

1-1-1946

# The 86th Chemical Mortar Battalion presents its battle history

United States Army

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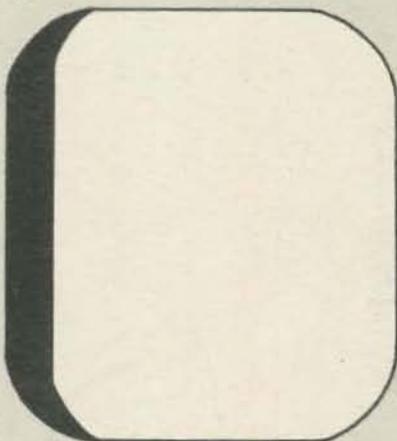
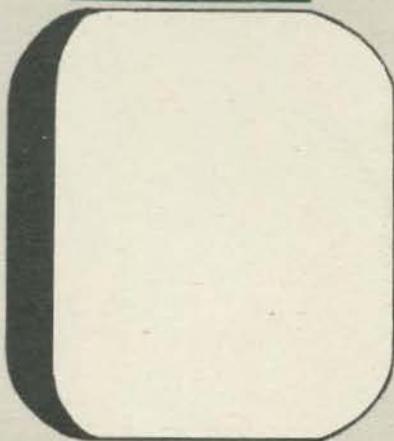
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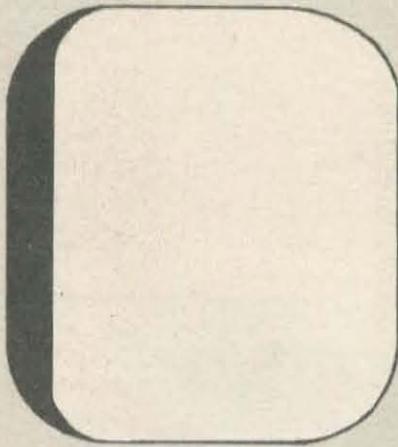
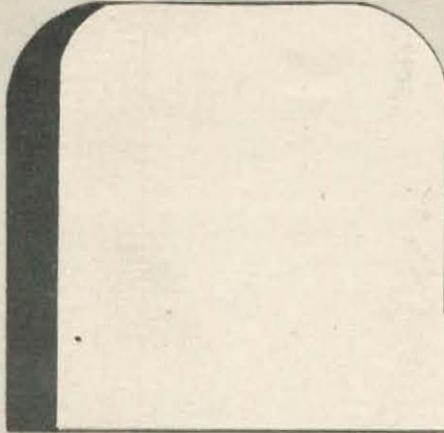
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THE 86th CHEMICAL MORTAR BATTALION

*Presents*

ITS

**Battle  
History**



Published By The  
86th Chemical Mortar Battalion

Camp Campbell  
Kentucky





To the Officers and Men of the Eighty-Sixth Chemical Mortar Battalion who paid the supreme sacrifice in the service of their country and who in such great measure contributed to the glory and fame of this organization—this book is dedicated.

To the loved ones of these, our comrades, we extend our deepest sympathy in the loss of those so dear to them. We, too, share in this great loss. We shall never forget their sacrifice.

To the readers of these pages of history of gallant men, we remind each of the great obligation to those who gave their lives that this nation might continue to live; charging each with the duty of making everlastingly sure that the peace is won and kept, just as decisively as the fighting was won by force of arms.

To those of our ranks who remain, we individually rededicate our lives to the service of God and country, continuing "steadfast, immovable" in this great service.

## Killed In Action

Pfc. Antul, Alfred J.  
Pvt. Balcerk, Thomas N.  
Cpl. Barbaryka, Mike  
Pvt. Bogan, Cecil L.  
Pfc. Boyington, Robert R.  
S/Sgt. Campbell, James A.  
Pvt. Carlson, William D.  
Sgt. Carter, Walter A.  
Pvt. Caskey, Patrick F.  
T/5 Duval, Armon E.  
Pvt. D'Auqeraux, Lolly A.

Cpl. Duralja, Frank J.  
Pvt. Eagle, Earl W.  
T/5 Edwards, Troy O.  
Pfc. Flowers, Edward P.  
1st Lt. Glade, Dustin S.  
Pfc. Heffner, William Jr.  
Pfc. Henning, Walter J. Jr.  
Sgt. Hinchy, Gerald D.  
Pfc. Homa, John P.  
Pfc. Hughes, John W.  
Cpl. Kane, Charles H.  
S/Sgt. Levinson, Edward M.  
S/Sgt. Linwood, John A.

Sgt. Mauk, James R.  
Pvt. Manton, Robert J.  
1st Lt. Mantlios, Deo J.  
1st Lt. Matchett, Wayne M.  
Pfc. McKahan, Edward L.  
Pvt. McLaughlin, Manus J.  
Cpl. Olson, Paul E.  
Cpl. Reed, Frank H.  
Pvt. Sins, Louis H.  
Sgt. Sutphin, Sherman D.  
T/5 Seiber, William E.  
Cpl. Spaggio, Ralph  
Cpl. Tenhagen, Chester F.  
Sgt. Tucker, Otto  
Cpl. Watson, William S. Jr.  
S/Sgt. Zdrikowski, Francis S.

## To All Things A Beginning . . .

Everyone knows of the infantry and the air corps, the tankers and the engineers, the quartermaster and ordnance. And they "know" all about Chemical Warfare: they picture us playing with test tubes in white laboratories, a thousand miles behind the lines, discovering new war gases and atomic bombs.

Some within the Chemical Warfare Service do bring new methods of warfare from their labs, but most of us are ordinary soldiers—very like the infantry and all other troops who fight on the ground, for keeps.

Originally, our mortar was designed for firing chemical shells. Then one day someone discovered that you could fire a TNT-filled shell from the same muzzle—and that day you said goodbye forever to clean labs and pretty colored chemicals, and became a soldier.

So we toted a 4.2" mortar from the beaches of France to the heart of fortress Germany. We went where the infantry had to go, a few times arriving before they did. Our ways of life were alike: same wariness by day, same fear by night, same boredom and despair. And some died in the fight—just as the infantrymen.

Neither for the glory nor the medals, the press releases nor the newsreels—but with a vague consciousness we sensed that we had to be part of this mighty juggernaut that was crushing the Nazis. Beneath our blusters and disdain of flighty words we were proud of being soldiers. We originated a favorite maxim that we used as a "wisecrack" all over Europe—"Don't fool with the fighting troops!"

Yet there are few—soldiers and civilians alike—who know what a 4.2" chemical mortar is and what it can do. Here is the answer, and it has nothing to do with chemicals or chemists except in a very abstract way. This is the historical account of a fighting odyssey, the simple facts of where and with whom we fought.

Everyone knows of the infantry and the engineers. This is about mortar men, who also fought a war.





HEADQUARTERS  
EIGHTY-SIXTH CHEMICAL MORTAR BATTALION  
OFFICE OF THE BATTALION COMMANDER

Camp Campbell, Kentucky  
6 November 1945

TO: All Members of the Eighty-Sixth  
Chemical Mortar Battalion;

This battalion has made an enviable record, not only while  
stationed in the United States, and in England, but in the long  
months of combat in Europe.

You served with three Armies, six Corps and supported twenty-  
six Divisions, with many changes between these units, throughout  
five campaigns in the European Theater and with all missions success-  
fully accomplished.

The history of this battalion contains many deeds of valor on  
the part of individual members of this organization, yet standing  
high is the record of the entire battalion of six hundred and  
seventy two officers and men, together with all former members and  
reinforcements, who have performed all duties and tasks as a "team"  
in an unsurpassed manner.

We individually and as a unit, pay tribute to our dead. That  
they shall not have died in vain, we assume the obligation of keeping  
this Nation strong and free for ourselves, our loved ones and for  
those who follow after us.

To each and every one of you, I wish the greatest success and  
happiness. May God bless you.

Sincerely,

*W. B. Hamilton*  
W. B. HAMILTON  
Lt. Colonel, CWS  
Commanding



**BATTALION STAFF AND  
COMPANY COMMANDERS**

Bottom row, left to right: Capt. E. G. Christiansen, CO, Co. A; Lt. Col. W. B. Hamilton, Bn. CO; Maj. J. J. Doyle, Ex. Off.; Capt. Thayer Rudd, S-3; Standing: Capt. S. P. Palmer, S-2; Capt. E. M. Overbeck, S-4 and CO Hqs. Co.; Capt. W. B. Hinchcliff, CO, Co. B; Capt. I. T. Gross, Med. Off.; 1st Lt. J. B. Deasy, Adj.



**BATTALION EXECUTIVE OFFICER**  
Major J. J. Doyle

**COMPANY COMMANDERS**  
Left to right:  
Capt. E. M. Overbeck, Hqs. Co.  
Capt. E. G. Christiansen, Co. A  
Capt. W. B. Hinchcliff, Co. B  
Capt. Elvin Dalton, Co. C





## BATTALION HISTORY

### TRAINING

THE 86th Chemical Battalion, Motorized, came into being 23 February 1943 when a cadre was formed from the 1st Separate Chemical Company, and station complement personnel declared physically fit for combat. Arriving at Camp Swift, Texas, on 15 May 1943, the cadre immediately undertook preparations for the new-born battalion, and then proceeded in a training program designed to prepare the battalion for close-in support of infantry, the type of missions to be met under combat conditions.

The original battalion commander was Major Richard C. Tanner. On 25 March 1944, Lieutenant Colonel Wesley B. Hamilton assumed command of the 86th and successfully guided its destinies through the Normandy, Northern France, Ardennes, Rhineland, and Central European campaigns.

### E.T.O. BOUND

Upon completing its short but intensive training program, the battalion departed by rail from Camp Swift on 11 April 1944 for the POE—Camp Shanks, New York. After a hurried three days and nights, the unit left Camp Shanks and boarded the *New Amsterdam*, a former Dutch luxury-liner now converted to transporting troops. The *New Amsterdam* sailed from New York harbor on 18 April 1944.

A week later, after an uneventful crossing of the Atlantic, the ship anchored at the scenic port of Greenock, Scotland. It was a pleasure to sight land again, if only because it meant a promise of relief from the crowded shipboard conditions and the not-too-appetizing food.

### ENGLAND

The train which was waiting at the dock took us south into England. By the 27th of April the entire battalion was billeted in private homes of English families located in the village of Port Sunlight, Cheshire. During our two-month visit, we took full advantage of the opportunity and privilege to become really acquainted with our English hosts. The sincerity of the hospitality so graciously offered us, the many little things that made us feel at home, the friendships that developed, will not be soon forgotten.

There was an important job to be done; the unit had to be completely equipped and motorized. Although the time for additional training was short, each company was able to get in one day of firing on the range at Ruabon, Wales, as well as some small arms firing.

The battalion left Port Sunlight on the morning of June 25th and arrived at Stonehenge late at night. At 0300 hours on the 28th, the unit was ordered to proceed to the marshalling area at Southampton immediately.

The battalion sailed for France on the 29th. Early in the afternoon, the convoy ran into a mine field and six ships hit mines. The vessel on which "B" Company had sailed was so severely damaged that personnel were transferred in mid-channel to another boat and returned to the United Kingdom. The other ships reached Utah Beach, Normandy, without further incident.

### NORMANDY CAMPAIGN 29 June to 1 August 1944

Units supported: 90th Infantry Division; 82nd Airborne Division; 8th Infantry Division; 83rd Infantry Division.

Immediately upon landing, the battalion at-

tached to the Eighth Corps went into combat. During this period the battalion fired more than 11,500 rounds of mortar ammunition in close support of five different divisions and thus assisted materially in the drives which finally resulted in the breakthrough at Avranches by the armor.

On 6 July 1944, all companies underwent a reorganization for the purpose of enabling personnel in excess of platoon T/O strength to be rotated to battalion rear echelon for rest whenever possible. This move was necessary in order to keep men physically fit and equipment in good condition.

#### NORTHERN FRANCE CAMPAIGN 25 July to 14 September

*St. Malo — Dinard — Cap Frehal — Rennes, 1 to 17 August 1944*

Units supported: 79th Infantry Division; 8th Infantry Division; 83rd Infantry Division.

During this period the battalion fired a total of 7,844 rounds of mortar ammunition in close support of the infantry troops and contributed to the ultimate capture of St. Malo, Dinard and Cap Frehal. Two officers and two enlisted men of the battalion were in the party of American officials who took the surrender of Colonel von Auloch at the Citadel at St. Malo.

*Brest 19 August to 19 September 1944*

Units supported: 8th Infantry Division; 29th Infantry Division; 2nd Infantry Division; 2nd Ranger Battalion.

Firing a total of 47,561 rounds of mortar ammunition during the period August 24th to September 19th, the actual dates of the Brest Crozon peninsula fighting, this battalion supplied an extremely high volume of accurate close-in supporting fire, and contributed materially to the fall of Brest and the capture of the Crozon peninsula. It was here that German prisoners of war nicknamed our WP shell "Whispering Death."

*Eastern France 23 September to 22 October 1944*

Units supported: 35th Infantry Division; 80th Infantry Division; 4th Armored Division; 26th In-

fantry Division; 6th Armored Division.

Following the battle of Fortress Brest the battalion was moved to Dombasle, France under the Twelfth Corps. Immediately upon arrival, the mortars were set in position facing the enemy along a line running south from Metz to Luneville.

#### ARDENNES CAMPAIGN 16 September 1944 to 25 January 1945

*Germany 26 October to 17 December 1944*

Units supported: 28th Infantry Division; 78th Infantry Division; 2nd Infantry Division; 99th Infantry Division; 8th Infantry Division.

On the 26th of October, the battalion received word to proceed to Arlon, Belgium. Before the unit was committed here, orders were received sending the battalion to the 28th Infantry Division (Fifth Corps Sector: at Rott, Germany. Here it supported the 28th and its successor in the line, the 8th Infantry Division, in the battle of the Hurtgen Forest. This was the only time in the history of the battalion that the unit was committed to the support of just one division. For heroic work in conjunction with the attack on the town of Schmidt and surrounding high ground which protected the network of dams, the battalion received a commendation from the Commanding General of the 28th Infantry Division.

After setting up headquarters in Rott, Germany, it was decided to establish a rest camp, thereby enabling a rotation plan of rest for war-weary men. The town of Dolhain, across the boundary in Belgium, was selected. Daily movies and USO entertainment were features that always gave the fighting man a respite—a rest well-deserved, for this was the period of our hardest (and dirtiest) fighting. On December 1st, the battalion completed its 150th day of combat and fired the 100,000th round of ammunition.

*Battle of the Ardennes 17 December 1944 to 16 February 1945.*

Units supported: 78th Infantry Division; 8th Infantry Division; 2nd Infantry Division; 99th Infantry Division; 1st Infantry Division; 9th Infantry Division; 30th Infantry Division; 82nd AB Division; 75th Infantry Division; 7th Armored Division.

During the Battle of the Ardennes, the battalion



proved its capabilities and fighting qualities, assisting in holding the enemy from penetrating our left flank. Time after time, desperate forces of Nazi tanks and fanatical infantry rolled toward our lines. Each time our mortars belched their "Whispering Song of Death." White phosphorus blinded and burned the Nazis, tank drivers lost their sense of direction and charged crazily into trees, off roads into ditches, into men, and into each other. German foot troops became panicky and vainly sought cover. Finally the enemy offensive lost momentum and began retreating.

In this period the battalion was in support of two Corps and at one time two Armies. At one time the unit supported the Seventh and Fifth Corps, later the Nineteenth Corps of the 9th Army and the Fifth Corps of the 1st Army. Later the battalion, under the 1st Army, supported the Fifth Corps and the Eighteenth Airborne Corps. After the enemy all-out drive had been stopped, the battalion was relieved for reorganization and was redesignated the 86th Chemical Mortar Battalion with a Headquarters Company and three Weapons Companies.

#### **RHINELAND CAMPAIGN**

25 January to 21 March

Units supported: 28th Infantry Division; 2nd Infantry Division; 1st Infantry Division; 78th Infantry Division; 104th Infantry Division.

Immediately after reorganization, the battalion supported the Fifth Corps in the final assault on the Roer River defenses and the advance to the Rhine. When the Remagen Bridgehead was established, two companies, A and B, were attached to the Seventh Corps to assist in holding and expanding the bridgehead while preparations for the final breakthrough were being made. As we moved across the Rhineland, Battalion Headquarters was set up in Kalterherberg, Munstereifel, and Ahrweiler.

#### **CENTRAL EUROPE CAMPAIGN**

22 March to 9 May

Units supported: 69th Infantry Division; 9th Armored Division; 3rd TD Group.

During this period, units of the battalion assisted in closing the Ruhr pocket, while the re-

mainder helped in the drive across Germany. Battalion Headquarters displaced several times to keep abreast of the rapidly advancing elements, passing through Neuwied, Weillburg, Trysa, and Wollhagen. Battalion Headquarters eventually found billets in the city of Naumberg.

"A" Company was supporting the 69th Infantry Division when that unit made the initial contact with elements of the Russian infantry, thereby severing Germany in half and virtually concluding the war.

Since April 7th the entire battalion had been back under Fifth Corps control. On April 28th, all companies were relieved from the line and on May 1st the entire battalion moved to Eschenbach, Germany, assuming a novel phase in its varied experiences—that of security guard, protecting installations and enemy material. It was here that we celebrated V-E Day. Our last move took us across the border into Czechoslovakia to Bischofteinitz in the German Sudetenland.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Leaving Czechoslovakia on June 13 1945, the battalion went by motor convoy to Camp Lucky Strike, France. We sailed from Le Havre on July 1st headed for home, thirty-day furloughs, and then the Pacific. V-J Day intervened and when the battalion reassembled at Camp Campbell, Kentucky, it was to "sweat out" discharges instead of an invasion of Japan.

From the time the battalion entered combat on June 29th, 1944, until cessation of hostilities in Europe on May 9th, 1945, the unit expended a total of 152,257 rounds of HE and WP ammunition, and was in combat 315 days in the 11 months of actual combat on the continent. The battalion had been attached to the following Armies and Corps and been in support of the listed divisions:

Armies: First, Third, Ninth.

Corps: VIII, XII, V, V II, XVIII AB, XIX, III.

Divisions: 1st, 2nd, 4th, 4th Armored, 6th Armored, 7th Armored, 8th, 9th, 9th Armored, 26th, 28th, 29th, 30th, 35th, 69th, 75th, 78th, 79th, 80th, 82nd AB, 83rd, 90th, 99th, 104th, 106th, 2nd Ranger Bn., 102nd Cav. Gr.

TRAVEL AND LOCATION CHART  
86TH CHEMICAL MORTAR BATTALION  
APO 403 US ARMY

LOCATION	DATE	MILES	TOTAL MILES
NEHOU, FRANCE	30 June 1944	0	0
DOLVILLE, FRANCE	14 July 1944	9	9
MONTSURVENT, FRANCE	30 July 1944	18	27
MUNEVILLE, FRANCE	1 August 1944	20	47
CHAMPCEY, FRANCE	2 August 1944	20	67
LE MEIGNE, FRANCE	4 August 1944	14	81
VILDE BIDON, FRANCE	13 August 1944	23	104
TREBEDEN, FRANCE	17 August 1944	22	126
LANDOUZAN, FRANCE	19 August 1944	123	249
TREGNOUX, FRANCE	24 September 1944	101	350
ST. DENIS, FRANCE	25 September 1944	148	636
TREMILLY, FRANCE	27 September 1944	122	758
ALLAIN, FRANCE	26 September 1944	76	834
DOMBASLE, FRANCE	30 September 1944	22	856
ARLON, BELGIUM	25 October 1944	124	980
ROTT, GERMANY	28 October 1944	108	1088
DOLHAIN, BELGIUM	6 November 1944	25	1113
KALTERHERBERG, GERMANY	4 March 1945	21	1134
MUNSTEREIFEL, GERMANY	10 March 1945	40	1174
AHRWEILER, GERMANY	22 March 1945	30	1204
NEUWIED, GERMANY	27 March 1945	23	1227
WEILBURG, GERMANY	31 March 1945	60	1287
TREYSA, GERMANY	1 April 1945	70	1357
WOLFHAGEN, GERMANY	2 April 1945	47	1404
HANN MUNDEN, GERMANY	10 April 1945	50	1454
WEISSENSEE, GERMANY	12 April 1945	85	1539
NAUMBERG, GERMANY	15 April 1945	50	1589
ESCHENBACH, GERMANY	30 April 1945	145	1734
HORSOVSKYTYN, CZECHOSLOVAKIA (BISCHOFTEINITZ, SUDETENLAND)	18 May 1945	75	1809

NUMBER OF DAYS IN COMBAT — 315

4.2 AMMUNITION EXPENDED — 152, 257 Rounds



# Letters of Commendation

HEADQUARTERS 86TH INFANTRY DIVISION  
APO 250, U. S. ARMY  
11 December 1944.

AD 200.22  
SUBJECT: Commendation.  
TO : Commanding Officer, 86th Chemical Battalion.  
THRU : Commanding General, First U. S. Army, APO 250, U. S. Army.

It is with genuine pleasure that on completion of the present phase of our operation we find ourselves completely in control of all the objectives that we were assigned to take. In spite of the difficulties of terrain, tenacity of the enemy and the extremely adverse weather, your unit has consistently given superior support. Every obstacle we have met has been overcome. We have emerged as a team with a fighting spirit that nothing can stop.

It is with justifiable pride that I am able to extend my congratulations to you for the determined leadership you have displayed and which has resulted in the obtaining of the final objective of the first phase. I desire that this commendation extend down through all ranks. The fighting spirit, the tenacity of purpose and the will to win has never been better personified than by the men of your unit.

We will go on to more successes, confident in our skill and in our ability. The people of our nation are watching us and are cheering us on. They can be proud of our successes.

/s/ W. G. Weaver,  
Major General, U. S. Army,  
Commanding.

1st Ind.  
201.92/486 (A)  
HEADQUARTERS FIRST UNITED STATES ARMY, APO 250, 17 Dec 1944.  
TO: Commanding Officer, 86th Chemical Battalion.  
THRU: Commanding General, V Corps.

The Army Commander is pleased to note and transmit this fine tribute for work exceptionally well done.

/s/ S. W. Johnson,  
COL, A.G.J.C.,  
Asst Adjutant General.

2nd Ind.  
201.22  
(11 December 1944) - Commendation.  
HEADQUARTERS V CORPS, APO 305, 22 December 1944.  
TO: Commanding Officer, 86th Chemical Battalion.

It gives me great pleasure to note and transmit this commendation for a difficult task performed in a superior manner.

/s/ George  
W. T. GARDNER,  
Major General, U. S. Army,  
Commanding.

HEADQUARTERS 86TH INFANTRY DIVISION  
APO 250, U. S. ARMY  
15 March 1945.

SUBJECT: Commendation.  
TO : Commanding Officer, Company A, 86th Chemical Battalion, APO 250, U. S. Army.  
THRU : Commanding General, V Corps, APO 305, U. S. Army.

The release of your organization from attachment to this Division as a part of the 86th Infantry Division during the period your personnel displayed an unusual degree of initiative. It is my desire to commend you for the excellent discipline, training and morale of your unit and also for the cooperative attitude of all members of your unit under difficult circumstances.

It is my wish and hope that your unit will continue to "do its job" as it has in the past.

/s/ William H. Hays,  
Major General, U. S. Army,  
Commanding.

2nd Ind.  
201.22  
(11 March 1945) - Commendation.  
TO: Commanding Officer, 86th Chemical Battalion, APO 250, U. S. Army.  
THRU: Commanding General, V Corps, APO 305, U. S. Army.

It gives me great pleasure to note and transmit this fine tribute for work exceptionally well done.

/s/ George W. T. Gardner,  
Major General, U. S. Army,  
Commanding.

HEADQUARTERS V CORPS

George W. T. Gardner,  
Major General,  
Commanding.

# Original Overseas Roster Of Officers

Name	Rank	Assignment
HAMILTON, W. B.	Lt. Col.	Bn. Comdr.
DOYLE, JAMES J.	Major	Bn. Exec.
CHRISTIANSEN, EMIL G.	Captain	CO Co. D, Co. A
GROSS, IRVING J.	Captain	Bn. Surgeon
OVERBECK, EDWARD M.	Captain	CO Co. B, S-4
PITT, HAROLD M.	Captain	CO Co. A, S-3
RASHID, ROBERT G.	Capt., Maj.	S-3
RUDD, THAYER	Captain	CO Co. C, S-2, S-3
CUTTS, ROBERT M.	1st Lt.	Co. A
DALTON, ELVIN	1st Lt., Capt.	CO Co. C
DAVIDSON, THOMAS J.	1st Lt.	Co. D, Co. B
FISCHGRUND, HAROLD S.	1st Lt.	Co. C
HENDRIKSON, HERBERT G.	1st Lt.	Co. B
HINCHCLIFF, WARREN B. JR.	1st Lt., Capt.	CO Co. B
LYNCH, JOHN B.	1st Lt., Capt.	S-2, CO Co. C
MANTLIOS, LEO J.	1st Lt.	Co. D
MATCHETT, WAYNE M.	1st Lt.	Co. A
OTTO, CHARLES B.	1st Lt.	Co. D, Co. A, Bn. Motor Off.
PALMER, STERLING P.	1st Lt., Capt.	Co. A, S-2
PHILLIPS, WILLIAM L.	1st Lt.	Co. C
SOUTHWELL, CASH J.	1st Lt., Capt.	S-4
WAISGERBER, WILLIAM	1st Lt.	Co. B
WALLACE, ROGER B.	1st Lt.	Co. C
ASSMANN, FREDERICK F.	2nd Lt., 1st Lt.	Co. D, Med. Det.
CREE, ROBERT V.	2nd Lt., 1st Lt.	Co. B
DAVIS, HUBERT W.	2nd Lt., 1st Lt.	Co. A, I E & O
DEASY, JOHN B.	2nd Lt., 1st Lt.	Adjutant, S-1
DUDEK, JOSEPH H.	2nd Lt., 1st Lt.	Co. C
DUMARS, DAVID B.	2nd Lt., 1st Lt.	Co. A
FORD, ROBERT E.	2nd Lt., 1st Lt.	Co. B
GLADE, DUSTIN S.	2nd Lt., 1st Lt.	Co. D
GREENVILLE, WILLIAM T.	2nd Lt., 1st Lt.	Co. C
MIERTSCHIN, NORRIS H.	2nd Lt., 1st Lt.	Co. D, Co. B
MUCKLEROY, RICHARD W.	2nd Lt., 1st Lt.	Co. B
RISING, STANLEY A.	2nd Lt., 1st Lt.	Co. A
SWOPE, JOHN G., JR.	2nd Lt., 1st Lt.	Co. A
VIGLIOTTI, RALPH A., JR.	2nd Lt., 1st Lt., Capt.	CO Co. D, Bn. Motor Off.
WILLIAMS, RAYMOND A., JR	2nd Lt., 1st Lt.	Co. B
WILSON, ROBERT B.	2nd Lt., 1st Lt.	Co. C, Co. A
CHAPMAN, ALFRED E.	CWO	Personnel Officer
<b>Reinforcement Officers</b>		
BENJAMIN, LEMUEL G.	1st Lt.	Co. D, Spec. Serv. O.
LANG, DAVID	2nd Lt., 1st Lt.	Co. A
MATTHEWS, DALE E.	1st Lt.	Co. A
ENCALADE, ALVIN J.	2nd Lt., 1st Lt.	Co. C
FALSEY, EDWARD T.	2nd Lt.	Co. C
PRICE, BLISS A.	2nd Lt., 1st Lt.	Co. D, Co. C
IMBERGAMO, SALVATORE C	2nd Lt.	Co. B, Co. C
MURRAY, GEORGE L.	2nd Lt., 1st Lt.	Co. C
WALZ, ELMER H.	2nd Lt., 1st Lt.	Co. B
FRENCH, WILLIAM T.	2nd Lt., 1st Lt.	Co. C
GARDNER, ALVIN Y.	2nd Lt., 1st Lt.	Co. B
WARREN, JOHN P.	1st Lt.	Co. D, Co. B
MINGER, WILLIAM C.	1st Lt.	Co. C
ANTONAK, JAMES G.	2nd Lt.	Co. A, Co. B
MALOY, ROBERT H.	1st Lt.	Co. B
<b>Battlefield Appointments</b>		
TOLMIE, MIKE	2nd Lt., 1st Lt.	Co. C
LINDSEY, RAYMOND C.	2nd Lt., 1st Lt.	Co. C
TERRY, JOSEPH	2nd Lt., 1st Lt.	Co. D, Co. C
WIXSON, PHILIP L.	2nd Lt., 1st Lt.	Co. A
CHERTKOV, MORRIS	2nd Lt.	Co. B
GRUETZMACHER, ALFRED H	2nd Lt.	Co. B
WHARTON, JUDSON K.	2nd Lt.	Co. B
WHITEMAN, WILBUR O.	2nd Lt.	Co. A
WEBB, FRANK	2nd Lt.	Hq. Co.
GLYNN, CARROLL W.	2nd Lt.	Co. A
JOHNSON, C. A.	2nd Lt.	Co. C
RAUNIO, ENSIE E.	2nd Lt.	Co. A

BSM—Bronze Star Medal

SS—Silver Star

PH—Purple Heart

\*—Posthumously

MC—Military Cross

*Awards*

BSM, PH  
BSM  
BSM, PH  
BSM, PH  
BSM W/OLC, PH  
BSM, W/OLC, PH  
BSM, W/OLC  
BSM, PH  
SS, PH  
C de G, BSM, PH  
BSM  
SS, PH  
  
BSM, PH  
  
BSM\*, PH\*  
PH\*  
BSM  
SS  
PH  
BSM  
BSM  
  
BSM, PH  
  
BSM  
BSM  
PH, W2/OLC  
PH  
BSM, PH  
SS\*, PH\*  
SS, PH, W/OLC  
BSM, PH  
MM, PH  
BSM  
SS  
C de G, BSM, W/OLC,  
PH, W/OLC  
BSM, PH  
SS, PH  
BSM  
  
  
SS  
BSM, PH  
BSM  
PH  
  
BSM, W/OLC  
PH, W/OLC  
BSM  
  
BSM  
BSM  
  
  
BSM, PH  
SS, PH  
DSC, SS, BSM, PH, W/OLC  
BSM, PH, W/OLC  
BSM  
BSM, PH  
BSM  
SS, BSM  
BSM  
PH  
SS, PH, W3/OLC  
BSM

W/OLC—With Oak  
Leaf Cluster

*Residence*

Tacoma, Washington  
Houston, Texas  
New York, New York  
Verona, New Jersey  
Dallas, Texas  
San Francisco, California  
Berlin, Wisconsin  
Lexington, Massachusetts  
Martinez, California  
Landsaw, Kentucky  
Baltimore, Maryland  
Franklin, New Jersey  
Staten Island, New York  
Greenville, Mississippi  
Bloomfield, New Jersey  
New York, New York  
Wayne, Indiana  
Rosemont, Pennsylvania  
Seattle, Washington  
Baltimore, Maryland  
Mt. Clemens, Michigan  
Lawrence, Massachusetts  
Oakland, California  
Shorthills, New Jersey  
Sioux City, Iowa  
Rush, Kentucky  
San Francisco, California  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
  
Lakewood, New Jersey  
Los Angeles, California  
Washington, D. C.  
Port Arthur, Texas  
Houston, Texas  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
San Antonio, Texas  
Detroit, Michigan  
  
Salt Lake City, Utah  
Charleston, West Virginia  
Beechurst, New York  
  
  
Dale, South Carolina  
San Francisco, California  
Tabor, Iowa  
Gretna, Louisiana  
Massachusetts  
Andover, Massachusetts  
Beechurst, New York  
New Bedford, Massachusetts  
Kansas  
Miami, Florida  
Columbia, South Carolina  
Trenton, New Jersey  
Gadsden, Alabama  
New Haven, Connecticut  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania  
  
  
Deer River, Minnesota  
Texarkana, Arkansas  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania  
Port Huron, Michigan  
Seattle, Washington  
Chicago, Illinois  
Baltimore, Maryland  
Cannonsburg, Pennsylvania  
Los Angeles, California  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
Corpus Christi, Texas  
Superior, Wyoming  
  
C de G—Croix de Guerre





## HEADQUARTERS COMPANY HISTORY

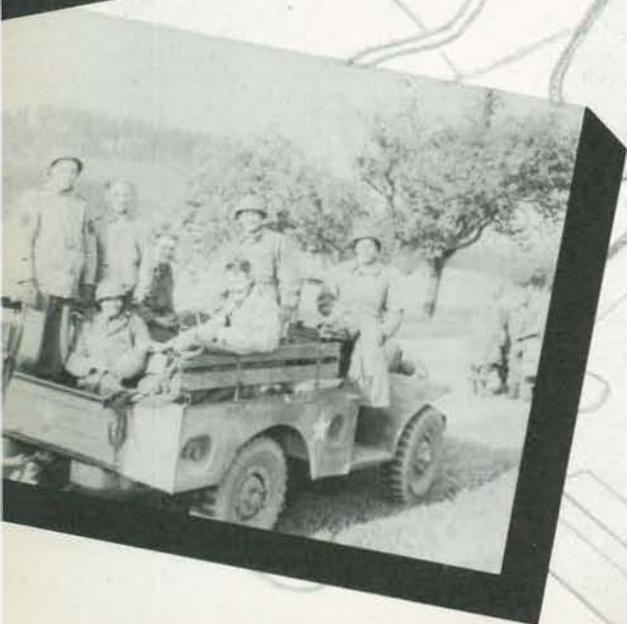
TO US of Headquarters Company there is one night that stands as a salient against our background of training and the test of that training. Tracing an equal distance of time to the activation of the 86th as it did to the final end of the war, this passive, cold English night severed the way of life for fifty eight men. "Perhaps in no other way, except for the quiet apprehension that accompanied it, did this early morning of the 28th of June 1944 differ from any other English night." This we could have said if a motorcycle hadn't crashed through the typically cool mist at 3:00 A. M. bearing a messenger and a message we had long expected. The perennial whistles blew and strident commands pierced the dark until the confusion and noise quickly changed into an orderly convoy. Thus we left Stonehenge, England, the blackout lights of our vehicles casting warning glances in the direction of the enemy and resting soft shadows upon a land we had learned to love. We were off to war.

Driving slowly toward Southampton, our marshalling area, we thought of our two month stay in the picturesque town of Port Sunlight. We thought of how unreal the incident had been, how ridiculous it would have seemed if a GI had told us, "When I was in England I lived in a private home, had tea every night at ten o'clock and was a special hero to a bunch of people who would just as soon have given me the keys to their home than see me live in a place that didn't serve their tea on time," but my gosh; these things had happened to us, they were real, true . . . just as real and true as the fact of their termination.

The morning light and the first vehicles of the

convoy entered Southampton together. A hot meal, the distribution of small arms ammunition and our assignment of sleeping quarters on the docks of Southampton completed the day. In the huge steel-girdered construction that was our home for the night we found box cars, boards, sacks of flour and straw which we were told were our sleeping facilities. The preparations for night completed, we sat in small groups and watched the rain blow in the open doors while kindly English dock-workers enthusiastically told of air raids. Slowly the night, the stories and the rain passed into the next day. Quickly we boarded the U.S.S. Goethals. The English shore moved lazily toward the horizon and the striking difference between its impassive stare at our disappearing ship and the warmth and technicolor beauty of the Scottish Firth as it appeared upon our arrival in Europe seemed like a sad and final farewell.

Just as a ghost story is always better read late at night with all the lights out except the one with the heavy dark lampshade so were the six fast, thunderous, explosions that interrupted our remorseful thoughts more keenly felt. The sensation during those few minutes of spasmodic bursts of noise and water was much like the feeling one experiences half way down the highest drop on a roller coaster . . . tense, expectant, anxiously awaiting the end; not without a little of the thrill of imminent danger. Six ships forming a perfect circle around us were hit and the faces of our seaman reflected thoughts different from their boasts of the peaceful channel crossings to tell the next boatload. Evening's silent curtain descended upon the U.S.S. Goethals while



the ship slowly moved into an unnamed harbor on the coast of the Cherbourg Peninsula.

Early the next morning, as a burning sun threw its light on the sand and into the sea, ships of all sizes and shapes performed a thousand different tasks preparatory to landing. Everything seemed confused and disorganized but the speed and surety of the landings testified to the fact that we were witnesses to a huge and carefully laid plan. Watching the intricate and awkward looking apparatus that was loading our trucks and equipment into LSTs that looked incapable of containing anything but a small car or two was a pleasant diversion from the strain of the past few days.

Fortunately our landing wasn't one of those hell bent dives for cover and advance that movie realists love to picture as the only way of getting onto a beach. Fortunate, because though our motor pool made all the complicated preparations for the waterproofing of our vehicles, the movement orders received at Stonehenge followed those preparations by only a few hours and the trucks had to be put together non-waterproof. The jaws of the LSTs opened and we rolled onto the beach and into the assembly area.

A French town doesn't gain its only distinction from quaint construction or pastoral atmosphere. There is a definite odor that accompanies a French dwelling; at least there was in the early months of the European campaign. The odor was that of a combination of fresh milk, farm animals, clean air, destruction and death. It was neither obnoxious nor pleasant. To us it was just a part of France that will remain as long as the memory of France itself, just as the recollection of a pretty girl brings to mind a certain song or color. It was this peculiar odor and the complete devastation that made the strongest impression upon us. Poverty and ruin were the stage settings for our opening night. "Opening," is the most clearly descriptive adjective for our first night in combat. Noise that had the power of material force and angry flame that tore the dark into a pattern of light and shadow defiantly shouted to the world, "This is war, this is power!" The giant strength of man's destructive ingenuity was awe-inspiring but the futility and childish application of this great power made a deep and ironic impression upon us.

It was here, at Nehou, that we began collecting those rarities of character and personality . . . little children. Intermingled in the pathos that accompanied the war, French, and later Belgian, children were always wandering timidly around our trucks or tents. It was a welcome contrast to see an incongruously-dressed group of kids listening with wide-eyed attention to animated stories, or accepting with awkward grace candy or chocolate ration. Until we entered Germany they were either standing at our side, watching us shave, or in some way inflicting a small part of their emotions, thoughts, or troubles into the lives of those who took the time to know them. This was a part of our experience in war that wasn't wholly unappreciated or without amusement and pleasure.

At Nehou the "pool" system of ammunition supply was initiated. A pool of ammo trucks and drivers serviced the companies upon requests for ammunition by telephone. This was particularly difficult because many of the trips had to be made at night

and the drivers had to find their companies by map. In a war torn countryside where the beginning and end of a town may be but a few yards apart and where a bridge that stood yesterday doesn't stand today, a map can be appallingly misleading. Despite this disheartening difficulty ammunition had to reach the companies when they asked for it. Despite the many flat tires that were an every-day occurrence and the imminent danger of mines, whose reality was proven more than once to some of the drivers, the ammunition did reach the companies.

Many of the events that occurred between July 1st 1944, the day of our landing, and our entry into the Brest Peninsula have made history, but none of them will be remembered by us as long as an eventful night we spent on the palatial grounds of Chateau Champcey. Chateau Champcey was the ostentatious home of the mayor of Champcey. Surrounded by a woods of giant trees and well-maintained lawns, the only suggestion that war had touched Champcey was the few broken windows the Chateau sustained and an occasional horse-drawn ammunition cart abandoned by the Germans. Having arrived toward the end of afternoon, it was dark by the time we had set up the battalion command post and organized the company. There had been no time to dig foxholes and the men had already taken advantage of the opportunity to sleep, when the soft, heavy drone of enemy bombers reached us. It is strange how fast those weak-sounding German planes can approach. Shortly after the first intimation that enemy planes were near, the first bomb screamed its death-laden message to earth. Distance, we learned, could not be judged by sound for the dive of each plane seemed directly overhead and we were sure the whine of each bomb would terminate in our area. The Germans returned three times that night and dropped a lonely flare on the last flight. Our area was on a slight hill and fringed by a thin circle of trees. It was above an edge of these trees the flare descended. Slowly and faithfully it dropped, throwing a pale white light that turned our area into a fairyland of grotesque shadows and contrasting whites. It was these shadows the Germans were watching, patiently waiting for some movement that would indicate a bivouac of troops. Everyone followed the earthward descent of that flare but as it drew near the fringe of trees a silent wind moved it slowly into the adjacent area.

Despite the many horrible aspects of war, there invariably occur humorous incidents. This night spent at the Chateau set the stage for just such an incident. We knew the battalion adjutant had had previous theatrical experience but we did not know he possessed the ability to distinguish between good and bad wines. Somewhere along the trip across France, the adjutant, through his knowledge of cognac, had become the recipient of two bottles of cognac whose quality he had intended to determine; however, the opportunity failed to present itself until the night of Chateau Champcey. Shortly before the enemy aircraft arrived, the adjutant had begun to test the cognac but since both bottles were of almost equal quality discrimination between the two became increasingly difficult. By the time the planes arrived and the night was in full swing the adjutant





had become so completely absorbed in his task that he paid little attention to anything else. Soon after the flare had settled and the enemy had departed, the adjutant had completed his task. Perhaps it was just a product of highly strung nerves that prompted some of the members of headquarters company to insist that they had seen a long-legged figure striding through the moonlit woods of Chateau Champcey and mumbling passages from "Hamlet," and "The Face On the Bar Room Floor!"

At the headquarters position a few miles from Brest, France, the personnel and battalion headquarters section enjoyed a comparative rest while the ammunition section experienced its most difficult tasks still laboring under the pool system of ammunition supply. The CWS ammunition dump was located approximately one hundred and twenty miles away in the vicinity of Dinan. Because of the rapidly advancing American lines, the supply dump couldn't move up fast enough to facilitate supply to the battalion; consequently, it became necessary for our group of eight drivers and four ammo handlers to move the ammunition dump servicing the battalion in addition to supplying the companies with white phosphorus and high explosive shells. The trip to Dinan would have been interesting if the threat of strafing hadn't materialized too often and if the drivers weren't compelled to drive over the speed limit in order to make the trip on schedule. It must have been an impressive sight to the French peasants who stood timidly in their doorways to see a convoy of eight trucks roar through a little town whose cobblestone streets had previously echoed only the warm and friendly sound of horses' hoofs.

Though technical manuals permitted only twenty four hundred rounds of ammunition to be carried by eight trucks, the furious race of ammunition to the front necessitated overloading the trucks by eight hundred rounds. Establishing the ASP at a town closer to the front and assigning two trucks, two drivers, and an ammo handler to each company solved most of the difficulties in ammunition supply.

We left our bivouac near Londonzan in the Brest Peninsula on the 24th of September 1944 and made the six hundred and seven mile trip to Dornbasle, France in six days. Stretching across a brilliant white highway the 138 vehicles that formed our convoy gave one a feeling of pride in the power and self-sufficiency of our battalion. A large reception hall centered in a beautiful grounds served as our headquarters for twenty five days. We ate in a band shell that faced the side of the hall and established a kitchen in a garage a few yards away. The only inconvenience at Dornbasle was experienced by the communications section who had to maintain 24-hour-a-day contact with the letter companies. At this time we had only two radio operators; which meant one would have to stay with the radio 24 hours while the other slept. This system proved more effective than 12 hour shifts, though twenty five days of operation with no rest was a grueling task. Nights at Dornbasle were cold and inside the lonely weapons carrier that served as a communications truck the single radio operator had to warm himself by means of a small blowtorch. For this man, keeping an attentive watch for news or a call for help that might carry the responsibility





of men's lives, the move to Arlon, Belgium was a relief.

Belgium derived her most appeal from the fact that she had ice cream. We hadn't tasted such a delicacy in several months. As soon as we arrived at the old hospital we were to occupy, one of our company who could speak a very little German contacted a Belgian who had the same ability, but in a lesser degree of proficiency. Our interpreter thumbed through his small dictionary for the word, "Ice cream" and found the German equivalent whose literal translation meant "eating ice." Having acknowledge complete understanding of our desire, the kind Belgian swiftly departed for the "eating ice" shop. We were particularly enthusiastic because he had described a cake of ice cream a yard in length and six inches in width and breadth which he claimed would cost us only seven francs. We waited about ten minutes for his return and then we saw him coming slowly up the street, bending under a rectangular object of the measurements he had described. This unorthodox form of ice cream puzzled us but our enthusiasm was much to great for our logic. When he reached us, his face beaming with pleasure at his accomplishment, we saw that he had taken the German equivalent for ice cream literally and had brought us a massive rock of solid ice! This wasn't our first disappointment in Belgium for our planned two week stay in Arlon was interrupted by movement orders received forty eight hours after our arrival. Again the motor pool was caught off balance. In those first two days they had unloaded and established a working area for the planned two week stay. How they repacked and assembled in convoy in time for the move into Ger-

many is one of those things that are done and not explained.

The road was slippery and treacherous; the winding and unfamiliar horse cart path that penetrated into Germany was fogged by a cold mist that dimmed our blackout lights and intensified the ominous atmosphere that followed our careful move into the enemy's country. We pushed into a dark woods that was blanketed with cold gray snow. We arrived late at night and had just attempted digging foxholes in the frozen ground when the thunderous crash of nearby heavy artillery blasted the silence like a terrified scream in a lonely cemetery. The incessant pounding of guns jammed close together beat a like rhythm with the sleet and rain that had begun to seep through the shelter halves to soak our blankets. The few days spent in the Hurtgen Forest were days of cold and nights of flak and anti-aircraft shells that hummed through the branches of stately trees. The personnel section had cut down two pine trees and trimmed the branches. These they mounted on ammunition boxes and propped up their field desks on the structure. Though it wasn't humorous, it often occasioned a smile to see them at the seemingly futile task of attempting to type on machines that were just as stiff and cold as their fingers; however, reports that had to reach higher headquarters with no excuse for delay compelled them to accomplish an apparently impossible task.

We moved back into Belgium from the Hurtgen Forest (actually the Staats Forest, Rotgen) on the 6th of November 1944. It was immediately apparent that work was almost impossible under the present



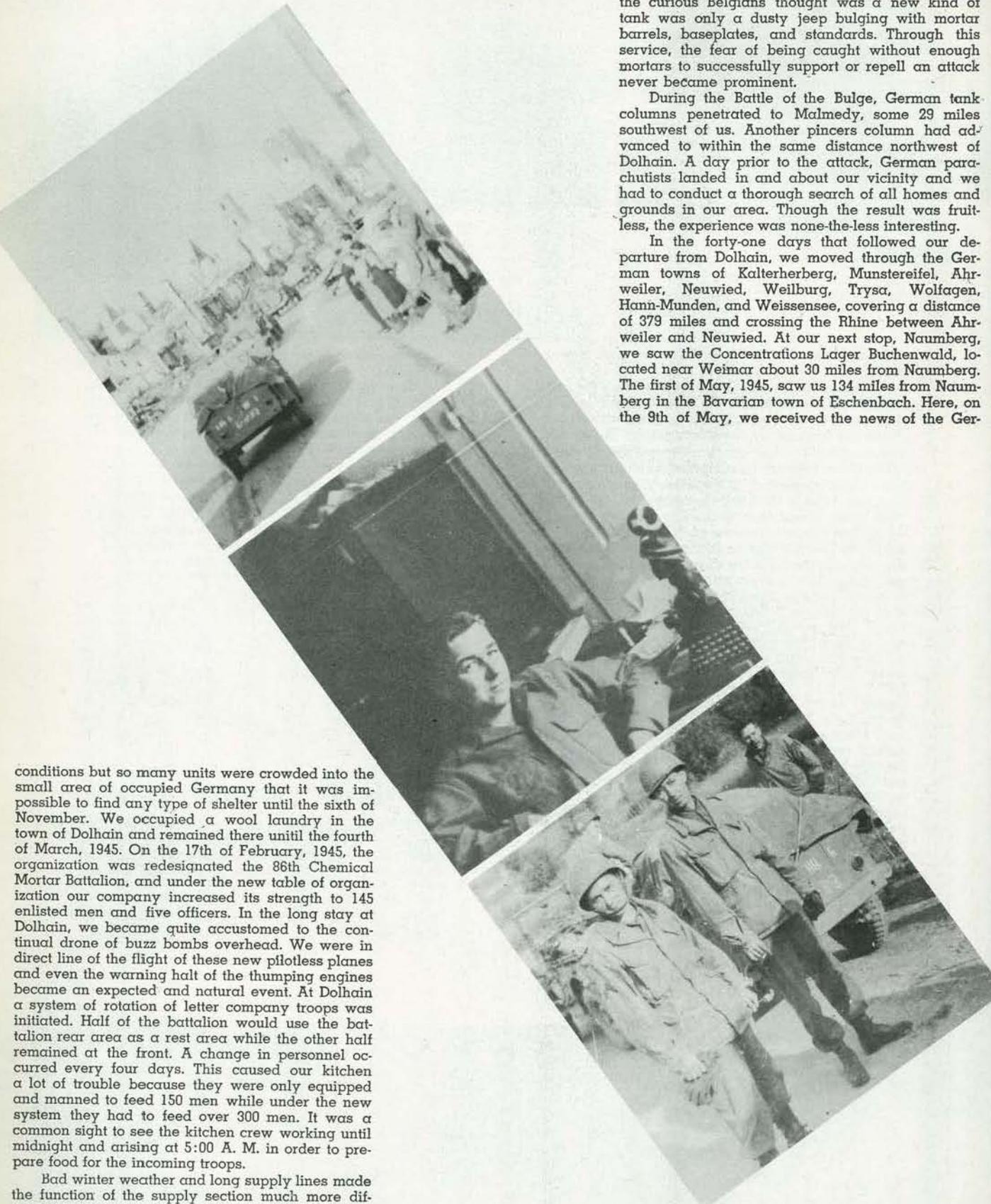
to the trouble in maintaining an efficient flow of supplies. A section within supply was organized to maintain contact with chemical maintenance and depot companies and ordnance companies. What the curious Belgians thought was a new kind of tank was only a dusty jeep bulging with mortar barrels, baseplates, and standards. Through this service, the fear of being caught without enough mortars to successfully support or repel an attack never became prominent.

During the Battle of the Bulge, German tank columns penetrated to Malmedy, some 29 miles southwest of us. Another pincers column had advanced to within the same distance northwest of Dolhain. A day prior to the attack, German paratroopers landed in and about our vicinity and we had to conduct a thorough search of all homes and grounds in our area. Though the result was fruitless, the experience was none-the-less interesting.

In the forty-one days that followed our departure from Dolhain, we moved through the German towns of Kalterherberg, Munstereifel, Ahrweiler, Neuwied, Weilburg, Trysa, Wolfagen, Hann-Munden, and Weissensee, covering a distance of 379 miles and crossing the Rhine between Ahrweiler and Neuwied. At our next stop, Naumberg, we saw the Concentration Lager Buchenwald, located near Weimar about 30 miles from Naumberg. The first of May, 1945, saw us 134 miles from Naumberg in the Bavarian town of Eschenbach. Here, on the 9th of May, we received the news of the Ger-

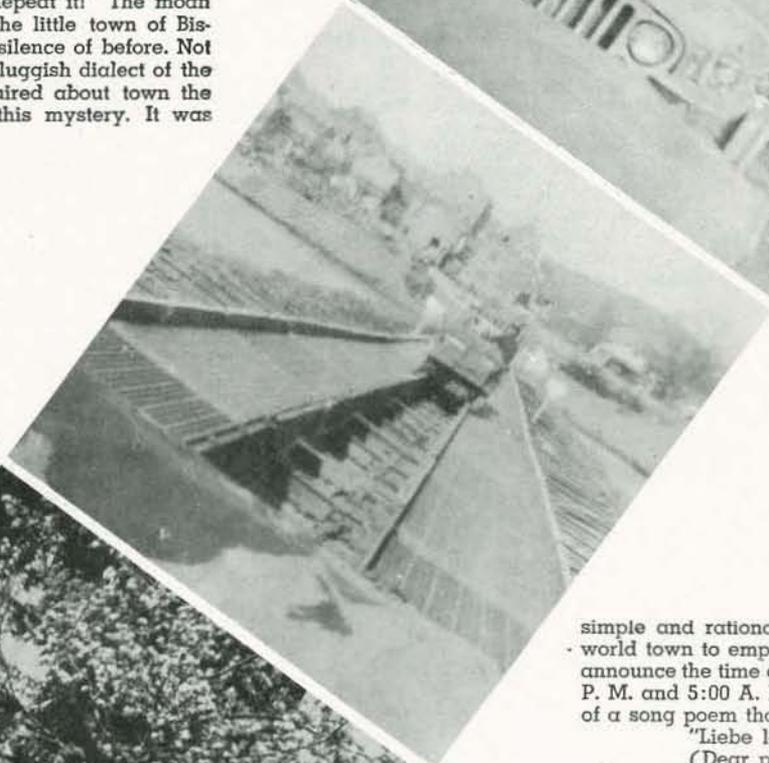
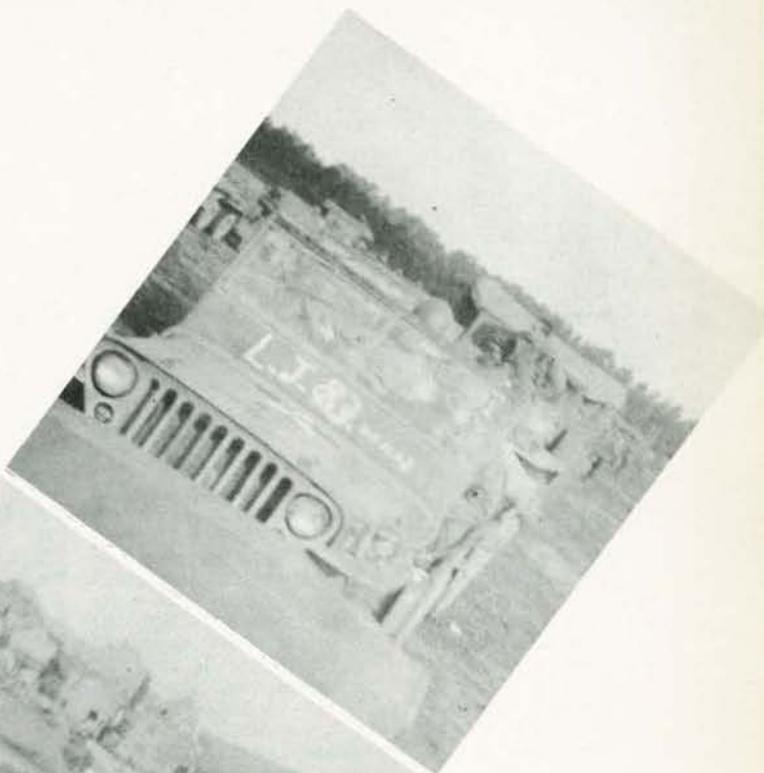
conditions but so many units were crowded into the small area of occupied Germany that it was impossible to find any type of shelter until the sixth of November. We occupied a wool laundry in the town of Dolhain and remained there until the fourth of March, 1945. On the 17th of February, 1945, the organization was redesignated the 86th Chemical Mortar Battalion, and under the new table of organization our company increased its strength to 145 enlisted men and five officers. In the long stay at Dolhain, we became quite accustomed to the continual drone of buzz bombs overhead. We were in direct line of the flight of these new pilotless planes and even the warning halt of the thumping engines became an expected and natural event. At Dolhain a system of rotation of letter company troops was initiated. Half of the battalion would use the battalion rear area as a rest area while the other half remained at the front. A change in personnel occurred every four days. This caused our kitchen a lot of trouble because they were only equipped and manned to feed 150 men while under the new system they had to feed over 300 men. It was a common sight to see the kitchen crew working until midnight and arising at 5:00 A. M. in order to prepare food for the incoming troops.

Bad winter weather and long supply lines made the function of the supply section much more difficult. Hard work and long hours on their part kept our stomachs full, our bodies warm, and the mortars firing, but the distribution of rations, equipment, and clothing only comprised a part of the supply section's work. The constant repair of mortars added



man surrender. Seventy five miles away on the 18th of May, we were in the Bohemian, Sudetanland town of Bischofteinitz. It was a town founded in custom and folk lore that had long lost a date of origin but never its customs. One such custom provides the material for an interesting story:

It had been remarked occasionally that an inexplicable, weird, groan would accompany the toll of the church bell at night. One warm, moonlit night at Bischofteinitz, a German-speaking corporal of the guard was making an inspection a few minutes before 12:00 P. M. and listening to a guard who was telling him this strange story of a prolonged moan that sung out with the toll of the church bell. The church was located about 50 yards from the guard post and a pale moon cast soft light on the church tower and on the cobblestone street below. The heavy silence that guarded the night seemed to throb and echo along the winding streets and the hollow, slow, ring of the church bell as it struck midnight pierced the night with a cold, melodious sound. Then, immediately following the ring, came the deep-voiced moan from the tower. For the two men on guard that night seemed electric as the corporal shouted, "What's the trouble?" and then a little softer, a little slower, "Repeat it!" The moan repeated itself and then left the little town of Bischofteinitz bathed in the deep silence of before. Not being able to understand the sluggish dialect of the ghost voice, the corporal inquired about town the next day for the answer to this mystery. It was



simple and rational. It was a custom in this old-world town to employ an old man in the church to announce the time of day every night between 11:00 P. M. and 5:00 A. M. This he would do in the form of a song poem that, translated in English, is:

"Liebe leute last euch sagen,  
(Dear people let us tell you)  
unsere Uhr hat elf geschlagen."  
(Our clock has struck eleven)

"Die liebe Frau in Himmel d'roben,  
(The holy Lady in Heaven)  
last unsere Uhr elf schlogen."  
(Lets our clock strike eleven)

Simply and without supernatural connections, a custom in a town existing in customs.

From the date of our arrival at Bischofteinitz, we expected to make our last move in Europe and the motor pool prepared for the inevitable return trip. The job of servicing the worn vehicles for the long trip ahead was immense, but the motor pool finished the task in time for our departure from the Sudetanland on the twelfth of June. We traveled 735 miles and arrived at Camp Lucky Strike, St. Valery, France on the sixteenth of June.

As the S. S. Sea Pike left Le Havre on the first of July, we looked back upon the thinning silhouette of France and felt that same loss of something gained in a foreign land. In the secret hours of night nine days later, we saw the timid lamps of a New York port throw wrinkled patterns of pale light across the friendly waters that patiently awaited the joyous awaking of the S, S. Sea Pike.

# HEADQUARTERS

Name	Rank	Assignment
Adamson, Hilmer J.	Pvt., Pfc.	
Arling, Carl W.	Pvt., Pfc.	
Boeker, Norman E.	Tec. 5 Gr.	
Boyd, Bradford C.	T/Sgt., M/Sgt.	
Brennan, Clement C.	Pvt. 1cl	Trfd. to Co. C
Britton, John H.	S/Sgt.	Trfd. to Co. C
Broadhurst, Erwin M.	T/5	
Caudle, James L.	Sgt., S/Sgt.	
Charlton, Albert L.	Pvt.	Trfd. to Co. B
Cicccone, Joseph C.	T/5, T/4	
Clark, William E.	Pfc.	Trfd. to Co. B
Cobb, Walter J.	T/5	
Cynkar, Stanley J.	Sgt., T/Sgt.	
Dambruch, Robert F.	Pvt., Pfc.	
Dangelo, Santo	Pfc.	
Dougherty, Patrick J.	Pfc.	
Ferguson, Douglas F.	M/Sgt.	
Fink, Roscoe H., Jr.	T/4, T/Sgt.	
Freedman, Israel R.	T/Sgt.	
Gerrits, Leonard J.	T/5	
Gilbert, Dean H.	T/4, 1st Sgt.	
Goins, Grover D.	Pfc., T/5	
Hamel, Joseph N. A.	T/4	
Jones, Walter E.	T/4	
Kesler, Leon D.	S/Sgt., M/Sgt.	
Knutson, Robert N.	Pfc., T/5	
Kramer, Gerald A.	Cpl.	
Kretz, John C.	T/5	Trfd. to Co. C
Lerch, Frederick W.	Pfc., T/5	
Makamson, Herman A.	T/5	
McCarty, Harold E.	T/5	
McGinley, James S., Jr.	T/5	
Messersmith, Lawrence B.	Pvt.	
Miller, James F.	T/5, T/Sgt.	
Mitzelfeldt, Everett A.	Pfc., S/Sgt.	
Packard, Arthur D.	Pvt., T/4	
Parkyns, Edward A. Jr.	T/5	
Rasch, Anthony A.	M/Sgt.	Trfd. to 35th Evac.
Reichert, Andrew W.	T/Sgt.	
Rhoads, John W., Jr.	T/5	
Robb, Ernest W.	T/4, S/Sgt.	
Sawka, John	Pvt., S/Sgt.	
Schmidt, George G.	Pvt., Pfc., T/5	
Skinner, George C.	Pvt.	Trfd. to Hosp.
Sweet, Donald L.	Pvt., T/5	
Sylester, Raymond W.	T/Sgt., M/Sgt.	
Terrell, Sanford G.	Pvt.	Trfd. to Co. A
Venable, David J.	Pvt., T/5	
Weiner, Sol	Pfc.	
Whitaker, James C.	T/5, T/4	Trfd. to Co. C
Williams, James A.	Pfc.	
Winn, Thomas J.	Pfc.	Trfd. to Co. B
Wiste, Vernon A.	Pvt., Pfc.	
Zilm, William E.	Pvt.	Trfd. to Hosp.
Zimmerman, Wenzel V.	Pvt.	Trfd. to Hosp.
Voropay, Nicholas P.	Pvt.	Trfd. to Hosp.

# DETACHMENT

## *Awards*

Bronze Star, Purple Heart

Purple Heart  
Purple Heart  
Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Bronze Star

Purple Heart, Bronze Star

Bronze Star, Purple Heart

Bronze Star

Purple Heart and Cluster

## *Residence*

Chicago, Illinois  
Macomb, Illinois  
Waterloo, Illinois  
Nashville, Tennessee  
Toledo, Ohio  
Holyoke, Massachusetts  
Chicago, Illinois  
Henderson, North Carolina  
Portland, Maine  
Nutley, New Jersey  
Gilbertson, Alabama  
Honesdale, Pennsylvania  
Chicago, Illinois  
Kimberley, Wisconsin  
St. Louis, Missouri  
New Iberia, Louisiana  
Albany, Kentucky  
West Allis, Wisconsin  
Fall River, Massachusetts  
Appleton, Wisconsin  
Buffalo Center, Iowa  
Anacoco, Louisiana  
Fall River, Massachusetts  
Findlay, Illinois  
Crown Point, Indiana  
Rockford, Illinois  
Chicago, Illinois  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania  
S. Bound Brook, New Jersey  
Batesville, Mississippi  
Saluda, South Carolina  
Millvale, Pennsylvania  
Wyoming, Illinois  
Frackville, Pennsylvania  
Fond du Lac, Wisconsin  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
New York, New York  
Ansonia, Connecticut  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
Atwater, Ohio  
Finleyville, Pennsylvania  
Scranton, Pennsylvania  
Chicago, Illinois  
Winnsboro, Louisiana  
Akron, Ohio  
Auburn, Maine  
Elmer, Louisiana  
Rayne, Louisiana  
Brooklyn, New York  
Toledo, Ohio  
Cuero, Texas  
Winsted, Connecticut  
Madison, South Dakota  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
Westford, Massachusetts

# REINFOR HEADQUART

Name	Rank
Kroster, Richard G.	Pfc.
Gerrieri, Frank H.	Pfc.
Jackovin, Anthony	Pfc.
Patchak, Peter	Pvt.
Curtiss, Oscar L.	Pvt.
Lefter, George T.	Pvt.
Joyal, Reginald	Pvt.
Cibelli, Daniel J.	Pvt.
Conicola, Anthony P.	Pvt.
Schraffren, Anthony	Pvt.
Green, Elwyn W.	Pvt.
Fell, Milton E.	Pvt.
White, Otis H.	Pvt.
Goodall, Joseph P.	T/5
Cwach, Lee J.	Pfc.
D'Agastino, Stephen	Pfc.
Hunt, James B.	Pfc.
Kilgoar, James A.	Pfc.
Macguinness, Alvin G.	Pfc.
Lebian, Raoul H.	Pfc.
Scott, George W.	Pvt.
Stanley, Willis L.	Pvt.
Weldon, Dobbie	Pvt.
Weldon, Leland L.	Pvt.
Zupnes, Edward C.	Pvt.
Iverson, Elvin M.	Pfc.
Lockwood, Walter	Pvt.
Martin, James E.	Pvt.
Mattox, John W.	Pvt.
Maynor, Theodore C.	Pvt.
Page, Joseph D.	Pvt.
Parsley, Ray O.	Pvt.
Payne, John T.	Pvt.
Pincince, Leo	Pvt.
Redell, Jack W.	Pvt.
Reyes, Elias	Pvt.
Robbins, Henry Jr.	Pvt.
Sargent, Ralph B.	Pvt.
Hargrove, Thomas I.	Pvt.
Czerniewski, Casimir V.	Pvt.
Browzowsky, Daniel	Pvt.
Sarvi, Benjamin A.	Pfc.
Castine, Lewis J.	Pfc.
Longo, Gaetono	Pfc.
Knight, Ralph D.	Pvt.
Walters, Clayton E.	Pvt.
Sanders, Clifford J.	Pvt.
Semski, Michael J.	Pvt.
Spar, Donald D.	Pvt.
Vernalis, Peter A.	Pvt.
Dougherty, Paul J.	Pfc.
Kenny, Albert H.	Pfc.
Long, John T.	Pfc.
McCarter, Arthur R.	Pfc.
Seager, Samuel C.	Pfc.
Jones, George H.	Pfc.
Olsovsky, Justin F.	Pfc.
Thomas, John C.	Pfc.
Waite, James E.	Pfc.
Snider, Robert F.	Pvt.
Waeger, Irving A.	Pvt.
Wilson, John L.	Pvt.
Wisnieski, Joseph J.	Pvt.
Murdoch, Edward E.	Pfc.
Andrews, George A.	Pvt.
Patterson, Harold Jr.	Pvt.
Burgess, Herbert C.	Pfc.
Polzin, Lee N.	Pfc.
Golson, Lee W.	Pvt.
Benjamin, Robert L.	Pfc.
Nesseralla, Edward A.	Pvt.

# CEMENTS

# ERS COMPANY

## Awards

Purple Heart

Purple Heart

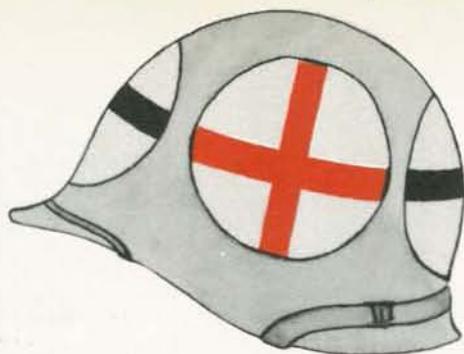
Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Purple Heart

## Residence

New Hope, Pennsylvania  
Chicago, Illinois  
Chicago, Illinois  
Wilmore, Pennsylvania  
Detroit, Michigan  
Athens, Tennessee  
Peru, New York  
Chicago, Illinois  
Hackensack, New Jersey  
Reading, Pennsylvania  
Erie, Pennsylvania  
Lead, South Dakota  
Thomasston, Georgia  
Etrick, Virginia  
Yankton, South Dakota  
Camden, New Jersey  
Mt. Vernon, Missouri  
Shebeville, Tennessee  
Wilmington, Maryland  
W. Warwick, Rhode Island  
Highbee, Missouri  
Selma, North Carolina  
Bartow, Florida  
Bartow, Florida  
Waterbury, Connecticut  
Salem, Illinois  
Sharon Springs, New York  
East Liverpool, Ohio  
Wirtz, Virginia  
Pembroke, North Carolina  
Dexter, Maine  
Merschons, Kentucky  
Owensboro, Kentucky  
Wakefield, Massachusetts  
Alexander, Kentucky  
Bannister, Michigan  
Selbyville, Delaware  
Merrimac, Massachusetts  
Salisbury, North Carolina  
Chicago, Illinois  
Baltimore, Maryland  
Serva, Minnesota  
Haverhill, Massachusetts  
Jamaica, New York  
Cambridge, Massachusetts  
Fremont, Nebraska  
Sheriden, Wyoming  
Baltimore, Maryland  
Ada, Ohio  
Schenandoah, Pennsylvania  
Millville, New Jersey  
Riverton, New Jersey  
Holyoke, Massachusetts  
Camp Hill, Pennsylvania  
Los Angeles, California  
Camden, Arkansas  
Summitt Hill, Pennsylvania  
Bremont, Texas  
McCarley, Mississippi  
Framingham, Massachusetts  
Adoh, Pennsylvania  
Posen, Illinois  
Ashville, North Carolina  
Denver, Colorado  
Lancaster, Pennsylvania  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Cheyenne, Wyoming  
Scranton, Pennsylvania



## MEDICAL DETACHMENT HISTORY

On 25 June 1945 the battalion and the detachment moved to a marshalling area near the famous stone monuments at Stonehenge. During our brief stay there the aid station was set up once more. It was our last practice before the real thing.

Before dawn, 29 June, the order came to move down to Southampton. There after a night in a warehouse, listening to the rain drum on the roof and the sea, and thinking and wondering about the future, we boarded a liberty ship.

The next morning, we joined a convoy, outside Southampton harbor, and sailed for France. On the way several ships struck mines, and Co. B had to return to England having lost all its equipment. It was then that we lost our first "medic." He was slightly injured in the mine explosion and never returned to the detachment. That night we lay off the beaches, listening to German planes and experiencing our first feeling of being in the war.

The following morning we transferred our equipment to landing craft and next found ourselves on the bloody Utah beachhead, which only two weeks previously had been a battle ground.

That day our detachment separated into four groups, one group going with each company. Those first days in Normandy were fearful ones and the battalion suffered its first casualties and fatalities early in the game. The aid men put all the skill and knowledge they had gained from months of training treating the wounded in the midst of severe shelling, disregarding their own safety.

The fighting was bitter and the men lived through days that were like nightmares, but our troops pushed on into France, leaving fallen comrades, but surging forth relentlessly.

The battalion aid station was set up at each bivouac area and the aid men came in from the front for medical supplies and bringing Emergency Medical tags, made out after each individual injury, with recorded data showing eligibility for Pur-



ple Heart awards, which were made by the battalion commander.

The aid station stayed with battalion headquarters some miles from the front, thus severe battle casualties were not brought to us. Infantry aid stations treated our badly wounded before evacuating them to hospitals.

After the St. Lo breakthrough, we moved into Brittany, to Brest, where we bivouacked for six weeks while that stronghold was being battered into submission. The medical officer made trips to the various companies inspecting kitchens, latrines, etc., as well as holding physical inspections. He interrogated the men at the front as to their opinions on how to ameliorate the food situation, sanitation, etc. It was at Brest that the first award of the Bronze Star Medal in the battalion was presented to a member of the detachment for valor in treating the wounded under fire.

After the fall of Brest, the detachment drove all the way across France to Dombasle, on the outskirts of Nancy. Our mortar companies were fighting with 12th Corps troops of the Third Army, and for long periods we did not see the aid men, for they were so far in advance of Battalion Headquarters. At this time, the aid station was in the basement of a school, and the aid men, who rotated, or took turns at the front, had a warm shelter to return to for rest after gruelling days at the front.

The next move, in October 1944, took us into the Roetgen Forest, Germany, just across the Belgian border, where we set up in a dense pine forest. Here there was no shelter for the men to come back to, but getting out of the lines was relief enough.

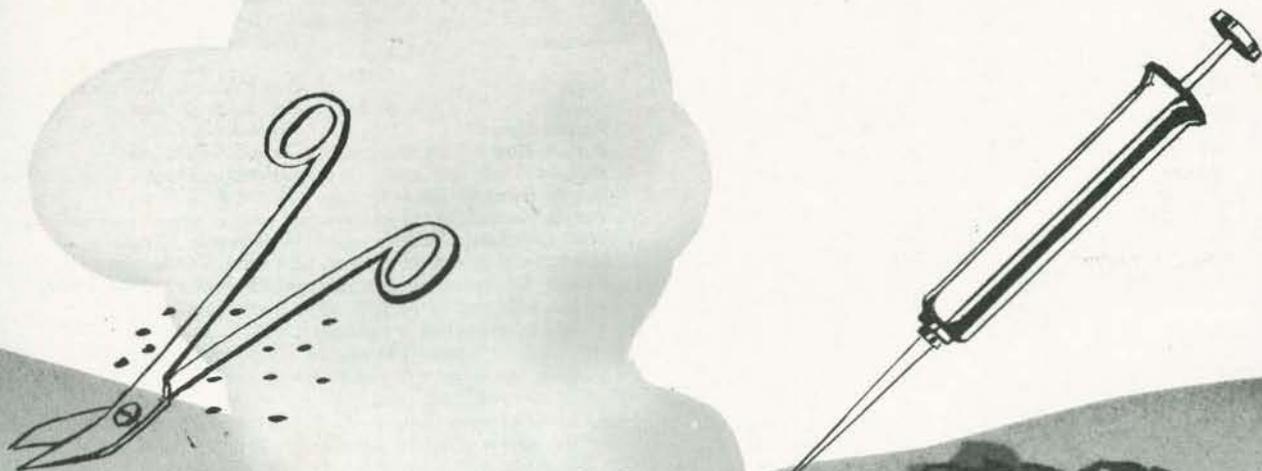
Moving to Dolhain, Belgium, we lived in a wool dying factory for four months, from November 1944 to March 1945. The glass roof on this structure afforded fine views of the buzz bombs hurtling overhead day and night, leaving us rather nervous. The owner of the factory had his furnaces put into operation, and we were most thankful for the warmth during the cold winter months. Here, the aid men

had a real shelter to return to during rest periods, where they could bathe, sleep and keep warm after living in the snow during the battles of the Hurtgen Forest and the Belgian Bulge. It was during our stay at Dolhain that the battalion underwent reorganization and acquired a new T/O, giving the detachment an MAC officer. Also since there were to be only three companies instead of four, four aid men could be assigned to each company instead of only three, giving the men longer periods in the rest area. The new system, inaugurated by the battalion surgeon, was called "8 in and 4 out," eight days rest followed by four days in the field. This system saved the men from complete loss of hope, or so they said.

From Dolhain we moved, in March 1945, back into Germany, traveling rapidly from one capitulated town to the next. We sped across the Rhine, northeast toward Kassel, and then we swerved sharply south toward Leipzig. The companies and the aid men were always miles ahead, and we had to work to keep anywhere near them. Our most palatial aid station was located at Naumburg, near Leipzig, where we had a whole house to ourselves. We had bathrooms, electricity, hot water, furnace heat and all the things we'd been without for so long.

Again we moved south, this time into Bavaria, to the village of Eschenbach, near Bayreuth. While we were here, the war finally came to its spectacular finish. At this time the companies were relieved from their attachments to divisions, and the men spent the days patrolling the woods in search of renegade bands of Nazis and SS troops, as well as doing security work in the various towns in the vicinity.

18 May 1945 the battalion moved to Bischofteinitz, Sudetenland, in order to be nearer Corps Headquarters, so that they could inspect our equipment and records and prepare for the return trip to America and home. Here the men were able to relax a little, with the job of fighting well done and behind them.



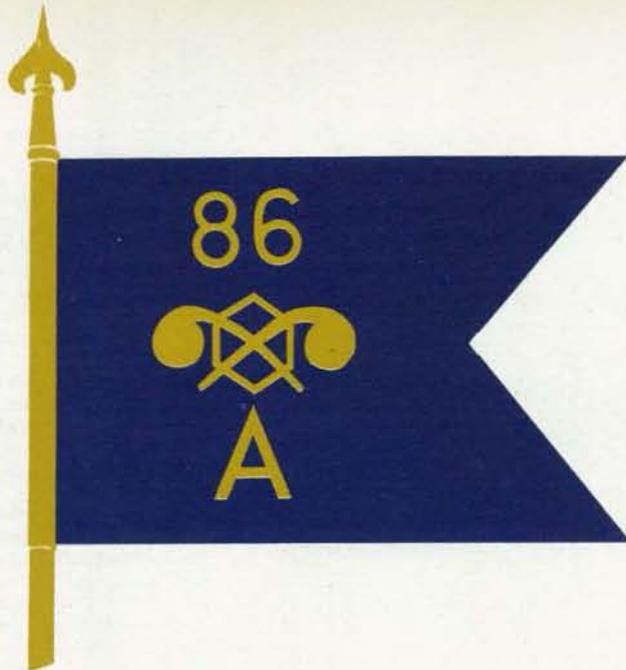
# MEDICAL DETACHMENT

Name	Rank	Awards	Residence
Conover, Kenneth R.	Pvt.	Purple Heart and Cluster Bronze Star	Wakita, Oklahoma
Digman, Oran H.	Pvt., T/5	Silver Star Bronze Star Purple Heart	Chicago, Illinois
Durand, Spencer D.	T/5	None	Chicago, Illinois
Figueira, Anthony	Pfc.	None	Sacramento, California
Foster, Willis C.	T/5, S/Sgt.	Bronze Star Purple Heart	Chicago, Illinois
Hoshor, Raymond D.	Pfc., T/4	Bronze Star Purple Heart	Peoria, Illinois
Johnopolos, George	Pvt., T/5	Bronze Star Purple Heart	Chicago, Illinois
Kimmel, David	T/4	Bronze Star Purple Heart	Chicago, Illinois
Krask, Bernard J.	T/4	Silver Star Bronze Star Purple Heart	Chicago, Illinois
Miksovsky, Jerry	Pfc., T/4	Silver Star Bronze Star Purple Heart	Chicago, Illinois
Perres, Leo A.	T/5	Purple Heart	Chicago, Illinois
Smith, Grant H.	T/5	Purple Heart	Rayne, Louisiana
Yeomans, John R.	T/3	None	East Longmeadow, Mass.
Zielinski, Casimer	S/Sgt.	None Bronze Star	Winnetka, Illinois New Britain, Connecticut

## REINFORCEMENTS

## MEDICAL DETACHMENT

Name	Rank	Awards	Residence
Dowell, Frank H.	Pvt., Pfc.	None	Birmingham, Alabama
Eitzen, Kenneth L.	Pvt., T/4	None	Peabody, Kansas
Foreman, Riley M.	Cpl.	Purple Heart	Waterford, Ohio
Kennedy, John T.	Pfc., T/5	Purple Heart	Detroit, Michigan
Stengle, Arthur	Pfc., T/5	None	Chicago, Illinois
Wojcik, Edmund Y.	Pfc., T/5	Purple Heart	Chicago, Illinois
Leaf, Ralph G.	Pfc.	Purple Heart With Oak Leaf Cluster	Waukegan, Illinois
Luna, William E.	Pvt.	None	Jackson, Tennessee
Spina, Salvatore A.	T/4	None	South Amboy, New Jersey



## HISTORY OF COMPANY "A"

**FOREWORD:** Space limitations prevent the mention in the narrative of all the heroic infantry divisions Company A has supported, the naming of many towns and villages bright in your minds, and the recital of incidents that recall many things to you. However, in a general way this is the "path of glory" you have traveled and for which you fought. Your memory will fill in the gaps.

This is a saga of fighting men who won battles and lost lives, who inched their way forward toward total victory and paid a bitter price. These little men, these happy few, this band of brothers, are a small part of mankind's struggle for freedom and this is their history—a word and ink retelling of the sweat and blood that wins wars.

### 1.

#### *"Atraid of Fear—and More . . ."*

The sixth of June, nineteen hundred and forty-four—a date to remember, for that day the hopes and fears of a free world were at stake. Then began the titanic encounters that called for soldiers, more men and more guns each day. On D+25 Company A, 86th Cml. Mortar Bn., docked in the man-made harbor of "Utah" Beach head, surrounded by the floating hulks of other ships that never reached the shore. Silent ships, in themselves a sad story of life and death on the sandy shores of France.

The next morning Company A's vehicles, men and equipment were driving from the LSTs on to the crowded beaches, heading one way—toward the noise of the artillery and the whining whistle of death—and moved immediately into firing position near the French town of Francquetot, some seven miles from the initial coastal landings, and the company was ordered in support of the 358th and 359th Regiments of the 90th Infantry Division. The infantry's attack was scheduled for early morning, and at 0530 hours the 3rd of July Company A was "up and at 'em" firing the initial mortar barrage that preceded the doughboys' push. All through the day the mortar crews labored as they never had before, opening a pathway for the hard fighting troops.

For days the attack continued and on the 4th of July one battalion stalled, stopped by two enemy

rifle companies and twelve machine guns, and Company A began a fireworks show of its own with over 900 high explosive shells into the enemy's strong points. An eye-witness report on the effectiveness of firing said, "Machine guns and rifles were blasted all over the place, and you couldn't begin to count the dead Krauts." But the best gauge of the mortar fire was the speed of the infantry battalion's advance: half a mile in half an hour.

By the 6th of July the 359th Regiment had fought its way to the crest of hill 122, a vitally strategic mass of high ground that overlooked the enemy's positions in the Forest de Mont Castre. The first and second platoons took up positions on the reverse slope of the hill using a ravine and field for their mortars. Our attacking infantry were just in front of us, too close for complacency on our part, waiting—tense and quiet—for the enemy counter-attack they knew was coming. The mortar crews fired several urgent missions into the wooded area on the forward slope where the enemy seemed to be massing.

What happened next is anyone's guess, part of the uncertainty that results when the action is fast and a soldier is too busy fighting for his life to prepare an accurate report for the historians. This much is certain: the two companies of infantry that had been in front of the mortar men had withdrawn





to a stronger defensive position on the road behind the mortar crews.

Between 2200 and 2300 hours that night an enemy combat patrol, armed with automatic weapons, began an attack, coming down the slope of the hill screaming and firing into the mortar positions, punctuating the darkness with staccato bursts from their "burp" guns. Completely unprepared for the assault and the unaccountable swiftness with which the enemy penetrated what was thought to be the infantry's line, Company A's mortars fired without ceasing until the enemy was well within the mortar's minimum range and could no longer be fired upon. A machine gun crew was ordered to remain and the Company was withdrawn into a secondary mortar position where they could continue to fight.

Despite the returned automatic fire the Germans succeeded in reaching the mortar defilade and capturing three men and setting fire to a jeep and trailer. In the light of the fire Company A's 50 caliber machine gunners spotted the Germans and their prisoners and opened fire, enabling the prisoners to escape during the confusion. That night the two men of Company A held their ground, spraying the area with machine gun slugs and preventing the enemy from even reaching the infantry's first line of defense.

The next morning the mortar company was



again firing its weapons from the base of hill 122, participating in one of the most fierce encounters of the war. This day there was no withdrawal and the engagement was fought to its tragic end—victorious, but with 17 casualties that one day alone.

On the 10th of July, nineteen badly-needed replacements arrived to help in the hedgerow fighting that raged from field to field with pitifully small gains. That same day four of those replacements had been wounded and one killed; the only way to learn in Normandy was the "hard way." Four days later the Company assisted the 90th Division's attack on enemy positions south of the Sevres River in the Perier sector.

The action was intense and rugged, a human kind of Hell infested with every evil known to man, but it was purposeful with a definite goal. At last it came: "Operation Cobra" was ready. On the 25th of July over 3,000 American aircraft bombed and strafed the enemy lines between St. Lo and southwest to Perier. Immediately following the air raid infantry units launched a forceful attack from the Perier sector, breaking through the enemy fortifications, routing his troops, dashing with alacrity past Avranches into the Brittany Peninsula and eastward toward the center of France.

Though the enemy infantry was being hit hard, the Luftwaffe had not heard of the invincibility of the Americans. Coming from Avranches through St. James, the convoy of mortar men ran a gauntlet of enemy air attack and strafing that only impressed on us more the horrors the enemy must have gone through with our more concentrated air attack on them.

Company A traveled the "Break-through" with the 79th Infantry Division, then was relieved and attached to the 83rd Infantry Division for the siege of St. Malo, the enemy's bastion bordering the sea.

## II

### "Let Us Then Be Up And Doing . . ."

At the town of La Costerdars, France, Company A joined the 83rd infantrymen in fighting for the enemy held towns that barred the road to St. Malo. From the 4th of August to the 10th the Company moved through these towns: Fort de Chateauneuf, Parame, La Neuette and Les Martette. The 7th of August began the officially documented engagement of 4.2" mortars vs. tanks and self-propelled





artillery pieces. Three enemy tanks had succeeded in piercing our lines and were located by Company A's forward observer who called for mortar fire. The shells were "on target," scoring direct hits on a tank and "knocking it out," scaring off the other tankers and killing the crew of the self-propelled gun. The next day Company A's guns scored a direct hit on an enemy mortar, resulting in the white-flag surrender of its crew. This was the German's nasty week.

Two days later the second platoon was attached to another regiment of the 83rd attacking at Dinard, and moved into the vicinity of Pleslin, not far from Ville Aube where they were joined by the remainder of the company on the 12th. On the 16th of August the Company was reassigned to the St. Malo sector for the assault on the Citadel.

The fight for St. Malo had been an unrelenting struggle that neither gave nor expected quarter. Frontal storming of the Citadel was to no avail, our infantrymen had been on top but could not enter. Protected by fifty feet of concrete, the Germans thought themselves relatively safe in their medieval fortress, and the mad Colonel had promised Hitler it would not fall. But there was an Achilles heel in the impregnable fort: the modern air-conditioning system upon which they depended for air. The mortar men went to work with white phosphorus shells, landing projectiles with "the Devil's smoke" in front





of the air ducts. On the 17th of August, the "impossible to take" Citadel, with its underground rooms that never heard the bombing and the strafing, surrendered to the attacking force. Col. Von Aulock, the German commander, was very unhappy, charging the use of white phosphorus was "inhumane" and admitting it had forced capitulation.

### III. "The Silent Ships Go On . . . To Havens Under The Hill . . ."

The initial attack on the German Submarine base of Brest began at 1300 hours the 25th of August with Company A firing in support of the 116th Regiment of the 29th Infantry Division from a position near Dreves, north of St. Renan. On the 28th, Company A was in its usual form: to support an attack by the 116th at 1200 hours the mortar men successfully took up positions at least 500 yards ahead of the infantry lines (chronicled in Battalion's report to the Commanding General, 3rd U. S.)

While in the Brest Area, the Company was attached to the 2nd Ranger Battalion, that with elements of the 29th Infantry Division, was grouped into Task Force Sugar for the taking of the town of La Conquet, west of Brest. The German-held coastal defenses were equipped with heavy artillery, including a sixteen-inch artillery piece with a 360 degree traverse.

While in support of Task Force Sugar, the Company became accustomed to the train-like roar of the shell of the sixteen-inch gun as the shell chugged over them, scattering deadly fragments into the mortar position. In return, the enemy took an unmerciful pounding from the 4.2s. Within a twenty-four hour period, the mortar men sent 1800 rounds of high explosive and white phosphorus ammunition into enemy positions.

PW reports told us that the fear-crazed German troops had dubbed the mortar fire "Whispering Death," a tribute to the swift and silent 4.2 shell.

Targets at Brest were abundant, machine gun positions, anti-aircraft emplacements, cross-roads, enemy command posts, mortar installations, fuel depots, and various targets of opportunity. In rounds expended in harassing the enemy, the Brest campaign has no equal. In the twenty-five days of action on Brest peninsula, the Battalion fired 48,000 rounds of ammunition, 18,000 by Company A alone.

### IV. "Onward, Onward . . . Into The Valley Of Death . . ."

Leaving Brest on the 24th of September, the

entire Battalion drove to Neufchateau, France, and from there were assigned by XII Corps headquarters to billets in a modern schoolhouse in Dombasle, France, with Company A in Corps reserve from the 30th of September to the 7th of October. On the last named date the Company moved to the vicinity of Ajoncourt to support an attack by the 6th Armored Division, whose objective was the clearing of the enemy from the area south of the Seille River to establish a new MLR (main line of resistance), preparatory to the storming of Metz. Five days later, the Company was released and attached to the 4th Armored Division and moved to Juvrecourt, where on the 15th of October, the 26th Infantry Division arrived for its baptism of combat, and Company A remained to "give a hand."

The 26th had come to combat short-handed. The Infantry was ready but the division artillery was unable to move into position. Company A was detailed the firing missions that would ordinarily have been fired by the artillery. The schedule of fire was heavy and the crews were busy helping the 26th out of jams and neutralizing resistance.

On the 16th of September a patrol of the then "rookie" 26th was intercepted by enemy machine gunners and 4.2" mortar fire on the machine gun enabled the patrol to withdraw to safety. The next day the Company fired upon and put out of action an enemy self-propelled artillery piece located at a crossroads entering the Bois de Moncourt. The "Yankee Division" was "sold" on the Mortar men.

### V. "Beyond This Place Of Wrath And Tears"

On the 26th of October the Battalion left in convoy from Dombasle and proceeded through Nancy, Toul, Etain, Longuyon, and Longwy to the Caserne Callemeyne at Arlon, Belgium, where Company A was to have a "two week rest." Two days later the Company was ordered into position ten miles south of Aachen to support the 28th Infantry Division in an attack on Schmidt, key town to control of the Schwammanndam Dam, which governed the tide of the Roer River.

The Company was placed in a very exposed position on the division's right flank, protected only by cavalry reconnaissance elements. Here began the long winter in the Hurtgen forest—scene of heart-breaking bitter battles where our troops sawed in and out of Schmidt. The town was ours by day and the German's by night, and the inches gained in one attack were forfeit with the first counter-attack.

For almost seven weeks the Company remained in the same position, mortars dug in behind a demolished pillbox that had originally been part of the Siegfried Line. The news commentators spoke

glibly of the "fallacy" of the German static, cement-built defense, but the soldiers thought otherwise. The inescapable truth was that the Siegfried Line, thirty miles in depth, though under-manned and with less fire power than usual, was proving the most formidable obstacle ever to face the American doughboy. Gains were almost imperceptible. To everyone on the ground it seemed that we were doomed forever to the mud and foxholes the Germans had left behind. The mortar crews "dug in" for the winter, constructing log structures over squad-size foxholes, and stringing telephone lines between squad holes. By 1800 hours darkness was already settled over the Hurtgen, but it was too early for sleeping—although the muscles were willing, the spirit was not. Candles and improvised gasoline-fed lanterns provided illumination in the "blacked-out" holes, and by night until sleep time the soldiers played cards, wrote letters, or just "shot the breeze." Neither the Germans nor the Americans gained ground; the targets remained the same and within range. Ammunition expenditures were high, but we learned that though it was simpler to take ground with mortar support, you did not make any headway at all with mortar fire alone.

It required courage, fortitude, and endurance to remain in the Hurtgen. But twenty days after arrival, the 28th Infantry Division commended the Battalion for "uplifting and unselfish devotion to duty." So it was Thanksgiving dinner in the forest, with a seeping sleety drizzle to flavor the turkey. Infantry divisions came and went—the 28th, the 8th, the 78th—but Company A remained to hold the ground, to continue the fire, to pound its head against a stone wall of resistance.

Finally on the 12th of December, Company A was attached to the 309th Regiment of the 78th Infantry Division, and under cover of darkness moved to Paustenbach, Germany, arriving there before the infantry to discover the line, which was scattered from hell to breakfast, being held by two or three platoons of the 102nd Cavalry. The infantrymen arrived in the morning. It was an important assignment, for in this sector four days later, the enemy launched his most powerful counter-offensive of the war—the "Battle of the Bulge."

## VI

### "Our Heads Were Bloody, But Unbowed"

In V Corps sector from North to South were the 8th Division (on the left flank), the 78th Division, the 2nd Division, and the 99th Division (on the right flank). Corps boundaries were the extreme right flank of the First Army, adjoining the left flank of Third Army's VIII Corps. The enemy punched with the ferocity and brilliance that had marked his first

"blitzkrieg" into Western Europe, slicing between the American First Army's V Corps and Third Army's VIII Corps. His initial successes were the result of fortuitous circumstances and masterly planning. Fifth Corps' 99th Division and Eighth Corps' 106th Division, side by side in the line, were both newcomers to battle and had moved into the line just a few days before. Neither unit had sufficient combat experience to stop an offensive of this intensity. Enemy armor pierced VIII Corps' lines and slashed into V Corps' sector, turning V Corps' right flank and creating a corridor between the two.

Elements of the 2nd Ranger Battalion moved in to aid the 78th in repulsing the German's hourly offensive attempts in this area. The entire position was in danger of being inundated by the Nazi hordes; two Panzer divisions were known to be roaming in front of the 78th searching for a weak spot. It was a critical moment, and for consecutive days and nights, the Company's mortars were never silent. Observation of a draw upon which Company A had fired incessantly revealed German dead piled three deep, and that was no isolated instance.

The enemy never did succeed in piercing, or even achieving moderate success, in the V Corps front held by the 78th Division—the infantrymen, supported by the mortar men, held fast and this action was later commended by the Corps commander. On the 23rd of December, the main danger past, Company A was relieved from its attachment and reassigned to participate in the retaking of ground that had been lost in other sectors.

On Christmas Day, 1944, two platoons left the Battalion billets to support the 1st Infantry Division—a delicious "K" ration being the Yule dinner. Shortly after arrival and before they could fire a round, the Company was placed under control of the XVIII Air Borne Corps for duties with the 30th Infantry Division. Near the pre-war Belgian resort of Cascades de Coe (between Spa and Stavelot) the mortar crews found the ideal mortar position sandwiched between two mountains. It was mathematically impossible for the enemy to shell the Company.

But the safety was of short duration, some days later the mortars were ordered east of Malmedy, Belgium, for the drive to regain St. Vith, Belgium.

The border territory between Belgium and Germany was "hot" as few places were. One night Nazi tankers succeeded in digging in their tank, with only the muzzle of the .88 above the ground. They were virtually unassailable, artillery and mortar fire could not do any damage.

As the mortars fired their night missions, the tankers located the guns and soon made continued mortar fire an exceedingly hazardous occupation. The mortar fire continued all night, and the tank





fire did the same. But the morning count for the enemy was no hits and plenty of errors.

Moving with the infantry in the snow-blanketed fields outside of Malmedy, the Company was witness to the recovery of over one hundred dead American soldiers, who had surrendered to the enemy. In accordance with the Geneva Convention, they had expected the same humane treatment that the American army extended to German prisoners of war; instead they were made to stand in ranks while German tanks filed down the road firing machine gun slugs into the unarmed, defenseless troops. It was a degrading, despicable testimony to the nature of the enemy.

#### VII.

*"He Maketh Me To Lie Down In Green Pastures . . ."*

By the 26th of January, the last of the "Bulge" was cleaned out and Company A returned to Battalion control. On the 29th, the mortar men were back in the field—"doing business in the same old stand"—with the 9th Infantry Division, east of Hofen.

This was the winter at its worst, when only an axe would dent the frozen ground and five minutes in the open beside a mortar, was enough to freeze a brass monkey. They did their best to fight the enemy and the weather. A house at any cost was the rule, but most of the nights were spent in fox-holes with the hard soil for a mattress and the silent snow for a blanket. That is, if you weren't too busy fighting you could sleep. The company was beginning its eighth month of continuous combat without an official rest period, and this combined with strenuous battle and rigorous weather was beginning to tell a tale in the mounting total of men evacuated with combat fatigue.

The need for winter clothing remained as wounded men were brought into the aid station and their boots and clothing removed, it was quickly claimed by the soldiers. In 1945, America had a second Valley Forge, and this was no place for the "summer soldier and the sunshine patriot."

On the 3rd of February the Company was attached to the 78th Infantry Division—engaged in taking Schmidt! The objective was the strategic Schwamman Dam, which controlled the rise and fall of the waters on the Roer River. Further north the American 9th Army had been poised since mid-October, 1944, for a crossing of the Roer, but dared not risk the operation for fear of the river being flooded and the soldiers being isolated from their supplies and supporting troops. The battle for the dam was not a lengthy struggle this time, and shortly the mortar men were only 800 yards from the objective waiting for the final attack. On the



13th of February, the Company was released from its mission, its objective taken.

#### VIII.

*"By All Means, Take Some Time To Be Alone . . ."*

For purposes of reorganization of the Battalion, all companies were placed in reserve and assembled in Dolhain, Belgium, for the first authorized rest since their landing in France. Enlisted men of the Battalion's Company D were assimilated into Company A and became integrated with the "old" men. The Company remained in the rest area until the 1st of March, on which date they joined the 28th Infantry Division outside of Hofen for the initial attacks leading to the First and Ninth Armies' crossing the Roer River at Gemund, Germany.

One week later the Roer had been bridged and the spectacular, unexpected taking of the Ludendorff bridge had been accomplished (6th March). By the



15th, Company A was east of the Rhine, supporting the 1st Infantry Division from Himberg, Germany, 300 yards southwest of the Autobahn.

The convoy crossing of the Rhine had not been uneventful. As the vehicles reached the east bank and a place of cover beneath a cement railroad trestle, some fifty battalions of anti-aircraft artillery opened fire on an approaching enemy plane. The bomb the plane dropped landed some three hundred yards from the bridge, inflicting casualties, but none within the company.

The enemy resisted with fanatical fury, using every possible weapon he could muster. The effort and proportions of the east-Rhine battles were reminiscent of the early days in Normandy. Not a single terrain feature was undefended, every natural obstacle was used to its fullest military advantage against the attackers.

At Sand, Germany, one platoon sustained three casualties (one killed, two seriously wounded) within a five minute period, and two days later the same platoon suffered four more casualties (two dead, two severely injured). There is no consolation for the death of our comrades in arms, but we know now that this was the final crucible from which came total victory.

#### IX.

#### "Say Not The Struggle Naught Availeth"

No one will ever forget how his blood, pounding excitedly, raced through his veins, as he heard the news that his outfit had helped to tear a hole through the enemy's resistance and enabled the armor to clank through for what could easily become a major victory. The 1st Division, with Company A attached, had blasted a way to Uckerath, Germany, and the tankers' column of tanks moved swiftly on to "holy German soil." This was it!

The infantry and mortar men followed the tanks and watched with undisguised hope as they went deeper and deeper into the enemy's homeland. Remember how your heart sang to see tanks detach from the column to make junction with other tanks to form a "pocket" of the Krauts trapped in between! Still in the leading elements spearheading into Germany, Company A was attached to the 69th Infantry Division—and they raced together to close a trap at Paderborn, another at Kassel. Task Force Z, of which Company A was a part, raced closer and closer to the heart of Germany.

On the 15th of April, Company A fired missions on enemy barracks and emplacements in Kriechau, Germany, causing huge blazes and heavy casualties. The Company was credited with forcing the surrender of 400 enemy soldiers and thirty-two artillery pieces (the infamous "88s"), and bringing about the fall (in more ways than one) of the town. From Kriechau Company A fought its way to Leipzig, Germany, with the 272nd Regiment of the 69th Infantry Division.

The last mission to be fired in the European Theater of Operations by Company A was a mortar fire upon the German town of Ellenburg, which capitulated on the 25th of April, 1945. In 315 days of combat, the 86th Chemical Mortar Battalion had fired 160,000 mortar shells. Of this total 55,445 had been fired by Company A.

#### X.

#### "All Things Come Home With The Evening Tide . . ."

Between the 3rd and 18th of May, the mortar crews served as Security Guard in enemy installations that had been captured, and on the last named date were relieved by other units and reported to Ronsperg, Czechoslovakia. Finally on the 13th of June, 1945, the 86th Chemical Mortar Battalion moved in convoy to Camp Lucky Strike, adjacent to Le Havre, France. And on the 1st of July, a year to the day of our landing in France, we embarked for home on the U.S.S. Sea Pike.

So those who had marched breast forward, never doubting clouds would break, who knew they fell but to rise again, were at last home. Older than their years perhaps, but brave hearts, each and every one.

Yet there are corners of many foreign shores that are forever American—for there are our dead. They are of our flesh and our spirit, part of the glory that shines in the midst of tears.

These went with songs to the battle—they were young, straight of limb, steady and courageous to the end against odds uncounted. They fell with their faces to the foe. "No more for them life's stormy conflicts, neither victory nor defeat, or Time's dark events charging like ceaseless clouds across the sky."

But where our profound hopes are, in the innermost recesses of our own hearts, these men are known—as the stars are known to the night.

And as the stars that shall be bright when we are dust—to the end, to the end they remain.



## Combat Units Supported

Sixteen infantry and armored divisions have been supported by Company A, 86th Chemical Mortar Battalion. Some of these divisions were supported two and three times.

- 90th Infantry Division—Normandy, France.
- 79th Infantry Division—In the Perier sector, France.
- 83rd Infantry Division—St. Malo and Dinard, France.
- 29th Infantry Division—Brest campaign, France.
- 2nd Ranger Battalion—Brest campaign, France.
- Task Force Sugar—Brest campaign, France.
- 6th Armored Division—Nancy-Metz sector.
- 4th Armored Division—Nancy-Metz sector.
- 26th Infantry Division—Nancy-Metz sector.
- 28th Infantry Division—Hurtgen Forest.
- 8th Infantry Division—Hurtgen Forest.
- 78th Infantry Division—Hurtgen Forest and the Battle of the Bulge.
- 30th Infantry Division—Battle of the Bulge.
- 7th Armored Division—St. Vith, Belgium.
- 9th Infantry Division—Hofen, Germany.
- 78th Infantry Division—Schmidt and the dam.
- 28th Infantry Division—Drive to Roer River.
- 1st Infantry Division—East of Rhine River.
- 69th Infantry Division—The Last Breakthrough.
- Task Force "Z" —The G.I. Tour of Germany.
- 69th Infantry Division—Last firing in E.T.O.

Lastly, when the 69th Division joined forces with the Russians, Company A was 8 miles from the junction point. Two men of Company A tried to attach themselves for the party, but MPs asked for their invitations.

# Killed In Action

## "A" Company

*"They shall not grow old,  
As we that are left grow old;  
Age shall not weary them,  
Nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun—  
And in the morning—  
We shall remember them."*

- CPL. FRANK L. REED—8th of July, 1944, in Normandy, France. Interred in St. Mere Eglise Cemetery No. 2, France. Wife: Mrs. Frank L. Reed, 1553 Hollywood Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.
- PVT. EARL W. EAGLE—10th of July, 1944, at Lithaire, France. Interred in St. Mere Eglise Cemetery No. 2, France. Mother: Mrs. Marie Eagle, 502 North Street, La Porete, Indiana.
- 1ST LT. WAYNE M. MATCHETT—2nd of November, 1944, in the Hurtgen Forest, Germany. Interred in Henri Chapelle Cemetery No. 1, Belgium. Wife: Mrs. Wayne Matchett, Berne, Indiana.
- PVT. THOMAS N. BALCEREK—26th of November, 1944, in the Hurtgen Forest, Germany. Interred in Henri Chapelle Cemetery No. 1, Belgium. Mother: Mrs. Mary Balcerek, 111 Yoder Avenue, Mt. Pleasant, Pennsylvania.
- SGT. WALTER A. CARTER—13th of December, 1944, at Lammersdorf, Germany. Interred in Henri Chapelle Cemetery No. 1, Belgium. Mother: Mrs. Eva Carter, Route 3, Box 179, Natchitoches, Louisiana.
- PFC. ALFRED J. ANTUL—3rd of January, 1945, near Stavelot, Belgium. Interred in Henri Chapelle Cemetery No. 1, Belgium. Mother: Mrs. Helen Antul, 11 Fuller Street, Framingham, Massachusetts.
- CPL. TROY O. EDWARDS—22nd of March, 1945, at Sand, Germany. Interred in Henri Chapelle Cemetery No. 1, Belgium. Mother: Mrs. Lelia Edwards, RFD 1, Clinchport, Virginia.
- CPL. FRANK J. DURALJA—24th of March, 1945, at Dahlhausen, Germany. Interred in Henri Chapelle Cemetery No. 1, Belgium. Mother: Mrs. Anna Duralja, 273 Christian Street, Steelton, Pennsylvania.
- PVT. MANUS J. McLAUGHLIN—24th of March, 1945, at Dalhausen, Germany. Interred in Henri Chapelle Cemetery No. 1, Belgium. Mother: Mrs. Salina McLaughlin, 30 Miner Street, Coaldale, Pennsylvania.

# "A" COMPANY

Name	Rank	Assignment
Alexander, Charles L.	Cpl.	
Andrew, Cecil D.	T/5, Cpl.	
Ashton, Howard I.	Pfc.	
Balcerk, Thomas N.	Pfc.	K.I.A.
Barbay, Joseph A., Jr.	Pfc.	Trfd. Hq. Co.
Barnes, Leslie	Sgt.	Hosp.
Barrett, Carroll M.	Pfc.	
Bartelini, Vito V.	Cpl.	
Batchelor, Cerdy E.	Cpl.	Trfd. Co. B
Berry, Woodrow	T/4	Trfd. Hq. Co.
Billbrey, Claud	Pfc.	
Bitteerman, Richard L.	Pvt.	Hosp.
Black, James W.	Pvt., Sgt.	
Blakeslee, Edward L.	T/5, T/4	
Blalock, Thomas E.	Pfc.	
Burgess, Beecher E.	Pfc.	
Camagna, Louis H., Jr.	Cpl.	Hosp.
Camp, Paul A.	Cpl., Sgt.	Trfd. Hq. Co.
Campbell, Thomas	Pvt.	Hosp.
Carr, Elbern B.	Pvt.	Trfd. 2nd Inf. Div.
Carter, Walter A.	Pfc., Sgt.	K.I.A.
Caswell, Warren R.	Pfc., Cpl.	
Chupinsky, John P.	Cpl., Sgt.	
Ciullo, Angelo J.	Sgt.	
Clodfelter, Floyd R.	T/4	
Cockfield, Charles F., Jr.	Pfc.	
Cohen, Morton	T/5	
Colby, Loyd E.	S/Sgt.	Trfd. 2nd Inf. Div.
Combs, Calvin H.	Pfc.	Trfd. Hq. Co.
Cope, George C.	S/Sgt.	
Coyle, Owen J., Jr.	T/4, S/Sgt.	
Davis, Harry L.	Pfc.	Trfd. 18th Repl. Depot
Deleo, Joseph G.	Sgt.	
Dehanich, Michael	Pvt.	3rd Repl. Depot
Dorsey, William J.	T/5	
Deucett, James C.	Pfc.	
Ducote, Perry W.	Sgt.	
Duplantier, Edmund R.	Pvt., T/5	
Duralja, Frank J.	Cpl.	K.I.A.
Eberhard, Leslie E.	Pvt., Cpl.	
Ferrara, Joseph S.	Pfc., Sgt.	
Fink, Warren R.	T/4	
Finnicum, John C.	T/5	
Francisco, Robert W.	T/5	
Fusco, Francis R.	Sgt.	Hosp.
Galasso, Nicholas	Cpl., Sgt.	
Garner, Clyde B.	Pfc.	
Giannini, Albert	1/Sgt.	Trfd. 1st Inf. Div.
Grant, Fred M.	T/5	Hosp.
Hainley, Adam P.	Pfc.	
Hamilton, Wade A.	Pfc.	Hosp.
Hartman, Richard T.	Cpl., S/Sgt.	
Hassler, Donald E.	T/5, Cpl.	
Hastings, Lewis F.	Cpl., S/Sgt.	
Haymond, Randall V.	Pvt.	Hosp.
Henkelman, John R.	Pfc.	
Hoagland, Jesse W.	Cpl.	
Hofstetter, Alfred F.	Cpl., Sgt.	
Hellkamp, Bernard J.	Pfc.	
Honeycutt, Darrell A.	Pfc., Cpl.	Trfd. Hq. Co.
Howard, George W.	T/5	Trfd. Hq. Co.
Howard, Laverne E.	Cpl., Sgt.	Trfd. 80th Cml. Co.
Hutzel, Roy S.	Pfc.	
Hyczyk, John A.	Pfc.	
Ivey, Joseph L.	Pfc.	
Jenkel, John J., r.	Pfc.	
Johnson, Charles G.	Pfc.	
Kelly, Robert L.	Sgt., 1/Sgt.	
Keneham, John K.	Cpl., Sgt.	
Klawes, Neal W.	S/Sgt.	
Klawitter, Harry R.	Sgt., S/Sgt.	

# "A" COMPANY

## *Awards*

Bronze Star, Purple Heart  
Purple Heart  
Purple Heart  
Purple Heart

Purple Heart  
Purple Heart  
Purple Heart  
Purple Heart  
Bronze Star

Purple Heart

Purple Heart  
Purple Heart

Purple Heart  
Bronze Star, Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Bronze Star  
Bronze Star  
Purple Heart  
Purple Heart  
Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Bronze Star

Purple Heart  
Bronze Star  
Purple Heart

Bronze Star  
Purple Heart

Bronze Star  
Purple Heart

Bronze Star, Purple Heart

Bronze Star, Purple Heart

Bronze Star, Purple Heart

Bronze Star  
Purple Heart  
Bronze Star, Purple Heart  
Bronze Star

Bronze Star, Purple Heart

## *Residence*

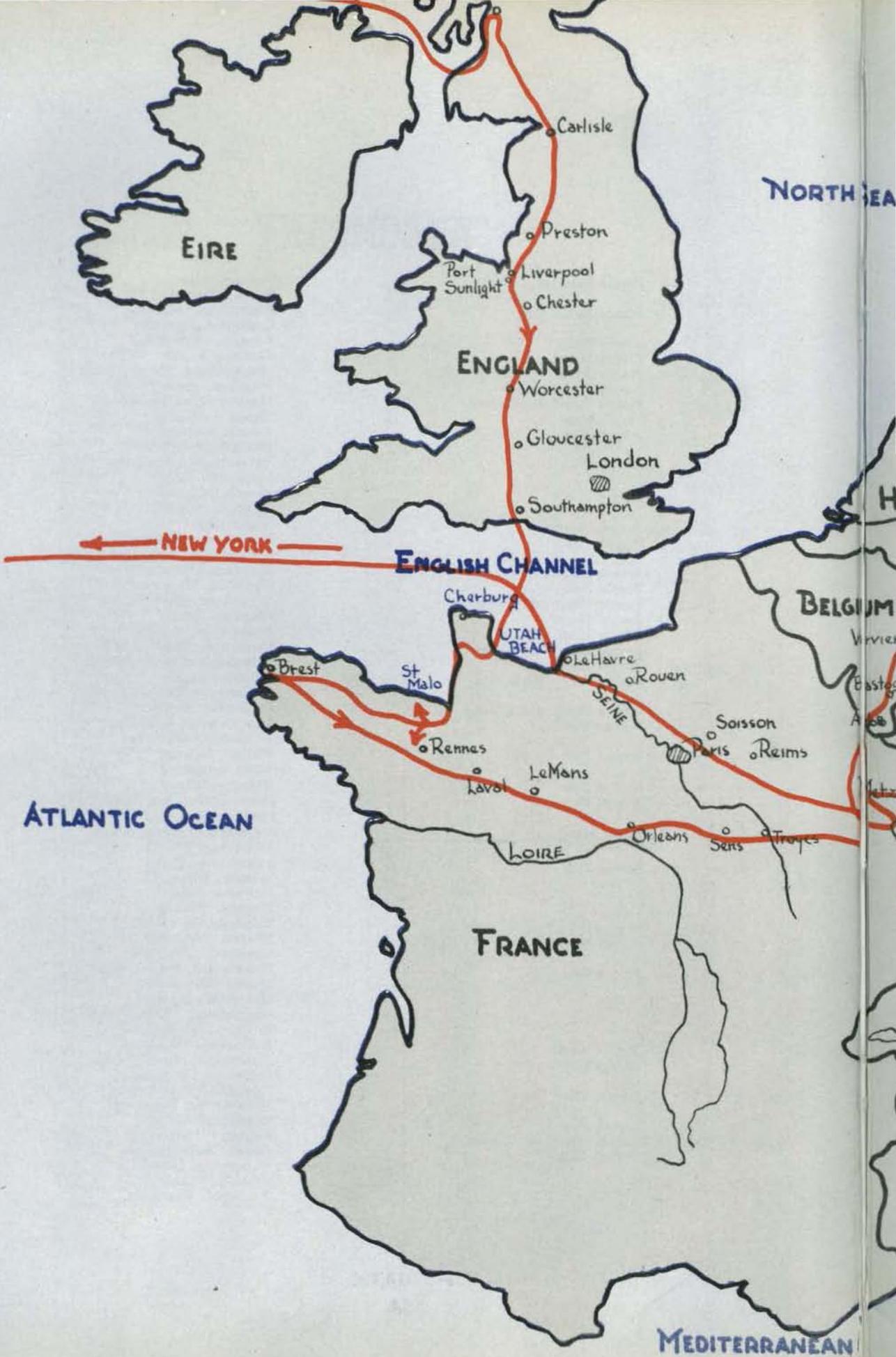
Oil City, Louisiana  
Kernville, Oregon  
Camden, New Jersey  
Mt. Pleasant, Pennsylvania  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana  
Rome, Georgia  
Pollock, Louisiana  
Martinez, California  
Macon, Georgia  
Yatesville, Kentucky  
Anderson, Indiana  
Millersburg, Pennsylvania  
Jersey City, New Jersey  
Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
Gate City, Virginia  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Long Beach, California  
Hendersonville, Pennsylvania  
Columbia, Louisiana  
Natchitoches, Louisiana  
Sparrow Bush, New York  
Wolfdale, Pennsylvania  
Brooklyn, New York  
Russellville, Indiana  
Colfax, Louisiana  
Bronx, New York  
Detroit, Michigan  
Danville, Illinois  
Greens Creek, North Carolina  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Baltimore, Maryland  
Dunmore, Pennsylvania  
Strabane, Pennsylvania  
Arlington, Virginia  
Lake Charles, Louisiana  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
Steelton, Pennsylvania  
Appleton, Wisconsin  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
Franklin, Ohio  
Morrison, Illinois  
Dundalk, Maryland  
Syracuse, New York  
Newark, New Jersey  
Urichville, Ohio  
Mahanay City, Pennsylvania  
Slagle, Louisiana  
Ringtown, Pennsylvania  
Clinton, Tennessee  
Sligo, Pennsylvania  
Neeah, Wisconsin  
Washington, Pennsylvania  
Adrian, West Virginia  
Baltimore, Maryland  
Hagerstown, Indiana  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
Louisville, Kentucky  
St. Charles, Virginia  
Sharpsburg, Maryland  
Alton, Illinois  
Chicago, Illinois  
Jeanette, Pennsylvania  
Knoxville, Tennessee  
Appleton, Wisconsin  
Ashville, North Carolina  
Davidsville, Pennsylvania  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
Rio, Wisconsin  
Madison, Wisconsin

# "A" COMPANY

Overturf, Lee C.	Sgt.	Hosp.
Peet, Joseph L.	Sgt.	Trfd. Co. D
Polizzi, Albert M.	Pfc.	
Pranger, Arthur B.	Pfc.	
Raunie, Ensie E.	Sgt., 2/Lt.	
Reed, Frank L.	Cpl.	K.I.A.
Reed, William I.	T/5	Trfd. Co. B
Reeder, Raymond M.	Pfc.	Trfd. Hq. Co.
Richard, Junior K. D.	T/5	Trfd. Hq. Co.
Rochelle, Frank	Pfc.	Hosp.
Rogers, Emmitt H.	T/5	Hosp.
Rose, John A., Jr.	T/5, T/4	
Scandura, Sebastian J.	S/Sgt.	
Schnell, Robert F.	Pfc.	Hosp.
Schwanke, Ernest A.	Sgt.	
Sersen, Leonard J.	Pfc.	
Sheep, Harold A.	Pfc.	Trfd. Hq. Co.
Sinclear, Theodore W.	Pfc.	Hosp.
Snarey, William W.	Pfc., T/4	
Streder, William J.	Cpl.	
Thiede, Chester C.	Pfc., Cpl.	
Thompson, Neel C.	Pfc., T/5	
Tirone, James F.	Sgt.	
VandePutte, Wilber S.	Pfc., Cpl.	
VegePohl, Paul L.	Pfc., Cpl.	
Weikel, Henry H.	Pfc.	19th Rein. Depot
Weiss, Theodore B.	S/Sgt.	Hosp.
Wilson, George W., Jr.	Cpl.	
Wixsen, Philip L.	S/Sgt., 1st Lt.	
Ybarzbal, Warren C.	Pfc.	
Ward, Edward	Pfc.	
Fribley, William G.	S/Sgt.	
Poe, Leon S.	Sgt.	
Schivone, Michael	Pfc.	
Smith, John A.	Pfc.	
Kleiber, Frank R.	Pfc.	Trfd. Hq. Co.
Kohring, Frederick C.	Pfc.	
Koshinski, Clarence A.	Pfc., T/5	
Kottkamp, George H.	T/5	
Krablean, Harold E.	Pfc.	Trfd. 60th Cml. Depot Co.
Krietemeier, Elmer A.	Pfc.	Trfd. Hq. Co.
Kuhn, Walter S.	Pfc., T/5	
Lahey, James I.	Pfc., Cpl.	Trfd. Hq. Co.
LaMere, Walter S.	Cpl., T/4	Trfd. Hq. Co.
Landskron, Harry G.	Pfc.	
Lipp, Saul	Pfc.	Trfd. 19th Rein. Depot
Little, Louis	Cpl.	
Livingston, Willis C.	Pfc.	
MacDonald, Charles L.	T/5	
Majewski, Joseph J.	T/4	Trfd. 2nd Inf. Div.
Marks, Freeman	Pvt.	Hosp.
McClure, James B.	Sgt.	
McFarland, Charles L.	Pfc.	
McLaughlin, Manus J.	Pvt., Cpl.	Trfd. Hq. Co.
Molinare, Robert A.	T/4	K.I.A.
Moreno, Robert W., Jr.	Pfc., Cpl.	
Morgan, Melvin B.	Pvt.	Hosp.
Morlan, William G.	Pfc.	
Myers, Charlie H.	Pvt.	
Myers, William G.	Pvt.	
Olsen, Marlyn E.	Sgt.	P.O.W.

# "A" COMPANY

Purple Heart and Cluster	Buckner, Illinois
Bronze Star	Beloit, Wisconsin
Bronze Star	Alexandria, Louisiana
Purple Heart	Covington, Kentucky
Purple Heart	Superior, Wisconsin
Purple Heart	Chicago, Illinois
Purple Heart and Cluster	Waynesburg, Pennsylvania
Purple Heart	Pricedale, Pennsylvania
Bronze Star	Napoleonville, Louisiana
	Vivian, Louisiana
	Folsen, Louisiana
	South Bend, Indiana
	Belmont, Massachusetts
	Lyndhurst, Ohio
	Rockford, Illinois
	Chicago, Illinois
	Huron, Ohio
	Rhineland, Wisconsin
	Canonsburg, Pennsylvania
	Springfield, Illinois
	Appleton, Wisconsin
	BrynMawr, Pennsylvania
	Chicago, Illinois
	Mishawaka, Indiana
	Columbus, Ohio
	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
	Chicago, Illinois
	Canonsburg, Pennsylvania
	Pt. Huron, Michigan
	New Orleans, Louisiana
	Covington, Kentucky
	Elkhart, Indiana
	Hicks, Louisiana
	Chicago, Illinois
	Silver Spring, Maryland
	Oskosh, Wisconsin
	Canonsburg, Pennsylvania
	Irvingtown, Illinois
	Irvingtown, Illinois
	Neenah, Wisconsin
	Richview, Illinois
	Chicago, Illinois
	Baltimore, Maryland
	Neenah, Wisconsin
	Marshfield, Wisconsin
	Washington, Pennsylvania
	Mound City, Illinois
	Merryville, Louisiana
	Marblehead, Massachusetts
	Hartford, Connecticut
	Rockwood, Michigan
	Canonsburg, Pennsylvania
	Baltimore, Maryland
	Coaldale, Pennsylvania
	Minneapolis, Minnesota
	Oakdale, Louisiana
	Benton, Pennsylvania
	Green Castle, Indiana
	Waterproof, Louisiana
	Hibbing, Minnesota
	Appleton, Wisconsin



EIRE

NORTH SEA

Carlisle

Preston

Port Sunlight

Liverpool

Chester

ENGLAND

Worcester

Gloucester

London

Southampton

← NEW YORK →

ENGLISH CHANNEL

Charbourg

UTAH BEACH

Le Havre

Rouen

Brest

St Malo

Rennes

Le Mans

Laval

Soisson

Paris

Reims

ATLANTIC OCEAN

LOIRE

Orleans

Sens

Troyes

FRANCE

BELGIUM

MEDITERRANEAN



DENMARK

HOLLAND

GERMANY

Berlin

Cologne

Kassel

Leipzig

ELBE

WESER

FULDA

LUX

MOSELLE

RHINE

Bayreuth

Pilsen

Horsovsky  
Tyn

CZECHOSLAVAKIA

Mannheim  
Heidelberg

Nurnburg  
Ansbach

Nancy

SWITZERLAND

HUNGARY

ITALY

JUGOSLAVIA

ADRIATIC  
SEA

## "A" COMPANY

Name	Rank
Hemstock, Thomas	Pfc.
Johnson, Harold E.	Pvt.
Yodkins, Edward J.	Pvt.
Waugh, James V.	Pvt.
Tsouvaies, Peter	Pvt.
Shepard, Charles	Pvt.
Schaedel, Curtis L.	Pvt.
McConnell, Lloyd M.	Pfc.
Deulley, Cecil W.	Pfc.
Whittington, Rex W.	Pvt.
Grier, J. E.	Pvt.
Smith, John A.	Pfc.
Chavex, Antonio E.	Pvt.
Keerd, Lawrence J.	Pfc.
Dowd, Joseph F.	Pfc.
Farris, Henry C.	Pfc.
Stevens, James T.	Pvt.
Trust, Edward J.	Pvt.
Witter, Frank P.	Pvt.
Zukle, Ishmael W.	Pvt.
Blacker, Fred E.	Pvt.
Stemwedel, Harvey C.	Pfc.
Keller, Emil B.	Pvt.
Murphy, Michael F.	Pvt.
McGuire, William J.	Pvt.
Miller, Albert J.	Pvt.
Stone, Story C.	Pfc.
Walkoff, Max	Pfc.
Wszolek, Joseph J.	Pfc.
Antul, Alfred J.	Pfc.
Gregory, Dwight V.	Pfc.
Doherty, John C.	Pfc.
Grines, Robert W.	Pfc.
Jenkins, Everett	Pvt.
Dorff, William J.	Pfc.
Lee, Don	Pvt.
Kowalewri, George J.	Pfc.
Kumysula, John A.	Pvt.
Ashton, Howard I.	Pvt.
Aysine, Oscar L.	Pvt.
Russo, Leonard A.	Pvt.
Hitchens, Olyn G.	Pfc.
Lee, Albert E.	Pvt.
Little, Russell W.	Pvt.
Mandolortz, David	Pvt.
Pertot, Carlo B.	Pvt.
Wolf, Micolos D.	Pvt.
Vile, Nicholas D.	Pvt.
Tidd, James F.	Pvt.
Ross, George W.	Pvt.
Shelton, Roy W.	Pvt.
Lee, Winfred E.	Pvt.
McDonnell, John E.	Pvt.
Polep, Irwin J.	Pvt.
Henniger, George	Cpl.
LoVeechio, Joseph	Pvt.
Wilburn, Warl C.	Pfc.
Bremer, Harry	Pfc.
Clauss, Robert	Cpl.
Oldain, Leopold L.	Pvt.
Bailey, Mittett J.	Pfc.
Krebs, Harvey L.	Pfc.
Maquire, Joseph W.	Pfc.
Medzwiedz, Bernard	Cpl.
Ostrich, Ralph E.	Pfc.
Quinoz, Francisco	Pfc.
Sternel, Andrew J.	S/Sgt.
Eagle, Earl W.	Pvt.
Nestino, Joseph L.	Pvt.
Sermar, Lester J.	Pvt.
Williamson, Paul E.	Pvt.
Holmes, Clarence L.	Pvt.
Ellis, Rolland S.	Pvt.
Jinkowski, Joseph E.	Pvt.
Singer, Donald C.	Sgt.
Stewart, Russell E.	Pfc.
Cantlebery, William W.	Pfc.
Dyche, James E.	Cpl.
Hendershot, Simon A.	Pvt.
Hinkle, Albert	Pfc.
Persky, Marvin	Pfc.

**Awards**

Bronze Star, Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Purple Heart and Cluster

Purple Heart and Cluster

Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Bronze Star

Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Purple Heart, Bronze Star

Purple Heart, Bronze Star

Purple Heart

Bronze Star

Purple Heart and Cluster

Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Bronze Star

Bronze Star

Purple Heart

Purple Heart, Bronze Star

**Residence**

Sparta, Wisconsin

Chicago, Illinois

Torrington, Connecticut

Brighton, Massachusetts

Peabody, Massachusetts

Silver Lake, Indiana

Allentown, Pennsylvania

Nickelsville, Virginia

Orton, West Virginia

Wilkesboro, North Carolina

Tacoma Park, Michigan

Guadalupita, New Mexico

Sauk Rapids, Michigan

Massena, New York

Lowell, Massachusetts

Tyler, Texas

Reidsville, North Carolina

Breezeville, Michigan

Chambersberg, Pennsylvania

Alton, West Virginia

Pontiac, Michigan

Belvidere, Illinois

Elmer, New Jersey

Sommerville, Massachusetts

Brockton, Massachusetts

Mode, Illinois

Tifton, Georgia

Poughkeepsie, New York

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Framingham, Massachusetts

Dresel Hill, Pennsylvania

Lynn, Massachusetts

Union City, Michigan

Burnwell, West Virginia

Temperaine, Michigan

Los Angeles, California

Chicago, Illinois

Buffalo Location, Michigan

Camden, New Jersey

Norlina, North Carolina

Apollo, Pennsylvania

Rockport, Illinois

Grand Rapids, Michigan

Edwardsville, Pennsylvania

Long Beach, California

Byron Center, Michigan

New Britain, Connecticut

Groton, Massachusetts

Savannah, Georgia

Mount Airy, North Carolina

Rockport, Illinois

Chicago, Illinois

Chicago, Illinois

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Astoria, New York

Grayville, Illinois

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Allentown, Pennsylvania

St. Louis, Missouri

Richmond, West Virginia

Shamokin, Pennsylvania

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Millers Falls, Massachusetts

Hibbs, Pennsylvania

Los Angeles, California

Berkley, Michigan

LaPorte, Indiana

Keiser, Pennsylvania

Midland, Louisiana

Danville, Illinois

Rock Island, Illinois

Barr Oak, Kansas

Chicago, Illinois

Lancaster, Pennsylvania

Mennittstown, Pennsylvania

Killbuck, Ohio

Corbin, Kentucky

Port Jervis, New Jersey

McAndrews, Kentucky

Chicago, Illinois

# Letters of Commendation

HEADQUARTERS 30TH INFANTRY DIVISION  
APO 90, U. S. ARMY  
20 January 1945.

800.6  
SUBJECT: Commendation.

TO : The Officers and Men, Company "A", 86th Chemical Battalion,  
APO 305, U. S. Army (THUSCOM). Commanding General, XVIII  
Corps (Allcorps), APO 109, U. S. Army.

1. You are commended for your outstanding performance of duty from 28 November 1944 to 24 January 1945, while in support of the 30th Infantry Division in defending the Meusey - Stavelot sector in Belgium and the subsequent move to the south toward the Tille.
2. In order to give more effective support, you continuously selected and occupied positions in close proximity to the enemy. You presented the heaviest and most accurate fire support, with freezing weather and heavy snowfall adding to the difficulties of terrain and enemy action. Despite all hardships, your enthusiasm and aggressiveness were commensurate with the prompt execution of all support missions commensurate with the success of these operations.
3. Your courage, efficiency, and devotion to duty are well-tributed materially to the success of these operations.

/s/ In S. Hobbs  
Major General - U. S. Army  
Commanding

20/26 February 45.

1st Ind.  
800.6-100  
TO: Commanding General, XVIII Corps (Allcorps), APO 109, U. S. Army.  
FROM: Commanding General, V Corps, APO 305, U. S. Army.  
Reference as a matter pertaining to your command.

/s/ Kenneth Baird  
Major, A.O.D.  
Assistant Adjutant General

Commendation (30 Jan 45) (Cont'd)

801.20  
1st Ind.  
TO: Commanding General, V Corps, APO 305, 20 November 1944.  
FROM: Commanding Officer, 86th Chemical Battalion.  
I give my best pleasure to note and transmit this fine tribute to the fact that you have so well performed.

/s/ S. J. Reuther  
Major General, U. S. Army,  
Commanding

A 20-11-1000 Form 0073

JOHN W. HEANEY,  
1st Lt., G.S.  
66 2nd 30th Sq.

HEADQUARTERS 20TH INFANTRY DIVISION  
APO 20, U. S. ARMY  
18 November 1944.

800.6  
SUBJECT: Commendation.

TO : Commanding Officer, 86th Chemical Battalion, APO 230, U. S. Army.  
FROM : Commanding General, V Corps, APO 305, U. S. Army.

1. At this time I desire to extend to the officers and men of the 86th Chemical Battalion my commendation for and appreciation of the excellent support given by them during the recent operations carried out by this Division in the Wommach-Dononville area. Through their daring and successful devotion to duty under heavy enemy fire, the Division's securing of vital ground and the holding of this terrain was accomplished. In my opinion, the momentum displayed by all elements of the Division and the attached units was magnificent.
2. I am certain that my feelings are mutually felt by every man in the Division when I say I am exceedingly sorry that such commendation and cooperation as was afforded by your organization to this Division has necessarily been brought to an end. It is to be hoped that we still may enjoy again the pleasure of serving with you in the very near future.

/s/ Herman D. Ochs  
Major General, USA,  
Commanding

801.20  
1st Ind.  
TO: Commanding Officer, 86th Chemical Battalion,  
APO 230, 20 November 1944.

It gives me great pleasure to note and transmit this commendation of a task well performed.

/s/ In T. George  
Major General, U. S. Army,  
Commanding

A 20-11-1000 Form 0073

JOHN D. HUCK,  
1st Lt., G.S.  
Adjutant.



## STORY OF COMPANY "B"

V-E day found the men of Company "B", 86th Chemical Mortar Battalion, in the small town of HIRSCHAU, Germany which is approximately 30 kms. from the better known town of Amberg. We had been occupying two small villages, and our main duty was to pick up all German soldiers who had donned civilian clothes—soldiers who hoped that they would be passed over in the resulting confusion coincident with the complete Wehrmacht capitulation.

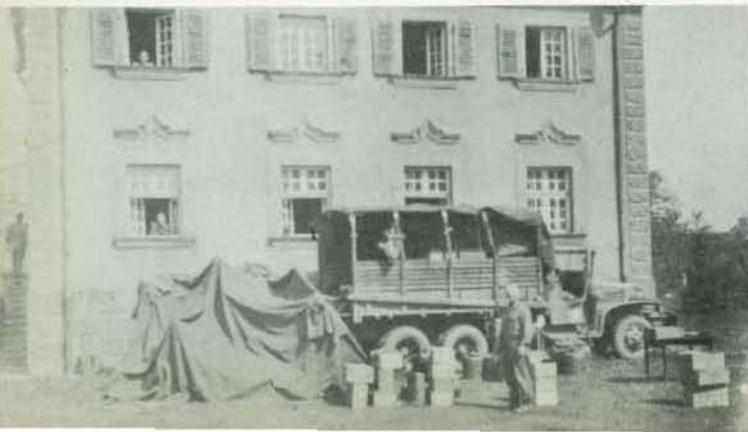
To us, V-E day was just another day away from home, and it brought thoughts of a new theater of war much closer. We heard of gay celebrations and much drinking and making merry by so-called "rear echelon commandos", but although no mention was made of it, you could feel that most of the men in Baker were thinking of their many buddies who were not with them to share in the peace and quiet that V-E day had brought. Little Mike, Lolly, Mauck, Ollie, and good old Hinch who had been with us all the way through basic and the greater portion of our combat days in Europe, Killer Kate, Campbell (Little Patton the 2nd.), Ed Levinson, and many others no longer with us but never forgotten in our thoughts.

Yes—it was an eager bunch of Joes that awaited the good ship "The James A. Farrell" on the 29th of June, 1944. We had come from a most enjoyable and hospitable town named Port Sunlight,

about 10 miles outside Liverpool, and now at long last we were headed for France to do battle with the "unconquerable" German, for whom we had been preparing for many long months. We had faith in our particular weapon, a heavy mortar, and there was nothing but praise from all theaters as to the effectiveness of its fire. We were green, yes—but every soldier must have felt as we did. This was it, and if the other Joes could take it we were damned sure we could. We boarded ship in the early evening and after taking our place in the convoy of ships headed for Cherbourg we began our zig-zag course through the sub-infested waters of the English Channel.

Our trip was without excitement until we reached a spot approximately 7 miles from the coast of the Cherbourg peninsula, where the stark realization of the horrors of total war thrust themselves upon us in the form of a mine or torpedo. To this day, the official verdict is still undetermined, whether it was one or the other, but officially or otherwise, something hit us, and we were committed to action before we even knew it. It was this first encounter with disaster that proved the calibre of men we had in Baker Company. Their immediate reactions were more than a commander could have hoped for. In no time at all, officers and men were working like madmen with complete disregard for their own personal safety clearing the rapidly filling





hold of men who otherwise would have been trapped and surely drowned in the mass of rubble and debris which had once been materials of war. To try to describe the scene and the actions which took place is humanly impossible, for, to fully appreciate the grim reality of war, one must personally experience the workings of the brain and the weighing of one's own personal feelings as compared to thoughts that regardless of how much you value your life, there is a job to be done. It should be sufficient to say that our casualties numbered thirty-five, including one man missing, little Mike Babaryka, a favorite with all the men.

For a time it appeared that soon most of us would be swimming in the choppy seas of the English Channel, but fortunately that never happened. An American LST took aboard all survivors of the sinking James A. Farrell. Thus we found ourselves on the way to England, badly in need of equipment and men.

We landed at Portland, England and were taken to The Citadel, a fortress overlooking the harbor. Here we received a fine meal, clean clothes, and the opportunity to shower and shave.

From The Citadel we travelled by truck to Beurnemouth where we worked feverishly to prepare ourselves for another attempt at crossing the channel.

In the unbelievable short time of two weeks, we were again fully equipped and on our way for a second time to join our parent unit which had successfully landed with the same convoy in which we had sailed. This time the trip was without incident except for enemy air activity over Omaha Beach the night we landed. The drone of enemy planes, the steady bark of the ack-ack, the multi-colored tracers that zoomed across the sky like fireworks—all these against a background of the slow, running





tide and the bleak Normandy coast with its ghostly ruins impressed upon our minds a vivid picture that was to never leave us. Thus we went ashore, and in very short order, we found ourselves driving over the shell-torn, battle-wearied roads of Normandy on our way to the town occupied by our Battalion.

We stayed one day and night with the Battalion, and the next afternoon found us committed to action with the 83rd Division in the vicinity of La Haye du Puits, on the Normandy peninsula. Our very first position was a rather warm one, for after firing our first mission, our area began to receive small-arms and machine gun fire and our platoon leader decided that it was about time for us to start a retrograde movement. All the units which had been in front of us, were now barreling down the road past our position going in the wrong direction. We also found it necessary to "partir", but after the situation again stabilized itself, we returned to our foxholes and then began our long series of attachments, re-assignments, and our long journey.

The huge breakthrough at St. Lo will be memorable because of the beautiful sight of thousands of bombers during their saturation bombing of the fixed German defenses in and around St. Lo. As a result, the American tanks could at last stretch out their tracks in the direction of Berlin. We raced down the Normandy peninsula with the infantry trying to overtake the fast fleeing Krauts. At Avaranches we were told that our Battalion had been assigned to the task force which was headed for the impenetrable fortress of BREST!

Our trip across the Brittany peninsula was a glorious one. In every little village and hamlet, the liberated French would shower us with roses, wine, cider, champagne and apples.

Our first mission on the Peninsula was against the fortress at St. Malo. After placing a murderous fire of White Phosphorus in the installations for a week, the fortress commander capitulated with the remark that: "The enemy will continue to use the deadly White Phosphorus, against which we cannot possibly hold out." Here, in the handwriting of the fanatical Nazi, Colonel Von Auloch, was visible proof of the effectiveness of our "goon gun."

After the fall of the Citadel at St. Malo, we were assigned to help reduce the resistance in and around the Brittany town of Dinard, and in very short order, our mission was accomplished, and we were en route again headed for Brest. We were attached to the 8th Division for this particular job, and the brass hats had it all figured out, whereby General





Remcke, the fortress commander would certainly surrender his entire garrison after a three day barrage from artillery, mortars, and fighter bombers. Apparently somebody forgot to tell Remcke what the plan was, for five weeks later we were still battling our way inch by inch against the most stubborn resistance we had yet encountered.

During this engagement, we came in contact with prepared German mine defenses, and the very well known "88s", along with the very appropriately named "screaming mimies", shells from a huge trench mortar having a terrific concussion effect. The Krauts used them extensively to cause casualties in areas where troops were well dug in and flying shrapnel could not reach them. The sound of the projectile in flight, resembling the sound of a shearing piece of sheet metal, was not a pleasant one to hear.



We began to feel that Brest would still be holding out long after the Germans on the Siegfried Line had surrendered, for it was while we were engaged at Brest, that we heard the Siegfried Line had been penetrated and that slow progress was being made into the Reich. We began to feel that we were banging our heads against a stone wall, for the Kraut positions were being taken only after a high cost of life on both sides of the line.

Finally, the complete surrender came, and we had visions of a long rest, perhaps passes to large cities, etc., but that is all they were—just "visions" that never materialized. We rejoined our battalion and after a week of preparations set out on a 600 mile motor march and at the end of the march, we found ourselves under the command of "Old Blood and Guts" Patton, the most bombastic, lovable American general in the ETO. His specialty was tank warfare, and it meant a new kind of warfare for our mortars.



We went into action with the 35th Infantry Division in the vicinity of Nancy, France, and participated in the battle of the Gramercy Forest. In this





vicinity the company received an exceptionally severe shelling. It was the very first time that every man in the company from cooks to mortarmen was subjected to artillery barrage. It had been the policy of the company to establish a rear area in a comparatively safe place for the purpose of giving the men on the line a place to rest up for a few days because the company had never been pulled out of the line for a rest period (after an engagement) such as the infantry enjoys. We were committed to combat two days after landing in France, and the Battalion Commander realized the necessity for such a policy, for it would have been humanly impossible to maintain an effective fighting force for such a long period of time if the men were not given the opportunity to rest up and relax after a given number of days on the front lines. The area for such a place was reconnoitered and the entire company was moved into it. The next day the platoons were to occupy gun positions in support of the doughs of the 35th Division. We all considered the area a safe one, and as a result we bedded down for the night without digging holes. At exactly ten o'clock, the first shell came screaming in, and luckily for us, it was short of its mark. It gave us a few seconds to duck into whatever natural cover was available. Evidently the Krauts used the few seconds to make whatever corrections were necessary to get on the target, for the next shell hit directly in the middle of the 3rd Platoon area. For the next twenty minutes we went through indescribable hell-like tortures. When the shelling subsided, we counted two dead and 17 wounded, vehicles damaged beyond repair, and the mental attitude of the entire company at its lowest ebb since we had been in combat.

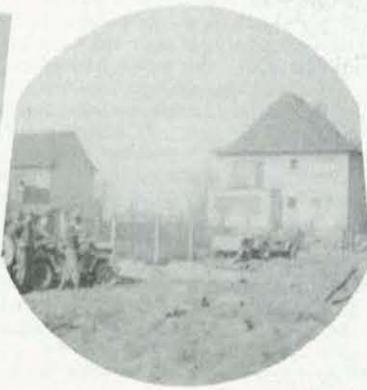
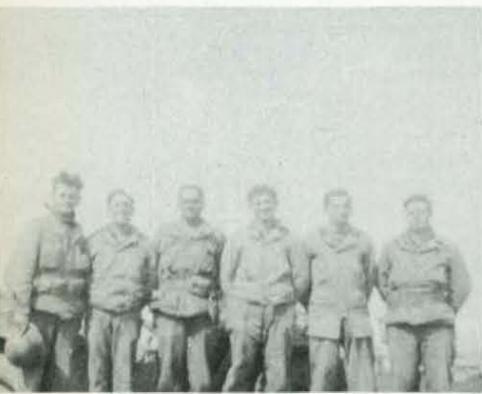
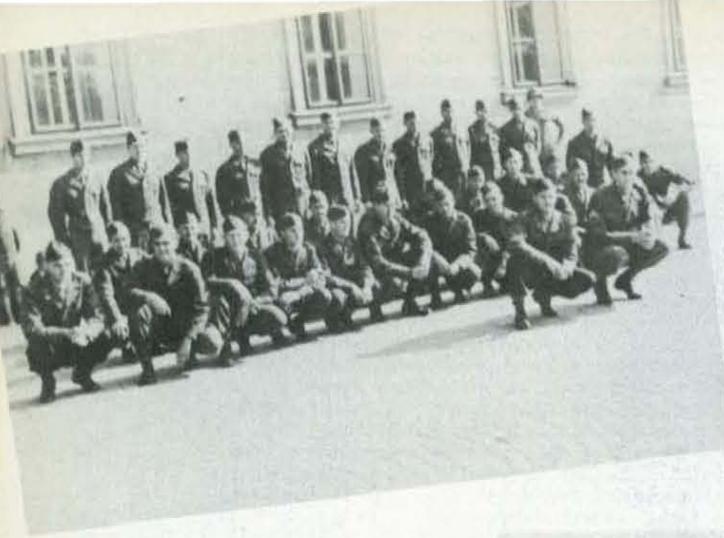
We moved from the area immediately and occupied an alternate rest area, and it was here that the company commander made the wise decision of wasting no time in getting the remnants of the company together and going into the line the very next morning in support of the Infantry Division of our attachment. Again the company displayed its recuperative powers, for, this "incident" also was overshadowed by the knowledge that we still had a job to do and a bigger score to settle, for one of the boys who had been killed was Bob Boyington, a nice kid from Louisiana.

We began to get hardened to the tribulations of war, and we all had a more grim perspective of what we were up against.

It was during this campaign that we fired numerous smoke screens for advancing infantry, and on several occasions, we worked hand in hand with division artillery using the well known Cub liaison planes as observers for our firing.

The weather conditions were far from favorable. It was the time of the year for rain, mud and more rain. The mud made tough going for the tankers and a small knowledge of our particular weapon is all that is needed to appreciate the work that the boys did on the guns in order to keep them firing. Mortars were fired without locking forks, standards,





covered with three foot of mud, and on one occasion one particular mortar "rode" back at least fifteen feet from where the squad leader had first laid it in. Yet, under these trying conditions the men were fully aware of how important it was to maintain the devastating fire the mortars were laying down around the Kraut's ears and, they all performed miracles, successfully completing every mission assigned to them by the infantry commander.

At that time, the First Army was occupying the headlines, for its progress was increasingly speeding up, whereas the thrust by the Third Army, sorely in need of supplies and materials as a result of its lightning like dash across France and the resulting lengthening of supply lines, was slowly being arrested.

We fought with the Third Army up until October, when word came that we had been assigned to the First Army, and once again we prepared for a long motor march to join the First Army, which at that time was inside the Siegfried Line preparing for the Battle of Hurtgen Forest, the bloodiest, most miserable battle in the history of warfare.

We entered the German town of Roetgen, and then began one of the worst campaigns the company could ever hope to be in. We were attached to the 28th Infantry Division, called the "Bloody Bucket", and we went into position inside the Hurtgen Forest, in a valley which later on was to be named Purple Heart Valley, as a result of so many casualties suffered there. The forest had been completely mined and booby-trapped, and the engineers did a wonderful job in clearing the territory the infantry was to cover.

The prime mission of the division we were supporting was to go through the entire forest and occupy the town of Schmidt, a well defended town commanding the approach to the series of dams controlling the flood waters which ran into the industrial Ruhr valley. H-hour came, and we proceeded to lay down a rolling barrage of high explosive shells, softening up the enemy defenses. For the first ten minutes, everything was going fine, and the infantry was prepared to go over the hill of the valley we were in, when the enemy let loose with everything he had. Our attack was halted by the tremendous amount of artillery, and it was then that we were aware of how big a job it was going to be to oust him from his dug-in positions and reach our objectives.

Not long after this attack, the weather decided to take up the fight against us, and we began to live through heavy snowfalls, and extreme cold.

The guns remained in the one gun position for a solid month, and somehow the company managed to hold together throughout everything that came up. We saw the 28th Division go, the 8th Division come in, stay for about three weeks and then be relieved by the 78th Division. As usual, when the divisions were relieved, we remained where we were, and took the new assignment with a shrug of the shoulders, for we knew we were there to stay. The 8th Division finally knifed its way out of the forest and instead of this action turning the tide in our favor, it completely exposed us to enemy observation and densely mined flat terrain.

We set up our guns in the town of Hurtgen outside the forest and once more the company was ordered to move out of the town into a small defilade approximately 800 yards from the front line by the infantry commander.

At three o'clock in the morning, the third platoon took off in a column of jeeps and started down the road toward the new position. The leading jeep and the one immediately behind it passed over a certain spot without anything happening, but the third jeep hit what is called a German box mine, and all its occupants were blown into the air and off the road. Immediately after the explosion, the Germans began laying a barrage on the area and once again the men were subjected to a group shell which took its toll.

This "incident" also displayed the courage of the men in "B" Company, for after working under shell fire on a mined road, they successfully evac-

uated the wounded men to aid stations and after a quick check, we found that four men had been killed, and thirteen injured. The men killed were Mauck, Olson, Kane, and Homa, boys we had known since basic training, and we took their loss rather hard.

The morale of the company was again on its last legs, for the company commander had completely broken under the terrific strain forced upon him.

With the loss of our company commander, seventeen men out of action, the squads working with one and two men on each gun, and the war still on, drastic steps had to be taken immediately in order to keep the company in the line.

It was about this time that Von Rundstedt launched his historic dash through the American lines and the Battle of the Bulge was on. His strategy was to make thrust towards Luxembourg and after drawing the American forces down into the area of the thrust, he had planned to swing hinge like to the north to hit the First Army's salient and cut it by capturing Roetgen, which would put us in an extremely unpleasant position.

However, he ran into a little more than he expected when he began to feel out the "northern flank" and decided that he could more easily keep on going due west and sever the American supply lines which were greatly extended at that time, and by this action isolate the First Army and its troops in Germany.

We were not at all surprised when a re-attachment came down and we were sent out of the Hurtgen Forest down into Belgium in support of the paratroopers of the well known 82nd Airborne Division. They were to hammer at the northern flank of Von Rundstedt's salient and cut it in two by meeting up with the Third Army which was hammering at the southern flank.

Fighting with these paratroopers was indeed a new experience, for their very actions inspired a "can't be beaten attitude" and the ease with which they handled all their objectives was something we had not see since we worked with the 13th Regiment of the 8th Infantry Division at Brest. Each day the guns moved forward, and the gun crews knew that each move forward was taking them that much closer to home.

Major General "Slim Jim" Gavin paid us a visit one day at one of the gun positions and it was easy to see why he had the admiration and respect of every man in his division. Like Eisenhower, General Gavin takes a personal interest in the lowest Joes in the Army and he can make the lowest private feel at ease in spite of the fact that he is face to face with a Major General. He offered helpful and constructive criticism of the gun position and complimented the company on its fine work.

It wasn't too long after his visit, that we were given twenty paratroopers to supplement the losses we had sustained in the Hurtgen Forest and they came in mighty handy, for we still had the elements opposing us in our operation of the mortars as well as opposition from the enemy. The cold and snow were very severe and the gun positions were of necessity out in the open because the Ardennes Forest is rather dense, and there are very few houses and villages that troops can live in.

We stayed with the 82nd Division until they were relieved by the 75th Infantry Division, a "green" outfit, and again, as usual, we just stayed where we were and started working with them. For a green outfit, they functioned very efficiently and Von Rundstedt's salient was being reduced day by day. Our fighting took us across the Salm River and into the town of Vielsalm, and by this time, Von Rundstedt's bulge had all but disappeared, and we began to sweat out a new assignment.

The new assignment was not long in coming and we found ourselves with the 9th Infantry Division battling our way up to the Roer River, about seven miles south of Schmidt, the town which had been taken in almost four months of fighting in the

First Army sector. This particular campaign was one of movement, for we were being shunted from one regiment to another and then back again to the first regiment, and each shunt meant moving into the new regimental sector.

After Schmidt had been taken by elements of the 78th Division, plans were laid for the crossing of the Roer River. The crossing of the Roer became headline news. This meant that the Allies now had complete control of the Schwammanuel dams. It was our good fortune to see the main dam and all its huge abutments.

The Germans then began to disintegrate, and we again had a chase on our hands for we made a lightning like dash from the Roer River to the banks of the Rhine in support of the 2nd Infantry Division. The sight of the Rhine River and the Remagen railroad bridge which had been captured intact by the 9th Armored Division was a wonderful one. We began to realize that organized German resistance was rapidly crumbling and it was just a question of time now until the surrender terms were accepted.

The collapse of the railroad bridge held up progress quite a bit, and once again the engineers showed their prowess by constructing the huge pontoon bridges necessary to insure the flow of men and materials to the fighting front which by this time was on the other side of Hitler's Autobahn. "B" Company made it possible to cut this vital supply road by screening the advancing infantry with White Phosphorus shells.

Our next assignment saw us containing the Krauts sealed up in the Ruhr Pocket of upwards of 200,000 troops. We remained on the east bank of the Rhine in the vicinity of Seigburg on the Seig River, a position governing the southern escape route which was now closed to the besieged Krauts in the Ruhr Pocket. We remained here for approximately three weeks when a new assignment with the 104th Division came through.

After a long motor march we found ourselves in another rather shaky position. We were on the tip of the finger that was trying to close up the Ruhr pocket making a junction with the Canadians who were coming down from the north. There was very little action during this period, and after a couple of weeks in this region, we received another assignment which was to be the most interesting one we ever had.

We were attached to the 9th Armored Division that had established the first bridgehead across the Rhine, joining them at Mulhausen. Their objectives were to be a junction with the Russian Army, if possible, and to secure all the ground west of the Elbe River, which runs approximately north and south through the center of Germany. Our spot on the river would place us southeast of Berlin, and naturally we were anxious to get rolling, for the end was at last in sight. We started out with Combat Command B clearing all the towns which lay in our path, and it was practically a non-stop flight across the flat land which characterizes the center of Germany.

Even on this last leg of the war, the company was to have another "incident" and it came about very unexpectedly. We were in the armored column in the vicinity of Bilzingsleben and parked on the road leading into the town. The time was about five o'clock in the afternoon and the brilliant sun was to our backs and we were feeling rather good, when, from out of the sun came four ME-109s with a perfect target of a long line of vehicles. They came in unannounced and undisturbed, for the anti-aircraft units were caught napping and they offered no resistance to the planes until after they were well started on their strafing and bombing mission.

For some reason or other the planes concentrated on "B" Company's string of vehicles and every bomb that hit, landed on the road where we were parked. It was really terrifying, for the sound of a bomb screaming down, is a sound never to be forgotten. Once again we added up the damage done, and we found that good old Hinchy had been killed instantly when a bomb struck the truck under which

he had sought cover. Seven other men had been seriously wounded and after they were taken care of, we again took of with the grim reminder that the war was still very much on, regardless of what the home papers might be saying.

Three days later found us east of Leipzig, in the small town of Wolpen where we were to fire our mortars for the last time. After shelling Eilenburg for several days, we were once more relieved for another assignment. A long motor march over the Reichsautobahn and we found ourselves in Southern Germany, acting as police troops.

Here we went to work cleaning the woods of Wehrmacht stragglers who had banded together constituting a serious threat to our over-extended supply lines. This was something new for Baker Company, but it proved its adaptability by over-running a Wehrmacht bivouac area, thus greatly lessening guerrilla activities in this sector.

We seemed destined never to stay very long in any one place. Once again it was that familiar cry, "March Order", that sent us on our way to Hirschau.

Thus it was that V-E day found us in Hirschau and wondering what would happen next. We had been in combat 300 days; we had supported 28 different divisions, 8 corps, and 3 armies. We all hoped to be in the Army of Occupation, but deep within us we knew that we were destined for the Pacific.

From Hirschau we moved in Battalion convoy to a town in Czechoslovakia called Bischofteinitz, and after staying there for about three weeks, we were finally alerted for a long trip through Germany and into France where we were told we would embark for home and 30 day leaves in the states. You can imagine what a thrill it was to think that after 15 months overseas we were at last going home to see our loved ones. Thoughts of the Pacific were thrust aside, for the combat man learns to live for today and let tomorrow take care of itself.

Our staging area was Camp Lucky Strike, that large tent city located near Le Havre. The convoy from Bischofteinitz to Le Havre was long and wearisome, but our spirits were high with thoughts of home—nothing could daunt us.

We stayed in Camp Lucky Strike for two weeks, but it seemed at least four times that long, so eager were we to get started toward home. At long last, that day of departure arrived. There never was or will be a happier band of men than "B" Company on that occasion, although the weather did not share our enthusiasm. A driving rain soaked everyone to the skin; but even that failed to dampen our spirits. With light hearts we boarded the S. S. Sea Pike, homeward bound.

A calm voyage under sunny skies, eight carefree days and we docked at New York. Home at last!!!

From New York we traveled by train to Camp Kilmer, where we were separated into groups according to the location of the re-deployment centers nearest our homes. Then came those glorious furloughs, thirty days which ended all too soon.

While we were enjoying this respite from war, our Pacific Forces were carrying total destruction to the shores of Japan. The atomic bomb forced the Japanese government to sue for peace and thus it was that while we were returning to our new station, Camp Campbell, Kentucky, the war officially came to an end.

This great news brought forth a tangled mixture of emotions—relief, happiness, and sadness. We were relieved to know that there would be no more combat for us; we were happy with the thought that now we could go home and stay; but it was with sadness that we thought of our friends who were not with us to celebrate this great day.

Now the saga of "B" Company is coming to an end. With each departure of a high point veteran goes a little bit of that glorious past which has marked this organization's history. Soon there will be nothing left but these words to commemorate the brilliant traditions of Baker Company, 86th Chemical Mortar Battalion.

SMOKE  
E4 B-3  
LOT 2 IN CML

# KILLED IN ACTION

## "B" Company

- CPL. MIKE BABARYKA**—29th of June, 1944, in the English Channel. Interred in England. Mother: Mary Babaryka, Box 20, Hendersonville, Pennsylvania.
- S/SGT. JAMES J. CAMPBELL**—5th of September, 1944, near Brest, France. Interred in France. Father: William C. Campbell, Route 1, Lowndesville, South Carolina.
- PVT. LOLLY A. D'AUGEREAUX**—5th of September, 1944, near Brest, France. Interred in France. Mother: Jeneura D'Augereaux, Route 1, Box 85, Church Point, Louisiana.
- T/5 WILLIAM A. SEIBER**—30th of September, 1944, near Laitre, France. Interred United States Military Cemetery No. 1, Andilly, France. Wife: Florence Robinette Seiber, 125 Charlotte Street, Centralia, Illinois.
- PFC. ROBERT R. BOYINGTON**—30th of September, 1944, near Laitre, France. Interred United States Military Cemetery No. 1, Andilly, France. Father: Raymond Boyington, RFD No. 1, Bogalusa, Louisiana.
- PVT. ROBERT J. MANTON**—17th of September, 1944, near Kerualan, France. Interred in France. Mother: Eunice Manton, General Delivery, Folsom, Louisiana.
- SGT. GERALD D. HINCHY**—5th of November, 1944, in Germany. Interred Breuna Cemetery No. 1, Holland. Mother: Ida J. Hinchy, 805 Dupont Street, Bellingham, Michigan.
- S/SGT. EDWARD N. LEVINSON**—17th of November, 1944, in Germany. Interred Henri Chapelle Cemetery No. 1, Belgium. Mother: Mrs. Ida Levinson, Aberdeen, Grays Harbor, Washington.
- SGT. JAMES R. MAUCK**—8th of December, 1944, in Germany. Interred Henri Chapelle Cemetery No. 1, Belgium. Mother: Inez May Mauck, 214 East Main Street, Covington, Virginia.
- CPL. PAUL E. OLSON**—8th of December, 1944, in Germany. Interred Henri Chapelle Cemetery No. 1, Belgium. Mother: Agnes M. Olson, 549 North Leamington Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.
- PFC. JOHN P. HOMA**—8th of December, 1944, in Germany. Interred Henri Chapelle Cemetery No. 1, Belgium. Mother: Mary Homa, RD No. 2, Smithfield, Pennsylvania.
- PFC. CHARLES A. KANE**—8th of December, 1944, in Germany. Interred Henri Chapelle Cemetery No. 1, Belgium. Mother: Margaret Kane, 12 West Elm Street, Baltimore, Maryland.

# "B" COMPANY

Name	Rank	Assignment
Alten, Virgil A.	Cpl.	Hosp.
Alleman, Alcide J.	Pfc., Cpl.	
Autin, Oscar J.	S/Sgt.	Trfd. 1st Inf. Div.
*Babaryka, Mike	Cpl.	
Bailey, Harley	Pfc.	
Benoit, Wiley	Pvt., Pfc.	
Bergen, James W.	Cpl., Sgt.	Hosp.
Berlinsky, Theodore L.	Sgt., S/Sgt.	
Bogdan, Leonard J.	Pvt.	Hosp.
*Boyington, Robert R.	Pfc.	
Brian, Mayfield	Sgt.	Hosp.
Bromley, William M.	Cpl.	Hosp.
Broussard, Coy	Tec. 5 Gr.	
Burch, Benjamin F.	Pfc.	
*Campbell, James J.	S/Sgt.	
Caples, Alfred N.	Pvt., Pfc.	
Cazalot, Maurice G.	Pfc., T/5	
Christ, Erwin E.	Pfc.	Trfd. Hq. Co.
Cloessner, James C.	Pvt., Pfc.	
Combel, Sidney J.	Pvt.	Hosp.
Crews, Thomas H.	T/5	
Crosse, Robert C.	T/5, T/4	
Cumber, Robert T.	Sgt.	
Curtis, Constantine C.	Pfc., Cpl.	
Daniel, Porter D.	T/5	Trfd. 16th Armd. Div.
Darlington, Russell E.	Cpl.	
*D'Augereaux, Lolly A.	Pvt.	
De Hart, Houston J.	Pfc.	Hosp.
Dickey, Everett L., Jr.	Cpl., Sgt.	Purple Heart
Diglio, Dominic A.	Cpl.	Hosp.
Dreher, John M.	S/Sgt.	Hosp.
Duthu, James B.	Pfc.	Hosp.
Ertl, Lawrence P.	T/4, S/Sgt.	
Estapa, Wincle	Pvt.	Trfd. 79th Cml. Co.
Ellis, Alfred T.	Sgt.	Hosp.
Evans, James F.	Pfc.	Trfd. 19th Reinf. Dep.
Faul, Lee Roy J.	Pvt., Pfc.	
Fendley, Grover C., Jr.	T/5	
Fontenot, John P.	T/5	Hosp.
Futrell, Edward B.	Pfc., T/4	
Gajkowski, Henry J.	Cpl., T/Sgt.	Trfd. Hq. Co.
Germe, Frank F.	Pvt., Cpl.	
Gianni, Reno	Pvt.	Trfd. Hq. Co.
Hartman, Theodore R.	Pvt., Pfc.	
Hawley, Gerald S.	Cpl.	Trfd. Hq. Co.
Hedges, Albert B.	T/4	
*Hinchy, Gerald D.	Sgt.	
Hoffpaair, Ronald J.	Pfc., Sgt.	
Hornsby, Henry	Pfc.	Hosp.
Horn, Irving	Col., Sgt.	
Jacobs, Raymond M.	T/5	
Jakopac, John W.	Pvt., Pfc.	
Jennings, Floyd	T/5, S/Sgt.	
Jones, Herbert W.	Pvt.	Hosp.
Johnson, William M.	T/4	
*Kane, Charles A.	Pvt.	
Katz, Sidney K.	Sgt.	Hosp.
Kennedy, John T.	Pfc.	Trfd. Med. Det.
Kight, Hezie B.	T/4	Trfd. 2nd Inf. Div.
Killeren, Richard J.	Sgt.	
Knestrick, John D.	Pfc., T/5	
La Borde, Louis J.	Pvt.	Hosp.
Lance, Neil M.	Sgt., S/Sgt.	
Lanehart, Jacob T.	Pfc.	Hosp.
Lateur, Charles B.	Pfc., T/5	
Le Blanc, Randolph	Pvt., S/Sgt.	
Lemoine, Earl E.	Pvt., T/5	
*Levinson, Edward N.	S/Sgt.	K.I.A.
Linn, Chester L.	T/4, M/Sgt.	
Lusk, W. A.	Pfc.	
Maggard, Earl	Pvt.	Trfd. 16th Armd. Div.
*Manton, Robert J.	Pvt.	K.I.A.
Matson, Harold J.	Pvt.	Hosp.
Marble, Jack E.	Cpl.	
*Mauck, James R.	Sgt.	
McDonough, William H.	Cpl., Sgt.	
McNeely, John F.	Pfc., Sgt.	
McMahon, John	T/5	
McKenzie, Joseph R.	Pfc.	
Merkel, Robert L.	Pfc.	
Merritt, Vernon E.	Sgt.	Hosp.
Miller, Charles N.	Pfc.	Trfd. to Hq. Co.
Modglin, Alvin R.	Pvt.	Hosp.
Moore, Ross O.	Pfc.	
Murrell, John R.	T/5	
*Olson, Paul E.	Cpl.	
Pence, Robert L.	Pvt.	Hosp.
Piegts, Rene J.	Pvt., Sgt.	
Polinsky, John J.	Pvt., Pfc.	
Putica, John	Pvt., Pfc.	
Ray, Callace F.	Pfc.	Trfd. Hq. Co.



# "B" COMPANY

Reed, William P.	Cpl.	Hosp.
Richard, Elwood H.	Sgt.	
Roberts, Ernest H.	Pvt., T/5	Hosp.
Ronte, Joseph J.	Pvt.	
Rothman, Edward S.	Cpl.	Cpl., Sgt.
Rybezynski, Ted C.		Pfc., Sgt.
Sadler, Troy D.		1/Sgt.
Saline, Robert		Sgt., 1/Sgt.
Sauer, Vincent	1st Inf. Div.	
Scherer, Charles T.		Pvt., Cpl.
Seiber, William A.		Pvt.
Sgriccia, Vincent G.		Pvt., Cpl.
Sibley, Carroll C.		Pfc.
Simko, Andrew J.		Pvt., Cpl.
Simpson, Forest E.		T/4
Simpson, Robert M.		Pvt., Sgt.
Sisson, Billy D.		T/4
Smith, Sosthene B., Jr.		Cpl., 1/Sgt.
Stahler, Norman S.	Trfd. Hq. Co.	Cpl.
Stanisz, Albert G.		Pvt., Pfc.
Stephan, Joseph F.	Trfd. 9th Reinf. Dep.	T/5
Stokes, Lawrence J.		S/Sgt., 1/Sgt.
Strickler, William H.		T/5, T/4
Taylor, William W.	Hosp.	Pvt., T/5
Tonti, Albert		Pvt.
Webb, Floyd E.		Pvt.
Webre, Robert L.		Pvt., Pfc.
Wells, Harold W.		Pfc.
Wells, Steve M.		T/5
Wharton, Judson K.		
S/Sgt., 2nd Lt.		Pvt., Pfc.
White, Bernard E.	Hosp.	Pvt., Pfc.
Whittington, Francis D.	Hosp.	Pfc.
Wiedman, Joseph C.		Sgt., S/Sgt.
Wilcox, John J.		Pfc., Sgt.
Wyatt, John J.		T/5
Yommer, Alvin L.	Trfd. Hq. Co.	Pfc., Sgt.
Zaunbrocher, Richard A.		

## REINFORCEMENTS

## "B" COMPANY

Name	Rank
Griggs, Anthony L.	Pfc.
Wells, Harold W.	Pfc.
Gould, Alfred H.	Pvt.
Groover, Carroll F.	Pvt.
Hart, John B.	Pvt.
Henderson, John D.	Pvt.
Holland, Sam L.	Pvt.
Howard, Stewart M.	Pvt.
Jarvis, Herman D.	Pvt.
Karabel, Louis C.	Pvt.
Lace, William F.	Pvt.
Larrison, William T.	Pvt.
Gould, George A.	Pvt.
Grout, John S.	Pvt.
Heinrich, Edwin H.	Pvt.
Hill, Louis E.	Pvt.
Hooqendorn, Nicholas H.	Pvt.
Juengel, Louis H.	Pvt.
Kattenbraker, Arthur R.	Pvt.
Criscuola, Salvatore F.	Pfc.
Baker, Robert E.	Pvt.
Zolli, Carlo	T/5
Mamer, Alonzo D.	Pfc.
Strauss, Rubin	Pfc.
Stuikis, Albert J.	Pvt.
O'Dell, Thomas D.	Pvt.
Larrison, Philip T.	Pvt.
Jackpac, John W.	Pvt.
Gill, William W.	Pvt.
Gervasio, John E.	Pvt.
Varnell, William C.	Pfc.
Greenfield, Lloyd P.	Pfc.
New, Charles B.	Pvt.
Callahan, James L.	Pfc.
Lloyd, Lindsay G.	Pfc.
Lucy, Paul K.	Pfc.
Leavens, Neil H.	Pfc.
Baird, Clinton A.	Pfc.
Akins, Forrest W.	Pfc.
Benjaminson, Sigurdur	Pfc.
Crotlin, Claude A.	Pfc.
Klemm, Joseph	Pfc.
Cox, Marvin L.	Pvt.
Filmore, Jack	Pvt.
Kaban, Arthur L.	Pvt.
Pugh, Willard L.	Pfc.
Siler, Charles R.	Pvt.
Templeton, Walter D.	Pvt.
Morton, Voris M.	Pfc.
McKenzie, Joseph R.	Pvt.
Bornette, Oneal	Pfc.
Barger, Charles D.	Pfc.
Laurish, Anton M.	Pvt.
Lawrence, Ivan	Pvt.

# "B" COMPANY

Purple Heart  
Purple Heart, Silver Star

Purple Heart  
Bronze Star  
Purple Heart  
Bronze Star

Bronze Star  
Purple Heart and Cluster  
Purple Heart and Cluster  
Purple Heart

Bronze Star

Purple Heart  
Purple Heart and Cluster

Purple Heart  
Purple Heart  
Purple Heart  
Purple Heart, Bronze Star

## Awards

Purple Heart  
Purple Heart

Purple Heart  
Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Bronze Star

Purple Heart

Purple Heart, Bronze Star  
Purple Heart

Purple Heart, Bronze Star

Purple Heart

Purple Heart and Cluster  
Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Purple Heart

West Graham, Virginia  
Rayne, Louisiana  
Webster, Pennsylvania  
Chicago, Illinois  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Chicago, Illinois  
St. Landry, Louisiana  
St. Marys, Pennsylvania

Carona Queens, New York  
Chicago, Illinois  
Centralia, Illinois  
Clymer, Pennsylvania  
Stormont, Virginia  
Cannonsburg, Pennsylvania  
Ada, Oklahoma  
Altoona, Pennsylvania  
Kelso, Washington  
Church Point, Louisiana  
Washington, D. C.  
Chicago, Illinois  
Chicago, Illinois  
Kewanna, Indiana  
Mount Joy, Pennsylvania  
Indianapolis, Indiana  
Cannonsburg, Pennsylvania  
Kokomo, Indiana  
Wallace, Louisiana  
West Liberty, Kentucky  
Vivian, Louisiana  
Baltimore, Maryland  
Baltimore, Maryland  
Indianapolis, Indiana  
Lacrosse, Wisconsin  
Toledo, Ohio  
Jamacia, Virginia  
Meyersdale, Pennsylvania  
Rayne, Louisiana

## Residence

Chicago, Illinois  
West Liberty, Kentucky  
Jonesboro, Texas  
Atlanta, Georgia  
Vinton, Iowa  
Detroit, Michigan  
Gneiss, North Carolina  
Oswego, New York  
Berlin, Indiana  
Chicago, Illinois  
Chicago, Illinois  
Mt. Sterling, Kentucky  
Brooklyn, New York  
Ellingville, New York  
Miller, Indiana  
Laurel, Mississippi  
Kalamazoo, Michigan  
Utic, Michigan  
Chester, Illinois  
New Haven, Connecticut  
Shoremanstown, Pennsylvania  
Ladd, Illinois  
Detroit, Michigan  
Bronx, New York  
Baltimore, Maryland  
South Bend, Indiana  
Mt. Sterling, Kentucky  
Synesville, Pennsylvania  
Louisville, Kentucky  
Cleveland, Tennessee  
Suffolk, New York  
Brooklyn, New York  
Dallas, Texas  
Cool City, West Virginia  
Detroit, Michigan  
Norfolk, Virginia  
Royal Oak, Michigan  
Providence, Rhode Island  
Westmoreland, Tennessee  
Crystal, North Dakota  
Chippewa Bay, New York  
Seltzer, Pennsylvania  
St. Louis, Missouri  
Loueller, Kentucky  
Chicago, Illinois  
Crab Orchard, Tennessee  
Williamsburg, Kentucky  
Tullahoma, Tennessee  
Cairo, West Virginia  
Hannibal, Missouri  
Melville, Louisiana  
Kingsport, Tennessee  
Nunising, Michigan  
Onaway, Michigan

# Letter Of Commendation

HEADQUARTERS 121ST INFANTRY  
Office of the Regimental Commander  
APO #8, United States Army

5 December 1944.

MEMORANDUM:

I desire to extend to each member of the 121st Infantry and the First Battalion 13th Infantry, Companies B and C 86th Chemical Battalion, 12th Engineer Combat Battalion, 709 Tank Battalion, 644 TD Battalion and 56th Field Artillery Battalion, my congratulations and sincere thanks for the successful conclusion of the Battle of Hurtgen Forest, and capture of the key town of Hurtgen which will be recorded in history as one of the hardest and most bitter battles in this war.

The operation of this Corps depended on the capture of the key towns of Hurtgen and Kleinbau which provided avenues for further advances to the east and eventually to the Rhine. The success of the attack on Hurtgen and surrounding area and the efficient manner in which it was conducted has earned warm praise from the Army, Corps, and Division Commanders who have asked that their appreciation for a hard task will done be communicated to each member of the Regiment and attached units.

I am well aware of the hardships and the conditions under which this fighting was conducted. The combination of a determined enemy and such obstacles as foul weather, rain, snow, and sleet, difficult wooded terrain, and ever present mud were overcome by your sheer courage and your will to conquer the enemy even though he was bringing to bear all possible resistance in a desperate effort to hold his positions. In spite of these seemingly unsurmountable obstacles in each instance you have succeeded in defeating him and capturing your objective.

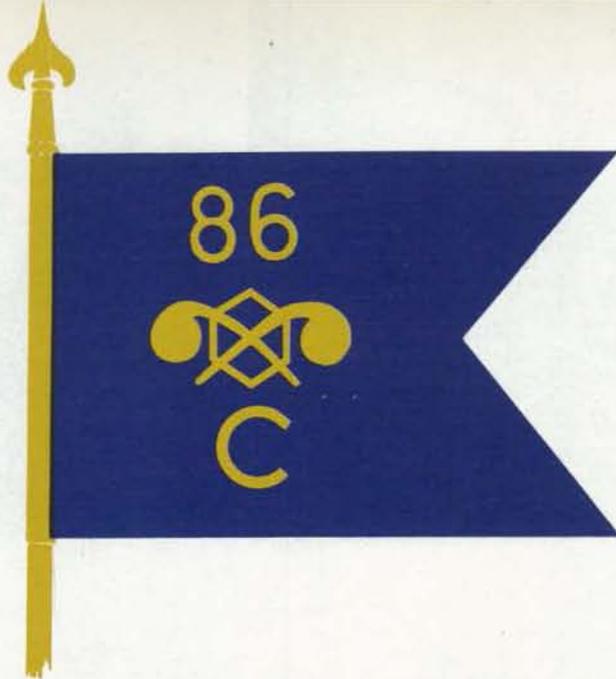
Each member of the Regiment and attached units has just cause to be proud of what they have accomplished. The knowledge that you materially contributed to the ultimate defeat of the enemy will cause your relatives and friends at home to share with you the pride of accomplishment in the success of this operation.

I am proud to command such a splendid fighting Regiment.

/s/ T. J. CROSS  
/s/ T. J. CROSS  
Colonel, Infantry,  
Commanding.

A CERTIFIED TRUE COPY:

JUDSON K. WHARTON  
2nd Lt., CWS  
Adjutant.



## HISTORY OF COMPANY "C"

C Company landed on Utah Beach on the shores of France at about 2300 hours, 29 June, 1944. It was a hectic, confused, chaotic situation that might have reminded the layman of Babylon, Babel and Dante's Inferno on a single stage. The beach buzzed, roared, and swarmed with activity. Tanks, half-tracks, and armored cars churned huge ruts in the sands. Jeeps followed the ruts until they could take off on other tangents. Amphibious vehicles, "ducks", waddled through the water, waddled on to land, laid their eggs of war cargo and waddled back into the water again.

Our jeeps followed Military Police directions, road signs, and blind instinct to a rendezvous point. Some jeeps didn't quite make it on time, so we sat and waited. Dawn brought them in, tired, and a little jumpy. They received a baptism of fire on the

beach from enemy planes which flitted about in the glare of anti-aircraft searchlights until their wings were singed and they fluttered earthward.

On July 3rd, after bivouacking near St. Jaque De Nehou, we fired our first combat mission. At the time we were attached in general support to the 314th Infantry Regiment of the 79th Division. The objective was Hill 121, a huge bald slope with the enemy well entrenched. The 314th hammered away at it and we helped. The platoons were split, and the First Platoon moved out to encircle the hill and support the initial attack. Our first missions were very successful and seem to have started a habit and pattern that was followed closely during the next 314 days in combat.

That night we held a sector of the line as front line troops and experienced the qualms of the in-





experienced soldier with all the attendant visions of enemy patrols and snipers. Omnipresent danger was supplied by trigger-happy, nervous boys who saw an enemy spy in every fluttering leaf.

On 6 July the company settled down to real work by firing five different smoke screens on and around the town of La Haye du Puits. Excellent results . . . the town fell . . . figuratively and literally.

On 7 July, C Company learned about War the hard way and paid the price exacted of all warriors. It was in La Gossiliniere. The Second Platoon had moved forward to an orchard near Montgarden to fire a special screening mission. The First Platoon fired from its position near La Gossiliniere. The Second Platoon had just finished its mission when a number of German 88s, the most vicious gun Jerry had, opened up on them from a perfect vantage point. The enemy observation was unimpaired by any terrain feature and the orchard soon became a death trap sprung to the tune of hot, singing, steel. And to add to the danger of casualties, the First Platoon moved into the same orchard. We dug frantically, burrowed into the giant hedgerows that were at times a protection and at others a danger, listened helplessly to the cries for "Medic" and waited for the fire to lift. When it did lift, we changed position and counted noses. There were a few missing and the effect of that news was sobering. Some of us lost our enthusiasm for war. Others felt a little more like veterans but all of us knew we had stopped playing for marbles.

The next few days were spent in intermittent firing. We had almost settled down to accept the static condition when we found an opportunity to reply in kind for that bad day. On July 14 we returned the compliment to Jerry by killing 80 and effecting the capture of 40 gray-green boys when we fired into an orchard near Le Russeau.

The next period of note we spent in a constant moving and firing routine that threatened to become monotonous. We moved through many towns but that is not indicative of distance in France. French towns earn that name if they have a chapel, a crossroad, and a couple of houses. Sometimes a wayside shrine substitutes for the chapel and a dilapidated barn may replace the houses. But they are towns nonetheless and named, mapped, and chartered.

Very soon the light jabbing and hooking changed to our first real knockout blow. The BREAK-THROUGH!!! We went through and kept going. The Boche was rocking on the ropes and we weren't giving him time to recover. The speed of advance did little to deter us from exercising the age old prerogative of the soldier; exploration of conquered territory, nor did it interfere with the boys' innate tendencies to indulge in the little pleasures the countryside afforded. We discovered the liquid



lightning known as CALVADOS; a powerful French Home-brew that we suspected Hitler of using later on to power his "buzz-bombs." Some of the fellows, remembering their first drinks, still believe the Atom Bomb is an inferior imitation of the energy sealed in a litre of Calvados. Some others enjoyed it after developing leather throats and asbestos stomachs. The addicts, no names here please, could find the stuff no matter how well the thrifty peasants hid it.

At Dol de Bretagne, 4 August, the townspeople welcomed us with all the laughter and gaiety of which the French are capable masters. There was an air of festivity in the town and a constant drone of broken French and busted English trying to strike a happy medium. But languages never presented too great a difficulty. If we wished, we could get along very well with a few phrases and plenty of pantomime.

On 9 August we moved into the Dinan sector. The former resort and bathing place was practically untouched by the war and it, too, was in a state of fiesta. The huge, picturesque, stone causeways which connected the hills surrounding the town afforded an excellent view that we spent lots of time admiring.

On 13 August, the First Platoon was committed again and we moved forward to a new position. Here again occurred one of the inexplicable tricks of war. In moving the twelve platoon vehicles, we passed over a large mine at a crossroad and not one vehicle caused the mine to detonate. At another time a sneeze might have been sufficient.

On 17 August the company was attached to the 329th Infantry Regiment of the 83rd Division and committed to support the attack on the Citadel at St. Malo. The Citadel, an almost impregnable fortress of modern design, presented an unusual and difficult firing problem. The enemy was firmly esconced in underground tunnels behind the thick, stone walls. Some tunnels were sixty feet deep with facilities for withstanding a long siege. The "Mad Colonel" von Aulock, commander of the German garrison had been ordered by his boss, "Der Fuehrer", to hold out. And the colonel was obeying orders. It might have been a long tedious job had not someone discovered a way to smoke the rats out of their holes and into the open. The ventilating shafts that supplied fresh air to the garrison below were the key to the problem. So we started a continuous fire of one round per minute for twenty-four hours, landing each round just in front of the air ducts. Whenever the big fans sucked air into the tunnels they also sucked White Phosphorus fumes down. We imagine it got mighty uncomfortable down there. Von Aulock later complained that the use of White Phosphorus was inhumane. A clear case of the kettle calling the pot black. The Citadel surrendered and another strongpoint was marked off Hitler's inventory of the "thousand year Reich."

Then came our next big job, the Battle for Brest. Brest was the walled city and port that harbored Hitler's submarine fleet. We traveled 125 miles onto the Brittany Peninsula while other forces took off eastward on the drive to Paris. We were attached to the 2nd Infantry Division, an outfit with which we were to do a lot of work later on in the cam-





paigns. Here we encountered another Hitler ultimatum. He said "Hold the city!" We argued the matter and won. It was at Brest that we perfected the split company technique. The First Platoon supported the 9th Infantry Regiment and the Second Platoon did the same for the 23rd. It meant spreading ourselves a bit thin but we compensated for the spread by working harder and faster. It was at Brest that the Company fired the most rounds for any single mission. It was also at Brest that an objective was taken largely because of the intense artillery and mortar fire laid down.

At Brest we found respite from the monotony of GI food by dressing up the Ten-In-One Ration so that even the creator of the packaged nourishment would have failed to recognize his brainchild. There was an unlimited supply of fried potatoes coming from a frying pan manhandled by one of the boys who earned the nickname of "Potato Joe" for his efforts, and incidentally, earned the undying gratitude of every fried potato fiend in the outfit.

As the action at Brest continued the boys grew restless. The following incident indicates that restiveness and also the fact that we were really hardened veterans and maybe a little careless. In one position we were set up in a large grassy field about the size of a football gridiron. It was inevitable that we would soon yield to the temptation. We did. The Captain walked onto the field one day and discovered two complete teams in formation on the field. The signals were punctuated by gunfire and when one came close, everybody hit the dirt and the play was called off. The Captain rubbed his eyes, tried to decide whether he was in command of a bunch of screwballs or whether to get on the wagon. He did neither but broke the game off short and sent us back to our holes a little chagrined but a little happier.

As did all other points, Brest fell with a crash of mortar, masonry and dress swords. The commander escaped to the Crozon Peninsula but was picked up soon afterward. The job was cleaned up and we were ready for new fields to conquer.

On 25 September we were ordered to Neufchateau, so we shook ourselves down and took off. It was quite a trip. We saw France from the seat of a jeep (highly recommended for the full view) and vibrated our merry way past beves of gals at each crossroad. The French gave freely of their cider and cognac and we became very proficient at snagging a bottle while doing thirty miles an hour. Some of the near-sighted boys had difficulty distinguishing the curved bottle from the curved femmes and tried snagging them also. Of course we paid off in chocolate; cigarettes and gum; but our supply was exhausted before our thirst was quenched. Sort of





one-sided Lend-Lease, we thought. Some of the towns we were feted in on the trip were Morlaix, Lesneven, St. Brieuc, Rennes, Laval, and Orleans. Our destination was an assembly area in the Bois Anciotta. There we were told of our attachment to the 80th Division to support an attack on Mt. Toulon and Mt. St. Jean Delincourt. The towns of Sivry and Serrieres were included in the objective area. Here we fired what might be termed our most successful screening mission. Mt. Toulon was a large, cone-shaped peak commanding all the territory around it. It presented a difficult task. The 80th decided to attack it with a frontal assault and a flanking movement right and left. The left movement was to pass through Serrieres and the right through Sivry. The frontal assault, like all such maneuvers, demanded the most screening. The attack was set for 0600 and our orders were that the top and most of the slope fronting us was to be obscured. At best it was a difficult job. The top was a mile from the base. The valleys were filled with tricky air-currents that could not be predetermined. We started firing on schedule and a perfect ring of smoke mushroomed round the summit. We dropped the range a bit, traversed the mortars, and soon a curtain of smoke lay like a barrier between the enemy and our advancing infantry. The wind, fickle most of the time, helped us by staying away; and soon the valley looked like it had experienced a very heavy snow-fall. The smoke shifted gently back and forth. From under it came the sound of battle. It was strange to hear all the familiar noises and see nothing. At 0651, just twenty minutes after we had started to fire, word came that we had won the objective. The word came from the TOP of Mt. Toulon! Twenty one minutes to wipe a mountain out of the way!!

One week later C Company probably became the only 4.2 unit to be officially credited with the destruction of a plane in combat. The circumstances were extraordinary; they would have to be. The plane, one of our own Cub Grasshoppers, made a forced landing behind the enemy lines. It sustained no damage and it looked for awhile that the Boche had captured an unusual prize. That is, it looked that way until C Company received orders to destroy the plane with mortar fire and keep it from being used against us. So we did. After a few rounds were fired the plane was tailless, propellor-

less, wingless and therefore worthless.

#### LUXEMBOURG BELGIUM GERMANY

The campaigns of Luxembourg, Belgium and Germany proved to be a far more severe test of our ability, efficiency and combat effectiveness. Not that previous campaigns had been fun but now we encountered the worst enemy of the foot soldier . . . weather. Weather that refused rest, ruined sleep, and made working an ordeal. No war is easy; no war is a lark; but war against both men and weather becomes a hellish torment that exacts a double toll and demands greater stamina, endurance, and patience. It was through this type of weather that C company proved its soldiering strength, took its greatest toll of the enemy, and made its greatest contribution toward the winning of the war in Europe.

Our first firing position in really inclement weather was near Germeter, Germany. We were under division control of the 28th; the Division that was to write its name in blood on the snow covered floor of the Hurtgen Forest. Veterans of both wars agree that Hurtgen ranks number one in ferocity, treachery, and casualties among the great battles of history. The Forest is an impenetrable stand of tall pines growing so close together that their interlocking branches form a solid roof through which the sun, moon and stars can barely filter. In winter this roof catches and holds most of the snow. When the temperature rises it falls as icy slush. The floor of the forest becomes a muddy morass which hides paths, roots, vines and stumps; a condition not conducive to swift and comfortable travel. A full company of men could hide between trees within a 50 yard area and often did. The enemy knew the Forest like a well-read book. They shelled our areas continuously with all the artillery they could muster. The shells were doubly dangerous because of treebursts which filled the air with shrapnel, flying splinters, and falling trees. The Hurtgen Forest lay at the entrance to the key territory around the important Schwammanuel Dam system and the Boche was just as determined to hold it as we were to take it. It meant hard, bitter fighting where inches were as important as miles had once been.

On 1 November, C Company screened the town



of Schmidt. That town was to become a symbol. It changed hands almost daily and we fired on it, at it, and around it a number of times before it fell and stayed fallen.

10 November ushered in another dark period of intense enemy fire and heavy resistance. In one area we counted more than 500 large caliber artillery shells landing near us during a three day period. The men were never closer to each other as is illustrated by the incident of the crowded fox-hole. One day, while we were firing a mission, Heinie opened up with all he had. We made for our holes and discovered that in one hole, built originally for four men, we had managed to accommodate over a dozen.

And then came the BULGE. That particular period in the history of war will probably be the most talked of campaign of all time. For velocity, ferocity, and horror there is probably no equal. Most of our memories are a little hazy on exactly what happened, so we quote from a report submitted immediately after we returned from the trap near Rocherath, Belgium.

This report was submitted to Battalion Headquarters after C Company had returned from assisting the 2nd Division in holding the "hot Corner" of the Bulge. During that period the company was completely cut off from other units and the daily report was submitted after we safely returned to Dolhain, Belgium. Here is the report:

#### COMPANY C AMMUNITION REPORT FOR PERIOD 12-14 TO 12-19 INCLUSIVE

"The real report of the past four days firing cannot be given in just a series of figures and map coordinates; nor can it be told in the language usually reserved for such records.

"Since entering this theatre of action, Company C has never been a part of nor has it experienced such a critical situation as arose during those hectic days. Never has the morale, efficiency, resourcefulness and discipline of the company been put to such a grueling test. And never have these qualities

come through with such flying colors as they did through this ordeal.

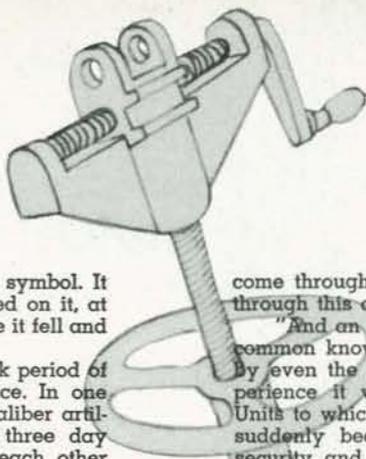
"And an ordeal it was. The situation, as is now common knowledge, was definitely termed critical by even the most optimistic observers. In our experience it was unparalleled and unanticipated. Units to which C Company had been subordinated suddenly become dependent on C Company for security and fire. The danger in which all units found themselves could be minimized greatly by C Company's action if the proper action was taken at the proper time.

"And the proper action was taken; taken to the extent that it was responsible for evacuating complete units; halting enemy advances; protecting our troop movements; replacing heavier artillery; supplying the only fire in many concentrations; accounting for heavy casualties among enemy personnel and material; maintaining communication for and with isolated units and general support of the whole sector. C Company mortarmen exposed themselves to capture or death to lay a curtain of fire so that other units might be withdrawn. This fire, as noted later, was responsible for holding up the enemy advance until other units could move to safer positions.

"There can be no question as to the voluntary character of this work. It was the initiative of both officers and men, the morale and discipline and the enthusiastic will to win that was responsible for the maintenance of ammunition supply, food, water and generally unexcelled accuracy in firing."

The report continues to tell of the details involved in each mission. It is sufficient to state that C Company came out of the Bulge with all men safe and sound.

On the 24th of December, C Company initiated a new phase for mortar men; supporting two Divisions from the same position at the same time. It was at Berg, the site of a large dam, and the divisions supported were the First and Second Infantry.



The day after moving into Berg we had a typical Army and therefore a typical American Christmas dinner with turkey and all the trimmings. It is not peculiar, nor strange, that the same adaptability the American soldier had to strange conditions and places also served him well when it came to celebrating American holidays no matter where he was or what he was doing. Soon after Christmas, as follows everywhere, came New Years Eve. And we celebrated at midnight in the time honored custom of making a lot of noise. Of course, we combined pleasure and business by shooting off our guns in the general direction of the enemy.

Soon after we left Berg, we discovered what had been missing by digging holes when the action slowed. Quite by accident we found that German homes afforded warmer, more comfortable, if not the greatest, degree of safety when we needed shelter. From then on our address could have been found in the village directory. In one of these houses the Company became God-Father to a new babe almost born in a cellar of the Command Post. Fortunately, the prospective mother was evacuated before it became necessary to turn her over to the gentle ministrations of soldiers. It is still a question as to how she would have survived under those circumstances because we did have many experienced fathers, all of whom wanted to help.

On 28 December, C Company made a triumphal entry into the town of Rocherath, the latest position held during the Bulge. No fanfare of bugles greeted us; just the ruin, stink, and debris of war lay in mute evidence to the bloody battle fought there.

February 5th, in our record, is the next notable day. It was then that the Second Platoon moved into the town of Ruhrberg in support of the 78th Division. The town lay on a tip of land jutting out into a large lake. The lake was surrounded by high hills upon which Jerry had a forbidding array of artillery pieces. We felt very much like Goldfish with no privacy and lots of exposure until we started firing. The squad leaders were, for the first time, able to adjust their own fire. The range was only 700 yards and the targets could be seen clearly from the guns.

On February 8th we again fired on the town of Schmidt and this time made it stick. Schmidt ceased to exist as an inhabitable place and we believe the Heinies would do better to move the site of the town and start building instead of trying to salvage anything in the original place.

Things started to ease up a little in March with improved weather and a faster running enemy. We hit the West Bank of the Rhine River. There, attached to the 2nd Division again, we were with old friends in the right neighborhood. We had an Observation Post that was the last word in luxury. It was located in the penthouse of the Rhine Hotel in Brohl. Our instruments rested on mahogany tables. We sat on overstuffed furniture. The room was policed regularly by the hotel employees. A far cry from fox-hole and mud. It was here that the Company Rear discovered a new design for living in combat. They

set up in the Sprudel Works where one of Germany's nationally known soft drinks is manufactured. Of course, GI ingenuity found ways to improve and strengthen the drink. In addition, they acquired a stable of riding horses, a German staff car and assorted motorcycles. Ten men in the car, three men on a horse, and two men on a motorcycle were common sights.

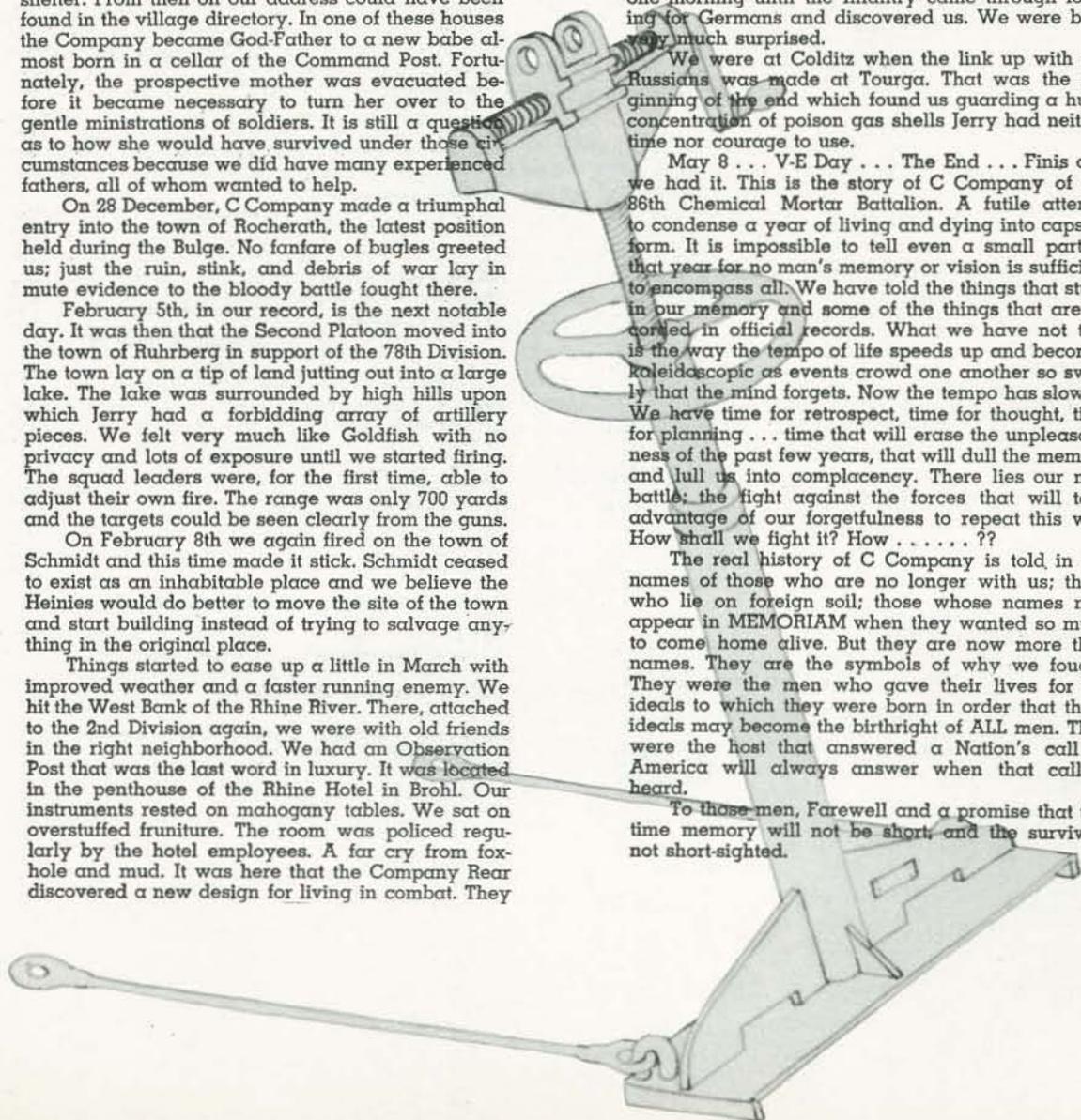
Early in March we crossed the Rhine over the now-famous Victory Bridge, and started on our tour of the Auto Bahns Hitler had built to facilitate the movement of his own war machine. Now the project turned upon him like a Frankenstein monster and those same roads were writing the doom of Germany. We fired a little after crossing the Rhine; but our last important mission was capturing the huge synthetic rubber factory at Leuna. We had no idea we had captured it when we moved in before dawn one morning until the Infantry came through looking for Germans and discovered us. We were both very much surprised.

We were at Colditz when the link up with the Russians was made at Tourga. That was the beginning of the end which found us guarding a huge concentration of poison gas shells Jerry had neither time nor courage to use.

May 8 . . . V-E Day . . . The End . . . Finis and we had it. This is the story of C Company of the 86th Chemical Mortar Battalion. A futile attempt to condense a year of living and dying into capsule form. It is impossible to tell even a small part of that year for no man's memory or vision is sufficient to encompass all. We have told the things that stuck in our memory and some of the things that are recorded in official records. What we have not told is the way the tempo of life speeds up and becomes kaleidoscopic as events crowd one another so swiftly that the mind forgets. Now the tempo has slowed. We have time for retrospect, time for thought, time for planning . . . time that will erase the unpleasantness of the past few years, that will dull the memory and lull us into complacency. There lies our next battle; the fight against the forces that will take advantage of our forgetfulness to repeat this war. How shall we fight it? How . . . . . ??

The real history of C Company is told in the names of those who are no longer with us; those who lie on foreign soil; those whose names now appear in MEMORIAM when they wanted so much to come home alive. But they are now more than names. They are the symbols of why we fought. They were the men who gave their lives for the ideals to which they were born in order that those ideals may become the birthright of ALL men. They were the host that answered a Nation's call as America will always answer when that call is heard.

To those men, Farewell and a promise that this time memory will not be short, and the survivors not short-sighted.





# KILLED IN ACTION

## C Company

- T/5 ARMON E. DUVAL**—7th of July, 1944, in Normandy, France. Interred Cambridge American Military Cemetery, England. Wife: Mrs. Beatrice A. Duval, 92 Gate Street, Worcester, Massachusetts.
- PFC. JOHN W. HUGHES**—7th of July, 1944, in Normandy, France. Interred in England. Mother: Mrs. Lillian Menig, 4728 North Mascher Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- PFC. EDWARD L. McKAHAN**—7th of July, 1944, in Normandy, France. Interred Blosville Cemetery, France. Mother: Mrs. Bess McKahan, 423 Burton Ave., Washington, Pennsylvania.
- CPL. CHESTER F. TENHAGEN**—9th of July, 1944, in Normandy, France. Interred in Normandy, France. Mother: Mrs. Arletta Tenhagen, 27 Lurthen Street, Newberg, New York.
- PFC. WALTER J. HENNING**—12th of January, 1945, at Berg, Germany. Interred Henri Chapelle Cemetery No. 1, Belgium. Wife: Mrs. Norma Henning, James Street, Montrose, New York.
- CPL. RALPH SPAGGIO**—7th of February, 1945, in Germany. Interred United States Military Cemetery, Margraten, Holland. Mother: Mrs. Nellie Spaggio, 32 South 12th Street, Easton, Pennsylvania.

# "C" COMPANY

Name	Rank	Assignment
Ardoin, Gordon	Pvt., Pfc.	C Co.
Bartelet, Kenneth D.	Pvt., Pfc.	C Co.
Banta, Homer L.	Sgt.	C Co.
Bozych, Eugene E.	Cpl.	C Co.
Boetcher, Joseph W.	T/5	C Co.
Bohus, John E.	Pvt., Pfc.	C Co.
Brown, Fred C., Jr.	Cpl.	Hq. Co.
Burger, Leo F.	Pvt., Pfc.	C Co.
Buck, Wilbur E.	Cpl.	C Co.
Calcagne, Thomas J.	Sgt., S/Sgt.	C Co.
Carpenter, Lyle J.	Cpl.	C Co.
Chesney, Alfred W.	Pfc., T/5	C Co.
Chertkev, Morris	Cpl., 2nd Lt.	Trid. CIC
Clark, Frank, Jr.	Pfc.	C Co.
Cook, James R.	Pfc.	C Co.
Corcoran, William P.	Pvt., Pfc.	C Co.
Cornell, Charles J.	T/4, S/Sgt.	C Co.
Creeley, Daniel P.	Pfc., T/5	C Co.
DeBruin, Carl P.	Cpl.	C Co.
DeRoche, Joseph T. L.	Sgt.	Trid. 1st Div.
Doss, Marion L.	Pfc., T/4	C Co.
Drezdewski, Brenislau	S/Sgt.	A Co.
Dunkleberger, Roy, Jr.	Pvt., T/5	C Co.
Duval, Armen E.	T/5	K.I.A.
Feldman, Jack	Cpl., S/Sgt.	
Ferguson, James L.	T/5, T/4	C Co.
Figart, Paul W.	Pfc.	C Co.
Gavin, James L., Jr.	Pvt.	Hq. Co.
Goeffrey, Felton J.	Pfc.	C Co.
Gilcrease, Huey P.	Pvt., T/5	C Co.
Griffith, Rolland H.	Cpl., Sgt.	C Co.
Grearson, Filmore	Cpl.	Co Co.
Guzik, Stanley E.	Cpl., Sgt.	C Co.
Guillette, Leroy J.	Pvt.	Hq. Co.
Hale, George C.	Cpl., Sgt.	C Co.
Harbin, Clyde	Pvt.	Hosp.
Hill, Robert A.	S/Sgt.	C Co.
Heffman, Zev.	T/5	Hosp.
Hoewell, Murray B.	Pfc., T/5	C Co.
Hornsby, Charles D.	Pvt., Pfc.	
Hughes, John W.	Pfc.	K.I.A.
Huettmann, Elwood L.	Cpl.	Hosp.
Isakson, Richard H.	T/4	C Co.
Jenkins, James A.	Pvt., Pfc.	Hosp.
Jindra, Joseph	Pfc., Cpl.	C Co.
Johnson, C. A.	Sgt., 2nd Lt.	C Co.
Jones, Edd C.	Pvt.	Hq. Co.
Kane, Joseph A.	Sgt.	C Co.
Keller, Freeman A.	Pvt., Cpl.	C Co.
Kelly, Alpheus E., Jr.	Pfc., T/5	C Co.
Klingenmeyer, Walter C.	Pvt., Pfc.	Hosp.
Klansek, Robert W.	Pvt., Pfc.	C Co.
Kobylarek, Edward L.	Pvt., Cpl.	C Co.
Kopec, Michael, Jr.	Pvt.	Hosp.
Kostakos, James P.	Cpl.	Hosp.
Kruschinski, Raymond	Sgt.	C Co.
Lane, Edward J.	T/5, Cpl.	C Co.
Laurent, Lionel L.	Pfc., T/5	C Co.
La Rue, William T.	Pvt., Pfc.	C Co.
Landry, Elliott J.	Pvt., T/5	C Co.
LeBeouf, Leeward J.	Sgt.	C Co.
Lemoine, Marvin P.	Pvt., Cpl.	C Co.
Lewis, Ralph A.	Pvt.	Hosp.
Lindsey, Raymond C.	1/Sgt., 2nd Lt.	
Lindenberg, Paul, Jr.	Pfc., Cpl.	C Co.
Mannina, Jack	Pvt.	Hosp.
Marze, Charles L.	Pvt.	Hosp.
Makovich, Daniel E.	Pvt., Pfc.	Hosp.
McDaniel, Bernard E.	Cpl., Sgt.	C Co.
McClelland, Emerson	T/5	C Co.
McKahan, Edward L.	Pfc.	K.I.A.
McGahan, William J.	Pvt.	C Co.
Miller, James A.	Pfc., Sgt.	C Co.
Miller, David L.	S/Sgt., 1st Sgt.	C Co.
Mills, Jack	T/4	C Co.
Michael, James D.	Pfc., T/5	C Co.
Montoya, Lorenzo	Pvt., Cpl.	C Co.
Moskevitz, Jack	T/4	Hosp.
Muste, James F.	T/5	C Co.
Mueller, Anthony J.	Pvt., Cpl.	C Co.
Muzzie, John B.	T/5	C Co.
Myers, Paul V. B.	Sgt.	Hosp.
Nehmer, Harold F.	Cpl.	C Co.
Nevalessi, Merino P.	Pvt.	Hosp.
Peters, Stanley C.	T/4, S/Sgt.	C Co.
Pickett, Joseph R.	Pvt., Pfc.	C Co.
Peoppel, Richard A.	T/5	Hosp.
Powell, Walter E.	Sgt.	C Co.
Provost, Roy A.	Pfc.	Hosp.
Reeb, Raymond C.	Pfc.	C Co.
Richard, Joseph E.	Pvt., Pfc.	C Co.
Roberts, Elmer L.	Sgt.	Hq. Co.
Robinson, Almaroon	Pvt., Pfc., Cpl.	C Co.

# "C" COMPANY

## Awards

Purple Heart and Cluster

Silver Star, Purple Heart

Bronze Star  
Purple Heart

Bronze Star

Purple Heart and Cluster

Purple Heart  
Purple Heart

Purple Heart  
Bronze Star  
Purple Heart and Cluster  
Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Bronze Star  
Purple Heart  
Purple Heart  
Purple Heart

Purple Heart  
Purple Heart

Purple Heart  
Silver Star and Bronze Star  
Purple Heart and Cluster  
Purple Heart

Bronze Star  
Purple Heart and 2 Clusters  
Bronze Star and Purple Heart

Silver Star, Purple Heart  
Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Purple Heart  
Purple Heart  
Purple Heart

Purple Heart  
Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Bronze Star  
Purple Heart  
Bronze Star

Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Purple Heart

## Residence

Mamou, Louisiana  
Auburn, Pennsylvania  
Sidney, Ohio  
Lemont, Illinois  
Racine, Wisconsin  
Cannonsburg, Pennsylvania  
Chicago, Illinois  
Colina, Ohio  
Appleton, Wisconsin  
Brooklyn, New York  
Belvidere, Illinois  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
Seattle, Washington  
Canton, Ohio  
Florian, Louisiana  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Belle Vernon, Pennsylvania  
Chicago, Illinois  
Kaukauna, Wisconsin  
Pawtucket, Rhode Island  
Bastrop, Texas  
Bridgeport, Connecticut  
Chicago, Illinois  
Worcester, Massachusetts

Marysville, California  
College Park, Georgia  
Altoona, Pennsylvania  
Brooklyn Heights, Maryland  
New Iberia, Louisiana  
Slagle, Louisiana  
Cannonsburg, Pennsylvania  
Appleton, Wisconsin  
Chicago, Illinois  
Franklin, Louisiana  
Freemont, Virginia  
Gates City, Virginia  
Yazoo City, Mississippi  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Clarks, Louisiana  
Branch, Louisiana  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
Chicago, Illinois  
Cheneyville, Louisiana  
Lawrence, Pennsylvania

Corpus Christi, Texas  
Grayden, West Virginia  
Jersey City, New Jersey  
Nashville, Illinois

Chillicothe, Texas  
Racine, Wisconsin  
Akron, Ohio  
South Bend, Indiana  
Trenton, New Jersey  
Chicago, Illinois  
Detroit, Michigan  
Chicago, Illinois  
LaPlace, Louisiana  
Richmond, Virginia  
Labadieville, Louisiana  
Montegut, Louisiana  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
Winchester, Indiana  
Austin, Texas  
Conemaugh, Pennsylvania  
Chicago, Illinois  
Anacoco, Louisiana  
West Newton, Pennsylvania  
Slidell, Louisiana  
Swissvale, Pennsylvania  
Washington, Pennsylvania  
Washington, Pennsylvania  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
Baring, Missouri  
Vernon, Texas  
Flatonia, Texas  
Albuquerque, New Mexico  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Pittston, Pennsylvania  
Chicago, Illinois  
Pueblo, Colorado  
Schenectady, New York  
Gladstone, Michigan  
Ellwood City, Pennsylvania  
Norton, Virginia  
Jersey City, New Jersey  
Chicago, Illinois  
Hillpoint, Wisconsin  
Dexter, Maine  
Belleville, Illinois  
Church Point, Louisiana  
Henager, Alabama  
Tense, Virginia

# "C" COMPANY

Rote, John R.	Pfc.	C Co.
Root, James R.	T/5, T/4	C Co.
Savoie, Amedie J., Jr.	Pvt.	Hosp.
Sabins, Richard M.	Pvt., Cpl.	C Co.
Serpas, Joseph L.	Pfc.	C Co.
Sebastian, Wendell L.	Sgt., S/Sgt.	C Co.
Seamster, Clarence D.	Sgt.	C Co.
Seese, Glenn E.	Pvt.	Hosp.
Spenner, Richard A.	T/5	C Co.
Spaggie, Ralph	Pvt., Cpl.	K.I.A.
Squires, Delbert W.	Pvt.	Hq. Co.
Strong, Donald P.	T/4	C Co.
Stecker, Gerald H.	Sgt., S/Sgt.	C Co.
Tenhagen, Chester F.	Cpl.	K.I.A.
Toth, Frank G.	T/5	Hosp.
Tolmie, Mike	S/Sgt., 2nd Lt.	C Co.
Totos, William S.	Pvt., Pfc.	C Co.
Transue, James C., Jr.	Pvt., Pfc.	C Co.
Tyler, Paul N.	T/5, T/4	C Co.
Wade, Leroy T.	Cpl.	Hosp.
Wall, John C.	Cpl., Sgt., T/Sgt.	C Co., Hq. Co.
Wallace, Elmer C.	Pvt., Pfc.	C Co.
Webb, Frank	S/Sgt., 2nd Lt.	Hq. Co.
Westfall, James W., Jr.	Pvt.	Hosp.
White, Fields V.	Pvt., Pfc.	C Co.
White, George J., Jr.	Pvt., Cpl.	C Co.
Wickman, Harold E.	Sgt.	Trfd. 1st Div.
Williams, John R.	S/Sgt.	Trfd. 16th Armored
Wood, John T.	Pfc.	Hosp.
Woliver, Samuel L.	Pvt., Pfc.	C Co.
Wright, Harvey E.	Pfc., T/5	C Co.
Yagoda, Allan	Cpl.	C Co.
Young, Leonard T.	T/4, Sgt.	C Co.
Zance, Salvador J.	T/5	Hosp.
Zuidema, Marvin N.	Pfc., Cpl.	C Co.

## REINFORCEMENTS

Name	Rank
Newberry, Charles H.	Pvt.
Russo, Thomas	Pvt.
Stockov, Harry L.	Pvt.
White, Chester M.	Pvt.
Bindell, Russell H.	Pvt.
Donadi, Lewis N.	Pvt.
Kendra, Joseph J.	Pvt.
Knobbe, Harry A.	Pfc.
Groover, Carroll F.	Pvt.
Anapolis, Nickolas G.	Pvt.
Ayres, Clinton F.	Pvt.
Baird, Bertram O.	Pvt.
Barker, James E.	Pvt.
Boyer, Charles P.	Pvt.
Bylicki, Roman L.	Pvt.
Diehl, Thomas R.	Pvt.
Frances, Roy A.	Pvt.
Armstrong, Brownlee	Pvt.
Baird, Stephen J.	Pvt.
Bertarelli, John M.	Pvt.
Brown, Walter N.	Pvt.
Campbell, Paul	Pvt.
Dolbeare, Donald P.	Pvt.
Forbes, Glen W.	Pvt.
Fritz, Donald J.	Pvt.
Lara, Nieves H.	Pvt.
Martinez, Maximino	Pvt.
Tona, Alegando C.	Pvt.
Gonzales, Florian B.	T/5
Sentillanes, Jose A.	Pvt.
Tafolla, Robert C.	Pvt.
Maroles, Jerry D.	Pvt.
Adame, Jose E.	Pvt.
Campagna, Frank A.	Pvt.
Fontanarosa, Anthony E.	Pvt.
Westbrook, Joseph M.	Pvt.
Ramerez, Louis E.	Pvt.
Venable, Joseph O.	T/5
La Conti, Vito T.	Pfc.
Nascenzi, Romeo	Pfc.
Schreder, Louis R.	Cpl.
Pobutkiewicz, Martin	Pvt.
Tedford, Floyd L.	Pvt.
Terry, William E.	Pvt.
Scott, James W.	T/5
Garner, Charles L.	Pfc.
Beale, James W.	T/5
Bleiman, Julius L.	Pfc.
Berzellini, John J.	Pfc.
Bosford, Raymond G.	Pfc.
Dean, Thomas W.	Pvt.
Johnson, Brooks	Pvt.
Lechner, Alanzo L.	Pfc.
Napert, Arthur R.	Pvt.
Barela, Jose M.	Pfc.
Martinez, Doming	Pfc.

# "C" COMPANY

Silver Star, Purple Heart  
Bronze Star  
Purple Heart  
Purple Heart  
Purple Heart  
Silver Star, Purple Heart  
Purple Heart

Bronze Star, Purple Heart  
Bronze Star, Purple Heart  
Purple Heart  
Purple Heart  
Purple Heart

Purple Heart  
Purple Heart  
Bronze Star  
Purple Heart  
Bronze Star

Silver Star, Purple Heart  
Silver Star, Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Bronze Star  
Bronze Star, Purple Heart  
Bronze Star

Purple Heart

## Awards

Purple Heart, Bronze Star

Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Bronze Star, Purple Heart

Bronze Star

Silver Star  
Purple Heart and Cluster  
Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Purple Heart  
Purple Heart

Cortland, New York  
Randolph, Nebraska  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
Albion, Michigan  
Lennig, Virginia  
Canton, Ohio  
Chicago, Illinois  
Easton, Pennsylvania  
Clarksburg, West Virginia  
Fairmount, Illinois  
Neeah, Wisconsin  
Newberg, New York  
Parma, Ohio  
Deer River, Minnesota  
Fond du Lac, Wisconsin  
Alliance, Ohio  
East Moline, Illinois  
Baltimore, Maryland  
Chicago, Illinois  
Leander, Louisiana  
Los Angeles, California  
Florien, Louisiana  
Alexander, Louisiana  
Washington, Pennsylvania  
Gardner, Massachusetts  
Stafford Springs, Connecticut  
Alexandria, Louisiana  
Jonesville, Virginia  
Wichita, Kansas  
Chicago, Illinois  
Chicago, Illinois  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
Marrisen, Illinois

## Residence

Momence, Illinois  
Baltimore, Maryland  
Canton, Illinois  
Superior, West Virginia  
Racine, Wisconsin  
Janesville, Pennsylvania  
Beaver Meadows, Pennsylvania  
St. Louis, Missouri  
Atlanta, Georgia  
Chicago, Illinois  
Medford, Oregon  
Sparta, Illinois  
Gainesville, Georgia  
Ithaca, New York  
Detroit, Michigan  
Cheektowaga, New York  
Chicago, Illinois  
Rawlings, Maryland  
Detroit, Michigan  
Brockton, Massachusetts  
Wyoming, New York  
Everett, Massachusetts  
Pittsfield, Illinois  
Chambersburg, Pennsylvania  
Chicago, Illinois  
La Union, New Mexico  
Redlands, California  
Sahuarito, Arizona  
Lemiter, New Mexico  
Albuquerque, New Mexico  
Anaheim, California  
Corpus Christi, Texas  
El Paso, Texas  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Ashley, Pennsylvania  
New York, New York

Church Point, Louisiana  
New York, New York  
Cranston, Rhode Island  
Utica, New York  
Trenton, New Jersey  
Nashville, Arkansas  
Big Clefity, Kentucky  
Hammond, Indiana  
Burr Oak, Indiana  
Mill Creek, Pennsylvania  
New York, New York  
Dexter, Pennsylvania  
Port Chester, New York  
Millport, Alabama

Ludell, Kansas  
Berlin, New Hampshire  
Fabens, Texas  
Fabens, Texas

# Letter Of Commendation

HEADQUARTERS 121ST INFANTRY  
Office of the Regimental Commander  
APO #8, United States Army

5 December 1944.

## MEMORANDUM:

I desire to extend to each member of the 121st Infantry and the First Battalion 13th Infantry, Companies B and C 86th Chemical Battalion, 12th Engineer Combat Battalion, 709 Tank Battalion, 644 TD Battalion and 56th Field Artillery Battalion, my congratulations and sincere thanks for the successful conclusion of the battle of Hurtgen Forest, and capture of the key town of Hurtgen which will be recorded in history as one of the hardest and most bitter battles in this war.

The operation of this Corps depended on the capture of the key towns of Hurtgen and Kleinhan which provided avenues for further advances to the east and eventually to the Rhine. The success of the attack on Hurtgen and surrounding area and the efficient manner in which it was conducted has earned warm praise from the Army, Corps, and Division Commanders who have asked that their appreciation for a hard task well done be communicated to each member of the Regiment and attached units.

I am well aware of the hardships and the conditions under which this fighting was conducted. The combination of a determined enemy and such obstacles as foul weather, rain, snow, and sleet, difficult wooded terrain, and ever present mud were overcome by your sheer courage and your will to conquer the enemy even though he was bringing to bear all possible resistance in a desperate effort to hold his positions. In spite of these seemingly unsurmountable obstacles in each instance you have succeeded in defeating him and capturing your objective.

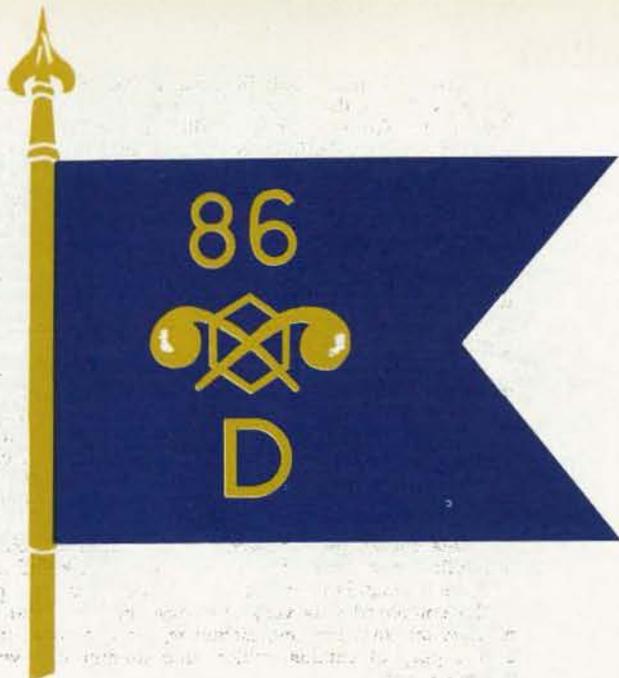
Each member of the Regiment and attached units has just cause to be proud of what they have accomplished. The knowledge that you materially contributed to the ultimate defeat of the enemy will cause your relatives and friends at home to share with you the pride of accomplishment in the success of this operation.

I am proud to command such a splendid fighting Regiment.

/s/ T. J. CROSS  
/s/ T. J. CROSS  
Colonel, Infantry,  
Commanding.

A CERTIFIED TRUE COPY:

JUDSON K. WHARTON  
2nd Lt., GWS  
Adjutant.



One quiet evening some three weeks after D-day D Company found itself in action in Normandy. Rain fell intermittently in the shrub-covered defile, and the men tried to make their slit trenches as dry and comfortable as possible, wondering what war would be like.

Friendly paratroopers of the crack 82nd Airborne visited, gave advice and told some of their stories, and left as darkness fell. Gone were the garrison days of Camp Swift, the rush through Camp Shanks, the ocean crossing, and the comparatively comfortable and enjoyable stay at Port Sunlight. Even the Channel crossing seemed remote. No more training and practice—this was the real thing.

The morning of the third, the first mission came. A few shells were dropped down the barrels, and a fierce and accurate enemy barrage came crashing back. One direct hit ignited propelling charges in a flash of red flame. Three men were killed and six were wounded. A bad start, but the fire mission was completed. A new position was reconnoitered, and the company started to move, but by this time,

the attack had progressed so well that orders came to displace forward, and the heavy mortar carts were loaded and dragged through Varenquebec and along a road not yet cleared of mines to the new position on hill 131. The mortars were dug in, and work commenced on an alternate position, when word came to move again.

Another long haul was made, still without transportation, and more pits and slit trenches had to be dug. The unaccustomed strain and exertion were beginning to tell. The fourth of July was a good day. From fine positions back of hedgerows a large number of rounds was fired in support of an attack on hill 121. Nothing came back, and spirits began to rise, until evening when another move was ordered. The carts had to be dragged all the long miles back to where the jeeps had been left. Toward daybreak of the fifth the weary convoy pulled into the company rear area, where it was hoped there might be a day or two of rest; the company had been relieved from the 82nd.

A short hour or two after bedding down, tents were struck and the company moved out to support





the new and green 90th Division in the vicinity of St. Jores. Before getting properly dug in, the second platoon received a mission and commenced firing. Again, the Krauts answered with uncannily accurate fire, and the platoon was driven from the field, carrying with them one wounded man. Later in the day, a small detail returned to the position to retrieve the mortars.

St. Jores had been bitterly contested, changing hands several times. The night of the same day, the fifth, Co. D established a position in a small ravine in front of the town to help in its defense. The mortar positions were crowded, and the ground was swampy, but there was a measure of protection from enemy fire. Next day, the mortars were fired almost continuously. The men were utterly exhausted from hard work and tension; positions had to be redug constantly; and there was excessive breakage of parts; but somehow the guns were kept firing.

On the seventh, the company pulled back, then returned to the same place to help repel an enemy counter-attack. During the eighth also the Jerries exerted heavy pressure, and the gun crews were kept busy. On the ninth, the company was relieved from the 90th Division; but hopes of any rest were dispelled by immediate attachment to the 8th Division. During reconnaissance for a position, the second platoon lost its platoon leader (killed outright), platoon sergeant (fatally wounded), and a lineman (seriously wounded). Finally, gun positions were established.

This ended the first week of combat. The going had been very tough; one officer and three enlisted men had been killed in action, and eleven men had been wounded, one of whom died later. The physical state of the rest of the command was very low, due chiefly to the necessity for pulling the mortars on carts for long distances, many moves, much digging, little sleep. The supply of rations, water, and ammunition was just beginning to be smoothed out.

From 9 July to 26 July, Co. D participated in the slow, grueling, bitter hedgerow warfare. Things settled down to a routine. From the vicinity of La Haye du Puits through tiny battered stone villages to Battiere, the mortars were set up in the small Normandy fields and orchards behind hedgerows. Jeeps and trailers were used and the physical work reduced. Supply and liaison became efficient. Fresh reinforcements were received. Casualties were fewer, although on 16 July the platoon leader of the first platoon was missing in action while moving forward of the lines to observe.

Finally, after several postponements, came the breakthrough. Following a terrific aerial bombardment by heavy planes, the enemy lines disintegrated. Advances in the past had been a few thousand yards; now, they were long motor marches. Instead of passing a few dead cows, roads were littered with abandoned enemy equipment and vehicles. Contact was lost, and it became unnecessary to set up the guns or dig in. After rolling through Coutances, Granville, and Avranches, the company came to a halt outside Rennes, 6 August, to wait for a possible enemy attempt to break out of the Brittany peninsula.

On 15 August, a small enemy force trapped on Cap Fréhel surrendered quickly after chemical mortars and other arms fired short missions to display their strength.

On August 24 the company moved into position just north of Gouesnou, in preparation for the VIII Corps attack on Brest the next day. With Allied armor slashing eastwards through France, and after the easy victory at Cap Fréhel, it seemed certain that Brest would capitulate in a matter of days. No one was prepared for the stubborn, fierce resistance that prolonged the battle four long weeks. It was 3 September before the 8th Division had been able to advance far enough to permit Co. D to displace beyond Gouesnou. Finally, after several moves and heavy firing, the immense walls of the Fortress of Brest were within range, and a heavy smoke screen was laid down to cover infantrymen advancing toward them. It was decided, however, not to attempt to scale the walls at this time, and on the 14th the company moved down to the Crozon peninsula south of Brest as part of an 8th Division task force. After initially strong resistance, the peninsula was cleared.

The battle of Brest had been very difficult. However, in spite of active enemy artillery, Co. D had come through with comparatively few casualties. A total of over five thousand rounds of HE had been fired, and six thousand rounds of WP. On one day, 1700 rounds were fired, including 750 rounds by one platoon in 45 minutes. The targets were many and varied: troop concentrations, ammo dumps, enemy artillery, smoke screens, and the barracks at Pontamezen. A captured PW, himself seriously burned, testified to the effectiveness of 4.2 WP shells.

On 24 September the battalion started a five day motor march across France. Few will forget the enthusiastic crowds of French men, women, and children who lined the streets in every village, throwing flowers and vegetables, into the jeeps, shouting "Vive l'Amerique! Vive l'Amerique!" French and American flags were flying everywhere, and the people were in a holiday mood. For them, the war was practically over.

The men of the 86th, however, were soon to find that the war was far from over. Co. D was attached to Gen. Patton's famed 4th Armored Division, and on the last day of the month moved into position near Juvrecourt, to the east of Nancy. Conditions were far different from what the company was accustomed to; there were no fields with thick protecting hedgerows; this terrain was open and rolling. Furthermore, the situation was static, and the company's positions were in a small bulge in the lines, with Jerryland on three sides.

The attitude of the civilians was not clear; word came that some were

working back and forth through the lines. With the armored forces deployed around their vehicles rather than in the infantryman's more continuous front line, this seemed very possible. Whether or not spies were actually operating, it is certain that the mortar positions received some very heavy and accurate barrages. During one night-barrage a shell struck the roof of a barn where half the first platoon was sleeping, injuring one man seriously and seven men lightly.

However, the company gave better than it received: the towns of Bezanges-le-Petit, Moyenvic, and Xanray were hit heavily and fired with WP; an ammunition dump in Moyenvic was blown up, and an enemy column outside Xanray dispersed. On 12 October, shortly after the 4th Armored was relieved by the 26th Infantry Division, Co. A replaced Co. D, and D Co. returned to the rear area in Dombasle for its first official rest.

The name "Vossenack" will remind any Co. D man of the unit's roughest assignment. A small village in the Hurtgen Forest, Vossenack lay in the Siegfried Line on the approaches to the vital dams governing the level of the lower Roer River. Enemy resistance was fierce in the extreme. Lines of supply were long over difficult forest roads. The dense growth of pines seriously limited the choice of mortar positions, and the weather had turned cold and wet.

The first site selected, 30 October, was in a deep ravine which afforded excellent protection, but very poor ground for the mortars. This was some 800 yards west of Germeter. Guns and ammunition had to be carried by hand down a precipitous slope, and, for the first platoon, part way up the other side. Breakage of parts was excessive due to the wet and soggy ground; and one location would support the guns for only a very limited number of rounds, necessitating frequent redigging.

On 2 November, the 28th Division launched its attack on Schmidt. On 3 November, Co. D was to follow the 112th Regiment into Kommerscheidt and Schmidt; but the infantry was meeting savage resistance, and this was not possible. Attempting to enter Vossenack instead, the column came under strong sniper fire and was pinned down temporarily. Mortar fire held up part of the convoy for hours. Finally, both platoons moved into the ruined, smouldering village.

The attack was in a generally southerly direction, and both platoons selected positions in a small defile on the northern edge of Vossenack. Although there was little information of any sort, this appeared to be a good spot, and the vehicles were brought up and the men commenced to dig in.

There was a dense pine wood (presumably in friendly hands) to the rear and left of the first platoon's area, perhaps a hundred yards from number four gun. While the men were digging in, a burst of machine gun fire from this woods swept the area. Two men were hit; the rest dropped into the half finished holes. Germans were in the woods, to the rear and very close. The line of slit trenches was in plain view of the enemy, but it was impossible to find him in the woods—and mighty unhealthy even to look.

Meanwhile, the two injured men were in bad shape and could not get into their holes though lying beside them. Finally, one man darted from his hole to an American tank that was mired some distance away, told the occupants to give supporting fire, ran back to his jeep and took out and set up a machine gun. With the help of this heroic action, it was possible to evacuate the wounded by jeep. (It was learned later that neither man survived.)

Later another machine gun was set up, but the situation was not bettered. Jerry was invisible in the woods, and continued to send over small arms fire, and also was able to direct very accurate and very heavy mortar and artillery fire on the position. It was not until darkness fell that any movement was possible. Wire was then run to the company CP in the town, and the company commander held a meeting with the platoon leaders. The second platoon had also received intense mortar and artillery fire. It was decided to remain in position and set up the mortars on a defensive fire. This was done quietly in the dark.

All during the night, half the platoon remained awake and ready for an attack on the position. Next day, the fourth, the infantry was in dire straits and needed supporting fire badly. The first platoon, near the woods, was not able to fire, and the second platoon was undergoing such severe shelling that it could not fire either. For the first (and last) time, Co. D had to decline a mission, and Co. B substituted.

All during the fourth there was nothing to do but remain under cover in the holes. The friendly tank was salvaged, leaving no American forces in the area. It was hoped the woods would be cleared out, but word came that it was not intended to do so. One meal reached the position the previous evening; but during the fourth nothing could be brought up. The men were hungry, thirsty, cold and wet. Small arms fire continued from the woods at any sign of movement; several shots were directed at the radio antenna, but missed. The wire had been shelled out.

A small force of American tanks appeared during the day, and fired blindly into the woods; but the only observable effect was enemy shelling of the tanks, which were uncomfortably close to the mortar position. The tanks soon left. After dark, another meeting was held. Orders were to remain in Vossenack, and there were no other positions available in the vicinity, so that meant sweating it out. The evening of the fifth, after another day under heavy shelling and without food or water, the Company Commander decided to send the vehicles to the rear. Too many were being damaged by the shelling.





One by one the drivers moved their jeeps away as silently as possible. The night was cloudy and dark; no shots were fired. Then at last permission came to move the company. When the drivers returned, they were immediately set away again to bring the jeeps back. Quietly the men loaded their mortars and themselves, and moved out. The last jeep with two machine guns pulled away just as the moon came out. Again the luck held, and the Krauts did not fire.

Next morning the company set up in the original position west of Germeter. The attack had collapsed, Jerry had reoccupied Vossenack with men and tanks, and Co. D fired a mission into the same draw they had occupied the day before.

With food, sleep, and a new rotation plan the company soon regained its efficiency. It was now possible again to send out more shells than were received. Armistice Day and Thanksgiving were spent here. The familiar 8th Division replaced the 28th. Winter set in, with heavy snows. A deer was bagged in the area, and the company enjoyed several meals of venison. Over three thousand rounds were fired, helping the infantry to hammer out small gains.

The night of 30 November the company moved forward into Vossenack again. This time two or three houses were occupied, and the guns set up nearby. This position proved little better than the former one: Vossenack was visible to the Jerries in Kommerscheidt who soon located the mortars and sent back heavy barrages. On 3 December enemy fire ignited a building where 4.2 ammunition was stored, and the flames exploded 80 rounds of WP and 9 of HE. There being no practicable mortar position in or near Vossenack, the company again returned to the ravine in back of Germeter, where effective fire was delivered until the end of the attachment on 10 December.

On 13 December the company was in position north of Krinkelt, Belgium, ready to support the green 99th Division in its initial attack into Germany, in the Ardennes Forest. All went well, until the Germans launched their full-scale counter-attack on 16 December. The next day, after seeing other units falling back past the gun positions, orders came to destroy vehicles and mortars, and move back. However, an open route was reconnoitered, and all equipment was saved. The night was spent in front of Krinkelt, with heavy artillery fire landing in the vicinity and continuous small arms fire immediately ahead. Next day, after making several halts, a position was established in front of Elsenborn and a stand made. Several attacks were launched against this position, an especially heavy one with tanks coming the evening of 20 December. All were repulsed, with help from the 4.2s, and the position was

maintained through the winter until the German Bluge collapsed. The company rear was not so fortunate. Its position in Krinkelt was overrun by the German attack. The entire personnel was missing in action, with the exception of one mechanic. This man remained in a slit trench for thirty-six hours. He saw a German tank shell the house occupied by the others, and later heard German infantry attack it using hand grenades. When he finally escaped on foot, he saw several vehicles destroyed and the helmets of a number of the men lying on the ground. Months later, hope for these men was revived with word that several were prisoners of war. A happy sequel came towards the end of the war, in Naumberg, Germany. Two officers, walking by the admission tent of an American evacuation hospital, heard a familiar voice cry out. It was the former first sergeant. He had been released when Leipzig was captured. He was suffering from malnutrition, and had lost some 80 pounds and was very weak, but safe at last. He stated that probably the other thirteen men were also safe, as they had all been taken prisoners together.

On 28 January the company moved to the vicinity of Butgenbach, Belgium, in support of the 2nd Division, occupying a position at the edge of a snow-covered pine forest. The Bulge had by this time been wiped out, and an American attack was progressing smoothly. On 31 January, the company moved to Kinkelt; on 2 February, to Schonenseiffen, Germany; on 4 February, to the vicinity of Schleiden; and on 5 February, to a position north of Hellenthal, beyond which it was not desired to advance at this time.

On 16 February, the company joined the rest of the battalion at the rear area in Dolhain, Belgium. The battalion was to be reorganized under a new T.O. which called for three instead of four mortar companies. It fell to the lot of Co. D to be disbanded. The men were assembled for a final formation and addressed by the battalion commander, who commended them for the fine record they had established in over seven months of combat. Every member had a feeling of great pride in the company, and knew that it had played its part with courage, determination, and success.

The personnel of Co. D were transferred in grade to Hq. Co., Co. A, Co. B and Co. C, where they continued to serve with distinction in their new assignments throughout the following months of combat in the European theater of operation. These heroic members of Co. D, with their wealth of experience in battle strengthened their new units and continued to make the reputation of the 86th Chemical Mortar Battalion unexcelled in the history of warfare.

42 IN CMG  
33-38  
221  
M.P. - 42

# KILLED IN ACTION

## "Company D"

- SGT. OTTO TUCKER—3rd of July, 1944, at Pont L'Abbe, France. Interred Blosville Cemetery, France. Brother: Bee Tucker, General Delivery, Wilcox, Arizona.
- CPL. WILLIAM S. WATSON, JR.—3rd of July, 1944, at Pont L'Abbe, France. Interred Blosville Cemetery, France. Mother: Katherine P. Watson, 479 Pensdale Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- PVT. LOUIS H. SINS—3rd of July, 1944, at Pont L'Abbe, France. Interred Blosville Cemetery, France. Mother: Edna Sins, 3201 Toulouse, New Orleans, Louisiana.
- S/SGT. FRANCIS S. ZDRIKOWSKI—9th of July, 1944, at Blandemour, France. Interred Blosville Cemetery, France. Mother: Stella Zdikowski, 158 Homestead Avenue, Holyoke, Massachusetts.
- 1ST LT. LEO J. MANTLIOS—9th of July, 1944, at Blandemour, France. Interred Blosville Cemetery, France.
- PFC. WILLIAM HEFFNER—13th of July, 1944, at St. Symphorien le Valois, France. Interred Blosville Cemetery, France. Mother: Mildred E. Heffner, 5754 North Beechwood Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- 1ST LT. DUSTIN S. GLADE—19th of July, 1944, at Periers, France. Interred Marigny No. 1, Marigny, France. Wife: Elizabeth Glade, 648 West 42nd Street, Los Angeles, California.
- PFC. EDWARD P. FLOWERS—29th of July, 1944, at Servigny, France. Interred in France. Mother: Lena Flowers, Route 2, Standish, Michigan.
- S/SGT. JOHN LINWOOD—11th of August, 1944, at Rennes, France. Interred United States Military Cemetery, St. James, France. Mother: Mrs. Margaret Matthews, Route 1, Box 64, Winlock, Washington.
- SGT. SHERMAN C. SUTPHIN—3rd of November, 1944, at Richelskonl, Germany. Interred Henri Chapelle Cemetery No. 1, Belgium. Wife: Beatrice L. Sutphin, Box 273, Galax, Virginia.
- CPL. CECIL L. BOGAN—3rd of November, 1944, at Richelskonl, Germany. Interred Henri Chapelle Cemetery No. 1, Belgium. Wife: Edith J. Bogan, 2600 Vivian Street, Shreveport, Louisiana.
- PVT. PATRICK F. CASKEY—17th of December, 1944, at Elsenborn, Belgium. Interred Henri Chapelle Cemetery No. 1, Belgium. Mother: Sophia A. Bloam, RFD No. 1, St. Mary's, Pennsylvania.
- PVT. WILLIAM D. CARLSON—8th of February, 1945, at Hellenthal, Germany. Interred Henri Chapelle Cemetery No. 1, Belgium. Mother: Mirtis A. Carlson, 709 West 2nd Street, Rome, Georgia.

# "D" COMPANY

<i>Name</i>	<i>Rank</i>	<i>Assignment</i>
Adams, Charles B.	Pvt., T/5	MIA—Ramp
Allen, Thomas G.	S/Sgt.	MIA—Ramp
Antas, Walter F.	Pvt.	Trfd. to A Co.
Appleby, Harmon L.	Pvt., Cpl.	Trfd. to B Co.
Biasiello, James J.	Pfc., S/Sgt.	Trfd. to Hq. Co.
Bland, Harry C.	Pfc.	Trfd. to Hq. Co.
Bleckaz, Raymond R.	T/4	Trfd. to Hosp.
Bogan, Cecil L.	Pvt., Cpl.	DOW
Briggs, Henry D.	Pvt., Cpl.	Trfd. to B Co.
Brunson, Howard E.	Pvt.	Trfd. to A Co.
Burchett, James B.	Pvt.	Trfd. to B Co.
Bushmire, Harry A.	Pvt.	Trfd. to C Co.
Busse, Fred A.	Cpl.	Trfd. to Hosp.
Bussiere, John J.	T/5	Trfd. to A Co.
Butchko, Joseph T.	Cpl., Sgt.	Lost to Hosp.
Cashmore, Floyd J.	Pfc., Sgt.	Trfd. to Hq. Co.
Champagne, Sidney G., Jr.	Pfc.	Trfd. to A Co.
Chastian, Raymond A.	Sgt.	Trfd. to C Co.
Christensen, George	S/Sgt.	MIA—Ramp
Ciliberti, John A.	Pvt.	Trfd. to C Co.
Clary, Dallas W.	T/5, S/Sgt.	Trfd. to Hq. Co.
Conforto, Frank J.	Pvt.	Trfd. to B Co.
Coulter, Gerald L.	T/4	Trfd. to Hosp.
Cummings, Joseph J.	Pvt.	Trfd. to Hosp.
Cumpton, Charles F.	Cpl.	Trfd. to C Co.
Deubel, Russel C.	Pvt., S/Sgt.	Trfd. to Hq. Co.
DeVito, Vito	Pvt.	Lost to Hosp.
Dora, Jacob P.	T/5, T/4	Trfd. to B Co.
Doyle, William J.	Pvt.	MIA—Ramp
Earl, John C.	T/4	Trfd. to Hosp.
Edwards, Troy O.	Pfc.	K.I.A.
Elwell, Benjamin H.	Pfc., S/Sgt.	Trfd. to A Co.
Ferrier, Charles H.	T/5	Trfd.
Fisher, Richard E.	Pvt.	Lost to Hosp.
Fleming, Barney L.	Pvt.	Trfd.
Fontenot, Willis	Pfc., Sgt.	Trfd. to B Co.
Fraser, Joseph D.	S/Sgt.	Lost to Hosp.
Fribley, William G.	Cpl., Sgt.	Trfd. to A Co.
Fruge, Chester J.	Cpl.	Trfd. to C Co.
Gaspard, Elster J.	Pfc., Cpl.	Trfd. to B Co.
Getty, Raymond	Pfc.	Lost to Hosp.
Gilbert, Robert L.	Pvt., Pfc.	Trfd. to C Co.
Glynn, Carroll W.	Sgt., 2nd Lt.	Trfd. to A Co.
Golding, Charles L.	Sgt.	Trfd. to B Co.
Gordon, Albert	Sgt.	Trfd. to Hosp.
Graham, Morris T.	Cpl.	Trfd. to B Co.
Graves, Herman M.	Pvt.	Trfd. to C Co.
Greene, Raymond E.	Pvt.	Trfd. to A Co.
Gruetzmacher, Alfred H.	Sgt., 2nd Lt.	Trfd. to B Co.
Gunsch, Theobald	Pfc.	Trfd. to Medics
Gunter, Ben T.	T/5	Trfd. to B Co.
Hamilton, Clarence M.	Sgt.	Trfd. to B Co.
Hancock, John E.	Cpl.	Trfd. to Hosp.
Happ, Raymond L.	Pfc.	Trfd.
Hawkins, Robert K.	T/5	MIA—Ramp
Hebert, Clayvon	T/4	Trfd. to Hq. Co.
Heffner, William, Jr.	Pfc.	K.I.A.
Hernandez, Roy J.	Pfc.	Trfd. to C Co.
Hill, Leslie R.	1st Sgt.	Trfd. to A Co.
Hudson, Moses W.	Sgt.	Trfd. to Hosp.
Hunter, George J.	T/4	Trfd. to Hq. Co.
Jackson, Sherman	T/5	Trfd. to Hosp.
Keeth, Charles J.	Pvt.	Trfd. to A Co.
Keller, Hubert S.	Pfc.	Trfd. to Hosp.
Keron, Robert	Pfc.	Trfd. to B Co.
Klopfleisch, Gustov J.	Pvt.	Trfd. to Hosp.
Lang, Stewart M.	Sgt.	Trfd. to Hosp.
Larson, Lyle L.	Sgt.	Trfd. to B Co.
Linwood, John A.	S/Sgt.	Died
Locke, Alan V.	S/Sgt.	Trfd. to Hosp.
Loebach, Paul A.	1st Sgt.	MIA—Ramp
Lux, George W.	Sgt.	Trfd. to Hosp.

# "D" COMPANY

## Awards

Purple Heart

Soldiers Medal, Purple Heart

Silver Star

Purple Heart, PostH.

Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Bronze Star

Bronze Star

Purple Heart

Bronze Star

Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Silver Star, PostH.

Silver Star

Bronze Star

Purple Heart

Bronze Star

Bronze Star and Cluster

Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Silver Star

Purple Heart

Bronze Star

Bronze Star

Bronze Star

Bronze Star

Bronze Star

Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Bronze Star, Purple Heart

Bronze Star

Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Silver Star

Purple Heart and Cluster

Purple Heart

## Residence

Chicago, Illinois

Isaban, West Virginia

Chicago, Illinois

Westlake, Louisiana

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Pine Bank, Pennsylvania

Dallas, Texas

Shreveport, Louisiana

Oak Grove, Louisiana

Colfax, Louisiana

Zanesville, Ohio

Muse, Pennsylvania

West Allis, Wisconsin

Chicago, Illinois

Easton, Pennsylvania

Racine, Wisconsin

Houma, Louisiana

Pelzer, South Carolina

Sturgis, South Dakota

Newark, New Jersey

Piedmont, Ohio

New Orleans, Louisiana

Petrolia, Pennsylvania

Chicago, Illinois

Rayville, Louisiana

Cleveland, Ohio

Brooklyn, New York

Montrose, Pennsylvania

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

South Bend, Indiana

Clinch Port, Virginia

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Lead, South Dakota

Baltimore, Maryland

Pearl River, Louisiana

Ville Platte, Louisiana

Cambridge, Massachusetts

Elkhart, Indiana

Basile, Louisiana

Marksville, Louisiana

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Dryden, Virginia

New Orleans, Louisiana

Chicago, Illinois

Bronx, New York

Jena, Louisiana

Natchitoches, Louisiana

Washington, Pennsylvania

Chicago, Illinois

Dawson, North Dakota

Forest Hill, Louisiana

Kenosha, Wisconsin

Appleton, Wisconsin

Chicago, Illinois

Fairmont, West Virginia

Breaux Bridge, Louisiana

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Mathews, Louisiana

Ramer, Tennessee

Wilson, North Carolina

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Simpson, Louisiana

Vivian, Louisiana

St. Tammany, Louisiana

Washington, Pennsylvania

Celina, Ohio

Altoona, Pennsylvania

Highland Park, Illinois

Ontario, California

Chicago, Illinois

Chicago, Illinois

Hermie, Pennsylvania

# "D" COMPANY

Marzec, Steve J.	Pvt.	Trfd. to A Co.
McGinnis, Eugene R.	Pvt.	Trfd. to Hosp.
Miller, Clarence A.	T/5	MIA—Ramp
Mix, Donald D.	Cpl.	Trfd. to Hosp.
Moore, William C.	Cpl.	Trfd. to A Co.
Moses, Joshuy B.	Pfc.	Trfd. to Hq. Co.
Nowak, Frank E.	Pfc.	MIA
Nuzzi, Louis F.	Sgt.	Trfd. to Hosp.
O'Donnell, Joseph E.	Pfc.	Trfd. to C Co.
Oberbeck, Walter A.	M/Sgt.	Trfd. to Hq. Co.
Otto, Harold W.	Cpl.	Trfd. to Hq. Co.
Padderud, Earl	T/5	Trfd. to A Co.
Pascoe, Eugene	T/4	MIA
Pierce, Leroy J.	Pvt.	Trfd. to Hosp.
Pilarski, Donald M.	Cpl.	Trfd. to B Co.
Poe, Leon S.	Cpl.	Trfd. to A Co.
Prosba, Harry	Pfc.	Trfd. to A Co.
Pryor, Victor C.	Pvt.	Trfd. to B Co.
Riccobono, Philip J.	Pfc.	Trfd. to C Co.
Roberts, Lloyd D.	T/4	Trfd. to Hq. Co.
Roche, Clarence	T/5	MIA
Rupp, Joseph F.	Pfc.	Trfd. to Hq. Co.
Saylor, Samuel C.	Pvt.	Trfd. to Hosp.
Scott, James	Pfc.	Trfd. to Hosp.
Semansky, Alex J.	Pfc.	MIA
Shaner, Raymond E.	T/5	Trfd. to Hq. Co.
Shelton, Thomas E.	S/Sgt.	Trfd. to Hosp.
Sherman, Harold	T/5	Trfd. to Hq. Co.
Simpson, Julius C.	Cpl.	Trfd. to Hosp.
Sins, Louis H.	Pvt.	K.I.A.
Skinner, Harston J.	Pfc.	Trfd. to A Co.
Smith, Percy A.	T/4	Trfd. to B Co.
Smith, Victor E.	T/4	Trfd. to Hq. Co.
Stabley, Preston L.	T/4	MIA
Stevens, Edward, Jr.	Cpl.	Trfd. to Hosp.
Suggs, Johnnie R. W.	S/Sgt.	Trfd. to Hosp.
Sutphin, Sherman C. A.	Sgt.	K.I.A.
Terrell, T. C.	S/Sgt.	Trfd. to Hq. Co.
Thompson, Charles F.	Pfc.	Trfd. to Hq. Co.
Thompson, Raymond E.	Sgt.	Trfd. to Hosp.
Tippy, Clyde W.	Pfc.	Trfd. to Hosp.
Tomkins, Irvin H.	Sgt.	Trfd. to Hq. Co.
Terry, Joseph	1st Lt.	Trfd. to C Co.
Trego, Robert A.	Pvt.	AWOL
Tucker, Otto	Sgt.	DOW
Van Dusen, Charles E.	Pfc.	Trfd. to C Co.
Vespi, Alfred	Pvt.	Trfd. to A Co.
Watson, William S.	Cpl.	K.I.A.
Weseli, Melvin E.	Pfc.	Trfd. to Hq. Co.
Wheeler, Willis L.	Pfc.	Trfd. to A Co.
Whiteman, Wilbur O.	Sgt., 2nd Lt.	Trfd. to A Co.
Wilusz, Walter P.	Sgt.	Trfd. to C Co.
Wood, Harvey W.	T/4	Trfd. to Hosp.
Yampolsky, Julius B.	Pfc.	Trfd. to Hosp.
Zdrikowski, Francis S.	S/Sgt.	DOW
Zouvelos, Alex G.	T/4	MIA—Ramp
REINF. CO. D		
Gibson, Corbett	Pvt.	
Grubb, Warren L.	Pvt.	Bronze Star
Hampton, Ervin E.	Pfc.	
Mayhew, Arthur L.	Pvt.	Bronze Star
Ortiz, Jose	Pfc.	Purple Heart and Cluster
Atwell, Benjamin L.	T/5	Silver Star
Blanton, Dunk W.	Pfc.	Purple Heart
Denmark, Floyd L.	Pvt.	Bronze Star
Garner, Ralph F.	Pfc.	
Holt, Phil K.	Pvt.	Bronze Star
Lusby, Maurice E.	Pvt.	Purple Heart and Cluster
Hitchens, Olyn G.	Pfc.	
Keefe, Fred R.	Pfc.	
Wohlgeschaffen, R.	S/Sgt.	
Baroodly, Joseph	Pvt.	Bronze Star
Coskey, Patrick	Pvt.	

# "D" COMPANY

Purple Heart

Bronze Star  
Purple Heart  
Purple Heart  
Bronze Star  
Bronze Star  
Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Purple Heart  
Purple Heart  
Silver Star

Purple Heart  
Bronze Star  
Purple Heart  
Purple Heart

D. S. C., Silver Star, Bronze Star  
Purple Heart and Cluster

Purple Heart  
Purple Heart

Purple Heart

Silver Star, Bronze Star  
Bronze Star, Purple Heart  
Purple Heart  
Bronze Star, Purple Heart  
Purple Heart

Caney, Kentucky  
Tulsa, Oklahoma  
Flat River, Missouri  
Piedmont, West Virginia  
Rock Springs, Texas  
Springfield, Missouri  
Tabor City, North Carolina  
Ithaca, New York  
Gaffney, South Carolina

Macon, Georgia  
Washington, D. C.  
Steele, Missouri  
Pringle, Pennsylvania  
Detroit, Michigan  
Geneva, New York  
St. Mary, Pennsylvania

Chicago, Illinois  
Wilkesbarre, Pennsylvania  
Pickneyville, Illinois  
Litchfield, Illinois  
Ann Arbor, Michigan  
Monroe, Louisiana  
Chicago, Illinois  
Camden, New Jersey  
Fond du Lac, Wisconsin  
Upper Darby, Pennsylvania  
Beaver, Pennsylvania  
Chicago, Illinois  
Minneapolis, Minnesota  
Golden Meadow, Louisiana  
South Bend, Indiana  
Hicks, Louisiana  
West Newton, Pennsylvania  
Washington, Pennsylvania  
Gibbstown, New Jersey  
Clinchport, Virginia  
Amory, Mississippi  
Fond du Lac, Wisconsin  
Annville, Pennsylvania  
Chicago, Illinois  
Scranton, Pennsylvania  
Madison Heights, Virginia  
Hickory, North Carolina  
Baltimore, Maryland  
Downesville, Louisiana  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
Rayville, Louisiana  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
Columbus, Ohio  
York, Pennsylvania  
Short Beach, Connecticut  
Jacksonville, Florida  
Galax, Virginia  
Slagle, Louisiana  
Bloomfield, Indiana  
Chicago, Illinois  
Carbondale, Illinois  
Oakland, California

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania  
Waverly, Ohio  
San Joaquin, California  
Mishawaka, Indiana  
Bayonne, New Jersey  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
Euclid, Ohio  
Brookline, New Hampshire  
Cannonsburg, Pennsylvania  
Toledo, Ohio  
Chicago, Illinois  
Chicago, Illinois  
Holyoke, Massachusetts  
Portland, Oregon

# Letter of Commendation

FORWARD ECHOLON  
HEADQUARTERS 82D AIRBORNE DIVISION  
Office of the Division Commander  
APO #469, U. S. Army

6 July 1944

SUBJECT: Commendation of Company "D", 86th Chemical Battalion.  
TO : Commanding Officer, 86th Chemical Battalion.  
THRU : Commanding General, VIII Corps.

1. It is my pleasure to commend the officers and men of Company "D", 86th Chemical Battalion, for the outstanding manner in which this unit supported Division operations on July 3 and July 4th, 1944, ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~, France.

2. This unit reinforced the attack of the 505th Parachute Infantry on Hill 131, on the morning of July 3rd, from positions immediately east of the Hill. In spite of casualties sustained from enemy artillery in this forward position, their effective support continued; and on July 4th, this unit moved south to support the advancing attack. The company moved directly into this latter position through a heavily mined area that had not yet been cleared. It was thereby able to render maximum support to the assault on Ridge 95 by the 3rd Battalion, 507th Parachute Infantry, during the evening of that same day. Officers and men of this organization displayed exemplary and aggressive determination in the execution of important assignments.

/s/ M. B. Ridgway,  
/t/ M. B. RIDGWAY,  
Major General, U. S. Army,  
Commanding.

THM:scr

1st Lt.  
HEADQUARTERS VIII CORPS, APO 308, U. S. Army. 7 July 1944..

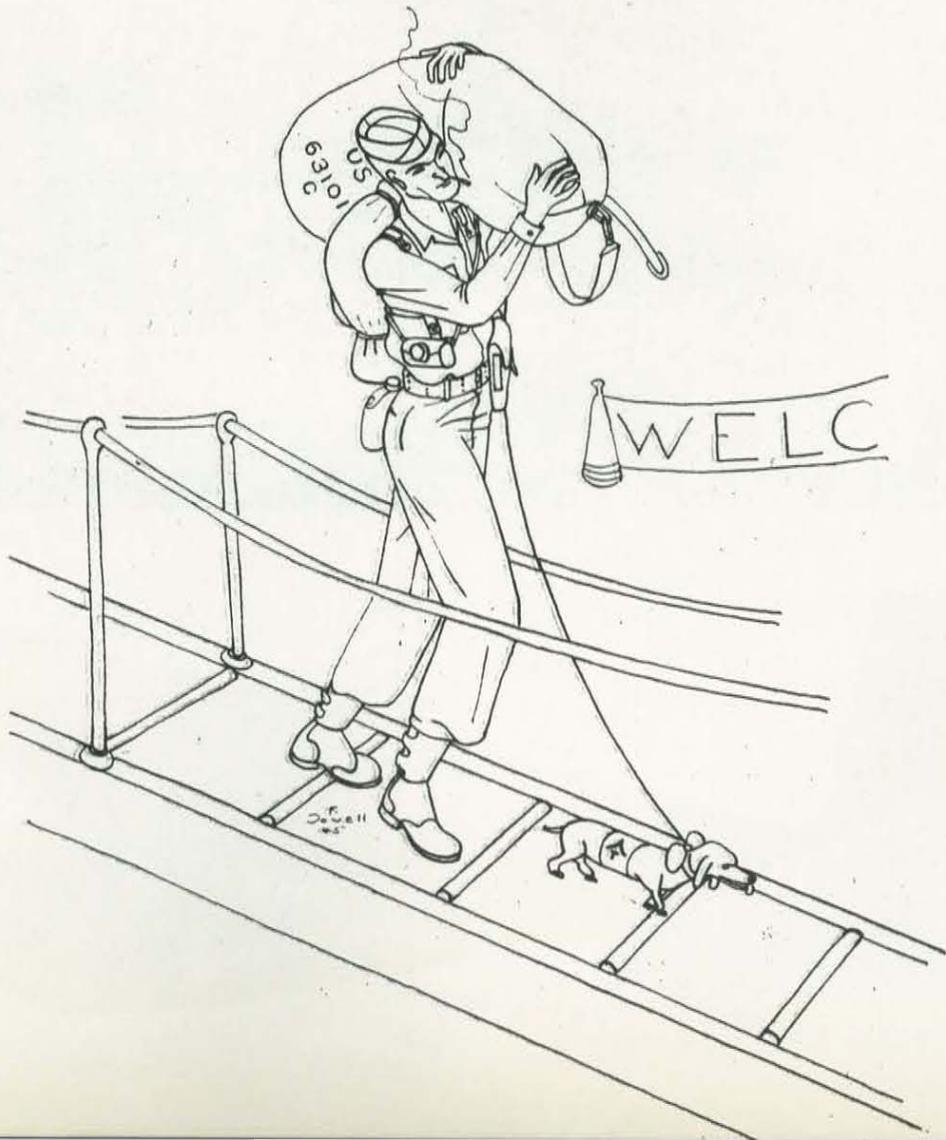
TO: Commanding Officer, 86th Chemical Battalion.

The undersigned notes with pleasure the outstanding performance of Company D, 86th Chemical Battalion. My appreciation and thanks to officers and enlisted men of this organization.

/s/ Troy H. Middleton,  
/t/ TROY H. MIDDLETON,  
Major General, U. S. Army,  
Commanding.

A CERTIFIED TRUE COPY:

JOHN B. DEASY, 1st Lt., OWS.





U.S. Army, 8th Chemical mortar battalion  
T.A.E.

