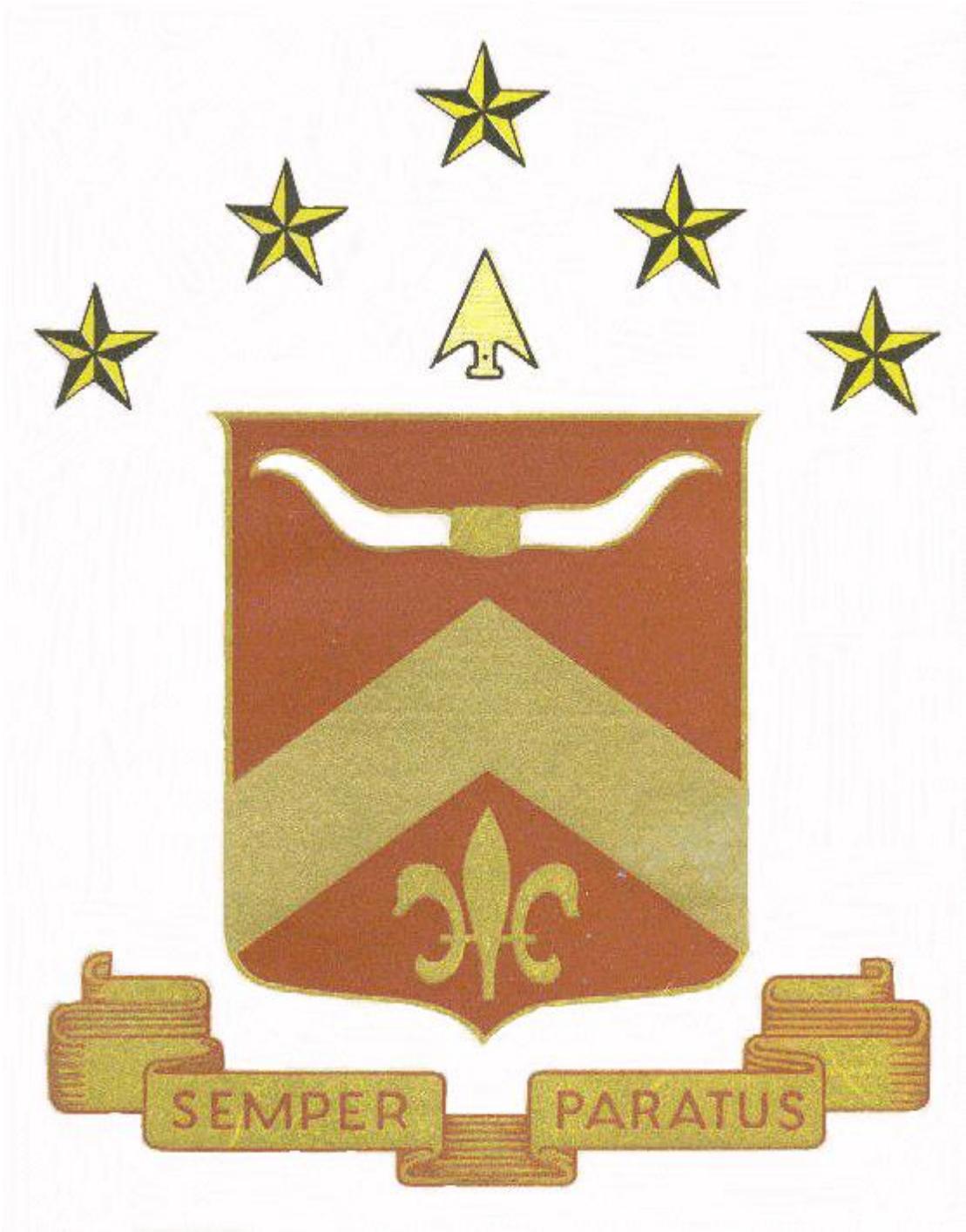


*MISSION*  
*ACCOMPLISHED*

**343<sup>RD</sup> F.A. BN**

Printed by Friedrich Puster, Regensburg, Germany, November 1949



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from the Battalion Commander .....	4
Dedication by the Battalion Executive Officer.....	5
In Memoriam.....	7
Chapter I – the Background for Invasion .....	8
Chapter II – Invasion, The Battle of Normandy.....	12
Chapter III – The Run to Le Mans, Chambois Shambles.....	17
Chapter IV – Across France to Fortress Metz .....	26
Chapter V – Across the Moselle to the Saar.....	32
Chapter VI – Double-Crossing the Saar.....	35
Chapter VII – The Bulge .....	41
Chapter VIII – Through the Siegfried to the Rhine.....	45
Chapter IX – One More River to Cross, VE.....	51
Some Facts and Figures.....	59
Roster and Acknowledgment .....	63



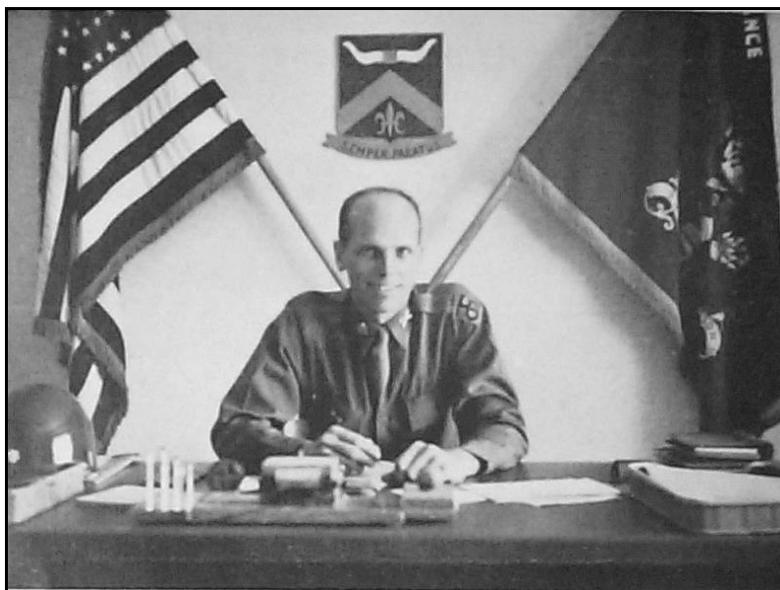
**TO THE OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE  
343RD FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION**

You are the ones who made the history of the 343rd Field Artillery the magnificent account of a truly wonderful organization. You are the ones who studied and worked in Camp Barkeley, the Louisiana Maneuvers, on the Desert, and at Fort Dix to make this battalion a team that accomplished its mission in every encounter against the enemy.

I am indeed proud to have been the Commanding Officer of such a loyal, courageous and devoted group of Officers and Men. I shall never forget the superior manner in which you performed your duties, regardless of the hardships you had to undergo, the sacrifices you made, and the dangers you faced with courage and determination.

I regret that I am unable to take each and every one of you by the hand and thank you for your wonderful cooperation and attention to duty. I hope the hardships and sacrifices you have made have not been made in vain and that your future life will be filled with peace and happiness.

D. KENNETH REIMERS, Lt. Col. F.A.



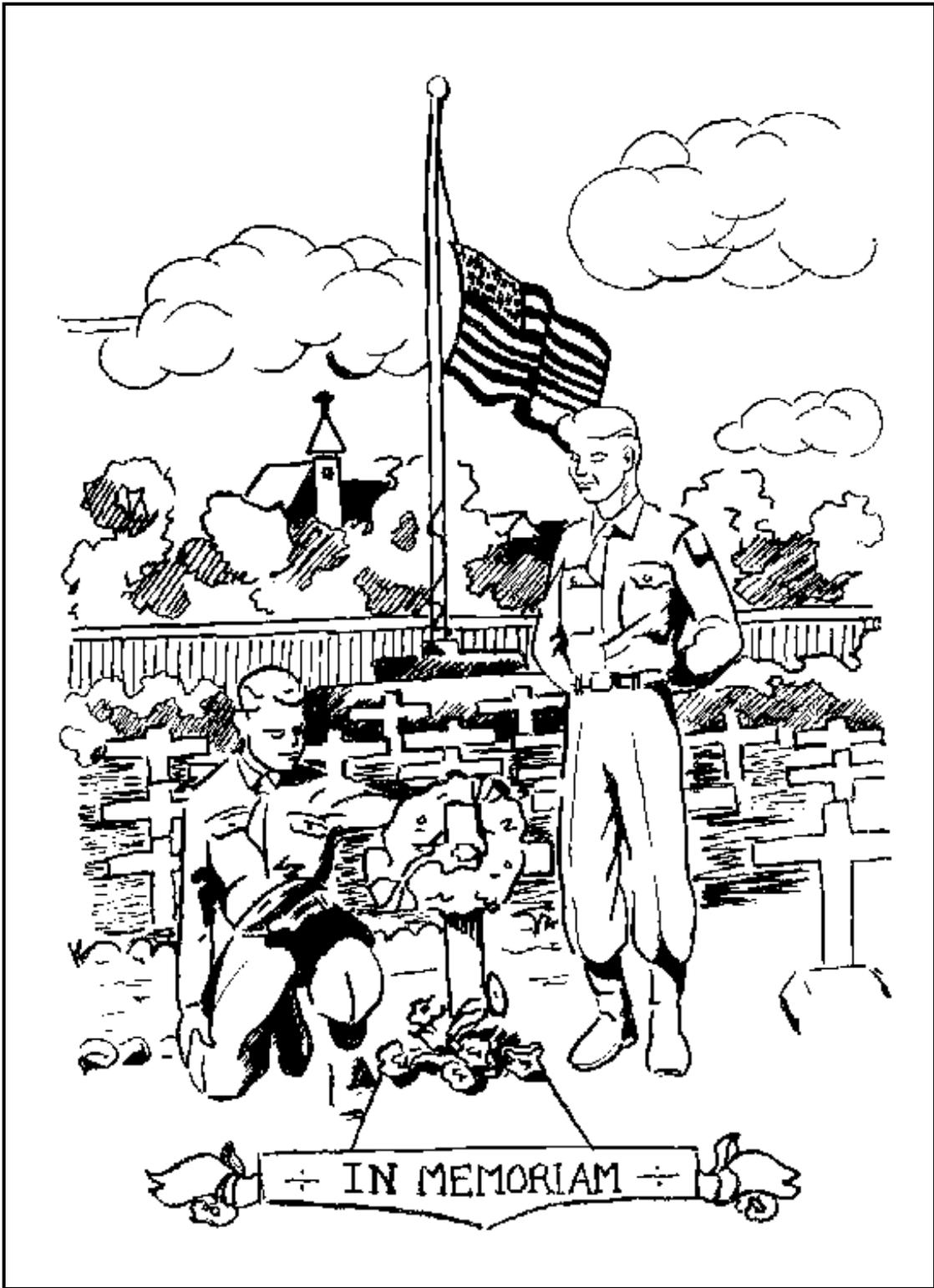
## **DEDICATION**

This history is dedicated to you, the men and officers of the 343rd Field Artillery Battalion. Through your heroic deeds, your devotion to duty, and your cooperation, this battalion was enabled to achieve its enviable record in defeating the enemy. Throughout combat you encountered many hardships and trying situations which you surmounted with the usual good humor and American ingenuity that characterizes a superior outfit.

To the officers and men of this battalion who made the supreme sacrifice for their country, we offer this history as a simple but heartfelt memorial to their services.

The events recorded here in a permanent form represent only a fraction of the highlights of your brilliant combat experiences. It would be impossible to recount the outstanding achievements of each individual which taken as a whole go to make the record of your battalion one envied by all. It is hoped that the few incidents recorded here will serve as stimulants for recalling other experiences of heroism and humor for the inevitable bull sessions of future years.

**HOLLOWAY W. PERKINS MAJ. F.A.**



## IN MEMORIAM!

A final taps has blown for our friends listed below. They are gone now to a place where reveille never blows. Their names are shown below in the order in which they answered the last roll call.

To these men go our proudest salutes. May your supreme sacrifice not have been in vain. May we carry on and be worthy or the ideal for which you fought and died, and in your memory find the inspiration to build for all people a world of enduring democratic peace.

Millard F. Aufrance	Technician Fifth Grade
George J. Mayer Jr.	Technician Fifth Grade
Frank H. Kocubinski	Private
Gilbert A. Helland	Private First Class
Hall G. Varner	Private
Charlie A. Preslar	Corporal
Ray W. Whidden	Sergeant
Jeremiah A. Sheehan	Captain
John Burkhart	Technician Fourth Grade
Henry Maul	Private First Class
Fred D. Weyl, Jr.	Private First Class
Tony A. Vigil	Private
Joseph R. McDonald	First Lieutenant
Henry R. Dutkiewicz	Second Lieutenant
Charlie V. Ard	Private First Class
Aram Zazian	First Lieutenant
Walter S. Vrooman	Private First Class
Lillard E. Pratt	Captain
Henry F. Deer	Technician Fourth Grade
Stuart R. Spear	Technician Fifth Grade

# CHAPTER I

## BACKGROUND FOR INVASION



On 25 March 1942, the 343rd Field Artillery Battalion was activated at Camp Barkeley, Texas as a part of the organic artillery of the 90th Infantry Division. At that early date no one suspected the fame and glory that this unit was to achieve in the hard months and years to come. Men from all parts of the United States came to form the 90th Infantry Division and the 343rd. At first, these men wore the T-O, Texas and Oklahoma, shoulder patch with indifference. Later they learned to love it and also its battle-earned meaning of "Tough 'Ombres". The "Tough 'Ombres" Division was loved by all within it and highly respected by all, friend or foe. It took a back seat to none.

The 343rd motto "Semper Paratus" (Always Prepared), dates back to the old Texas Battery A of 1879 from which came some of the original members of the 343rd Field Artillery Regiment. This

Regiment was organized at Camp Travis, Texas, in 1917, as a unit of the 90th Division. It served overseas but did not participate in battle.

Under authority of Section 3A, National Defense Act, the 343rd Field Artillery was reconstituted a unit of the 90th Division, Organized Reserves in November 1921, with headquarters at Fort Worth, Texas. The unit remained in this status until 25 March 1942, when it was reorganized as the 343rd Field Artillery Battalion as part of the 90th Division Artillery.

From Fort Sill, Oklahoma came officer fillers, and from the 1st Field Artillery Battalion, 6th Infantry Division, Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, came the enlisted cadre. Soon, from induction centers all over the country, came men from all walks of life, to the dusty, wind-blown tent-city at Camp Barkeley, Texas.

Early in April the initial phase of basic training began under the able leadership of Lt. Col. Philip H. Enslow. Aptitude tests of all kinds were taken. The men were assigned and reassigned until all sections were built up and tested. Sweat, blisters, dust, wind, rain, hot weather, cold weather, homesickness, adjustment, readjustments, chiggers, hikes, and many other obstacles were taken in stride, and in October the Battalion journeyed to Camp Bowie, Texas for the Army Ground Force tests.

Thus, about six months after starting basic training, the 343rd was to be tested to find the results of its training. The result was the highest score ever attained by a field artillery battalion. The 343rd achieved the first of a long list of honors.

Back to Barkeley and more work, problems in freezing weather, furloughs, CT problems with the 357th Infantry Regiment, inspections; under the leadership of Lt. Col. D. K. Reimers, then Major, our present battalion commander, replacing Lt. Col. Enslow who was transferred for duty elsewhere during the tests at Camp Bowie.

In January 1943, the 90th was sent to Louisiana for maneuvers. The 90th maneuvered against the 77th Infantry Division. The results were highly satisfactory. The 343rd conducted itself honorably on all occasions, notwithstanding the fact that Fire Direction and parts of the firing batteries managed to get captured and make headlines as far away as Chicago. Under combat conditions the outcome may have been different, but under umpire rules, the greater share of the 343rd was captured. The "PW's" were returned in due time, and undaunted by their setback went to work and made a creditable showing for the remainder of the maneuvers.

Back to Barkeley again and more training and furloughs, more hikes and obstacle courses, small arms firing and again to Camp Bowie for AGF tests. Although the 343rd didn't make as high a score as was made the first time the tests were highly satisfactory. During all of this time the battalion was sending a very high quota of men to Officer Candidate School thus creating a great replacement problem. In September 1943 the 90th entrained for the Desert Training Center. The division made a new camp, Camp Granite, near the Granite Mountains and Freda, California. More training, hikes, service, practice, and maneuvers, this time against the 93rd Division. The results were again very satisfactory. The 343rd was living up to its record as one of the best.

Christmas of 1943 was observed by the 343rd at Camp Granite, a pause in the arrangements for the move to Fort Dix, New Jersey. The unit arrived at Fort Dix early in January 1944, and final preparations and furloughs were rushed prior to leaving the United States. The forward party left Fort Dix on 18 February and entrucked to Fort Hamilton, New York, from where it sailed, on the Queen Mary, at noon, 1 March. The battalion moved with the division to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, later sailing by combat team from New York POE aboard HMS Dominion Monarch on 23 March. The battalion arrived at Liverpool, England on 4 April and entrained to Coldport where it was met by members of the forward party and taken by truck to Camp Davenport near Worfield in Shropshire.

While in England new equipment was drawn and put into combat readiness. Service practice and battalion firing exercises were held in Wales. Vehicles and equipment were water-proofed and security measures stressed. Inspections were held and equipment checked and rechecked.

On 14 May the battalion moved to Camp Bulwark, near Chepstow, Wales, on the Bristol Channel and final inspections were held. The camp was sealed on 29 May. All contact with the outside world was lost. Officers and men were briefed on our mission. All excess equipment and clothing were turned in. On 3 June the battalion was alerted and moved by train from Chepstow to Newport where Liberty ships were boarded. June 5th, the ships moved out of the Bristol Channel and started around the southern tip of England toward France. Dry runs were history and the real test coming up. Yes, this was it!





## CHAPTER II

### INVASION: THE BATTLE OF NORMANDY



As the convoy rounded Land's End, tension rose, and there was much speculation as to where the invasion would take place. The "Sunday morning quarterbacks" were telling how, where, and when it would happen, and many faces were red when news of the invasion was announced. Briefing was then completed and it was known that the battalion would go ashore on D+2. Part of the 90th went in on D-Day with the assaulting 4th Infantry Division, and the rest of the Division came in as fast as possible.

On the morning of 8 June our convoy approached Utah Beach. There were ships everywhere. Battleships, cruisers, destroyers, LCVP's, LCM's, LST's, Liberty ships, ducks, and minesweepers. There were hundreds of things that will always be in the men's memory of Utah Beach those hectic days; our Navy blasting enemy coastal batteries; barrage balloons more numerous than nickel balloons at a country fair; enemy guns getting uncomfortably close and then suddenly quitting; U.S. Destroyers moving in close and firing point-blank at enemy coastal defenses; barrage balloons bursting in the air; an

occasional plane going down in smoke with the pilot parachuting to safety and some that didn't. The continual jockeying around of the vessels to prohibit the enemy from "zeroing in"; anti-aircraft shrapnel dropping close by; the monotony of our rations and how uncomfortable a steel deck can be to sleep on; the moments of complete silence and all at once all hell breaking loose. Enemy aircraft overhead at night and the thousands of colored fingers from our machineguns and "ack-ack", searching the skies for them. The sudden ball of fire rocketing to earth when our ack-ack boys found their target and the warm feeling our hearts for those of the "Triple A". The union hours of the Merchant Marine and vehicles left hanging in midair during unloading while they "took off for chow"; the Susan B. Anthony hitting a mine and sinking, the orderly manner the ship was vacated without loss of life. Some of the "Doughs" who lost their weapons when she sank going ashore unarmed; the pots of coffee the sailors produced when needed most; first wounded being brought aboard and the indescribable feeling knowing that it might have been you. The thoughts of home and your loved ones and of Him watching from up above. Wondering, not if He is on your side, but if You're on His side. Then it came, "Let's go, this is it".

Part of the 343rd went ashore on D+2. The rest came in on the morning of D+3. Major Harris, (then Captain) who had been aboard the ill-fated Susan B. Anthony, and the walking party were ashore ahead of us marking the assembly area. Late afternoon brought "C. S. M. O.", the battalion moved into its first combat firing position in the vicinity of Neuville au Plain. Enemy aircraft were active, being, "a bit of a bother", the first few nights in Normandy. In the meantime our infantry was working inland from Ste Mere Eglise toward Amfreville. The Merderet River was crossed, but our gains were costly. The enemy launched numerous counter- attacks during the night, trying to regain ground lost during the day. It was then that Major General Eugene M. Landrum assumed command of the division replacing Brigadier General Jay W. MacKelvie. Col. Sheehy replaced Col. Ginder as CO of the 357th Infantry Regiment the next day, 14th of June.

On 11 June, our second full day of combat, we suffered our first casualty. Pfc. Gilbert A. Helland in one of Able Battery's "FO" teams was killed in action near Amfreville, He made nine trips across a bridge exposed to enemy fire to maintain and service wire communications so that we could continue to give "Our Doughs" the much needed support.

The first CP grew uncomfortably "hot". It was a target for nightly bombings and evidently was a concentration number on some "Heinie" firing chart. It was decided a change of position would be healthier but before the battery had cleared the field a barrage came in on the exact spot that Fire Direction, switchboard and Message Center had just vacated. The foxhole, one of the men had been attempting to dig in rock and shale, was blown to the proper size by one of the enemy rounds.

In the first position, the 343rd had its biggest day for rounds expended: 2981 rounds were fired during the attack on Amfreville. During that time enemy aircraft raised havoc with the "Urban" battalion. "Bed Check Charlie" made his debut at 2300 our first night in Normandy and played a full hour a night for approximately 70 nights. His harassing ceased some time after General George Patton's boys had passed over the Seine River. A sister model of "Ole Bed Check" made her appearance later, but didn't stay around long. Throughout Normandy "Ole Bed Check" was highly respected as an incentive to the T-O boys to dig a little deeper.

On 12 June T/5 George J. Mayer Jr. and T/5 Millard F. Aufrance both of Headquarters Battery were killed in action. They were radio operators in liaison sections during the attack on Amfreville. Casualties were very high in these early actions. Pvt. Frank H. Kocubinski also of Headquarters Battery was reported wounded in action on this day and died of wounds a short time later.

After one of the nightly bombings, the battalion received a gas scare. The air was heavy and smoke from the exploded bombs hung like a gas, so being new in combat and extremely cautious, the alarm was given. Some gas masks were not where they were supposed to be. They were hanging on trees or in trucks, rather than being carried, or in the foxholes. Some had not been de-waterproofed. Sounds in the night ran something like this: "Oh Lord, where is my mask – Gulp! I'm smothering –

cough – cough; oh hell, it's too late now – My Gawdl Hartnett we're dead for sure – That's my mask". The classic remark of the evening was from a captain of another artillery battalion, who was at fire direction. Ten minutes after the alarm and not being able to find his mask, he drawled, "Well, I guess that you can take them off now, cuz if it was gas I'd be damn near dead by now". It wasn't gas.

After Amfreville it was Gourbesville for the 357th Infantry. Enemy resistance continued to be strong. Counterattacks were numerous and artillery was the motivating factor in the eventual capture of the city as it was in the capture of Amfreville. While the infantry pushed on, resistance grew lighter until the 90th crossed the Cotentin peninsula and received a holding mission cutting off any enemy escape route from Cherbourg. It was then that the 90th, the 82nd, and the 101st Airborne Divisions were transferred from the VII to the VIII Corps control.

The 357 Combat Team was motorized under the command of Col. G. B. Barth, who had assumed command of the 357th on 17 June after Col. Sheehy had been killed. CT 357 took up a defensive line from St Sauveur le Vicomte, west to Portbail. The VIII Corps mission was to hold a line across the peninsula until Cherbourg had been captured and more troops and supplies were available. High winds had made Utah and Omaha beaches practically inaccessible and the supply problem was somewhat critical. Orders were to make every round count and to waste none. The enemy was attempting to break our line in the vicinity of Portbail, in fact, at times it was difficult to ascertain whether the main effort was from the North or South. The enemy forces on the south were trying to push up the peninsula to help their troops there, and thousands by-passed by the 9th Infantry Division were trying to sneak down the coast to escape capture. The battalion went into position in a woods northwest of St Sauveur le Vicomte. A hill with a tower on it near the battery positions offered a good observation post of the enemy territory. It was soon learned that the Heinie artillery also thought it a good registration point. Baker Battery caught the "overs", and any observer on the hill received the range and deflection correct rounds during their adjustments.

It was in this position that a Baker "FO" crew met with disaster. The 357th was trying to secure a hill for observation well in advance of the front lines. The FO party went out with a platoon of infantry to the hill and upon arrival found it good for observation. While waiting for reinforcements to arrive to secure the hill, German infantry came upon them from both front and rear and a tank from a flank. Lt. Marable assumed command of the group in the absence of the platoon leader who had returned to our lines to bring other troops. The Lieutenant and an infantry sergeant elected to stay in their position and give covering fire while the others tried to reach our lines. When the smoke cleared away T/5 Pratt was the only member of the FO party that had managed to escape back to our lines. Lt. Paul D. Marable and Privates Roy E. Jacobs and Louis M. Krohn were listed as "Missing in Action". Word was received later that all reported missing were in German prison camps.

On 21 June the kitchen trucks came to the battalion. The kitchens were not used but were sent to Service Battery and the extra trucks used to haul ammunition and supplies. The kitchen personnel were placed on Security Guard and "K's" and "10 in 1's" were still the menu.

23 June the battalion moved to the vicinity of Grande Huanville. On the second night in this position enemy patrols nearly came into the position area and the next day five Krauts were captured by "Undo Able" (Battery A of the 537th Anti-Aircraft Artillery Battalion which was attached to the battalion at Amfreville and remained with us up to the second Moselle crossing) in a barn overlooking the CP. On the twenty-seventh, a German agent was captured in Baker Battery area. Shortly after midnight the CP received a "pretty good going over" by enemy artillery and Pvt. Hall G. Varner on security guard was killed and Pvt. Franklin F. Haughawout was injured.

Later in the day the battalion moved to Besneville where Capt. Meier took over duties as S-2 and Lt. Bleimehl assumed command of Baker Battery. The 79th Infantry Division came down from the north and relieved the 357 CT (Combat Team, 357 Infantry and 343rd Field Artillery Battalion). The CT moving to the T-O left flank on the 29th and 30th. On 2 July the battalion went into position near

Appeville in support of the 344th Field Artillery Battalion for the attack on St Jores, the 357 being placed in reserve.

At noon, on the 4th of July, all division artillery fired howitzers and small arms in a salute. Evidently all personnel were not notified of the salute because many went into foxholes, but quick, and some on straddle trenches either terminated their business, right then and there, while others were given added incentives for their business. No casualties.

July 5 the 357th was thrown into the fight again, south of St. Jores, with orders to take Beau Coudray, while the rest of the division plunged into the Foret de Mont Castre. In our sector, the attack started off very well with artillery playing an important role. Beau Coudray was reached after bitter fighting, but here the infantry was stopped cold. This was the beginning of a six day see-saw battle for the town. "Urban" moved to new positions near St. Jores and those that were only "88" conscious found out that the Krauts had something quite a bit bigger.

Pitted against the 90th were some of Adolph's best troops and on their own maneuver areas, putting the odds completely against us. Hill 122 to the west of Beau Coudray afforded the best OP in Normandy and was well fortified. On the division right flank the 79th was driving south and the fleeing Germans were a menace to the 357's right flank.

The "Union" doughs battled the Krauts back and forth across the main street of the town and finally went across to stay on the sixth day. In the meantime the artillery wasn't exactly having a picnic. "Urban" alone fired 8261 rounds, in between dodging incoming rounds, in support the 357. No record was available as to how much supporting battalions fired. Capt. Pratt occupied an OP on the regiment's right flank that was neither held by us or the enemy, both sides were reluctant to occupy the hill but both shelled it constantly and the Captain was finally forced to abdicate.

With Beau Coudray taken and the high ground south of there in our hands, the battalion was to move to Beau Coudray. First positions were found to be mined and under heavy enemy fire, so were changed to the other side of town.

Cpl. Charlie H. Preslar of Charlie Battery was killed on the 13th of July. He was with the 3rd liaison section wire crew and was out repairing a line when high explosive shells came too close. He did not come back.

After Hill 122, Foret de Mont Castre, and Beau Coudray were behind the 90th, the Seves River was approached. It wasn't much of a river but the Island of Seves turned out to be a fortified enemy stronghold. As the division approached the river we moved near Gorges on 14 July where we stayed until 25 July. Enemy artillery was still on the active list and all batteries received a liberal amount of shelling. "Undo Able" bagged their second plane at this position and enemy "ack-ack" gave our "Cubs" an occasional near miss. The Heinies didn't care, even a little bit for our Cubs (L-4 observation planes). When they were up, enemy artillery was quiet. When the cubs were down the Kraut artillery made up for lost time. Eleven men were wounded, 6 from Service and 5 from Able, while in this position; all from enemy artillery. Sgt. Ray W. Whidden was killed when the 5 others from Able were injured. They were loading ammunition when the concentration hit.

21 July an enemy barrage of about 120 rounds was thrown in and over the CP, of which 75 to 80 were fortunately duds. There were no casualties. T/4 Jack Fish was at the straddle trench when the first two came over, the second landed a little closer than the first. He was still there when the third round started but left a fraction of a second later holding his trousers with one hand and a carbine in the other. Progress was smooth and rapid until about 3 yards from his foxhole a telephone wire was encountered. A split second later a shell came in, a dud. Fish also came into his foxhole with a dive that looked something like jack-knife, swan and a one and half gainer all mixed in together and with trousers at half-mast. Communications were still in. Cpl. James E. Gentile of Able Battery had a similar experience sometime later but without the telephone wire to hinder his progress.

25 July the Air Force came out in strength to blast the enemy at St. Lo. That evening the 357 CT moved around to the east of the Seves Island, the 358 CT faced it, and 359 CT was on the right. 26 July the First Army jumped off and the division with orders to by-pass the island started its advance. The veteran VII Corps on the division's left pushed out ahead and the Germans in the 90th sector started pulling back to forestall encirclement. The "Tough 'Ombres" went after them and reached their objective on 28 July. Contact was made with the 1st Division and lost with the enemy, the first time in 53 days.

The 90th had advanced 10 miles in 3 days. This wasn't exactly spectacular but after bucking the heavy Kraut line for 50 days, the entire division felt like a halfback that breaks loose and gallops for a touchdown. There was very little artillery fire during this attack. We were there in position, the batteries were leap-frogged and artillery support could have been given had it been needed. The practice in leap-frogging was good practical experience for what was to come next: one of the greatest exhibitions of the practicability of combat team control during the war.

The battle for Normandy was over and the division received a three-day rest. The 343rd never-the-less had all guns in position, and ready to fire, in the vicinity of Le Mesnibus. The kitchens were brought up to their respective batteries and the first kitchen-cooked meal of "B" rations was heartily enjoyed by all. Relaxation was the chief duty after bathing and cleaning-up had been accomplished. Movies were shown and interrupted by "Bed Check Charlie".

The entire 343rd had a record to be proud of down to the last man. Lt. Col. D. K. Reimers had done an excellent job as battalion commander as had Major H. W. Perkins and Capt. James A. Ford in their untiring efforts running fire direction. The ammunition train had hauled over 29,000 rounds of ammunition – over 850 tons – an average of sixteen and one-half tons a day. Forty five trips for ammunition had been made ranging from ten to one hundred and seventy miles in length. There was never any vehicular trouble. In fact a roster of the battalion would have to be listed to cite every man and section who had completed the first phase of the battle of Europe with a "well done".

30 July, Brig. Gen. (now Lt. Gen.) Raymond S. McLain and Brig. Gen. (now Major Gen.) William G. (Wild Bill) Weaver assumed duties as division and assistant division commander, respectively. The Tough 'Ombres had caught their breath, found a firm footing and were now ready to roll. The 343rd Semper Paratus.



## CHAPTER III

### THE LE MANS RUN: CHAMBOIS SHAMBLES



1 August, the 90th Division passed from the VIII Corps, First Army to the XV Corps, Third Army, and was alerted to move. The next day kitchens were returned to Service Battery. The division began a move that “outblitzed” anything ever done by an infantry division heretofore, and as far as the author knows, has yet to be surpassed. The Monnois, Lengronne, Gavray, le Loreur, La Haye-Pensel, Montviron, and Avranches. General Patton and Maj. Gen. Haislip, Corps Commander, and Brig. Gen. Devine inspected the column. Many officers in 90th Division Artillery found out that some things were somewhat different in the Third Army.

The next day we moved 6 miles to the vicinity Chasseguey. No activity except that more enemy planes were encountered than at any time since we entered combat. Battalion machine gunners, as well as Captain Lee and the boys from Undo Able, had learned early in Normandy not to fire on enemy planes at night unless first attacked by them. Undo Able was high on the list of people that we liked most to have around. It was late afternoon when the battalion made its move to Chasseguey. During this march the largest fleet of enemy planes witnessed to date, appeared. At first, a number of the men thought them to be P-51's. There were too many to be enemy. Then they attacked. Undo Able and other ack-ack outfits kept them away from our column but other installation's got a fair working over before friendly planes came and drove them away. Famous last words – keep going, those are P-51's.

4 August the XV Corps, 90th and 79th Divisions were ordered to move on Le Mans, 73 miles away. The 90th was first ordered to seize Mayenne, 45 miles away, and Task Force Weaver was

originally the whole division, but the task force was reorganized to give the maximum of mobility with tremendous fire-power. For General "Wild Bill" Weaver's spearhead force, the 357 CT motorized, the 712th Tank Battalion and the 343rd Field Artillery Battalion were selected. This Task Force was further subdivided into Task Force Barth, and the main body of TFW to give even greater mobility. The main body of the TFW consisted of the 3rd battalion, 357th Infantry (Mason's Maulers), the 343rd and most of the 712th Tank Battalion.

Early morning of 5 August, the task force began to roll. Practically no resistance was met until just out of Mayenne where the motorized 357 CT and a part of the 712th Tank Battalion, the task force spearhead, ran into some trouble but soon had it under control. The decision was made to encircle the strongly defended town; first crossing the Mayenne River in three places. The 343rd was rushed up close enough so that medium range would clear the town. Going into position we passed a battalion of tanks, a tanker was heard to quip, "What in hell kind of a war is this when even the artillery medics pass up the tanks". The stage for the attack was set, and the boys of Union took off. Union Red pushed straight toward the town but were stopped by two "88's" firing at them. Captain Ingram, our liaison officer to the 1st Battalion, called for fire. One of our first rounds scored a direct hit on one of the "88's". The ensuing explosions caused a heavy smoke to blanket the bridge. Major Hamilton seized this opportunity and the Red Battalion rushed the bridge, capturing it intact, with aero-bombs wired to it ready for its destruction. A short time later White and Blue Battalions having crossed the river by raft and boat, flanked the town and the initial objective was secured.

6 August was spent in the same position, preparations were fired for the attack on Aron and several air missions for Lt. Hicks and Lt. Rhein, on SP guns and tanks. The following day at 0200 a preparation was fired so that the infantry could withdraw from Aron. The task force pulled back to Mayenne and headed south leaving the enemy in and around Aron to the 1st Division. Farther south the Red Battalion was having quite a scrap at Ste. Suzanne, and it was here that Captain J. A. Sheehan was killed in action by enemy artillery. Captain Sheehan was working with Captain Ingram, who, with his driver Cpl. Orville Lindstrom, was wounded at the same time.

The task force moved swiftly south and by 1420 August 7 we were in position on the outskirts of Vaiges. Batteries were leap-frogged into position; ready to fire. Artillery received a priority on roads and sped from position to position doubling the column, occasionally with MP's motorcycles as escorts. In fact, in one instance an overanxious MP led us too far and we came to a skidding halt alongside the "Recons". The infantry after another skirmish at Ste. Suzanne started down the Le Mans highway the following morning with the 343rd Cowboys, riding high and shooting from the hip. The air OP's were up from dawn to dusk directing fire on the fleeing enemy columns. Wreckage was everywhere. Tanks, towed-guns, personnel carriers, SP guns, every type of equipment, horses, and Krauts were lying on the roads, by the roads, in the fields and even hanging in the trees. Between the air force, the artillery and tanks practically nothing was escaping to fight again. Towed-guns with motors still running on the tractors were overtaken. "Super-men" came marching down the road, with hands on head, without guard escorts, just marching and waiting for someone to impound them. On and on the task force sped, twisting, weaving and shooting through towns and villages with the French lining the streets, heedless of danger. The French cheered, laughed and cried with elation. They brought gifts of foods, wines, "white lightning" and occasional kisses. Gallant, little old ladies, with white hair and wrinkles, smiled through their tears, stood on their toes trying to make themselves heard "Vive la Americain!" They were happy once again, the rule of tyranny was lifting, they would be free again. "Merci, Monsieur, Vive la Americain!"

It was all so strange! A few days ago we had been inching across Normandy trying to get from one hedgerow to the next. Now we were racing across France at a speed unheard of for an infantry division. Cavalry could do it, yes, but an infantry division, no. Never-the-less, the Tough Ombres were doing it and making the boys from the old school sit up and take notice. After it was over, the commanders,

battalion and regimental, were called into 3rd Army Headquarters. Army wanted to know how an infantry division could do such a job as the 90th had done.

Lead elements entered Le Mans at 0300 August 9 coordinating with the 79th Division who entered the city from the southwest. Cheering crowds lined the streets, champagne, wine, cider, cognac and “buzz-bomb juice” flowed freely. This same procedure followed all through France. “Cigarette pour Papa?”

The Division occupied positions north of Le Mans. Task Force Weaver was dissolved but its historical dash of 146 miles in seven days will be remembered and read about for years to come. Countless numbers of enemy tanks, armored and other vehicles were captured or destroyed. 2054 prisoners were captured and hundreds killed, while our casualties were very light. The air OP’s manned by Lts. Rhein and Hicks did a never-to-be-forgotten job. They did a marvelous task reporting the leading elements of the various parts of the task force and in maintaining unending surveillance of our front and flanks. To Lt. Colonel D. K. Reimers, our battalion commander, goes the highest praise. His leadership and thoroughness in reconnaissance and ability to keep one, and the majority of the time, two batteries in position firing, was one of the reasons for the success of this great maneuver. Every man who participated in this operation deserves high praise, because each one had to put out his utmost to make it a success. So fast was the movement that a man in the leading elements, even to eat a “K” ration, found himself in the rear echelon when finished. Armored escorts were necessary for supply trains.

12 August the battalion passed thru Alencon and was shelled intermittently along the route. A few minutes after midnight, and shortly after arriving in position northwest of Alencon, the Luftwaffe came out in considerable strength dropping flares and then bombing. Many bombs landed in and around our positions but the first flares caught us unaware and lit up the area, like Christmas night in Harlem, but camouflage had been well handled and all personnel behaved like veterans.

As more troops were rushed up to plug the holes left behind the racing T-O boys, the 90th edged toward Chambois, driving and blocking until only one road remained that the battered German 7th Army could even hope to escape through. On 17 August, while moving to a position northwest of Nonant Le Pins, two P-38’s circling overhead came down to strafe the column. The second came in too low, shearing the tops of four telephone poles and hitting Baker Battery’s 4th gun section truck with its wing and propeller. Four men were killed and two injured during the strafing. The men killed were T/4 John Burkhart, Pfc. Henry Maul, Pfc. Fred D. Weyl, Jr., and Pvt. Tony A. Vigil. The plane crashed and burned about 250 yards from the road. The pilot was killed in the crash and burned beyond recognition, but his dog tags identified him as an American pilot. The next day Service Battery made a special trip to pick up engineer supplies, which turned out to be one “maul”. In the course of getting these “supplies”, the truck was strafed by British Spitfires and the driver was injured.

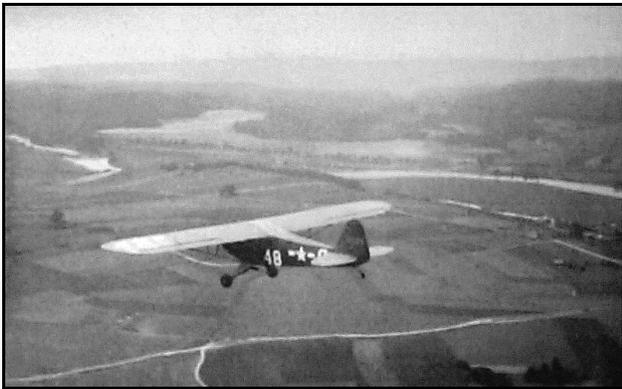
19 August Colonel John B. Daly, Division Artillery Executive, was killed. 20 August, the Battalion moved to new positions near Exmes, our last position in what was once the Falaise Gap and was now known as the “Chambois Shambles”. The 90th occupied the high ground around Chambois, which was known as the “Balcony of Death”. Infantry guns up front, and the artillery a little farther back poured hot steel in on the Germans, pausing now and then to permit some to surrender. In seven days, this division took 12,355 prisoners and killed nearly as many. Destroyed were 308 tanks, 248 SP guns, 164 artillery pieces, 3270 motor vehicles, 649 horsedrawn vehicles and 13 motorcycles.

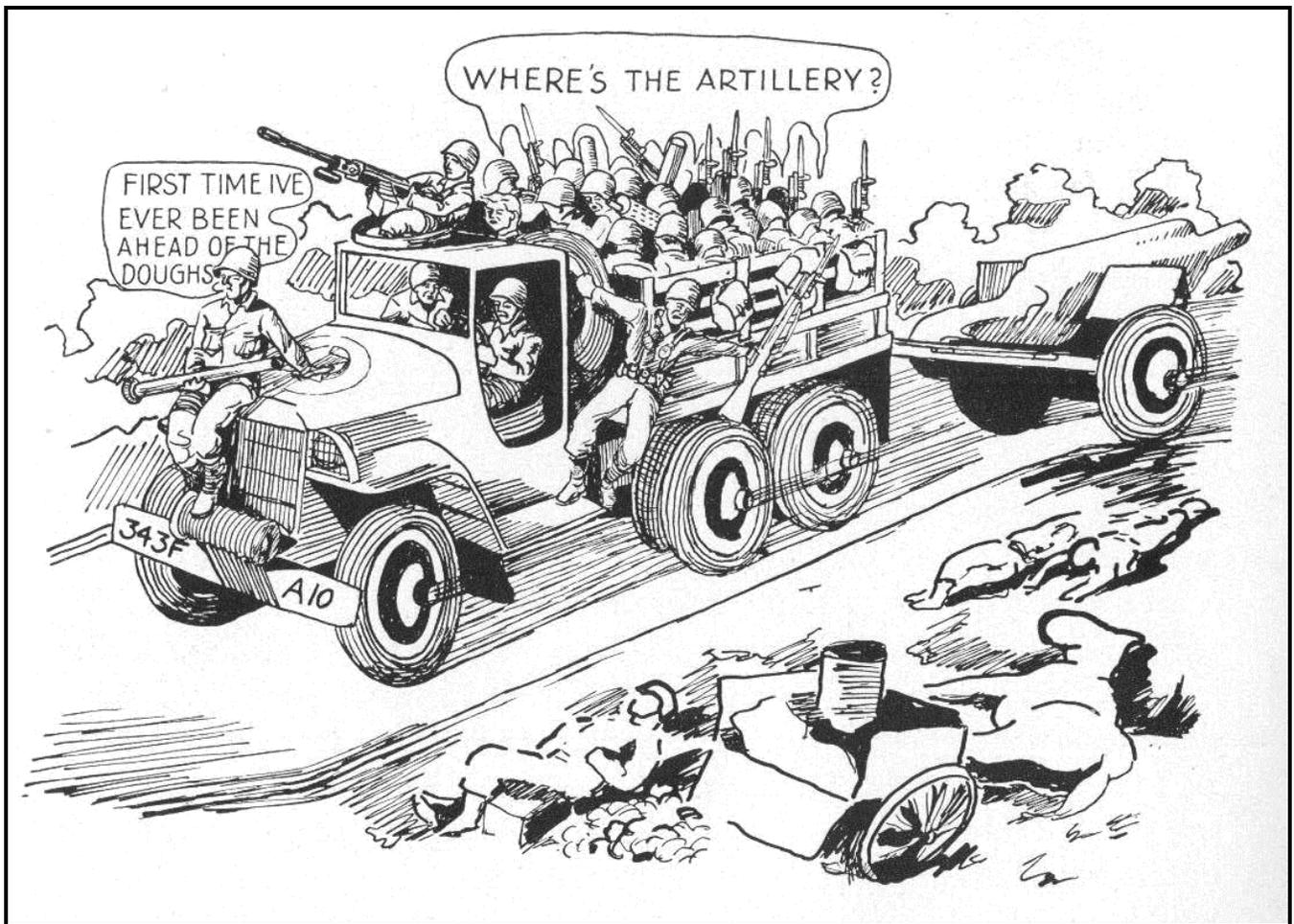
The following, is a quote from Lt. Colonel D. L. Durfee who was with the 90th as an observer for the Army Ground Forces. He was with the division from Le Mans to near Metz. “It was really incredible”, Durfee said, “This campaign which began with the advance north from Le Mans and terminated with the juncture of American and British forces north of Chambois, will forever be regarded as one of the most brilliant episodes in the Battle of France.

“The 90th Infantry Division initiating the campaign in a support role, subsequently became the motivating factor in the success of the scheme”.

“The Nazi defeat there was plainly a rout. It was every man for himself. The roads were cluttered with all kinds of equipment, horses, tanks, artillery, foot soldiers and supplies, all mixed together and all being shot to pieces by the remarkable marksmanship of our artillery. It was the greatest ambush of the war”.

On 17 August the 90th was transferred to V Corps control and on August 26 transferred again to XX Corps control. The time, 22 August to 26 August, was spent as a partial rest period. The Battalion moved back to the vicinity of Nonant le Pins but was in position ready to fire at any time. Physical inspections, movies and trips to Chambois for a view of the wreckage constituted the activities of the 343rd for the period. The first Red Cross Clubmobile visited the area; coffee, doughnuts, good music, and visits with American girls were enjoyed.

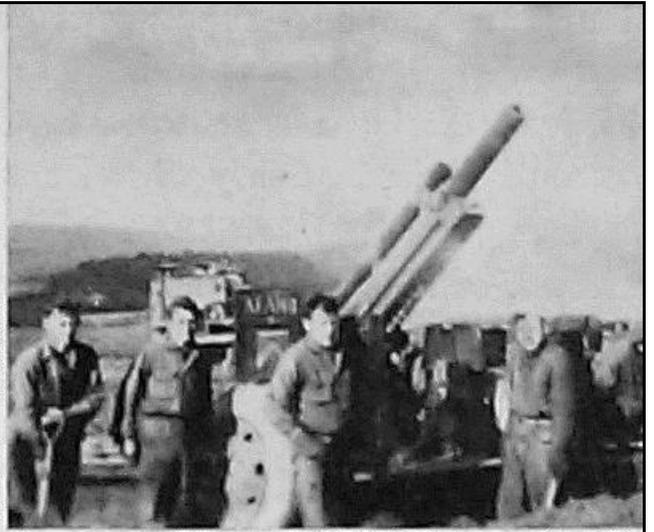






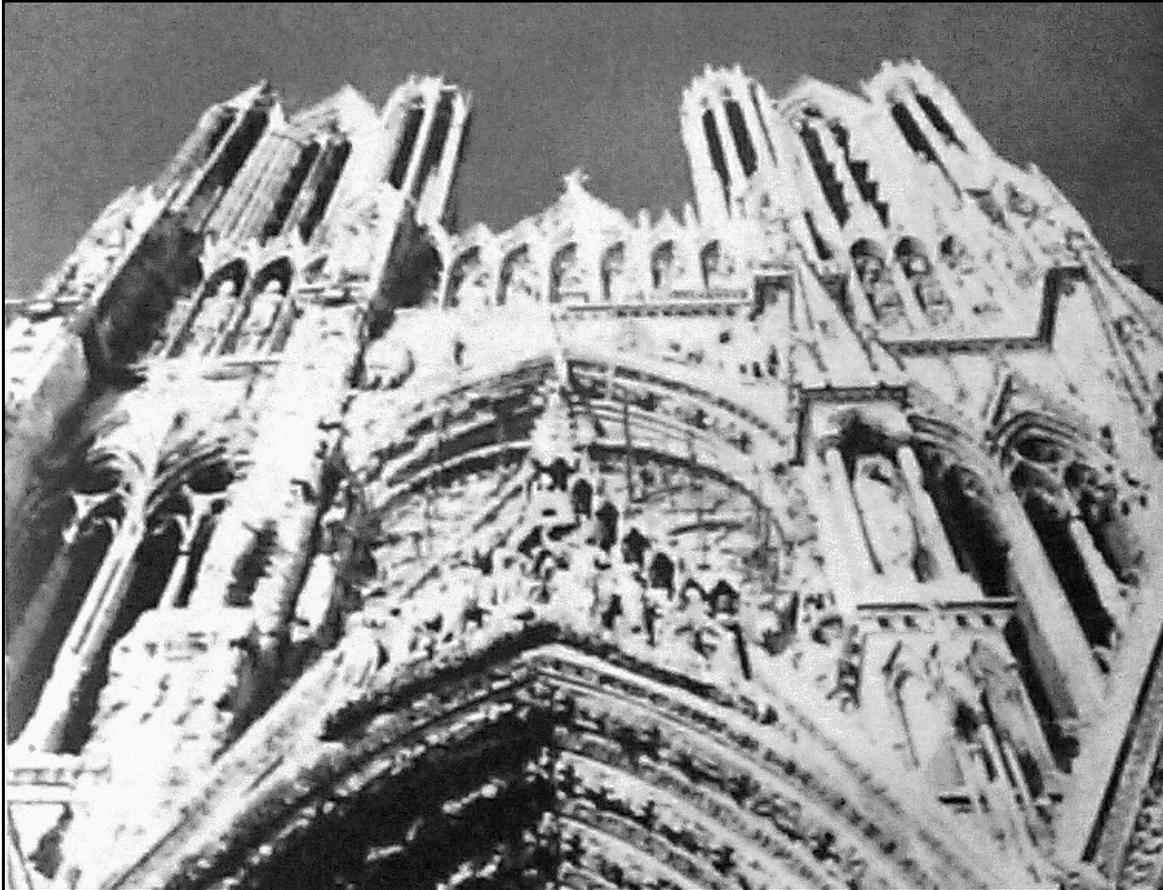






## CHAPTER IV

### ACROSS FRANCE TO FORTRESS METZ



On the 26th of August, the battalion left Nonan le Pins under combat team control and arrived ten hours later in a rendezvous area four miles south of Fontainebleau, having marched 163 miles. The next day we moved thirty one miles going into position near le Plessis-Hainault. The XX Corps, (90th, 5th, and 7th Armored Divisions) mission was to move on Reims. During the day of the 28th we occupied two positions marching forty six miles to Courboin. At many places along the route, natives did not seem friendly. We found out later that they didn't know we were Americans. After they discovered who we were, celebrations were in order. The battalion moved fifty four miles on the 30th of August via Chateau Thierry and went into position near Cormicy, northwest of Reims. It was on this march that another new tactic appeared: the 1st battalion, 357, was loaded on the 343rd F.A., and the 3rd Battalion, 357 was loaded on the 284th F.A., which was attached to us. Moving on parallel roads, the two Infantry-Artillery Battalions rapidly closed the gap behind the fleeing Krauts. Once more, the "doughs" were in doubt as to just how "rear echelon" their artillery was. We were in this position two days, gas and map supply practically nil. Most of the officers and men went into Reims, the champagne capital of

the world, to see the cathedral and quench their thirsts. The first visitors to the fair city entered some hours before the 5th Division “doughs” thus giving birth to the claim that the 343rd liberated Reims.

1 September found us moving to position two miles northeast of Bazancourt. No gas. While in this enforced “rest”, word got around that Sedan had been liberated. A strong task force was immediately formed consisting of two L-4 “cubs”, Lts. Hicks and Rhein, pilots, and Lt. Colonel Reimers with the mission of verifying this report. Circling Sedan, all appeared well, so a landing strip was selected and occupied. Leaving Lt. Hicks to protect the planes from the curious, Col. Reimers and Lt. Rhein set out to ascertain the situation. As they reached the hedge, they heard an explosion behind them. Looking back, they saw Lt. Hicks crawling towards them, one plane burning fiercely and across a stream a number of Heinies dividing their fire between the crawling Hicks and the surviving plane. Their fire “got” the second plane just as Hicks joined the other two. The ensuing escape from enemy territory involved crawling long distances, wading up streams, crossing mountains, and wild rides in rickety FFI vehicles back to American lines. Once safe, the intrepid trio reported Sedan was definitely not liberated.

5 September brought gas and “march order”. We marched ninety-seven miles to Lanchères. It was here that the new 90th caught up with the history of the 90th of World War I. During the march, old battlefields of the last war were passed: Verdun, the Argonne Forest, and other places of grim interest. Several contacts had been made with the enemy during the march from Fontainebleau, all minor skirmishes. The FFI were a great help in rounding up stragglers from the ranks of the fleeing Nazis.

On 7 September, the Battalion marched twenty four miles and occupied two positions. Definite contact was made with a strong enemy force. As usual, 357 CT was out in front and needed flank protection. Union, Urban and Undo Able consolidated their CP’s in Mancieulles, for better security. The batteries had to cover a sector of approximately 4000 mils. S/Sgt. Davidson, in Fire Direction found himself with two firing charts. One for the area east of north and south, and one for west. Both were in constant use. Charlie Battery fired on enemy guns and personnel using a small hill directly in front of the guns as an OP. The guns were on the reverse slope of the same hill. Undo Able even entered into the furious fighting, as scattered enemy troops tried to flee the sector, by setting up a 40mm on a hill and firing direct fire on a Heinie AT gun. They scored direct hits with AP shells and knocked the gun and crew out.

8 September we broke up a few counterattacks with artillery. Captain “Pappy” Carl Weinrich, our liaison officer to the 357th, 2nd Battalion, came close to adjusting fire on himself in this position. “Pappy” was adjusting on an enemy OP in a church and not realizing that he was on the opposite side of the church, was calling overs, short, thus bringing the fire closer in. After a little discussion he became oriented and got his adjustment on the OP.

Lt. McDonald, Liaison 1, was killed while almost single-handedly stopping an enemy attack. Awarded a Distinguished Service Cross posthumously, Lt. McDonald perceived the losses which must result should the enemy occupy a hill from which they had just forced our infantry and, “instantly, alone and without regard to his own safety, climbed to the bare crest of the hill in order to secure observation for friendly artillery. Although at times the fire of all the enemy’s weapons appeared to be directed against him, he advanced upon the forward slope and by radio directed effective artillery fire against the enemy, destroying two of their tanks, badly damaging others and decimating the attacking troops”.

A captured German field order indicated that we were on the axis of advance of the German 15th Panzer Division. The battalion moved to the Combat Team flank, away from the probable approach of the enemy. We received notice that our ammunition supply was critically low.

Division Artillery CP was attacked by some German Panzer elements and during the ensuing fire fight received a number of casualties, seriously wounding our agent, Cpl. C. B. Woodson. The 712th Tank Battalion came to the rescue.

Captured German beef was distributed and enjoyed by all. 10 September the Battalion moved to Neuchef. The present mission for the 90th was to move on Thionville and cross the Moselle. The area around the town was fortified. Captain Graf, Liaison3, while adjusting fire on some Krauts that ran behind a haystack, observed some of the rounds bounce off of the stack. "That ain't hay", he radioed back. Able FO fired on a novel target, a railroad train. 12 September the battalion moved to Marspich near Hayange, an industrial center. The purpose of the move was to give a greater range across Moselle River. Six target-marking missions for the air force were fired. Plans were changed, and as the infantry jockeyed for a good crossing-site we were obliged to move. The Battalion traveled back thru Hayange to Morhange. The CP was in a beer tavern – no beer!

New orders moved the 90th to relieve the 7th Armored Division. The 5th Infantry Division was to establish a bridgehead south of Metz and relieve the 7th Armored. At 0840, 14 September, the Battalion moved out through Neufchef, Avril, Briey, Homecourt and Montois. The firing batteries went into position south of Montois, with the CP moving into a schoolhouse in Roncourt. As the CP truck stopped, in came a fire mission, no survey data; Captain Ford and Sgt. Davidson outguessed the survey: the initial rounds were only 200 yards from the target. Despite the fire mission, the CP was given "march order". The mission was completed on the way back to the new CP in the Montois schoolhouse.

This location was to be our home for some time to come. The Tough 'Ombres were in the vicinity of where the Texas-Oklahoma Division had been at the end of the last war, facing the fortress of Metz. Could this series of forts, moats, tank traps, emplaced guns, all manned by men who knew every inch of the terrain, could they possibly be taken? We were to find out in the weeks to come.

"Beaucoup" artillery was attached to us. The infantry probed around the various forts and found that a frontal attack was next to impossible. Some progress was made north of Mazieres les Metz but that was as far as the Doughs could go without artillery and plenty of it. Strange as it seems there was more artillery around Metz than we had ever had before but the ammunition was not available in quantities to support a large scale attack.

Most of our ammunition was spent on TOT's and marking targets for our dive bombers. Because of the absence of full 5th sections, all TOT's were fired on definite information that the target was worthy of the ammunition expended. Frenchmen infiltrating through the lines, and Germans who had decided it was better to be alive in an American prison camp than a good German, one who had died for the Fuehrer, furnished most of the data for our targets. These TOT's had a demoralizing effect on the Germans and induced many to surrender, that is, those that were not killed or injured in the shelling.

One enemy gun emplacement, our concentration Number 33 C, will be remembered by all. Countless rounds were spent trying to silence these guns but they were still firing when we left the area some weeks later. 105's, 155's, 8-inchers, 240's all tried, the place was marked for bombing a number of times but still they fired back. Yes, 33 Charlie will long be remembered.

In an effort to substitute for lack of artillery ammunition, Task Force Higgins was formed. Headed by Lt. Higgins, Baker executive, the task force consisted of 10 Sherman tanks from Motor Charlie, Company "C", 712th Tank Battalion; set up as three batteries with a central fire direction. The tankers were unused to indirect firing, but under Lt. Higgins expert tutelage were soon slamming those "75" shells right where the FO's wanted them.

Much captured enemy artillery material was put into action against the enemy. 10 cm and 88 batteries were set up and manned by various units in the Metz perimeter. Ammunition for these guns was plentiful as vast stores were captured in the Argonne Forest. It was a pleasure to send the Kraut Ammunition back at them, especially when they received it the hard way.

This developed into more or less of a holiday mission. Rest centers were set up and every effort was made to get movies, Clubmobiles and other forms of entertainment. Despite the fact that government officials at home were assuring the "home front" that there was an abundance of ammunition, we were still limited to a very small daily expenditure.

17 October Brig. Gen. J. A. Van Fleet assumed command of the division succeeding Gen. McLain who had earned himself the command of a corps thru his brilliant leadership and the exploits of the famous Fighting 90th. It was during the time of Gen. McLain's reign over the Tough 'Ombres that the title of the "90th Panzer Grenadiers" was bestowed on us by our enemy. The Krauts had the highest respect for the division and feared it greatly.

During October the infantry continued to inch into Maiziers le Metz and after bitter fighting for every little section of the town, they managed to get a good solid foothold. A large slag pile near the city had proven to be a great obstacle, as was a chateau on the other side of town. Both proved to be a big help to the enemy in holding their position and as vantage points for observation.

The latter part of October orders were received to take Maiziers. In preparation for the attack a 155 mm SP gun was moved into a factory near an enemy strong point to fire at point blank range. The strong point – the schoolhouse, the range – 150 yards. Artillery ammunition ceased to be rationed for the attack and everything was in readiness on 28 October.

0730, October 29, all artillery opened up with a preparation that was to initiate the attack. A few false preparations had been fired during the previous 24 hours and the Krauts, thinking that this was another, failed to respond until it was too late. Many were caught flat-footed and found it useless to resist, while in other parts of the town bitter fighting resulted. The town was systematically cleaned out and at 0845 the next morning the schoolhouse was all that remained in enemy hands. Later in the day all of Maiziers was in the hands of the Union men and patrols had reconnoitered the cemetery where concrete mortar emplacements were found. The lid was again clamped on the ammunition.

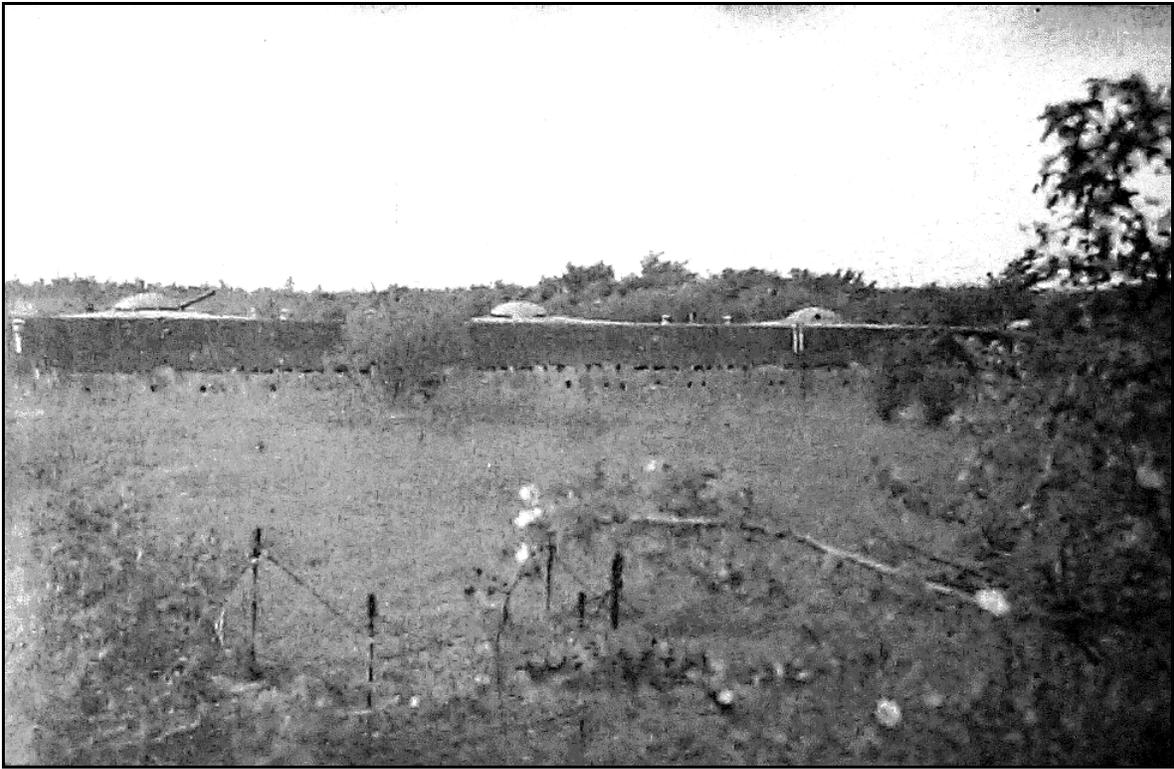
31 October the 95th Infantry Division began moving in, to relieve the 90th; the 920th F.A. Battalion taking over in our sector. Orders were that the 90th Division was going back for training, this after five months of practically steady combat. The move turned out to be only the setting of the stage for, in the words of the army commander, "the greatest feat of World War II".

1 November, the battalion moved to Mercy Le Haut and for the first time since the beach, the covers were left on the guns. All of the battalion was clear of the old position except liaison. FO parties, Captain Ford, and Sgt. Davidson who remained behind to orient the 920th on the situation and turn firing charts over to them.

The period, 1 November to 6 November, was spent in care of material and ordnance inspections. The Battalion CP was set up in the house of the last President of France, Albert Lebrun. Some of the men were quartered in his old schoolhouse.







## CHAPTER V

### ACROSS THE MOSELLE TO THE SAAR



1910 hours, November 6. The Battalion departed from Mercy le Haut, en route to a position near Seutzich. Moving over rugged terrain and mucky roads, blacked out the Battalion went into position at 0030. Every driver on that march deserves high praise for bringing his vehicle through. It was a helluva night! The Battalion set up their CP in Fort 688 of the Maginot Line.

The scheduled assault of the Moselle River was postponed, because the steadily rising waters of the once peaceful and narrow stream. The dangers in crossing grew as time became more precious. Finally at 0330 November 9 the first wave crossed in assault boats.

The enemy was well protected in its fortifications, while our own doughs with the rain and cold of combat along with plenty of enemy artillery and tanks were finding the going tough. This they could lick, but nature seemed against us for the rains continued, and the once placid Moselle became a raging torrent, nearly a mile and a half wide. Bridge after bridge was broken and washed away by the rampaging river. Rafts and boats were capsized. The infantry, separated from its artillery and supply,

by the muddy tide, became desperate for supplies. Figuring a little was better than nothing Lt. Watland loaded his cub with medical supplies and despite the weather and enemy landed the precious craft across the river. This initiated a series of mercy flights by the Div Arty "Air Corps", and earned the undying gratitude of the doughs, and a DSC for Lt. Watland.

Finally after losing bridge after bridge to nature or enemy artillery, the reluctant Moselle was finally spanned. The badly needed tanks, TD's, and all kinds of supplies began a steady flow across to the Koenigsmacher side of the river.

The artillery was kept busy day and night firing on enemy positions. Many targets were marked with smoke for the air force to bomb. Captain Clint W. Bracher and Lt. William D. Tatsch went up to replace Captain "Fearless Fosdick" Weinrich and Captain David E. "Molasses" Graf who had been wounded as Liaison 1 and 3. For "Pappy" it was his second time. Both had been up on liaison since the beginning and had been doing "crack up" jobs.

14 November the entire battalion was across the river and in position near Koenigsmacher. Shortly after the CP was set up, representatives of the Division informed us that Division forward Headquarters and Div Arty Headquarters were moving into the town and that "we might be a little crowded". We took the hint and moved forward to Elzange. We didn't like the idea of being kicked out of town, but that night we sat snug and smug in our new position while the Krauts shelled hell out of Koenigsmacher. There wasn't a round that landed in our position.

I guess life is like that.

The next morning the 343rd personnel were up bright and early. Sometime later the Div Arty Executive Officer entered the CP and informed Colonel Reimers that the infantry was pushing out fast (the same that we had sent Div Arty some time before) and that we would have to displace forward by leap-frogging the batteries. He explained that he would show how it was done. During the conversation he was looking directly at the Silver Star awarded to Colonel Reimers by General McLain for the Mayenne-Le Mans engagement for giving artillery support at all times during this fast moving engagement.

16 November the body of Lt. Henry R. Dutkiewicz, Able Battery's FO, was found. He had been missing since the 9th when he and his radio operator Cpl. Joe Sellitti crossed the river with the infantry.

The infantry was advancing steadily against stiff enemy opposition. The guns of the Maginot Line were emplaced so that it was necessary to use 155 SP's to fire direct on them. The 240's knocked out some, while the light artillery was used for targets in the open. Mud and rain still persisted and any degree of comfort was impossible.

On the 18th, a couple of enemy planes came over and thanks to the 537th AAA failed to return to Herman Goering. It's rumored the pilots went down singing the new luftwaffe battle song, "Don't get around much anymore".

The enemy maintained its advance and the artillery kept firing. The terrain was rolling and the enemy had dug many tank traps. This had its disadvantages as well as its advantages. While it slowed our advance it also limited the number of roads the Jerries could run away on from the rapidly forming Metz trap.

With the contact of our Division and the 5th Division coming up from the south, the encirclement of the fortress Metz was complete. The city fell to elements of the 5th and 95th Divisions. The 90th made contact with the 5th Division at Bauzainville 19th November. After the enemy realized that the encirclement move was being made every effort was made to get as many forces as possible out of the area. As the pincers closed, many enemy columns were caught on the road and destroyed. It was a repeat of the Chambois trap on a smaller scale.

Thanksgiving day, just before the turkey dinner was to be served, a fire mission came over the radio. "Enemy machine gun dug in, 4 Krauts, will adjust". Cpl. Bill Pabst sent the data to the battery. Baker fired three center rights in adjustment and after the first rounds in the fire for effect, the command

came back, "Cease Firing". One of those rounds landed in the dugout and blew both MG and Krauts all sky high. "Come and get it, turkey is served".

The 90th crossing of the Moselle was another epic feat of the Tough 'Ombres. The army command called it off and ordered the infantry back, but these men were not to be denied victory after so much was at stake. They stayed, and the angry river seemed to sense that such valiant men would never turn back and even she decided to return to her banks and permit the bridge so badly needed to be built.

With Metz out of the way, the 3rd Army turned its back on the city and headed toward the Saar Basin. The 90th now feeling at home when at the front, as usual led the army.

On 29th November, Able and Charlie Batteries went into the first positions of the Battalion, in Germany. Charlie Battery had, earlier on the 25th, fired the first rounds of the battalion in Germany at 0850, a check point registration. Now the 357th was on the high ground overlooking the Saar, southwest of Merzig.

As the 95th Division sector was moved up to our right, we occupied a sector along the Saar opposite Pachten Colony and Dillingen. We moved to the vicinity of Buren and Siresdorf with Service Battery in Hunnersdorf.



## CHAPTER VI

### DOUBLE-CROSSING THE SAAR



The XX Corps assault of the Saar was to be made with the 95th Division making the main effort and crossing at Saarlautern. The 90th was to attack through the 95th, enlarge the bridgehead, thrust through Dillingen and crack the Siegfried line. The 95th was unable to secure more than a toehold, so the 90th was ordered to make an assault crossing into Dillingen.

Our positions in and around Buren and Siresdorf were constantly subjected to Kraut artillery and even mortar fire. "The Bowling Alley" was the name given to the valley in which the towns were located. That is exactly what it sounded like, day and night. More enemy artillery was encountered during this period than ever before. The night that the roof of the Message Center house was blown off

by an enemy shell, was typical of how everyone had grown accustomed to "The Bowling Alley". Sgt. "Casey" Rice, Cpl. "Curley" Knoff and "The fighting 4-F" Cpl. "Swede" Larson were playing a game of 500 Rummy, when the shell hit the roof. As if the command, "Helmets on head, place" were given, all calmly reached down to get their helmets and placed them on their heads in one action. The game continued, not a play was missed. "Stinky, the newly naturalized dog, who had been adopted by Knoff, had the '88' jitters and was just a brown streak, heading for the cellar".

On 5 December, Pfc. Charlie V. Ard, of Able battery wire section was killed in action, while laying wire to Able forward observation post.

In 16 days we fired over 16,000 rounds and attached units were practically as busy as we were. The 949th F.A. Bn. (Cocktail), a 155 Howitzer Battalion, was our mainstay for support. We first met up with them at Montois and since have had nothing but praise for them. They had been with us most of the time since then and had proven themselves a decided asset. Cocktail was the fastest, and the most accurate unit with whom we had the pleasure of working. Most of the time they were represented by the ever pleasant and able, Captain "Come out wherever you are" (Garcon) Seddon. Whenever a mission suitable for the mediums came in, it was not necessary to start looking for the liaison officer, Cocktail had already been alerted by Captain Seddon and was standing by, ready to take the mission.

Early in the morning of Dec 6th, the 357th Inf. started an assault boat crossing of the Saar without artillery preparation. They worked through the mud on the opposite shore and by-passed some pillboxes so as to gain the high ground beyond Pachten, before dawn. Thus began sixteen days of battle, among the worst in the history of the regiment. They fought on "K" rations and guts, and without a bridge for the whole period. On the 2nd night, one of the TD's from the 773rd TD battalion was ferried across, and from then on, more came nightly. Medical supplies were dropped, practically in the laps of the Medics by the 19th Tactical Fighter Group. One company, alone, repulsed 30 Nazi counterattacks during their stay in the heart of the Siegfried. When the Regiment crossed, it was approximately half strength. During the bitter fighting against severe weather and fanatical enemy forces casualties mounted until companies were of platoon strength and battalions were of company strength. Still the regiment held, far out in front of the remainder of the Division's infantry, who were entangled in Dillingen.

There were many pillboxes that were by-passed, most of these were along the river and could be observed from our side. 240 mm Howitzers were used on these and at times an observer would fire a mission in front of him, turn around and fire the big guns on targets behind him. 155 SP's were again used to fire direct fire and were very effective in helping reduce these fortifications.

Our guns smashed many counterattacks and killed hundreds of Hitler's fanatics, who were defending in this part of the Siegfried. On one occasion a company of these fanatics came marching up a valley at right shoulder arms, marching up to the lines to attack. Not knowing they were close enough to be under observation, they made a juicy target for our FO, after he had succeeded in convincing Fire Direction that he was sober and not seeing things. Having fired a concentration near this point a short time before, the first rounds were practically on the target, making minor changes, the command was "Fire for effect". Report from the FO: "It's a beautiful sight, arms and legs flying everywhere". Even though completely disorganized, the few that escaped the carnage, came up the hill, screaming, "Heil Hitler". The doughboys got the rest.

So fanatical and insistent were these Nazis in counter attacking, it was necessary for the boys from Union to roll the dead from in front of their MG Positions so that they would have an unobstructed field of fire. At one time a short truce was called to allow the Krauts to carry away their dead and injured.

Communications presented a problem. Many attempts were made to run wire across before success came. Cables would break from the strain and enemy artillery would tear them apart. Tirelessly the wire crews toiled, hour after hour, and night after night. In the meantime our radios were busy every minute of the day. Fire missions, messages for supply officers, messages for medical supplies, pleas for

radio batteries, messages to Union 3, day and night, this routine went on. Fire control channel and the alternate channel were in constant use. Here the FDC radio operators deserve a note of praise for the way they handled these messages. Two, four, six at a time, yet all were handled without a flaw. Finally on the fourth night, Headquarters Battery wire crew succeeded in getting a wire across and the strain on the radio was eased. This did not mean that the wire section was through. Enemy shelling saw to it that they had little rest. Night and day they worked.

During all of this the HCO in FDC lost his voice. He reported to the Medics and after frantic efforts of whispering and waving of arms, and pointing at his throat, he received treatment: "A box of ever ready, all-purpose aspirin! Eat two every hour and don't talk". 15 days later his voice came cracking back. In the meantime he used a little horn: one toot for "No", two for "Yes". A cow, not knowing the password, walked in the back door of the shed that Headquarters Battery kitchen was in and came out of the front door in 108 mess kits! Captain "Dave" Graf, Sgt. John F. "Knobby" Piel and T/5 Frank Pratt left for the U.S. on well-earned furloughs. All three had been up front in liaison and FO since Normandy. An ARC Clubmobile came to the area but did not stay long enough for the coffee to be saucered and blown. Never-the-less they won the admiration of all for staying as long as they did, because there was quite a bit of "incoming mail".

10 December, Lt. Aram Zazian, Baker battery FO was killed by enemy mortar fire.

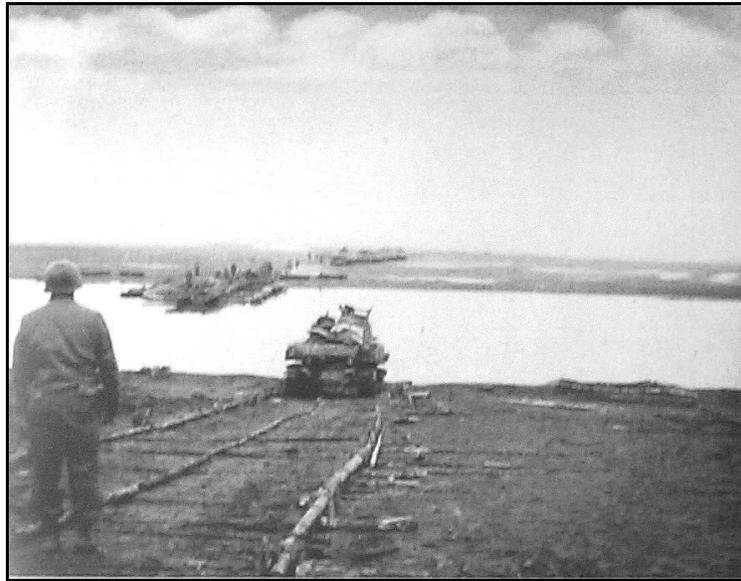
"Mason's Maulers" were still driving on, blowing pillboxes, killing Krauts and showing the Germans that when Adolph told them they were superior, he and not heard of the Tough 'Ombres, and evidently we hadn't heard that they were supposed to be superior, for we continued to chase and kill them. The enemy threw a number of tanks into the fight and many didn't return, with Urban getting its share.

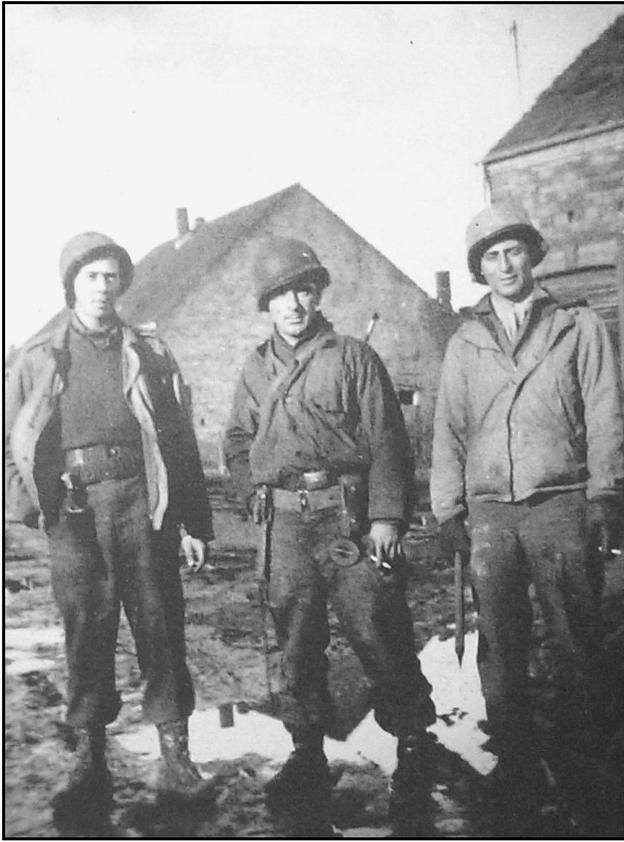
About the 15th, enemy shelling lessened some, this was near the time that Von Rundstedt's Ardennes drive started. Some of the enemy artillery had moved up to help in this counter offensive.

Down on the river banks, the Saar was forever enveloped in the white fog of an opaque smoke generated by a record number of nearly 9000 smoke pots, set in operation by the 161st Smoke Generator Co. The negro troops, working 18 hours a day, consumed 146,410 gallons of fog oil, to screen an area of five kilometers along a vital section of the river.

Von Rundstedt's offensive in the north necessitated a revamping of American lines and the Tough 'Ombres, on their 16th night in the Siegfried, gently disengaged from the unsuspecting enemy and returned across the Saar, evacuating more than 100 armored vehicles and all combat troops without suffering a casualty during the withdrawal. To accomplish this, Urban and attached units were busy all night, firing at strong points and sometimes firing, just to make noise. Before the withdrawal, the engineers blew up everything that could later be used by the Krauts as a pillbox. With the exception of two hastily improvised foot bridges, constructed on the first and last nights, the Saar bridgehead was maintained without a span across Germany's number two river.

The Saar had been double crossed.







## CHAPTER VII

### THE BULGE



After the successful withdrawal to the west bank of the Saar, the 90th received a holding mission along the river north of where we had been. Merzig was across the river in our sector. On 22nd of December we left the "Bowling Alley" and went to the vicinity of Waldwiese, where we stayed until 6 January. During this time, most of the firing was interdiction and harassing missions. A few movies and one USO Show helped pass the time.

Christmas 1944 was observed with church services and enemy planes strafing us. A movie was shown in the afternoon and evening with a delicious turkey dinner being served between shows. Some

of the sections managed to erect some beautiful Christmas trees with decorations and candles. Some of the officers donated their champagne to the EM and a truly benevolent spirit existed throughout the day with most everyone reminiscing of home and Christmas as it was there. The cooks of Service Battery will well remember the Christmas of “fourty-four” at Halstroff, France. They had prepared a wonderful Christmas dinner mingled with strafing attacks from German planes. There was one attack which came at the time they were getting ready to serve the Christmas dinner to the men of the battery. After it was over the machine gunner picked a number of bullets out of the truck on which the machine-gun was mounted. The mess Sergeant was manning the gun. For the Krauts we had a present, the new Pozit fuze. 4 TOTs were fired on Christmas Day.

Enemy aircraft was extremely active during this period and Undo Able started the New Year right by shooting down 3 of them. Turkey was again enjoyed on New Year’s day. Orders were received to move the division to the Bulge. With the greatest amount of secrecy yet used in the war the 90th was relieved by the 94th Division who occupied the exact positions we had, used our radio call signs and frequencies. Even the bumpers of the two divisions vehicles and shoulder patches were blacked out. The relief was successful.

Still under this curtain of secrecy, the 90th on January 6, 1945 started its move to the Bulge. We went back over ground that just a short time before we were fighting hard trying to take. Across the bridge at Koenigsmacher it was quiet, so unlike when we came over the first time. We moved up thru Luxembourg City and bivouacked at Ospern.

7 Jan we moved up to the vicinity of Mecker-Dundrodt, making preparations to attack thru the 35th and 26th Divs, who were stalemated. The objective of the 90th was the high ground and road net at Bras, Belgium. The orders to the flanking Divisions were to keep up with 90th at all costs.

9 Jan the 357th and 359th jumped off with the 358th in reserve. The going was plenty rough. It was cold, there was snow and there were Krauts – plenty of them! The 359th making the main effort, moved slowly, the 357th surged forward taking Berle-Doucous, Sonlez and the high ground to the north, even going out of its boundary to help the 359th advance. The Krauts were completely surprised. Exploiting the advantage, the division axis of attack was turned East, regiments attacked thru one another, always using the freshest men in the attack. The Jerries were caught flatfooted and overrun – they fell back in confusion – the 90th pressed forward – far ahead of the flanking divisions, moving thru Belgium, Luxembourg and into Germany in a matter of minutes. The attack continued by day and night never halting, across the Our River, into the Siegfried Line. Having driven a wedge into the vaunted Siegfried Line, the 90th was relieved moved farther East and again sent against the intertwined rows of pillboxes. To the artillery, this constant attack meant continuous firing; long continuous hauls for the ammunition and supply sections; cannibalizing of destroyed vehicles and constant work on the part of the maintenance crews to keep us moving. The FO and Liaison sections suffered casualties. The battalion was far below strength and many had to do jobs other than their own.

On the second day of the attack Pfc. Walter S. Vrooman and Pfc. John Ricci of the Liaison section were wounded in action. Vrooman died of wounds the next day and Lt. Hugh R. Higgins and Cpl. M. O. (Moe) Wood were wounded. All were from the same section. “Hig” and “Moe” refused to be evacuated until replacements arrived, then they came back to the CP to give the complete info on the situation to Captain Meier, our S2 Arthur S. Bettencourt, a member of Headquarters Battery until 17 Dec. 1944 when he was transferred to Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 357th Infantry was killed by mortar fire on 12 Jan 45 while servicing a wire in the vicinity of Berle, Luxembourg.

From Mecker-Dundrodt we went to Tarchamps, Wardin, Allerborn, Wilwerdange, Stockem, Asselborn, Binsfeld, Weiswampach, Leithum and Beiler. The Bulge was being reversed now, we were driving right back thru where the Krauts had come 6 weeks before. Six of the longest weeks one would care to spend. At Weiswampach, Able Battery set the house they were using for a CP on fire. Not to be

outdone Hq. wire section burned down the place that they were using for sleeping quarters a few nights later. It was cold those days but such a big fire was needless!

It was during this time that General Van Fleet left us to assume command of a corps. General Rooks assumed command.

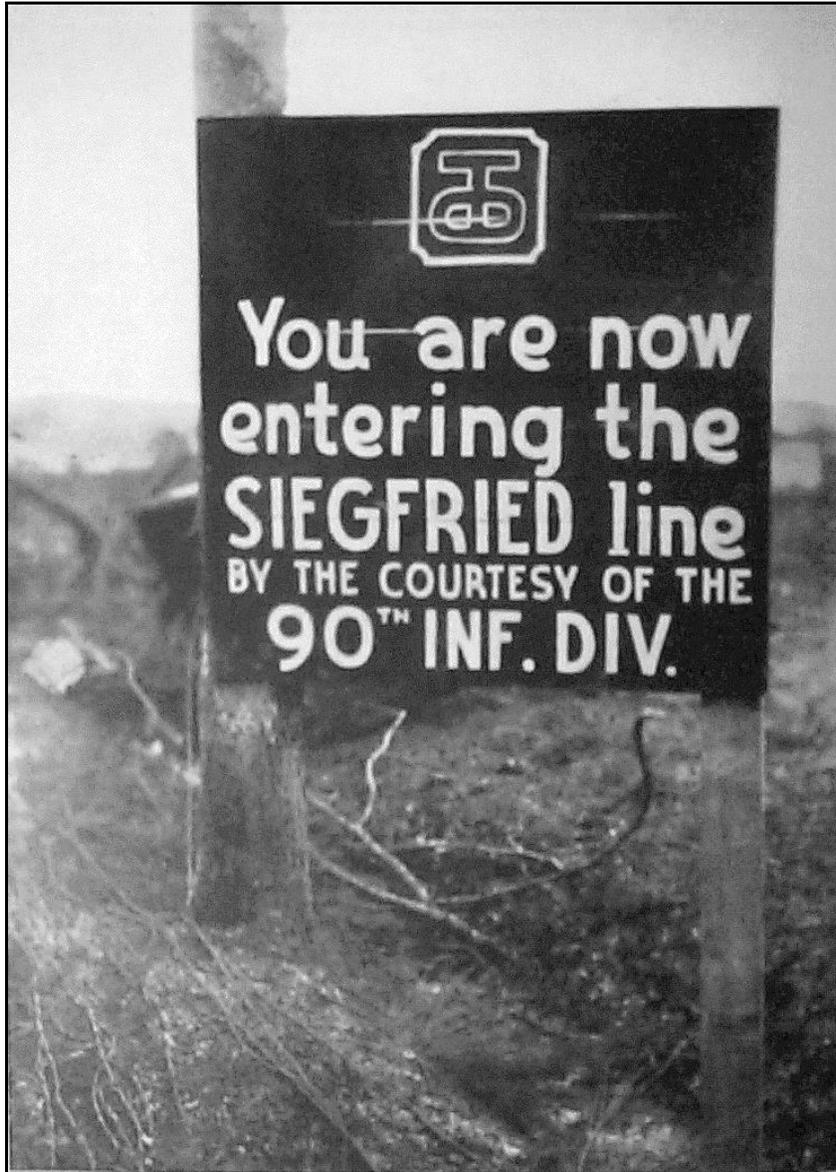
The battle of the Bulge was nearing a close. The sky cleared and the A.A.F. came out and riddled the fleeing enemy columns that were out of range of the artillery. Back into the Siegfried the Germans went with the 90th right after them.





## CHAPTER VIII

### THROUGH THE SIEGFRIED TO THE RHINE



On Feb. 5 the 90th moved out of their wedge in the Siegfried Line, and into another sector north of there, turning the old sector over to an armored unit. The Battalion moved to positions in and around Winterspelt, Germany, rather what was left of it. The T-Os were conquering again instead of liberating. "Shootin and lootin was guten".

Big guns and SP's were again plentiful as the doughs started to work on the Siegfried pillboxes again. The going was hard and slow and many rounds of artillery, all calibers, were fired night and day. Captured Krauts gave out info about assembly points, TOT's were fired and results were excellent.

The roads were in bad shape presenting a supply problem. Supplies were flown in by C-47s and dropped to the 4th Infantry Division, and the 90th Service Battery did their job and did it well and the ammo supply was kept up.

Cpl. Bill Pabst, Baker Computer, became known as the Battalion newsboy, only the boys in the Battalion didn't benefit any from the reading matter. His paper route was delivered by a 105 shell filled with leaflets giving the Krauts all the latest news on all fronts and of course suggesting that they surrender. Results were fair. Later as a special inducement to surrender, a few rounds of HE were fired at the same place the papers had been sent. The Krauts didn't appreciate our sense of humor. They didn't think it cricket for us to send them papers and then blast hell out of them when they went out to get them, but it did help make up their minds.

Another little trick was to adjust one gun on a point where there was always quite a bit of enemy activity. Sometime later when a few Krauts had been around this point and didn't get fired at they would get brave and more would start collecting around this point. That is when they got it. When good maps, survey and a registration were possible, transfer fire could be put on the target just as effectively. Of course this worked both ways. Don't bunch up.

There were plenty of juicy targets in the Siegfried, tanks, infantry, all types of vehicles and artillery pieces. We also furnished plenty of horsemeat for those who dared to get out and get it. The Heinies were getting shorter and shorter of motor vehicles and used many horse drawn vehicles. When an artillery shell is coming your way there is no time to quibble with a horse as to which way to go. Usually the driver went one way, the horse another and the vehicles and contents practically every direction. A hit wasn't necessary to mess everything up, but it helped.

As the boys from Union pushed on we moved up to be on hand with plenty of range to spare. On the way from Winterspelt to Eigelscheid a cut back in the road was encountered which necessitated some pretty good maneuvering to get the 6X6s around. S/Sgt. V. B. "Silent" Smith dismounted to help the driver, Pfc. Auge Mortenson got the radio truck and trailer around. After backing up twice the truck was clear to make the turn. S/Sgt. Smith was starting back up to the cab when an enemy round came over and burst just over the truck. Smith started to dive for the ditch in case another round should follow the first, Mortenson jammed the gears and gas at the same time taking off like a Texas jackrabbit. As the truck bounded away another round, a dud ("Thank God", Quote Smith) hit just in front of him, covering him with mud on the outside. Thus armored, Smith was waiting at Eigelscheid when the truck got there.

On Valentine Day, T/4 Ray A. Zabel of Charlie Battery was discharged to receive a battlefield commission. The next day the 343rd reorganized under a new Table of Organization. Some of the men are still wondering if we did or not.

One night while the battalion was at Eigelscheid, the FD radio broke the silence of the CP. One of the FO's was sending a fire mission on a tank. A doughboy was sending the mission to the FO. Location of the tank was very vague. It was just up the road a little bit, ahead of the doughs, near some trees. The HCO scratched his head and stuck a pin in the map and gave the data to Charlie computer. Charlie fired one gun, one round. The FO was notified that one round was on the way and to get a sensing. 5 minutes, 10, 15 "What about that sensing, do you want another round"? Finally the FO replied, "The dough says he doesn't think that you need to shoot anymore cuz you hit it the first time and that the tank is burning and the ammo exploding". Captain Ford and someone else went up on the hill in front of the CP and sure enough there was something burning up where we fired. "Paint another tank on the shield of that gun Charlie."

22 Feb, during the attack on Lichtenborn, Captain Lillard E. Pratt was killed by enemy artillery fire. He had gone up as Liaison 1 when Lt. Higgins had been injured and had been doing his usual superior work when he received the call. He was well respected by all and was known by the men of 357th as a Doughboy's artilleryman.

Also on this day T/4 Dean R. Irland and T/5 Stuart R. Spear were hauling some logs to better their gun position when their truck hit a tellermine. Both were badly injured and Spear died on the way to the hospital.

Lichtenborn was taken by the 357th and they were well on their way to the Prum river. Just outside of Lichtenborn strong enemy resistance was encountered and all available artillery was used to reduce the strong point. Toward evening the enemy counter-attacked. This was beaten down by a few hundred rounds of artillery. The infantry then moved on against scattered resistance to the Prum River and seized the town of Waxweiler. A bridgehead was established across the river. Orders came that the 6th Armored Div. would expand this bridgehead and that the 90th would go into Corps reserve.

The 90th had been fighting continuously since 9 November with the exception of the 2½ days it took to withdraw from the Saar and move to their position near Bastogne. During blizzardy, zero weather, the T-O spearheaded the Corps' attack to deflate the Bulge, drive the Krauts back into the Siegfried and then blast them out of the Siegfried. At Dillingen they blew up 260 pillboxes, here many more were destroyed. Now after moving up from the Saar to deliver Patton's knockout punch in the Bulge, then racing on and cracking the Siegfried Line and on to the Prum. The Tough 'Ombres were going to get a rest. The Doughs that went into Waxweiler were a little reluctant at leaving, so soon. It seems there was beaucoup ham and eggs, sausage, cognac, champagne, and wine. They couldn't stay, so they came out with their arms full. In the last 111 days the guns of the 343rd had been in position almost continuously with the exception of the 28 hours that it took to get from the Saar to the Bulge.

The battalion retired to Winterscheid where billets had been arranged for prior to our arrival. Showers, clean clothes, movies, pay and restful sleep out of range of enemy artillery and too close for buzz bombs. During our stay there the skies were overcast most of the time and it rained some, but no one seemed to care. The Luftwaffe stayed out of the air. Those 6 days were well spent getting clean again, haircuts, letter writing, sleeping and more sleeping.

1130, 3 March the battalion moved out, back thru the Siegfried across the Prum and into position near Winrengen. Our old friends, the 949th were there and were attached to us. Everything was quiet and we moved again next morning to the vicinity of Nieder Hersdorf. More activity here and we fired about 500 rounds during the day and moved to Kopp. The infantry was nearing the Kyll River and resistance was increasing. The Heinie side of the Kyll was called the Little Siegfried, the high ground overlooking the river was entrenched, and strongly fortified with practically a perfect field of fire overlooking the river.

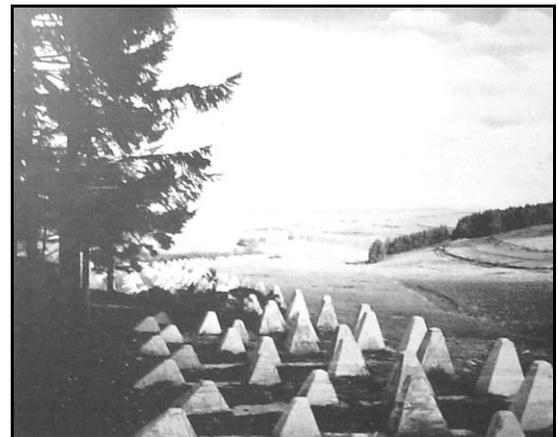
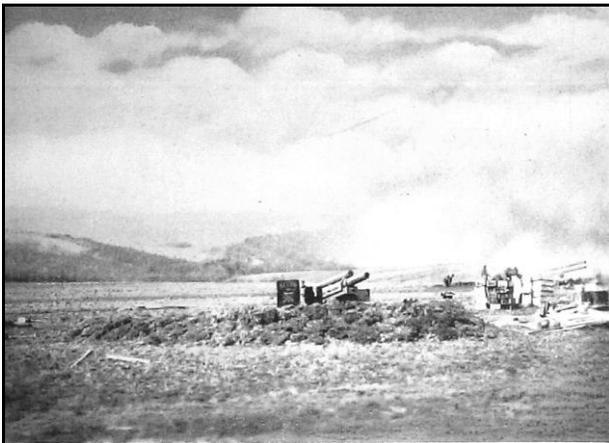
The 357th sent orders that they were attacking across the river at 1630 and wanted a preparation. Plans were being made for this when word was received that Sgt. Henry F. Deer had been severely wounded by nebelwerfer fire. First aid was rushed to him but he died on the way to the hospital. Henry had done more than his share of being up front and had served well and faithfully. He had been hospitalized once before and had come back to resume his old duties, as Liaison wire Sgt. a short time before.

The Union men, after a heavy preparation from us and attached artillery assaulted the river and later forced a crossing. We were busy firing all night and most of the next day before the bridgehead was completely secured and enemy resistance broken.

The Doughs had to pry or blast the Krauts out of their holes but once they broke thru an Armored Division came in and went on to capitalize on it. The Armor raced on to the Rhine against scattered resistance, by-passing the strong points and leaving them for the Tough 'Ombres to take care of.

9 March we were in position at Mayen, it had been a fast march with all buildings in all towns flying white flags and V-3 was still harassing the battalion. The Krauts were trying to pull back across the Rhine and about all the resistance to be encountered was the lame and lazy, who had been left behind in the race to the Rhine. 10 March at 1230 Sgt. Bailey's gun section from Able Battery fired the first rounds by the 90th Division across the Rhine. 10 rounds were fired. Next day we moved to Rubenbach opposite Koblenz with the Moselle between them. The 4th Armored occupied the town where we were located. Next day we moved to the vicinity of Kalt up stream along the Moselle, where the 90th and 5th Divisions were massing for another assault on the Moselle. It was the second time for both divisions. There were rivers at all points of advance so the amphibious 90th, the Doughs with the web-feet, were given the call. By the time a bridge head was established and resistance broken the tanks would be gassed up again and could start rolling.

During the advance across Germany all houses flew a white flag, where once Hitler's swastikas were. If a white flag was not displayed, warning was given and the house was attacked. If there was resistance the house was burned to the ground. All roads were cluttered with shattered vehicles and trudging refugees of all Nations. The refugees were sorry-looking but displayed enthusiasm upon seeing the Americans. They were happy at being released from the grip of the Nazis. They were happy because now they were going home; those of them that had homes left to go to. They carried their belongings by every conceivable means, in knapsacks, little carts and wagons, baby buggies, some had procured horses or oxen. Most were in rags, some old uniforms, some in new clothes they had "liberated". Some were barefooted, some new shoes, wooden shoes and some with feet wrapped in rags.







## CHAPTER IX

### ONE MORE RIVER TO CROSS: VE



At 0250 on 14 March the 343rd along with the rest of the XII Corps Artillery started firing the greatest preparation that had ever been furnished the 90th Division. There was artillery fire on every known enemy strong point and on the road net that the enemy would use to bring up reinforcements. Before dawn the infantry went across the Moselle river in assault boats and started pushing out against scattered resistance. This was the second time the 90th had forced the Moselle. We had to move up next to the river to give necessary artillery support. Shortly after noon the engineers had a bridge across the river on the 90th and 5th Division boundary and the necessary armor and supplies began to pour across.

Late in the evening of the same day we crossed the river and went into Alken, within 50 yards of the river. The high hills made it necessary for us to use the lowest possible charge with high elevations to clear the mask.

About the time of departure from our old position, Charlie Battery received a light shelling resulting in one casualty. The march to and across the river was quiet and well executed. Actually the night was as black as tar but artificial moonlight, manufactured by a search light unit, was a great help and did much to speed up the march. As the new position was approached good march discipline was stressed and the battalion was warned to be doubly alert as our positions were on the exposed left flank of the division. Many rounds of WP were exploding on the hill in front of our position, they were being fired by an attached 4. 2 Chemical Mortar outfit.

Early in the morning of March 15 the enemy counter-attacked the 357th using flak guns and 88s. Urban and its supporting units poured thousands of rounds into these enemy positions. SS Troops attacked with fanatical fury, practically all were either killed or captured. Few escaped the fast moving 90th. Coordination of infantry, artillery and tanks made possible the reduction of these strong points. Within 36 hours after the leading elements of Union Red crossed the Moselle. They were on the banks of the Rhine! Partial score for this CT was 300 SS Troops dead, seven 88s and 19 flak guns knocked out, in addition to countless Wehrmacht dead and vehicles kaputed, even boats and barges destroyed on the Rhine. The Union men sat on the banks of the Rhine at Boppard, seven miles below Koblenz, shooting at the Krauts on the other side and pouting because they were not permitted to cross. Army orders did not call for a crossing.

As the 90th and 5th broke through, the 4th Armored came thru to make a record dash in the direction of the U.S. 7th Army in an effort to trap Germans in this pocket. We moved along the Rhine as fast as additional troops could be brought up to hold our rear. The 90th moved on Mainz and captured it after a fierce battle. It was a slam-bang affair, slam on the brakes, pull off the road and bang, fire a few rounds and on the road again. We were harassed by enemy jet-propelled planes. It was interesting to watch the ack-ack boys, who to date had done a wonderful job, try to track these jet jobs. The jets were the fastest thing we had seen. When they came in low it was too late to start for cover because brother they were gone. The afternoon of 22 March we arrived at Marienborn, in position to support the attack on Mainz. Expecting to be there a few days, plans were made for showers and laundry and a chance to clean equipment, but a change of plans, they always came up, had us on the road about noon the next day. Shortly before dawn on the 23rd, the 5th Division had slipped across the Rhine in the vicinity of Oppenheim and their Division Commander had requested that the 357th CT be rushed up to help them expand their bridgehead.

At 1650 hours, Baker was reported ready to fire. We remained in position at Oppenheim until 1940 when we moved through town toward the bridge. The 5th Division Artillery was scheduled to cross before us but a short breach between convoys appeared and permission was asked to cross. Permission was granted providing we cleared in 10 minutes, the battalion cleared in 12 minutes establishing record time for the crossing and thus making the 343rd F.A. Battalion the first artillery unit, in the 3rd Army to cross the Rhine.

Although not receiving a casualty the move that evening will long be remembered. Enemy aircraft and artillery were extremely active around the bridge, but it seemed that they both "took 10" when we went across. The town of Leeheim was receiving the same treatment but as we neared the city limits the firing ceased. On through town, no sooner had we cleared than the Krauts dumped everything they had there. Urban was in position, ready to fire, about 900 yards south of town at 2200.

Many missions were fired during the night and morning. The armor passed through about noon and drove straight east. The 5th headed for Frankfurt, the 90th to the Main River east of Frankfurt.

Resistance was strong up to Darmstadt where the main line of resistance was broken and the 90th raced to the Main.

The first day over the Rhine Lt. A. J. Lease, Cpl. C. F. Groom and Pfc. A.F. Meisner, all members of a Baker FO crew, were captured by the Krauts. Lease and Groom managed to escape the next day when the armor overran the enemy. Meisner was recaptured sometime later but did not return to the 343rd.

On 27 March we were at Dittelsheim in position to support the assault crossing of the Main. Artillery preparations started at 0400 the next morning and the infantry crossed against strong resistance. Good progress was made as more troops poured across. Hundreds of rounds of artillery were fired during the day with a large percentage of them used in searching for a roving enemy gun. This gun or guns were hindering the work on the bridge our engineers were attempting to throw across the river. Double success was finally achieved and we crossed the Main to Wachembuchen at 0200 March 28, five days after crossing the Rhine.

In the last 23 days the 90th had crossed 4 large rivers, the Kyll, Moselle, Rhine and Main, slashed thru the Little Siegfried and had ran amuck over hundreds of miles of Germany. Thousands of prisoners had been captured and nearly as many more killed. There on the Fulda River it paused momentarily getting its breath and making ready to start on another record drive.

2 April we started moving from the vicinity of Hersfeld toward Zella Mehlis. The 90th straddled the hills of the famous Thuringen Forest while the armor took to the plains. Because the U.S. First, Ninth, Fifteenth and British Second Armies north of us had started to move out the Third Army was to swing southeast, thus the objective of the 90th was changed from Dresden to Prague.

4 April the 357th discovered the famous gold cache in the Merkers salt mines and stayed there to guard it until the gold had been inventoried and removed by higher headquarters.

The 357th Infantry stopped but we were assigned to supporting the fires of the other regiments and continued on our way across Germany. The back of the German Army had been broken and with the exception of a few units that were still intact, resistance was scattered. A few fanatical units fought savagely while the Volkssturm were only too glad to give up.

17 April at Heinersgrun after a 10 day absence the 357th was back in the war and we went back in their support. 18th April 90th patrols crossed into Czechoslovakia, and Germany had been split in half by the Tough 'Ombres. The remainder of April the division continued its drive southeast patrolling the Czech border but not going into the country.

As the drive gained momentum the 357th pushed out in front and stayed there. One battalion had to keep contact with the regiment on the left thus holding the 357 CT left flank back. This created a problem for us because we had to stay up close enough to give the front elements support and far enough back to support the left flank elements. It wasn't unusual to see the 343rd in position with 2 batteries laid on compass 3200 and one battery on 6400. This occasionally confused the FO's who had been led to believe, at Fort Sill, that the artillery fired over the infantry and not back of them. All observers were at all times notified of our position, but some observers did not check this on their map before firing. This proved rather embarrassing at times when the target was on a line between the guns and the observer. After a near miss on his own position, the observer usually gave fire direction a piece of his mind and in turn was asked to check our position before we fired the next rounds.

A number of old German towns were set-a-fire by artillery when they offered resistance after displaying their white flags. This happened to one neat little city, directly on the axis of communication. It was a proposed CP for Div Arty and Division, the town offered resistance, a new town was chosen for their respective CP's!

Many allied prisoners were freed during this time. Some were being marched to the Southern-Redoubt by SS Guards. Thousands of slave laborers were freed, the Flossenburg concentration camp was captured and political prisoners freed.

3 May found the 343rd sitting right on the Czech border in the vicinity of Rittsteig, Germany. The CG of the 90th had received a surrender envoy of the German 11th Panzer Division. We had received orders to move with the 357th but were recalled to participate in the surrender of this Panzer unit. Urban CP was used as the contact point when the unit started coming in and was being disarmed. Our howitzers had the road covered and as the convoy approached there was some speculation as to what would be the outcome if the Krauts changed their minds. The surrender went as expected, except the division arrived with a few hundred more vehicles and a couple thousand more men than the German Commander knew he had, others had decided that it was the right thing to do, so fell in line as the column passed!

The following morning we marched 54 miles, to catch up with the 357th, over familiar roads. In fact it seemed that we had been thru a few of the towns, while maneuvering around, so many times that we expected the natives to start calling us by name. The first few miles of this move presented a strange sight. The captured 11th Panzer on one side of the road and us on the other. The Krauts were being disarmed and as we passed they would toss us Lugers and P-38s. It was all so strange. A few days ago we had been tossing the projectiles at each other.

After driving from Hof to Zwiesel parallel to the border, we suddenly swung to the left and started up the main highway toward Prague via Pilsen. Neither point mentioned was reached. On 7 May at a point a few miles beyond Susice we were given the order to cease firing and halt in place. After the order was received, Urban closed at Petrovice and marched 13 miles further northeast to Cejkovy in case we had to fire for the boys from Union who had gained such momentum in their drive that they couldn't be stopped until then.

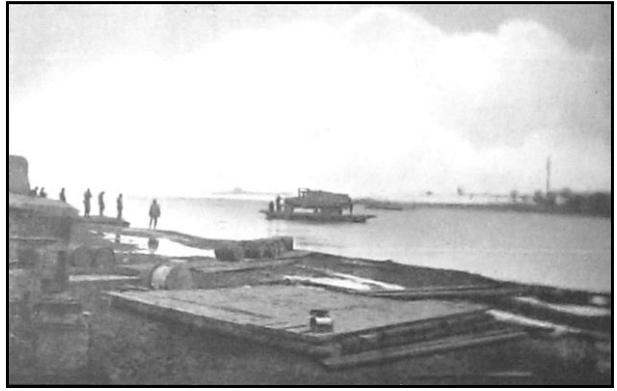
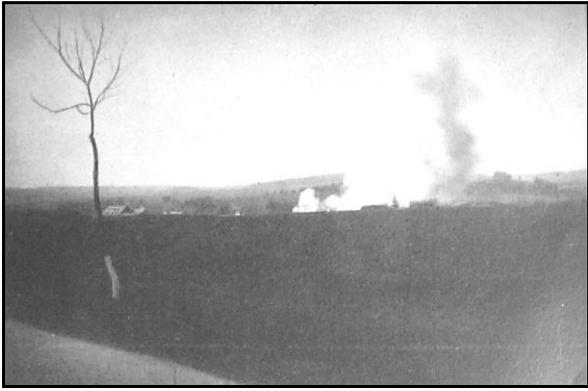
The march into Czech was a change over the past few months: we were liberating again. Everyone lined the streets and the roads in the country cheering us as we passed. It was a fitting end for the months of hardships we had been through. We moved into Cejkovy, Czechoslovakia, and set up our last combat position, a few hours later a message was received to cease firing for good, Germany had surrendered unconditionally.

The Czechs took us into their homes and gave us their best, dances were held and finally a ceremony with both the Czechs and our men taking part. The Czechs mustered the only group for whom they had uniforms, their firemen. A representative group of Officers and men from the 343rd met the formation. The national anthems of both countries were sang. The Mayor gave a speech of thanks and welcome to the "Glorious Americans". Colonel Reimers put forth his best in acknowledging the welcome, and indicated that all of us were proud to have done our bit in liberating the enslaved peoples of Europe. Although the words were his, the feeling was that of every man in the 343rd.

We have come a long way together and now we can proudly say:

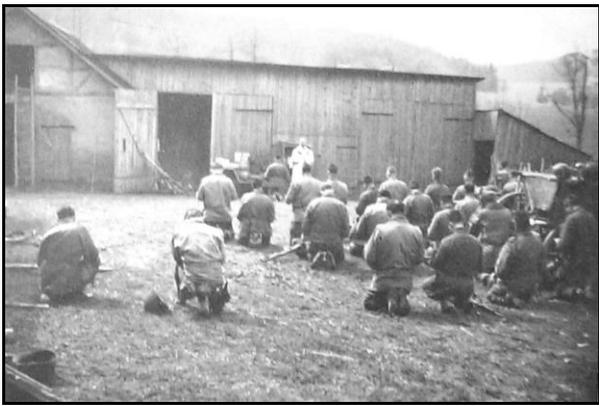
**MISSION ACCOMPLISHED!**

**Over — Out**











## SOME FACTS AND FIGURES

For those people interested in statistics, here are a few totals compiled by the 343rd Field Artillery Battalion from D-day to VE-day.

### Miles Traveled:

June & July .....	93	
August .....	554	
September .....	180	
October.....	----	
November .....	100	
December .....	18	
January .....	118	
February .....	33	
March .....	354	
April .....	415	
May .....	<u>100</u>	
from Utah Beach to Cejkovy .....	1965	miles – occupying 158 Battalion positions in 11 months

Rounds of ammunition fired and missions accomplished:

	Missions	No. of Rounds
Normandy .....	887	29409
Chambois .....	91	2242
Chambois to Maizieres .....	554	16439
Moselle to Saar .....	353	9809
Saar .....	443	19302
Bulge thru Siegfried.....	722	37869
Kyll R. to Main R.....	230	11027
Across Main to VE day.....	<u>131</u>	<u>5236</u>
Total .....	3411	131333

Most ammunition fired in one day was on June 12, 1944 in the Amfreville attack: 2981 rounds. Most effective mission: One gun, one round, one tank.

The ammunition train traveled 10000 miles in 11 months. Their longest single trip was 212 miles round trip. Their shortest was 5 miles round trip. In all their travels only 4 trucks broke down.

The authorized strength of the Battalion is 34 officers, 2 warrant officers, 473 enlisted men. From D-day to VE-day we had 61 officers, 2 warrant officers and 591 enlisted men.





# ROSTER

Names of all the personnel assigned to the 343rd Field Artillery Battalion from D-Day, June 6, 1944,  
to VE-Day, May 8, 1945.

## OFFICERS

### Lieutenant Colonel:

Kenneth Reimers                      Moose, Wyoming

### Major:

James W. Campbell	Kansas City, Mo.	Halloway W. Perkins	Crosbytown, Texas
Wayne M. Harris	Longvicw, Texas	Jesse J. Saegert	Seguin, Texas

### Captain:

Roland C. Bleimehl Jr.	Highland Park, Ill.	Arthur C. Meier	Council Bluffs, Ia
Clint W. Bracher	Port Lavaca, Texas	Lillard E. Pratt	Torrington, Wyo.
Fred S. Bremer	River Forest, Ill.	William D. Richbourg	Lakewood, Florida
Robert M. Derrough	Thomasboro, Ill.	Jeremiah A. Sheehan	Baton Rouge, La.
James A. Ford	San Antonio, Texas	Alan H. Surrell	New York, N. Y.
James J. Gable Jr.	Vista, Calif.	Ralph M. Springer	Chicago, Ill.
David F. Graf	Sandwich, Ill.	Carl R. Weinrich	Evanston, Ill.
Harwood B. Hott	Lancaster, Mo.	Daniel S. Wilcox	Bronxville, N. Y.
George L. Ingram	Ft. Worth, Texas		

### First Lieutenant:

Patrick J. Barry	Norwich, Conn.	Earle L. Lindquist	Galua, Ill.
Robert A. Beck	Boston, Mass.	Paul D. Marable Jr.	Clarksville, Texas
Robert W. Boroff	New Bloomington, Ohio	John B. Martin	Auburn, Ala.
Charles S. Bramble	Glasco, Mo.	Joseph R. McDonald	Brownstown, Ill.
Edward Bustram	Grand Rapids, Mich.	William D. Peck	White Plains, N. Y.
James W. Carrell	Portland, Ore	William J. Rhein	Chicago, Ill.
Elliott C. Derenein	Somerset, Pa.	Rollo A. Richardson	Haverhill, Mass.
Paul P. Flynn	Scranton, Pa.	Otto J. Schlesinger Jr.	Riverside, Ill.
Robert C. Gossin	Houston, Texas	Roy J. Silverblatt	University City, Mo.
Donald M. Graving	Battle Creek, Mich.	William D. Tatsch	New York, N. Y.
Edward C. Hicks	Marshfield, Ore.	Peter Timonet	New Orleans, La.
Hugh R. Higgins	Columbus, Ohio	Lloyd A. Watland	Estherville, Ia.
Keith D. Kelly	Gerand, Kans.	Francis L. Zabowski	Wilkes Barre, Pa.
Seymour Kravitz	Brooklyn, N.Y.	Aram Zazian	Dearborn, Mich.
Anthony J. Lease	McKeesport, Pa.		
Charles A. Leet	Lyons, Kans.		

### Second Lieutenant:

Henry R. Dutkiewicz	Chicago, Ill.	Dale L. Luff	Belvidere, Neb.
Steve A. Halasz		Robert W. MacCullough	Brooklyn, N. Y.
Maurice Kaufman	Birmingham, Ala.	George R. N. H. Nash	Warrenton, Va
Anson H. Klauber Jr.	University City, Mo.	Elmer L. Peterson	
Russell G. Lane		Raymond A. Zabel	Cook, Nebr.

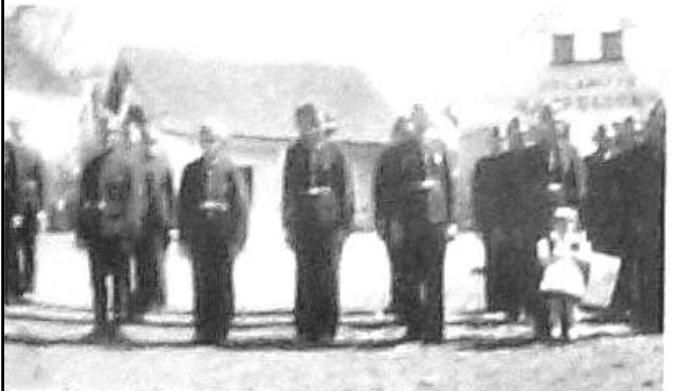
### Chief Warrant Officer:

James C. Norman                      Bristow, Okla.

### Warrant Officer Junior Grade:

Lloyd H. Weir Jr.                      Flint, Mich.







HEADQUARTERS



90<sup>TH</sup> INFANTRY  
DIVISION



## HEADQUARTERS BATTERY

### Master Sergeant:

Arlo W. M.atthiesen Fairmont, Minn.

### First Sergeants:

Earl Percefull Chandler, Okla. Wilmer R. Sargent Morrison, Okla.

### Tech Sergeants:

James E. Dean Gorman, Texas George F. Reeves Ft. Supply, Okla.  
Winfred P. Garrett Jr. Paris, Texas

### Staff Sergeants:

Louis A. Caro Jr. Franklyn, La. Leslie R. Oberschelp Ohio, Illinois  
Carroll W. Chipman Longview, Texas Walter J. Phillips Salinas, Calif.  
William C. Davidson Aberdeen, So. Dak. Verrell B. Smith Morgan, Utah.  
H. C. Estes Corsicana, Texas James A. Wells Malvern, Iowa.  
Dane C. Fitch Hill City, Kansas.

### Technicians 3rd Grade:

James V. Pacitti Springfield, Mass. Clarence W. Tell St. Paul, Minn.

### Sergeants:

Walter S. Cagle Clarksville, Texas Arthur C. Scarcello Rathdrum, Idaho  
John E. Piel Martinez, Calif. Hugh A. Sossamon Oakland, Okla.  
Kasimir J. Rice Anamoose, No. Dak.

### Technicians 4th Grade:

Harry F. Chatfield Lane, Idaho. Thomas S. Moon Jr. Cleburne, Texas  
Henry F. Deer McComb, Miss George L. Ojala Minneapolis, Minn.  
Wendell M. Ellsbury Ft. Collins, Colo. Francis H. O'Neill Winchester, Kansas  
Jack D. Fish Cheyenne, Wyo. Dennis L. Patrick Hunnewell, Ky.  
Stanley A. George Goodhue, Minn. Anton W. Pearson Pinedale, Wyo.  
Mathew M. Grahek Ely, Minn. Richard R. L. Slobig Palermo, California.  
James C. Hamilton Wichita Falls, Texas Julius Yuhasz Youngstown, Ohio  
David N. Lee Carrollton, Texas

### Corporals:

George Aeilts Ellsworth, Minn. Joseph Mott Greensburgh, Penna.  
Leonard P. Bennett Nebraska City, Nebr. Thomas R. McKnight Crown Point, Ind.  
Robert L. Cox Kansas City, Mo. Willie S. Robertson Cedar Grove, N. C.  
Clarence C. Damme Cook, Nebr. Sam Sambataro Monte Clair, N. J.  
Walfred O. Falgren Washburn, No. Dak. Howard T. Seay Henderson, Texas  
William A. Foye Salem, Mass. Melvin L. Stern St. Louis, Mo.  
Charles B. Johnson Gannett, Idaho Frank J. Stevens St. James, Minn  
Selmar A. Knoff Devils Lake, No. Dak. Leslie Stiebritz Longview, Wash.  
Anton C. Larson Balfour, No. Dak. Milward O. Wood Monroe, La.  
Orville M. Lindsfrom Guthrie, Minn. Charles B. Woodson Camden Pt., Mo.  
Fred W. Marshall Guilford College, No. Car. Robert L. Buchler Waseca, Minn.  
George J. Mayer Jr. Buffalo, N. Y.

### Technicians 5th Grade:

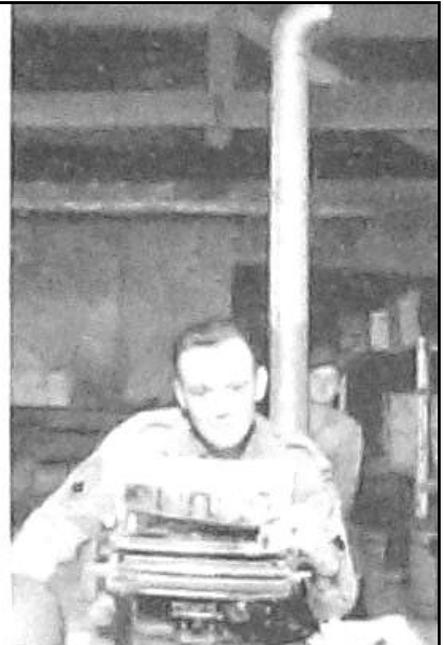
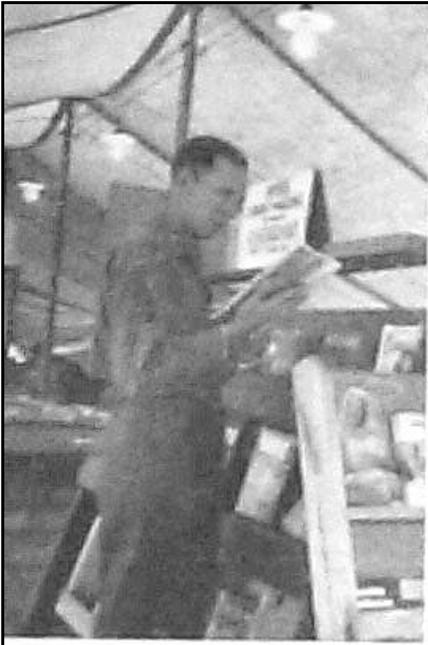
William J. Acker	Rusk, Texas	Andrew N. Lisson	Linwood, Kansas
Millard F. Aufrance	Wooster, Ohio	Joseph F. McCallum Jr.	Jackson, Tenn.
Louis H. Benoit	Denver, Colo.	William Newell Jr.	Elmont, N. Y.
Morris R. Brandhagen	Rothsay, Minn.	Arne E. Olsen	Oakland, Calif.
Robert A. Burns	Buffalo, N. Y.	William H. Pabst	Lincoln, Nebr.
James F. Chamberlain	Rochester, N. Y.	Henry E. Quellmalz	St. Louis, Mo.
Grover C. Chronister	Abilene, Texas.	Joseph Santore	Bronx, N. Y.
Joseph P. DeLorenzo	Little Falls, N. Y.	Joe J. Chalupsky	Seneca, Kansas
Wilbur A. Diethart	Minneapolis, Minn.	Richard J. Scannell	Pittsburgh, Penna.
Stephen Ferro	Cheyenne, Wyo.	Casimis W. Szczyciel	Chicago, Illinois
Carl J. Fink	Spokane, Wash.	Harvey O. Thonvold	Minneapolis, Minn.
Maurice F. Hartnett	Chicago, Ill.	Louis L. Titano	Brooklyn, N. Y.
Milton R. Holmes Jr.	Westmont, N. J.	Andreas P. Voll	Kaylor, So. Dak.
Frank A. Keller	Dickinson, No. Dak.	Woodrow K. Zumbrun	Cheyenne, Wyo.
Samuel C. Kelly	Wayne, W. Va.	Ray L. Ingham	Cedar Rapids, Iowa

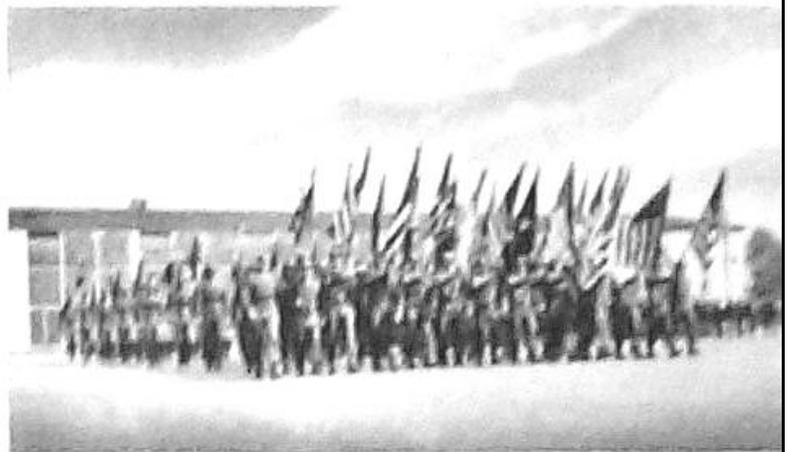
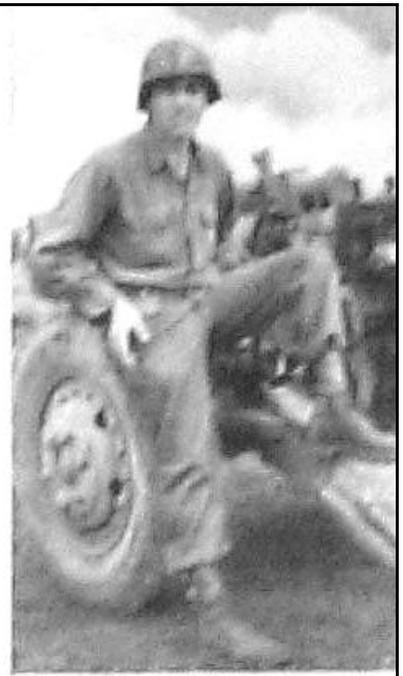
### Privates First Class:

Joseph R. Acito	Youngwood, Pa.	Armand J. Lebeau	Williamansett, Mass.
Virgil Adkins	Davy, W. Va.	Howard G. Leonhardt	Bellmore, N. Y.
Walter V. Anderson	Roff, Okla.	Francis J. Maitre	Yonkers, N. Y.
Clelon W. Brummett	Oxford, Miss.	Leonard C. Manzella	Corona, N. Y.
Donald B. Burch		David R. McCue	North Amity, Maine
Frealing F. Canklyin	Johnson City, N. Y.	Henry W. Morris	Corsicana, Texas
James Conroy, Jr.	Jackson Heights, N. Y.	Aage S. Mortensen	Minneapolis, Minn.
William J. Dillahunt, Jr.	Pollocksville, N. C.	Sam M. Pickens	Knoxville, Tenn.
Rudolph J. Eroncig	Chicago, Ill.	Mike D. Sarap	Steubenville, Ohio.
Chester H. Foster	Corsicana, Texas	Norman O. Schnorf	Sheridan, Wyo.
Randolph M. Hester	Rocky Mount, N. C.	Arthur F. Schroeder	Antigo, Wis.
William S. Holland	Lynbrook, N. Y.	Howard Sosbe	Cynthiana, Ky.
Herman R. Krueger	St. Louis, Mo.	Ola N. Stiles	Paola, Kansas.
Robert L. Kuykendall	Smithville, Miss.	Will Tarver	Malone, Alabama
Woodrow W. Langford	Amory, Miss.	Van B. Wells	Pontotoc, Miss.
Royal O. Larson	Superior, Wis.	Arthur J. Wolstoncroft Jr.	Pittsburgh, Penna.
Salvatore J. Lautande	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Carl Woolridge	Lavington, Illinois

### Privates:

Arthur S. Bettencourt	New Bedford, Mass.	Wilbert H. Klemm	Pittsburgh, Penna.
William L. Biddle	Rossville, Ga.	Frank H. Kocubinski	Trenton, N. Jersey
Patrick Bowers	Ashland, Wis.	Walter C. Lawson	Boisevain, Va.
Henry B. Cazabon	New Orleans, La.	Leon J. Lyduch	Chicago, Illinois
Franklin E. Haughawout	Colmar Manor, Md.	William F. Morrison	Decature, Illinois
Raymond K. Hedgecock	Antlers, Okla.	Herman G. Mapes	Painted Post, N. Y.
Richard J. Hoffman	New Baltimore, Mich.	Garnett B. Ratliff	Hinton, W. Va.
Audie H. Johnston	Commanche, Okla.	George W. Poteet	Huntington, W. Va.
Calvin A. Jonas	Richmond, Utah	William P. Thompson, Jr.	Clarion, Penna.
Raymond M. Joyce	Bronx, N. Y.	Hall G. Varner	Punxsutawney, Penna.
Fredrick F. Kelly	Chicago, Illinois	Clifton E. Walker	Alice, Texas
Ernest L. Kenimer	Beckville, Texas	Arthur W. Wood	Ft. Worth, Texas







## “A” BATTERY PERSONNEL

### First Sergeant:

Elvin D. Browning                      Chaffee, Ark.

### Staff Sergeants:

Warren G. Alberts	Golden, Colo.	Leslie V. Lampman	Minneapolis, Minn.
Woodrow C. Cavitt	Ore City, Tex.	Anthony T. Velella	Brooklyn, N. Y.

### Sergeants:

Fred G. Bailey	Hartshorne Okla.	Dave J. Huffman	El Dorado, Ark.
Norman F. Cahill	Cranston, R. I.	Wilson McKnight	Belleville, Ark.
David R. Crawford	Winnsboro, Tex.	Arthur L. Schuster	Sterling, Ark.
Wallace L. Edge	Bryan, Tex.	Ray W. Whidden	Olympia, Wash.

### Technician 4th Grade:

Ford C. Cook	Iola, Tex.	John D. Prettol	Ludlew, Colo.
Dean R. Irland	Otoe, Nebr.	John P. Semiraro	Bound Brook, N. J.
Gene A. Lindsey	Pineland, Tex.		

### Corporals:

Gilbert G. Arebalos	Santa Ana, Calif.	Beryl A. Harrison	Victor, Colo.
Lewis H. Bahn	Jourdanton, Tex.	Leamon Hough	Campbell, N. Y.
Ralph P. Davis	Tulsa, Okla.	Lumir J. Serovy	Cedar Rapids, Iowa.
Raymond L. Garrison	Okarcho, Okla.	Lewis H. Thompson	Smithville, Miss.
Sheldon W. Gauvreau	Chicago, Ill.	Joseph L. Wetmore	Leguna, N. M.
James E. Gentile	Buffalo, N. Y.	Lester O. Wildman	Monticello, Utah
Sam H. Gidney	Piedmont, Okla.		

### Technician 5th Grade:

Thomas Aberle	Napoleon N. D.	Robert F. Hyde	Grand Junction, Colo.
Cecil E. Bennett	Poolville, Tex.	Daniel S. Judd	West Asheville, N. C.
Anthony J. Boschert	Burlington, N. D.	G. D. Magnon-Maletta	Belmont, Mass.
Manuel M. Braga	Fall River, Mass.	Joseph C. Sellitti	Newburgh, N. Y.
Gordon J. Camuel	Duluth, Minn.	Leo D. Shipman	Piedmont, W. Va.
Fred G. Cook	Lawton, Okla.	Stuart R. Spear	Beverly, Mass.
Clarence C. Harshberger	Hawk Springs, Wyo.	Jacob Tousek	Shiner, Tex.
Charles A. Hart	Madison, S. D.	Arlvn F. Witte	Lemay, Mo

### Privates First Class:

George Adams	Lakes Andes, N. D.	Charles F. Greenhill, Jr.	Durham, N. Carolina
Charley V. Ard	Springville, Miss.	John Gubody	Sagin W, Mich.
Damian P. Arredondo	Kingsville, Tex.	Gilbert A. Helland	Centralia, Wash.
Albert D. Bates, Jr.	Baltimore, Md.	Oscar J. Hinton	Terrell, Tex.
James L. Blagg	Lubbock, Tex.	Albin J. Hladky	Mullen, Neb.
Clement A. Cosgrove	Stockton, Ill.	Arvin J. Holster	Brownwood, Tex.
Q.T. Cotton	Bruce, Miss.	Dewey Hopper	Vinemount, Ala.
Joseph K. Deranger	Cincinnati, Ohio	Coleman C. Howell	Arkadelphia, Ark.
Elmer F. Dietels	Avalon, Pa.	Robert A. Hulett	Pontiac, Mich.
Walter L. Ditto	Ferrell, Tex.	Nicholas J. Keegan	Bellmore, N. Y.
Lora C. Faries	Millsap, Tex.	James R. Kelley	San Jose, Calif.
John J. Foust	Springfield, Ill.	Garrett J. Laughlin	Buffalo, N. Y.
Walter R. Frank	Greensburg, Pa.	Alfred S. Lodge	Methuen, Mass.
Eulis O. Goodwin	Granbury, Tex.	Edgar W. Lowe	Greensburg, Ky.

Charles R. Markowski  
Anthony J. Marrese  
William H. McMillan  
Gustave E. Oseland  
Harry R. Pauli  
Frank J. Pils  
Tom S. Placeneio  
Steve A. Pudloski  
John Ravanelli  
Walter E. Reed  
Harold M. Roark

Belford, Mass.  
Rochester, N. Y.  
Millen, Georgia  
Mobile, Ala.  
Yuma, Colo.  
Seattle, Wash.  
Gibson, New Mexico  
Kent, Ohio  
Newark, N. J.  
Decatur, Ill.  
Marlow, Okla.

Philip C. Rubenstein  
Eugene J. Rusek  
Wilbur M. Schultz  
Daniel P. Sharp  
Theodore O. Smeby  
John H. Stewart, Jr.  
Cecil W. Taylor  
Fernando R. Valdes  
Isaac B. Vasquez  
Edwin F. Wolf  
Paul Ybarro

Rochester, N. Y.  
Buffalo, N. Y.  
Braman, Okla.  
Hennessey, Okla.  
Winger, Minn.  
Lanexa, Virginia  
Columbus, Miss.  
El Paso, Tex.  
San Antonio, Tex.  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
Navasota, Tex.

Privates:

John C. Arnold  
Willard W. Davis  
George Dolger  
J. T. Floyd  
Peter Guralny  
William Y. Hatfield  
Keith O. Jensen  
John F. Jeska  
Max Levin  
John M. Lynch

Rock Island, Ill.  
Deep River, Wash.  
Long Island City, N. Y.  
Big Sandy, Tenn.  
Syracuse, N. Y.  
Marion, Ind.  
Hyrum, Utah  
Salinas, Calif.  
Baltimore, Md.  
Nanticoke, Pa.

Willard A. McDonald  
Cyrel Putte  
John F. Raele  
Robert J. Rayno  
Milton T. Reynolds  
Charles Simcik  
Willard H. Stokes  
John J. Sullivan  
Joe S. Vigil  
Wilbur L. Wilson  
Gurley B. Womack

Compton, Calif.  
Walnut Grove, Minn.  
Brooklyn, N. Y.  
Franklin, N. H.  
Buffalo, N. Y.  
Taylor, Tex.  
Allen, Okla.  
New Haven, Conn.  
Pryor, Colo.  
Fonda, Iowa  
Okemah, Okla.





## “B” BATTERY PERSONNEL

### First Sergeant:

Lee O. Hyson                      Lawton, Okla.

### Staff Sergeants:

Clifford O. Albin	Spiritwood, N. D.	Edward F. Grybowski	Shamokin, Pa.
William L. Berry	Harpers Ferry, Iowa	Bonnie L. Scott	Peco, Texas

### Sergeants:

Odell M. Crow	Tyler, Texas	Harry S. Josefezyk	Detroit, Michigan
Merrill E. DeWald	Amour, S. D.	Joseph Sandoval	Gallup, N. Mex.
Floyd A. Grun	Houston, Texas		

### Technician 4th Grade:

John Burkhart	St. Louis, Mo.	Orvin C. Oien	Mission Hill, S. Dak.
Dennis Connelly	Denver, Col.	Amos C. Perryman	Alluive, Okla.
Glen W. Deanne	Axtell, Kansas	Raymond J. Radthe	Chicago, Illinois
Furn W. Fitzimmons	Wann, Okla.	Woodrow Young	Duncan, Okla.
Robert E. Mansell	Cordell, Okla.		

### Corporals:

Doris J. Block	Bethel, Okla.	Arthur O. Klostreich	Jamestown, N. Dak.
John W. Clover	Walhalla, N. Dak.	Emil Nishik	Elendale, N. Dak.
John Donche, Jr.		Cecil L. Parker	Paducah, Texas
Vincent A. Dziuk	Falls City, Texas	Leopold L. Sigala	Salinas, California
John A. Eaves	Holladay, Tenn.	Ramon J. Ulebarri	Blanco, N. Mex.
Robert M. Evans	Sandy, Tenn.	Frank E. Woodley, Jr.	Niagara, Falls, N. Y.
Charles F. Groom	Acme, Texas		

### Technician 5th Grade:

John Bohl	Denver, Colo.	Fredrick A. Kvamme	Fango, N. Dak.
Louis Christoffels	Beaver Creek, Minn.	Frank F. Pratt, Jr.	Little Rock, Ark.
Howard Conway	New Castle, Ind.	Mario P. Raffetto	Santa Barbara, California
Edward L. Hamouz	Milligan, Michigan	John T. Reynolds	Lubbock, Texas
Raymond E. Henshaw	Richmond, Va.	Obrey D. Rose	Newman, Illinois
Raymond J. Itos	Alden, Iowa	Russell E. P. Salamo	St. Louis, Mo.
Henry H. Jones	Wellington, Colo.	Albert G. Smith	San Jose, California

### Privates First Class:

Wilmore Barron	Bluffdale, Texas	Johnny L. Lake	Corsicana, Texas
Rene W. Charland	Woonsocket, R. I.	Alton J. Langley	
Chesley D. Clement	Paris, Tenn.	Nubern M. Long	Thaxton, Miss.
Willie R. Coff	Stonewall, La.	Herman E. Manske	Milwaukee, Miss.
Walter E. Coons	Denver, Colo.	Henry Maul	Billings, Montana
W. D. Cude	Dubbin, Texas	Andrew F. Meisner	Hannell, N. Y.
James F. Culley	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Crespin Mora	Gamerco, N. Mex.
Ralph E. Elliott	Sperry, Okla.	Raymond Roland	Waco, Texas
Melvin T. Gammon	Owens, Texas	Toney S. Ruiz	El Monte, California
Nunzio L. Gentile	Stamfort, Conn.	John S. Samolik	Schenectady, N. Y.
Henry Grundwalski	Burlington, Conn.	Margarito M. Sanohez	Del Valle, Texas
Premo Guerino	Mulberry, Kansas	Henry B. Schroider	Wagner, S. Dak.
Myrl Keel	Abbenville, Miss.	Author E. Shelton	Travelers Rest, S. C.
Louis M. Krohn	Bayonne, N. Y.	John D. Stafford	Collierville, Tenn.

Alvin F. Staton  
John T. Stormes  
Alejandro C. Velarde  
Milton P. Vorgile

Georgetown, Texas  
Texaw, N. Mex.  
Santa Fe, N. Mex.  
Cincinnati, Ohio

Joe R. Walter  
Fred D. Weyl  
Jackson F. Wintcrs  
James R. Worley

Menno, So. Dak.  
Plainview, Texas  
Guthrie, Okla.  
Todd, N. C.

Privates:

Walter F. Alberts  
Abraham Allen  
Christopher L. Anastas  
Edward R. Andrews  
Samuel F. Belcher  
Raymond E. Brink  
Ralph L. Butler  
William W. Campbell  
Emmit H. Carter  
Marcus M. Gase  
Jack B. Clarke  
Abraham L. Debord  
Alexander E. Edwards  
Gordon E. Gentry  
George C. Grimm  
Roy W. Grappe  
Leon M. Grupa  
Roy S. Hall  
Neil S. Harman  
John F. Hladoucak

Earlville, Maryland  
E. Cambridge, Mass.  
Norfolk, Va.  
Corsica, South Dak.  
Loris, S. C.  
Champaign, Illinois  
Bogalouza, La.  
Quarry, Va.  
Everett, Washington  
Durant, Okla.  
Fairbank, Pa.  
Anderson, Texas  
Waggoner, Okla.  
Oakland, California

Roy F. Hull  
Roy F. Jacobs  
Delbert McClelland  
Charles D. McFadden  
Spyros Mukanos  
George M. Peralta  
Martin Petkavich  
Vernon G. Regenauer  
James L. Rhodus  
Edmund B. Rusin  
Sebirn P. Rutherford  
Babilla Rossetto  
Octaviano T. Segura  
James W. Sikes  
James W. Smith  
James N. Swain  
William R. Thornton  
Isaac B. Vasquez  
Tony A. Vigil  
Richard K. Wilson

Jewett, Texas  
St. Louis, Mo.  
Bronson, Texas  
Aluquippa, Pa.  
San Francisco, California  
Elmhurst, Pa.  
Magnolia, Miss.  
Carbondale, Pa.  
Athen, Texas  
Erie, Pa.  
San Antonio, Texas  
Albuquerque, N. Mex.



## “C” BATTERY PERSONNEL

### First Sergeant:

Dale W. Cargill                      Oklahoma, City, Okla.

### Staff Sergeants:

Michael A. Calo	Waterbury, Conn.	George Pawless	Gainsville, Texas
Lerry A. Hoagland	Elmhurst, Illinois	Homer J. Pennisson	Beaumont, Texas
Patrick D. Joyce	St. Paul, Minn.		

### Sergeants:

Einar Arneson	Lostwood, No. Dak.	Jack C. Jordon	Oklahoma City, Okla.
James H. Auwen	Lexington, Okla.	Clifton R. Lindsey	Healdton, Okla.
Ray S. Burfield	Stockport, Ohio	G. B. Prather Jr.	St. Joe, Texas
Neal DeLeo	Queens Village N. Y.		

### Technician 4th Grade:

Willard H. Hlochderffer	Cleveland, Okla.	Owen K. Nesedith	Valley Falls, Kansas
Lester O. Hunt	Longview, Texas	Raymond J. Mount	Plain Field, New Jersey
James B. King	Forth Worth, Texas		

### Corporals:

Edmund K. Atkinson	Garvey, California	Charlie H. Preslar	Florence, Texas
Henry C. Barnack	West Springfield, Mass.	Wayne J. Robertson	Browning, Illinois
Walter A. Copenhagen	Aline, Oklahoma	George N. Schlader	Lisbon, N. Dak.
John J. Klein	Bronx, N. Y.	Jose F. Silva	Los Angeles, California
Titus S. Loos	Parkston, South Dak.	Donald R. Stockert	Port Angeles, Washington
Dever F. Miller	Valley Falls, Kans.	Daniel C. Trvarogowski	Cleveland, Ohio
Richard C. Pelletier	Beverly, Mass.	George M. Vredel	Deer Park, Washington

### Technician 5th Grade:

Willie C. Bennett	Dallas, Texas	Lester A. Olsen	San Francisco, California
Robert M. Carr	Chicago, Illinois	Joseph C. Romano	Brooklyn, N. Y.
Aubrey D. Cherry	Lafayette, Tenn.	Samuel Schmookler	Forest Hills, N. Y.
John F. Foxworthy	Seaside, California	George F. Shababy	Chicago, Illinois
Bernard M. Larkin	Annapolis, Mo.	Ernest W. Tollefson	Hickson, No. Dak.
Woodrow W. Miller	Annapolis, Mo.	Salvador Villegas Jr.	Missuor, Texas
Marcus J. Nagle	Manville, N. Dak.	Jerry F. Whitlock	Muskagee, Okla.
John F. O'Dea	Lima, N. Y.	Grover W. Wyrick	

### Privates First Class:

Jose B. Alcorta	Charlette, Texas	Frank H. Gray	Enderlin, No. Dak.
Theo Atchley	Charlette, Texas	Louis A. Guadagno	Bronx, N. Y.
Joshua C. Ball Jr.	Dallas, Texas	Macklyn F. Helms	Mancelons, Michigan
Walter L. Beach	Walhonding, Ohio	Robert B. Herrington	Livonia, N. Y.
Michail Bleaher	Canton, Ohio	Edmund Jim	Tohatchi, N. Mex.
Cort K. Blum	George, Iowa	Edward O. Johnson	Arkon, Iowa
James M. Bowling	Sissonville, W. Va.	Louis E. Kostello	Salida, Colo.
Harry A. Burgam	Clawson, Michigan	Joe Leveck	Singleton, Texas
Manuel S. Carranza	Phoenix, Ariz.	Herbert E. Letzring	Vesta, Minn.
William E. Clayton	Burlington, Vermont	Bernard W. Manning	Osborne, Kansas
Virgil L. Coulter	Randolph, Nebr.	Fredrick C. McKay	Detroit, Michigan
Harry Funt	Elizabeth, N. Jersey	Wiley W. Osborne	Cincinnati, Ohio
John Geisicke`	Fort Morgan, Colo.	William L. Owens	Grand Prairie, Texas

Frank H. Putman  
William O. Rich  
John D. Rollins  
Eugene Schlaht  
Orville B. Smithson  
Billy C. Stegall

Leon, Okla.  
Burkburnett, Texas  
Amory, Miss.  
Sheynne, N. Dak.  
Weber Falls, Okla.  
Monroe, No. Car.

Howard W. Stokes  
Gordon A. Thompson  
Louis A. Trelli  
William P. Tushar  
George P. Young

Springfield, Ohio  
Danvers, Mass.  
Bristol, Conn.  
Gilbert, Minn.  
Louisville, Ky.

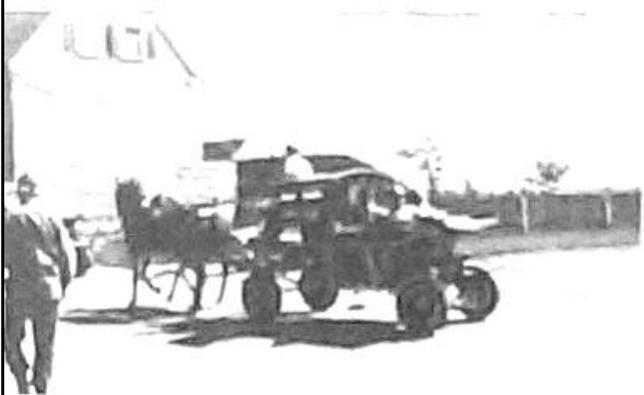
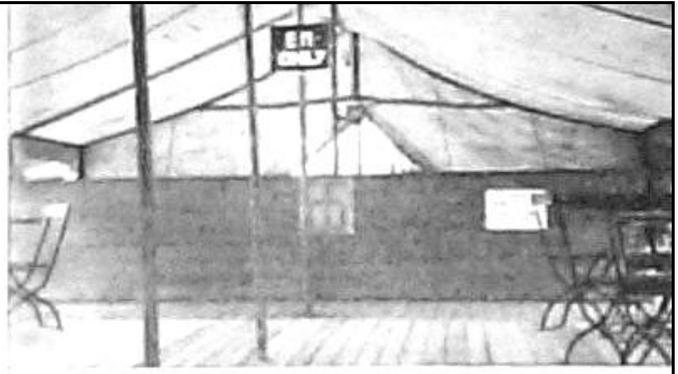
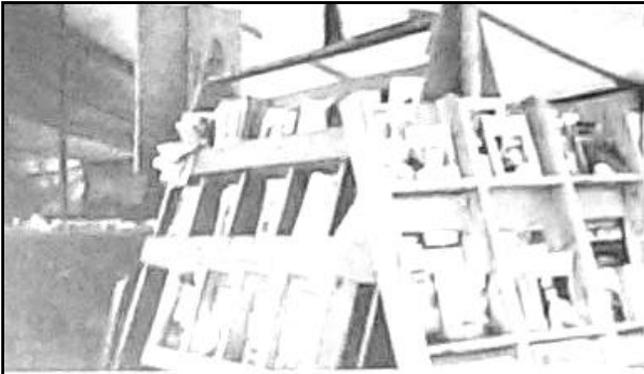
Privates:

Milton H. Anderson  
Eugene Bailey  
Harold A. Baird  
Frank V. Bassilio  
Ronald G. Bruger  
Elwood R. Cobb  
Robert C. Duncan  
Mack B. Evans  
Ernest L. Fletcher  
Noble E. Fraley  
James D. Gibles  
Edward Gotreau  
Peter R. Jasaite's  
Victor D. Keen  
Sylvester Malicoat

Narrowsburg, N. Y.  
Bonham, Texas  
West Newbury, Mass.  
Chicago, Illinois  
Burbank, South Dak.  
Interale, Maine  
Abbvile, Miss.  
Asheville, No. Car.  
Cortes, Colo.  
Winchester, Ky.  
Nettleton, Miss.  
Riddell, La.  
Chicago, Illinois  
El Monte, California  
Wanette, Okla.

Clarence R. Nelson  
Harold A. Nelson  
Ferrel E. Palmer  
Terrel L. Raines  
John Ricci  
Vincent J. Sladic  
Louis Sturman  
Harold T. Thomes  
Philip A. Trotter  
John T. Varano  
Gilbert Villareal  
Edward K. Vitale  
Harry V. Walker  
John R. Weinhardt

Camdenton, Mo.  
Duluth, Minn.  
Portland, Ore.  
Chattanooga, Tenn.  
Norwood, Rhode Island  
Pittsburgh, Pa.  
Brooklyn, N. Y.  
Bellaire, Ohio  
Springfield, Ore.  
New Britain, Conn.  
Tampa, Fla.  
Detroit, Michigan  
Delwein, Iowa  
Sacramento, California



## SERVICE BATTERY PERSONNEL

### First Sergeant:

Millard L. Barnes                      Boswell, Okla.

### Tech Sergeant:

Connely O. Fairchild                  Kansas City, Mo.

### Staff Sergeants:

Raphael D. Cady	Sanpoint, Idaho	Hurvev H. Poizin	Dover, Minn.
Donald W. McCarthy	Sioux City, Iowa	Earl D. Robins	Ponca City, Okla.

### Sergeants:

Murland Y. Flint	Layton, Utah	Lester M. Moen	Hunter, N. Dakota
Peter J. Gutekunst	Cleveland, Ohio	R. A. Williams	Dickens, Texas
Archie O. Harding	Orange, Texas		

### Technicians 4th Grade:

Fred S. Bell, Jr.	El Campo, Texas	Ewald E. Muggli	Glen Ullin, N. Dak.
Nelson Crowder	Clarkedale, Ark.	Kermit D. Rings	Gravette, Ark.
Edward J. Holland	Tecumseh, Okla.	John D. Taylor	Cedar Rapids, Iowa
William H. Huchteman	Franklin, Nebr.		

### Corporals:

Nathan Brandoff	Brooklyn, New York	Orion K. Hunt	Oklahoma City, Okla.
Harold W. Huddleston	New Castle, Indiana	Melvin L. Taylor	Eugene, Oregon

### Technicians 5th Grade:

Lowell E. Amos, Jr.	Indianapolis, Ind.	Albert V. Myers	Lander, Wyo.
Ivan D. C. Behrends	Auburn, Nebr.	Ernest J. W. Schoeffler	Eunice, La.
James E. Bender	Fort Smith, Ark.	Lloyd K. Shuter	Aurora, Ind.
Richard G. Giles	Salt Lake City, Utah	Clarence E. Thompson	Kansas City, Kansas
Leslie C. Hick	Henrutta, Texas	George H. Totten	Lansing, Michigan
George F. Howe	Edenberg, North Dakota	Clarence N. Williams	Dallas, Texas
Elden L. Kalina	Exeter, Nebr.	Paul P. Windholz	Hayes, Kansas
Arvel W. McClure	Plainview, Texas		

### Privates First Class:

Mathew G. Anderson	Minneapolis, Minn.	Travis R. Neal	Wolf City, Texas
Ralph W. Anderson	Minneapolis, Minn.	Regenald J. Page	Rochester, N. Y.
Jacob R. Buchwitz	Goodrich, N. Dak.	Worley R. Payne	Elk City, Okla.
Stephen C. Crganek	Binghampton, N. Y.	Floyd E. Plumma	Concord, N. C.
Frances E. Collins	Port Gervis, N. Y.	Olin A. Raby	Flat River, Mo.
Charlie M. Cox	Edinburg, Texas	Arnold H. Schnackenberg	Chelsea, Okla.
Ralph L. Cross	New Clarus, Wis.	Harry L. Slater, Jr.	Checkasha, Okla.
Bryan T. Crow	Stonewall, Okla.	Edward L. Smith	Flint, Michigan
Clarence W. Dotson	Fletcher, N. C.	Edward Sobczynski	Detroit, Michigan
Ivan B. Funderburk	Salisbury, N. C.	William A. Stevenson	Burlington, N. C.
James E. Gentry	Pontotoc, Miss.	Armando L. Tomo	Brooklyn, New York
Peter S. Locicero	Buffalo, N. Y.	Hal H. Walker	Reedsville, N. C.
Gellie R. Martin	Cortez, Colo.		

**Privates:**

Robert J. Barnes	Costa Mesa, California	Esteban Montoya	El Paso, Texas
Peter Calgaro	Chicago, Illinois	Jack H. Spain	Detroit, Michigan
Cecil D. Conrad	Mason, Ky.	Walter S. Vrooman	Eads, Cob.
Bernard Grimaldi	Hoboken, N. J.	Roy E. Walter, Jr.	Canton, Ohio
Roger L. Hayward	Grand Rapids, Michigan	Peter Wenz	North Fork, California
Vinson T. McNullin	Los Angeles, California	Leon S. Wiley	Oakland, California
William B. Young	West Asheville, N. C.		

**MEDICAL DETACHMENT PERSONNEL**

**Staff Sergeant:**

Richard G. Burges      Edgeley, N. Dak.

**Technician 3rd Grade:**

William F. H. Gibbon      Paris, Texas

**Technician 4th Grade:**

Joe W. Burgner      Evansville, Indiana

**Corporal:**

James J. Miller      St. Louis, Mo.

**Technicians 5th Grade:**

William A. Beasley	Indianapolis, Indiana	Lloyd C. Willman	Lonoke, Ark.
--------------------	-----------------------	------------------	--------------

**Privates First Class:**

Carl W. Howe	Boulder, Colo	Mule A. Paderson	Barrington, Illinois
Noe P. Jeminez	Lockhart, Texas	Howard W. Stevens	Lafayette, California
David O. Loyd	Sesser, Illinois		

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

*Each officer and man of the Battalion doing his job has made this book possible. Well deserved thanks are extended to all. To those that worked at compiling, writing, rewriting and editing we say, "another job well done." To Captain Meier and Lt. Kravitz an extra thank-you, and to Staff Sergeant Davidson for his invaluable work, a wealth of gratitude.*