

D-Day Plus 40 Years
G/276
By
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(deceased)

It's a warm day, the first of July, 1980, and this is the beginning of a talk-tape to produce past history of the 70th Infantry Division with which I served in World War II. I begin this tape with the intent of taking a trip to Europe soon to retrack the steps we took forty years ago.

BACKGROUND ON THE 70TH INFANTRY DIVISION

The nickname of the 70th Infantry Division is "The Trail Blazer" Division. The 70th Division was activated in the State of Oregon and its nickname honors the pioneers who tracked through the wilderness along the Oregon Trail. The ballad "Oh, Suzanna" is the song of the 70th Infantry Division because of the popularity with the Oregon pioneers.

The shoulder patch is in the shape of an axe blade in red. A white axe head is superimposed on the red background. Below the axe head is a replica of Mount Hood, and standing beside the mountain is a fir tree in green. The axe symbolizes the pioneers who traveled the Oregon Trail to the Willamette Valley in Oregon where Camp Adair is located and where the Division was activated. The red background represents the red blood of the sturdy empire builders. The mountain on the patch represents the State of Oregon and the green fir tree, the 91st Division (which uses it as a shoulder insignia) from which the officers and non-commissioned officers who formed the 70th Division Cavalry were drawn.

The 70th Infantry Division was activated on June 15, 1943, in Camp Adair, Oregon, under the Fourth Corps. The training was under the Army Ground Forces. In July, 1944, the Division moved to Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, to complete its training in the country. It left the United States in December, 1944, for the European Theater Operations. Overseas training lasted less than three weeks after its first elements had landed in France, the three Infantry Regiments of the Division then being committed to a defensive position along the west bank of the Rhine River.

Major General Frank W. Milburn, commanding general of the 21st Corps commanded the Division with action in the capture of Forbach, Stiring-Wendel and Saarbrucken and in crossing the Saar River. Citations given to the Second Battalion in the 274th Infantry Regiment included Distinguished Unit Citation, action at Wingen, France, from January 5 through January 7, 1945. Successive commanding generals included Major General John E. Dahlquist, from June 1943 through July 1944; Major General Allison J. Barnett, from July 1944 to July 1945; and Brigadier General Thomas W. Herren, from July 1945 to approximately August 29, 1945, when I left the Division.

The component units of the Division were the 274th, 275th and 276th Infantry Regiments with the 882nd, 883rd, and 884th, and the 725th Field Artillery Battalions. We were under the command of the 21st Corps of the 7th Army.

The reduction of the Bitche Salient, crossing the Saar River, the capture of Saarbrucken and the reduction of the Saar Basin are among the highlights of combat records achieved by the 70th Infantry Division. On December 28, 1944, the three infantry regiments of the Division took up defensive positions along the West Bank of the Rhine River. In the last days of 1944 and the early weeks of 1945, the 70th Division, without its full strength, was designated as a task force and took part in some of the most bitter and most important actions in northeastern France. This was the height of the German winter offensive

and the enemy was attempting to drive south from the Bitche sector, north from Colmar pocket, with the intent of cutting off the entire 7th Army west of the Saverne Pass. At Wingen, France elements of the 274th and 275th Infantry Regiments surrounded and sealed off nearly 1,000 SS troops in the town and cleaned it up after a bitter three-day battle. This apparently broke the point of the northern prong with the southwestern German drive.

In mid-January, the Division moved to the area directly south of the German border, Bastion of Saarbrücken, extending from Saareguemines on the east to Morsbach on the west. In February the 70th launched the drive in the area just below the Saar River. Driving into higher grounds overlooking Saarbrücken, it smashed into the important French industrial city of Forbach. The Trail Blazers went on to take the town of Stiring-Wendel and; liberated nearly 1,000 allied prisoners of war, one of the first deliverances of allied prisoners of war on the Western Front. Early in March, the offensive carried the 70th Division to the south of the Saar River, putting men across the vital stream during the night of March 18. Or. March 20, the Division captured the town of Saarbrücken. The Division then swarmed through the famous Siegfried Line defenses along the north bank of the Saar River into Volkingen and other important Saar lands, cities and towns. A junction with the 3rd Army was effected on March 21, and in April, the Division went in to further reduce the Saar Basin Valley. After the V.E., the 70th Division was in occupational duties with divisional commands in posts located near Otterberg, Bad Kreuznach, Frankfurt and Oranienstein.

Now, what I am going to attempt to do is tell it as I saw it from my outfit as we sailed from the United States. I have had copies of the morning reports sent from St. Louis, Missouri, which give me some factual information to help my memory in telling my incidental stories. Morning reports were made up by my company every day and I will begin my story at the period of time from December 1, to December 4, 1944 when we were at Camp Myles Standish, Massachusetts, under the captainship of James R. Michael. There were 190 enlisted men and six officers.

Having completed its combat training at Ford Leonard Wood, Missouri, the 276th Infantry, Colonel A. C. Morgan commanding, departed by troop train 19 and 20 November 1944 for Camp Myles Standish, Massachusetts, clearing into that post, before midnight of 22 November 1944. On departure from Fort Leonard Wood, the unit was T/O strength.

The following two weeks spent at Camp Myles Standish were devoted to issue of articles of supply required for ETOUSA and to instruction in subjects pertaining to security and to conduct and safety measures aboard a troop transport.

Items of supply issued to the individual soldiers during the staging period included: One pair shoepacs, one pair combat boots, one lightweight standard gas mask, one sleeping bag, two pairs ski socks and one wool knit sweater.

Eight hours of special instruction was given to the company orientation officers and noncommissioned assistants of the regiment.

As I remember it at Camp Myles Standish, we were issued some incidental gear for the European Theater Operations. One thing that stands out in my mind was the issuance of sleeping bags. The inside of the sleeping bags was equivalent to two wool blankets; the outside was considered water repellent, and the bag rolled up so you could put it in your backpack. When we were issued these bags, the comment among the enlisted men was they were death traps. If it was cold and you got inside and zipped them up, you would have a heck of a time trying to get out. They were continually working with those sleeping bags trying to figure out a way to use them and still have mobility. The funny thing about it is they issued every one of us, 190 enlisted men, these sleeping bags and when we got overseas the first thing we did was turn them into supply. We took two blankets, which were old wool blankets, rolled them up in a bed roll to make them look like Turkish troops and slung them over our shoulders, using a tent rope to tie them across our backs. That turned out to be our bed roll for the duration of the war. However, they were so cumbersome that we finally had to get rid of them. So every morning we threw them all into a community trailer of the company. Now, you can imagine 190 men throwing their bed rolls into a trailer

and then at night filing back and picking up another one and using it, knowing the guy who had used it before had stomped mud all over it, may have bled on it, or even gotten sick on it. It didn't matter, that was your bed for the night, and when you were finished with it, you rolled it back up and threw it in the trailer. The next night you got another man's bed roll again, never the same one.

While at Myles Standish, we had wood fires in the barracks and we pulled guard duty seven days a week, 24 hours a day, right around the clock, so that we could watch the fires to make sure the temperature stayed warm in the barracks, also so as not to burn the barracks down.

Mostly what we were doing at Camp Myles Standish was training. We were issued books to read in German and weapons which we learned to clean. We had a fellow non-commissioned officer by the name of Gibson; we called him "Hoot" Gibson. Hoot made a bet with all the people in his particular building that he could detail strip his 45, carbine and M1 rifle, put all the pieces in the bed and then, blindfolded, put it all back together in four hours. We had nothing else to do so we bet old Hoot that he couldn't do it. So he sat down on his bunk with his 45, his carbine, his M1, and detail stripped it all, took out the springs, the hair pins, all details cut. At the conclusion of the four hours, Hoot had assembled all the weapons and collected about \$1,000 for four hours work. This was really unique since all the pieces in these weapon had to fit the individual weapon. If I remember right, the 45 had 48 parts.

On 5 December 1944 an advance party moved to Boston, Massachusetts, by rail and boarded the transport to prepare for the arrival of the troops on the following day. The regiment moved by rail the morning of 6 December 1944 to Boston and immediately boarded ship. At 1630 on 6 December 1944 the transport lifted anchor and stood out from Boston harbor for the Atlantic passage. Training enroute included orientation, abandon ship drill and care and cleaning of equipment. The regiment was transported to Marseille, France, arriving in that port the morning of 15 December 1944. Immediately after noon unloading began, the troops being taken off on barges and set ashore at Callahan Beach. As they arrived, they were transported by truck to Delta Base CP No. 2, where a bivouac was established, the troops pitching pup tents in company-street formation.

During the week of CP No. 2, the regiment was issued complete motorized equipment, 57-mm AT guns, 105-mm cannons and was brought up to T/E strength in all respects.

On December 6, 1944. we boarded a train from Camp Myles Standish which took us to Boston, the Port of Entry. They backed the train right down alongside the ship, The USS West Point, which was commissioned from the USS America, the biggest American ship in American lines that America had at that time. As we got off the train in units, we marched down to the gangplank and it was kind of sad the way we were in a state of mass confusion while a band was playing "Oh, Suzanna". As we started up the gangplank, we had to call off our serial number, name and rank. The First Sergeant had a roster and he made sure that every man aboard the ship was accounted for. One hundred ninety men and six officers stomped up that old gangplank under Captain James R. Michael, a West Point graduate. We sailed at 1600 on December 6, 1944, for foreign duty. We had no idea where we were going, other than we figured we were headed for Europe.

On December 7, 1944, which is Pearl Harbor Day, we were on the sea to foreign duty. The trip itself, from December 6 to December 16, was basically uneventful. We crossed the Atlantic Ocean by the route from Boston, moving along the coast of Miami, and going straight across to the Mediterranean Sea, passing by the Rock of Gibraltar. The first two days at sea a U.S. Navy blimp followed us. We changed course every so many minutes so that the submarines could not get a fix on us. When the dirigible returned to the U.S., after two days at sea, a 4-motor bomber escorted us. Criss-crossing our path, he would be there for 15 seconds and then he would be gone, then back again and gone, until finally, at the end of our trip, on about the 9th day, we had nobody, and of course we were approaching enemy waters at that particular time.

We arrived in Marseilles, France, at Delta Base Section Command Post No. 2. I'll never forget how they brought landing crafts out and we went over the side, and down into the landing crafts, and we came

ashore. Captain Michaels got in front of everybody and lined up four platoons on the beach. He said something like "Sergeant, we are all here and we are all accounted for."

They moved us through Marseilles on the back of semi-trucks, like cattle. It was dark and they took us to Delta Base Section Command Post No. 2, which if I remember right was called "Lucky Strike". It was nothing but mud and snow-covered hills with no toilets, only pit latrines and trench latrines, and no buildings. We pitched pup tents on top of the hill and spent December 16 to December 23 getting ready for the Front Line.

We took our equipment and detail stripped it. I was in a 60-mm mortar section and we were issued backboards with the intent of strapping the mortar and the base plate on the backboards and carrying that plus your personal equipment. While we were there, we would adjust, fix, correct, throw away, find new, change, reorient anything possible to make it easier. We made our bed rolls and were issued gas masks. Orientation instruction was conducted by company at CP No. 2 to familiarize the men with the strategic situation on the Western Front. Troops were granted occasional passes for a few hours at a time (always daylight) in the city of Marseilles. V-Mail stationery was issued and a few consignments of mail from the States arrived and were distributed. The Retreat Ceremony was conducted nightly in the bivouac. Company officers stressed military courtesy and discipline in their instructions to the men during this period.

Weather during the stay in the Marseilles vicinity was rainy and cold and the bivouac area was muddy.

Movement of the 276th Infantry to the combat area began early in the morning of 23 December 1944. The foot elements were transported in two troop trains, composed of French freight cars, which left before noon of 23 December 1944. The first was commanded by Major Theodore R. Mataxis and the second by Major Robert J. Natzel.

Each of these trains was unloaded at Brumath, France, and the troops marched to Bischwiller, France, where they were billeted in abandoned factories and public buildings.

Meanwhile, the motor elements of the Regiment began their northward movement from CP No. 2 at 0630 on 24 December 1944. The motor column bivouaced that night in St. Rambert, France, having covered 176 miles. The night of 25 December the bivouac was in Dijon, France, after 167 miles, and on 26 December 1944 the motor elements drove 145 miles, bivouacking in Baccarat, France.

The motor column cleared into its billeting areas in Bischwiller at 1630 on 27 December 1944. after a 113 mile drive the last day.

From 27 December 1944 to noon of 29 December, the 276th Infantry remained in Bischwiller in TF HERREN reserve. During this period the Regimental strength was 152 officer-s, 5 warrant officers, and 2805 enlisted men. A total of 219 EM had been transferred as replacements to the 80th Infantry Division. The supply situation was: Rations, 3 days rations; ammunition, basic load; all unserviceable signal equipment was ordered to repair section the Commanding General; gas and oil, 1 day supply.

We departed Delta Base Section Command Post No. 2 at 5:00 by rail enroute to a new station. We marched down the road in the mud and snow to the railway and boarded 48 World War I box cars. At that time we had no problem with our equipment because it was a short walk, less than a mile. We got on the 48 box cars and proceeded to move north. The equipment did not seem cumbersome and we were fully loaded. We had excess ammunition, excess water, excess everything. We carried brand new equipment, brand new overcoats, brand new shoe packs, brand new rifles. We were a brand new outfit.

From December 23 to December 25, we moved by rail and we arrived at Bischwiller, France, at 2300 with 190 enlisted men and 6 officers. On Christmas Eve, we were proceeding on the 48 box cars, each car built to take 40 enlisted men and eight horses. We had a platoon in each box car,

roughly 40 to 42 men, and all our gear and K rations, which was really a sight to see. We didn't even have straw on the floor. It was cold and we were moving into enemy territory. We were so green, somebody would sneeze and 40 men would jump 10 feet in the air. On Christmas Eve, it was reported that on our route north the Germans had dropped some paratroopers and that they had cut off our destination area. It was decided by the officers of our Regiment that if we got struck by paratroopers we would leave the train area immediately, proceed to the hills along the side of the track and set up some kind of defensive organization to defend the train as best we could. However, there had to be one non-commissioned officer and a couple of men who would remain with each car. We elected to pull straws and the short straws would stay with the train. I pulled the short straw. At that particular time I was a buck sergeant, a three-striper, and I was scared to death. All I could see were my buddies running toward the hills when the Germans hit us and me on the train by myself or maybe with one other man. I didn't sleep very well until we reached our destination safely.

I remember one night we were going through a town or, the train, I don't remember its name, but on the railroad siding there was a car full of straw. Some of the fellows raided that car and took the straw and put it in their own car. Our officers were so perturbed by this act of vandalism that they were going to Court Martial everybody involved because of lack of discipline and control. I remember thinking, "We are going to be court martialed for stealing a couple bails of straw we threw on the floor of a box car." The straw was a hazard anyway because people were smoking at that time and it could have caught fire so easily. I have no idea why that straw was in that box car going the other direction in the first place. Probably some of the high-ranking German officers were using it for their horses or something.

On December 26, Milton B. Muir was injured by an accidental discharge of a Browning automatic rifle bar. He was shot in the neck. He was the first man shot from our outfit. We were on the second floor of a warehouse in Bischwiller. His gun was loaded, laying on the floor, and a blanket lay over the gun. Someone tripped over the blanket and the gun went off and hit him in the neck. He was the first wounded man we had seen and being an accident, it was a real morale buster for us.

From December 26 to December 28, we were on patrols and had guard duty. Everybody started getting edgy, started training like a real combat outfit. People were getting jumpy and enlisted men were shooting at stars, moon, anything that moved. We weren't even near the enemy. Twenty-two of our enlisted men were transferred to the 20th Infantry Division. The 20th Infantry Division was very much under-strength and they were still in the 7th Army. We were in the 7th Army also and the 20th needed replacements, so they took the 22 men. They did not want to go but they were forced to go anyway.

At 1230 on 29 December the regiment began to move by motor and marching from Bischwiller to Soufflenheim in accordance with orders to relieve the 275th Infantry in defensive positions along the west bank of the Rhine River from Seltz to Raschwoog. Regimental CP was established at Soufflenheim. The 1st Battalion occupied the right half of the Regimental sector, the 2d Battalion the left half and the 3d Battalion was in reserve. Our mission was to deny the area to the enemy. Later our right flank was extended to Fort Louis.

In general, the S-2 estimate of the situation was this: The enemy lacked sufficient strength to prevent accomplishment of our mission, but he would be able to maintain active patrolling and reconnaissance missions along the banks of the Rhine. He was also thought to be able to strafe and bomb our lines of communication and to drop saboteurs by parachute.

Administrative reports at this time showed the following replacements needed: 2 officers, 237 enlisted men. Five casualties were evacuated in the 29-30 December 1944 period.

The supply situation showed 3 days rations, approximately one day's supply of ammunition and one day's supply of gas and oil.

From 29 December 1944 to 1 January 1945 the 276th Infantry held its defensive sector along the Rhine. Combat efficiency was reported as excellent.

On December 29, 1944 we departed Bischwiller at 1300 and arrived at about 1400 in Seltz, France. We traveled these 15 miles by truck convoy. If I remember correctly, the trucks were "alligators", big landing craft the Infantry used in the Pacific quite frequently for landing from ship to shore. The "alligators" were landed in France with the intention of crossing the rivers. Of course, you would use any transportation you could get.

On December 31, we departed Seltz at about (unreadable) in the morning and we arrived at Beinheim at about 8:30. We traveled these three miles by convoy. We departed Beinheim at 1445 by truck and arrived at Camp d'Oberhoffen around 1600, a distance of about 12 miles. On January 2, we departed Camp d'Oberhoffen by truck at 1500 and arrived at Ingwiller, France at 6:30 p.m., 16 miles away.

On 1 January 1945 the regiment, now attached to the 79th Infantry Division, moved by motor and marching to Camp d'Oberhoffen, its defensive positions along the Rhine being taken over by the 274th Infantry. The mission of the 296th Infantry in its new location was VI Corps Reserve, and tactically involved only local security. The Regiment was ordered to remain assembled, prepared to move to the Mouterhouse area.

During afternoon of 2 January 1945 the Regiment began movement by motor to Zittersheim, France, to continue its VI Corps Reserve mission by preparing, occupying and defending a position extending from Volksberg to Ingwiller, a distance of 11 miles. At this time the 276th Infantry, which had been attached to the 79th Division, was attached to the 45th Division. The new position was occupied during the late afternoon and night of 2 January 1945 with the 2d Battalion on the right extending from Ingwiller to Wimmenau inclusive, the 3d Battalion on the left extending from Volksberg to Wimmenau exclusive, and the 1st Battalion in reserve south of Wingen.

Administrative reports now listed needed replacements as 2 officers and 232 enlisted men. Rations were sufficient for three days and oil and gas for one day. The ammunition report showed a shortage of hand grenades and efforts were being made by S-4 to fill this deficiency. There were no damaged vehicles and none on request.

The 276th Infantry, having occupied positions as shown on an overlay from the 45th Division, at once began to improve them and to install road blocks. One platoon of Company I was attached to the 180th Infantry and remained with the 180th Infantry all during the battle of Wingen.

The 2d Battalion at 0730 on 3 January 1945 reported to the Regimental CP at Zittersheim the loss of one Regimental AntiTank gun, attached, and part of Company E.

Two artillery shells burst in the 3d Battalion area during the morning and at 1010 that battalion reported 90 per cent of the civilian population was evacuating Rosteig, moving west on foot toward Volksburg. A column of French medium tanks and armored cars appeared at Volksburg at 1030 and the French captain in command conferred with the commanding officer of our Company K to coordinate action. Later in the day the captain of French Armored Forces reported to the CP of the 276th Infantry for coordination.

By January 4, we were starting to get into combat. We were in battle position. We departed Ingwiller by foot at 1530 and arrived at 1730 in battle position, 8 miles north of Ingwiller, France.

At 1215 the 3d Battalion reported that Companies C and B of the 179th Infantry were withdrawing through the first platoon of our Company I, while Company A of the 179th was moving north around our left flank to counter-attack.

The 1st Battalion, preparing positions to defend Wingen, was shelled and lost one man. This was reported at 1455. Shelling of the 3d Battalion CP at 1625 required moving the CP to a new position.

On 3 January S-2 estimated the enemy situation this way: Unit in contact is the 8th Company, 953rd Regiment, 359th Division, with reserves including elements of 953rd Regiment and the 12th S.S. Mountain Regiment reported at Egueishardt. There had been contact with small groups of the enemy in the vicinity of Wimmenau and artillery fire and patrolling in the Wingen area. We had killed a two-man enemy patrol, and he had killed a man in one of our patrols. S-2 concluded that the enemy had very few supporting weapons to use in an attack, that he could continue active patrolling in this sector and that he might be able to bring up sufficient reinforcements to attack.

The weather during the regiment's period of operations in the Zittersheim area was cold with occasional snow flurries and there was a light mantle of snow on the ground.

The following morning (4 January 1945) at about 0530, the enemy attacked to the south, taking the town of Wingen. The attacking force was aggressive and well equipped with individual weapons, particularly automatic weapons, of which it had an excessive number. However, they had very little supporting fire.

Regimental CP, having been notified at 1830 the night before (3 January 1945) that an enemy attack might be expected at Wimmenau and Kelsberg, had immediately notified all its units and had disposed troops on Corps order in anticipation of the blow. The 1st Battalion was moved from Wingen to the vicinity of Wimmenau with Company B north of the tracks at Wimmenau and Company C on the high ground north of the tracks.

First definite information that the enemy had struck in force came at 0510 4 January 1945 from Company B which was then engaging the enemy north and east of Wingen. At 0635 the 1st Battalion reported that Company B, moving into position evidently had been ambushed and attacked from the rear by a large enemy patrol. It was first reported that casualties were fifty percent of all riflemen, but this was later amended to say that casualties were uncertain and could not be known definitely before daylight. Company A was sent to aid Company B and to comb the area for patrols. At 0750 approximately 30 enemy were reported in Wingen. The I. and R. platoon was dispatched to Wingen at once to investigate.

At this time TF Herren notified the 276th Infantry that tanks would be attached, and that they would arrive within an hour and a half. A request from this regiment for artillery fire on Wingen was refused by G-3, 45th Division at 1000.

The 276th Infantry was ordered by G-3, 45th Division, at 1027, to use at least one rifle company and Company B, 781st Tank Battalion, (less one platoon), to attack and restore regiment's position north of Wingen. The town was to be bombed when our troops had left it.

Immediately the 3d Battalion was ordered to have its reserve company, together with Company I, launch a co-ordinated attack on Wingen from the west, generally astride the railroad. The 1st Battalion was to support this move by fire from the south and east to permit the attackers to clean out the town. One platoon of medium tanks was attached to the 3d Battalion units. The 3d Battalion companies were to reorganize after accomplishing their mission. Specifically, the 1st Battalion was ordered to move Company C to the right of Company A astride the road and railroad tracks and prevent the enemy withdrawing to the east.

The 276th Regiment was notified at 1230 that the 2d Battalion, 274th Infantry, was to launch an attack northwest from Puberg to Wingen and would then take over the line from Rosteig, exclusive, to Volksburg, inclusive. The 3d Battalion, 276th Infantry, would then consolidate its positions to the south and east.

The attack of the 3d Battalion from the west end of Wingen jumped off at 1330, and at 1720 the I. and R. platoon reported that the attack was moving forward with heavy mortar support down the valley and through the town. The attack was also supported by 10 tanks. The I. and R. platoon further reported that Company C was receiving automatic weapon fire from Wingen on its right flank.

At dark, S-2 reported that enemy units in contact were the 8th Co., 953rd Regiment, 361st Division; 506th SS Battalion, 12 SS Regiment; 6th SS Mountain Division, and the 506th Panzer Grenadier Battalion. The only reserves listed were armored units north of our sector, all other enemy troops reported in the area having been committed. Enemy strength in contact was estimated at 200 men, with excessive amounts of automatic weapons, and the morale of the Mountain Division troops was said to be very high.

The attack of 4 January 1945 failed to accomplish its purpose and at 0840 on 5 January 1945 the push was resumed on this plan:

Elements of the 3d Battalion, attacked from the west and Company C from the north, the remainder of the 1st Battalion from the south, was to support the attack by fire. Company G of the 274th (attached) was to support the attack from the southwest. The attack was supported by a concentration of artillery fire on the hill northeast of Wingen by the 160th Field Artillery of the 45th Division. By means of heavy automatic fire and bazooka fire on tanks, the enemy held up this operation on all flanks.

A renewed attack by Company C was launched by our forces at 1600 and this met with greater success, the troops of the 276th Infantry penetrating far into the town. However, before mopping up operations were well under way darkness descended and the operation was brought to a halt, except for active patrolling, all troops were ordered by Division to withdraw from the town.

During the two days of the attack, the enemy had taken some 150 of our men prisoner, including 15 wounded, and all these were held in the Wingen schoolhouse. They were not fed and were used as litter-bearer details for the handling of enemy wounded.

On the evening of 5 January 1945, S-2 reported that enemy units in contact were the 1st and 3d Battalions of the 12th SS Regiment, 6th SS Mountain Division, and the 6th Company, Second Battalion, 331st Infantry. Reserves included a few units of depleted strength reported north of our present position, and a small amount of artillery and armor. In Wingen, the enemy casualties were heavy as a result of our artillery, machine-gun and tank fire.

Mopping up operations in Wingen were resumed on the morning of 6 January 1945 by our 1st and 3d Battalions. The 2d Battalion, having been attached to the 313th Infantry, had been ordered to attack the strongly held town of Lichtenberg. This attack was successful. During this day's action the taking of the town was completed and practically all of the prisoners taken by the enemy were freed and restored to their own units. The enemy was cleared from our entire area by 7 January 1945 and the defensive line of the switch position that the 276th Infantry had occupied as division reserve was restored and strengthened. The regiment was warned to be ready to move to a new sector.

In the course of the operations at Wingen, the regimental and battalion communications platoons of the 27th Infantry overcame the loss of their principal wire lines with the fall of Wingen, and maintained uninterrupted service throughout the battle. Wires from all battalions, going to the CP at Zittersheim, had been channelized through the town of Wingen. When that point was taken by the enemy it was necessary to lay wire back through La Petite-Pierre and then north to CP's at Wimmenau and Rosteig. This involved 12 miles of wire on each line. A total of 250 miles of wire was laid by the regiment during the Wingen action. Tanks and artillery fire destroyed wire constantly, necessitating 24-hour duty by the wire crews. In addition, 150 messages a day were transmitted by radio.

The tide of battle put the routes of communication in the hands of the enemy on several occasions, and an example of the hazards of carrying messages was the case of one mounted messenger who counted 10 bullet holes in his 1/4-T vehicles following a dispatch trip.

January 6, 1945. we had the bear by the tail. The Germans were launching an attack from Bitche, France, which was their headquarters, to a town called Wingen. By January 5 a regiment had completely surrounded Wingen. My company was not directly involved in the Battle of Wingen. We had encountered

1,000 SS troops in the battle and they were promised a furlough of three days if they could hold the town. The town of Wingen was a small crossroad town up in the hills and the Baker Company of our regiment took a terrific beating at Wingen. One of my friends from Columbiana, Ohio, was killed in the Battle of Wingen. He was drafted in the beginning of the war, shortly after Pearl Harbor Day, served his tour of duty in the Alaskan area and then was transferred when the division was activated in Oregon. He served, the rest of his career, his life I guess, in the division. He was one of those men who got in right at the start of World War II and he was trapped. He was killed in the first encounter.

The orders were given to dig in and hold ground for the night's operation. It was one of those deals when we had marched all day, then had to dig in at night and set up patrols. The ground was frozen hard, covered with snow and the guys were tired. They didn't dig in. When the 1,000 SS troops launched their attack (and the Germans were very good at counter-attacks) the Baker Company of the 1st Battalion of the 276th Infantry Regiment did not have any defensive positions to hold and they were caught in a cross-fire of light infantry weapons. This being their first encounter of combat, they lacked the discipline and complete control. They believed if they withdrew immediately it would solve the biggest problem of getting out of the crossfire. When they stood up to withdraw from the hill and go down through the valley, the Germans were ready and just cut them to ribbons. If I remember right, there were about 190 men in a rifle company: 12 men to a squad and 3 squads to a platoon, making it 40-41 men per platoon, including a platoon leader, a platoon runner, a radio operator and a medic. At the end of the battle that first night, I believe there were only about 6 men left of that platoon, maybe 8. They were all shot up. The battle for Wingen went on for three days. However, my company stayed on the defensive. We left defensive position, north of Ingwiller, France, at 1500 by foot and arrived at Lichtenberg, France, at 1730. We were under enemy fire artillery from 1725 to 1730. We had two wounded enlisted men sent to the hospital.

That particular night, I got what they call "a bullet with your name on it". I can remember we were arriving in the evening and it was dusk. On both sides of the street in this particular town, a farm town, the houses were made out of masonry and the Germans set up an 88 artillery barrage and were shooting up the town. We all layed down in the gutters. The order was given to move into town, rather than be cut to ribbons in the fields because the column was laying out in the fields.

George Company was leading the 276th Infantry Regiment and as we were getting ready to move forward, I was up on my feet. It was dark and the German gunners fired a round late. They were great for that. They waited until everyone stood up and then they would fire one last round. We learned later that in an artillery barrage you always wait a couple of minutes because there was always one round that fired about two minutes later. When this particular round went off, it struck a building next to me and threw a great big chunk of mortar from the building that went up into the air. I have no idea how high it went, but I do know it was a little bigger than a baseball. It came down on top of my helmet, hit me on the right shoulder, breaking open the skin on my cheek and creasing my nine-pound steel helmet. It drove me to the ground, to my knees. I started to bleed. I had gloves on and took off my glove to feel my skin. It was wet. We moved into a building, into the basement and took the town.

It was brought to my attention that my face was red with blood and they wanted me to go and look up a medic. That meant I had to get out of that building at night with everybody shooting at everything to find the medic who was in another cellar in that town. No way was I going out there. I could feel my face was not hurt that badly. However, I should have gone because I would have received a Purple Heart and 5 points for coming home. I learned later that if I had gotten the Purple Heart, I would have three Purple Hearts, which would have given me 15 points to come home and I would have come home earlier. But no way was I going out to look for a medic that night.

On 6 January 1945 the 276th Infantry (minus 2d Battalion attached to 313th Infantry) moved from the vicinity of Zittersheim and Wingen to Mulhausen. At this new CP plans for an attack to be executed at 0700 the following day were prepared pursuant to orders from the 45th Division. On arrival of the regiment at Mulhausen the 2d Battalion, now at Offwiller, was released from attachment to the 313th Infantry and was included in the attack plans.

As of this date, replacements required for the regiment were listed at six officers and 281 enlisted men. There were 23 evacuations during the period covered in the report. Rations for three days and gas and oil for one day were on hand. There had been no ammunition expenditures listed for the period. The regiment was short four 1/4-T vehicles, 31 1-1/2-T, one 2 1/2-T and six 1/4-T trailers.

On January 7, 1945 we launched an attack east of Lichtenberg France at 9:00. We advanced 2,000 yards and encountered no enemy. We marched by foot at 1500 to Zinswiller, France, and arrived at 2130, a distance of approximately 5 miles. Now, 2130 is late at night and I remember as we traveled along the road somebody gave the command "lock and load". While we marched, we had no rounds in our rifles; but when the command came down the line to "lock and load", everybody put a clip in their rifle. I don't know if you can imagine 190 men loading and locking their rifles, but I would imagine half of them never did lock their rifles. If you just took your rifle by the barrel and jammed it on the ground quick, the safety would go off. And if you can imagine the fear of the trigger-happy Americans (every bush, every rock, every shadow or silhouette. was a 6'10" German) that order never should have been given.

Somewhere along that column, after the order of "lock and load" was given, we halted for one reason or another; They must have seen something and they were being cautious. When we stopped, we laid down on the side of the road again in the ditches. One guy started to shoot and pretty soon the whole company was shooting. It took the officers twenty minutes to get the thing stopped. Shooting at everything, we must have killed sheep, cows, shot windows out of houses. I don't know what we were shooting at and nobody else knew either.

On January 8, 1945 at Zinswiller, France, we took 13 enlisted men to the hospital as casualties and probably half of them had trench feet. We had two pairs of socks with cotton toes and cotton heels and wool lining. We had shoe packs on that were made of leather to the top of the boot and rubber at the bottom of the boot. When you marched all day, your feet would sweat. We were not educated enough in the care of feet. We didn't understand that you had to take your feet out of those boots at night because your feet would chill and when they did chill they would freeze since the temperature was around zero and we were laying in the snow. With trench feet, your feet look like when you soak your hands in soapy water for a long time, all wrinkled. and white. So to avoid getting trench feet, we carried two pairs. of socks; one you wore and the other pair you would wrap around your belly. As you marched along during the day, the heat from your body would dry out your first pair of socks and then at night you changed socks. Maybe your socks weren't clean but at least they were dry. But, everybody got trench feet to some degree. My feet never got so bad that I had to leave the outfit. Some of the guys got so bad that they couldn't walk. Anyway, out of those 13 men, I would say 50% of them had trench feet and others were probably wounded in battle.

The attack to be launched at 0700 9 January 1945 has as its objective the taking of four hills in the. area southwest of Baerehthal. Prior to the action, S-2 listed the enemy units in contact as 1st Battalion, 952nd Regiment, 361st Division, and 2nd Battalion, 476th Regiment, 256th Division. No reserves had been located. The enemy's activity consisted of defensive action in the regimental zone to include artillery fire throughout the area. Strength of the enemy at Obermuhlthal was estimated at one battalion of approximately 100 men. Morale of enemy troops was reported generally low.

S-2 concluded that the enemy had three capabilities: To reinforce present positions and defend; to reinforce present positions with sufficient force to attack; to fight a delaying action on successive positions.

The 1st and 2d Battalions jumped off at 0700 and the 3d Battalion at 0715, all advancing without opposition until about 1030. At that time Company C received sniper fire from Obermuhlthal, a town in the area of the 275th Infantry. Meanwhile, the 2d Battalion contacted the enemy in its sector.

Informed that fire from Obermuhlthal was hampering the attainment of the 1st Battalion's mission, G-3 said that the 275th Infantry on the right would aid in taking that town. On our left was the 313th Infantry.

At 1146 Company A took its first objective and Company C took temporary control of Obermuhlthal, while the other units continued to advance without resistance. However, Company A was ordered to hold up its progress at this point because of the slower advance of the 2d Battalion due to terrain, and the impracticability of by-passing Obermuhlthal.

Company C was hit by a counterattack at 1410 and at the same time Company B was subjected to heavy artillery fire. A request was again sent to the Commanding General, 45th Division, to have the 2d Battalion, 275th Infantry, aid the 1st Battalion, 276th Infantry, by taking over Obermuhlthal.

The 1st Battalion had the situation under control at 1530 but at 1555 a small arms and artillery attack was made on its CP. This was repulsed. The 2d Battalion was under machine gun fire and artillery fire was landing on the 3d Battalion. At 1700 the 1st Battalion reported Obermuhlthal cleared. S-3 of the 275th Infantry had refused permission to register artillery fire north and northwest of Obermuhlthal because of danger to his troops. As of 1800 plans were being made to defend the ground held. There was active patrolling by our units and the enemy during the night.

S-3's conclusions of the day's action was that the 276th Infantry had accomplished the initial phases of its mission, but that better results would have been obtained if it had not been necessary to turn aside from our mission on the right flank.

On January 9, 1945, we engaged in battle north of Offwiller, France at about 1700. We had one enlisted man missing in action, two enlisted men killed in action and four enlisted men wounded in action. Those killed in action were brought back and laid along side the road so everyone could look at them. Those seriously wounded in action were immediately withdrawn to the regimental hospital set up in the rear some place. The medics put them on stretchers and got them to an ambulance.

At dawn of 10 January 1945 the attack was resumed with the 2d Battalion on the left, 1st Battalion on the right and 3d Battalion in reserve position on its original objective. The regiment continued to push forward throughout the day, after front lines were straightened for easier contact between units.

On this day S-2 reported that enemy units in contact were 2d Battalion, 477th Regiment, 257th Division, and 1st and 2d Battalions, 952d Regiment, 361st Division. No reserves had been located. Enemy strength was reported as greatly reduced and battalions operating with 60 to 200 men, some with only one officer. Morale of all Volkssturm Guards was found to be exceedingly low, but SS units had the same high morale and fighting spirit as previously. More enemy field artillery was being encountered.

The S-1 report showed that replacements needed by the 276th Infantry now stood nine officers and 283 enlisted men. For the period 7, 8, 9 and 10 January 1945 there had been 91 casualties evacuated. There were rations sufficient for three days, ammunition for 1 1/2 days and gas and oil for two days.

The Regimental CP moved to Offwiller 10 January 1945.

On January 10, 1945, we again engaged in battle north of Offwiller, France, and had another man killed in action, one enlisted man lightly injured and three seriously wounded. When a man was killed in action, the first thing you had to do was take one of his dog tags. A man had two dog tags: One tag you turned into the First Sergeant and that was for the record that he would maintain to return to the rear; the other tag had a notch in it and you were supposed to stick it in the guy's teeth and then kick it in so that it would stay there because that dog tag represented the identification of that body. For the duration, we did not bury the dead. They were left laying there and we pushed on. The rear echelons would come up and take care of them. They would look at that dog tag and they could identify the body. Now if you had a guy who was hurt badly enough when he died that you couldn't tell where the chain was, you would look into his mouth to see whether the dog tag was in there.

The attack entered its third successive day at daylight of 11 January 1945 with the battle order remaining: 2d Battalion left; 1st Battalion right; 3rd Battalion reserve. Heavy enemy artillery, mortar and SA fire was encountered throughout the day.

The 1st Battalion attacked and captured Hill 403, but was stopped by heavy artillery fire on reaching the crest of Hill 358. Later this hill was taken at heavy cost to the battalion. The 2d Battalion was pinned down by heavy enemy small arms and automatic fire and unable to advance but later was instructed to move forward in small groups and infiltrate past Hill 403. The 3d Battalion was committed to the 1st Battalion sector, with the 1st Battalion reverting to regimental reserve.

The 3d Battalion attack was halted at 1845, but the 2d Battalion continued to advance and at 0030 12 January 1945 captured Hill 415. At this point it dug in and there was active patrolling by both battalions during the night.

On January 11 at Offwiller, France, Marvin Herrick, PFC, went to the hospital. We engaged in a battle north of Offwiller, France, with no casualties. On January 12, 1945, at Offwiller, we had a Staff Sergeant missing in action and we dropped him from the rolls. We again engaged in battle north of Offwiller, France, all day and had no casualties. That was fantastic.

The fourth day of the attack began at 0900 12 January 1945 with the 2d Battalion on the left, 3d Battalion on the right. Although the 2d Battalion was pinned down by heavy enemy small arms fire, the 3d Battalion pushed forward and sent Company L (reserve) to close the gap between battalions and aid the 2d Battalion. During this day only slight progress was made by the regiment as a whole, due to heavy enemy artillery and small arms fire.

Late in the day, 12 January 1945, a warning order was received that this regiment was to relieve units of the 157th Infantry and 36th Engineers on 13 January 1945.

The S-1 report of 12 January showed five killed and 75 wounded with 82 casualties, being evacuated. Replacements needed were listed as nine officers and 288 enlisted men. The supply situation was normal.

The regiment moved its CP to Woerth, France, 13 January 1945 with the 1st Battalion relieving the 3d Battalion, 157th Infantry; 2d Battalion relieving the 1st Battalion, 315th Infantry (attached to 157th Infantry) and the 3d Battalion relieving the 1st Battalion, 36th Engineers.

In the new position the 276th Infantry's left flank was at Jaegerthal and its right at Lembach. Its mission was to deny the area to the enemy.

January 13 at Mattstall, France, we had quite a few casualties. We had some guys transferred to the 21st General Hospital. We departed approximately 5 miles north of Offwiller, France, at 1400 and arrived at Mattstall, France, at 1600. We covered approximately 30 miles getting there. My particular Sergeant, a Staff Sergeant by the name of Robert G. Ginthner, was slightly wounded on January 13. The day he got wounded we were in a wooded area on top of the reverse side of a hill. We had three 60 mm guns set up to fire in unison for the protection of the front line troops, a main line of resistance.

I remember the artillery shells were falling quite heavily in a very wooded area. I'll never forget how those shells kicked up a herd of deer, scared to death, and they ran wild through our company. Those deer jumped over men; they zigged and they zagged, and they were fast. The deer were jumping and running and the men were yelling "look out, here come the deer" as they tried to get away from them. But, we all knew better than to stand up because the Germans were shooting. The deer finally ran towards the Germans as the Germans were shooting 88s in a barrage. It was really something. Not one American was hurt by those deer; they never stepped on a man. We could hardly believe it.

It was in this barrage that my Staff Sgt. and Section Sgt. were slightly wounded. He received a shell shock hit, which meant that the shell went off and gave him a concussion. I was on a patrol to the rear of the lines bringing up mortar shells. I had taken a squad. In a squad of one 60 mm gun you have a gunner, assistant gunner and three ammunition bearers. The ammunition bearers are there for the sole purpose of carrying ammunition from the ammunition dump to the guns while you are firing. They are constantly

moving because the 60 mm mortar eats up a lot of shells. The ammo dump is wherever the jeep car can get close to the front. The jeep is also continually moving back to the rear and then up to the front again. I had three guns, so I had a total of 9 men and I was leading them to the rear to get the ammo when Sgt. Ginthner got the concussion. He didn't have a puncture wound, just a concussion. When I came back to the outfit with the ammo for the gunners asked where Sgt. Ginthner was and someone said he was sitting over by a tree. I went to report in to Sgt. Ginthner because he was supposed to be my leader. I could see something was wrong and I asked, "Is there anything you want me to do?" His eyes were like two fried eggs, his mouth was open and there was saliva running from his mouth. He was completely in shell shock. He did not hear me, or see me. He didn't even know where he was. It was just like he was knocked crazy. So they evacuated Sgt. Ginthner at that particular time.

Now the hard thing about this was that I didn't know my Lieutenant had delegated me to take over the section at that time and that meant I was promoted from a Buck Sgt to a Staff Sgt. This was only temporary because we did not know whether Sgt. Ginthner would come back or not and you can't promote anyone until you find out if there is a vacancy. So Sgt. Ginthner was loaded in an ambulance along with many other men. According to my records there were quite a few boys who were hurt that day.

So Sgt. Ginthner was evacuated back to the hospital. It turned out he was eventually returned, but we'll talk about that later.

On January 14 at Mattstall, France, we had four men returned from the hospital to duty and we had one man slightly wounded in action. So we gained four and lost one. These four people probably had trench foot, had been doctored up, dried out and powdered and bandaged and returned to the front. We were in position in Mattstall at that time.

At 1357 14 January 1945 the regiment was warned by TF HERREN to be ready to be relieved by units of the 103rd Division, the relief to be completed by 1800, 17 January 1945.

An advance party left the regimental CP at 1820 14 January 1945 with destination the vicinity of Farebersviller.

Relief of the 276th Infantry by the 410th began 14 January and was completed at 1510 16 January 1945. At 1500 16 January 1945 first elements of the regiment left for the vicinity of Farebersviller to relieve the 411th Infantry. The new regimental CP was established at Farebersviller. Movement to the new positions continued throughout the night.

The mission of the 276th, on relieving the 411th (and some elements of the 106th Cavalry), was to deny the enemy the area occupied in defensive positions extending from Emmersweiler on the left to Buschbach on the right. The 2d Battalion occupied the right half of the sector, the 3d Battalion the left half and the 1st Battalion was in reserve. At the time these positions were occupied the enemy strength in this immediate area was estimated at three companies with a total of 350 to 400 men. The situation along the front was generally static and it was believed the enemy probably knew our general location, since he had been in this vicinity for at least a month. It was the S-2 conclusion that the enemy would continue to defend and improve his present positions until he had massed sufficient reserves to launch a coordinated attack. Active patrolling and harassing missions were anticipated.

On January 15, 1945, our company was relieved from position occupied one and a half miles north of Mattstall, France, by the 103rd Infantry Division at 1500. We proceeded to an assembly area approximately one mile north of Mattstall. Captain Michaels was still in charge. We were in an area that was wooded and I can remember the 103rd Infantry Division came up on the hills to relieve us.

The night before we had made one of our first and only night attacks and we had attacked all night and got up on the hill and then we were cut off from the rear. The Germans let us get in there on top of that hill during the night. They let us get situated and dug in and then they just cut us off. We were on this hill and we couldn't get away. So the 103rd had to come in and get us; when they did, we were replaced company for company, platoon for platoon, squad for squad, man for man. On the day we were being replaced, I

remember the Germans opened up with artillery 88s and they caught the 70th and the 103rd on the same hill.

We all jumped in holes. I remember I jumped in a hole and it felt like the whole 103rd (which was equivalent to 15,000 men) jumped in with me. Everybody jumped on top of me because there weren't enough holes to go around. Of course, we eventually withdrew from the rear and went back to the regiment in the rear area for a while.

However, on January 14, we had wounded a German and he was at the bottom of the hill. He was cold and his foot had been shot off; he kept yelling, "Help me, help me!" It was hard on the morale of the troops listening to that soldier dying. Finally an officer came over and said, "Bru, you take a couple prisoners (we had some German prisoners) and go down there and bring that guy up on top of the hill to see if we can shut him up." So I took two prisoners and went down the hill, approximately 150-200 feet. My outfit was on top of that hill and all eyes were on me, but still, I was getting awfully close to the enemy and I was all by myself with two German prisoners. As I approached the wounded soldier, I noticed he was a kid not any older than I was and I was only 19 years old. I started to talk to him. I asked him if he spoke English. He said, "Nein." He was cold and he was shivering, but his foot wasn't bleeding even though it was in sad shape. I had my back to the enemy lines and was facing the fellows in the front, trying to get the Germans to pick the guy up. We didn't have a stretcher, but we had some blankets and were trying to carry him in a blanket roll. Unknown to me, there were some German soldiers hiding in the bushes at my back side. One was an officer and the rest of them were non-commissioned officers. They wanted to surrender and came out with their hands up. I will never forget that as long as I live. There I am with a 45 pistol, two prisoners and a wounded man with my back to them.. They could have cut me to ribbons. Eight soldiers came out of those bushes, armed with rifles. My outfit wanted to open fire and I kept them calm, saying, "Don't shoot, don't shoot!", because that's the first thing they said to me when they came out. I could see that they had a rifle with a white flag and wanted to surrender. I finally got my outfit settled down where they would not shoot and the Germans were coming cut. As they approached me, I told them to throw their weapons on the ground. They did, right in front of me. The officer came up and he had a German lugger, a real beauty; I took it from him and then proceeded to organize the party to carry this wounded guy and get the hell out of there. I wanted to get back up with my own fellows. I figured that there were going to be more Germans, because they always worked that way. They always shot when they saw one American because they knew there would be more. I learned that lesson a long time ago, so I figured there had to be more Germans around. I tried to organize the party but the officer was giving me a hard time, because he didn't want to pick up the wounded soldier. Now it was cold and I was tired and hungry and in enemy territory completely surrounded by Germans and I was scared to death. I just wanted to get this guy up on the hill and here is this stupid officer trying to give me a bad time because he says he is an officer and, according to the rules and regulations of war, an officer is not supposed to work. Finally I said for pity's sake and I got his attention; he picked up the wounded soldier and we made it to the top of the hill.

When we got to the top, our medic took a look at the German who was wounded. At that time he used sulfur to patch the wound and wrapped bandage around it and took him over on the other side of the hill where there were more prisoners. This was a case where I was credited verbally but never received an award. They said, "Brubaker, you are a brave soldier to go out and fight a war and catch eight prisoners with your back turned." At the time I didn't think it was one bit funny; but after it was over, I did manage to see the humor in it, although I would never want to go through that again -- no way!

On January 16, 1945, we left the assembly area one mile north of Mattstall, France, at 1700, and moved towards new positions. On January 17, 1945, we arrived at a new position at Folkling, France at 3:00 by truck. We relieved and took positions of Company G, 411th Infantry Regiment. I never did understand what all the maneuvering of people was about.

On January 18, our company commander saw fit to promote 18 enlisted men from privates to privates first class. Now really that doesn't mean much. A private got promoted to PFC and he got one stripe and a pay increase of about \$10 a month. But I'll tell you something, it was a real morale booster for the outfit.

Here we were in battles with the Germans on top of hills covered with snow and the commander sees fit to promote 18 enlisted men.

On January 19, 1945, at Folkling, France, we dug new fox holes at the same positions and held a practice alert at 1400. The company CO made a recon over the company position and selected withdrawal routes. We also had night patrols. I was getting kind of antsy when he started talking about withdrawal routes. They called it a strategic withdrawal but what it really meant was that he expected to retreat and he was looking over the hills to try to figure out which way would be the best way to get the hell out of there. We were all starting to get antsy. We had practice and alerted everybody in the company to fire a main line of resistance. That meant if you have a full strength of 190 men and six officers, they all open fire, including the mortars, the machine guns and rifles. Everybody shoots and it's a devastating sight to see. Then we found out we were going to have to withdraw. I always panicked when he would talk that way because there was always someone left behind to fight a delay action to hold the enemy back while his buddies withdrew. That is miserable. It is probably the most lonesome thing a person could do--sit there and watch your buddies going off the hill knowing you are the only one left.

On January 20, Captain James Michael transferred to the 2nd Battalion Headquarters. The new company commander was 1st Lt. Harry Shoem and we had 2nd Lt. Charles Spencer assigned to Company A. We were holding a defensive position and organizing patrols. It really doesn't sound like much, but it's a miserable job. The outfits would dig in on the hills, usually two men to a hole and the patrols are fixed so they usually have about 4 or 5 men. They would make a diamond shape with one man in front, two men on the flanks and one to bring up the rear. Now, the guy in charge of the patrol would be in the middle so that he could control the patrol. In other words, tell the patrol what they are going to do and which way they are going. These five men would leave the area, cross through our lines of organization and move into the enemy territory. The objective was to find out what the enemy was up to.

Now this was a quiet, satisfying, relaxing job. You tiptoe out to no-man's land, look the situation over and stick your head into a German foxhole, taking notes on what the Germans are talking about. Then you withdraw, tiptoe back and if you can get through your own lines without getting shot by slap-happy Americans, you report to the Company Commander, "For pity's sake, they're cooking hot dogs over there!"

What you were supposed to do was find out what the Germans intended to do. If you were trained in the Army for a while, you could anticipate things, assume what was going on, see reinforcements coming up, see if they had full strength and if they were fully equipped and with what pieces of equipment. Our morning reports say "holding defensive positions, organizing patrols, morale of enlisted men good." Sure it was good for the guy who was in his hole with his top covered over and calmly smoking a cigarette, making a pot of coffee and worrying only about his own little world in that hole. But not so for the guy who had to go out there on patrols, and they were ungodly patrols sometimes lasting 5 to 6 hours into the night. The next morning if the company was moving out, that guy would come in and start moving again with no sleep.

On patrol you would tape your dog tags together so they wouldn't jangle, blacken your face; and if you were out at night, try to keep your clothing dark. We had white covers over our overcoats to blend in with the snow, like the Finnish troops. They didn't work for night patrol. Nobody, I mean nobody, talked to one another. It was all done through hand signals with as little communication as possible. If the Germans heard one man, they assumed there were two more and they would lay and wait, setting a trap for five slap-happy Americans, shooting the breeze, walking in German territory. Then you were a dead duck.

On January 22, we sent Robert Meredith to the hospital, which means that he was sent to the rear. Robert Meredith was one of the guys that got married in my outfit when we were in the States side. He married a young girl about 18 years old. That same day we lost four men who were transferred to the headquarters company 2nd Battalion. The Company Commander promoted 10 privates to PFC. Another man was transferred to 236th general hospital from battalion hospital. On the 23rd and 24th of January we had quite a few men in movement back and forth from the sick hospital battalion or battalion aid station and the 21st headquarters station hospital. The Battalion Air Station was really the rear of the company area and the battalion area which was the equivalent of moving back four companies. They

usually had a doctor back there. They would bring the wounded back and look at them and if they could give any temporary aid they would do that. If the person was serious and needed further medical treatment, they would put that person in an ambulance in a convoy and ship them to another hospital. That meant they went from a tent to a building where they had facilities for surgery.

They kept the Battalion Aid Stations as close to the front lines as possible so they could give aid as soon as possible. The hospitals where they performed surgeries were further back in regimental areas which is four battalions. The ones that were really bad off were evacuated from the area and usually sent to a place like England where there were regular hospitals. If the hospitals in England were not equipped to take care of a particular injury, the person was shipped back to the States. It was possible that if you were wounded on the front line, within a matter of seven days you could be in a hospital bed in Indiana or Cleveland, Ohio. They would rush you right to the rear and keep you right on moving until you got to the facility that could help you.

On January 23, we again had quite a few wounded and we were transferring people back and forth. The position we held was getting some wounded while sitting on the front.

By the 25th of January we transferred three sergeants to the 45th Infantry Division and, of course, had many men transferred to the general hospital from the sick battalion. When we went up that gangplank the previous December, we had 190 men and six officers. I can tell you from reading the reports that our T. O. (technical operation) strength was down considerably. I can remember when this occurred. Theoretically, we should have had 12 men to a squad. At times you might be down to only 3 men per squad. Where you had 40 or more men to a platoon, you might be down to only 12 men. We were getting down to the bare minimum where we were not functional. We could not stand an attack.

On January 16, we had to take eight enlisted men and transfer them to task force Herren, which was a special task force, a combat unit. Now, we were really hurting. My First Sgt. Manuel Figeira got a battle field commission and was appointed to Second Lieutenant. Richard Schummacher was promoted from Tech Sgt. to 2nd Lt., and we had two platoon sgt. and one 1st. sgt. who were battle field commissioned to 2nd Lts. and transferred to the second replacement depot in Thaon, France. They took them to the rear, pinned on their gold bars, read them the articles of war and then sent them back to the outfit. They were gone several days. This procedure made several openings in our outfit now, because we were short of non-commissioned officers. Also, on January 27th, fourteen men were transferred to Company A of the 276th Infantry Regiment. They were peeling our outfit down and we had practically no one left. It was also at this time we had a man by the name of Robert Toomey listed as AWOL (as of 7:15 January 26). Toomey was later cleared of those charges when it was determined that he had been taken as a prisoner of war.

They were using our outfit as replacement personnel for those lost or killed in other outfits in our regiment and soon we were down to a handful. Yet, troop morale was indicated as good and we were digging in. The third platoon, which was a supporting platoon of our company, laid protection wires from our left flank to E Company which was on our right flank. This wire was called constantino (concertina – ed.) wire, barbed wire entanglement that the Germans would encounter if they attacked. The wire was strung from company to company. The third platoon also cut timber for the first, second and weapon platoons to improve fox holes. We were digging our holes deeper and getting timber on our roofs. We were getting ready to sit for a while and defend our action because we were going it alone. Nobody was going to help us and everybody was getting excited about this deal now, wondering what's going to happen. Somebody was getting ready to do something.

January 28th we were taking casualties in our outfit and we had three guys taken back to the 19th headquarters 23rd general hospital. We were sending guys to the hospital and still sending out patrols at 8:00 in the evening to observe Forbach, France. The report stated the mission was accomplished at 1:00 in the morning; all the E.M. returned and no enemy activity observed. When I read a report like that, it sounds like the patrol crossed through our lines, went out so far, laid down on their bellies and stayed awhile. The enemy was out there and they just didn't want to go out any further than they had to, with the intention of putting in their time and avoiding a shooting match with the enemy. I don't know this, but I am

assuming that a patrol stomping around in enemy territory that long would have picked up information, stepped on a foot mine or tripped a flare or something. It seems odd that they were out there that length of time and found no enemy.

On January 29th we had five guys from battalion aid station going to the 36th general hospital. We had PFC Coleman transferred to headquarters company 2nd battalion. Robert Toomey was now determined "missing in action" in the vicinity of Forbach, France, 800 yards from Canivingem, France, as of 0715 January 26. His name was dropped from the roll. As of this date, we were left with 109 men and 21 of those men were sick at the Battalion Aid Station. We were supposed to have six officers and we had only four. We continued to lay wire and improve our position.

We were digging in like crazy, our holes getting deeper and deeper, using heavier timber on top, stringing tin cans to the wire so the clanging at night would alert the troops.

On January 30th, we promoted quite a few people to replace the men that were gone. It appeared that we were going to begin to build up our outfit again. We were inspected by the division and regimental staff officers. When they came down and looked at the company, we got the idea that something was going to happen. Our men were promoted and we had the line jobs filled. We were in a position that we only required replacements.

On January 31, 1945, one-third of the company worked on fox holes, switched positions, and the remainder of the company was on the line and in position. Morale of the troop is listed as "good" in the report. Here we are now, we stepped off the boat one month ago with 190 men and we are left with 109 and they write "morale of troops is good". I'll have to talk to the First Sgt. about that. It seems to me he has something backward.

The S-1 report of 17 January showed that needed replacements were eight officers and 327 enlisted men. Supplies are normal.

The two weeks following occupation of the new positions were devoted to improvement of defensive work and to aggressive patrolling. Complete plans were prepared for defense, for counterattack and for withdrawal under various conditions. In the meantime, TF HERREN, which had been operating under the XXI Corps, was placed under the IV Corps at 1100 25 January 1945.

S-2 subsequently reported that the enemy was dug in strongly and was continuing to improve his positions. Deliberate defenses in the vicinity of Saarbrücken were reported. The enemy, meanwhile, devoted his efforts chiefly to patrolling and harassing actions.

Operations in the Farebersviller area were conducted under the handicap of a heavy stand of snow, icy roads and extremely cold weather.

As the month of February opened, the 276th Infantry was occupying defensive positions extending from Emmersweiler, on the left, to Bousbach on the right. These positions had been held by the regiment since 16 January. The last half of January had been devoted to improvement and strengthening of the defensive setup and to aggressive patrolling. Combat efficiency was classed as excellent.

On the left of the 276th Infantry was the 106th Cavalry Group and on the right was the 275th Infantry.

There was a heavy stand of snow on the ground 1 February, but the next day the weather moderated and a thaw set in that melted all the snow within the next four days. This, together with intermittent rains, made roads and fields muddy and hampered transportation and impeded combat operations.

The enemy, during the latter part of January, also had been improving his defenses, and had been out-posting those positions and doing some patrolling, though not aggressively.

The S-2 estimate of the enemy situation on 1 February was that there were elements of one regiment opposite our positions. The enemy line ran generally through the towns of Forbach, Oeting, Behren and Kerbach. Questioning of prisoners of war indicated that some of these troops were as old as 55 years. The state of morale, however, appeared to be satisfactory. More complete information was being obtained from the questioning of civilians than from prisoners of war.

The S-2 report concluded that the enemy would outpost and defend his present positions, awaiting reinforcements; that if attacked the enemy would delay in successive positions until he reached the fortified area south of Saarbrücken, and that the enemy would continue to improve his present positions.

In general, the 276th sector was quiet at this time.

S-3 was preparing plans for withdrawal to defensive line as established by Headquarters TF HERREN. Reconnaissance was made of routes of withdrawal and work was under way on phase lines. Reconnaissance and planning were also going forward for a series of raids to be made in accordance with Division order.

On February 1, 1945, two rounds of mortar fire fell on the position and no fire was returned. The enemy could not be located. On this date the First Lt. paid us and we got paid in allied marks. This was the first payday we had for a long time and we wondered why. For heaven's sake, here we were in enemy territory, fighting a war; on that particular day two rounds of mortar fell right in our company area and we were paid. No one understood that.

On February 2, replacements required for the regiment were listed as 20 officers and 798 enlisted men. The supply situation was normal. The following vehicles were listed as lost or damaged: 16 1/4 T, one 2 1/2 T, eight 1/4 T trailers, four 1 T trailers. Requests covering all of these had been submitted.

On February 2 at Folkling, France, eight mortar rounds fell 100 yards from our mortar position--that was me. No fire was returned. The enemy could not be located. One-third of the company worked on position in line and the remainder of the company in position on defense line. In other words, the enemy had spotted us on our positions. On that particular day, the mortars were on the reverse slope of the hill and I was on the forward slope. I was an observer with our troops on the front lines. Now this hill had no trees, was covered with snow and had no buildings. It was like an abandoned, snow-covered wheat field. I was with one other man, my platoon runner PFC Wilfred Sencindiver, in a hole.

That night the hole started to melt. I was lying on a board in the hole and had the board laying against the side of the hole. When I woke up early in the morning, my feet were in water and so were my buddy's feet. He was supposed to be wide awake, but was snoring with his feet deep in water. We could not evacuate the hole. The edges of the hole were thawing, making a neat black ring around the hole, a perfect target for the enemy.

The enemy took out his field glasses, looked over and saw our position and fired mortar rounds near us. You get five rounds to knock out a target. A mortar has a bursting range of 19'6" across the diagonal. It was strictly concussion, very little shrapnel. You would set the gun up and fire. It didn't matter where the first round landed. You just wanted to settle the base plate and get the gun solid so there would be no movement. When the first round exploded near your target, you could calculate your corrections and adjust your gun to bring one burst under the target. The philosophy was that you would fire one over and one short, then adjust right on your target. One over, one short, and then three rounds to hit.

Okay, now here we go. It's dawn, beginning to lighten and warm up. It's muddy; we are wet; we are cold and we are hungry. We haven't slept right; we haven't eaten; we haven't done anything worthwhile. Our feet are soaking wet and I look out the hole and see and hear a burst of shell fire behind me. I look in front of me and see another shell fall in front of me. I tell my buddy, "That's for us, so let's get cut of here." So we get cut of the hole and start running to the rear, the reverse side of the hill. As we ran, the enemy fired three on our position. They were near misses. They did not hit the hole. They came close. As they saw us running, the Germans fired three on the reverse slope of the hill. Of course, his shells went over

our guns because they were on the other side of the hill. That accounts for the eight mortar rounds falling 800 yards from our mortar position in Forbach. The company commander put that down in the log; I guess that was the only action we had that day.

On February 3, 1945. Richard Schumacker, the 2nd Lt., reported on duty from the Task Force Herren. I was promoted from a buck sergeant to a staff sergeant because my sergeant was off the rolls. After his shell shock, he came back once, but was there only for a short time. He was no good to the outfit. He would hear a round fall or machine guns and he would cry like a baby. He couldn't think; he couldn't lead; he couldn't do much of anything. It was just too bad. They finally took him off the roll and sent him back to the rear. I got his job on February 3.

It was noted in the S-2 report of 3 February that the enemy was bringing up reinforcements. Reserves, estimated at a battalion, were located in Stiring-Wendel. Added to the summary of enemy capabilities was the conclusion that with further reinforcements and artillery he could execute a coordinated attack in the zone of the 276th Infantry.

On the same date S-2 and S-3 continued perfecting plans for raiding operations. XV Corps refused the use of tanks and TD's in these operations. Improvement of defensive positions and active patrolling continued.

On February 5th we got 19 men as replacements, brand new from the United States. We also had seven assigned to duty from replacement headquarters from the Task Force Herren. We moved from 109 men to 135. Our outfit was beginning to be pumped up. Now remember, we put new sergeants in command, started a new organization. Our company was relieved at 5:00 on February 5 by Company A. We assembled in Folkling, France, for the remainder of the day.

First we started receiving reinforcements, then they pulled us out of the lines and put us in the rear. We knew that there was something big cooking. I could feel it, but we had no idea what was going on. They took us to an assembly area and we tried to get some kind of organization together so we could operate as a unit.

At this time the regiment was also carrying on a training program for reinforcements. This instruction included familiarization and mechanical training with all weapons, scouting and patrolling, map reading and use of the compass, observation, emplacements, camouflage, first aid and personal hygiene, and general proficiency. Progress charts were kept to insure that each reinforcement had received adequate instructions. Also, the troops were shown the training film, "Your Job in Germany".

Reinforcements totaling 12 officers and 184 enlisted men were received 3 February.

The 276th Infantry began to operate again as a unit of the 70th Division at 0001 4 February, when TF HERREN was dissolved.

Raid No. 1 of the planned series jumped off at daylight February, conducted by the third battalion. The raiding party reached its objective in Marienau without encountering opposition and searched houses in that vicinity, but no enemy was found. There were no casualties on either side and no PW's taken. The raiding party returned at 0900.

The First Battalion, ordered to relieve the Second Battalion and K Company, had completed this relief at 0630 5 February.

Plans were being completed 5 February for an attack by the Second Battalion and K Company, scheduled to jump off on the morning of 6 February. The 276th Infantry was notified by the 70th Division at 1740 on 5 February that the 275th Infantry was preparing to support the attack.

The mission of the attack was to capture prisoners of war and to kill as many of the enemy as possible. Original plans for the attack called for three phases: First, the taking of high ground to the south and east

of the enemy-held town of Oeting by E and F Companies; Second, taking of high ground southwest, west and northwest of Oeting by G and K Companies; Third, taking of the town of Oeting. Preparatory to the attack the Second Battalion, Maj. T. R. Mataxis commanding, established a forward CP at Folkling with right and left CP's from which to observe action in the first two phases.

Supporting the attack were the 93rd Armored Battalion, a platoon of 4.2 mortars and elements of the 2775th Engineers.

The attack began, as scheduled, at 0001 6 February when E and F Companies moved out along the road running north from Gaubivingen, with E on the left, to accomplish the first phase. Enemy resistance was not heavy and the objective was taken at 0507.

To accomplish the second phase, K and G Companies crossed the LD at 0630, K on the left. But now the enemy was alert and these two attacking companies met heavy small arms, automatic weapon and artillery fire. In spite of this stiff opposition, K and G attained their objective by 1100. Now the four companies held high ground overlooking Oeting in a general horseshoe from southeast of the town, to the south, to the southwest and up to the northwest.

But the opposition which was overcome by K and G Companies proved to be only a forerunner of extremely stubborn enemy resistance that included heavy and accurate mortar and artillery fire, continued small arms and automatic weapon fire, and, on the following day, fire from tanks. For the rest of 6 February the four companies held their positions on the limited objectives in the face of the mortar and artillery pounding by the enemy. Our supporting weapons reduced the effectiveness of the enemy's concentrations to some extent by counterbattery fire, but late in the afternoon this assistance still was not sufficient to permit a continuation of the attack into the town of Oeting.

By 1800 of 6 February we had taken 35 prisoners of war and had inflicted considerable casualties on the enemy with our small arms, automatic weapons, mortar and artillery fire, but we had also been suffering casualties through the day, chiefly from the enemy's artillery and mortars.

As darkness approached, reports were received from F and G Companies that the large number of enemy in Oeting made an attack on the town inadvisable. At the same time, the enemy renewed and intensified his artillery fire on our positions. The Commanding Officer of the Second Battalion deemed it unwise to launch an attack to carry out the third phase of the engagement so late in the day, mainly because it was virtually certain to result in a night fight within the town.

Thus, the coming of night 6 February found our forces still holding the high ground of phases 1 and 2. While this action had been taking place, O Company, assigned the mission of staging a raid into the town of Behren to kill or capture all possible enemy, carried out this order by sending one platoon into the town. Having carried out the mission, the platoon withdrew to its original position.

During the night of 6 February the four attacking companies strengthened their positions and were prepared to lay down close in fires in case of counterattack. However, the night passed in comparative quiet.

Shortly after daylight the enemy resumed his aggressive action against our positions with heavy fire from artillery. At the same time enemy infantry commenced counterattacks through infiltration tactics. This early morning action was beaten off, but later in the day there was additional infiltration supported by fire from enemy tanks and by continued artillery and mortar fire. Our counterbattery fire reduced to some extent the effectiveness of the enemy mortars and artillery, but never sufficiently to permit a renewal of the attack. The infiltration counterattacks were successfully staved off in all instances, although the second and third platoons of Company G had to withdraw to the CPL after receiving an attack from the front, both flanks and the rear, and after vainly attempting to contact Company K.

Throughout the day, the four companies had difficulty maintaining contact due to heavy automatic weapon fire that pinned down patrols. For example, Company K, feeling to the right for G Company, sent out five patrols that failed to establish contact.

Toward evening of 7 February the E and F Company positions were swept by a severe artillery, mortar and rocket barrage. At the same time two tanks appeared, one on the left and one on the right, placing direct fire on foxholes. All this was coordinated with a direct frontal attack. One artillery FO's radio was destroyed and his crew injured so that F Company could not get artillery support when it was requested. Enemy riflemen began moving in from the right of the company. The Company F commander then gave orders for withdrawal of the company to E Company's right flank. When the E Company commander discovered that F Company was not in position on his right flank, he requested another company to cover that exposed side and at the same time he organized some elements of F which he contacted to serve as a flank protection for his company.

Meanwhile, Company K, hard-pressed by the enemy and out of contact with both G Company and the Second Battalion, clung to its position until it was reached at 1715 by elements of I Company, a squad of the A & P Platoon of the Second Battalion and a wire crew, establishing wire contact with the other units.

The night of 7 February withdrawal of all four companies to their positions before the attack was ordered. E Company covered F's return to its original position, and G Company covered the withdrawal of K. By daylight of 8 February the original line had been re-established.

The First Battalion was relieved by the Second, plus Company K, on the original OPLR and MLR on the right of our sector, the Third continued to hold the left half and the First Battalion went into reserve in the vicinity of Folkling.

A summary of the Oeting action of 6-7 February placed our casualties at 10 killed in action, 64 wounded and seven missing, while we inflicted considerable casualties on the enemy and took 46 prisoners.

The enemy had been compelled during our attack to withdraw his defensive line to a position approximately 300 meters north of Oeting, but he still retained possession of the town. His counterattack the evening of 7 February restored his original defensive positions. The strength of the enemy on the 276th Infantry's regimental front during this action was estimated as being three to five companies with supporting weapons which included artillery, tanks, light and heavy mortars, machine guns and some rockets. His morale was regarded as "satisfactory". S-2 reported that the strength of the enemy forces had been badly depleted as a result of our attack, but that reinforcements could be received from Spicheren. One of the enemy units resisting our attack was an Officer Candidate Company.

On February 6th, a 2nd Lt. was slightly wounded in action in the vicinity of Oeting, France. We also had a Staff Sgt. seriously wounded in action, two privates slightly wounded and a PFC lightly wounded. We had a T/Sgt who came back from sick hospital to duty. We had launched an attack on February 6 at 6:00 to take Hill Yoke. Now you realize we were not full strength but we did have enough men to make an organization and we encountered the enemy at 8:00. Heavy fighting occurred all day and we took Hill Yoke 400 yards southwest of Oeting. One officer and six enlisted men were wounded. The mission was accomplished by 1600 and the company was still under fire, artillery and mortar fire.

I remember this attack very well. It was very cold. There was snow on the ground. We jumped off at 6:00 a.m., after the 93rd Armored Field Artillery Battalion laid a roving barrage of artillery shells in front of us. They started dropping their shells as close as they could to us without hurting any of our troops and then lifted the barrage up the hill and away from us about 2000 yards. They then came back to us again, lifted the barrage again and started going away from us towards the Germans. We followed the exploding shells up the hill while the Germans were buttoned up in their holes. We kept as close to the shells as we could. All the time we were doing this, we were going through a mine field laid by the Germans. The army engineers had cleared a path and lined it with white linen tape.

I remember I was the one who told several rifle platoons about this attack before we went into battle. Part of our company was in a warehouse and I was in the process of telling my fellows about the attack when the officer in the building said, "Bru, you might as well tell the story to everyone in the building." And I did. However, I wasn't told it was going to be a raid. I thought if we took Oeting town, we would push on into Germany.

As the attack moved along through the morning, I remember the Germans opened up with 88 shells and I jumped in a ravine headfirst and felt something under me. It was a dead G.I. who had been killed several weeks before. He was frozen solid. His face was only two or three inches from mine and his eyes were wide open. The bottom part of his body was covered with snow, but the wind had blown the snow from his face. I had dreams about him for many nights after that.

We did manage to get some people into the town of Oeting but withdrew to high ground around the town. We fired our first area target with three 60 mm mortars here. All three guns firing at once covered a wide area in front of our troops. After we fired the mission, I heard Lt. Cheezen ask the rifle platoons over the radio if anyone of our guys got hurt and the answer was "no". I was real proud of our gunners that day. Another thing happened that evening. Lt. Cheezen came back to me and said, "Brut, a German has been sniping at us from the rear and we have to get him out of there." Somehow the German got into a dug-out behind the troops and he was shooting our people in the back. So we knocked down one of the 60 mm mortars and just took the barrel. Jake and I crawled within range of the dug-out. Jake was the gunner and I was the second gunner.

We were going to shoot within a range of 100 to 150 feet in front of us without a base plate or tripod and no sights, just a 60 mm mortar barrel. It could be done but if we failed we could be killed or kill some of our own troops. The shell must go straight up and come down 100 feet in front of us. It was cold but as Jake was sighting the gun, I looked over at him and he was sweating like it was 90 degrees out. I said to him, "Jake, this has to be the best shot of your life or I'll never speak to you again." Jake finally said, "Now; shoot!" I pulled the pin on the shell and let it slide down the barrel. The shell went off and up the barrel. We could see it going up from the barrel and we couldn't see it coming back down. It hit the dug-out dead center. Jake and I were so shocked that we hit the target that he and I sat there looking at each other for a couple of minutes. We couldn't believe we did it. The Lieutenant said, "Jake, you should get a medal", but he never did.

The Germans had tanks. Our weapons would not fire because of the mud in the guns. But we fired everything we had to fire. A machine gunner whose tripod had been shattered by mortar fire hopped to his feet and fired the weapon from the hip to disperse an enemy charge. Our 60 mm barrels were red hot. The U.S. manual says after firing a 60 mm and the barrel gets hot, you are supposed to swap the barrel, or pour water on it--something to cool it. That day as the Germans were counterattacking, we used so much ammo that the ammo bearers were complaining about carrying so much ammo for the 60 mm mortars and 30 caliber machine guns.

After all that killing and wounding of people, we were ordered to withdraw to the rear under the cover of darkness. We carried our dead and wounded to the rear while the Germans kept the pressure on. On February 7th, one mile southwest of Oeting, France, we had lightly wounded people, people who were at the hospital or at battalion aid station who were not coming back because they were wounded. The fighting was getting tough and casualties were happening faster. We neared the town of Oeting, fighting one mile southwest of it to take the town. I remember this deal very well because on February 8, our 2nd Lt. Cheezen got a promotion to 1st Lt. and our casualties were very high. We were relieved by Company A at 2:00 on February 8 in defensive position near Folkling, France.

As of the night of 7 February, the 884th Field Artillery was placed in direct support of the 276th Infantry. On 9 February, the 274th Infantry, which had been in division reserve with the 100th Division, returned to 70th Division control and moved into the line between the 275th and 276th, relieving elements of both. As a result of this action, the front of the 276th, which had extended from Emmersweiler to Bousbach, was reduced to a line from Emmersweiler to Gaubivingen. On this front the First Battalion relieved the Second Battalion (plus Company K) on the right half, the Third Battalion remained on the left and the Second

went into reserve in the vicinity of Kochern, Company K returned to Third Battalion control and went into reserve. Limiting point of the front line battalions was in Morsbach. The First Battalion CP was at Folkling and the Third's at Nassweiler (a suburb of Rosbruck).

At the same time, the regimental CP was moved from Farebersviller to Bening. The Service Company and the field train were established at St. Avold.

The 106th Cavalry, on our left, was replaced by the 101st Cavalry on 11 February, while the 274th Infantry continued to be the unit on our right. In the three days following the re-adjustment of the line, the enemy devoted himself almost entirely to defensive actions--strengthening his present position, out-posting his line and doing some patrolling. In general, the front was quiet. The regiment continued active patrolling.

The weather, which was cold and rainy as the Oeting action started on 6 February, continued so for the next week. The temperature was in the vicinity of 40 to 45 degrees most of the time and the continuous rainfall made transportation and field operations even more difficult.

February 9th, the company moved from Folkling to Theding, France, approximately 4 kms. and moved to Cocheren, France, approximately 5 kms. We moved by truck and at that particular place about 50 percent of the company took showers. I can remember how they took half the company to the rear and into town where they had public baths. They had showers, which were called "douches" or "cabine". We had not had baths for over two months. We had not shaved nor had haircuts. We hadn't even brushed our teeth half the time. We looked terrible. We went in and we all dropped our uniforms. I took off my overcoat and threw it in a pile after taking all my things out of the pockets. I had a field jacket on underneath and I took it off and threw it in the pile. I had a pair of green O.D. pants and shirt and threw them in the pile. I threw in a windbreaker, a pair of long johns and socks. Then, they took us to a place where they had tubs. You could take a bath or a shower. It was a public bathhouse taken over by the U.S. Army, but it was run by civilians. They had women working in these baths. After you finished your bath, the women would go in and clean the tubs to get ready for the next men. The odor from our clothes, with all the steam from the bath, was enough to kill a six-day old horse. The hanky-panky that was going on was something else; the women would go in to clean the showers and the guys wouldn't let them out. It was quite a mess.

When you got a shower, you got a haircut which was done fast and furious. It was done by a civilian; nothing pretty, but he did the job. Now remember I had a wool cap on and a nine-pound helmet which had flattened my hair; it looked like a sick mop. The objective was to get the hair off my ears and neck. It wasn't even, but it was a haircut.

Then we received new clothes: shoes, underwear and shirts. Everything was brand new, the tags still on. The clothes we left there were washed and given to displaced persons and prisoners of war. They were over two months old and had never been cleaned. You can imagine what that was like. But, we had haircuts and clean clothes. They took us across the street and we laid down in a warm building, the first building we'd seen in ;with heat, and we slept. We only slept for two or three hours, .but it was glorious. When they came around and woke us up, of course we had to go to the front line again. If the building is still there when I go back, I'm going to take a shower there. February 10th, more replacements arrive reporting for duty. They started to beef us up again. I hated to see that. We got them from HQ 71st Replacement Battalion.

Replacements required as of 10 February were listed by S-1 as 14 officers and 577 enlisted men. This shortage was relieved in part on 11 February when 223 enlisted men were received by the regiment as reinforcements.

Immediately after new boundaries were assigned to the 276th, plans were prepared for possible withdrawal to successive defense positions.

The regiment began a new and thorough program of training for reinforcements and units on 12 February. The plan called for a schedule of training by the reserve battalion to include familiarization with all

weapons, squad and platoon attack problems (day and night), field firing, scouting and patrolling, use of the compass, etc. It was also ordered that some phases of training be conducted by troops occupying defensive positions.

The regimental training plan called for rotating battalions as reserve so that four or five days at a time would be allowed each for carrying out the instruction program. The writing of Squad and platoon problems was assigned to the various battalions. Operations on our part from 11 February to 16 February consisted chiefly of improvement of defensive positions and the conduct of active patrolling.

February 11 we were back on the front lines and we had nine guys go to the hospital, although I can't remember the action of that particular day. On February 12, we dropped four guys missing in action and we actually got a new guy from replacement depot.

The regiment was now receiving aggressive air support. One bombing mission on 13 February against an enemy paper mill at Marienau, where four machine gun positions had been reported, resulted in 50 percent destruction of the factory.

On the same date an order was received from Division that each regiment would conduct a raid of at least platoon strength once a week. The raiding unit was not to be of company size.

Changes in the battle order on 15 February placed Company A on the MLR, relieving Company C, which went into First Battalion reserve, while the 70th Division Reconnaissance Troop relieved Company L and elements of Company M. Company K and Company L then became Third Battalion reserve. The sector at this time was quiet. The regimental train was moved forward from St. Avold to Hombourg Haut.

On February 13 in Cocheren, France, we got 34 enlisted men assigned to duty from the replacement depot. That meant something was getting ready to happen again. When you lose a jeep, if they give you a replacement that meant you were getting ready to run again. And if you got replacement men, something was up. February 14th we started to run some company squad problems because we had new men and we wanted to see how the company runs with squad problems. We were going to run platoon problems in area 19 in St. Avold, France. We had to work as a unit because if you didn't, you were a dead duck. We had to find out what the new men knew and what they didn't know because our lives depended on what they did. Now, you can imagine on the front lines, running problems. We were playing cops and robbers on the front lines which seems like the silliest thing, but it had to be done. We departed Cocheren, France on February 16 at 1700 and arrived at Morsbach at 2000. Travel was by motor convoy manning positions on outpost line of resistance at Morsbach, France, which is a pretty big town and a suburb of Saarbrücken, France. On February 17 we were in position, on outpost manning positions on the outskirts of the town and we were starting to get reinforcements. Sgt. James Roddel stepped on a land mine and lost a foot. He was in the machine gun section.

Orders having been received by the 70th Division to attack in conjunction with the 63d Division on the right and the 101st Cavalry Group on the left to seize the high ground on the general line Bubingen-Stiring-Klarental-Wehrden, the staff of the 276th prepared complete attack plans for this unit and issued them shortly before midnight of 15 February. This represented the most elaborate attack preparations yet drawn up for the Bloody Axe regiment. The Division objective called for capture of high ground along the south bank of the Saar River opposite Saarbrücken and extending above and below that city.

In general, the 276th was to follow this line of attack: Seize the high ground dominating the town of Oeting; move into and capture that town; take the high ground beyond the town; then pivoting on the left limiting point, to swing the direction of the attack north-northwest to take Forbach and be prepared to continue the attack northwest through the Forbach Forest to seize our section of the Division's final objective--the high ground extending from Wehrden to Krughutte looking down on the Saar River. The attack was to begin 17 February at 0001 with the First Battalion on the right, Third Battalion on the left and Second Battalion in reserve in the vicinity of Cocheren. Additional missions of the 276th were protection of the Division's left flank and to be prepared to assist by fire or maneuver the attack of the 274th on the right.

In direct support of the Bloody Axe for the attack were the 884th Field Artillery Battalion reinforced by the 495th AFA, the 86th Field Artillery Battalion and the Cannon Company of the 276th. Attached units were: One platoon, Company C, and one platoon, Company D, 749th Tank Battalion; one platoon, 270th Engineer Battalion, and Company C, 99th Chemical Battalion, minus one platoon.

The enemy position, as the plans for the attack were completed, extended from Marienau through the town of Forbach, along the southwest edge of Le Kleinwaldchen, and through Oeting to Behren. S-2 estimated enemy units in contact to have a strength of 520 men, divided among the First and Second Battalions of the 880th Regiment and the Second Battalion of the 860th Regiment.

An estimated 800 reserves in Forbach, Stiring-Wendel were reported to have left, moving in the direction of Saarbrücken. S-2 pointed out that they might be reinforcing other units in the area. The food situation in Forbach, Stiring-Wendel and Marienau was bad, and typhoid was reported in Stiring-Wendel.

One possible enemy action in the event of a strong attack was foreseen as delay on successive positions until reaching the fortified area south of Saarbrücken, where a deliberate defense could be employed. Preparatory to the attack, a forward dump of K and C rations was established at Bening, and an emergency ammunition dump at Cocheren. Also at Cocheren was an emergency gasoline dump. On the eve of the attack Company G relieved Company I, Company H relieved elements of Company M, Company L relieved Company B, and Company M relieved elements of Company D in the Company L sector.

The Second Battalion came under Division control, as Division reserve, when the attack started. Since Company G was in position on our left flank, our new left limiting point on a much-reduced front for the attack was in the woods northeast of Morsbach, while our right limiting point at the start of the attack was in the vicinity of Gaubivingen. This concentrated the efforts of the Bloody Axe initially on the Oeting vicinity.

The day before the attack S-1 listed replacements required as eight officers and 160 enlisted men. At 0001 on 17 February the attack moved out, as scheduled, with the companies first advancing to assault positions, and from these locations launching the main attack just before daylight. Advancing through a heavy fog that made visibility extremely limited, Company K was on the left of the Third Battalion and Company I on the right; Company B on the left of the First Battalion and Company C on the right.

Initial objective was the Kleinwald-Fahrbert-Kelsberg Hills. Pressing on against enemy small-arms fire, the Third Battalion had taken its part of the first objective by 0820 and was reorganizing. The First Battalion also reached its first goal and then Company B entered the town of Oeting, while Company C moved forward to the east of the town. B Company had barely gained a foothold in Oeting, and L Company on the left was preparing to enter, when the advancing troops came under the fire of four self-propelled 88's. So intense was this fire that L was unable to enter the city and B could push forward no farther. Meanwhile C Company was progressing very slowly because of heavy small-arms fire from an anti-tank ditch. Late in the day the intensity of the 88 fire compelled B Company to withdraw and dig in south of the town. At dark, Companies I and K, occupying the Third Battalion's initial objective, Company A to the southeast of Oeting, Company B to the south and Company C, east, were all digging in for an all-around defense for the night. Active patrolling was conducted throughout the night.

The first day of the attack had revealed the deadly effectiveness of enemy land and antipersonnel mines, a number of casualties having resulted from these weapons. Enemy resistance throughout the day had been chiefly small arms fire, however. His artillery and mortar fire had been very light, except for the 88's in Oeting. An outstanding development of this initial day was the efficiency displayed by the units of the 276th in maintaining contact with each other--a vast improvement over the situation in the attack conducted 6-7 February in the same general area. The day's casualties were one killed and 56 wounded. The 276th had taken 50 prisoners.

An example of the effectiveness of the enemy's mines was the inability of our AT Company to give assistance to Company B when that unit was meeting terrific resistance in the right side of Oeting. AT guns could not be brought up along the east side of the town because of a well-mined road. Neutralization of this section of road had to await the cover of darkness. This prevented an early knockout of the 88's and consequently made it possible to take Oeting the first day.

Early in the morning of 18 February elements of B and C Companies reduced a bunker in the vicinity of Oeting. Otherwise the night passed without incident.

It was decided that the following plan would be followed when the attack was resumed: A and C Companies to move forward in coordination with 274th Infantry on our right to capture high ground overlooking Forbach in the northeast corner of the Kleinwald; L Company to be attached to First Battalion and B and L Companies to move into Oeting, clear the city and take the high ground to the north of town; I and K Companies to remain in defensive positions southwest of Oeting, prepared to assist in taking of the high ground behind the town, or to advance north to take hills in the Kleinwald just south of Forbach. At 0645 L and B Companies again advanced on Oeting and this time moved rapidly through town, so that by noon it had been cleared entirely of enemy.

A and C Companies, advancing on line with L of the 274th, passed across the hills north of Oeting and moved toward the previously stated objective in the Kleinwald overlooking Forbach.

I and K Companies continued to hold the hill they had occupied southwest of Oeting and I Company sent out patrols to reconnoiter the woods in which the Third Battalion's next objectives were located.

With the taking of Oeting, L Company was released from First Battalion control and reverted to the Third at 1315. When A and C Companies crossed the hills behind Oeting and took up a northwesterly direction, toward Forbach, they pinched out B Company, which reverted to First Battalion reserve.

Now the units of the First and Third Battalions had all taken up the northwesterly move, heading for Forbach. But between them and that city were three imposing terrain barriers-hills covered by the thick woods of the Kleinwald.

Most spectacular of the three was the ancient Schlossberg, red stone castle towering above a steep hill in the Kleinwald overlooking Forbach at the northwest edge of the woods.

This structure, approximately 400 years old, was being used by the enemy as an observation post for adjustment of artillery and mortar fire.

To the left of the high ground covered by the woods was a narrow valley, with flat floor, which could be covered by automatic weapons fire almost the entire distance from Forbach to the ground held by us just outside of Oeting.

Thus, the obvious prerequisite to the taking of Forbach was capture of the high, wooded terrain immediately south of the city, and particularly the Schlossberg, since it was the most commanding point of observation in the entire area.

By 1705 A and C Companies were on their objective, the wooded hill at the northeast corner of the Kleinwald, and half an hour later I and L Companies were half way up the southernmost hill of the Kleinwald, with K Company at the rear of I. During the day, transportation of supplies and weapons was difficult because of roads cratered by shellfire and the necessity of crossing the deep antitank ditch in front of Oeting.

The Engineer Company was active throughout the day making routes of advance passable and bridging the ditch.

Casualties for the 24-hour period ending at 1800 of 18 February were six killed and 28 wounded. Ninety prisoners were taken.

While I and L Companies continued to fight their way up the southmost hill in the dusk of late afternoon, A and C Companies, already digging in on the northeastern prominence overlooking Forbach, were receiving heavy enemy artillery fire, particularly 88's.

The Third Battalion companies attained their objective just at dark and at once prepared to hold the position for the night.

With two of the three hills in the Kleinwald now taken, the following regimental plan of action was decided upon for 19 February: Third Battalion to attack the final high point-the Schlossberg; First Battalion to move from its hill down into the edge of Forbach, but to push no farther than about two blocks into the city. The First Battalion commander planned to take his company commanders and artillery liaison officer on a ground reconnaissance in daylight, preceding the attack on the city, and launch the advance perhaps as late as 1000. The Third Battalion commander's plan was to storm the castle hill beginning at 0830. Both of these plans of action received regimental approval.

With Company L on the right, Company I on the left, and Company K following at left rear to protect the regimental flank, the Third Battalion moved out on its attack of the Schlossberg at 0830 19 February. While this advance got under way, the First Battalion reconnaissance was being conducted and at 1000 it was completed. The battalion commander's decision was to start the advance into Forbach at 1300. The Third Battalion continued to advance through the morning, overcoming pockets of enemy resistance. Most of this opposition was in the L Company sector, particularly in the vicinity of the old German barracks in the Kleinwald, where there was heavy small arms fire. I Company, meeting little opposition, by-passed the barracks and continued to move up the hill toward the castle. Paradoxically, the old barracks was proving a much more serious obstacle than the towering stone castle on the pinnacle of the steep hill. At 1335. Company I had the castle surrounded, while L Company was still working on the barracks, a group of buildings surrounded by a high stone wall that contained only one entrance. Before 1500, however, L had overcome all resistance down to the forward slope overlooking Forbach. At this time, I Company, closing in around the castle, had contact with both L on the right and K on the left. Although suffering several casualties from mortar fire in the early afternoon, I Company pushed on up the slopes to the base of the castle, moved through its close-in defensive installations and at 1510 reported the tower had been cleared of enemy. Thus, midafternoon found the Third Battalion disposed as follows: I Company in possession of castle hill with its excellent observation of the enemy's positions; L Company to the right and moving down the slopes of the Kleinwald toward Forbach; K Company to the left rear of I, still serving as regimental and Division flank protection.

The attack of the First Battalion on the city of Forbach was under way late in the afternoon, with C on the right and A on the left.

In the Third Battalion, I Company was receiving heavy artillery and mortar fire in the vicinity of the castle, while L Company, advancing into the city, received such stiff opposition that it withdrew back up the slope.

This day's casualties were 28 wounded. There were also 13 sick, making a total of 41 evacuations. We captured two prisoners.

Orders to the 276th the evening of 19 February were to take Forbach as soon as possible. The Commanding General, visiting regimental headquarters, had directed that the Bloody Axe "cut, slush and drive".

CP of the 276th had been moved to Folkling during the afternoon.

Beginning the night of 19 February the enemy settled down to a determined defense of the city of Forbach. First move was a counterattack on the castle, held by I Company.

Although enemy infantrymen pushed up the steep hill with almost fanatical zeal, yelling in the darkness as they came on, they were stopped at the base of the tower. The few who crossed the walls were killed.

This was the first and last attempt of the enemy to regain by storm the prize taken by the Bloody Axe. The swastika had been hoisted over the tower nearly five years before.

But throughout the night of 19-20 February the enemy placed intense mortar and artillery fire on the castle and on all positions of the 276th overlooking Forbach.

During the day of 20 February the fierce resistance continued. Attempts of the assaulting battalions to break through into the city were stopped by heavy small arms, automatic weapons, mortar and artillery fire. Our Infantry-Tank teams could not maneuver sufficiently to break up this opposition.

Late in the afternoon the Third Battalion was maneuvering into the First Battalion area to assist in breaking up the small arms and automatic weapons fire holding up the advance.

The Second Battalion, less G Company and elements of H, had' been released by Division, and F Company now was being employed around our right flank, while the remainder of the First Battalion contained the enemy to the front.

Casualties for the period ending 1800 20 February were three killed and 63 wounded. There were also 16 sick evacuated. Prisoners captured totaled 33.

On 21 February the enemy, continuing a strong and determined defense of Forbach, brought in as reinforcements the First and Second Battalions of the 860th Regiment and the 14th Company of the 860th, a total of approximately 300 troops. Again on this day the backbone of the defense was heavy mortar and artillery fire, supplemented with small arms and automatic weapons. The enemy had not yet made use of air or armor.

The First Battalion with F Company attached and the Third Battalion with E Company attached pushed into the city during the day and slowly but methodically cleared the southeast part of town. Because the enemy was defending with snipers and small groups of riflemen and automatic weapons units at strong points, it was a building-to-building task. For control and artillery and mortar fire direction purposes the city was divided into lettered and numbered zones.

The steady advance from block to block was continuing at dark and the day's progress had brought the biggest bag of prisoners yet--100. Our losses for the period were 11 killed and 53 wounded. Eight sick also were evacuated.

To facilitate the attack, the forward DP of E and C rations had been moved by S-4 from Bening to Folkling and emergency ammunition and gas DP was operating at Gaubivingen.

Weather conditions throughout the attack had been generally good. Although there were early morning fogs at the outset, the days were for the most part fair and the temperature above freezing. The roads were still muddy from previous days of melting snow and rain, but their condition improving slightly with the sunshine.

The night of 21 February was devoted to defending the gains made in the city. With the dawn of 22 February the struggle was resumed for possession of Forbach, the enemy resisting more stubbornly than ever. The slow and painful house-to-house advance was continued with the Third Battalion on the left and the First Battalion on the right. Resistance within the city was still composed of scattered strong points, mostly in basements which served as pillboxes. Troops manning these strong points seldom gave up until they were almost completely surrounded. Heavy fire from artillery and mortars continued to fall in the sections of the city occupied by our troops. The artillery included 88's, 105's and some of even larger caliber. The defenders also used some assault guns and the small arms, automatic weapons and bazooka fire was almost continuous.

The Bloody Axe continued to hack its way through this opposition throughout the day and by nightfall had reached the railroad tracks cutting through the city in a northeasterly-southwesterly direction.

A mission flown by the air corps during the afternoon had struck at enemy positions in Forbach and aided the advance of the foot troops. An innovation during the night of 21-22 February was the use of a searchlight to permit observers to pick up targets in the darkness.

G Company, reinforced, still in Division reserve, remained in position through 22 February.

Casualties for the day were 11 killed, 30 wounded and 7 missing. Eighty-three prisoners were taken by the regiment. Anticipating that the southeast part of Forbach would soon be cleared, the 276th headquarters late the night of 22 February issued Operating Instruction No. 12. This plan, to be put into effect on regimental order, called for a continuation of the attack to the northwest. The First Battalion, on the right, would first take the part of the city immediately across the railroad tracks from its present sector. It would then be prepared to resume the advance on order and to take the high ground in its zone northwest of Forbach.

By a passage of lines, the Second Battalion would take over the Third's sector on the left and proceed to clear the part of Forbach northwest of the tracks in its zone of action. Then it would be ready, on order, for a further advance to take the high ground beyond Forbach on the left half of the regimental objective. It would also provide left flank security for the regiment. After the Second had passed through, the Third would revert to regimental reserve, securing a phase line following the railroad tracks through the city and protecting the regimental right flank.

The plan could not be accomplished until the 274th Infantry was in position to attack with us and provide protection for our right flank.

The 23rd of February was spent in consolidating and improving the defensive positions at Phase Line II, the railroad track running through town. We continued active patrolling and mopped up a few small pockets. We received moderate to heavy enemy mortar and 88 fire throughout the night.

What was thought to be a blimp of unknown origin appeared four times during the night. A bright, white light of only a second's duration seemed to be dropped from it. Presumably, the blimp was on a photographic mission.

During the day of 24 February 1945 Companies E and F were relieved by elements of the 1st and 3d Battalions, E and F closed in Cocheren. The 2d Battalion, less Company G, was placed in Regimental reserve at Cocheren. We continued to improve our defense along the railroad in Forbach, patrolling continually. Company F was attached to the 1st Battalion of the 274th Infantry to reinforce them against persisting enemy counterattacks, but they were not committed in this period.

Our attached Engineers, Company C, 270th Engineer Battalion, cleared the main road on our left flank from Morsbach to Forbach and removed mines, bombs, and explosives from the sewers in Forbach. German artillery and mortar fire continued to fall in Forbach.

All positions remained the same on the 25th. The 1st and 3rd Battalions continued to occupy positions along the railroad in Forbach, the 2d Battalion (less F and G Companies) was in Regimental reserve in Cocheren, Company F was attached to the 274th Infantry, Company G (Division reserve) continued to occupy assigned defensive positions. One squad from Company F was attached to Company G to outpost between Company G right flank and Company I left flank.

Snipers were still active and about one hundred rounds of enemy artillery landed in our sector throughout the day and night of 26 February. All positions remained the same except Company E (less one squad) which was attached to the 274th Regiment. Company F, also attached to the 274th was committed. The 276th was still being counterattacked by the Germans. Company E was put in 274th Regimental reserve. A Regimental Training Company was organized to train reinforcements in Cocheren. All new men were given an opportunity to zero their individual weapons and also fire various other weapons. Squad tactics, village fighting, and combat first aid were also stressed in the two-day training period.

The tactical situation did not change the last two days of the month. Enemy patrols were active. Heavy artillery and rocket bombs fell in Forbach in large numbers. One enemy barrage lasted almost two hours with an estimated nine to twelve shells landing every minute.

As the month ended, the 1st and 3d Battalions occupied positions in Forbach. Companies F and E (less one squad were attached to the 274th Regiment, Company G plus one squad from E Company occupied defensive positions as Division Reserve, and the balance of the 2d Battalion was in Regimental Reserve. Training of reinforcements continued. We continued active patrolling across the railroad. Combat efficiency was rated as: Very Satisfactory.

During the month, the "Bloody Axe" Regiment captured 483 prisoners. From February 18 to February 21 our position remained the same. Action was light, but we took one prisoner and another surrendered at his own will. My platoon tech. sgt. received a battlefield commission to second lieutenant. I was very proud of old Heinz getting that commission. We also got a new company commander, Captain Robert Wiley, and a new man from the reinforcement depot, Joseph Strauss, 2nd Lt. That meant we were operating without a platoon sgt. I did have a new 2nd Lt. Joseph Strauss and he was going to be my platoon leader, but we lost our old platoon sgt. The new officer in charge works with the company commander, so I am left with a platoon.

On February 22, we had a sgt. going to the hospital; two men on the 23rd that were missing in action; two guys killed in action; and others lightly wounded or sick who were sent to the hospital. Harry Shuman, 1st Lt., was released from company command to an executive officer and Robert Wiley took over as commander. We received 18 enlisted men assigned to company duty from the 71st headquarters reinforcement, APO 776. As I look over the roster I can remember some of the names; one of them, Layman Heckle, a staff sgt., was in the Air Corps and then transferred to us as a gunner in the machine gun section. He was in the cook outfit in the Air Force and now he is in the Infantry in the machine gun section. His morale was shot. I got to like Heckle pretty well. I felt sorry for him. He had no idea what the Infantry was all about and he had a rank of staff sgt., which meant he could be put in charge of something. He pleaded with me not to be put in charge of anything until he found out what was going on, because he didn't want to get his head blown off.

On February 23, a little over two months overseas, I was promoted to a staff sgt.--my first promotion. A couple of my buddies were promoted, too. Donald Jacobson was promoted to a staff sgt.; he was my first gunner. Robert Weeks was promoted from a corporal to a sgt. in the machine gun section. Now Heinz Mush, my old platoon sgt., a Mormon and a real nice fellow, was transferred to the replacement depot in the headquarters task force.

On February 25, our company commander was assigned to regimental headquarters company and we got a new commander, a First Lt. Now, new officers are scarce. Things were running kind of high and February 25 is the day I want to talk about. The company commander who got retired and went back to regimental headquarters had the cooks make us up some hot meals at the position we were on, which happened to be in the basement of a house on the reverse slope of the hill. We were holding high ground and had the town shut off. We had the tanks with us from the 14th Armor. We took the hill with tanks, our men following the tanks up the hill. The tanks killed the Germans in fox holes and the German casualties were high. We took the hill with a minimum of casualties. We lost less than ten men. The problem was the tanks left us on top of the hill to take the counterattack. The Germans always counterattacked immediately after being pushed off something, but we held the hill.

On that particular day Sgt. Heckle came to me and told me he had to go out. He was brand new and didn't know apples from peaches. He hadn't heightened his senses to war yet. You learn to hear quickly in combat. You know when a shell is going to fall short by listening. Of course, it's the one that falls on you that you never do hear. You learn to smell a German, alive or dead, and you start to smell him a mile away. Your eyesight grows keen. These are the things that you learn. You are geared up for survival and you become like a wild animal. Now, Sgt. Heckle was very timid and scared. He was probably about 40-45 years old. He is not a young man. I am only 19 years old and he wanted me to stand on guard duty

while he went to the bathroom. The sun was coming up and it was a foggy morning. The vegetation had frost on it and there was snow on the ground.

I stood guard at the door while he proceeded to leave the archway of the door and moved to the field away from the house. He crossed over a barbed wire fence. The posts were good but the fence was dilapidated. It was about 3-1/2 feet high. As he got to the other side of the fence, it was just getting light and I could see his breath. As he's going to the bathroom, he's looking around for the enemy. All of a sudden a German gunner opened up with an 88; it came over the hill and exploded in the town behind us. When it went over the hill, it sounded like it would explode right between your eyes and part. your hair.

Sgt. Heckle thought they were shooting at him. He immediately jumped up and started to run towards me with his pants down. He cleared that fence straight out. He was parallel with the ground and came down on the other side of the fence, into the house and down the steps with his pants around his ankles. Well, it was hysterical. I knew there was only one shell and nothing to be afraid of but old Heckle didn't understand that. That was about the funniest thing I saw during the war.

On that particular day, Sgt. Jacobsen came up out of the basement and I looked at him .and asked, "Jake, how do you feel?" He said, "I feel terrible." I looked into his eyes and they were yellow. It turned out he had yellow jaundice; he was on disability for quite a while. We also lost Joe Strauss, our 2nd Lt.; he went back to sick hospital.

It was that evening that the company commander took half of the company off the line at a time and gave them hot food. It was pitch black when it came my turn to pull the fellows out of the line. We were proceeding down to a house that the cooks had set up with hot food when we approached a squad of Free French. Now the Free French had no relatives near them, no home or property. They were nomads living off the land. If they wanted something, they had to go hunting for it. As a matter of fact they would go rabbit hunting right in the middle of enemy territory and if the Germans were there, they would get a few of them, too. They were vicious people. Anyway, as we were going down the road, we heard someone in very broken English holler, "Give it to me." In the Army we have what we call "signs and countersigns". When you were challenged with a word, you would have to come back with another word. They changed the words every night. The object was to come back with the right word when challenged and then the challenger knew you were not the enemy. On that particular night I didn't remember what the signs were; we'll say they were "Black" and "White". The Free Frenchman said, "Give it to me" and he was after the sign and countersign. If I didn't give him an answer he liked pretty quick, there would be no more soldier, namely me. It turned out he had been in the basement at a cellar window and he and his buddies had us pretty well covered. It finally dawned on me what he wanted, so I gave him the sign and he came back with the countersign. He let us proceed down into town. But, I'll never forget that. I had no idea where he was when he spoke or, at first, what he was talking about. All I could think about was that the Germans had infiltrated our area and cut off our lines. I was overjoyed when I found out it was a Free Frenchman. They were welcome in our outfit and had saved a lot of lives for us. They were efficient. with their weapons and had done a lot of scouting and patrolling.

The next day Lt. Strauss went to the 7th Army Hospital.

On February 27th we listed John Shoup as missing in action. His name was dropped from the rolls and later changed to "killed in action", after someone evidently found his body. It was on the 28th that Jacobsen was finally sent to the hospital with yellow jaundice.

The month of March found the 276th Infantry Regiment in position as follows: The 1st and 3d Battalions occupied positions in Forbach, Companies F and E (less one squad) were attached to the 274th Infantry Regiment, Company G plus one squad from Company E was in Division Reserve and occupying positions near Morsbach, and the balance of the 2d Battalion was in Regimental Reserve at Cocheren. The 274th Infantry was on the right flank and the 101st Cavalry was on the left.

A group of approximately 150 reinforcements was training in the vicinity of Cocheren. This group was called Company "J" for the purpose of administration.

The enemy on March 1st continued to shell our positions and the city of Forbach generally with artillery and mortars. They seemed to throw more shells at the time of mess calls, as concentrations were heaviest between 1130-1330 and 1700-1800.

Small arms fire of limited quantities was also noted. Our units in Forbach continued to patrol across the railroad.

Company F, attached to the 3d Battalion of the 274th, was in Battalion Reserve. On the 26th of February 1945, the Germans counterattacked the 274th Regiment's 3d Battalion Sector. Company F repulsed the counterattack as the two rifle companies to their front had been moved to positions in the rear of F Company. Company E, attached to the 274th as Regimental Reserve, was committed and occupied positions in trenches on the right flank of Company F. Further action of these two "Bloody Axe" Companies was limited to the exchange of small arms fire with the enemy. No further counterattacks were launched by the enemy during the time that E and F Companies were attached to the 274th Infantry Regiment.

Company F was relieved from attachment to the 274th Regiment and returned to 2d Battalion control at 0210 on 1 March 1945.

Reinforcements required on March 1st were listed as 9 officers and 127 enlisted men.

On March 1st we promoted 66 enlisted men from Private to PFC and on March 2nd more men were promoted.

On March 3rd we left our position in Morsbach, France, leaving one platoon in position, about 40 men. I always hated it when we had to leave half an outfit behind. We arrived at Oeting at 9:20. We left Oeting at 1530 and marched to Forbach, France. On March 4th we had three enlisted men seriously wounded in action in the vicinity of Forbach and three enlisted men lightly wounded. John Brewer who was in our platoon went to sick hospital. We launched an attack at 5:30 from the south edge of Forbach.

On 2 March 1945, Company E was returned to the 2d Battalion after being relieved from the 274th Regiment. They closed in Cocheren at 2400. Company "J" was disbanded as a training unit and all reinforcements were returned to their proper units. Our reinforcements were generally of two types. One group consisted of those who were recent arrivals to the European Theater having just completed basic training at Infantry Replacement Training Centers in the United States. The remainder were those who had overseas experience in other arms and services. Most reinforcements were alert and anxious to get the additional training and familiarization firing.

On March 5, we had one seriously wounded, two lightly wounded and one went to sick hospital. Our second platoon joined us now, the one we had left behind in Morsbach. The second platoon joined Company F this regiment at 3:00 p.m. and an attack was undertaken. The first platoon joined Company E this regiment at 5:00. E Company is now in attack approximately one mile east of Forbach, France, and the remainder of the company is in defensive position one-half mile east of Forbach.

Quite a few people were wounded on March 6. The company left defensive position at 5:30 one-half mile east of Forbach and launched an attack one and a half miles east of Forbach.

The First Platoon is still attached to Company E, this regiment. The Second Platoon rejoined at 6:00 in the morning.

During the night of 3-4 March 1945, the troops were disposed as follows: Company I was on the Regimental left flank and was in the outskirts of Marienau. Their attached tanks were held up by a tank ditch, so the tanks pulled back for servicing. Company K was unable to advance further because of heavy automatic weapons fire from the enemy. Company L, in 3d Battalion Reserve, following Company I, moved through I Company to the high ground between I and K Companies. Company A was held up by the same enemy fire that pinned down Company K, while Company C on the right had cleared the

remaining houses in their sector and were in open ground. All units were ordered to post all around security and to hold and defend. H hour on the following morning for all units except the 2d Battalion was 0900. Word came from the 274th Regiment on our right that they would continue the attack at 0630.

The 884th Field Artillery Battalion fired harassing fires throughout the night.

In the early morning hours of 4 March, the enemy began to infiltrate into the positions which had been taken by the French and were held by units of the 12th Armored. The 12th Armored withdrew and Company B was sent in to hold the ground.

The 2d Battalion, on the right flank of Company C, attacked to the north encountering mortar and heavy small arms fire. Some of the small arms fire was coming from houses presumably already cleared by Company C. Units from Company E and Company F had to stop long enough in their advance to finish clearing this area.

At 0900 the forward units began their advance. Company B, after clearing their area of infiltrating Germans, returned it to the control of Combat Command "A", 12th Armored Division. Companies K and A, in the center of the Regimental Sector, found the going difficult because of enemy in well-fortified basements used as pillboxes. The Artillery Forward Observer with Company A coordinated the fire of all batteries of the 884th, and artillery fire was laid on the German positions, thus enabling Companies A and K to advance.

Tanks were unable to move forward because of heavily mined areas. Mine clearing crews were exposed to small arms fire and several men were wounded.

The 2d Battalion, with E Company on the left, F Company in the center, and G Company on the right, drew light small arms fire and heavy artillery, mortar, and rocket fire from the vicinity of the Simon Mine in the 274th Sector. Company F received the bulk of the fire but continued to advance. Elements of the 12th Armored crossed over the railroad tracks and moved north to occupy and hold the area taken by Company G on the Regimental right flank.

Units of the 12th Armored Division, co-ordinating with the 70th Division, moved from Oeting to Forbach and were shelled while on the road. Some of the enemy artillery and mortar fire was reported as coming from the vicinity of the University in Forbach. The Regimental Commander called the 2d Battalion to request Company C, 99th Chemical Battalion to lay down a smoke screen in the University area. The 2d Battalion was ordered to move into Forbach.

By 1200, the tanks were still unable to use the underpass but were supporting the foot troops from behind the railroad embankment. Tank Destroyers had knocked out one enemy self-propelled gun, one anti-tank gun, and one machine gun.

Company C on the right, pinned down by automatic weapons fire, was engaged in a heavy fire fight, after having taken several buildings. Company A occupied buildings across the railroad and the French Forces were aggressively advancing toward their objective. Company K was advancing slowly against heavy small arms fire, and Company I was about 500 meters along the Marienau road and still moving, but their support platoon was pinned down by fire from the vicinity of a factory building about 600 meters south of Marienau.

S-2 reported that a sergeant from Company I was shot at and wounded by one of two persons dressed in women's clothing. These persons, wearing helmets and carrying weapons, were not seen again.

The enemy was still shelling Forbach as the 2d Battalion moved into town. The heavy fire continued to hold up the advance of our forward troops. Two platoons of Company C were still being held up behind the railroad tracks. Tanks were called for and moved into position to support Companies C and K. One tank hit a mine after going through the underpass. Another tank attached to Company C helped them to

cross an open field and wipe out initial resistance. Company K lost one tank by a mine in the late afternoon and another tank moved up to support them.

Tanks were also with the French Forces attached to the 1st Battalion. By 1600 the French had reached their objective and were mopping up.

A unit from Combat Command "A", 12th Armored Division, relieved the French Forces and set up a defensive position after the French had completely cleared their objective.

The 2d Battalion was ordered to move to a forward position and prepare to attack, capture and hold the woods on the Regimental right flank. After the 2d Battalion assembled in Forbach, they moved under cover of darkness into position to jump off in the early hours of the morning.

The enemy situation and our own situation were unchanged except that a few additional snipers were flushed out of houses in Forbach proper.

Company G was returned from Division Reserve to 2d Battalion control at 0655, 3 March 1945.

The morning of 3 March was cloudy with a touch of rain. Low clouds over Forbach cut visibility to about 200 yards on the ground. Roads were muddy. H Hour was 0817 and, after the supporting artillery fired a concentration of Time on Target, the "Bloody Axe" Regiment jumped off on the attack. Our mission was to occupy the balance of Forbach and continue the attack until we reached the Division Objective which was the high ground overlooking the Saar River and the city of Saarbrücken.

The Battalions were disposed as follows: 3d Battalion on the left and 1st Battalion on the right. Companies I and K, with I Company on the left, were the assault Companies for the 3d Battalion and Company L was in Battalion Reserve. Companies A and C, with A Company on the left and C Company on the Regimental Right Boundary, were the assault Companies for the 1st Battalion. One Company of French Forces was attached to the 1st Battalion and was to assist in clearing out part of Forbach on the Regimental Right Boundary. The 2d Battalion, in Regimental Reserve, was located in the town of Oeting, France. The 884th Field Artillery Battalion, Division Artillery, was in direct support of the Regiment. All assault units jumped off at H Hour. The Line of Departure was the railroad. Elements of Company A entered the first house in their area ten minutes after crossing the Line of Departure. All units drew small arms fire from the enemy.

Company K, guiding on the road, went through the underpass under the railroad followed by Company A and met small arms and automatic weapons fire from straight up the road. Our attached tanks were unable to go through the underpass until it had been cleared of mines. Company K called for and received help from the attached Engineer Mine Platoon who began to clear the mines from the underpass.

The enemy began to shell Forbach and the assault Companies with artillery and mortars. Counter-batteries were fired by our supporting artillery but were found to be ineffective against the well dug-in positions of the Germans. The Regimental Commander requested an air mission to neutralize the enemy batteries. After some misunderstanding as to the disposition of our troops at the time, the request was granted by Division, but the mission was never flown.

About this time all wire communication to the assault Battalions went out due to the intensive enemy shelling. By 1000, elements of all the assault Companies had moved across the railroad tracks about 150 meters.

In the early afternoon, Company C was moving forward. The communications to Company A were out, but a messenger reported that Company A had taken four houses and was maneuvering to the right to avoid being pinned down. Lacking definite information as to the exact whereabouts of Company A, the Regimental Commander ordered the 1st Battalion to commit Company B.

The 3d Battalion reported that all communications were out. Company I was thought to be moving through Marienau. Company K, although being supported by artillery was unable to advance. Therefore, Companies K and A pulled back to the f the railroad in order that a concentration of 240's be fired on the enemy strong point.

Companies A and K launched a coordinated attack from the railroad tracks where they had withdrawn during the 240 artillery concentration. Company C on the right of Company A continued heir advance. The attack continued and Company K reached Phase Line II at the edge of the cemetery.

Company F reported a small enemy counterattack. Company G, after being relieved by elements of the 12th Armored, moved up n the right flank of Company F and aided in stopping the counterattack.

The Engineers began to clear the road to the 2d Battalion area of mines so the tank destroyers and anti-tank guns could move forward. The railroad underpass was reported cleared of mines.

The French Forces were given the mission to patrol, hold, and occupy the area between the 1t and 2d Battalions. Later n the afternoon, all the French Forces, less the Belgians, were attached to the 3d Battalion to occupy and hold the area cleared by Companies I and L in Marienau.

Companies A and C, together with elements from Company B, continued the attack until they reached the University area. Here they were ordered to cease operations for the night and resume the attack at 0700 on the morning of the 5th of March. All three rifle companies of the 1st Battalion were abreast, ready to attack the University.

The 2d Battalion on the Regimental right flank held their positions for the night and prepared to continue the attack the following morning.

In the 3d Battalion, Companies I and L, because relief was not available, held their positions in Marienau, while Company K held up at the cemetery for the night.

The weather continued murky, and rain kept the roads muddy.

At 0700, 5 March 1945, the 1st Battalion launched an attack on the University area and met little resistance. Company C in clearing out the right side of the University area found several hundred civilians in bunkers to the north of the University where they had presumably taken shelter from the artillery and bombing. A group of the Belgians helped to evacuate them, and they were turned over to the Civil Affairs Officer.

At 0942 on the morning of .5 March 1945, the 1st Battalion completed the clearing of the University area. Forbach was taken.

Company G on the Regimental right flank drew enemy fire from the Simon Mine. Companies E and F continued to progress slowly.

The 1st Battalion, with Company A on the left, Company C on the right, and Company B following Company A, continued into the woods beyond the University area. Company B was relieved from 1st Battalion Reserve and sent into a gap between Company E and Company F to maintain contact-between the units, and was to revert to 1st Battalion control as soon as the 2d Battalion had consolidated positions on the following morning.

Company K of the 3d Battalion completed the clearing of Im Bruch and was on the left of the Battalion Sector with Company I in the center and Company I on the right.

Rain fell at intervals throughout the day. Road conditions were muddy.

Generally, enemy resistance was light during this period. S-2 reported the enemy resistance as delaying actions. Also, the enemy had definite terrain features in his favor, namely, dense woods and high ground. That night, our units held positions with all around security, and they continued active and aggressive patrolling to their fronts. Combat efficiency was rated as excellent for this period. Our supply situation was normal. Reinforcements required on this date were listed as 13 officers and 205 enlisted men.

Operations for the morning of 6 March called for our units to continue the attack. But, at 0520, a counterattack was launched by the enemy from the northwest and northeast. Also, during the night, some Germans had infiltrated through our lines. Company F was cut off from the balance of the 2d Battalion. Company B, attached to the 2d Battalion and holding positions between E and F Companies, was ordered to attack the Germans to the east toward Company F. Company G on the Regimental right flank attacked to the west toward F Company. The Germans used two tanks and several prepared bunkers. Both B and G Companies had to knock out machine gun nests before reaching Company F. The enemy shelled our right flank positions with artillery and rockets. After a heavy exchange of small arms fire, the original line was restored about 1230.

The 1st Battalion less Company B launched an attack to the northwest toward Petite Rosselle meeting little resistance.

A formidable obstacle was found in front of the 2d and 3d Battalions. It was a single track railroad on an embankment approximately 20 feet high. In front of the embankment was an anti-personnel ditch about 20 feet deep and 30 feet wide. The railroad was heavily defended by embrasures under the tracks. To make a frontal attack without more supporting weapons would have been suicide. Armor could not get up into position because of an anti-tank ditch.

Another strong point on our right in the 274th area was the Simon Mine which the 274th erroneously reported to have taken. This was corrected an hour later when it was discovered that the units of the 274th were just entering the area and were meeting very heavy resistance.

The Regimental Commander ordered the 2d and 3d Battalions to pull back 300 to 400 yards and dig in for the night and patrol their sectors. Companies A and C were withdrawn to their former positions because of the heavy fire encountered by the 2d and 3d Battalions.

At 1700 another counterattack was launched by the enemy at Company E. It was repulsed by a concentration of our artillery.

At 1800 Company G reported a counterattack. Tanks were used to blast the woods between G Company and the Simon Mine along the Regimental right boundary. An artillery mission fired a concentration into the vicinity. The counterattack was stopped but the Company Commander was killed and his radio blown up.

At 2200 the Liaison Officer to the 274th Regiment reported that the two rifle companies on our Regimental right flank, Companies I and L of the 274th, had pulled back behind the railroad tracks in Forbach leaving our Regimental right flank exposed. The Regimental Executive Officer notified Division and Division ordered the 274th to go back to their original positions. The S-3 of the 274th reported to our Executive Officer that his Company I was on the right flank of our Company G and holding positions to the right of a lake between the railroad and the Simon Mine. Our patrols could not locate them. Later, our patrols did contact a half squad from Company I, 274th, and were notified by them that the balance of Company I, 274th, and Company L, 274th, were actually located in buildings-500 meters south of the lake. Our Executive Officer called S-3, 274th, and told him that a half squad was not enough to plug the gap between the two Regiments. G-3 ordered the 3d Battalion, 274th, to send out strong patrols throughout the night to maintain contact with our Company G on our Regimental right flank. (See page 2, S-3 Journal, Unit Report 70, 1800 March - 1800 7 March 45).

The Commanding General of the Division ordered that all attack plans be cancelled and directed that we continue to probe for weak spots in the enemy line.

Company B rejoined the 1st Battalion by relieving Company E. Company K moved into the position vacated by Company B. Company E was placed on the Regimental right flank-and began to prepare defensive positions. All Battalions were now on line, with the 2d on the right, the 3d in the center, and the 1st on the left. All Battalions improved their positions during the day of March 7th despite heavy enemy artillery fire throughout the day. Two enemy tanks were seen maneuvering into position in front of the 2d Battalion. Two "bazooka" teams, one from Company G and one from Company H, scored four hits on one tank which was left burning by the German tank crew. The other tank withdrew.

OF CELLAR HELL

FORBACH, Alsace, March 5 (UP).--American soldiers spent 11 hellish days underground with 8,000 residents of Forbach while the Germans blasted the town into ruins.

Men of the 276th Infantry Regiment of the 70th Division had battled into Forbach Feb. 22. They quickly drove the Germans from three quarters of the city, but the attack stalled at railroad tracks. A 20-foot embankment protected the Germans. A "freedom attack" yesterday drove the Germans from their position after hand-to-hand fighting.

Then for 11 days and nights the Americans stayed under cover, seldom risking the bloody streets as German artillery, mortars and rockets steadily pounded the town.

The families of Forbach shared their homes and cellars with the troops, ate with them and died with them.

Capt. John Bryant of Milton, Mass., civil affairs officer for the town, said about half of the population "wanted to get the hell out of there in the worst way." Since the only road out of town was under enemy observation and steady fire, military authorities would not permit a mass evacuation.

Army trucks and jeeps risked the run into Forbach with supplies for the troops. The French Red Cross fed the people although for the last two days, the civilians chose hunger to the risk of walking to the food distribution center.

I want to talk about a particular action on March 7th because my Lt., Charles Cheesem, is seriously wounded. We had an awful lot of casualties on this day. We were holding defensive position one and a half miles east of Forbach, France. Our company commander was killed in action. When we came up in this town of Forbach, we came into our jumping off position. My company departure time was 5:30 a.m., so we were moving during the night in a column. As we were marching in a column, another company crossed at right angle to our column and two companies were in right angles to each other. Part of our company latched in with the other company and went with them. Of course, then we had only part of our company. When I found that out, I had to stomp around to find the rest of our company. Well, I finally got a hold of them, turned them around and got them back in the right direction.

We were getting ready to get down near a railroad track. Forbach has a great big railroad siding and there are a lot of tracks and switching. The column stopped and when the column stops the first thing you do is sit down. We sat down and waited for the hand signal to move again. When the signal came the company got up and started to move again in the direction we were supposed to go in. Somebody tapped me on the shoulder and said, "Bru, we lost half our company again." I worked my way back to the end of the column and there is nobody there. There should have been two platoons. I asked the last guy who was

behind him and he said, "Brewer." I asked where is he and the man said he didn't know. I started off again the second time that night looking for the rest of our company. This time we were in a town and I walked around until I found Brewer. He was sitting down looking at something and I said, "How come you're not moving with the company?" He said, "I am; they are right over there." So I looked where he was pointing and it was a shadow. It looked like a man but it wasn't. So Brewer was waiting for that shadow to move. I finally managed to get everybody connected again.

That night when we were trying to make the connection, I walked over something. It was flesh, but I didn't know what it was. The next morning I looked down at my combat boots and in my eyelets there was meat. As time went by on about the third day, I happened to go back to that same area and here was a team of one ox and one horse that had been killed by an artillery shell. The Germans had been slicing meat off of them and eating it. It turned out that was what I had walked over.

That morning at 5:30 we jumped off and the fellows went across the railroad tracks where there was a big building about eight stories tall. Lt. Cheesem and I went into the building with the intent of finding an observation post and setting my guns up outside. I had three 60 mm mortars and, of course, I had a 536 radio (walkee talkie). The object was to give the troops supporting fire from the observation post in this building. When we entered the building, we found two French women that the Germans had just left that morning. We searched the building to make sure there were no Germans. The one woman said, "They are coming back." What she was insinuating was that the Germans were going to counterattack and take the building back again. We released the women and they went back down to the basement. I was looking out the window over the railroad tracks with my binoculars and giving supporting fire to our troops who were crossing the railroad tracks. The people going across were getting sniper fire and a couple of our men were killed crossing the track. That sniper was making it very uncomfortable for us to cross the tracks. Now, it's daylight and there are railroad cars setting along the side of the tracks. Lt. Cheezem informed me that after the last guy went across the tracks, I was supposed to knock down my guns and go across. He left and joined the troops. I watched him cross the tracks. It was 10:00 when our last troops went across. I should have gone with my men, but the sniper fire was very intense by now. It was really getting hot and furious. We had tanks supporting us and I was in the building on the 6th floor. I heard Lt. Cheezem yelling from the street below, "Where is that Brubaker?" I left my position, came over to the side of the building and yelled down, "Here I am." "How come you haven't taken the guys across the tracks?" he yelled back. As I was proceeding to tell him, all of a sudden the place where I had been standing was hit by a German shell. The room was blown to pieces. So really, Cheezem saved my life. They were firing more rounds now into the building, because they knew we were using it for observation to fire at them. I went to the street level and met Lt. Cheezem. He said, "Get the guys together. We are going to cross those darn tracks. We are going to cross them now." I said, "You know there's a sniper." He said, "I know, but we want to go across anyway. We can't be holding off for that sniper." I said, "Look out there." On the tracks were some of our men, laying dead.

He said, "We are going and we are going now." So Hoot Gibson and I went down to the tracks. We got ready to cross by stringing wire. Our guns were going to stay on that side of the tracks and we were stringing what we called "army field wire". Hoot took a spool of wire because he was going to string it. We got down and laid on the embankment next to the tracks. I said, "Hoot, here is what we are going to do. I am going first across those tracks and you follow right behind me. We are going to go right underneath that railroad car over there." He agreed.

I stood up and took off running. I cleared about six sets of tracks when the sniper saw me and opened up. He missed but came darn close. When he did that, I fell down, because I knew that he was going to let another round go sooner or later if I was still standing. I let him believe I was hit. When I fell down, I fell across the rails and my helmet rolled off. I hurt my leg on the rail. Hoot was right behind me and thought I was hit. He fell down beside me and I said, "Hoot, we can't lay here. We have to keep moving." So I jumped up and grabbed my helmet. I ran across and jumped underneath the railroad car. Hoot jumped in right behind me. We were both underneath that car and I looked over at Hoot. He had on a pair of leather gloves his folks had given him. He was feeding the wire out between his two fingers as he came across. The wire was laying so fast that it was smoking off his gloves; there was actual smoke. I bet if he had run a couple more minutes with that thing it would have burst into flames. Meanwhile, that sniper opened up

and the bullets were ricocheting all around the railroad car. We proceeded to get out of there, because we figured sooner or later one was going to get underneath that car with his shots.

Now it was Lt. Cheezem's turn to get across. He was an Indian, a little bit on the stocky side. As he started to run across, the sniper shot him right across his back. He went down on the track. He got what we thought was a "Million Dollar Wound". We thought he got shot in the cheeks of his butt. The bullet entered crosswise not penetrating his body but penetrating the fatty part of his cheeks. We found out later that this was not true. Now the whole thing was messed up, because that sniper really had us pinned down. We couldn't get any more people across and we couldn't move forward. They called for a tank. It came up the street and eventually spotted the sniper in a church steeple. The tank went up and wound up its gun right at the steeple. The shot blew the steeple apart and killed the sniper. As soon as that was over with, the tank turned and came down our way. The tank crew proceeded to get Cheezem off the tracks and placed him on the back of the tank. They strapped him there to take him to the battalion aid station. He was scared and was moaning, "Darn Brubaker, if he had crossed the tracks the first thing in the morning, we wouldn't have this mess. I'll court martial that man." He was really perturbed. Of course, he left and we continued to fight the war without him. I ran into Cheezem later on during my service in the Army and that's another story.

On March 7th when Lt. Cheezem was wounded, there were three enlisted men seriously wounded and five lightly wounded. Our C.O. was killed in action. We made it across the tracks and took the high ground and stayed there. That night was the first night they brought up the searchlights; they lit up the front. When the Germans would open fire with an artillery piece, the searchlight would cross their beam where they thought the German gun was and then, of course, our artillery would lay in our barrage. It was supposed to isolate that gun. I don't know how many lights we had but it would be like daylight. The report says the Germans had rockets that were fired a few times and that could be why the searchlights were brought in.

On March 8th the company held the same position; we were under continuous artillery and mortar fire. We had ten men wounded in action, two killed in action and we were having a tough time holding ground. The Germans ran a tank up and if you have ever heard an enemy tank crawl at night, it is something. You can hear the cogs engaging in the tracks of the tank; they have a diesel engine. There is an 88 mm on them and a flash hider on the muzzle. When they fire at night with this flash hider, you don't see the flash. Well, they came right up to the edge of the woods where we were lying and they raked us with machine gun bullets. They also fired this 88 mm gun point-blank and it's hitting trees and giving us fits. We had our bazooka and crawled over and got a round off from that into the tank. It hit the tank, but it didn't do any damage. It scared the hell out of the Germans, because they withdrew immediately. They figured if we were that close, we would shoot another round. They withdrew, but we took a lot of casualties. The same day I got my second crack at a Purple Heart. I was lying behind a tree and the Germans were shelling us with artillery, getting tree bursts up in the air. When the shells went off, they threw shrapnel. I heard the shrapnel singing through the air; it went up and then down, hitting me on the right cheek of my butt. I was lying beside a fellow and I said, "I'm hit--take a look and see what's going on." He took his glove and pulled this piece of shrapnel out of me. He threw it on the snow and it was so hot it sizzled. I had on a pair of windbreakers, O.D. pants, a pair of long johns, boxer shorts and a field jacket. And then, hanging over my belt was a raincoat, so I was not severely wounded.

The night of 7 March was limited to patrol activity by all Battalions. We were trying to search out weak spots in the enemy defense or unoccupied portions of his line.

Throughout the day of the 8th we improved our positions. The enemy activity was confined to the use of artillery and mortars. Our units did, however, continue to receive small arms fire from the enemy positions along the railroad embankment.

The weather turned colder. Some snow fell during the morning hours, but it turned to rain and continued intermittently during the day. The roads continued to be muddy.

Our supply situation remained normal. On 8 March our Regiment required 14 officers and 227 enlisted men as reinforcements. Combat efficiency was reported as: Very Satisfactory.

The following day, 9 March 1945, was again utilized in the improvement of our positions with active patrolling during the night. Some adjustment was made in our lines to best use the terrain. The enemy continued to use artillery and mortars. Forbach received a heavy concentration of artillery and rocket bombs about 1720.

Company C and one platoon of Company D, 749th Tank Battalion who had been in support of our troops, were detached from the Regiment.

The 3d Battalion CP, located in one of the University buildings, was discovered to be wired for demolition by time bombs. The enemy in his retreat had left behind three units of TNT (approximately 50 lbs. each) with a time device. They were disarmed. All units were warned to be watchful for time-bombs and booby traps.

On March 9, John Hennessey was our 1st Lt. and was assigned as a commanding officer. We had ten enlisted men wounded, killed and missing in action. Old Jacobsen was not back from the hospital. We took the hill and were going to make a strategic withdrawal. What that meant was that we were retreating. We withdrew about 500 yards to the rear and took up a defensive position. We withdrew so the air corps could bomb the coal factory 200 yards to the company's right front. The company was sending 10 E.M. at a time to change clothes. The report says the morale of the enlisted men was better.

On March 10 we had 19 men missing in action, wounded or killed. The company continued to send ten men at a time to shave and change clothes.

On the morning of 10 March the Regimental Commander ordered the 1st and 2d Battalions to set up a deliberate defense. The 3d Battalion would become Regimental Reserve. The 1st Battalion continued to occupy their present positions plus the left company sector of the 3d Battalion. The 2d Battalion continued to occupy their present positions and, in addition, the two right company sectors of the 3d Battalion. It was planned to conduct at least one raid per week, either day or night.

Upon instructions from Division, we patrolled constantly, ever on the alert for any signs of enemy withdrawal. We were notified that Combat Command "A" of the 12th Armored would be withdrawn during the afternoon. The Regiment received a group of reinforcements. They were sent up to the front lines to help prepare positions, and it was planned to send them back later to the reserve battalion for additional training.

The weather cleared up somewhat on the 11th, but roads were still muddy.

The 3d Battalion was relieved by elements of the 1st and 2d Battalions. Company B relieved Company L, Companies I and K were relieved by Company G, and the 3d Battalion closed in the vicinity of Rosbruck and Cocheren approximately 2300 on the 11th of March.

During the night we patrolled and kept contact with the enemy. Our patrols were fired on by small arms, and the forward positions were shelled by mortars. Rockets continued to drop on Forbach during the night. An observer of the 274th Regiment reported seeing a dirigible over our sector, but the "Phantom of Forbach", so called by our men, was not seen by any of our units.

On March 11, we had seven men missing, wounded or killed in action and the company moved to a new position after dark. March 12 there were 17 enlisted men promoted to PFC. Fourteen enlisted men were missing, wounded or killed in action. The company left the defensive position approximately one mile east of Forbach, France, and moved to a new position approximately 1,000 yards northeast of the previous position. We took up a flanking position. What we did was withdraw, come back and go to the left, advancing up the hill to get a better position to hold the high ground.

The 12th was comparatively quiet. The warm sun dried the roads somewhat, while in Forbach, the paved streets were completely dry and vehicles raised clouds of dust as they went by.

A prisoner of war reported that the Germans might use gas. The Commanding General ordered all men to wear gas masks. Orders by the Regimental Commander to reissue all gas masks were fulfilled by S-4 in the early afternoon of the 13th of March. The night of the 12th found increased enemy rocket fire landing on Companies F and G. Company B received heavy enemy mortar fire during the night.

A report from S-2 of the 274th that 15 Mark V tanks were lined up between houses north of Stiring-Wendel caused our S-2 to warn all forward elements of a possible enemy counterattack, but no attack materialized.

According to the records, on March 13, Staff Sgt. Brubaker is promoted to Tech. Sgt. We had eight men missing, wounded or killed in action. PFC Robert Adamson was promoted to Sgt. He was a gunner for the 30 Cal. machine gun and now became a squad leader.

On the morning of the 13th of March our patrols contacted the enemy still in position along the railroad embankment. Two enemy patrols moved into Company B area but withdrew.

Around noon, S-2 was informed that civilians reported the enemy was evacuating Petite Rosselle and withdrawing to Luisenthal. Civilians also reported later that the Germans had left Stiring-Wendel, Schonecken, and Gersweiler.

At 1130 an observer of the 1st Battalion reported that enemy soldiers in full field equipment were observed leaving Petite Rosselle. Patrols from Companies A and C were sent into Petite Rosselle with orders to hold what they took, if they met little or no resistance. Patrols from the 274th Regiment were sent into the Simon Mine area on our right to contact the enemy.

By late afternoon all patrols had reported either no contact with the enemy or meeting very little rear guard action. The "Bloody Axe" Regiment was ordered to pursue the enemy in force leaving Company I to clean out Petite Rosselle. However, later reports from patrols indicated that the town was clear of enemy. Therefore, Company I was sent to Rosbruck and cleared that village. They then rejoined their Battalion which was assembling in the University area to give chase to the Germans. The 1st Battalion, marching in column, was moving after the enemy by 1925. The 2d Battalion started across the railroad embankment shortly before 2000 with Company F on the right and Company G on the left. Company E moved along the railroad northwest and west. The 3d Battalion was assembling in the University area preparing to move to Klarenthal upon Regimental order. The 101st Cavalry on our left was on the move toward the Saar River. The 274th on our right was moving to the north toward the Saar. Shortly after our Regiment started moving, the Germans jammed our radios. The Battalions had no communications with their Companies until wire was laid.

It was decided to send the 3d Battalion up to the Saar behind the advancing 1st and 2d Battalions and have the 3d Battalion patrol the south bank of the Saar for possible crossing points. After the 3d Battalion was assembled, it moved out for Petite Rosselle on its way to the Saar.

During the night of 13-14 March, our troops officially crossed the pre-war French-German border at the outskirts of Petite Rosselle.

The anti-tank ditch at that town stopped most vehicular traffic during the night. The Engineers worked on a crossing and had great difficulty with mines which were thickly scattered all around. They suffered several casualties.

On March 14 our First Sgt. Ray McCreight, was promoted to 2nd Lt. The company moved from the defensive position and launched an attack at 1930 from 1/2 mile east of Forbach, France. We now held position one mile north of Kleinrossel, Germany.

Mines were encountered by all forward units. Several vehicles were lost to anti-tank mines and several casualties were caused by Schu Mines. The Company Commander of 2d Battalion Headquarters Company was wounded while guiding a vehicle through a mine field when the vehicle ran over an anti-tank mine.

All units continued to move during the morning and afternoon of the 14th of March. The attached French troops were sent to Petite Rosselle to occupy that town. The Regimental CP moved to Forbach. By 1530 the 1st Battalion was in Furstenhausen and sent out patrols to the bank of the river. Elements of the 2d Battalion were in Klarenthal and G Company sent out a patrol along the main road to the Saar meeting some resistance. The 3d Battalion held up at Petite Rosselle as Regimental Reserve. Patrols observed enemy on the north bank of the river, also, pill boxes and elaborate trench systems.

Small pockets of enemy which had been by-passed were cleared out. Approximately 50 prisoners were taken.

By evening, we controlled all the high ground south of the Saar in our sector. The 101st Cavalry on our left and the 274th Regiment on our right also occupied positions on the south bank of the river.

We patrolled continually, probing for a likely crossing point, and marking enemy positions across the river. During the night the Engineers cleared road blocks and mines on the road to Klarenthal. We were still receiving small arms fire on the south bank of the river, mainly from several houses. Company G patrols maintained contact with the 274th Regiment on our right and contact was made with the 101st Cavalry on our left early on the morning of 15 March.

Throughout the day all units except the 3d Battalion cleared out the enemy on the south bank of the Saar and patrolled along the bank of our Regimental sector. The 3d Battalion, in Regimental Reserve, was ordered to get as much rest as possible and to post only local security.

The forward elements continued to receive heavy fire, both mortar and artillery, during the night. Observers heard trains moving in the town of Volkingen across the river and boats were heard on the river.

The following morning found our patrols looking for suitable crossings. Ferryboat landings were found to be demolished by artillery, and a tunnel under the river was located and found to be heavily mined. Anytime one of our men exposed himself, he drew fire from the pill boxes and emplacements on the north side of the river.

On March 15, Joe Strauss was assigned to duty from the hospital. We had four enlisted men missing, wounded or killed in action. The company continued to attack from position one mile north of Kleinrossel, France to Klarenthal, Germany. We were moving into Germany. We were holding defensive position in Klarenthal. So the day we moved into Germany, I got a promotion. I never knew that until just now, because I never knew where I was half the time when I was over there.

The Regimental CP moved from Forbach to Petite Rosselle on the afternoon of the 16th of March. During the night patrols from the 1st and 3d Battalions attempted to cross the river by boat with the assistance of the Engineers. Each Battalion picked its own points for crossing.

It was planned that in the event a crossing was successfully made and the patrols could establish a beachhead, the Battalions would cross in force.

Before the patrols were actually on their way, we were notified by Division to extend our left sector to include the sector of the 101st Cavalry which was being withdrawn. Company B was ordered to move to the new sector to relieve the 101st and establish outposts. Company A took over the positions vacated by Company B. However, Company A did send out a patrol to attempt a river crossing.

Patrols from Companies A and C were unable to make a crossing. Their attempt was made by boat, about 50 yards apart. They drew heavy small arms, machine gun, and mortar fire from the enemy on the north bank of the river.

E, F, and G Company Patrols were unable to cross. E and F Patrols received heavy fire from the north side of the Saar while on the river in boats, while Company G Patrol was silhouetted by a burning German ammunition dump which was between them and the river. This patrol did spot ten enemy trucks across the river. Our artillery was notified and scored direct hits.

Company B completed the relief of the 101st Cavalry effective 0830 on the morning of the 17th of March. During the morning the Mine Platoon from our Anti-Tank Company cleared mines and booby traps from houses in Geislautern. When this was completed, the 1st Battalion CP moved into town. The 2d Battalion CO moved to Klarenthal.

During this period S-2 reported that the enemy had Volkstrum units manning the pill boxes along the north bank of the Saar. The enemy positions were so arranged as to provide excellent fields of fire. Mines and wire were used extensively along the river itself. A small enemy force in their defensive positions could hold off a much superior force.

During the night of 17 March the Germans shelled Geisweiler with artillery, and they used artillery, mortar, and small arms fire to harrass our forward troops. Geislautern and Klarenthal were also shelled by artillery and rockets.

On March 16 our First Lt. was seriously wounded. Our Tech. Sgt. was promoted to a First Sgt. and we had three enlisted men reporting for duty from the repo depot. The company continued to attack at 1300 from position on northeast edge of Klarenthal. We advanced 1,000 yards and established outposts. One platoon now occupied the outposts and remained there and the rest of the company withdrew to their former positions.

William Turner, who was one of my original buddies, was promoted to a Sgt. We made him a gun leader for a 60 mm mortar gun. He is now a professor in the Carolinas some place. His folks stopped to see us on Seventh Street once. I sure would like to see him. We crossed into Germany.

We continued to patrol the river for likely crossings. We maintained contact with the 65th Division which was now on our left flank. Our left boundary was now both Corps and Army boundary between the 7th Army and the 3d Army. The 65th Division was a 3d Army unit.

Our units were advised to be especially watchful for any signs of enemy withdrawal because armored units of the 3d Army were moving down behind the enemy units immediately to our front. The 3d Army was guiding on the Rhein River approximately 50 miles to our north after crossing the Mosel River and thrusting east and south.

Our patrols continued to draw fire when they showed themselves. But, they continued to be active during the day of 18 March. The Engineers reported that all roads to the forward units were passable for vehicles.

At approximately 1816 the enemy increased his fire along our entire front. The 1st and 2d Battalions were shelled by heavy artillery. The forward units in position received very heavy small arms, mortar, and artillery fire. This fire continued heavy until about 0300 in the early morning.

On the morning of the 19th of March, the 3d Battalion, in Regimental Reserve, was alerted and ordered to move to Krughutte and attempt a river crossing near Ottenhausen. Upon Division order the 2d and 1st Battalions (less Company A) assembled during the day ready to follow the 3d Battalion across the Saar. Company A occupied defensive positions along the entire Regimental front.

The Engineers had 56 boats with four-man crews for each. Two platoons from Company G were sent to aid in carrying the boats to the debarkation points along the Saar. Our Regimental anti-tank guns and cannon were moved into covered positions along the river to give support by direct fire on the fortifications manned by the enemy on the north bank. Patrols from Companies B and C continually kept contact with the enemy by drawing fire from them. Whenever the enemy exposed his positions, our artillery and mortars immediately zeroed in. As a whole, the enemy fire was light, but we lost one officer and five enlisted men from one Company B patrol.

The town of Schoeneck was decided upon as the de-trucking and rear assembly area.. This town was in the 274th Sector.

Our 3d Battalion was moving toward Schoeneck when we were notified by Division that the 274th would not allow our 3d Battalion to detruck and remain there. Therefore, the 3d Battalion was ordered to move back to Petite Rosselle, and they closed in at 1550.

New plans called for Company C to send a patrol across the Saar River near Hostenbach, and, if successful, the company would follow. The whole 1st Battalion would then follow Company C.

The 3d Battalion would then cross followed by the 2d Battalion. By 1800 all was in readiness. Company A was holding the line along the entire Regimental front; Company B was in an assembly area at Geislautern; Company C was in the vicinity of Werbeln; the 2d Battalion was in an assembly area in the vicinity of Klarenthal, and the 3d Battalion was assembled in Petite Rosselle. The weather was fair. All roads were dry.

Two rubber boats with the patrol from Company C were launched at 2200 on the night of 19 March 1945. They met no opposition. The 2d and 3d Battalions were alerted to be ready to move on a half hour's notice.

Once across the river, the patrol found an unoccupied pill box and ran into a mine field, exploding several mines. The Mine Platoon from the Regimental Anti-Tank Company and some of our attached Engineers next moved across the river to clear a path through the mine field. All Battalions held up pending the clearing of the mine field which consisted of anti-personnel and Schu mines, most of which were booby-trapped.

In the early morning hours of 20 March we received a report from the 274th Regiment on our right that they were meeting resistance in the form of heavy small arms fire. They had taken

two prisoners who stated that their unit had been ordered to withdraw across the river before daylight. By 0300 a path three feet wide had been cleared through the mine field, and the balance of Company C crossed the river followed by Company B. They were ferried across while the Engineers constructed a foot bridge and a vehicular bridge. Company A still held the line along the Regimental front and the 2d and 3d Battalions were awaiting orders to cross as soon as the way was clear.

By 0700 the foot bridge was completed. The 3d Battalion, which had been moving up to the river, crossed on the foot bridge and completed the crossing by 0840. The 2d Battalion followed the 3d across the river. The Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon gained contact with the 259th Infantry Regiment of the 65th Division on our left flank, and they maintained contact until Company A was relieved and moved across the river. The 274th on our right had moved their 3d Battalion across the river in the vicinity of Ottenhausen and were meeting no resistance.

At 0850 the Regiment set up a forward CP in Geislautern. By 1100 the 8 ton vehicle bridge had been completed in the vicinity of Hostenbach.

The 1st Battalion secured the high ground to the north and northwest of Volklingen. The 2d Battalion moved into the town, while the 3d Battalion, after clearing out several houses just across the river, was ordered to proceed to Puttlingen.

Upon Division Order the 2d Battalion moved from Volklingen to Altenkessel to relieve the 3d Battalion of the 274th which had already occupied the town. The 1st Battalion was ordered to move to Puttlingen along with the 3d Battalion. The plan was to motorize the Regiment to keep contact with the retreating enemy. One platoon of "Ducks" was attached to the Regiment. The Regimental Commander decided to use them in transporting the men to give chase to the enemy. The "Ducks" plus four trucks of our own were alerted. The Regimental Commander planned to move one Battalion at a time, moving from town to town in chase.

At 1430 our forward CP at Geislautern and our rear CP at Petite Rosselle were closed and a new CP was established at Hostenbach. No contact with the enemy had been made during the day, and, by 1800, the 1st Battalion occupied the eastern part of Puttlingen, the 3d Battalion occupied the western part of the town, and the 2d Battalion occupied Altenkessel.

The 65th Division had moved across our front with elements in Geisweiler and Heusweiler. We were ordered by the Commanding General to stay in our present locations and spend the following day, 21 March 1945, in mopping up. All was quiet during the night of the 20th. Weather remained clear and roads were dry. During the day of 21 March our companies cleared pill boxes with the assistance of our attached Engineers. From 165 to 170 reinforced pill boxes were found in our area. When each was cleared, it was marked with chalk. All German weapons were collected and turned over to the Regimental Supply Officer. Antipersonnel and Schu mines were cleared from our area.

Our attached platoon of "Ducks" was relieved and sent to another sector. Twenty prisoners were taken during the day and many male civilians were investigated by the Interrogation Team and Civil Affairs Officer as possible Volkstrum troops.

We were notified by Division that the 70th was now in 7th Army Reserve.

Mopping up operations continued on 22 March. Much ammunition and many weapons were found. During the day the 1st Battalion moved from Puttlingen to Volklingen as did Anti-Tank Company. Cannon Company moved to Altenkessel. At 1000 the Regimental CP moved from Hostenbach to Volklingen. Our position as 7th Army Reserve was clarified by Division. The 3d Army, moving north and east from our left flank, had advanced rapidly with armored columns across our frontal sector and had squeezed us out of the picture as a Division. The XXI Corps, of which we were part, was moved to Bitche, France, and the 70th Division reverted to 7th Army control and was put into reserve.

March 16, 1945 - Klarenthal, Germany. Chorba, Joseph, 1st Lt. 1542 - Seriously wounded in action vicinity of Klarenthal, Germany. Dy to sk hosp LD. Sk hosp LD to trfd Det Pnts 7th Army per Cir 37. Hq 7th Army dtd 17-Dec/44. Corbin, Paul, T/Sgt. - Aptd 1st/Sgt per par 19 SO 48. Hq 276th Inf dtd 16 Mar/45. Record of events: Company continued attack at 1300 from positions on NE edge of Klarenthal, Germany 15 Mar/45. Advance 1,000 yds and established outposts. One platoon now occupying outposts, remained there. Rest of Company withdrew to former positions. 1st Lt. John J. Hennessey still C.O.

March 17, 1945 - Klarenthal, Germany. Turner, William L., Pfc. - Aptd Sgt. per par 7 SO 47. Hq'd 276th Inf dtd 15 Mar/45. March 18, 1945 - Klarenthal, Germany. Record of events: Company improved defensive positions occupied 16 Mar/45.

March 19, 1945 - Klarenthal, Germany. No change.

March 20, 1945 - Altenkessel, Germany. Record of events: Company left defensive positions on NE edge of Klarenthal, Germany at 0800. Proceeded by truck about 8 miles to Saar River. Proceeded about 5 miles to Altenkessel, Germany.

March 21, 1945 - Altenkessel, Germany. Record of events: Company holding defensive positions on N. edge of Altenkessel, Germany.

On the 22nd of March our Regiment required 81 enlisted men to bring us up to strength. The supply situation remained normal with enough rations for four days, gasoline and oil for two days, and ammunition for one and a half days. Weather continued warm and roads remained dry.

The Regimental I and R Platoon, Anti-Tank Company, and Cannon Company patrolled the area by motor during the night, while other companies sent out foot patrols as security measures. We were instructed by Division that, so far as possible, men recently in the front lines be given opportunity to rest, and that men newly arrived from reinforcement depots be used as road guards and "mopup" patrols.

March 23, 1945 - Altenkessel, Germany. Record of events: Company improved defensive positions occupied 21 March 45. Company began training schedule consisting of squad problems and weapons demonstrations. Company being fed three hot meals per day.

On 24 March a training program was set up (see Training Memo 6, Unit Report 86, 23 March 1945). Emphasis was placed on training in weapons, squad and platoon problems, mines and booby traps, and chemical warfare. Four hours of training were given every day, either in the morning or afternoon, and four hours of athletics and recreation in the other period. Ranges were set up for firing weapons. All men, especially reinforcements, were able to familiarize themselves with all available infantry weapons. Demonstrations to show effectiveness of German weapons and mines were also given.

Eighteen prisoners, either stragglers or deserters, were captured by our patrols on the 23rd and 24th of March.

Company C, 772nd Tank Battalion was attached to us for training purposes but were relieved by a change of orders before our training program began.

Late in the afternoon of the 24th our Regiment was ordered to move by motor to the vicinity of Reichenbach, Germany. The march order issued by S-3 was 3d Battalion, 1st Battalion, 2d Battalion, Anti-Tank Company, and Cannon Company. The motor move began at 0800 on the morning of the 25th of March.

The march was made using only organic vehicles. These were supplemented by a few captured enemy vehicles which were registered and painted as authorized. The 3d Battalion, Regimental Headquarters Company, Regimental Medical Detachment, Company C, 370th Medical Battalion attached), with the Regimental CP Staff left Volklingen and moved in a northeasterly direction.

Along the route all men had an excellent chance to really see the Siegfried defenses as the enemy had built them. Pill boxes, bunkers, road blocks, tank traps, all were so placed as to afford maximum use of the terrain, command avenues of approach, and utilize interlocking fire. The men could see what a formidable obstacle the German Westwall actually was. If all positions were normally manned, it would seem to be almost impossible to take them by a frontal assault. The terrain was ideal for defense. At 1200 the Regimental CP, Headquarters Company, and the Medics arrived at Reichenbach. A delay was caused by our waiting for the civilians to evacuate the houses selected for our use. At 1400 the new Regimental CP was opened at Reichenbach. The 3d Battalion closed into Juttenbach at 1230.

March 26, 1945 - Kottweiler, Germany. Record of events: Moved by motor convoy from Altenkessel, Germany, to Kottweiler, Germany. Departed Altenkessel 1915, arrived Kottweiler. Distance traveled approximately 60 miles. Company resting and morale of troops good.

All vehicles returned to the vicinity of Volklingen to move the 1st and 2d Battalions. The 1st Battalion closed into Erzenhausen at 2300. The 2d Battalion closed into Kottweiler at 0100 on the morning of 26 March. During the day Anti-Tank Company moved into Staufenbach at 1218, and Cannon Company closed into Reichenbach Steegen at 1500. All of the Regiment, except the rear train, was in the vicinity of Reichenbach, Germany. The rear train was in the process of moving by shuttling.

We immediately began to patrol our assigned sector. All units were notified to provide their own anti aircraft security. Plans for continuation of the training which was started at Volklingen were made. Enemy planes of undetermined numbers flew over our sector at 0100 on the 27th of March.

Our new area was patrolled and mopped up during the day and night of 27 March 1945. The perfect weather of many days ended abruptly as rain fell throughout the day making roads muddy.

The Regimental Rear Train closed into Altenglan, Germany. Supply situation remained normal. Morale was excellent.

Training continued as scheduled during the rest of the month of March. Motorized patrolling of all areas occupied by our troops continued.

The problem of controlling, interviewing, and classifying large numbers of Volkstrum troops and displaced persons (Russians, French, Slovaks, etc., who were former "slave-laborers" of the German Reich) was encountered by our intelligence section and attached Interrogation Team and Civil Affairs Personnel for the first time. All Volkstrum Troops were interviewed. If, after screening, it was decided that they were not dangerous, they were released to the custody of the Burgermeister (Mayor) of their local community who would be responsible for them. If they were considered a menace to the security of the Regiment, they were classed as prisoners of war and sent back to a prisoner of war stockade.

All displaced persons were gathered together and, after screening, were sent to higher headquarters for possible return to their homes through the International Red Cross.

In the late afternoon of 28 March 1945, Company B held what is believed to be one of the first Retreat Formations ever to be held by United States Forces in Germany. An American Flag was found in the town of Puttlingen, Germany. The Colors were raised on the morning of the 28th and were lowered during the Retreat Ceremony. The town flagpole was used and Company B's bugler sounded "To the Colors" and "Retreat" on a captured German bugle.

Two days later, the 3d Battalion held a formal Retreat Ceremony for the presentation of Bronze and Silver Star Medals. The Trailblazer Band of the 70th Division played for the ceremony. Colonel A. C. Morgan, the Regimental Commander, presented the awards and reviewed the troops.

March 29, 1945 - Kottweiler, Germany. (88.7 - 10.8) Wolfstein 1/25,000. Traywick, James W. - Sk hosp LD NBC to dy as of 15(?) Mar/45. Schadt, Harold (Inf) 2nd Lt. 1542 - Asgd & jd with Bn as Plat Ldr as of 28 Mar/45 fr Hq 2d Bn, this Regt per par 4 SO 54. Hq 276th Inf dtd 29 Mar/45. Schoen, Harry P. Jr. (Inf) 1st Lt. - Reld fr dy as Ex 0 & asgd dy as Plat Ldr as of 16 Mar/45 per par 7 SO 54, Hq 276th Inf dtd 29 Mar/45. Placed on ED w/Regtl Hq as Graves Registration Officer as of 21 Mar/45 per par 6 SO 54. Hq 276th Inf dtd 29 Mar/45. Strauss, Joseph M. (Inf.) 2d Lt. - Reld fr dy as Plat Ldr & asgd dy as Exec 0 as of 16 Mar/45.

March 31, 1945 - Kottweiler, Germany. Brewer, W. J. Pfc. - Sk hosp LD NBC to trfd Det Pnts, 7th Army per Cir 37 Hq 7th Army dtd 17 Dec/44. Schadt, Harold (Inf.) 2d Lt. - Dy to TD Hq 7th Army APO 738 for dy with G-5 Section per par 1 SO 49. Hq's 70th Inf Div dtd 30 Mar/45.

On the 31st of March we were alerted to move by motor to the west bank of the Rhein River in the vicinity of Rheinbollen and Bacharach, Germany. The move was to start in the morning hours of 1 April 1945. The afternoon and evening of the 31st were spent in preparation for the move.

Our supply situation at the close of the month was normal. Our organic vehicles had been supplemented by several captured enemy vehicles as authorized by the 7th Army.

Weather remained cloudy and roads were muddy. Rail fell at intervals.

Reinforcements required at the month's close were listed as 122 enlisted men.

S-2 records showed 464 prisoners taken by the 276th Infantry Regiment during the month. Combat efficiency was rated as: Excellent.

By Division order the 276th Infantry Regiment was preparing to move during the night of 31 March - 1 April from the Reichenbach area to the vicinity of Rheinbollen. The move began by motor in the morning hours of 1 April 1945, the first elements departing about 0730.

Our new area was generally along the west bank of the Rhein River from Boppard to Bacharach, a distance of 15 miles, and extending inland six to eight miles in depth. Our mission was to guard the Main Supply Routes, the bridges across the Rhein, and the supply points within our boundaries.

The Regimental CP opened in Rheinbollen, Germany at 1320 on the 1st of April. The 2d Battalion was located in the vicinity of Werlau, the 3d Battalion in the vicinity of Daxweiler, and the 1st Battalion closed into St Goar shortly after midnight. The first few days of the month were spent in reconnaissance and organization to determine the best method to carry out our mission. S-2 organized motor and foot patrols to check the roads, patrol the woods, and enforce Army Military Government regulations. Motorized patrols were in action 24 hours a day. The prisoner interrogation team immediately began to screen civilians for possible Volkstrum troops, deserters from the German Army, and to segregate the displaced persons.

The 1st Battalion relieved elements of the 270th Field Artillery on Rhein River Bridge 271 at St Goar, and the 2d Battalion assumed the responsibility for Bridge 270 across the Rhein at Boppard and moved its CP from Werlau to Boppard.

We were assisted in our mission by elements of the 565 AntiAircraft Battalion, 1152 Engineers, 1134 Engineers, and 512 Military Police. Radar, searchlights, anti-aircraft guns, plus our own anti-tank guns, cannon, and mortars were all placed to best defend the bridges from any possible air or land attack.

We were notified that the 276th Regiment as a part of the 70th Division was assigned to the Third Army after having been in the Seventh Army since the Division first arrived in France in December 1944. In addition, the 70th Division was under orders of SHAEF (Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces) in that the Division as a unit could not cross the Rhein River without SHAEF approval.

April 1, 1945 - Holzfeldt, Germany. Record of events: Company moved from Kottweiler, Germany to Holzfeldt, Germany by motor, a distance of 85 miles.

April 2, 1945 - Filsen, Germany. Record of events: Company moved by motor convoy to Filsen, Germany, Second Platoon manning positions, a distance of 10 miles.

April 3, 1945 - Filsen, Germany. Record of events: Second Platoon moved to Kamp, Germany (80.8 - 91.6) Bonnard 1/25,000 and are manning outposts there. Remainder of Company continuing to man outposts and guard bridges and send out motorized patrols. The 3d Battalion moved its CP from Daxweiler to Weiler on 3 April. Operations throughout the Regiment consisted of carrying out the Regimental mission.

Patrols from Company K, in clearing cut a section of woods, were fired upon by two SS troopers with a "Burp" gun. They were both killed by Pfc George L. Hibbs, 2d Platoon, Company K, firing his M1. A third member was captured and processed by the Interrogation team. The prisoner stated that they had been left behind to harass the Americans by sniping, cutting communication wires, etc. The Division Commanding General sent his congratulations to all men concerned for the "prompt liquidation of the enemy".

On 3 April 1945 Colonel A. C. Morgan, the Regimental Commander, was taken ill and entered an Army hospital. Lt. Colonel Gordon Hammond assumed command of the Regiment.

April 4, 1945 - Filsen, Germany. Record of events: 2nd Platoon relieved 1st Platoon in positions on hill east of Filsen, Germany. 1st Platoon in Kamp, Germany guarding. Remainder of Company continuing to guard bridges and send out motorized patrols. On the morning of 4 April our Regimental Sector was enlarged to include Bingen and the west bank of the Mahe River which empties into the Rhein at Bingen. Also on 4 April we were ordered to furnish train guards armed with light machine guns or heavy machine guns to protect approximately ten trains per day running from Bad Kreuznach to Neunkirchen. Five squads of six men each were sent from the 1st and 3d Battalions. In addition to a light machine gun each squad carried two Browning automatic rifles and two M1's. The squads were ordered to be alert at all times and to place heavy and concentrated fire on any enemy within range. They reported to Bad Kreuznach at 0800, 5 April 1945 and remained on duty until about 20 April.

The companies of the Regiment continued to guard and patrol their assigned sectors in the Regimental area during the next few days.

Our men had the opportunity to see some of the most beautiful scenery in all Germany, the "sacred" Rhein country.

The Rhein Valley in our Regimental Sector was very narrow. Towns were all along the banks on both sides. Vineyards lined the sides of the mountains which rose up steeply from the river's edge.

A double track railroad and a two-lane highway ran down each side of the river. The railroad had been out of use for some time, but the few shell craters in the highways had been repaired and the roads were in constant use by our forces.

The railroad yards at Bingen especially showed the destructive effects of our air bombings. River boats lay in the river half submerged where they had been scuttled by the fleeing Germans. Some barges and boats were found to be afloat and serviceable and were used by units of the Navy to patrol the river.

A displaced persons camp was located at Ellern near the Regimental CP in Rheinbollen. Sanitary conditions at the camp were threatening the health of our troops in the vicinity, so the Regimental Commander authorized the removal of the old camp leader and replaced him with two enlisted men of the Regiment who were put in complete charge, responsible to the Regimental Commander.

There were about 600 Polish and Russian nationals at the camp. Sanitary conditions were immediately improved. Better quarters, including beds, which they did not have previously, were provided. The local Germans furnished the food including milk for the children. The camp was cleaned, policed, and made habitable. An athletic field was set up near the main gate, and musical instruments were furnished. The Regimental Commander and the enlisted men concerned were commended by the Assistant Division Commanding General, who inspected the camp, calling it a model installation of its kind.

It was one of the few known displaced persons camp where Poles and Russians lived and worked together in complete accord. During this period of non-combat activity, the Regimental Commander decided to send the Regimental photographer back over the ground traversed by our Regiment to photograph terrain and places of interest for a proposed Regimental Photo Album and to secure pictures for the Regimental History. A liaison officer, the photographer, and a driver spent almost two weeks taking still pictures and movie film of battlefields and historical points through France and southwestern Germany.

A training program was organized supplemented by an athletic program. Battalion softball leagues were organized. One of the more picturesque ball diamonds was a field on the river bank and was used as the home field for Company C.

The bridges over the Rhein at Boppard and Lorch were abandoned and dismantled by Engineers, thus relieving us of their responsibility, but we were ordered to relieve the 275th Regiment on the Rhein bridge at Bingen. Company I moved in to assume responsibility. April 6, 1945 - Filsen, Germany (82.1 - 89.2).

Ginthner, Robert J., S/Sgt. 607 - Trowbridge, Richard R., Pvt. 745. Asgd & jd fr Hq 71st Repl Bn. 2nd Repl Depot per par 4 SO 87. Hq 2nd Repl Depot dtd 30 Mar/45. Record of events: Third Platoon relieved 2nd Platoon in positions on hill E. of Filsen, Germany. 2nd Platoon now in Filsen, Germany sending cut motorized patrols & guarding bridges. 4th Platoon continuing to man positions on hill E. of Filsen, Germany and 1st Platoon continuing to send out patrols and guard bridges in Kamp, Germany (91.25 - 81.35) Boppard 1/25,000.

April 7, 1945 - Filsen, Germany. Record of events: Company in same positions as of 6 April 1945. Continuing to guard bridges, send out foot and motorized patrols & to man positions on hill east of Filsen, Germany.

April 8, 1945 - Filsen, Germany. Record of events: First Plat. relieved Third Platoon in positions on hill east of Filsen, Germany. Third Platoon now in Kamp, Germany sending out patrols and guarding bridges (91.25 - 83.35 Boppard 1/25,000). Fourth Platoon continuing to man positions on hill east of Filsen, Germany. Second Platoon continuing to send out foot and motorized patrols and to guard bridges.

April 10, 1945 - St Goarshausen, Germany. Record of events: Company moved by motor convoy from positions in Filsen and Kamp, Germany to present positions 9 April 45.

In the early evening hours of 10 April 1945, the Burgermeister of Lorch reported that there were 300 German soldiers hiding in the woods in the vicinity of Lorch. Company A and the I and R Platoons of Regimental Headquarters Company were alerted by the Regimental Commander to move into the area to contact and destroy the enemy. The I and R Platoons could find no trace of the supposed enemy and Company A, after combing the area, discovered the report of the 300 enemy soldiers to be erroneous.

On 11 April our Regiment was given an additional area, formerly held by the Division Artillery, to patrol and guard installations. The 1st Battalion assumed the responsibility of the new area which was adjacent to the southeast boundary of our original area. Units from the 2d Battalion took over the old 1st Battalion area and elements of the 3d Battalion shifted to take over some of the old 2d Battalion locations. The 1st Battalion CP moved from Oberwesel to Heddesheim. The 2d Battalion closed its CP at Boppard and opened at St Goar.

During the day the Regimental CP moved from Rheinbollen to Stromberg and continued to carry out its assigned mission.

On the evening of 12 April 1945, G-3 notified us of the death of President Roosevelt. By order of the Theater Commander, all colors were lowered to half-mast and all men of the Regiment observed a five-minute silence at 1500 on 15 April, paying homage to our departed Commander-in-Chief.

April 12, 1945 - Oberwessel, Germany. Record of events: pany moved by motor convoy 11 April 45 and ferry from St. Goars-hausen to Oberwessel, Germany. Departed St. Goarshausen approx 1600 and arrived Oberwessel about 2000, distance traveled approx. 3 miles. Company now billeted in Oberwessel and following training schedule in addition to sending out foot patrols.

April 13, 1945 - Oberwessel, Germany. (67.4 - 99.6) St. Goarshausen 1/25,000. Slinger, Leonard, Tec/5 - Cenclin, Harold G. Pvt. - Estes, William C., Pvt. Above 3 EM dy to died (drowned) in line of duty Non Battle as of 11 Apr/45 while crossing the Rhine River between St. Goarshausen and St. Goar, Germany. Record of events: Company continuing to send out patrols and conducting training schedules.

On 13 April the Division Commanding General requested that we send 30 more train guards to Bad Kreuznach. The 2d Battalion furnished the additional men.

On the 14th the 30 train guards from the 3d Battalion were returned to us by Division. Sixty men and one officer remained on the detail.

At 1415 on 14 April Colonel Morgan returned from the hospital and assumed command of the Regiment.

April 15, 1945 - Oberwessel, Germany. Record of events: Company continued to send out foot patrols & to guard road blocks during hours of darkness. One squad occupying and sending out patrols in Damscheid, Germany. 96.25 - 67.15 St. Goarshausen 1/25,000 for one night only.

In the late afternoon of 15 April we were notified by Division to be prepared to move to a new area across the Rhein River in the vicinity of Bad Nauheim. We were to be relieved by units of the Fifteenth Army. Our new area was estimated to be about five or six times as large as our present area on the west side of the Rhein. We were told that our train guards would be relieved in time to move with us. However, orders were changed and we were ordered to assemble in the area east of Frankfurt/Main in the vicinity of Hanau.

A more extensive training program began on the 16th of April. Training now included small unit firing problems, conditioning marches, but our assigned tactical missions of guarding and patrolling had first priority.

April 16, 1945 - Oberwessel, Germany. Record of events: Company continued to send out foot patrols and to guard road blocks. One squad from 1st Platoon occupying and sending out patrols in Birkheim, Germany.

The move began by motor in the morning hours of 17 April 1945. All units, except elements of the 2d Battalion and Cannon Company, were relieved by units of the 550th Field Artillery Battalion. Our men who remained were to assist the new units to take over our positions and were to join their units when the relief was completed.

The new Regimental CP opened at Hanau at 1630 and the Battalions closed into the nearby towns during the afternoon. We were told by Division that this was to be an assembly area and to be prepared to move upon notice. The 1st Battalion was at Roth, the 2d at Windecken, and 3d at Somborn.

April 17, 1945 - Rossdorf, Germany. Record of events: Company departed Oberwessel, Germany at 1350 by motor convoy and arrived Rossdorf, Germany 1830, distance travelled approx. 70 miles.

In the morning hours of 18 April, the Battalions and separate companies began to move by motor to our new area south of the city of Frankfurt/Main. We relieved units of the 103d Division. Elements of the 2d Battalion and Cannon Company, which were left on the west bank of the Rhein, rejoined their units in time for the move.

Units moved to the following locations: 1st Battalion to Seligenstadt, 2d Battalion to Gross Gerau, 3d Battalion to Urberach, Anti-Tank Company to Ostheim, Cannon Company to Umstaft, and Service Company to Dieburg.

The Regimental CP moved the following morning, 19 April. The Hanau CP closed at 1030 and the new CP opened at Darmstadt at the same time.

Our mission in the new area was to guard bridges, railroads, main supply routes, supply installations, and to maintain law and order.

April 18, 1945 - Oppenheim, Germany. Record of events: Company departed Rossdorf, Germany at 1300 and traveled by motor convoy to Oppenheim, Germany, arrived 1600. Approx. distance traveled 30 miles. All platoons guarding bridges.

April 19, 1945 - Oppenheim, Germany. Record of events: First, Second & Third Platoons guarding bridge across Rhine. Fourth Platoon is in reserve & providing local security for all platoons.

20 April 1945 was Hitler's birthday. All units were warned to be especially alert for demonstrations of any kind, especially by the "werewolves", supposed Nazi underground organization. Snipers were still being flushed out in our area. Screening of the civilian population began immediately. The area Gestapo Chief

was captured by men of Cannon Company and turned over to the Counter-Intelligence Corps and Military Courts for prosecution as a war criminal. Guards were watchful for acts of sabotage, as some of our telephone lines had been out.

Two of our more important installations were the Rhein River Bridge 316 at Oppenheim and the bridge over the Main River in the vicinity of Aschaffenburg.

At 1600, 20 April the men assigned to guard the railroad at Bad Kreuznach were returned to the Regiment for duty.

April 21, 1945 - Oppenheim, Germany. Record of events: First, Second & Third Platoons continuing to guard bridge. Fourth Platoon now occupying towns of Geinsheim (4742) Sheet T-3 Frankfurt 1/100,000 and Wallerstadten (5145) Sheet T-3 Frankfurt 1/100,000 and are guarding MSR and maintaining law and order.

There were about 12,000 male Germans between the ages of 16 and 60 in Darmstadt which our Interrogation Team began to screen. Several German-speaking enlisted men were put on detached service to assist the Interrogation Team in the screening. They were able to process about 2,000 per day.

April 22, 1945 - Oppenheim, Germany. Record of events: All platoons in positions and performing duties as of 21 Apr/45. April 25, 1945 - Oppenheim, Germany (WM 4439). Cheezem, Charles K. (Inf.) 1st Lt 1542. Reasgd (Prey drpd as BC) & jd Co 21 Apr/45 fr 93d Reinf Bn per par 1 SO 73. Hq's 276th Inf Regt os. Prino Dy 1542 (Plat Ldr) Race (W) Comp RES Date of Rank 1 Feb/45. Record of events: Company in same positions and continuing missions as of 21 April/45.

April 27, 1945 - Oppenheim, Germany (WM 4439). Cheezem, Charles K. (Inf) 1st Lt. 1542. Reld fr dy as Plat Ldr & asgd dy as Ex 0 as of 27 Apr/45 per par 5 SO 75. Hq'd 276th Inf os. Strauss, Joseph M. (Inf) 2d Lt. 1542. Reld fr dy as Ex 0 & asgd dy as Plat Ldr as of 27 Apr/45 per par 6 SO 75. Hq'd 276th Inf os. On the 27th of April we were notified by Division that we were being given a new, larger area, and to prepare to move most of our units to take over the new area by 2400, 28 April 1945.

Our new area was approximately 97 kilometers long and 40 kilometers wide, extending generally, from Wurzburg in the southeast to the north for 40 kilometers, then west to Hanau, south to Dieburg, and east to Kitzengen.

On the morning of 28 April the Regiment moved by motor to the new location in the vicinity of Lohr, Germany. The 274th Regiment relieved us of most of our former area, while we relieved units of the 277th Field Artillery Battalion, 503d Military Police Battalion, and the 11th Belgian Fusilier Battalion in the vicinity of Wurzburg, Hammelberg, and Lohr. The new Regimental CP opened at Lohr at 1215.

The 2d Battalion moved to Wurzburg, the 1st Battalion moved to Goldbach, and the 3d Battalion moved to Karlstadt.

Our mission remained the same, guarding installations, patrolling our assigned area, and maintaining law and order.

Our situation and troop positions remained the same as the month of April 1945 ended.

The warm spring weather ended, too, as rain and snow fell throughout the last three days. The supply situation remained normal during the month. We received 341 reinforcements during the month to bring us up to Table of Organization strength. No reinforcements were needed at the month's close.

Although the Bloody Axe Regiment was not in actual "frontline" contact with the enemy, 345 prisoners were captured during the month.

Morale and combat efficiency were excellent.

April 28, 1945 - Kitzingen, Germany. Record of events: Company departed Oppenheim, Germany 1100 travelled an approx distance of 80 miles to Kitzingen, Germany arrived 2030. Company guarding bridge and maintaining law & order.

April 29, 1945 - Kitzingen, Germany. Record of events: 1st Plat. continued by motor convoy fr Kitzingen to Ochsenfurt, Germany, a distance of approx. 12 miles, 2d Plat shuttled by jeep fr Kitzingen to Ebelstadt, Germany, 4th. Plat shuttled fr Kitzingen to Biebelried, Germany. 3rd Plat in Kitzingen.

April 30, 1945 - Kitzingen, Germany. Record of events: Company continuing missions as of 29 April 1945.

May 2, 1945 - Kitzingen, Germany. Weeks, Robert F., Sgt., 745. Fr dy to sk (LD undetermined) Det Puts 370th Ned Bn NB less Germany SSN 745 (Per Par 3-r. Cir 33 TUSA dtd 27 Mar 45). Record of events: Company continuing same positions and missions as of 29 April 1945.

May 4, 1945 - Kitzingen, Germany. Weeks, Robert F., Sgt., 745, AA. Reasgn (Prey drpd as NBC) & jd fr Det Puts 370th Med BN Per Par 3-? (1) Cir 33 TUSA dtd 27 Mar 45 Race W. Record of events: Company continuing same positions and same missions as of April 29, 1945.

May 6, 1945 - Kitzingen, Germany. Weeks, Robert F., Sgt. 745 Fr dy to sk (LD undetermined) Det Pnts 370th Med BN NB less Germany SSN 745 (Per Par 3? Cir 33 TUSA dtd 27 Mar 45) - should be Weeks, Robert F. Fr dy to sk (LD) Det Pnts 370th Med Bn NB less Germany SSN 745 (Per Par 3-a Cir 33) TUSA dtd 27 Mar 45). Record of events: Company continuing same positions and same missions as of 29 April 1945.

May 8, 1945 - Kitzingen, Germany. Record of events: V. E. DAY

Company continuing usual organizational duties and training schedule.