm R.
Moselle R.
Nahe R.
Glan R.
Saar R.
Ahr R.
Sieg R.
Semois R.
Lesse R.
HUNSRÜCK MTS
HURTGEN FOREST
SCHNEE EIFEL
Kyll
Eifel
Ardennes
FRANCE
GERMANY
(26 Dec)
(29 Dec)
(3 Jan)
(10 Jan)
(8 Jan)
(8 Jan)
THE ARDENNES-AREA
26 DEC 1944 - 16 JAN 1945

ALSACE - THE COLMAR POCKET - 1945

JANUARY 18, 1945

The Battalion left Messancy at 0940 hours, for what proved to be a long day. CCB of 10th Armored Div was no where in sight when we started but we caught up with them at 1100 hours south of Longwy, France. The roads here were very icy and chains were put on the vehicles while we were being held up. We followed and were held up by CCB all day, finally leaving them at Chateau Salins at 1700 hours. We had lunch of C rations at 1500 hours at one of the delay points.

The town of Chateau Salins, in Lorraine, had been the scene of some very heavy fighting in mid-November, when we were supporting the 35th Infantry Division, and the town was badly damaged. We were met there by the battalion advance party and received maps and instructions for the remainder of our trip. We were to go to Luneville - St. Die - Fraize. Since dark we had been using headlights as we were far behind the front lines. At St. Die we turned them off and drove the rest of the way with blackout drive lights on each battery lead vehicle and "cats-eyes" on others. There was heavy fog and mist in all of the valleys and visibilty was very poor. The mist froze on the windshields. Heavy rain and high wind started about 2000 hours, slowing us up even more.

We reached Fraize about midnight and within a couple of hours everyone was fed and bedded down in a large vacant factory building. Colonel Head and staff, including me, slept in a beer hall, also vacant. Fifteen hours to travel approximately 150 miles. We lost four vehicles with mechanical problems, but they were all there by morning.

January 19th the battalion stayed in Fraize all day. Hot showers were available to all at a community bathhouse, but most of the time was spent in cleaning up all our gear and equipment and other maintenance.

We were now out of General Bradley's 12th Army Group and General Patton's Third Army and VIII and XII Corps, and were assigned to General Devers' 6th Army Group and the Seventh Army and the XXI Corps. I felt that we had been transferred from the first team to the third.

Our new assignment was attachment to the 3rd Inf Div, one of the best and most combat experienced in the U.S. Army in Europe, having seen much combat in North Africa, Sicily, Italy, Anzio, Southern France, and here in Alsace. They started in Africa in November or December, 1942, so they had been at it for two years and one month. They were now attached to the First French Army for this operation but technically still in the U.S. Seventh Army. Also attached to the 3rd Div was one regiment, the 254th, of the 63rd Inf Div, just arrived in the ETO. We heard several rumors of the whereabouts of the rest of the division, such as the two other regiments had been lost at sea from a U-boat attack, or they were just delayed. In any event their normal supporting divisional artillery had not arrived and we were to fill that role. The 63rd Div shoulder patch proclaimed them to be the "Blood and Fire Division". They were right off the boat and would need some action before we would be comfortable with them.

These American troops were to assist the French First Army in eliminating the "Colmar Pocket", a German occupied area about 25 miles wide around the French city of Colmar, mostly to the south. The American Corps included the re-constituted 28th Infantry Div, badly mauled in the

Hurtgen Forest debacle in November, and again in the Ardennes in December. Also included were the 3rd Div, the 254th Regiment of the 63rd Infantry Div, and one French Division. The participation of the French troops was not considered a plus by most Americans.

The afternoon of the 19th my section and I went with the advance parties to locate and survey the gun positions the battalion would occupy the next day. They were on the other side of the Vosges mountains near the town of Ribeauville, about eight miles north of Colmar. It was a very old, picturesque town.

January 20th the battalion moved to positions near Ribeauville. The roads across the mountains were fairly steep and winding and covered with varying amounts of ice and snow, but there were no mishaps.

This was the first time the 802d had been the direct support artillery for an infantry regiment, though once before we had done it for an infantry battalion. Our normal function was to reinforce the fire of the divisional direct support battalion. Accordingly, Capt Hurd (Ln O), Capt Gemes (CO C Btry), and Capt Blumhorst (CO B Btry) were sent out as Liaison Officers with the three infantry battalions of the 254th Regiment. And Colonel Head spent much of his time at Regimental headquarters. The whole purpose was to be as effective and helpful to the infantry as possible. This was especially important with a green outfit whose first few days would of necessity be very rude. Major Fleetwood's position as S-3 had not been filled, Capt Brugh just moved over from S-2, so momentarily we were short two officers, an S-2 and a Ln O. Otherwise the battery commanders would not be out as Ln Officers. We were well represented. Both Virgil Blumhorst and Karl Gemes were excellent officers and battery commanders, and both good friends of mine. Blumhorst was from Nebraska and Gemes from Georgia. Hurd was also an excellent officer, a former battery commander, and also a good friend of mine.

The mail on the 20th brought me a bottle of apple juice from Jeanie. She had packed it in a hollowed out loaf of bread, and then with additional protection it had made it all the way from Clayton, Missouri, unbroken. The apple juice was intended as a mixer for gin. Every month every U.S. officer received a bottle of gin and a half bottle of Scotch whiskey. I had virtually given up alcohol for the duration and gave my allotment to my section. I did drink the apple juice.

We also had six new inches of snow, with large flakes and no wind, a really beautiful snowfall. The temperature was just below freezing. That night I was duty officer in the FDC.

On the 21st the Bn CP/FDC moved down the street to a beer hall to make room for the 3rd Div Signal Company in our old location. We fired nine missions totalling 165 rounds. There was another six inches of snow and it turned colder.

January 22nd there was no change of position. We fired 11 missions totalling 295 rounds.

The American attack on our front started early on the 23rd. During the day we fired 63 missions totalling 2200 rounds, much more than our previous high. Some of these rounds (455) were equipped with the new "Pozit" fuse. This fuse caused the shell to explode 30-40 feet in the air, and was very devastating to enemy troops in the open.

Several months previous I had gone to a rear area to attend a demonstration for Third Army personnel on this new fuse. We were just now receiving them. The allied command had been concerned that some duds would fall into German hands and they would develop such a fuse of their own. Up till that time we had had choices of fuse settings - a "quick" fuse, a "delay" fuse, and a "time" fuse. A "time" fuse was used to cause the shell to explode in the air just before it would normally have hit the ground, optimally 30 or so feet above the ground and the enemy troops. Such air bursts were very effective against troops in the open, on the ground or in a trench, showering shell fragments down on them. A "quick" fuse exploded on impact, with part of the explosion a few inches below ground level, so even the slightest ground depression offered some protection against all but the very close impacts. A "delay" fuse was used to penetrate the enemy's protective shield, dugout, building, or whatever. We almost always fired "quick" fuse. The time fuse was allright, and we had tables with precise "time of flight" for all ranges and powder charges, but it was difficult and time consuming to get the shells to explode at the right height. The new "Pozit" fuse was developed for anti-aircraft use and worked on the "proximity" idea, with some sort of radio signal emitted from the fuse, which upon striking an object less than 40 feet away bounced back, and caused the fuse to detonate the shell. They were referred to as "proximity" fuses about as often as they were "Pozit" fuses. They turned out to be very effective.

In the evening I attended a movie shown by Special Services in a local theater. It was titled "Bathing Beauty", with lots of humor, good music and pretty girls. Not a bad choice for soldiers. I was beginning to get the feeling that the 3rd Division had been at this war stuff long enough to know how to get little niceties for their troops.

The news from the Russian front continued to be encouraging. The Russians had now advanced beyond Warsaw and were still moving.

More snow and continued cold.

We stayed near Ribeauville on the 24th, with more heavy firing, 79 missions totalling 1831 rounds. The Germans were resisting fiercely and fighting very stubbornly.

It turned out that on their first night out, one of the platoons or companies of the new 254th Infantry regiment bedded down in a newly won building, either without posting guards or the guards went to sleep, and the whole lot were captured and taken prisoner. On the 24th the Germans fired propaganda shells over to the rest of the regiment welcoming the "Blood and Fire" division and promising them a warm reception. It also named the key officers in the regiment and battalion and so forth. Both sides usually knew in a day or two who was facing them. But we were not allowed to write home what division we were supporting or where we were.

In the afternoon the advance parties reconnoitered for new positions near Ostheim, about three miles east toward the Rhine. The terrain was very interesting. The Vosges Mountains were not very high, but they were rugged. They come down almost abruptly on the east side to a perfectly flat, level, plain that extends eight or ten miles to the east to the Rhine River. There were many good observation posts on the east side of the mountains, and you did not have to be very high to get a good view of the battlefield.

I had no knowledge of wines then and did not know we were in the heart of the French Alsatian wine region on this flat plain. The ground was covered with snow and there was no indication of the thousands of grape vines. In September 1985 Jeanie and I visited and spent several very enjoyable days in the Ribeauville-Colmar area.

That night I had FDC duty again. We had fired 4000 rounds in two days, much above our normal rate.

On the 25th the battalion moved to the new positions near Ostheim, shortly before noon. Ostheim had suffered much war damage, and good sleeping space was hard to find. The spot picked for me in the CP area did not suit me so I bunked with my section. We had two rooms on the first floor of a building, and were almost wall-to-wall people. The window openings were blacked-out with blankets, which made it a little stuffy. The building had no heat or windows, but we were not cold. Everyone in the section was very friendly and kind to me, and we got along very well. I felt like I cramped their style somewhat, but they made me feel welcome.

The weather was cold and very clear and bright, with an almost full moon lighting up the snow covered ground.

The battalion fired twenty missions totalling 806 rounds.

We stayed in Ostheim on the 26th, firing 45 missions totalling 1859 rounds, an other heavy day. Two Lts from 3rd Infantry Div Arty were attached to the battalion to serve as FO's.

B Btry received 30 rounds of enemy artillery fire in mid-afternoon, Pfc Weaver killed and Pvt Scott wounded. B Btry decided they would move to a new position since the Germans knew where they were. It happened that C Btry was missing three howitzers and B Btry one, so they consolidated in C Btry area. The four missing howitzers were in ordnance for new tubes.

Capt Hurd's jeep was stolen during the night at the infantry battalion CP but recovered during the day. We had intermittent snow flurries most of the day.

Since we had been attached to the 3rd Infantry Div I had been making some attempt to find Merrill Tilghman's artillery battalion. He was the only son of very good friends of my mother and father. He had been with the 3rd from the beginning in Africa. He was survey officer of his battalion, and was killed shortly after the U.S. forces broke out of the Anzio beachhead. On the 26th I located his Chief of Section (equivalent to Sgt Fleishman). It turned out he was with him when he was killed. They were surveying and were near a small crossroads and were caught in an enemy artillery barrage. Merrill was hit in the back by a shell fragment and died almost instantly. I did not know Merrill Tilghman as he was four years ahead of me and our paths never crossed. His parents and my parents were very good friends and would be for many years. Mr. Tilghman was an accomplished amateur photographer and took many pictures of Jeanie, Bethie, and me on our last leave home in May 1944. He developed and enlarged them and put them in an album, which he gave to us. Merrill was killed three or four weeks later.

The morning of the 27th we surveyed new positions about three miles east of Ostheim, and the batteries moved in the afternoon. Being a direct support battalion, the batteries moved one at a time to maintain uninterrupted fire. There was much delay in the short displacement caused by the undisciplined and (we thought) stupid French troops blocking the roads in unimaginable ways. We felt it was fortunate for the Allied war effort that there were only a few French divisions. Most of them were North Africans, or "gooks", as they were called.

A skeleton FDC displaced to the vicinity of the firing batteries, as the French troops' vehicles were continually becoming snarled in and breaking the phone lines to the firing batteries. The new FDC was not in or very close to a town. The FDC tent was set up in an open field in about one foot of snow. The FDC/CP tent was capable of being totally blacked-out and had a light-lock entrance and all-in-all was quite satisfactory. We had not used it since October in Lorraine, when we started putting the FDC in buildings, any building. The people in town were intermittently shelled all night, with no injuries but one trailer destroyed.

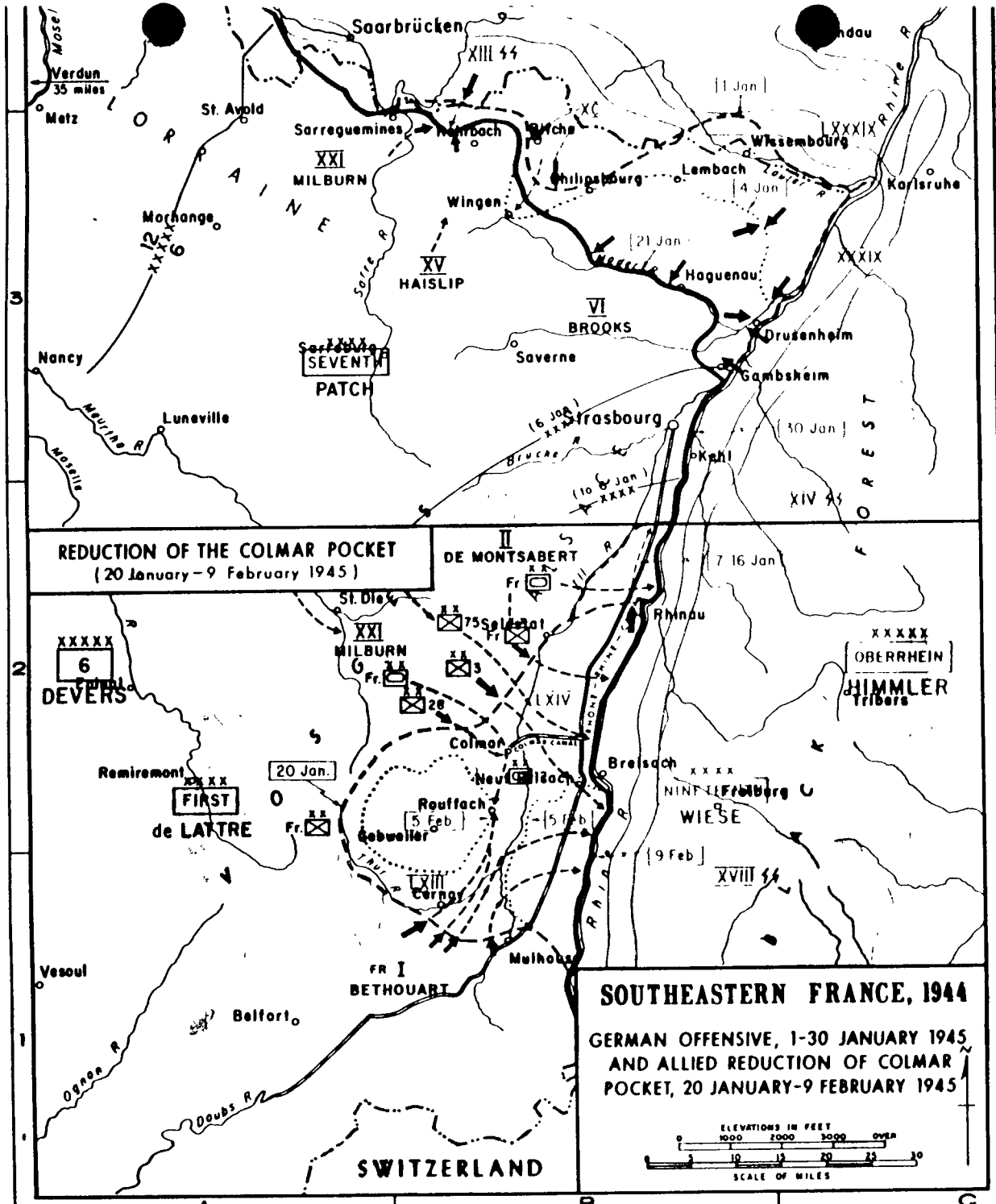
The 254th Regimental Cannon Company arrived to join the regiment, and we surveyed them in. They fired with us as another battery. There was one cannon company in each infantry regiment, with four 75 mm howitzers. At some point in the surveying process Sgt Fleishman and I were talking to the Cannon Company CO and one of his officers, who had just arrived, and we were explaining what was going on in general. Sgt Fleishman and I had been there for an hour or so, and the Germans were interdicting the main road south toward Colmar, the shells landing 60 or 70 yards to our right (south). They had been firing several rounds in three second or four second intervals, then halting for ten minutes or so, and then firing again. We had stopped paying any attention to them. The Cannon Company officers arrived during a ten minute interval, and at the next interdiction when they heard the shells whistling through the air they hit the ground flat out in the snow. When they quickly noticed that Sgt Fleishman and I were standing as before they were embarrassed. We assured them we did the same thing when we first arrived, and that it would not take them long to learn from the sound of the shells in the air where they will land, and when to take cover and when to ignore them. I did not tell them that it was commonly believed that you did not hear the shell that hit you.

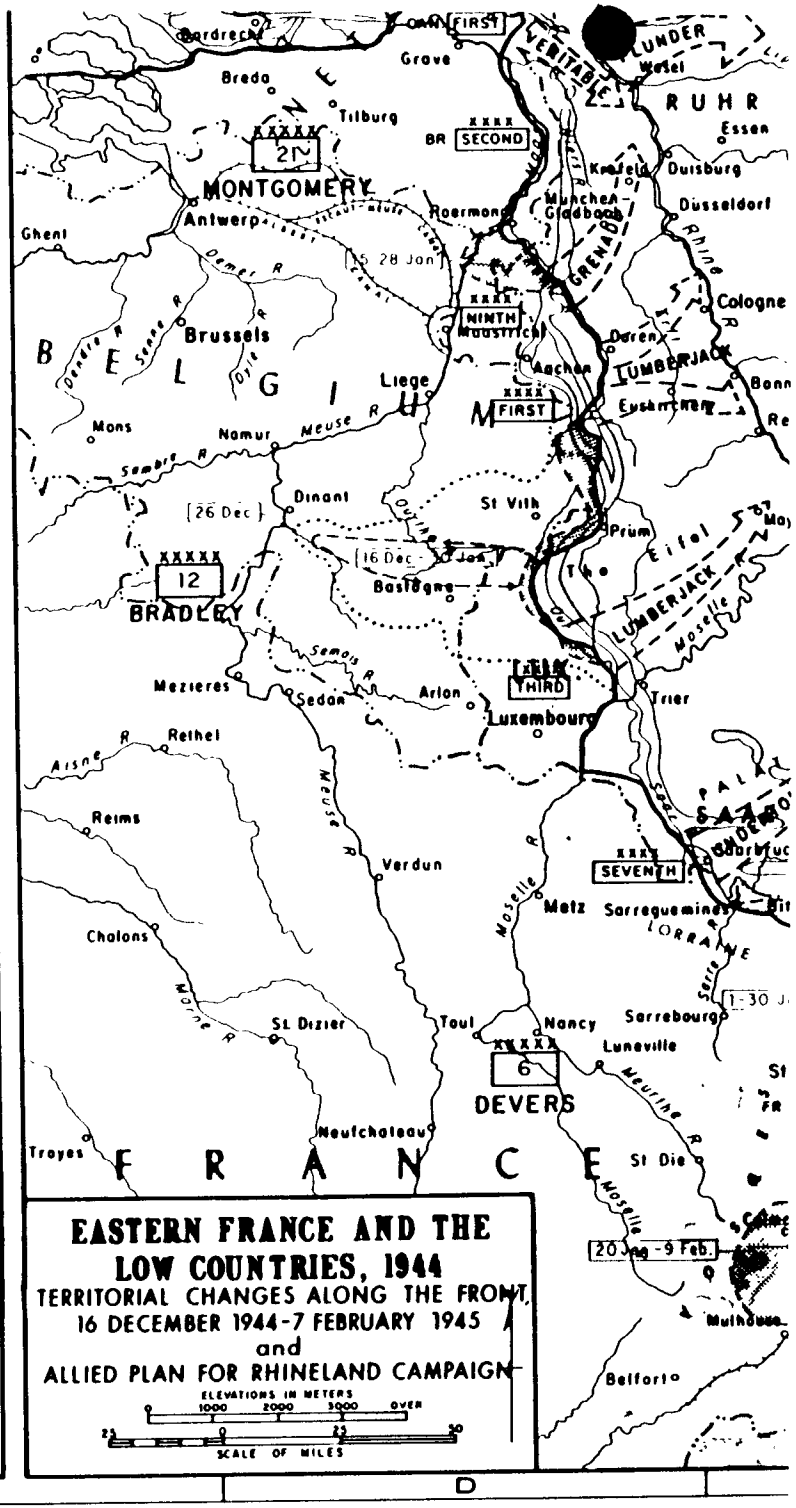
The battalion fired 22 missions totalling 876 rounds that day. Many of the Pozit fuses were bursting prematurely, some from battalions behind us firing over our positions, which kept our gun crews close to their foxholes, even though the shell bursts were high in the air.

We had heavy snow flurries on and off all day, and by this time had 14 or 15 inches of snow on the ground.

On the 28th we got our four howitzers back from Ordnance and were back to full 12 gun strength. The firing batteries were living out in the open, with no buildings near the gun positions. It was cloudy and cold but no new snow. I was on FDC duty that night in the tent. Thirteen missions were fired totalling 386 rounds.

On January 29th Hq Btry, including my section and me, moved out of town to live in the open, more or less near the FDC/CP. We were in an open, wooded area, in the lower approach hills to the Vosges Mountains, on the east side. I slept with my section. I cleared away a lot of the 15 inch snow, levelled it off, and pitched my pup tent. I could not get the tent stakes into the frozen ground but they held in the snow and the main support ropes were tied to tree branches. I put my


REDUCTION OF THE COLMAR POCKET
(20 January – 9 February 1945)
SOUTHEASTERN FRANCE, 1944
GERMAN OFFENSIVE, 1-30 JANUARY 1945
AND ALLIED REDUCTION OF COLMAR
POCKET, 20 JANUARY-9 FEBRUARY 1945
ELEVATIONS IN FEET
SCALE OF MILES
Saarbrücken
Verdun
35 miles
Metz
St. Avold
Sarreguemines
Zweibrücken
Bitche
Wissembourg
Lembach
Karlsruhe
Wingen
Philippsburg
Morhange
Haguenau
Drusenheim
Gambsheim
Saverne
Nancy
Luneville
Strasbourg
Kehl
Rhinau
Colmar
Neuf Brisach
Breisach
Rouffach
Gebweiler
Cernay
Mulhouse
Remiremont
Vesoul
Belfort
Doubs R
Ognon R
SWITZERLAND
FORÊT DE HAGUENAU
XXI MILBURN
XV HAISLIP
VI BROOKS
SEVENTH PATCH
II DE MONTSABERT
XXI MILBURN
6 DEVERS
FIRST de LATTRE
I BETHOUART
OBERRHEIN HIMMLER
NINTH WIESE
XIII
XV
XXXIX
XIV
LXIV
LXIII
XVIII
1 Jan
4 Jan
21 Jan
30 Jan
16 Jan
10 Jan
20 Jan.
5 Feb
9 Feb
A
B
C


EASTERN FRANCE AND THE
LOW COUNTRIES, 1944
TERRITORIAL CHANGES ALONG THE FRONT,
16 DECEMBER 1944-7 FEBRUARY 1945
and
ALLIED PLAN FOR RHINELAND CAMPAIGN
ELEVATIONS IN METERS
SCALE OF MILES
Gordrecht
Breda
Tilburg
Grave
Wesel
RUHR
Essen
Duisburg
Düsseldorf
Krefeld
Mönchen-Gladbach
Roermond
Antwerp
Ghent
Brussels
Liege
Mons
Namur
Dinant
St Vith
Prüm
Aachen
Düren
Euskirchen
Cologne
Bonn
Bastogne
Luxembourg
Trier
Mezieres
Sedan
Arlon
Rethel
Reims
Verdun
Chalons
St. Dizier
Toul
Nancy
Metz
Sarreguemines
Sarrebourg
Luneville
Neufchateau
Troyes
St Die
Mulhouse
Belfort
BELGIUM
FRANCE
MONTGOMERY
BRADLEY
DEVERS
NINTH
SECOND
FIRST
THIRD
SEVENTH
VERITABLE
GRENADE
LUMBERJACK
Eifel
20 Jan.-9 Feb.
1-30 J
A
B
C
D

bed-roll/sleeping bag inside and hoped for the best. I had five army (wool) blankets inside my sleeping bag, each folded double for a total of ten layers. I normally slept under as many layers as the cold required. My sleeping bag was quilted for warmth, not very thick, and was inside a heavy GI canvas outer covering. I usually took off my outer tanker jacket, but otherwise was fully clothed. I was never cold. The weather on the 29th was very cold, the coldest of the winter, and I did a dumb thing. I took my galoshes and shoes off and left them outside my bedroll, but in the tent. In the morning the shoes were frozen in an unyielding curvature, and it was almost impossible to get my feet back in them. They were very uncomfortable until they warmed up. That morning Sgt Gwin said the temperature was 5F. Ordinarily I would sleep with my shoes on, or if off, they would be inside my sleeping bag. A mental lapse.

The firing batteries did not move, firing 53 missions totalling 1712 rounds, including 673 Pozit fused.

The enemy was putting up fierce resistance and our infantry was making slow, hard-won, steady progress. The outcome never was in doubt.

Capt Bob Hurd's jeep was destroyed by enemy shell fire in Jebsheim.

On January 30th we received our first "new" mail since leaving the Ardennes. By "new" I mean mail not in the battalion's possession when we left there

Sgt Fleishman and I found a good place for an OP on the first foothill. We were only a couple of hundred feet higher than the ground in front of us, and could see several miles across the flat plain towards the Rhine. There were some US infantry at the foot of our hill. Late in the afternoon we noticed an enemy battery firing by the muzzle flashes, and 15 - 20 seconds later the shells were landing at the foot of our hill. We took a magnetic azimuth from our position and drew a back-plot on our map. The guns were five or six miles away and we could not determine their position on the map. We radioed the FDC and gave them the best coordinates we could, and attempted to adjust. It was late in the day and we could not see any of our initial rounds so Major Sparks called it off. It was frustrating to see the enemy guns and not be able to do anything about them. Earlier in the afternoon we had seen a number of German infantry in their white-sheet camouflage advancing toward the front, but they disappeared from view.

The batteries stayed in the same positions, firing 43 missions totalling 1054 rounds.

The battalion received some heavy winter clothing, shoes, and sleeping bags for the FO parties.

On January 31st the weather was much warmer, just above freezing, with light rain and wind. Some snow began to melt. The batteries stayed in the same positions, firing 24 missions totalling 1079 rounds.

Capt Hurd's new jeep was stolen from the infantry battalion CP where he was on duty as Ln Officer.

On the 1st of February we moved to Jebsheim, about three miles to the east and only about four miles from the Rhine. The German pocket was slowly collapsing as they withdrew south.

Jebsheim had seen some very hard fighting. The firing batteries were on the eastern edge of town, well spread out, and the CP/FDC was in the town center in a small lecture hall building.

Pvt Pavlin, Service Btry, was killed by the accidental discharge of another's .45 caliber automatic as the other was preparing to clean it.

On one of my errands around town, I was walking along one of the small roads leading out of town to the rear, near the outskirts or edge of town. Suddenly I realized 20 yards back I had walked past and somewhat around a pile of 15 or 20 dead German soldiers without really noticing them. I stopped and looked back at them and wondered how I could have done such a thing. They had been collected by Graves Registration (apparently), were all frozen, and had been thrown one on top of the other in a large pile eight or nine feet high, like large logs in blue-gray uniforms and great coats. It was a sad sight.

Lt John Cox returned to duty. He was wounded on November 19. Total firing was 15 missions and 405 rounds for the day.

On the night of the 1st I was on duty in the FDC. We were in a sort of a school building, mainly a lecture hall-small auditorium. It had a stage, and on both sides of the stage were two rooms, both about 16 or 18 feet square. The building was on the west side of the north-south road, and our FDC was in the room on the east side toward the enemy. HQ Btry personnel were scattered about in nearby buildings, barns, or whatever, by section, to get out of the weather. Sgt Oftedahl, a regular member of the FDC was on duty with me as was a radio/telephone operator. After a trip out behind the building to check out some of the radio equipment in his jeep, the radio operator announced there was a French Army ambulance parked out there over towards the main intersection, staffed by two French nurses. He claimed the nurses were happily accommodating any interested soldiers. He was quite intrigued by this and found numerous reasons for visiting his jeep. Sgt Oftedahl was a blond Swede from Minnesota, smart and friendly, and we worked together many times. We had quite a few concentrations to prepare from coordinates phoned to us from the infantry, to be ready for firing at specified times or on demand for the infantry attack in the morning. During the night we had considerable interdiction firing by the Germans around our building. It was not apparent whether they were firing at us or interdicting the road junction about 40 yards to our south. It did not matter what they were aiming at, they were hitting our building and those around us. Lt Bill Park came into the FDC at some point. He had been sleeping in a hayloft across the street and one shell hit the tile roof more or less over his head, so he decided to come and visit for awhile. Our building was constructed of masonry and seemed very solid and we were not particularly concerned. The east wall of our room, facing the Germans was a foot thick, and only had one large window. The window was gone and we had a blanket over the opening for blackout. We had some plaster dust from roof hits, and had some hits on the east wall. Fortunately it was interdiction fire, not a barrage or heavy shelling. The thought did occur to me that I wished Colonel Head had put the FDC in the identical room on the west side of the building, away from the enemy. Checking in the morning, one wire truck was damaged, and the nearest shell to our window missed by ten feet horizontally.

On the 2nd the battalion only fired four missions totalling 144 rounds. The infantry did not need those concentrations we had prepared as the Germans withdrew during the night. During the afternoon all but C Btry moved to the town of Fortschwihr, about three miles to the south.

One of the frustrating things we had to contend with was that there was no foreseeable end date to the war. In the fall we were confident of quick victory after the wild race across France and the Germans seemed beaten. But after the tremendous show of strength put on by the Germans in the Ardennes attack, and as fiercely as they were fighting to hold this Colmar Pocket, they did not seem about to give up. The advances on the Russian front were encouraging, but the advances on the American, and especially on the British, fronts were minimal it seemed. The war seemed endless.

February 3rd was a quiet day, five missions and 146 rounds total. We moved in stages again to the town of Durrenentzen, about three miles to the east. We had been down on the plain since Ostheim, and now were only about three miles from the Rhine River. After the very cold night we slept out in the open, the weather had warmed up a little. The daytime temperatures got above freezing, snow was melting a little, and things were getting muddy.

I saw my first jet airplane near a small bridge. A German Me 262, a two engine jet, made one diving pass, strafing traffic on and around a small bridge about 50 yards from where I was standing. He approached so fast that he was there before anyone realized it, and then climbed away at what to us seemed an incredible speed. We learned later that it flew almost twice as fast as a propeller driven plane.

Early on the 4th we received very sad news that two members of one of our FO parties had been killed and a third wounded early that morning. The fourth member was not wounded. Years later I obtained a copy of Dill Werley's account of what happened, which I quote -

> "On January 31 I went out on an FO detail, which as it turned out, was the last action I was to see. I went forward with Lt Corry, Pfc James Smith, and Cpl Egan as jeep driver. We were with Company C, 254th Infantry Regiment, 63rd Infantry Division. Our first two days up we were in reserve, and so had it pretty easy, but the third night was our heyday. That night they attached C Company to the Third Battalion and made up a task force out of C, L, and K Companies. We had to attack across an open field and cross a canal on the other side of it. On the other side of the canal the ground sloped upward slightly and on top of the knoll thus formed were two Jerry pillboxes. The pillboxes were so placed that they commanded the field and canal with fire. It would have been suicide to attack in daylight and so the attack was planned for three o'clock in the morning.
>
> "We were afraid that this large field was mined, so four tank destroyers were to go with us as far as the canal, and were to remain there to give us close in fire support if it were needed. We were formed in the front edge of the woods facing the field before 3 AM, and waited there for the tank destroyers. The tank destroyers were to come up a road that came across the front edge of the woods, and then turn left, go across the field with us right behind them, following in their tracks. While the tank destroyers were coming up we were to fire an artillery preparation out in front of us to hide the noise they would make.
>
> "It was a dark, rainy, quiet, night. We reached the edge of the woods slightly after midnight and lay there for 3 o'clock and the tank destroyers to come. Finally we heard them in the distance and so called for the artillery fire. Everything worked

like a charm. The artillery went out beautifully and the tank destroyers came up as planned, turned into the field, and for some unknown reason stopped. By then the artillery had stopped firing and on a quiet night as it was, you could hear their motors half way to Berlin. Naturally the Jerries on the other side of the canal heard them, knew something was up, and threw in a mortar barrage. They had uncanny luck and the first rounds were right on us, and they just kept coming.

"Lt Corry, Smith, and myself were lying right next to each other, a few feet apart. Lt Corry on my left and Smith on my right. One shell landed between Lt Corry and myself. I felt a piece hit me, heard Lt Corry moan and remember hearing Smith say "I'm hit!". I rolled over to Lt Corry and saw that he was seriously wounded and called for a medic. He came right up, but there was nothing he could do for him. He never regained consciousness, and died in a very few minutes. Then I started looking around for Smith. I didn't look very long or far because the shells were still landing. Then I crawled back in the woods a way, put a first aid dressing on my wound, and met up with several other walking wounded. One fellow had his hand blown off, and so I figured it best for us to get back to the aid station - the sooner the better. It was about a mile back through the woods, but we made it OK. My leg did not bother me much as long as I kept moving."

Bill Corry was one of the most admired and liked officers in the battalion. He was one of our youngest officers and had joined us while we were on Tennessee Maneuvers, December 24th, 1943. He was a great athlete, had been captain of the University of Florida football team, was a diligent but relaxed guy, friendly, clean-cut, clean living, a real 'All-American-Boy'. He was married to a young, pretty, and very nice girl. He had been wounded twice previously, but not seriously enough to be evacuated.

Reports at the time were necessarily sketchy. Capt Virgil Blumhorst arrived at our CP at 0830 hours and reported that he had talked to Dill Werley at the aid station, who had told him that Corry had been critically wounded. Blumhorst had also seen Pvt Egan, who had volunteered to guide stretcher bearers to Corry, but who got separated from the stretcher bearers in the woods because of the heavy shelling. Egan reached Corry but could not evacuate him alone, so recovered all the government property he could carry and returned to the aid station. By 0930 Corry had been evacuated to the aid station and pronounced dead. By 1030 the body of Pvt Smith had been located but could not be evacuated because of the heavy shelling.

It was a very sad day for us all. It was also ironic that had that FO detail survived that night they would never have gone out again. Three days later all of our FO's came back and we never sent out an FO detail as such again in the war.

February 5 was a very active firing day for the 802d, no doubt good for us after the previous day - 45 missions totalling 2369 rounds. The Germans had been pushed back until now most were on the other side of the Rhine, and those left were fighting a rear guard delaying action.

The weather had warmed and we had rain, so now we were back to mud as in October, November, and most of December.

I read two interesting articles in the "Stars and Stripes", the Army newspaper-ETO Edition. The first one was the Services of Supply announcement that as of then every soldier in the ETO had been issued "Shoepacs", a new type of boot with rubber foot and leather upper, waterproof, and the answer to trench foot. I did not have them, nor did anyone else around me, so I presumed it was just more Army propaganda for the home-front in the States. The other article was similar, of how fond American soldiers were of hot dogs and how many millions of them they had eaten in the ETO. What we got looked like hot dogs but were really vienna sausage and did not taste anything like hot dogs. Many if not most of us threw them away at the end of the mess line. But this also made good reading at home.

February 6 was quiet - 9 missions and 267 rounds. But we in the CP/FDC got shaken up. An eight inch howitzer battery moved into position two or three hundred yards directly to our rear without our really being aware of it. The first time they fired was unimaginably startling. That was a lot of gun and created a tremendous shock wave and roar out the muzzle. It broke the glass in windows not previously broken. Fortunately for us the fighting in the Colmar Pocket was virtually over and it fired very little. Mild weather and rain.

On February 7th we fired three missions totalling 61 rounds. One mission was adjusted by Capt Blumhorst, sinking a barge in the Rhine River.

The Germans in the Colmar area had by this time been cleared from west of the Rhine, so this particular battle was over. Our feeling was that the Germans fought as fiercely here as they did in the Ardennes, although the numbers of troops on each side were much less. It was hard fighting for the infantry.

At some point during this time we were notified that Pvt Pack's body had been found, buried in a shallow grave near the Seille River, and that he had been murdered. On October 29th, while we were in the stationary position east of Nancy, in Lorraine, Pvt ---- had reported that his friend Pvt Pack had drowned in that river. It now was evident that the two had had some disagreement and Pvt ---- had shot Pvt Pack in the head, buried him, and made up the story about the drowning. Officially it was decided not to pursue the matter as in the meantime Pvt ---- had been overpowered and killed by German prisoners he was escorting to the rear.

The big news for some of us on the 7th was that Sgt Fleishman received his first pictures of his new son born in December. He was a proud and happy guy.

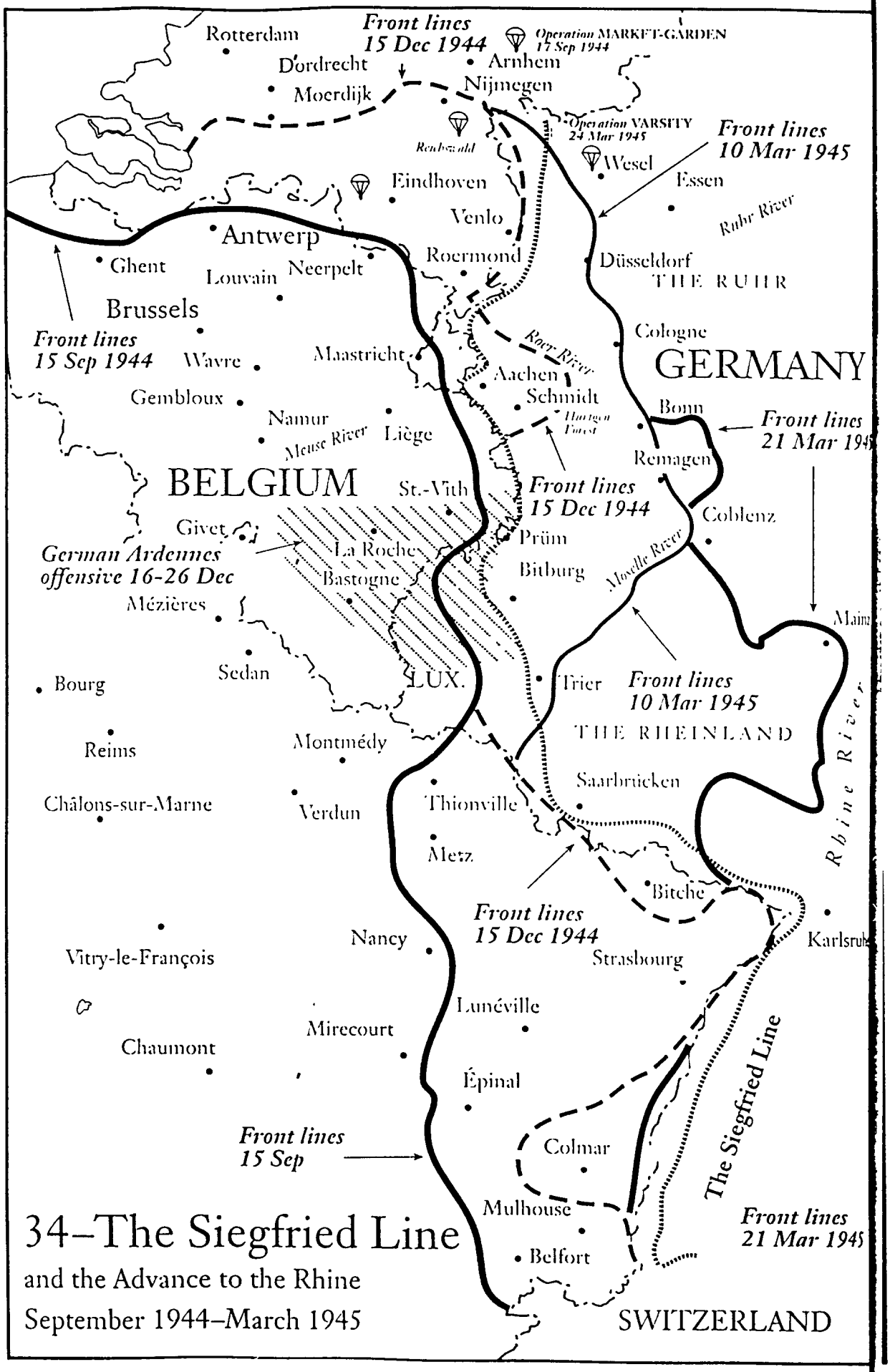
On the 8th all of our FO's and Ln O's returned to the battalion.
Our mission was changed from supporting the 254th Infantry Regiment of the 63rd Infantry Division to reinforcing the 10th FA Bn of the 3rd Infantry Division. Not long thereafter we were alerted that we would be relieved from attachment to the 3rd Infantry Division and would be moved to another area. The weather was mild and fair.

On February 9th the Bn CO and advance parties (including me) left at noon to report to XV Corps Artillery at Sarre-Union, about 100 miles to the north. Sarre-Union was only about 15 miles from Sarreguemines, where we had been two months previously, before the Ardennes and Colmar. The main body of the battalion was to move the next day.

On the 10th we finally got our orders from XV Corps. The 802d was to go to Lauterbach, Germany, and provide artillery support for the 116th Cavalry Squadron.

I was sent back to Luneville, France, to meet the battalion and lead them to Lauterbach. I got there in the early evening, and we bivouaced in a large warehouse over night.

We left Luneville at 0500 hours on the 11th, heading for Germany. Sgt Fleishman and Cpl Urich were with me in my jeep during this driving back and forth. We had a good time. The weather was warming and the roads were in terrible shape, caused by the weather and our heavy vehicles. □



34–The Siegfried Line

and the Advance to the Rhine

September 1944–March 1945

GERMANY - 1945

FEBRUARY 11, 1945

The battalion was ready to leave Luneville at 0500 hours but departure was delayed by XV Corps Traffic Control because an armored division was using the route prescribed for the battalion. A new route was designated but before reaching the outskirts of town the column was halted by the Military Police who said the prescribed route was impassable. We were then directed to go back to Baccarat and follow the previously designated route. This was done and the battalion reached Lauterbach, Germany, at 1150 hours, having passed through Baccarat, Domevie, Heming, Dieuze, and St. Avold. We had snow flurries and showers early but it had turned to steady rain by the time we got to Lauterbach.

In our new assignment we were attached to the XVth Corps, Seventh Army, and the 17th FA Group. We were in direct support of the 116th Cavalry Squadron. We took over gun positions just vacated by the 342d Armored FA Bn, who were sent on an assignment more suited to armored artillery. The gun positions were muddy and soft and there was some difficulty in getting in, set up, and ready to fire.

Lauterbach was a small town just inside Germany by a mile or two. The town was on both sides of the main and only street that paralleled a small stream running northeast down a ravine to the Saar River, about seven miles away. The town was near the top of, but in the ravine, surrounded by a large forest, seven or eight miles deep on all sides.

We had moved into what appeared to be a more or less static and quiet situation. The 116th Cavalry (and ourselves) were on the extreme left of the Seventh Army, where it joined the Third Army. It looked like a good break and a big change for us after three months of fairly intense activity.

All of the civilians had moved out of the town. Hq Btry personnel were assigned houses (by section) in and around the CP/FDC and Mess. I shared a house with Lt Bill Park (Hq Communications Officer). The town had not seen any fighting so all houses were undamaged. We had an intact roof, glass in the windows, a stove that worked, furniture, and so forth. The civilians took everything they could with them for safe keeping - rugs, mattresses, pictures, personal things, and the like, and left the large furniture behind. We were very comfortable.

Once in position and all set up the battalion registered and fired four missions totalling 46 rounds.

The battalion spent the next day, February 12th, getting organized in our new position. The batteries spent most of the day working on roads leading to the gun positions and on the muddy gun positions themselves. There was no active fighting going on in front of us. The cavalry were merely closing off their section of the front. We fired 19 missions totalling 263 rounds, on targets of opportunity, interdiction, and the like to harass the Germans and let them know there were Americans in front of them.

The German civilians had all been moved to the west end of town and we were in the east end. Now that we were in Germany we were forbidden by army orders (from the top - Eisenhower) to "fraternize" with German civilians. There were "non-fraternization" signs posted all over town, indicating this and noting that the penalty for such activity would be a $65 fine. It struck us as

childish and ridiculous. This was our first contact with German civilians and we were not feeling overly friendly toward them, but I don't think many of us were ready to accept the U.S. government propaganda effort that all Germans were hideous monsters, likely "Werewolves" and the like. We did not know what to expect.

It turned out that we were straddling the French-German border - C and Service Batteries were in France and Hq, A, and B were in Germany.

Special Services had taken over the local theater, with afternoon and evening shows for all troops in the area. Shower units had been set up in a coal mine and a public bath house in a nearby town. We had intermittent rain showers all day.

From February 12th to March 10th we stayed in Lauterbach. The war in front of us was very quiet. On an average day we fired about 200 rounds. Each firing battery set up an OP on the crest of the hills overlooking the Saar River valley, which they manned during daylight hours. Cavalry and Engineer troops manned them at night and used them as listening posts. On the 19th Lt John Cox returned to duty, fully recovered from his wounds. On the 22nd, Sgt Sampson and Cpl Henderson, of C Btry, were wounded by enemy mortar fire while on duty at the Btry OP. On several occasions we "marked" targets for "air strikes" by using smoke shells. On March 5th, Pvt Smallwood (C Btry) was killed when the command car he was driving hit a soft spot in the road on a curve and turned over. On March 2nd an officers' dance was held in a nearby French town. On March 12th an enlisted mens' dance was held in the same town, preceded by a GI stage show put on by personnel from the battalion and Group.

From March 1st - 6th, Lt. Bill Park and I got our turn at six days of rest and relaxation at a small resort type place in Chalons-Sur-Marne (France), one time headquarters of General Pershing during WW1. It was more or less boring. It was interesting to learn again that many French civilians did not hate the Germans as much as we had been told. Being married cut down on my activities, and taking this "rest" while the whole battalion was in a rest situation made it seem unnecessary. I was glad to get back to the battalion. The weather had been warming up and we had a fair amount of rain. But we had shower and bath facilities, movies, indoor living and eating.

Most of us had a very easy four weeks but we felt sure that some hard fighting lay ahead. At our location we were about 100 miles from the Rhine, and we knew that sooner or later the American Seventh Army would attack through the Palatinate to the Rhine. The West Wall, or Siegfried Line as it was called, was quite deep in our front. The German First and Seventh Armies held that area. The German First Army was in front of us and the German Seventh in front of the American Third Army's XX Corps on our left. They had been getting ready for the attack they knew had to come. We knew that hard times would soon be there. On March 10 the U.S. First Army captured an intact bridge across the Rhine River and had been gradually expanding their bridgehead. We knew this had to help, but did not know just how we might be affected.

To our left the XX Corps of the Third Army extended generally to the north to where the Saar flowed into the Moselle River. North of this were the XII Corps and the VIII Corps of the Third Army. Between February 8th and March 5th these two Corps fought forward 10 to 15 miles to the Kyll River and the left of the XX Corps moved forward to keep abreast of them, capturing Trier in the process. On the 6th of March Patton launched his XII and VIII Corps in a strong attack toward the Rhine along the north side of the Moselle River, and by the 10th his troops had reached the Rhine and cleared all Germans from the north side of the Moselle. Two or three days

later he wheeled the two corps to the right and attacked across the Moselle, catching the German Seventh Army by surprise. By the 17th his forward elements were so far into the rear of the German Seventh Army and First Army that the front in front of us started to collapse as the Germans attempted to escape encirclement. It was a brilliant maneuver of the type that Patton was noted for, and it saved us and the rest of the American Seventh Army much hard fighting and many casualties. *This particular action never got the historical recognition it deserved, but as one who was there, it meant a lot to me.*

On the March 17th the 70th Infantry Division moved into the line on the left flank of the American Seventh Army, in front of us, and the Cavalry Group was relieved. We were then supporting the 70th Division.

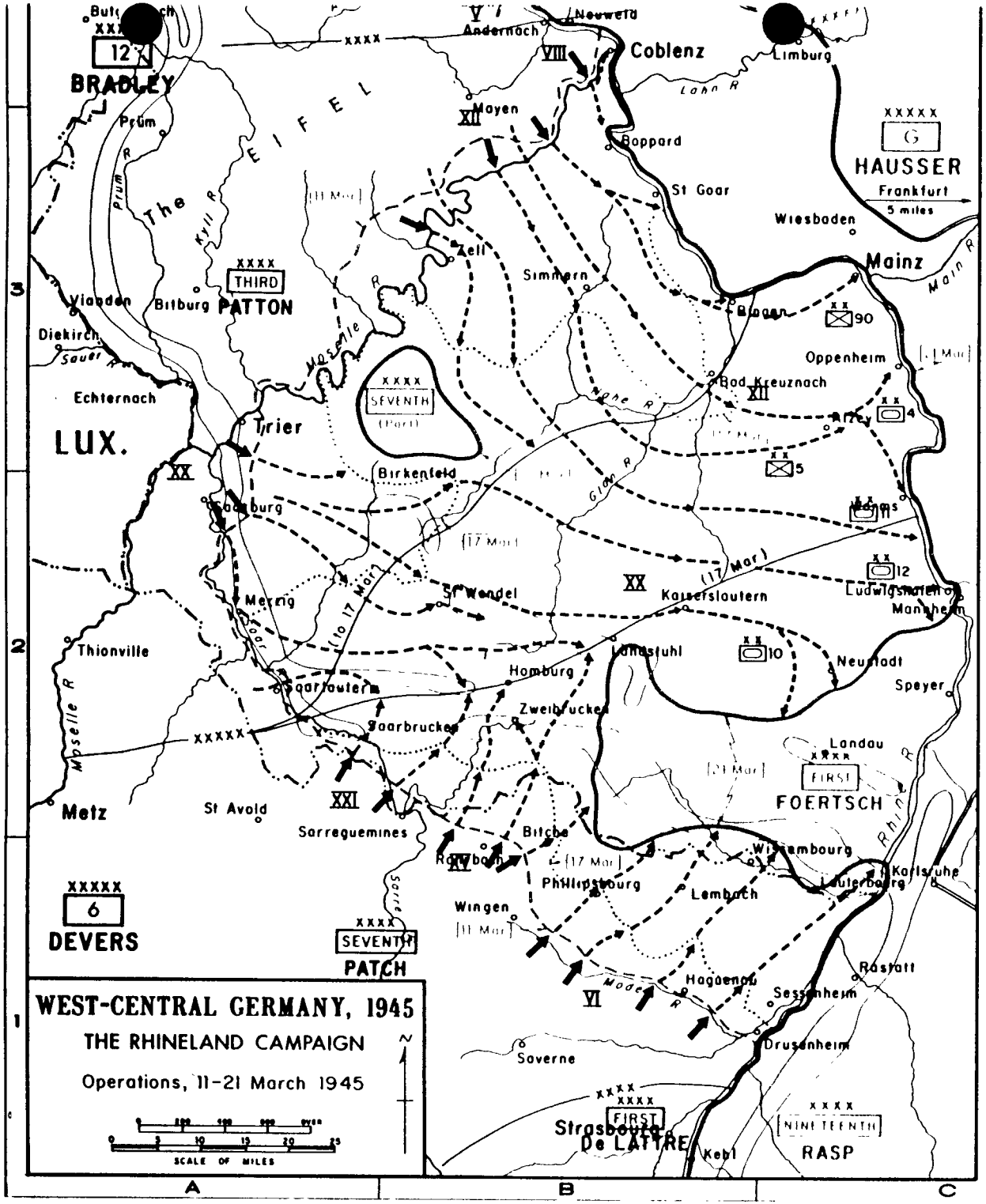
On the 18th Cpl Parsons was killed at the A Btry OP by enemy sniper fire (Capt Bob Hurd was standing next to him at the time), and Sgt Mahaney and Pvt Fanning were wounded by enemy mortar shell fragments near the OP while servicing telephone lines. It seemed that the Germans were pulling out because of General Patton's advance deep into their rear. Rather than just abandon ammunition they did not have means of evacuating they were firing it at anything and everything they could see.

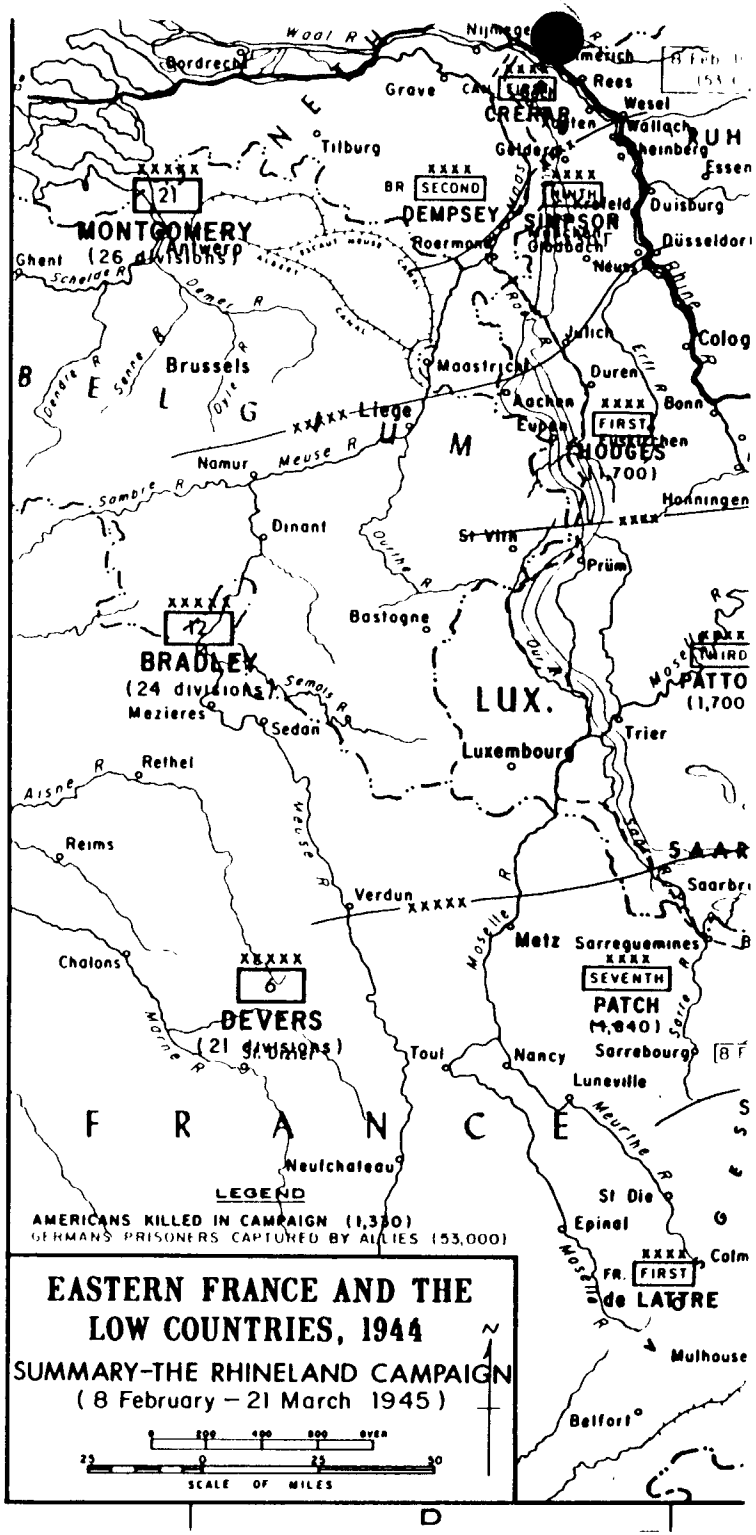
General Patton's Third Army attack appeared to have caught the American Seventh Army high command by surprise as it had the German army high command. The Germans started withdrawing on the 17th-18th, and it was two or three days before the Americans on our front were ready to press the Germans from the west. On the morning of March 20th we started towards the town of Ludweiler, about five miles down our ravine toward the Saar river. It soon became apparent that the Germans were withdrawing very rapidly and we ended the day in Volklingen, five miles farther and across the Saar. Many delays as too many troops had to cross the Saar on one pontoon bridge.

On March 21st we were relieved from attachment to the 70th Infantry Division and attached to the 100th Infantry Division. On the 22nd we moved and bivouaced near the town of Hanviller, France, near the 100th Division and were out in the field in tents. We did not go into firing positions as the German front in our area had totally collapsed and withdrawn, and the "front" was now the Rhine river, about 50 or 60 miles away.

On the 23rd we motored 70 or 80 miles, along with several thousand other troops, to assigned locations near the Rhine. We ended up in bivouac near Mutterstadt, Germany, about 12 miles west of Ludwigshafen and the Rhine. It was interesting coming down from Kaiserlautern in the "mountains" to the Rhine Plain over roads the Germans had used in their hasty retreat two days previously. Once out of the forests, on the down slope, off both sides of the road, continuously for miles and miles were wrecked and burned German military vehicles of all sorts, victims of the U.S. fighter aircraft. It was unimaginable. Thanks to General Patton our anticipated weeks of dreaded attack turned out to be an uneventful spring day drive. The weather was fair and mild. We saw our first groups of prisoners of war of the German army, released by the advancing Americans. There were many of them and most seemed to be Russian. They were pathetic looking, wearing non-descript remnants of uniforms, dirty, unkempt, but they seemed in good spirits.

On March 24th we moved about two and a half miles to the southeast to the town of Limburgerhof, another small town, though "suburban" in character rather than farming. We lived


WEST-CENTRAL GERMANY, 1945
THE RHINELAND CAMPAIGN
Operations, 11-21 March 1945
SCALE OF MILES
BRADLEY
12
THIRD
PATTON
SEVENTH
PATCH
DEVERS
6
FIRST
FOERTSCH
HAUSSER
G
Frankfurt
5 miles
NINETEENTH
RASP
FIRST
De LATTRE
LUX.
The EIFEL
Coblenz
Limburg
Andernach
Neuwied
Mayen
Boppard
St Goar
Wiesbaden
Mainz
Bingen
Oppenheim
Bad Kreuznach
Simmern
Zell
Trier
Bitburg
Vianden
Diekirch
Echternach
Saarburg
Merzig
Birkenfeld
St Wendel
Kaiserslautern
Ludwigshafen
Mannheim
Landstuhl
Homburg
Zweibrücken
Saarbrücken
Saarlautern
Neustadt
Speyer
Landau
Thionville
Metz
St Avold
Sarreguemines
Bitche
Rohrbach
Wingen
Phillipsburg
Lembach
Wissembourg
Lauterbourg
Karlsruhe
Rastatt
Hagenau
Sessenheim
Drusenheim
Soverne
Strasbourg
Kehl
Prüm
Moselle R
Rhine R
Main R
Lahn R
Nahe R
Glan R
Saar R
Sauer R
Sarre R
Moder R
(11 Mar)
(17 Mar)
(21 Mar)
(to 17 Mar)
XXXXX
XXXX
XXX
XX
XV
XVI
XXI
XII
VIII
V
90
4
5
11
12
10


EASTERN FRANCE AND THE
LOW COUNTRIES, 1944
SUMMARY-THE RHINELAND CAMPAIGN
(8 February – 21 March 1945)
SCALE OF MILES
LEGEND
AMERICANS KILLED IN CAMPAIGN (1,330)
GERMANS PRISONERS CAPTURED BY ALLIES (53,000)
MONTGOMERY
21
(26 divisions)
BRADLEY
12
(24 divisions)
DEVERS
6
(21 divisions)
DEMPSEY
SECOND
SIMPSON
NINTH
HODGES
FIRST
(1,700)
PATTON
THIRD
(1,700)
PATCH
SEVENTH
(1,840)
de LATTRE
FIRST
BELGIUM
LUX.
FRANCE
SAAR
Nijmegen
Arnhem
Rees
Wesel
Duisburg
Düsseldorf
Cologne
Bonn
Aachen
Eupen
Liège
Maastricht
Brussels
Antwerp
Ghent
Tilburg
Grave
Roermond
Julich
Duren
Namur
Dinant
Bastogne
St Vith
Prüm
Honningen
Mezieres
Sedan
Rethel
Reims
Verdun
Chalons
Toul
Nancy
Luneville
Sarrebourg
Sarreguemines
Metz
Luxembourg
Trier
Saarbrücken
Neufchateau
St Die
Epinal
Colmar
Mulhouse
Belfort
Meuse R
Moselle R
Rhine R
Sambre R
Ourthe R
Semois R
Aisne R
Marne R
Meurthe R
Saône R
Wool R
Scheldt R
Dyle R
Demer R
Roer R
Erft R
Ourte R
Lys R
Sarre R

A B C D

in modest but nice German homes, very recently vacated by the owners. In our own case we were careful of their possessions, and I believe looting was limited to such small things as cameras, Nazi emblems and artifacts. The weather was pleasant, sunny, and very spring-like. We were supporting the 399th Infantry Regiment, reinforcing the fire of the 925th FA Bn. Actually nothing was going on in our front, as the Germans had pulled back across the Rhine. With General Patton's Third Army crossing of the Rhine river to our north on the 22nd, nothing much could happen in our area until the American Seventh Army crossed. From the 24th to the 28th we did two registrations, three interdictions, and one mission, with a grand total of 138 rounds, virtually nothing.

March 29th we received preliminary movement orders. We were to be relieved of assignment to the Seventh Army and XXI Corps and reassigned back to the 12th Army Group. The 12th Army Group consisted (at that time) of the U.S. First and Third Armies. We had been in the Third Army (Patton) from the time we landed in France until the end of the Ardennes in mid-January and our transfer to the Seventh. I thought it was good to be going back to the first team.

At 0700 hours on March 30th the Colonel and an advance party, including me, left for Konigswinter, Germany, near Bonn, to report to the VII Corps of the U.S. First Army. Konigswinter was about five miles southeast of Bonn, on the east side of the Rhine, and about 200 miles north of where we were. It was about ten miles north of Remagen, where the First Army had made the first crossing of the Rhine early in the month. The remainder of the battalion left about 1100 hours.

On March 31st we (the advance party) reached Konigswinter and Colonel Head reported to VII Corps Artillery. We crossed the mighty Rhine at Bad Godesberg on a pontoon bridge. The Rhine scenery was much more striking than in Alsace, with steep banks rather than the flat plains.

On April 1st Colonel Head got our orders and assignment, as well as maps we would need, and the route of march of the battalion. He then flew with Lt Robertson in one of our Liaison or observation planes, back the Battalions route until he found them. He dropped maps and instructions to the Bn Exec, Major Sparks, and eventually we all got together and bivouaced near the town of Ettenhausen on the east side of the Rhine. Hq and B Btry were quartered in and around a large chateau and dairy farm.

April 1st brought good news for me. Capt Brugh, formerly S-2 and since January 1st acting S-3, told me he was now officially S-3 and that the Colonel was officially making me S-2 though I was to continue as Asst S-2 (Survey Officer) for the duration of combat. Major Fleetwood, former S-3 until his appendicitis attack New Year's Eve, was not returning to the 802d. This meant that 30 or so days after the additional assignment I would be eligible for promotion to Capt and an additional $50 per month. It meant a lot to me to be chosen and not passed over.

Also on the 1st, Capt Bob Miller (Asst S-3) told me he was to head up the battalion education program if we ended up as occupation troops, and asked if I would be his assistant. I agreed.

It seemed that once again the battalion was lucky. Our original assignment to the Third Army, in my opinion the best army because of its commander General Patton, was lucky. And in that army we generally worked with first rate divisions, more luck. Then our transfer to the Seventh Army, not high in my esteem, but we were attached to the 3rd Infantry Division, certainly one of the best U.S. divisions in Europe. And our new assignment to the VII Corps, considered by many people

to have the most outstanding corps commander, General "Lightning Joe" Collins. We always seemed to be with first rate outfits.

April 2nd the battalion spent all day on the road travelling from Ettenhausen to Goddelsheim about 140 miles (by road) north and east. The VII Corps was on the southern side of the recently created Ruhr Pocket where the mass of the German army in our area was rapidly being surrounded. The front was moving very rapidly. There was much traffic on all of the roads leading east with many troops to be moved. The roadsides were littered with wrecked, destroyed, and burned German vehicles. As we drove through the German towns almost all homes had white sheets hanging out a second story window. The German civilians had had enough and we were not worried that they would do us harm. We reached Goddelsheim shortly before midnight. There was a slow, cold rain all day.

We were in the U.S. First Army, assigned to the VII Corps, and attached to the 104th Infantry Division. The 104th was commanded by the well known Major General Terry Allen, who had formerly commanded the 1st Infantry Division in action in Africa and Sicily. He had been relieved of command of the 1st Division for not maintaining sufficiently strict discipline of his troops, mainly in their off-duty hours. He was considered a very able division commander as far as leadership and the fighting ability of his troops. Again we were encouraged to be supporting a division commanded by General Allen.

> *The complexion of the war changed very dramatically from March 10th to April 4th. The U.S. First Army captured the intact railroad bridge across the Rhine River at Remagen on March 10th, and put American troops across. At the same time, Patton's U.S. Third Army made its drive to the Rhine along the north side of the Moselle River. From March 15th to the 21st Patton made his sensational attack southward across the Moselle on the west side of the Rhine as far as Ludwigshafen, thereby almost encircling and causing the German Seventh and First Armies to withdraw without a fight across the Rhine. Patton's Army crossed the Rhine near Worms on March 22nd. On March 23rd Montgomery's 21st Army Group, including the U.S. Ninth Army, crossed the Rhine near Wesel. From then on the U.S. Ninth Army pressed eastward encircling the Ruhr industrial area on the north while the U.S. First Army did the same on the south. The encirclement was completed on April 4th at Lippstadt and Paderborn. The XVIII and the III Corps of the First Army peeled off and formed the southern part of the "Ruhr Pocket". The VII Corps of the First Army continued on eastward towards the Elbe River.*

April 3rd we stayed in Goddelsheim in bivuoac. Two German soldiers were captured in A Btry position, and we had more rain.

On the 4th we were first ordered to move to the town of Osdorf, arriving there about noon. At 1500 hours we moved to new positions near Kleinenberg, for a total move of about 40-50 miles due north. Service battery personnel picked up another 11 prisoners and took them to the POW cage. We were now reinforcing the fires of the 385th FA Bn, of the 104th Infantry Division.

My cousin, Bob Clare, was an air observer pilot with one of the artillery battalions of the 104th. I went to the 104th division airstrip and found him on the 5th. He had been in the Pacific theater

prior to returning to the states for pilot training and joining the 104th. The 104th arrived in Europe in December.

One of our pilots, Lt Newcomb, was on pass when we made the big move north. He got back on the 5th after looking for us for four days.

My driver, Cpl Urich, was born and spent his first 15 years in Austria and spoke German very well. He had a great time talking to the German civilians, sometimes as my interpreter but mostly on his own. He was a first rate guy with a cheerful and positive outlook. Sometimes his conversations resulted in gifts of fresh eggs, which was nice as our mess served only powdered eggs. Occasionally he picked up or was given souvenirs, sometimes offering something to me. I always told him I did not intend to take or send any such things home. Once he offered me a German Officer's fancy dress saber. I should have taken it. People were collecting all manner of things to keep or trade, though looting was, as we said, verboten. Somewhere he found a table model civilian radio, army green so we assumed it to be an army radio. He managed to hook it up to work off our jeep battery and we were able to listen to the Armed Forces Radio broadcasts of news and popular music.

On April 6th we moved to the town of Borgentreich, about 18 miles to the east. We were in position ready to fire but the Germans were retreating so rapidly and in such disarray there were no targets. Capt Dave Canon, Hq Btry CO, returned from pass and it took him three days to locate us. More Rain.

It was obvious that the Germans were defeated, but they were still fighting. We were approximately 150 miles from Berlin and moving and the Russians were 35 miles from Berlin. We were all very happy at the way it was going but were also angry at the Germans for continuing to resist. People were still getting killed and wounded. Having survived to that point people were understandably anxious that nothing happen to them in what appeared to be the last week or two of the war

On the 7th we moved first to Ebberschutz and then to Gottsburen. We fired one registration and one mission totalling 58 rounds. We were about 15 miles north of Kassel, and the weather was warm and springlike. The days were getting noticeably longer.

On April 8th we fired 16 missions totalling 403 rounds, the most we had fired since Colmar. Mid-afternoon we were ordered to move to Gieselwerder, four miles to the east. In the end only Hq Btry moved, the gun batteries staying in Gottsburen with a skeleton FDC/CP.

On the 9th the gun batteries moved to Gieselwerder but before they could occupy positions were ordered on across the Weser River to the town of Arenborn where positions were occupied. At 1930 hours we were ordered to positions near Lodingsen. Capt Hurd left for a seven day leave in England. On the 10th we moved again to the town of Holzerode. No firing either day. We received our first mail since leaving the Seventh Army.

All movement was difficult. With the front advancing so rapidly there were many outfits trying to keep up and we were sandwiched in with others over the same roads. The war was turning into a rout on our front but we were still getting occasional enemy artillery shelling in our area. It was usually interdiction firing at crossroads.

On the morning of the 11th the section and I surveyed new positions near the small town of Lutjenhausen, just one more little town of red clay tile roofs. In the afternoon we started to do the same for positions near the town of Weilrode, but were halted as the contemplated move was cancelled. While getting our bearings for the afternoon survey, my section and I were stopped at a small fork in the road, studying our maps. We were in open countryside, not in a village. From a nearby building we were approached by a fortyish German civilian man, who greeted us warmly in very American tones "Hi ya fellows! Can I help you?" We were startled to hear this coming from a healthy German male of his age in civilian clothes, especially the slangy American tone. It turned out he had lived in Detroit for many years, moving to Germany just before the war. We could not figure out how he had managed to stay out of the military. A number of German soldiers turned themselves in to the battalion, glad the war was over for them and to be surrendering to the Americans, "The Golden Capture".

On the 12th the battalion fired five missions totalling 178 rounds. Late in the afternoon the battalion moved to the town of Gudersleben.

Colonel Head left for seven days leave in England. Shortly before leaving he told me he had been carrying me on the roster as S-2 since March. Capt Hurd (Ln O), Capt Blumhorst (CO B Btry), and Lt Harold Moss (Asst Supply Officer) were in either Paris or England. Capt Brugh (S-3) was evacuated to the hospital because of his bad back. Lt Diz Dunbar was also in the hospital (sick).

April 12th was the fourth anniversary of the day Jeanie and I met.

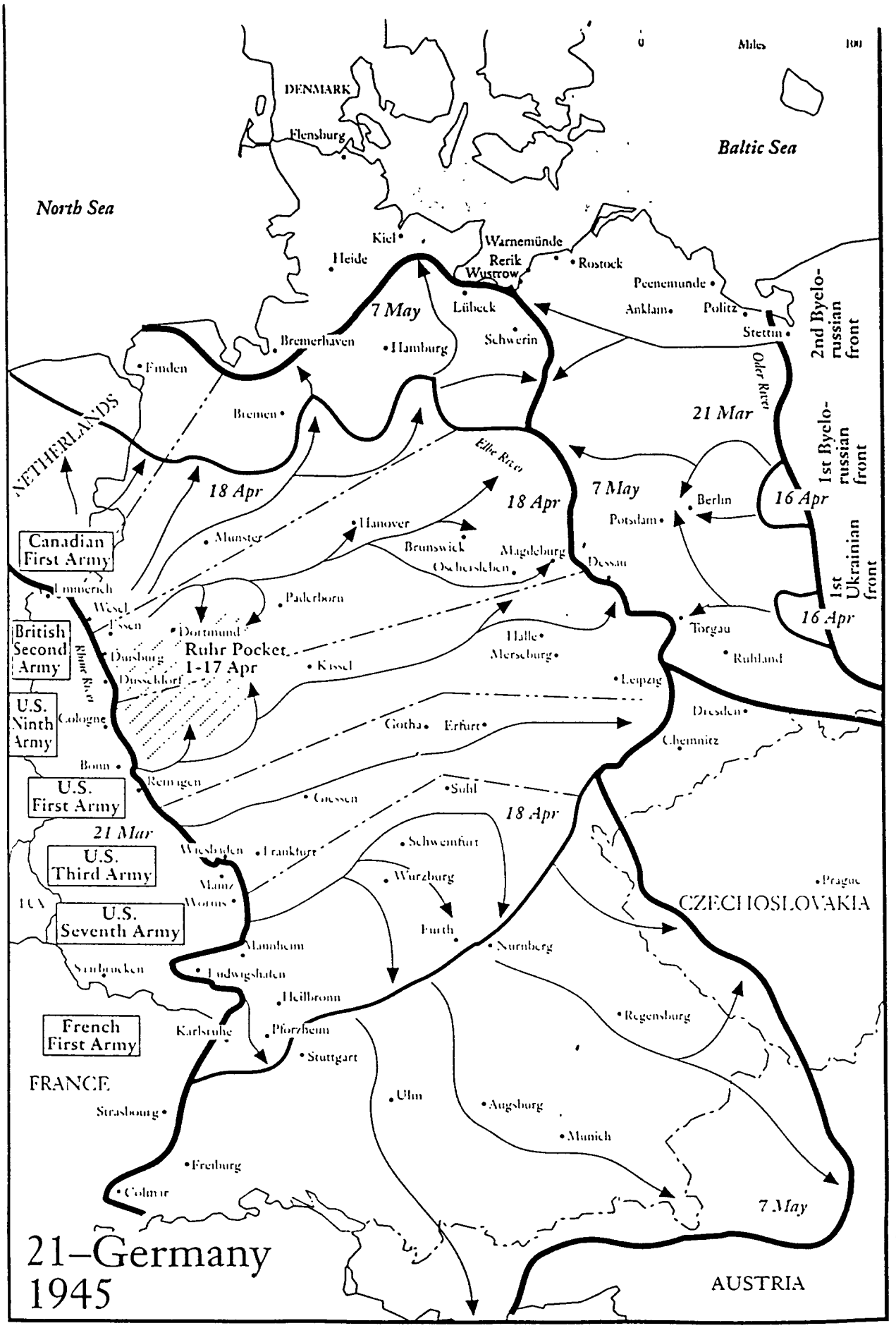
On the 13th the battalion fired eleven missions totalling 263 rounds. For the previous week we had been moving along the south edge of the Harz Mountains. It was supposedly a retreat strongpoint for SS troops, and also was thought to contain extensive tunnelled manufacturing areas for the V-2 rockets. Other American troops were peeled off to contain and reduce whatever Germans were there. We and the 104th Infantry Division continued to advance east as rapidly as the tankers and the infantry could overcome the few Germans in our path.

Plans were made to make us part of a task force with the 414th Infantry Regiment for a motorized drive on the city of Halle, about 50 miles to the east.

A Russian slave labor camp was found on the outskirts of town. Living conditions were very bad, unlike anything any of us had ever seen. A great many of the inmates were suffering from severe starvation. Our men collected food from the townspeople and our messes prepared it, and those who were able to eat were fed. Doc Danish (Bn Surgeon) treated many who were ill. The location and condition of the camp was reported to U.S. Military Government in Nordhausen. I visited the camp and was stunned that people could treat other people so badly.

Capt Frank Murphy, battery commander of A Btry, left the 802d for a position in Military Government. Lt Jack Dick, one of my closer friends, was made battery commander of A Btry. He had been Exec of C Btry for a long time and would make a good Btry Commander.

The big news on the 13th was that President Franklin D. Roosevelt had died. It was mildly upsetting news. I had never been an admirer of FDR. His 1940 campaign slogan "No American boys will fight in foreign wars!" was one I would never forget. His "unconditional surrender" statement in North Africa may have had the ring of steely determination, but it unquestionably prolonged the war by several months, probably eight, maybe more, and caused perhaps atleast a



21–Germany 1945

Donald S. Frazier

half million unnecessary deaths in Europe, counting both military and civilian, on all fronts and areas. And many of those were American boys. I felt I had little reason to admire Franklin Roosevelt, or grieve his passing.

At 0900 on April 14th the task force was formed and started the march on Halle at 1000 hours. This small force was made up of the 1st Bn of the 414th Infantry Regiment, two companies of the 750th Tank Bn, the Reconnaisance Company and one TD platoon of Btry D of the 555th AAA Bn, one company of the 87th Chemical Bn (mortars), one platoon of the regimental anti-tank company, and the 802d.

No opposition was met until mid-afternoon when the task force was held up by artillery and small arms fire just west of the Saale River on the west side of Halle. For us, at first one battery went into a hurried firing position and a forward observer adjusted fire on the enemy force. Resistance stiffened and the other two batteries went into position. Four missions were fired totalling 154 rounds. We spent the night there, near the small town of Teutschenthal, a few miles southwest of Halle.

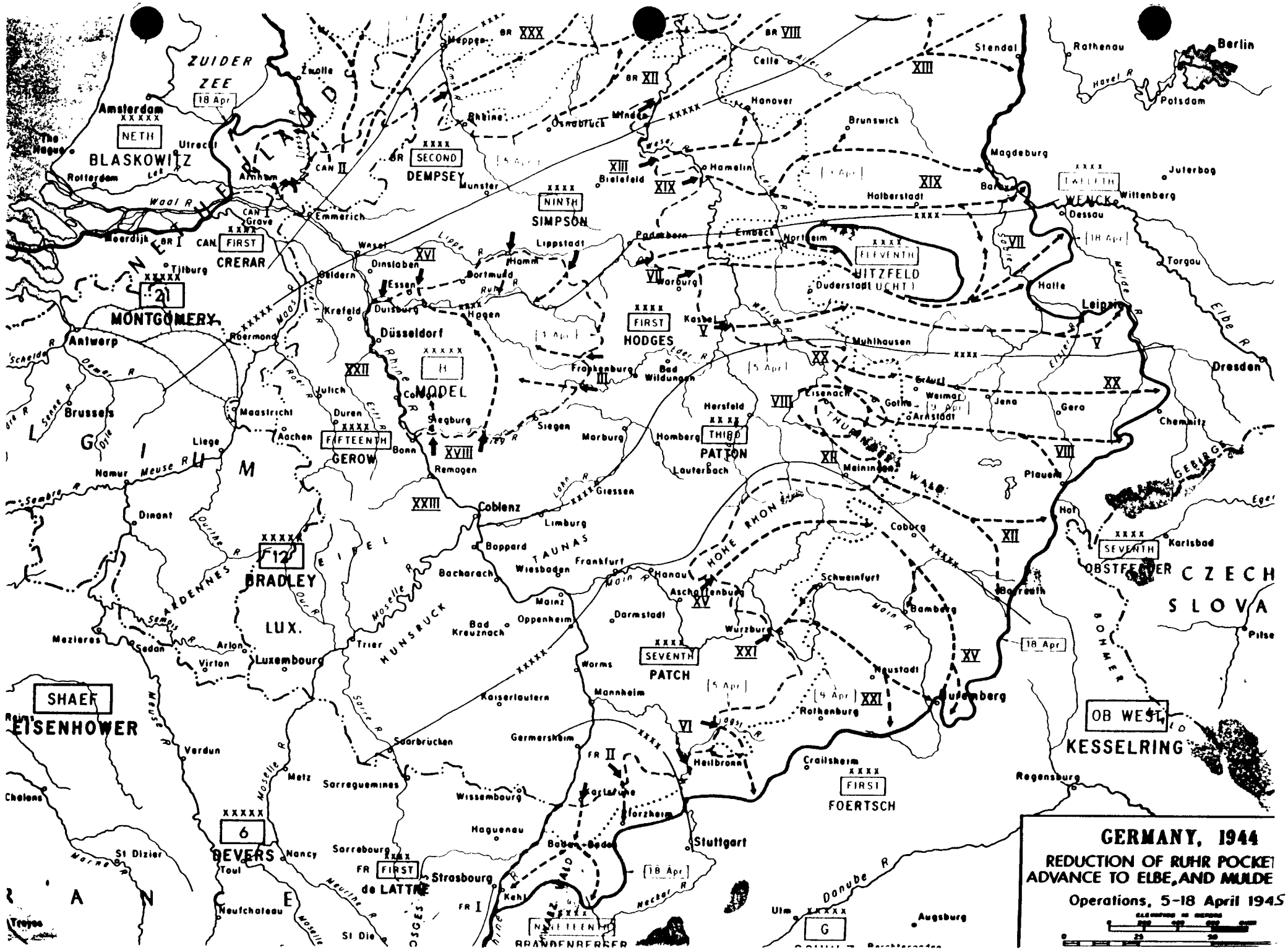
We had travelled 50 or 60 miles and along the way had passed many freed slave laborers and POW's, who greeted us enthusiastically. The task force captured a number of German soldiers along the way, including 12 by the 802d. The weather had improved as we got further into spring and that day was a wonderful spring day. But the Germans, or atleast some of them, continued to fight and resist and people were still being killed and wounded on both sides. We were about 85 miles southwest of Berlin. The most common expression of the German civilians was "alles kaput". The war seemed so near over some people started wondering if we would be sent to the Pacific theater.

The next morning at 0730 we moved a few miles to the north to the town of Bennstedt, about six miles due west of Halle. At 1300 hours we moved a few miles north and east to the town of Nietleben, and at 2145 hours we were ordered to move further north and east to support the troops flanking Halle on the north. The advance parties (including survey section) left immediately only to find the bridge on which we were planning to cross the Saale River would not support the battalions heavy trucks. The battalion was radioed to use another bridge, and the advance parties proceeded across on the light pontoon bridge. We arrived at our new position area, made our night reconnaisance, selected gun positions, did our survey, and then bedded down for the night. The battalion was not expected until morning.

The battalion arrived the next morning (April 16th) at 0530 hours and were very shortly ready to fire. Five missions totalling 210 rounds were fired. My section and I got about two hours sleep, but then nobody got very much sleep that night. At 1300 hours the battalion displaced closer to Halle, to the suburban town of Trotha. At 1900 hours our forces arranged a truce with the German defenders of Halle, but they declined to surrender the city and the truce ended at 0300 hours on the 17th. It was not clear to us why they continued to resist.

We stayed in Trotha on the 17th, firing four missions totalling 111 rounds. The battalion received rations of wine, champagne, and food, all captured in a German Army warehouse in Trotha. Also I took my first shower since leaving Lauterbach a month ago.

The battalion stayed in Trotha on the 18th also, firing three missions totalling 71 rounds. We received some shelling from the Germans, mostly road interdiction, seemingly hastily fired as they


GERMANY, 1944
REDUCTION OF RUHR POCKET
ADVANCE TO ELBE, AND MULDE
Operations, 5-18 April 1945
SHAEF
EISENHOWER
OB WEST
KESSELRING
21
MONTGOMERY
12
BRADLEY
6
DEVERS
G
FOERTSCH
FIRST
SECOND
DEMPSEY
NINTH
SIMPSON
FIRST
CRERAR
NETH
BLASKOWITZ
FIRST
de LATTRE
FIFTEENTH
GEROW
FIRST
HODGES
B
MODEL
THIRD
PATTON
SEVENTH
PATCH
SEVENTH
OBSTFELDER
TWELFTH
WENCK
ELEVENTH
HITZFELD
NINETEENTH
BRANDENBERGER
ZUIDER ZEE
Amsterdam
The Hague
Rotterdam
Utrecht
Arnhem
Nijmegen
Emmerich
Wesel
Tilburg
Antwerp
Roermond
Krefeld
Duisburg
Essen
Düsseldorf
Hagen
Dortmund
Hamm
Paderborn
Lippstadt
Bielefeld
Osnabrück
Münster
Meppen
Rhaine
Hanover
Celle
Stendal
Brunswick
Magdeburg
Halberstadt
Hameln
Kassel
Marburg
Giessen
Siegen
Bonn
Remagen
Coblenz
Koblenz
Bad Godesberg
Siegburg
Aachen
Maastricht
Liege
Namur
Dinant
Brussels
Mezieres
Sedan
Arlon
Virton
Luxembourg
Verdun
Metz
Sarreguemines
Saarbrücken
Trier
Bacharach
Boppard
Bad Kreuznach
Mainz
Wiesbaden
Frankfurt
Darmstadt
Oppenheim
Worms
Mannheim
Kaiserlautern
Germersheim
Karlsruhe
Baden-Baden
Strasbourg
Kehl
Wissembourg
Haguenau
Sarrebourg
Nancy
Toul
St Dizier
Chalons
Reims
Troyes
Neufchateau
St Die
Mulhouse
Freiburg
Stuttgart
Heilbronn
Crailsheim
Rothenburg
Ansbach
Nuremberg
Würzburg
Aschaffenburg
Hanau
Fulda
Eisenach
Gotha
Weimar
Erfurt
Jena
Gera
Chemnitz
Zwickau
Plauen
Hof
Bayreuth
Bamberg
Coburg
Schweinfurt
Neustadt
Ludwigshafen
Karlsruhe
Ulm
Augsburg
Regensburg
Passau
Pilsen
Karlsbad
Dresden
Leipzig
Halle
Dessau
Wittenberg
Torgau
Juterbog
Potsdam
Berlin
Rathenau
Brandenburg
Celle
Minden
Paderborn
Warburg
Kassel
Duderstadt
Muhlhausen
Meiningen
Lauterbach
Homberg
Hersfeld
Lippstadt
Hamm
Bielefeld
Osnabrück
Meppen
Emmerich
Nijmegen
Zwolle
Apeldoorn
Deventer
Groningen
Leeuwarden
Enschede
Rhine R
Ruhr R
Weser R
Elbe R
Mulde R
Saale R
Havel R
Oder R
Vistula R
Danube R
Neckar R
Main R
Moselle R
Meuse R
Maas R
Scheldt R
Lek R
Waal R
Ijssel R
Lippe R
Ems R
Weser R
Leine R
Werra R
Fulda R
Eder R
Lahn R
Nahe R
Saar R
Sauer R
Our R
Sambre R
Semois R
Ourthe R
Vesdre R
Roer R
Erft R
Sieg R
Eifel
Ardennes
Hunsruck
Taunas
Hohe Rhon
Thuringer Wald
Erzgebirge
Bohmer
Harz
Czech Slova
Lux.
Belgium
Netherlands
Germany
France
18 Apr
5 Apr
9 Apr

prepare to abandon a position and did not want to move the ammunition or leave it behind. It caused us no damage.

The advance parties reconnoitered east of Halle for new positions but the battalion did not plan to move until the next day. Conditions changed rapidly as the German resistance crumbled in a flood of surrenders. As the Russian troops approached from the east, and the possibility of the German soldiers being captured by them increased, the Germans were only to happy to surrender to the "Amis", as they called us. They came in droves, many with their weapons, to join us in a war against Russia. In many cases they were relieved of their weapons and marched on their own in groups to the west, for formal capture and processing.

On April 19th at 0700 the battalion moved to the eastern outskirts of Halle, and at 1300 the advance parties left for new positions further east. At 1630 the battalion moved to new positions at Riotzsch, about 13 miles northeast of Halle. Six missions were fired totalling 187 rounds in support of the 1st Bn, 415th Infantry Regiment, 104th Infantry Division.

Over the 20th-21st we stayed in Riotzsch, firing ten missions totalling 271 rounds. Some of the Germans must have been obsessed to have continued to fight (and die) at this stage of the war. The battalion received 50 captured commercial radio sets that were made for the use of the German Army and painted a medium dark dull green. The survey section got one.

The battalion received three T66 rocket launchers, an experimental weapon, for test firing. Artillery specialists from Fort Sill were expected in a few days to instruct us in their use.

At this time we were observing an ever increasing mass movement of people. As our advance proceeded into Germany more and more POW camps and DP (displaced person) camps were overrun and the inmates released. There were Russian, Polish, and British POW's in their uniforms, and DP's, civilians from mostly Eastern European countries, some German Jews. The DP's had been slaves of the Germans in some form or another for a considerable time, and looked it. They were dirty, underfed, poorly clothed, and had obviously been poorly and/or harshly treated for years. Many had expressionless faces, with dull and glazed eyes, and were almost robots, uncomprehending what was going on. Close behind the front there was no organization set up to care for them, though our troops did what they could before we moved again. The DP's were a pathetic sight. Interestingly enough, in our area there were no instances of them attacking German civilians. The POW's had obviously been treated better and were overjoyed to be heading home.

Corporal Urich, my jeep driver, somehow obtained a trailer for the jeep. From then on we carried all bedrolls and other personal gear in it, leaving plenty of room in the jeep for Sgt Fleishman, Cpl Urich, and me.

On the 21st three prisoners were captured in Hq Btry area, and Colonel Head returned from leave.

Mail caught up with us again - nine letters from Jeanie dated March 12th through the 28th.

On the 22nd we moved to new positions near Sausedlitz, three or four miles to the east. This was our last firing position of the war. We were about 18 miles north of Leipzig, 20 miles ENE of Halle, and about 80 miles SW of Berlin. The infantry in front of us was on the west bank of the

Mulde River, a tributary of the Elbe River. Our positions were 3/4 of a mile or so from the river. This was the stopping point as decreed by General Eisenhower on our front to await the arrival of the Russian troops. We were still in support of the 104th Infantry Division. Infantry action was restricted to limited patrolling on the east side of the Mulde looking for the Russians. The primary action was the streams of German soldiers in groups of all sizes rushing to surrender to the Americans, with or without weapons, all glad that the war was over, as were we. The only firing we did was to register. The battalion CP/FDC was located in a large chateau in the town.

Two officers from the Field Artillery Board, Fort Sill, Oklahoma, arrived to instruct us in the firing of the rocket launchers.

Between April 23rd and 26th we stayed in Sausedlitz, fired three missions totalling 33 rounds.

The new rocket launchers were fired but we never could see the rounds land. It was far from a success. Alongside our beautiful 105's the launchers looked very plain and homely and unfinished.

To keep the battalion busy, on the 26th we resumed the activities of state-side training camps - cleaning all our gear, clothing, vehicles, guns, etc, and calisthenics, close order drill, and so forth. The guns were left in firing position with skeleton crews. Everybody was feeling very good that the war was over, atleast in our area, and there was much speculation as to what the future held.

On the 24th I went over to A Btry for dinner and spent the evening with Lts Jack Dick, John Trapp, Jimmie Teehan, and Frank Fain. The latter had only been with the 802d a month or two and I hardly knew him. But Jack Dick and John Trapp joined the 802d when I did in January 1943, and Jimmie Teehan in the fall of 1943, and we were old and good friends. My normal duties prevented my spending much time with the batteries, and that night we had a great time.

On April 27th the advance parties left at 1230 hours to reconnoiter bivouac areas near the town of Eisleben. I went but not my section. On the 28th the battalion was relieved from attachment to the 104th Infantry Division and attached to the 224th FA Group for occupation and security control of an assigned area.

April 29th the battalion was pulled off our last combat position and assigned occupational duties. Headquarters Battery was assigned to Bad Lauchstadt, about seven miles south and west of Halle, and each battery was assigned to another town around us. German civilians were evicted from their homes to provide living quarters for all. There was no war damage in the towns. I put my bedroll on my bed but it was too soft, so I brought my canvas cot in and used it. I had appropriated a German camera and quite a bit of film so I was ready to start taking pictures of my friends and our surroundings.

I heard that Colonel Head had requested a new survey officer (Asst S-2). The Colonel said nothing about it. It sort of confirmed what I had thought for the last few months, or atleast hoped. From what Sgt Fleishman and others had told me numerous times, before I arrived they never had a survey shoot in accurately. After I arrived we never had one that did not shoot in accurately while I was survey officer. When Lt Clifford was survey officer (while I was in A Btry for three months) the surveys were slow and inaccurate, the most embarrassing being during an AGF (Army Ground Forces) Test. I believe Colonel Head became convinced that he could count on me to run a survey correctly, and he was not going to move me out of that job until the war was over. I held both the Asst S-2 and S-2 functions from January 2nd on but on the T/O was listed as Asst

S-2 until March. Now that the war had ended I hoped the Colonel would put me in for promotion. I was very fortunate - it was the perfect job for me - and I had Sgt Fleishman and an excellent section, especially Sgt Fletcher, Cpl Dillon, and others. Sgt Fleishman was the key person, as he had put together a section of good people, not only smart but hard working, reliable, and pleasant to be with. We all worked very well together. Perhaps equally important for my promotion chances, was that I felt I had a good relationship with Colonel Head. It was impossible for a Battalion Commander to be a "friend" to someone in his command, but we had very satisfactory chemistry between us.

It was hard to realize that after my section and I had run many, many, surveys, at all times of the day and night, in all kinds of weather, from Georgia and Alabama, to France, Luxembourg, Belgium, and Germany, that we had now run our last survey.

Starting May 1st we established Military Government in our area, through the local authorities to the inhabitants. We were the authority and the police, or "muscle". We established and manned road-blocks on all roads in our area to prevent movement of anyone (civilians, DP's, ex-German soldiers) from one town to another. People could get around us after dark, through the woods and fields, and no doubt many or most did. Nothing was said but I had the feeling that we were doing this more or less half-heartedly, since all of the movement was from east to west, everyone trying to escape the Russians. Most of us were sympathetic to their plight. We were in a part of Germany that would be turned over to the Russians in a matter of weeks. The civilians knew that and many were doing anything they could to flee to the west and the zones of occupation of either the Americans preferably or the British. What was left of whole families arrived at our road blocks, often consisting of the elderly man and woman, their daughter, and her children, with all of their worldly possessions in a baby buggy, a small wagon, and on their backs. They were all walking. No cars, horses, or bicycles. We felt sorry for them even though we remembered they were the people who had started the war in 1939. At that time, right after the war ended, we had not yet begun to feel much sympathy for the Germans.

At our request the local authorities made a survey. The Burgermeister reported there were 4,387 DP's in our area. In the first two days we evacuated ex-prisoners of war - 31 French, 99 Italians, 124 Polish, 212 Russians, 4 Ukranians, and 4 British. As the days went on there were several disturbances by DP's, dissatisfied at the way things were going. It was a wonder there was not more trouble, as they had been treated very badly by their captors for several years.

On the 1st of May we heard over the radio that Hitler was dead.

On the 8th we heard that the European War would officially end at 0001 hours on May 9th.

The U.S. Army was strictly enforcing their "non-fraternization" policy, which meant that American soldiers could not have anything to do with Germans other than official dealings. We all felt that policy was ridiculous, and a little childish, but at that time in our army careers nothing our government or the army did really surprised us. I don't think any of us wanted to enforce it, and many individuals were discreetly getting around it.

Rumors began reaching us of trouble with the Russians, but stories and pictures in the Stars and Stripes (Army newspaper) told of and showed happy meetings between the Russian and Allied troops along the front emphasizing allied unity.

On May 4th I went flying with Lt Robertson (Air Observer Pilot). We flew over Halle and Leipzig at a low altitude and observed their almost total destruction by the American and British Air Forces, an unbelievabe sight. It was total destruction, not a whole building standing, mostly just walls - no roofs, windows, floors. Also, I was surprised at the tremendous number of bomb craters in the surrounding countryside. The flyers certainly missed their targets thousands of times, and many were miles from the city. We also flew over to the 104th Division airfield to see my cousin, Bob Clare, but he was not there. Robbie loved to fly and got all of the gas he wanted. He was constantly asking people if they wanted to go up. He had previously appropriated a 16 gauge shotgun and ammunition, and often flew looking for a likely field for pheasants. When he found one he would land and go hunting. We had southern fried pheasant at the Hq officers mess twice.

We were living comfortably, even luxuriously compared to the time from September to March. We shaved and brushed our teeth every day, bathed every two or three days, and the greatest luxury of all we had indoor plumbing. I had a German radio in my room and occasionally heard Armed Forces Radio programs, mostly popular music.

During this time I learned that one of the survey officers in the 35th Infantry Division that I had had some dealings with had been killed. We were attached to the 35th almost all of the time from September to mid-December in Lorraine.

I was still the most junior officer on the battalion staff. As such I continued to get a lot of miscellaneous assignments, and was Bn Special Services Officer, Bn PX Officer, and other similar duties. On May 7th I had one more opportunity to escort the Red Cross Clubmobile to all of the batteries. The Red Cross girls were pretty American girls and they were nice for all of us to look at, but how much of a morale boost they provided was difficult to judge.

On the 9th I was told that Colonel Head had put me in for promotion. I also got my first snapshots back from the Army PX film development laboratory. These were taken with my "liberated" camera and film, and all came out well. (In those days Germany was the quality manufacturer of cameras, lenses, etc.). I had taken pictures of many of my friends - other officers, and my section, and other people in Hq Btry that I had known for a long time. It was nice to have pictures of these people, and many were taking similar pictures of their own. Suddenly we were not sure how much longer we would be together.

On the 10th we had word that (Major) Brugh was returning to the 802d from the hospital, and that Fleetwood was being sent back to the states.

Also on the 10th the Army announced their demobilization plan. Each individual was given points for type and length of service, awards, etc. My point count amounted to 66 points, and the first group of officers to be eligible needed 85. I was beginning to comprehend how long it might take for me to get home. At this time the war was still on in the Pacific Theater, and there were not many of us who wanted to be sent there. In addition, relations with the Russians seemed strained, not out and out trouble, but it was disquieting.

On the next page are the statistics of our time in Europe. □

The European war was over for the 802d. In the next few days Sgt Gwin put together certain statistics of our time in Europe from mid-July 1944 to May 8, 1945.

Number of Positions Occupied -

France (Lorraine)	39
Luxembourg	3
Belgium	6
France (other)	9
Germany	21
Total	78

Miles Traveled by Motor Convoy-

United Kingdom	452
France (Lorraine)	971
Luxembourg	174
Belgium	193
France (other)	390
Germany	930
Total	3,110

Ammunition Expenditure-

France (Lorraine)	37,534
Luxembourg	5,560
Belgium	5,263
France (other)	14,965
Germany	8,765
Total	72,087

Battle Casualties-	Wounded	Killed
France (Lorraine)	18	2
Luxembourg	4	
Belgium	1	
France (other)	3	3
Germany	5	1
Total	31	6

Non-Battle Casualties-	Illness	Injury	Death
Total	140	53	3

ARMY OF OCCUPATION - 1945

May 11, 1945

On the morning of May 11, Corporal Batton and I left for Paris in my jeep. Batton was the driver of the survey section truck, and was offered the job of driving me to Paris for a number of reasons. His army classification number was truck driver, he was in my section and we knew each other well and got along well, he was reliable, and he had always performed very well. His reward was to be a week on his own in Paris with no charge against "leave" time.

I was to attend the Education Program School for instruction in how the correspondence school was to be administered for the occupation troops. I was to assist Capt. Bob Miller in operating this program for the 802d. He had attended the school a couple of months previously.

We drove all day, planning to stop at U.S. Army installations along the way for meals and lodging. It did not work out that way, and the first night we stayed in a third rate hotel in Chateau Thierry, but it was fine. We drove all day on the 12th and arrived in Paris about 2300 hours. During the day we stopped briefly at the U.S. military cemetery at Belleau Wood (WW I), and Batton took my picture standing with the caretaker and his wife. This was my first military cemetery. It was beautifully maintained and very saddening. Asking directions of French civilians along the way I found out that my high school french was not very good. I pronounced the name "Rheims" every way I could imagine it could be pronounced to no avail.

Arriving in Paris after dark was a dramatic thing for us. It was the first city we had been in that had been lighted at night since leaving the States almost a year before. Corporal Batton dropped me off at the school and we arranged that he would meet me there at a specific time one week later. He had been in my section for atleast a year and a half, and it did not occur to me to wonder whether he would show up with my jeep in one piece.

Luck was with me in that a friend and engineering classmate from Cornell (Bob Gundlach) was also attending the school that same week. Classes were from 0830 to 1730 hours, and no work was required outside of class, so Bob and I saw the sights every night. The first night he insisted we start the evening with the opera, as something everybody who comes to Paris must do. The second night we went to a small legitimate theater stage play. After the opera and the stage play we took in the Paris nightlife, and it was going full blast.

We also looked up another Cornell friend of Bob's who was stationed in Paris. Both had been on the varsity crew at Cornell. The Army had taken over all of the very best hotels in Paris, and many high ranking officers lived in them. The friend, Nick Kruse, took us to one of the best one night for dinner. It was difficult to accept the difference in the living style between the troops stationed in Paris and those at the front.

The first or second night we were there, in the Club Lido, on the Champs-Elysees near the Arc de Triompe, we ran into another Cornell friend, Orm Hessler. He was with four or five friends, all American service men, and all just recently released from German POW camps after 28 or 29 months confinememt. They had been captured in North Africa near the end of 1942. They were momentarily quartered at Le Havre awaiting transportation to the States, and had come to Paris for a few days. We got together with this group several evenings during the week in a variety of nightspots. They were a lively bunch and we had quite a time. They all seemed to be in good health.

We visited a few of the obvious sights in and around Paris but mostly the evenings were spent celebrating the end of the war in Europe. It was mid-May and the spring weather was sensational and all-in-all it was a great week.

School ended at noon on the 19th and Cpl Batton was there as expected. On the way back, the first night we stayed with an outfit near Nancy, and the second night with an outfit guarding a German POW camp. I shared a room with a Captain in the AA (anti-aircraft) who had been overseas 2-1/2 years, and had a daughter at home he had never seen. He had been stationed in Iceland for over a year, and then had been stationed near Brussels for quite awhile. We spent an interesting evening comparing our quite different experiences in the army. His duty in Iceland had apparently been boredom with not the greatest living conditions. Brussels was quite the opposite. Neither assignment turned out to be dangerous.

MAY 21 - 31

Cpl. Batton and I arrived back at the battalion on the 21st. The battalion was now in Wallhausen, near Sangerhausen, about 30 miles west of Halle and on the southeast corner of the Harz Mountains.

Lt. Diz Dunbar had returned from the hospital (illness) and was acting S-4 and CO of Service battery, as Capt. O.B. Jones was in the hospital with ear trouble. Newly promoted Major Brugh was also back from the hospital (illness).

In the ten days I was away some of the enlisted men with high point totals had left the battalion on the long journey to the states and discharge. No officers had left.

The battalion was assigned to the U.S. Ninth Army, which had taken over from the First Army. The latter headquarters organization was being transferred for duty in the Pacific Theater for use against the Japanese. The battalion was on occupational and military government duty. I was the Battalion Military Government Officer (S-5) as well as the S-2 and Asst S-2. It was very easy duty with not much time or effort required, and we were living very comfortably.

It was not pleasant duty as we were not to permit the German civilians to migrate to the west, which many wished to do. We were in the area given over to the Russians by then President Franklin D. Roosevelt at Yalta. Many of the civilians were terrified of the soon to come Russians and were attempting to flee to the American or British zones. They were mostly elderly people with as much of their worldly possessions as they could load in old baby buggies, wheelbarrows, children's wagons, anything with wheels that they could pull or push. We did not permit them to pass our checkpoints on the roads, but as scared as they were we were sure they bypassed us at night in the fields and woods. Apparently without this restraint the American authorities feared a great many Germans would go to the American and British zones where they would have had to be housed, fed, and so forth, in what were already over-crowded and difficult conditions. Strangely, my sympathy was quickly going to our former enemy, the German civilians. They seemed to be victims of an evil government, little people who had lost everything and now were trying to save their lives. Some of the German troops had apparently been unbelievably savage in their treatment of Russian and Ukranian people in 1941/1942, and there were reports of similar and perhaps reprisal treatment of the German people by the conquering Russian soldiers. There were many reports of very bad treatment of civilians by the Russians. The other allies did not permit mistreatment of civilians by their soldiers, and soldiers who did were punished. Apparently

the French were not very strict about this, particularly with the Goons from North Africa, in their occupation zone in SW Germany, but I am certain that mistreatment of German civilians by American or British troops was limited to a few renegades.

We all were living in German homes, undamaged and vacated by the owners. The girls and women came in during the daytime to clean and look after their things. One put a sheet in my bedroll. We were not allowed to have any but official dealings with civilians, the so-called non-fraternization policy. We were not so stupid not to realize that some of the men and German frauleins had struck up friendships on the quiet, but we did not look for trouble as long as such friendships were out of view.

JUNE 1 - 30

We stayed in Wallhausen throughout June, doing our military government function with a minimum of effort, scheduling softball games between the batteries, and otherwise trying to keep people busy as pleasantly as possible. Almost everybody had a camera and plenty of film and there was a lot of picture taking of each other as we knew we would soon be split up and sent our ways.

On June 3rd my promotion to Captain came through. A number of friends, both officers and enlisted men, had been asking me "when?", so it was not a surprise. It made me feel great. Three years before, I had entered the army, as green and inexperienced as they came, not knowing what lay ahead, and with certain misgivings as to how I would handle myself in the totally new and unfamiliar world of the army. A year later I was an accepted member of a first class outfit, and then at the end to be promoted by Colonel Head to Captain was icing on the cake. There were other 1st Lts he could have chosen. The additional $50 a month in my base pay was also most welcome. I must admit there was a certain amount of luck involved. It was my good fortune that Major Fleetwood had appendicitis, and that Capt Brugh was moved up to his job, leaving the S-2 spot open. That day when I wrote to Jeanie I did not say anything about the promotion in the letter, but in the return address on the envelope I used my new rank. I later learned that she did not notice the change, but my father did and pointed it out to her.

Promotion or not, my main concern was the same as everyone else's, namely the number of points I had, how fast the demobilization process was moving, and when would they get down to my point level. It was not clear who would or would not be sent to the Pacific theater for the invasion of Japan. The U.S. First Army headquarters organization had already been sent to the states for 30 days leave prior to being sent on to the Pacific. Volunteers for the Pacific theater were solicited, sweetened by the promise of thirty days leave in the states first. Lieutenant Dick Taafel, Executive Officer of B Btry, was the only one I knew of who volunteered. In the end he chose well and got an early discharge rather than Pacific duty because of the abrupt end of the war in August. On the other hand, looking back on those months in Germany after the end of the war, while tedious and boring, were not a total loss to me.

During the active war there was not enough time to think of such things, but in Wallhausen I realized how well we all got along. We had been thrown together as only the army can throw people together, from all walks of life, from all over the country (although admittedly most of our people were from the southeast), from many different backgrounds, had been through a lot together, and we were all a long way from our loved ones and had been for a year. There were a few bad actors, but we had a friendly, pleasant, and congenial group.

On June 23rd I got four letters from Jeanie - March 24th and 25th, and June 7th and 13th.

Near the end of the month we were alerted for a move out of the Russian zone as they gradually but steadily moved in and took over. The Germans were despaired. In spite of the official non-fraternization policy some of the men had made attachments to German girls, and there were rumors that some of the girls wanted to be hidden in our trucks and taken to the American zone, and it did happen. The Germans were sad that we were going to leave, and rightfully so. Life in what became East Germany was significantly harsher than in West Germany for the next 45 years.

JULY 1 - 19

On the 2nd, several officers and men were transferred out to outfits scheduled for shipment to the states, on their way to discharge and home. One of them was my very good and special friend, Sgt Jack Fleishman. We said our goodbye and told each other "how good it was to serve with you" and we both knew that the other meant it. But we were not sad, quite the opposite. He was glad to be going and I was glad for him. Sgt Fleishman and I went through a lot in two and a half years and never really disagreed on anything. He was an excellent soldier, very conscientious, meticulous and precise in his work, and a truly enjoyable person to work and be with. We respected and liked each other, and made a very good team. He looked out for me on many occasions, particularly in combat, and always had room for me to bunk with the section if I got short-changed at headquarters. As closely as we worked together for two and a half years he never addressed me any way but Lt. (or Capt) Whiting and I never addressed him other than as Sgt. Fleishman. Nobody in my army career contributed as much to my success or made it as tolerable for me as Sgt. Fleishman.

Many others left on the 2nd and included Major Brugh, Capt Bob Hurd, Capt Bob Miller, and Lt Bruce Clark. Also Cpl Hinton, a friend from my three months in A Btry, who came over to say goodbye to friends in Headquarters Btry.

July 3rd the Russians moved in with a skeleton crew and took over our area, and we withdrew. It was my job, after the main body of the battalion left, to go around and pick up the 802d men at the roadblocks, and we were the last to leave. The Russians were a disquieting people. They permitted absolutely no mingling (after the first few days of the link-up) between their troops and ours. I had a brief "conversation" with their officer, difficult since neither of us spoke the other's language. Most of their soldiers that I saw were Mongolians. I was glad to get out of there and away from them.

On the 4th we arrived at our new destination, the town of Lorsch, south of Darmstadt and north of Mannheim, near the Rhine River. Oddly, Mannheim is directly across the river from Ludwigshafen, where we were with the U.S. Seventh Army in March, after the drive to the Rhine through the Palatinate.

The Battalion CO and Staff, and the battery CO's, were housed in two houses in town, and the remainder of the battalion were living in tents on the outskirts of town. The remainder of the battalion were not happy to be back in tents, and rightly so. The two houses in town were next door to each other and owned by brothers. I shared a room with Lt Jack Dick (CO A Btry), and Capt Dave Canon (CO Hq Btry) was in the next room, and we shared a common small open balcony on the back of the house. The owners were evicted but came back during the day to cook for us and clean and generally look after their possessions. They were not happy to have us using their houses and were worried we might damage their furniture, or other possessions, but they

were not resentful. They were working people. The couple who owned the house I was in were young middle-aged, with a 15 or 16 year old daughter and a 9 year old son. The father's picture in WW I uniform and Iron Cross medal were on the table in the living room. The 15 or 16 year old daughter was very pretty, blond, young for her age, and spoke English quite well. The family name was Gartner.

On July 1st I got my first "fogey", a term used to note the fact that every three years of service all personnel got a 5% increase in their base pay. I had already been getting a 10% increase for overseas duty. There was not an additional increase for combat. With everything figured in, including an allowance for being married, my total pay as of July 1st was $320 per month. I had $25 of this paid to me for spending money and the rest was deposited directly in my bank account in the states for Jeanie's use as needed.

New officers joined the 802d, replacing ours who had left for home. They were the ones from units being sent home who did not have enough points. They were nice and we did our best to make them welcome, but there was nothing like your own outfit and I was glad to be with mine.

Officially, we were doing nothing, not even military government anymore. There was a minimum of training, plus inter-battery softball, leaves and passes, generally trying to avoid boredom, and keeping people out of trouble. Most of our people were very pleasant, responsible people, but we had a few who could be pretty bad actors, and they were both embarrassing and annoying. Most of us were just trying to get along, making the best of our situation, and waiting to go home. Our principle function was the maintenance of law and order just by our presence. The trouble I heard about was almost 100% caused by a few of our men getting into trouble, most of it totally uncalled for, and some of it vicious.

There was a small balcony outside the second floor bedroom that Jack Dick and I shared, extending over behind David Canon's room. At our end there was an apricot (aprikose) tree growing up alongside the house. The fruit was ripening and we picked and ate the ones we could reach. Lorsch was a typical town. The houses were continuous, with little or no space between them, the fronts facing the street and only a few feet setback for sidewalks. The backs all opened on the inner part of the block, and from our balcony we looked at all of the neat and tidy backyards and vegetable gardens forming the inner part of the block.

We became very friendly with our German families, the Gartners. We were friendly, and were as easy as we could be on their furniture and possessions, and they in turn were friendly to us. The Germans by nature were respecters of law and order and authority, and we were representatives of that. We were glad the war was over and they were glad the war was over, and there was much incentive on both sides to be friends. An easy, friendly relationship developed after a few days, enjoyed by the Gartners and those of us staying in their houses. Sixteen year old Rose Marie acted as our interpreter as well as entering in on her own. Shortly after arriving I got an ETO (or Eisenhower) jacket and it needed a little tailoring to make it fit just right. Momma (as Mrs Gartner wanted to be called) did some very expert work on it at her insistence. She also did our laundry and generally looked after us. Many evenings we sat around the kitchen table with them and talked for hours. They were as curious about Americans and the USA as we were about them and Germany. We had ample supplies of soap, candy, cigarettes, and many other things, in extremely short supply or non-existent in Germany for several years, which we shared with them in return for their many kindnesses to us. "Momma" teased me about being too thin, and too young to be married and a father. One day I was wrapping some film I had appropriated to send

home (where film was scarce). Momma and Rose Marie saw what I was doing and insisted on putting in something "for your little girl", and gave me one of Rose Marie's bracelets from her baby days. It was a strange but pleasant relationship, forced to a large degree by circumstances, but none-the-less enjoyed by both sides. We did not talk much heavy politics, but we did discuss it somewhat.

> *About ten or twelve years later, around 1955 or 1957, Rose Marie and her husband came to the US and Atlanta, GA, on business, and called (former Capt) Karl Gemes at his home from their motel room, and they had a friendly visit at the motel.*

One of the ways some of us spent part of our time was flying with Lt Robertson in his Piper Cub plane. He still had it and all of the gasoline he wanted and was always looking for someone to go up with him. I flew with him many times. He was a good pilot and careful and I never felt any concern for my safety. While we were still in the Halle area I had flown over Leipzig with him to observe the bombing damage to that city, and it was almost total. In the Lorsch area we flew over Darmstadt and Mannheim and again the damage was total. We also flew over other places, always on a pretty summer day, and it was very enjoyable. The small towns and even cities like Lorsch were very little damaged. They were too small to bomb and the ground war went through them so fast there had been virtually no shelling in most of them.

Major Sparks with 85 points was transferred out to an outfit on its way home. In mid-July, two months after VE Day, they had only gotten down to 85 points for officers. I had 76 points and was discouraged.

On July 19th we moved from Lorsch to Crumstadt, about 12 miles to the north. We were not enthused about leaving our German family. The main body of the battalion living in tents were glad to leave. It had been very interesting to me to live there and talk with them as much as we did. They asked us to come back and visit.

July 19 - August 31

On the 19th we moved to Crumstadt, about 5 miles southwest of Darmstadt, a mile or so east of the Rhine River. Now the whole battalion was indoors, a much better and more appropriate setup. Headquarters Battery was in Crumstadt and the other batteries in nearby towns. Here I shared an apartment with Capt Dave Canon and Capt Evans, one of our new arrivals.

On the 26th we moved to Gernsheim, about 5 miles to the southwest and right on the Rhine. Colonel Head took over a small "villa" for his CP and quarters, and the Hq Officers' Mess. The rest of us lived in nearby private homes. I lived in a house about 1/2 mile away, which I shared with Lt Denton, another of our new arrivals. Each of us had our own room on the second floor. Denton was a very nice guy, clean-cut, young, from north Jersey, a bachelor, and we got along well. The house was owned by the wife or widow of a dentist. Her husband was in the German Army on the Russian front. She had not heard from him for a very long time but had not given up hope. She was about 45 years old (seemed old to me at the time) and had moved out of her house when we came in. She came in every day to clean, make our beds, and look after her home and possessions. She had not removed any of her furniture or house possessions, and Denton and I were very careful not to damage anything. It was easy to feel sorry for her, her life caught up in a mess she had little control over. We were friendly with her but not any way near as warmly as with the Gartners in Lorsch.

The Battalion Headquarters Officers Mess was sensational. There were five women who prepared and served the meals. The 802d provided the army ration supplies and the Germans supplemented it with local fresh eggs, milk, vegetables, and so forth. The cooking and the meals were excellent. We were in a potato growing area, and at each lunch and dinner, along with all of the other food, we were served potatoes prepared three ways. We ate very well.

On the July 24th, Jack Dick (CO A Btry), Homer Ball (Chief Warrant Officer and chief personnel records keeper of the Bn), and I drove down to Lorsch in the evening and had a nice long visit with the Gartners.

The speculation at that time was that guys like me with 76 points would go home about the end of the year. Not an encouraging thought. In the meantime, one of the places to go on leave was the French Riviera. Two or three officers usually went at a time. Jack Dick and I decided we would go together when our turn came, probably in August.

On the 29th, Homer Ball and I went to Heidelberg to see the sights, castle, and all. It was about 30 miles away, and we made a day of it, starting back after supper. (The only evident war damage in Heidelberg was the blown bridges over the Neckar River). On the way back we stopped in Lorsch to see our German friends again. They filled us up with pie, cake, fruit, and so forth, and we had a nice visit.

On August 1st a group of us went to Heidelberg to see Jack Benny's USO show. It was good, but Martha Tilton (popular vocalist of the late 30's and 40's) was the big hit.

I continued to do a lot of flying with Lt Robertson. He was very careful as well as very skillful, but liked to appear to be doing crazy things. At times he liked to fly very low over fields, rising to clear telephone lines or trees at the end of the field. But generally we just flew around, above the autobahn or damaged cities. It was a pleasant way to pass the time.

On August 7th we heard about the atom bomb dropped on Hiroshima and felt good that this would shorten the war. And then Russia declared war on Japan. On the 10th the BBC announced that Japan had offered to surrender and we knew that the war was over. None of us expected to be sent to the Pacific, but as long as one was in the army anything could happen.

On August 12th, Jack Dick, Karl Gemes, and I went to Lorsch for another visit with the Gartners. They were upset because some other American officers were about to move into their homes. None-the-less we had another nice evening.

On August 18th, Jack Dick, Doc Danish (Bn Surgeon), and I left for the Riviera, with a truck load of enlisted men. It was a 2 1/2 day drive, generally down the Rhone River valley. We stayed at army installations at Dijon and Marseille over night along the way. The city of Cannes had been taken over by the U.S. as a leave area for officers and the larger city of Nice similarly for enlisted men. We were in Cannes for seven days, all three of us in the Carlton Hotel right on the beach. Jack and I were in a double and Doc was in a single. The weather was perfect, and we spent our days on the beach and sightseeing, and our evenings partying. The Air Force had taken over the Hotel Miramar next door and had a very good Air Force band playing all of the popular music. The band, dance floor, and tables were outdoors on the beach side of the hotel. About mid-week I ran into my old friend from high school, (Capt) Frank Brandon, at that time a dentist and with the 45th Infantry Division since early 1943, through Sicily, Italy, the southern France invasion, and

finally with the Seventh US Army in Alsace and beyond. Also, Colonel Head showed up, having flown down, and we visited a little. He flew back about the time we left and of course got there ahead of us. All in all it was interesting and we had a good time, but the only thing all of us really wanted was to go home. We elected to drive back over a different route, going through Milan, Italy, the Italian Lakes region (Lake Garda), the Brenner Pass, Innsbrucke, Austria, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany, and on up to Gernsheim. We stopped at an army installation of the Fifth US Army in Italy the first night. It was a much more interesting and scenic drive than going down. Among other sights, the road along the west side of Lake Garda went through numerous tunnels, all equipped as machine shops beside the road to produce war materiel for the Germans. And of course we went right through some of the most scenic Alps and up through beautiful southern Germany. I took many snapshots and fortunately they all came out and the PX did not lose them.

We arrived back at the battalion just before supper on the 31st, and Doc and I told the others at Hq mess what a great time we had had. Immediately after supper Colonel Head called me into a private room and said he was sorry to be the one who had to tell me, but that my brother had been killed. He then gave me the telegram from home and left me alone. After 15 minutes or so I left and went to my quarters, trying to sort out my thoughts and grief, and read the mail that had arrived while I was away. It was a very sad and hard evening for me. I wrote my mother and father, and then Jeanie. I was humbled by the fact that I had worried much about myself and not at all about my brother, or for that matter anyone at home. Jack had gone into the draft and into the Air Force in the summer of 1941. After basic training he had unsuccessfully attended pilot training school, bombardier school, and navigator school. He was then a 1st Lt and was a non-flying officer, going to a succession of non-flying schools and assignments. He was an administrative officer in the Air Force and had never been sent overseas. I did not consider him at risk. Much later I learned that he and a friend had gone up in a rented two-seater plane that crashed on take-off, and both were killed. He was killed on August 12th, after the atomic bombs had been dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and just before the Japanese surrendered. At that time I am sure my parents had begun to relax about their two sons in the service. It turned out that the telegram arrived in the morning just before my group was to leave for the Riviera, and Colonel Head decided there was nothing I could do, no way I could get home, so he chose to withhold the news and let me go. And, of course, he knew about it when I saw him in Cannes. He did what he thought was best for me. It was sad to learn later that my parents, my mother especially, thought the Army would fly me home immediately. Unfortunately, she believed the nonsense the government put in the newspapers during the war for civilian consumption, such as flying soldiers home when tragedy struck a family. That summer Jeanie (and Bethie) had been staying with my parents thinking I would be home soon, but had just gone up to Ithaca, NY, to visit her grandmother, of whom she was especially fond. She returned immediately at my mother's phone call, and then she and my Aunt Josephine (my mother's next younger sister) took over and handled the arrangements, phone calls, identified the body, and other things that had to be done. Jeanie and especially Bethie were a great comfort to my mother and father in the ensuing weeks and months. It was at least a month after my brother's death that my letter reached them. The death of my brother was the hardest tragedy suffered by my parents.

September 1 - October 4, 1945

By September 1st all of the enlisted men in the 802d with 60 or more points had been transferred to other outfits scheduled to go home. Lt. Wood and Capt Canon had also left. At that point, out of the original 500 people in the battalion, of which I knew many, there were only a handful left that I knew.

HEADQUARTERS XXIII CORPS
APO 103, U.S. ARMY

GENERAL ORDERS)
:
NUMBER 67)

14 September 1945.

BRONZE STAR MEDAL

By direction of the President, under the provisions of AR 600-45, 22 September 1943, as amended, the Bronze Star Medal is awarded for meritorious service and heroic achievement in connection with military operations during the respective periods indicated, to:

*** *** ***

Captain William B. Whiting, 0464682, Field Artillery, while serving with the Army of the United States, distinguished himself by meritorious service in connection with military operations, not involving participation in aerial flight, against an enemy of the United States during the period 15 August 1944 to 30 April 1945. Captain Whiting performed his duties as Battalion Survey Officer in an outstanding manner during these eight months of combat. His surveys were always completed in a minimum of time, and the accuracy and thoroughness of his work contributed greatly to the ability of his Battalion to deliver fast, and accurate artillery fire. Captain Whiting maintained a high state of morale among the men of his section by his constant attention to their needs. The material and equipment under his control was constantly maintained in a superior manner. The leadership, tactical and technical knowledge, loyalty and devotion to duty displayed by Captain Whiting reflect great credit upon himself and is in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service.

Entered military service from ~~Missouri~~. PENNA.

*** *** ***

BY COMMAND OF MAJOR GENERAL PARKER:

R. VAN BRUNT
Brigadier General, GSC
Chief of Staff

OFFICIAL:

K.E. THIEBAUD
Colonel, AGD
Adjutant General

The dentist's wife (or widow) was very nice to Lt Denton and me. One night I got home after visiting the Gartners in Lorsch, where I had been given much food, and found a piece of cake on the table beside my bed. I'd had more than enough to eat, so I left it untouched, planning to eat it the next day. The next morning while I was at the officers mess for breakfast and she came in to clean, make the beds, and so forth, she found it. When I came back she was very put out with me for not eating it. However, she forgave me after I explained. She kept us well supplied with fresh fruit, apples, peaches, and other local delicacies, as well as cakes, cookies, and the like. We reciprocated as we did in Lorsch by giving generously to her the things they did not have (and hadn't for a long time) - soap, cigarettes, candy, chewing gum, - that we had in abundance through the PX allotment. Bar soap and cigarettes were the big items in their black market, and those she did not use herself she bartered to others for things she wanted. In another way, the sink in the bathroom was draining slowly and she asked us to see if we could fix it. So Denton and I got a wrench and removed the plug at the bottom of the trap and cleaned it out for her. It was our bathroom at the moment so it also helped us, but she was very pleased with us for clearing the drain. She was very friendly, but in a reserved way, and we felt sorry for her personal situation with her husband at best a prisoner of the Russians.

On September 8th I was in charge of a detail with Lt Fain and 40 enlisted men to go to Rheims to pick up trucks. The trucks had been left by homeward bound troops and were to be brought back to Germany. It was a 290 mile trip each way, and we were gone five days, living in tents. I saw several ex-802d people and had a chance to talk with them. We got back on the 13th with 29 trucks and only one lost. We figured he had made a wrong turn or had a girl friend somewhere.

On September 19th I was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for my survey work during combat. It was nothing to get excited about as most officers seemed to be getting them, or rather had already gotten them. Its main advantage was that it added five points to ones point score. I then had 89 points, four above the 85 needed for an officer to be discharged. The best information was I could expect to be transferred to an outfit going home in early November, and might reach home by Christmas.

I also played golf occasionally with other officers, Lt Phil Lull for one, at a course near Frankfurt. None of us were any good, but it was an enjoyable way to fill our days. Duty as such was extremely light, and there was no "make work" activity, so there was considerable free time. The main source of irritation was some of the GI's getting into trouble. There were a few bad actors who took out their boredom or just plain meanness in drunkeness, disorderly behaviour, property destruction, fights, beatings, and rapes. Of course, that was not new, it had been with us forever, not so much with our own men in the original 802d, but in the army in general. While the media image of the GI was the "cleancut boy next door", in actuality there were quite a few who might have been considered dregs of society. The 802d got rid of the worst of its troublemakers before leaving the states. There was no excuse for it. Duty was light, living conditions comfortable, girls plentiful. They were a considerable embarrassment to the rest of us. When caught they were court-martialed and dealt with severely. Rape was especially difficult to deal with, as it generally boiled down to the word of a German woman against an American soldier. I sat on one rape court-martial case, and was certain the German woman was telling the truth and the GI was guilty, but there was no way it could be proven. My other court-martial case involved a drunken GI breaking into a German home and beating almost to death a 70 year old German man. We had sufficient evidence on him. It was very embarrassing that we had so many undesirables in our army. Fortunately, the vast majority of the army were normal, friendly, likeable people. In one US Army at that time, the number of court-martials became an embarrassment, since the information

was public, so the Commanding General published a general order all but forbidding court-martials and directing that disciplinary action be taken at the unit level, which action was not public information. Thereafter his army appeared remarkably well-behaved.

Fortunately, some of my longtime officer friends in the battalion were still there - Jack Dick (CO A Btry), Virgil Blumhorst (CO B Btry), Karl Gemes (CO C Btry), John Trapp, Jim Teehan, Doc Danish, and others. Dick, Trapp, and I joined the 802d about the same time in January 1943. Blumhorst and Gemes were there ahead of us, and Teehan and Danish came in late 1943.

On September 24th Colonel Head received notification that eight of his officers, including me, would be transferred sometime in October to an outfit going home, which was the best news I had had in a long time. A week later we learned that we would be transferred to the 36th Infantry Division in approximately one week.

On October 4th the orders finally came transferring me (and others) on the 5th to the 36th Division, located in the Stuttgart - Ulm area of southern Germany, not far from where we were. The other officers going, of the old 802d, were Virgil Blumhorst, Karl Gemes, Harold Moss, Tony Moschetta, John Cox, and Doc Danish. The only original 802d officers who would remain were Colonel Head, Jack Dick, John Trapp, and Diz Dunbar. That night all of the battalion officers had dinner at the Headquarters Officers Mess, a very nice gesture by Colonel Head, more or less of a banquet with an excellent dinner and lots of champagne. The German cooks outdid themselves, and a very enjoyable time it was. I had been with the 802d for 33 months, and Karl and Virgil somewhat longer than that. It was very nice, and I was sure that Colonel Head was sorry to see us leave. We had been through a lot together.

The next morning a lot of them came to the CP to say goodbye and see us off.

In addition to the officers mentioned above a large group of enlisted men went to the 36th Infantry Division, including among others my friend Corporal Dillon. □

OFFICERS
132D FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION

STAFF

Bn Comdr	Major James W. Hunt, 521 East Church, Marion, Ohio
Exec	Major Burt R. Shurly Jr., 1027 Seminole Ave., Detroit, Mich.
Adj	Major Raymond H. Murphy, 1379 Farmington Ave., W. Hartford, Conn.
S-3	Major Georgie P. McCord, 63th South 10th, Beech Grove, Ind.
Ass't S-3	Major Eddy J. Rogers 607 S. Missouri Ave., Belleville, Ill.
Ass't S-3	Capt. Max W. Foster, P.O. Box 375, South Dayton Fla.
S-2	Capt Thomas E. Selby, 210½ E. Danaher St., Ludington, Mich.
Ass't S-2	1st Lt. Wm. E. Taylor, 1051 McLean St., St. Paul, Minn.
Ln O #1	Capt Joseph A. Larkin, 62 Ludlow St., Yonkers, N. Y.
Ln O #2	Capt Wm. B. Whiting, Ithan, Pa.
Ln O #3	Capt Edward B. Andrews Jr. Hotel Halpin, 54th & Broadway New York
Pers Off	2d Lt. Samuel Gambitta, 410 Scenendoa St., Oneida, N. Y.
Bn Surg	Capt Leonard B. Ginsberg, 1446 Prospect Ave., New York, N. Y.
S-4	Capt William H. Peterson Jr., High Acre, Colonia, N. J.
SSO	1st Lt. Phillip L. Lull, 5141 Stenton Ave., Philadelphia, Pa.
Chaplain	Capt Nicholas DeVries, Grand Rapids, Mich. 859 Henry Ave., S.E.
Mil Govt	WOJG Thomas A. Clark Jr., Mosquito Valley, Williamsport, Pa.

Hq Btry	BC	Capt Richard A. Musson, Woodcliff Ave., Woodcliff Lake, N.J.
	Asst Comd	1st Lt. Lennie M. Sweat, Cedar, Kansas.
	Mtr Off	1st Lt. Howard M. Dryden, 19147 Carman Ave., Detroit, Mich.
		1st Lt. Herbert R. Roberts, 10 Sibley Place, Rochester, N. Y.
		1st Lt. Gordon J. Mayer, Box 1166, Gladewater, Tex.
A Btry	BC	Capt Richard F. Taylor, 169 Meigs St., Rochester N. Y.
	Exec	1st Lt. John W. Smith, 821 N. Main, Bonham, Tex.
	Rcn Off	1st Lt. James F. Tatham, 125 Lincoln St., Springfield, Mass.
	Mtr Off	1st Lt. Harold Moss, 232 Howes St., Brooklyn, N. Y.
		1st Lt. William H. Isom, 5305 Bowser, Dallas, Tex.
B Btry	BC	Capt Earl E. Gomes, 981 Adair Ave., N. E. Atlanta, Ga.
	Exec	1st Lt. Thomas F. Walsh, Jr., 8241 Eberhart Ave., Chicago, Ill.
	Rcn Off	1st Lt. Antonio C. Mochetta, 351 E. 155th St., New York, N. Y.
	Mtr Off	1st Lt. Peter R. Andre, 415 Dava St., San Luis Obispo, Cal.
		1st Lt. Ferdinand I. Isberg, 1314 NE 57th, Portland, Ore.
C Btry	BC	Capt Virgil O. Blumhorst, Syracuse, Neb.
	Exec	1st. Lt. John S. Cox, 516 W. 61st St., Jacksonville, Fla.
	Rcn Off	1st Lt. Adair H. Hall, 1828 San Luis, Clearwater, Cal.
	Mtr Off	2d Lt. David B. Hatch, 14 Arnold St., Saylesville, Rhode Island.
Sv Btry	BC	Capt James D. Clarke Jr., 826 S. Oregon, Tampa, Fla.
	Tn Comdr	1st Lt. Lester M. Gochan, 654 Crofton St., Grand Rapids, Mich.
	Bn Mtr O	1st Lt. George E. Roose, 8723 White Ave., Brentwood, Mo.
	Btry Mtr O	1st Lt. Charles I. Dupont, 811 La Bauve Ave., Plaquemine, La.
	Asst S-4	CWO Ray B. Graham, Route 2, Lentwood, La.

FORMER 802d FA BN OFFICERS

COMING HOME - 1945

October 5 - November 19, 1945

On arrival at the 36th Division we were all assigned to the 132 FA Bn and quartered in a very delightful town named Schwabisch-Gmund, about 25 miles east of Stuttgart. Battery officers were assigned to batteries and I was assigned to the Bn Staff. Duty was light, especially for those of us on the staff as we had none of the administrative duties of the battery officers. We were initially told that our anticipated sailing date was about three weeks away, but this was changed as that date approached to two weeks later. Perhaps it was better for us to take the wait at two and three week stretches.

We were all officers (on the staff) from many other outfits, assembled on a point basis. Everyone was very friendly, happy to see the light at the end of the tunnel, and we got along very well. Two in particular that I got especially well acquainted with was a Jewish doctor from New York City, Doc Ginsberg, and Bill Peterson, a former refractories or zinc plant manager from New Jersey. Peterson knew of Alan Wood Steel Company, where my father was then President and Chairman of the Board. Peterson had been in a job that would have absolutely kept him out of the military as being indispensable to the war effort. Unfortunately for him he had a Reserve Commission from college, and when the emergency came he was given something like 24 or 48 hours to wind up his business and personal affairs and report for duty.

There was a movie we went to in the evening, and on the 20th we took over a small nearby tavern, bought beer, coke, etc, hired a couple of German girls as waitresses, and had our own officers club to congregate in in the evenings. From then on we spent every evening there and more or less enjoyed ourselves. The waiting was tiresome - we really had no idea when we would leave - and everyday there was a new round of "latest news". Most of us had been overseas about a year and a half and were very anxious to get home and out of the army. To be in the army in wartime is to be totally out of control of your own life and destiny, and we were all really civilians at heart.

We were in a particularly beautiful part of Germany and did a certain amount of sightseeing in the surrounding countryside. One day several of us from the 802d took a jeep ride back to Gernsheim and visited with those still there. Things were not at all unpleasant, but to a bunch of guys anxious to get home the waiting was tedious and boring.

At the end of October we were informed of another delay to the end of November. One of the popular songs that fall was "I'll Be Home for Christmas", and we hoped we would make it. Many higher point enlisted men were transferred to other outfits having earlier sailing dates.

One of the interesting things that was going on was the "Black Market". Americans had much that the German civilians were anxious to buy, and they seemed to have plenty of money. The Russian soldiers had lots of money and would buy anything they couldn't steal. Apparently the Russian soldiers were not paid during the war and were given their pay after VE Day. There were no Russians in our area, but there was a certain amount of travel through their zone to Berlin, Leipzig, and other places, and a small amount of contact occurred. The US Government printed special German money for the US troops in marks. This was the money we had been using since entering Germany. After our government printed all of the money they anticipated needing they gave the plates to the Russians to print money for their soldiers. The Russian money was identical

to ours except for a small dash (-) before the serial numbers. Our government honored both currencies, and there was a lot of Russian money circulating in our area. The typical Russian soldier had more money than he knew what to do with, or could even keep on his person, and there was very little in their zone to buy. They offered hundreds of dollars for $15 PX watches, as an example. Trench coats and other warm clothing seem to have no limit as to how high they would go. The US troops anywhere near the Russians were having a field day, having cheap watches sent to them from the states, selling them and sending the money home. In our case, the Germans were wild for American cigarettes. I had stopped smoking early in the year, but I still got a ration of one carton a week, at 50 cents each. I had been giving them to a friend in the 802d, Lt Harold Moss (Asst Supply Officer), thinking he was smoking them. I found out he was selling them and stopped giving them to him and started to accumulate them. When I got up to eight cartons one of the German girls that cleaned our quarters took them to her civilian friends and brought me back $240, a clear profit of $236. Basically I did not like that kind of dealing and from then on gave them to people, the Germans, a pack or two at a time, as I had been doing with candy bars and bar soap (another big favorite). Children got almost all of the candy and chewing gum. Some Americans were selling things they had looted from German homes. It got so bad that the Army put a limit on the amount of money each person could send home to 10% above their pay rate.

Finally, on November 18th we got word to be ready to move on Tuesday the 20th for Marseille staging area.

<u>November 20 - December 4, 1945</u>
On November 20th we left (in convoy) for Marseille, staying overnight at US Army Transient Camps at Metz, France, on the 20th, Dijon, France, on the 21st, and St. Rambert on the 22nd.

We arrived at the embarkation camp about 10 miles outside of Marseille on November 23rd, my 25th birthday. We were told we would sail between November 28th and December 7th.

The camp had a capacity for 70,000 troops, more than four divisions, so it was fairly large. There seemed to be an almost endless amount of paperwork to be done, and we all had to get one more round of shots (inoculations). We all had our individual medical records with us, showing among other things what shots we had had and when since entering the service. They were not interested in these records and were intent on giving us one more round. That was the first time I had gone down a line and received simultaneous shots in both arms.

We were beginning to fear that we would not be home for Christmas. Most troop ships were not fast ocean liners that made the trip in six or seven days. Most were converted "Victory" ships or something similar that took twice that long. But we were excited and optimistic to be that far along toward home.

On December 1st we were informed that our battalion and two others would sail on December 4th on the "Tusculum Victory" for Hampton Roads, Virginia. It was expected that we would arrive in the states on December 14th or 15th.

One last activity was converting all of our European money to American money. For our battalion I assisted a Major in doing this, a total in our case of about $50,000.

On December 4th, Jeanie's and my 3rd wedding anniversary, we boarded the "Tusculum Victory".

December 4 - 24, 1945

We sailed from Marseille late on the 4th. The next day was beautiful as we sailed westward toward Gibraltar. The Mediterranean was calm, and we watched numerous porpoises as they swam, leaping, for miles alongside the ship. It was hard to realize we were really going home. It was almost a year and a half since we had sailed from New York.

We were on a "Victory" ship, built for cargo and converted to troop carrying. The officers were housed four to a cabin, on deck, in bunk arrangements similar to our trip over. The enlisted men were stacked below decks, on narrow canvas bunks, arranged three high with about three feet between them, and narrow walkways between tiers. There was space for hundreds in large areas, in my opinion unbelievably sub-minimal conditions, but not untypical of the way enlisted men were treated in the army.

A couple of days beyond Gibraltar we began to get violent side effects of the worst storm in the North Atlantic in many years. The worst of the storm was several hundred miles north of us, which meant we were bucking headwinds. To me the waves seemed tremendous. I did not know that a ship the size of ours would pitch as much as it did. It seemed to me that the bow went up and down through a very steep angle. I also did not know that steel ships creaked and groaned under stress, but that one surely did. We only had two meals a day, and they were not good. Many people could not eat at all, and others could not keep anything down if they did eat. The storm lasted for days, everybody was sick, vomiting, diarrhea, or commonly both. Everyone stayed fully dressed and in bed except when being ill. My cabin was fortunately almost amidships and suffered the least motion, and being on my bunk helped. Between the violent waves and headwinds we made very little headway for six or seven days. We arrived at Hampton Roads on December 21st, six days late.

After certain procedures at the port, and we were put on various trains to our respective separation centers, mine being Indiantown Gap Military Reservation, east of Harrisburg, PA, and about 75 miles north and west of my parents home in Ithan, PA. Jeanie and Bethie were waiting for me there.

Final separation procedures at Indiantown Gap, and I was once again a civilian, with 3 1/2 months of accrued leave, about mid-afternoon on December 24th. I was met by Jeanie, my father, and my old friend, Frank Brandon. We arrived home about 7:00 PM on Christmas Eve. My good and bad 3-1/2 years in the army were over. □

Army of the United States

SEPARATION QUALIFICATION RECORD

SAVE THIS FORM. IT WILL NOT BE REPLACED IF LOST

This record of job assignments and special training received in the Army is furnished to the soldier when he leaves the service. In its preparation, information is taken from available Army records and supplemented by personal interview. The information about civilian education and work experience is based on the individual's own statements. The veteran may present this document to former employers, prospective employers, representatives of schools or colleges, or use it in any other way that may prove beneficial to him.

1. LAST NAME—FIRST NAME—MIDDLE INITIAL		
WHITING WILLIAM B		
2. ARMY SERIAL No.	3. GRADE	4. SOCIAL SECURITY No.
0 464 682	CAPTAIN	
5. PERMANENT MAILING ADDRESS (*Street, City, County, State*) ITHAN DELAWARE COUNTY PENNSYLVANIA		
6. DATE OF ENTRY INTO ACTIVE SERVICE	7. DATE OF SEPARATION	8. DATE OF BIRTH
30 June 1942	4 March 1946	23 Nov 1920
9. PLACE OF SEPARATION INDIANTOWN GAP MILITARY RESERVATION PENNSYLVANIA		

MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL ASSIGNMENTS

10 MONTHS	11. GRADE	12. MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY
26	IST LT	SURVEY AND RECONNAISSANCE OFFICER 1183
8	CAPT	INTELLIGENCE STAFF OFFICER 9301

SUMMARY OF MILITARY OCCUPATIONS

13. TITLE—DESCRIPTION—RELATED CIVILIAN OCCUPATION

SURVEY AND RECONNAISSANCE OFFICER

Coordinated and established communication and observation within a field artillery Battalion Directed surveys to orient gun position and to locate points in target area Directed preparation of firing charts and computed firing data served in the capacity in France and Germany as well as in the United States

INTELLIGENCE STAFF OFFICER

Collected evaluated and disseminated all enemy information obtained from various sources Kept own unit informed Battalion on enemy location and strength.

This form supersedes WD AGO Form 100, 15 July 1944, which will not be used.

MILITARY EDUCATION

14. NAME OR TYPE OF SCHOOL—COURSE OR CURRICULUM—DURATION—DESCRIPTION

FORT SILL OKLAHOMA FIELD ARTILLERY BATTERY OFFICERS SCHOOL 13 WEEKS COMPLETED

CIVILIAN EDUCATION

15. HIGHEST GRADE COMPLETED	16. DEGREES OR DIPLOMAS	17. YEAR LEFT SCHOOL
4 YRS COLLEGE	BS IN AEME	1942

18. NAME AND ADDRESS OF LAST SCHOOL ATTENDED

CORNELL UNIVERSITY ITHACA NEW YORK

19. MAJOR COURSES OF STUDY

ENGINEERING

OTHER TRAINING OR SCHOOLING

20. COURSE—NAME AND ADDRESS OF SCHOOL—DATE	21. DURATION

CIVILIAN OCCUPATIONS

22. TITLE—NAME AND ADDRESS OF EMPLOYER—INCLUSIVE DATES—DESCRIPTION

STUDENT ENTERED ARMY DIRECTLY UPON GRADUATION FROM COLLEGE

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

23. REMARKS

WORLD WAR II VICTORY MEDAL
AMERICAN CAMPAIGN MEDAL
EUROPEAN AFRICAN MIDDLE EASTERN WITH 4 BATTLESTARS
DISTINGUISHED UNIT BADGE
BRONZE STAR MEDAL

24. SIGNATURE OF PERSON BEING SEPARATED	25. SIGNATURE OF SEPARATION CLASSIFICATION OFFICER	26. NAME OF OFFICER (*Typed or Stamped*)
William B. Whiting	R. A. Drescher	R A DRESCHER CAPTAIN AIR CORPS

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE—O-657477

POSTSCRIPT

There are a number of observations and comments I want to add to the chronicle of my army days. These are not important but I feel should be said to round out my account.

It is not an exaggeration to say that 99% of the people in the army did not want to be there and did not enjoy it, and, in fact, hated every minute of it. Army life was dull, hard, and above all demeaning in many ways to the individual. Army training camps were almost always located in areas where the land was not fit for anything else, and many miles from any city. Most were in the southern states where the summer weather was somewhat warmer and more humid than many of us were accustomed to. The nearby towns were so small that living quarters for the wives and families of the married soldiers were very limited in number and hence so expensive that few enlisted men could afford to have their wives and families with them. Most enlisted men were paid $50-$100 per month, about a quarter of what they would earn in a civilian job at home. If there ever was an example of the unfairness of life it is the comparison between the life of a draftee and the civilian war worker. I will not enumerate the differences but merely say that in every category the civilians had it many times better than the drafted soldier. In the army, things were better for the officers than the enlisted men, of course. When I went in the army in the summer of 1942 as a 2nd Lt. my base pay was $125 per month plus living quarters and meals. After Jeanie and I were married my base pay was raised to $150 a month, and I received a food allowance for her of about $20 per month. As a graduate engineer I probably would have gotten a job in a defense industry for $300 a month, and our living conditions and expenses would have been much more favorable.

The other aspect of army life that gets little publicity is that the army owns you. Your life and well being are totally at the mercy of your commanding officer, his commanding officer, and so on up the chain. Any one of these people could order you (or your outfit) to do the most outlandish and ridiculous exercise, even dangerous, at his whim. You or your whole outfit could be restricted to base for no good reason. If a person wished to transfer to another line of duty or service his CO had the power and authority to throw the application in his trash file and it would go no further. There were a number of difficult aspects of army life for civilian soldiers to adapt to. Unfortunately, most of this was necessary. Discipline was all important, as commands had to be obeyed quickly and without question.

Training was dull, dull, dull. A battalion probably could be trained in six months, but if the schedule of the war did not require its use at that time, training continued, repetitively. I trained with the 802d for almost a year and a half, and they were an established, 80% trained outfit when I joined them. Much training was merely to keep everyone busy, much of it "make-work".

Another condition that does not get enough mention is that the war was fought and won by civilians soldiers. Virtually all of the famous generals and much, if not almost all, of the high rank were regular army. Almost all of the Majors, Captains, Lieutenants, Sergeants, Corporals, and Privates, were civilians in uniform. The U.S. Army in 1939 totalled about 300,000 men; in 1944 it totalled about 10,000,000. Of the original 300,000, many were separated out as not being physically fit for a wartime army, or were assigned to non-combat duties like Military Post Commanders or staff positions where they could not do much either good or bad. Thus only about 2.5% of the wartime army were "regular army", the rest being civilians in uniform. Of the 29 officers that went overseas with the 802d FA Bn only Colonel Head was regular army, West Point Class of 1932. Of the 450 enlisted men that went overseas there were about 10 or 15 that

were regular army. I think we were typical, but if anything we were high in regulars rather than low, as the 802d was split off from the 4th Infantry Division, a regular peacetime army division. Many cadres had been sent out to form new units, leaving fewer and fewer regulars each time.

In taking the optional two years of ROTC training in effect I volunteered for the service. One could argue that I would have been drafted after graduation anyhow, but not all people were, especially engineers. But I know I volunteered, that I would not have gotten a war industry job to avoid the draft. I felt I had to be in the war (if the US was to be in the war) to live comfortably with myself. But I hated it as much as anyone.

Many years after the war I came to realize that overall my army and war experiences were a positive time for me, and that I had been very fortunate in almost every way. I came out of college partially educated, but untrained and untried. I had led a very sheltered and privileged life, and was conscious of it. There was much to prove to myself. Three and a half years in the army gave me a measure of self-confidence as few other experiences could have, and it was a confidence I would draw on the rest of my life.

If such a thing is possible, I had a "good" and/or lucky war. I was fortunate first to be put into the field artillery branch in ROTC at Cornell. The field artillery was a combat arm. It was close to the infantry physically, but enough behind them to escape the extremely hazardous and uncomfortable life of the infantry. We were close enough to be at some risk and therefore "in combat" and doing our share.

The artillery was also good for me as there was the aspect of firing guns at targets miles away that appealed to my technical nature. And when I reported to the 802d Colonel Elliott made me survey officer on the spot, a position I had not thought about, but which turned out to be perfect for me. My luck continued in that I replaced a survey officer who had been totally inept at it, although a respected officer in all other ways. More luck appeared in the form of Sgt. Fleishman, Chief of Section of the survey section. It is difficult to imagine anyone who could have suited me better as my right hand man. Over the next three or four months I knew I had the best job in the battalion for me. I liked everything about it. Also, there is great satisfaction in taking over a bad situation and correcting it. The section I took over knew a fair amount about surveying but next to nothing about trigonometry. Two months later on our first battalion firing exercise after my arrival we had a perfect shoot. Sgt Fleishman proved to be an outstanding Survey Chief of Section and a very good friend for two and a half years. Fate had been very good to me.

Another area where I was most fortunate was being sent to Europe rather than to the south Pacific. And in Europe I was sent to France, not to Italy. In France good fortune continued in being assigned to the US Third Army, commanded by General George S. Patton. General Patton, in my opinion, was the most outstanding Army Commanding General of all of the Allied high command in World War II.

Luck stayed with the 802d and me. We were in as heavy fighting as most - Lorraine campaign, the Ardennes, the Colmar Pocket, and in Germany - but we suffered relatively few casualties compared to other 105 mm outfits. We almost always were attached to and supported good or outstanding divisions. And when the war ended we were in the heart of Germany, 60 or 70 miles from Berlin, not off in some unimportant area.

On the personal side, when I reported in to the army I was an unknown quantity to myself. I was somewhat aware of my strengths and weaknesses, but had lived all of my life and gone to school with people much like myself in the socio-economic sense. My two and three quarter years with the 802d were very rewarding in that I was well liked and respected by most of the other officers and many of the enlisted men. The latter were not easy to predict as there were those with a built-in dislike for and resentment of any and all officers. I seemed to get along well with those enlisted men with whom I had much contact. In the case of my survey section, our relationship was excellent. Of course, they were hand-picked by Sgt Fleishman, and he was very choosy. They treated me very well all of the time, but were especially kind and considerate overseas. I was always welcome if someone had a special treat or if they had a reasonably undamaged house to sleep in. There was no other officer in the battalion who knew much about surveying nor wanted to. I do not think any other officer wanted my job. Colonel Head and Colonel Elliott had had so much trouble with poor surveys for so long (and knew almost nothing about surveying themselves) that their relief at having that problem solved caused them to overlook some of my other deficiencies. I only served under Colonel Elliott for a few months, but was with Colonel Head for over two and three quarter years. Colonel Head and I always got along well though we were not close. He was kind to me, though not overly, and promoted me to Captain in May 1945, when he could have promoted almost any other 1st Lieutenant instead.

And most importantly, I was not wounded. □

HEADQUARTERS XII CORPS
Office of the Commanding General
APO 312, U. S. Army

16 October 1944

Brigadier General John M. Lentz
Commanding, XII Corps Artillery
APO 312, U. S. Army

Dear General Lentz:

The fighting of the last few weeks has punched home to us one point so obvious and so clean cut, that I want every soldier and every officer in the Corps to realize its full significance.

That point is this: The Germans, even the best and most experienced of them, are visibly frightened of us. They are frightened by the superior equipment, the more skillful tactics, and above all, by the magnificent courage and will to win shown by the troops of this corps.

I wish that more of us fully realized the really remarkable role that artillery has played in the war to date. In probably no branch of the ground forces has the skillful application of enormous power produced a more devastating effect upon the German army than in artillery, and I can assure you that the XII Corps Artillery is no exception. It has performed its missions consistently with distinction. All its members may well be proud of its record to date.

We are now between rounds of a fight to the knockout. The last round saw the Boche stagger back into his corner. While we are gathering our strength for the kill, he is hanging on the ropes. He cannot last another — he is bound to go down. I am confident when the next round comes up, that the troops of the XII Corps Artillery will show the same courage, the same skill, and the same driving determination to get this war won, that have won for them their successes to date.

I congratulate the XII Corps Artillery on its performance in the past — I wish it Godspeed and early victory.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ M. S. Eddy
/t/ M. S. EDDY,
Major General, U. S. Army
Commanding.

HEADQUARTERS
THIRD UNITED STATES ARMY
APO 403

GENERAL ORDERS

NUMBER 1

1 January 1945

TO THE OFFICERS AND MEN OT THE THIRD ARMY
AND

TO OUR COMRADES OF THE XIX TACTICAL AIR COMMAND

From the bloody corridor at Avranches, to Brest, thence across France to the Saar, over the Saar into Germany, and now on to Bastogne, your record has been one of continuous victory. Not only have you invariably defeated a cunning and ruthless enemy, but also you have overcome by your indomitable fortitude every aspect of terrain and weather. The speed and brilliancy of your achievements is unsurpassed in military history.

Recently I had the honor ofreceiving at the hands of the Twelfth Army Group Commander, Lieutenant General Omar N. Bradley, a second Oak leaf cluster to the DSN. This award was bestowed on me not for what I have done, but because of what you have achieved. From the bottom of my heart I thank you.

My New Year wish and sure conviction for you is that under the protection of Almighty God and the inspired leadership of our President and the High Command, you will continue your victorious course to the end that tyranny and vice shall be eliminated, our dead comrades avenged, and peace restored to a war-weary world.

In closing, I can find no fitter expression for my feelings than to apply to you the immortal words spoken by General Scott at Chapultepec when he said: "Brave soldiers, veterans, you have been bapitized in fire and blood and have come out steel."

s/ G.S. Patton, Jr.
T/ G.S. PATTON, JR.
Lieut. General, U. S. Army,
Commanding.

A TRUE COPY OF THE ORIGINAL:

HEADQUARTERS
XII CORPS ARTILLERY
APO 312

7 January 1945

Lt Col Nelson L. Head
Commanding Officer
802 FA Battalion
APO 403, US Army

Dear Col Head,

As one of the original and oldest units of the XII Corps Artillery, the transfer of your battalion was a real loss to us. The consistently reliable efficiency of your battalion was of great aid and assistance, permitting me to devote my undivided attention to other matters.

Your services contributed immeasurably to the successes of the Corps and I want you to know that I personally appreciate the untiring efforts and support you rendered throughout your attachment to the Corps.

The transfer of your unit is regretted. Please accept my sincere wishes for your success in the future.

Very truly yours,

JOHN M LENTZ
Brigadier General, US Army
Commanding

HEADQUARTERS XXI CORPS
Office of the Corps Commander

10 February 1945.

201.22

SUBJECT: Commandation.

TO : Commanding Officer, 802d Field Artillery Battalion, APO 403, US Army.

1. The operations of the XXI Corps in the Colmar area have been successfully completed. Colmar has been liberated and the enemy has been driven to the east of the Rhine.

2. The success of these operations has been due to the loyalty, the gallantry and the unselfish devotion to duty of the many thousands of officers, and enlisted men of the units that constitute the XXI Corps.

3. The 802d Field Artillery Battalion was particularly outstanding in these operations. It performed its assigned missions with great enthusiasm. It completed these missions successfully, constributing materially thereby to the great victory achieved by oub units.

4. I wish to commend you, the officers, and the enlisted men of this 802d Field Artillery Battalion for the superior manner in which they performed during these operations. Their actions were superb, and they reflect the finest traditions of the Armies of the United States.

s/ F. W. MILBURN,
t/ F. W. MILBURN,
Major General, U. S. Army,
Commanding.

Lieutenant General Jacob Devers of the United States Army wrote in a commendation:

> "Your swift advance was an inspration to the entire Allied Expeditionary Force and a striking tribute to the superior leadership of your officers and non-commissioned officers and the resolute courage of your troops. The doggedness and skill in which you pressed home your attack in eleven days overcoming seemingly insurmountable barriers is worthy of the highest praise."

In 1945, the 802nd F.A. Battalion, for their performance while attached to the 3rd Infantry Division during the Colmar action, received a Presidential Citation through the War Department. Perhaps due to t[redacted] ammendment, the Battalion was told of the citation but written notification was delayed. An exact copy---

EXTRACT COPY OF SECTION XIII, GENERAL ORDERS NO. 44, WAR DEPARTMENT, 6 June 1945, and SECTION VIII, GENERAL ORDERS NO. 21, WAR DEPARTMENT, 26 February 1946.

XIII—BATTLE HONORS.- *

"2. As authorized by Executive Order 9396 (sec. I, WD Bul. 22, 1943), superseding Executive Order 9075 (sec. III, WD Bul. 11, 1942), the following unit is cited by the War Department for outstanding performan of duty in action during the period indicated, under the provisions of section IV, WD Circular 333, 1943, inthe name of the President of the United States as public of deserved honor and distinction. The citation reads as follows:

The 3d Infantry Division with the following-attached units:
254th Infantry Regiment
99th Chemical Battalion
168th Chemical Smoke Generator Company
441st Antiaircraft Artillery Automatic Weapons Battalion
601st Tank Destroyer Battalion (SP)
756th Tank Battalion
IPW Team 183

fighting incessantly, from 22 January 1945, in heavy snow storms, through enemy-infested marshes and woods, and over a flat plain crisscrossed by numerous small canals, irrigation ditches, and unfordable streams, terrain ideally suited to the defense, breached the German defense wall on the northern perimeter of the Colmar bridgehead and drove forward to isolate Colmar from the Rhine. Crossing the Fecht River from Guemar, Alsace, by stealth during the late hours of darkness of 22 January, the assault elements fought their way forward against mounting resistance. Reaching the Ill River, a bridge was thrown across but collapsed before armor could pass to the support of two battalion of the 30th Infantry on the far side. Isolated and attacked by a full German Panzer brigade, outnumbered and outgunned, these valiant troops were forced back yard by yard. Wave after wave of armor and infantry was hurled against them but despite hopeless odds the regiment held tenaciously to its bridgehead. Driving forward in knee-deep snow, which masked acres of densely sown mines, the 3d Infantry Division fought from house to house and street to street in the fortress towns of the Alsatian Plain. Under furious concentration of supporting fire, assault troops crossed the Colmar Canal in rubber boats during the night of 29 January. Driving relentlessly forward, six towns were captured within 8 hours, 500 casualties inflicted on the enemy during the day, and large quantities of booty seized. Slashing through to the Rhone-Rhine Canal, the garrison at Colmar was cut off and the fall of the city assured. Shifting the direction of attack, the division moved south between the Rhone-Rhine Canal and the Rhine toward Neuf Brisach and the Brisach Bridge. Synchronizing the attacks, the bridge was seized and Neuf Brisach captured by crossing the protecting moat and scaling the medieval walls by ladder. In one of the hardest fought and bloodiest campaigns of the war, the 3d Infantry Division annihilated three enemy divisions, partially destroyed three others, captured 4,000 prisoners, and inflicted more than 7,500 casualties on the enemy.

VIII—BATTLE HONORS.-Paragraph 2, section XIII, WD General Orders 44, 1945, 3d Infantry Division, is amended by adding the following-attached unit:

802d Field Artillery Battalion.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR:

DWIGHT D EISENHOWER
Chief of Staff

OFFICIAL: EDWARD F WITSELL
Major General
The Adjutant General

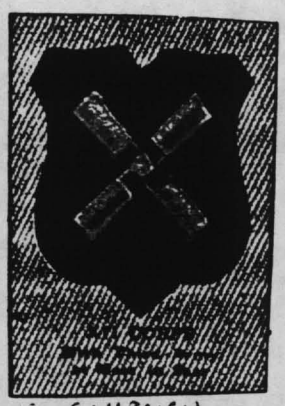
A TRUE EXTRACT:

ARTIS C HUFFMAN
CWO USA
Ass't Adj 692d FA Bn

AUG. 13, 1944
TO
JAN. 16, 1945

LORRAINE CAMPAIGN

BATTLE OF THE BULGE



LORRAINE CAMPAIGN
AUG. 13, 1944 – DEC. 18, 1944

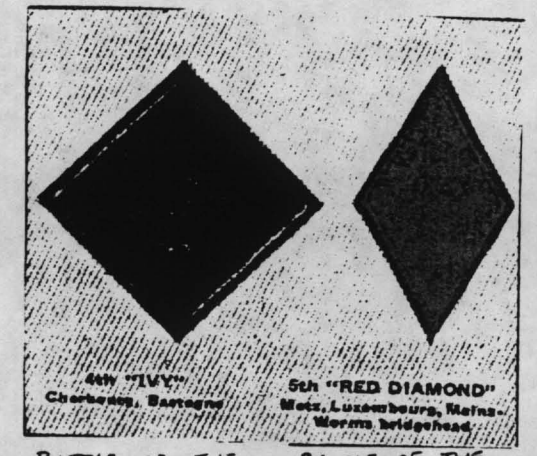
BATTLE OF THE BULGE
DEC. 22, 1944 – JAN 2, 1945

JAN. 2 – 16, 1945 BATTLE OF THE BU

LORRAINE CAMPAIGN
AUG. 13, 1944 – DEC. 18, 1944

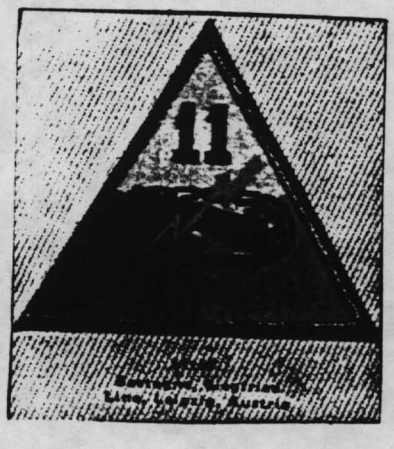
JAN. 2 – 5, 1945
JAN. 12 – 14, 1945
BATTLE OF THE BULGE

JAN. 5-12, 1945
BATTLE OF THE BULGE

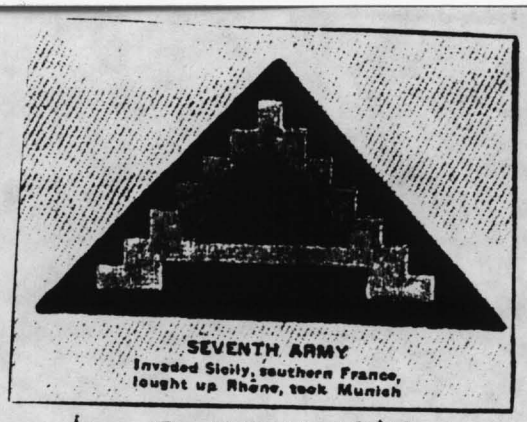


BATTLE OF THE BULGE
DEC. 28, 1944 – JAN. 2, 1945

BATTLE OF THE BULGE
DEC. 23 – 28, 1944



JAN. 14 – 16, 1945
BATTLE OF THE BULGE



JAN. 17 – MAR. 21, 1945

MAR. 30, 1945 – MAY 1945

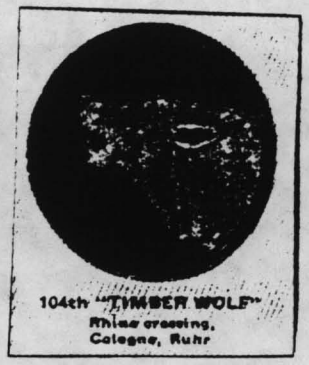
JAN 19, 1945 – FEB 8, 1945
COLMAR POCKET

FEB 9 - 28, 1945

FEB 28 - MAR 28, 1945

MAR. 30, 1945 – MAY 1945

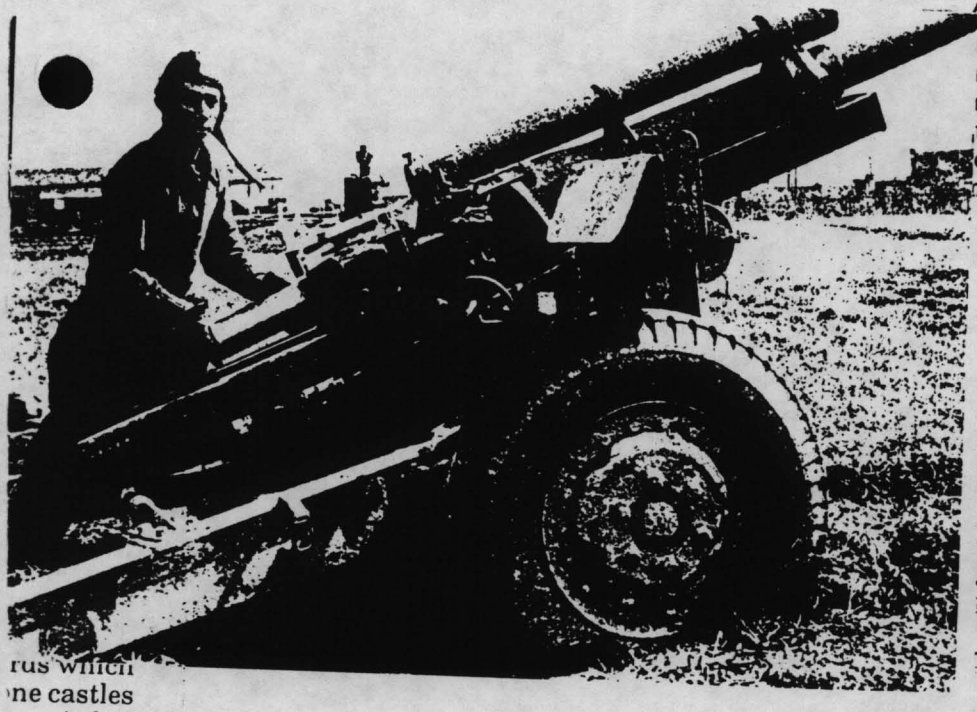
PALATINATE



APR. 3, 1945 – APR. 28, 1945

ARTILLERY WEAPONS OF WORLD WAR II

Weapon	Weight of Projectile	Maximum Range	Range Miles	Muzzle Velocity
United States				
105 mm Howitzer	33 lbs	12,200 yds	7.0	1,550 ft/sec
155 mm How	95 lbs	16,355 yds	9.3	1,850 ft/sec
155 mm Gun	95 lbs	25,400 yds	14.4	2,800 ft/sec
8-inch How	200 lbs	18,500 yds	10.5	1,950 ft/sec
8-inch Gun	240 lbs	35,635 yds	20.2	2,840 ft/sec
240 mm How	360 lbs	25,225 yds	14.3	2,300 ft/sec
Germany				
105 mm How	33 lbs	16,400 yds	9.3	2,000 ft/sec
150 mm How	96 lbs	16,500 yds	9.3	1,950 ft/sec
170 mm Gun	138 lbs	32,375 yds	18.4	3,035 ft/sec
210 mm Gun	298 lbs	32,800 yds	18.6	2,625 ft/sec
240 mm Gun	352 lbs	53,600 yds	30.5	3,600 ft/sec
280 mm Gun (Railrd)	561 lbs	68,000 yds	38.6	3,675 ft/sec



Almost as important as these developments was the invention of more efficient sighting and laying mechanisms. In essence, artillery had assumed the modern form. The next changes were the results of startling developments in motor transport, signal communication, chemical warfare, tanks, aviation, mass production, and finally, missiles.

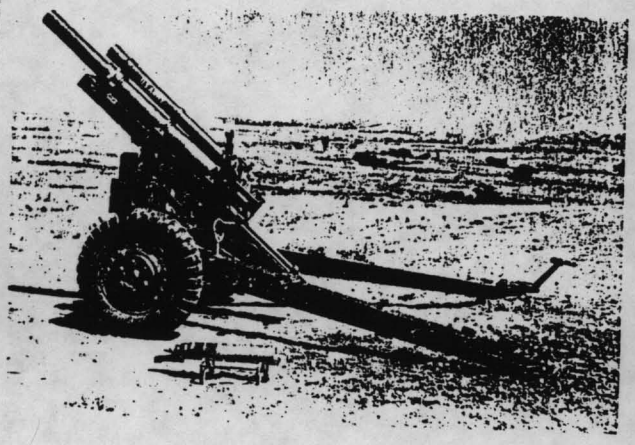


Figure 1-7. 105-mm howitzer M101A1.

1-5. Characteristics of Modern Cannon Weapon Systems

Today, the artilleryman has available to him the latest types of cannon weapon systems. The following are weapons common to the United States armed forces and our allies.

a. 105-mm Howitzer M101A1. The following data pertain to the 105-mm howitzer M101A1 (fig 1-7):

Muzzle velocity	472 meters per second
Maximum range	approx 11,270 meters
Type breechblock	Horizontal sliding wedge
Type firing mechanism	Continuous pull, M13
Type recoil mechanism	Hydropneumatic
Maximum recoil	39 to 42 inches
Recuperator N^2 gas pressure at 70°	1,100 pounds per square inch
Minimum elevation	-90 mils
Maximum elevation	1,155 mils
Type traverse	Pintle
Maximum right traverse	409 mils
Maximum left traverse	400 mils
Type equilibrators	Open spring (puller)
Tire pressure	40 pounds per square inch
Weight in firing position	4,980 pounds
Weight traveling	4,980 pounds
Maximum rate of fire	10 rounds per minute for the first 3 minutes
Sustained rate of fire	3 rounds per minute
Prime mover	2½-ton, 6×6 truck, or helicopter
Technical manual	TM 9-1015-203-12 w/all changes
Tube life (equivalent full charge)	
M2A1	5,000 rounds
M2A2	7,500 rounds

the war years with every combatant. The guns shown below are those which were the most commonly found in combat.

Explanatory notes: Up to one ton (2,240 pounds) the weight in action is quoted in pounds; above that in tons (t); weight in march order is usually greater. Projectile weight in pounds for standard projectile, usually HE; for anti-tank guns the AP shot is quoted, and for Coast guns the AP/HE shell; where there is an important difference, two or more projectiles may be quoted. Maximum range is in yards, except for AA guns where the figure quoted is the effective ceiling in feet. Muzzle velocity is in feet per second.

Weapon	Weight in action	Weight of projectile	Maximum range	Muzzle velocity	Cartridge type
United States Of America					
Anti-Tank					
37mm M3	912	1 61	8,000	2,600	Case
57mm M1	1 2t	6 28	10,000	2,700	Case
3-inch M5	2 2t	12 65	15,400	2,800	Case
Field					
75mm How M1	1,340	14 6	9,600	1,250	Case
75mm Gun M1897A4	1 5t	14 6	13,600	1,950	Case
105mm How M2A1	2 25t	33	12,200	1,550	Case
155mm How M1	5 7t	95	16,355	1,850	Bag
155mm Gun M1A1	13.6t	95	25,400	2,800	Bag
8-inch How M1	14.2t	200	18,500	1,950	Bag
8-inch Gun M1	31t	240	35,635	2,840	Bag
240mm How M1	28t	360	25,225	2,300	Bag
Anti-Aircraft					
37mm M1A2	2 4t	1 34	12,000	2,600	Case
40mm M1	2 5t	2 06	9,000	2,870	Case
3-inch M3	7.4t	15 5	27,900	2,800	Case
90mm Gun M2	14 4t	23 4	39,500	2,700	Case
105mm M1	15t	33	50,000	2,800	Case
120mm M1	27 5t	50	48,000	3,100	Case
Coast and Railroad					
6-inch M1908	19t	90	14,800	2,600	Bag
8-inch MkVIM3A2	46t	240	35,635	2 750	Bag
10-inch M1900	210t	617	16,300	2,250	Bag
12-inch M1895	182t	1,070	27,600	2,250	Bag
12-in Mortar	74t	700	17,900	1 800	Bag
14-inch M1909	1,034t	1,660	22 800	2,370	Bag
16-inch MkIIM1	715t	2,240	45,100	2 650	Bag
Recoilless					
57mm	45	2 75	4,350	1,200	Case
75mm	115	14 4	7,000	1 000	Case
Great Britain					
Anti-Tank					
2pr Mk 9	1,757	2 5	8,000	2,800	Case
6pr Mk 2	1 22t	6 0	5,500	2,700	Case
17pr Mk 1	2 05t	17 0	10 000	2,900	Case
Field					
25pr Mk 2	1 8t	25	13,400	1,700	Case
3 7-inch How	1,856	20	6,000	970	Case
95mm How	2,105	25		1,083	Case
4.5-inch Gun	5 65t	50	20,000	2,275	Bag
5 5-inch Gun	5 7t	100	16,000	1,675	Bag
7 2-inch How Mk 6	17.5t	200	16,600	1,630	Bag
Anti-Aircraft					
40mm Mk 1	2 4t	2	16 500	2 800	Case
3-inch	7 8t	16	20 000	2,000	Case
3 7-inch Mk 1	9 2t	27	32,000	2,600	Case
3 7-inch Mk 6	20t	28	45 000	3,450	Case
4 5-inch	14 75t	55	34,500	2,400	Case
5 25-inch Twin	76t	80	43 000	2 800	Case
Coast					
6pr Twin	9 9t	6 4	5,150	2 360	Case
6 inch Mk 24	37t	100	21 700	2,860	Bag
9 2-inch Mk 10	140t	380	31 600	2 700	Bag
15-inch Mk 1	200t	1 920	36 900	2,400	Bag
18 inch Mk 1	252t	2,500	24 500	1,925	Bag
Recoilless					
3 45-inch	55	11	1,000	900	Case
3 7-inch	250	22	3,000	1,000	Case
95mm	1 1t	25	10,800	1,600	Case
Germany					
Anti-Tank					
37mm PAK 36	952	1 5	6,000	2,500	Case
50mm PAK 38	2 016	4 5	3,000	2,740	Case
75mm PAK 40	1 5t	12 6	8,400	1,800	Case
88mm PAK 43	4 95t	20 3	14,100	2,460	Case
128mm PAK 44	9 9t	57	26,700	3,018	Case
Infantry and Field					
75mm leIG 18	880	12	4,150	850	Case
15cm sIG 33	1 58t	83	5,140	790	Case
75mm leFK 18	1 1t	13	10,300	1,590	Case
105mm leFH 18	1 9t	33	11,675	1,540	Case
105mm leFH 44	2 25t	33	16,400	2,000	Case
105mm sK 18	1 12t	33	20,860	2,740	Case
15cm sFH 36	5 6t	96	16,500	1,950	Case
17cm K 18	17.2t	138	32,375	3,035	Case
21cm K 39	33t	298	32,800	2,625	Case
24cm K 4	54t	352	53,600	3,600	Case
34cm How M1	73 5t	1,267	21,900	1,870	Case
60cm Karl	123t	4,840	4,900	722	Case
		3,746	7,300	928	
Railroad					
15cm K	73t	95	24,600	2,640	Case
17cm K	78.4t	138	29,300	2,870	Case
24cm Th Bruno	92 5t	327	22,100	2,215	Case
28cm K5	215t	561 conv	68,000	3,675	Case
		547 Rocket	94,600	3,710	Case
		300 Arrow	160,000	5,000	Case
38cm Siegfried	289t	1,091	61,000	3,445	Case
40cm Adolf	318t	1,323	61,250	3,450	Case
80cm Gustav	1,329t	10,584 HE	51,400	2,690	Case
		15,655 CP	41,560	2,290	Case
Coast					
15cm SK C/28	19.3t	100	25,700	2,870	Case
17cm SK L/40	100t	138	30,600	2,870	Case
30cm SK L/50	174t	551	46,800	3,674	Case
Anti-Aircraft					
5cm Flak 41	3t	5	18,400	2,755	Case
88mm Flak 18,36,37	5t	20	26,250	2,690	Case
88mm Flak 41	8t	21	38,000	3,345	Case
105mm Flak 38	10t	33	35,000	2,890	Case
128mm Flak 40	17t	57	38,000	2,885	Case
Recoilless					
75mm LG 40	321	13	7,435	1,150	Case
105mm LG 42	1,217	33	8,700	1,100	Case
15cm LG 240	1,875	83	5,750	790	Case
Japan					
Anti-Tank					
47mm Mod 01	1,660	3 4	8,400	2,735	Case
Anti-Aircraft					
75mm Mod 88	2 4t	14 4	20,000	2,360	Case
8cm Mod 10		13 5	15,000	2,220	Case
105mm Mod 14	4 9t	35	31,000	2,300	Case
Field					
70mm How M92	468	8 3	3,050	650	Case
75mm Meiji 41	2,020	12 5	12,000	1,672	Case
105mm How M91	1.5t	31 5	11,500	1,450	Case
105mm Gun M92	3.6t	34 6	20,000	2,500	Case
150mm How M4	2 75t	68	10,800	1,430	Case
150mm Gun M89	10.2t	90	21,000		Case
USSR					
Anti-Tank					
45mm M1942	1,257	4 7	5,000	1,045	Case
57mm M1943	1.1t	8 3	7,700	2,140	Case
100mm M1944	3 4t	35	19,300	2,750	Case
Field					
76mm Gun M1936	1 6t	14	15,260	2,320	Case
76mm Gun M1939	2 36t	14	12,200	2,230	Case
76mm Gun M1942	2 45t	14	12,200	2,000	Case
122mm How M1938	2 2t	48	12,900	1,640	Case
122mm Gun M1937	7t	55	22,900	2,425	Case
152mm How M1938	4 1t	88	14,100	1,665	Case
152mm Gun M1935	18t	108	24,800	2,575	Case
210mm Gun M1939	42 5t	297	30,100	2,440	Bag
Anti-Aircraft					
75mm M1938	4 2t	15	25,000	2,475	Case
85mm M1939	4.2t	20	27,500	2,750	Case
85mm M1944	4 8t	20	32,000		Case
Italy					
Anti-Tank					
47mm 47/32	582	5 3	3,800	820	Case
Field					
75mm 75/27	1t	14	11,200	1,730	Case
100mm How 100/17	1 4t	30	10,125	1,335	Case
104/40 Gun	3 8t	38	19,250	2,325	Case
149/35 Gun	7t	101	19,100	2,200	Case
149/20 How	5 6t	90	16,000		Case
152/47 Gun	16.4t	103	21,200	2,730	Bag
210/28 How	15 6t	225	17,500	1,730	Bag
Anti-Aircraft					
90mm Gun 90/53	5 1t	22	32,000	2,756	Case
102mm Gun		29	26,000	2,475	Case

ARMY FIELD RATIONS - WW II

In the Army in World War II, there were five basic types of field rations, and most of us survived on all of them at some time or another while we were overseas. They were identified by letters A, B, C, D, and K.

A. These were the meals we ate in training in this country and again after the war ended while in Europe. These were hot meals that consisted of about 70% fresh foods. In my experience, our Headquarters Battery cooks did very well and the food was quite good.

B. Similar to A except no fresh foods. Non-perishable items were used such as canned meats, fruit and vegetables, dehydrated potatoes and eggs. The B ration was sometimes referred to as the "Ten-in-One" because one package contained enough food for ten men for one day. Two meals could be served hot and one cold. This type of rations we got from Lorraine onwards, when our movement slowed somewhat and the rail lines were repaired. Our mess Sergeants and cooks did quite well with this, although we had a lot of stew, which in my outfit was usually called "goat". I do remember that on both Thanksgiving and Christmas (1944) we had roast turkey with all the customary trimmings. I understand this was true for everyone in the ETO except certain frontline infantry who were so close to the enemy they could not be disengaged far enough. In some cases the infantry rotated and ate in shifts, conditions permitting.

C. These consisted of small cans of meat and vegetables - ten in all - meat and beans, meat and vegetable stew, meat and spaghetti, ham and eggs and potatoes, meat and noodles, meat and rice, frankfurters and beans, pork and beans, ham and lima beans, chicken and vegetables. Also included was jam, crackers, powdered drinks to be mixed with water, sugar and cereals. As I remember, what is called meat and frankfurters were really Spam and Vienna sausage, neither of which I had ever had in my life before, and not popular with the troops. This ration was not prepared by the mess truck, but by small groups of men such as my survey section, heating the cans in water in their helmets over small gasoline burners. We had these rations generally during the second and third months in France, after the K's and before the B's.

D. A highly concentrated chocolate bar containing cocoa, oat flour and skim milk powder, weighing four ounces and containing 600 calories. This ration was not common and was provided only in emergencies. These were not especially tasty, not like a real chocolate bar, but the civilians liked them. We had these mainly the first month we were ashore in France.

K. This is the ration we carried with us (individually or by section or battery) when we went ashore in France and subsisted on it for the first month or so along with the D bar. These were individual meals contained in a waterproof box six and a half inches long by three inches wide by two inches deep, not unlike a CrackerJacks box. The boxes were dark green with a heavy wax coating, and each box was labelled breakfast, dinner, or supper. Breakfast consisted of a fruit bar, Nescafe, sugar, crackers and a small tin of ham and eggs. Dinner and supper each contained a can of cheese or potted meat, crackers, orange or lemon powder, sugar, chocolate or other sweets and chewing gum. There was considerable trading among us when the box was opened and people discovered whether they had the cheese or meat tin. Every box included a small thin box containing four cigarettes. On many occasions the outer waxed box was burned to heat the morning Nescafe.

PAY SCALE - WW II

The U.S. Army Monthly Pay Table, June 1942

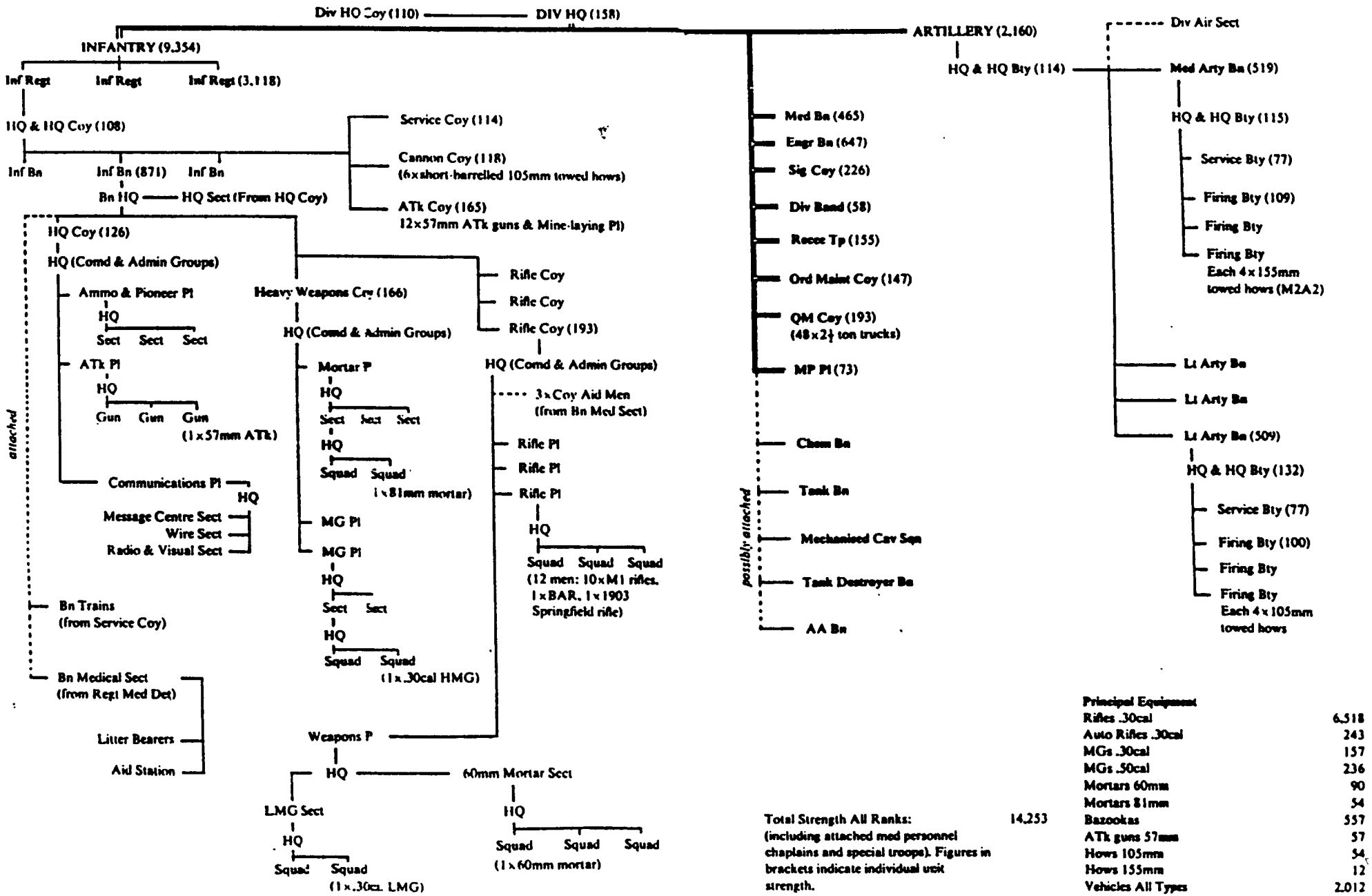
Private	$50	1st Lieutenant	$167
Private First Class	$54	Captain	$200
Corporal	$66	Major	$250
Sergeant	$78	Lt. Colonel	$292
Staff Sergeant	$96	Colonel	$333
Technical Sergeant	$114	Brigadier General	$500
1st Sergeant	$138	Major General	$667
2nd Lieutenant	$150	Lt. General	$667

I have copied the above from a source that should have accurate information and so I must assume the amounts are accurate. All amounts are what was known as "Base Pay". However, my memory tells me that when I went on active duty on July 1, 1942 as a 2nd Lt. I was payed $125 base pay and that when I was promoted from 1st Lt. to Captain my base pay went from $150 to $200 per month. What is confusing is that there were numerous additions to one's base pay. For instance, if you were married you got an allowance for your wife of perhaps $25 (for a 2nd Lt.). In addition you got a food and housing allowance for your wife, which might be another $50. Further, at the end of each three years of service one got a 5% increase, and for overseas combat duty one got an additional 10%. The only number I remember with any degree of confidence is that as a Captain with more than three years service and overseas I was being paid $360 per month gross (even though there were no deductions then at that pay level).

I remember reading somewhere (after the war) that General Eisenhower as a five star general and in command of three or four million troops in the European Theater had a gross pay of $10,000 per year.

TABLE OF ORGANIZATION INFANTRY DIVISION, 1943

Fig 8 The Infantry Division
(Source T/07 and allied tables, 15 July 1943)



Total Strength All Ranks: 14,253
(including attached med personnel chaplains and special troops). Figures in brackets indicate individual unit strength.

Principal Equipment	
Rifles .30cal	6,518
Auto Rifles .30cal	243
MGs .30cal	157
MGs .50cal	236
Mortars 60mm	90
Mortars 81mm	54
Bazookas	557
ATk guns 57mm	57
Hows 105mm	54
Hows 155mm	12
Vehicles All Types	2,012