

THE COMBAT HISTORY  
of



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"D" Company — 25th Tank Bn.

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This Book Is Humbly Dedicated  
To The Memory Of T-5 Lewis  
Crook Who Made The Sup-  
reme Sacrifice. A Good Sol-  
dier And A Good Friend.

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**NARRATIVE BY**

**P. F. C. OLIVER A ROBERTS and P. F. C. ROBERT J. TAYLOR**

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For their aid, the authors take this opportunity to express their thanks to.  
Lt. Robert R. Mc. Clarren, Pfc. Robert V. Menzel, Sgt. George M. Moretti and  
Pfc. Joseph Terranova Jr.

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## The Combat History of "D" Company

### The First Inning

"Move out!" An expression with a hidden meaning — a phrase comparable to "Anchor's aweigh" and "Take off" — a dreaded command to men of combat. We were going into battle. Testing the results of two years hard and rigid training. This was combat, there'd be no more dry runs or flag warfare. This was it!

The column of the 25th Tank Battalion rumbled out of the Foret de Charmes on the 20th of November and "D" Company moved into its place in the procession. "D" Company commanded by Capt. Wm. H. Smith of Revenno, Ky. Eighteen light tanks and 89 men. Ahead of us lay the Vosges Mts., Gertwiller, Wissembourg, Kapsweyer, Rittershoffen, and Hatten — names to be etched in our memories forever. Ahead of us lay the monotony of C & K rations, the piercing, relentless cold of the winter, the whine of bullets and the whistle of shells, sleepless nights, and always the enemy.

The column traveled southeast all that night thru Chatel, Pallegney, Domerve, Villoncourt, Dompierre, Girecourt, Grandrillers, St. Helene, Autrey, Housseras and to St. Remy. Dawn found us on a hill overlooking St. Die. Here was our first taste of war — our baptism of fire — for from the distance came the blast and the smoke of guns and the roar of tanks as our mediums rolled into battle. Here we had our first casualty — though non-battle. Cpl. Raymond Ott's foot was crushed by the track of a tank as it backed up. Pfc. Ralph Holst, Ott's bog, became the driver. We witnessed the panorama of battle that day and at dusk moved on again — this time to the north.

That night the 3rd platoon led by Lt. Paul Klinefelter of Waneco, Ill. and consisting of the tanks of S/Sgt. John Wilson, Sgts. Bruce A. White, John Caldwell, and Manuel Mello left the column to begin its first mission, that of guarding Division "A" Trains. Sgt. Caldwell's tank developed engine trouble that night and went to Ordnance. His place was taken by the tank of Sgt. Henry Germano of the 1st platoon. Always behind the forward elements the platoon and Division Trains moved through France.

Meanwhile the 25th column was pushing on. Along with company headquarters and maintenance were the 1st and 2nd platoons of "D" Company. The column moved through La Salle, Rambervillers, Baccarat, Montigny, Domevre to Blamont. At mid-afternoon of the 22nd it entered Cirey and on the 23rd it went through Lafrimbole to a bivouac beside the road to St. Quirin.

On the morning of the 24th, the 2nd platoon undertook its first mission. Moving into the vicinity of Abreschwiller they established positions to protect the left flank of battalion trains as they moved east. The mission lasted two days and then the 2nd platoon rejoined the Company.

The column was now at the foot of the Vosges. The advance was to be over this barrier; the obstacle over which no army in history had gone. The roads were narrow with hairpin turns; the visibility limited because of the dense forests and the cloud-like, low hanging fog caused by the ice and snow.

On the night of the 25th the column, with "D" Company minus the 3rd platoon, moved on the road that follows the Valley de St. Quirin to the peak known as Donon. Here the 2nd platoon in the following

formation: S/Sgt. Robert McClarren, Lt. Chrisman, Sgt. Willard Mellott, Sgt. Edgar Durbin, and Sgt. James Kimbley moved ahead to act as point for the column in its first attack. We sat here in the penetrating cold of the Vosges on the 26th giving more thought to it than to the mountains' majestic splendor. Shortly after midnight on the 27th the column moved to the Valley of la Brucke by Shirmeck with the 2nd platoon in the lead. That morning the column moved forward once again hard on the heels of the 3rd Inf. Division as it cleared the road through Russ and Grundlebruch.

## Gertwiller

The Column's original mission had been to move east to the Rhine and to secure a crossing when reaching it. When we arrived at Obernai the orders had been changed so that the column was to swing south, paralleling the mountains to their west, toward Slestat and Colmar. We halted temporarily at Obernai.

The attached reconnaissance went ahead to Goxwiller to determine the enemy's strength and we relaxed and waited. Reconnaissance learned from civilians that the enemy had an AT gun and 50 or 60 infantrymen defending a roadblock there. One medium tank platoon and one infantry platoon moved down the road followed by the assault guns. Soon the rumble of artillery fire came rolling on the winter breeze.

The 2nd platoon advanced to the edge of Goxwiller and halted there. As they fired their machine guns to the flanks, the infantry dismounted from their half-tracks and dug in. The enemy was now sending counter-battery our way.

The roadblock was reduced and our troops moved ahead — the lights following the mediums. Bypassing the assault guns they proceeded down the road. The advance was slow because of heavy enemy resistance and a blown bridge at Gertwiller. North of Gertwiller they came to a halt. Sporadic artillery fell around them. The tankers tried to see through the fog which was settling around them. Visibility was limited to that of a few yards. Two columns of infantry silently came up from the rear and disappeared as silently in the direction of the enemy. Kraut artillery continually whistled overhead. Through the fog occasional tracers appeared and darted here and there. The rapid chatter of automatic weapons was heard. The infamous burp gun, was at first thought to be one of our own water-cooled machine guns.

The 2nd platoon received the order to withdraw to a crossroads some 3 to 4 hundred yards to the rear. They took up a position on the road leading east to Bourgheim, which was parallel to the main line of resistance.

The 1st platoon was in Obernai with the remainder of the company. Guarding division "B" trains, they had also crossed the treacherous Vosges. Though they met no resistance they were constantly harassed by sniper fire. On November 30th S/Sgt. Robert Gilliland moved ahead to join the 2nd platoon relieving Sgt. Kimbley whose tank had developed engine trouble. As Gilliland maneuvered his tank around the column of vehicles strung out along the side of the road leading into the besieged town of Gertwiller he saw the medium tanks of "Able" Company. Flame belched from the muzzles of the 75's and the tanks reared back with the recoil of the guns. Passing the dug-in infantry alongside the road, Gilliland moved into position with Lt. Chrisman's platoon. An AP whined over the turret and gunner John E. Sopczynski opened fire joining the other light tank gunners.

The Kraut counter-attacked and our troops were forced to withdraw from the town. First, the mediums, then the infantry, and finally, still covering the infantry's withdrawal, the light tanks of "D" Company. This did not affect our positions to the north of town for as soon as our infantry withdrew a turrent of cannon and small arms fire was poured into Gertwiller. We our-selves receiving AT fire from an unknown position. A muzzle flash was discovered by "Mac's" gunner, Pfc. James Sechrist, and he accurately brought fire to bear on it. The enemy fire ceased.

A line was established at Goxwiller and here the men sweated out the night. The following afternoon S/Sgt. Gilliland was relieved by Sgt. Harold Krisley's tank. For the rest of the day and that night the lights held their position while the mediums worked their way into Gertwiller. The next night, the town taken, our tanks moved to follow the advance but were recalled and set up outposts at the crossroads at St. Pierre.

At St. Pierre, on the 2nd of December, the 3rd platoon rejoined the company. Coming through the French towns of Tonconville, Cirey, St. Quirin, over the Vosges, the prison camp at Shirmeck, and Rolsheim. They had been following the forward elements while guarding trains. With no battle stories to relate, they told of the time sniper fire had halted them and discovered they were among the forward elements of the 62nd column. The company stayed at St. Pierre and moved the next night to "muddy" Reidlheim.

## On To The Siegfried

The division was reorganizing for an attack on the vanitied Westwall — the Siegfried Line. In all our minds was the morbid thought "Who'll get it first and when?" Here we answered back mail, had sand racks welded on, and cleaned our tanks and guns. That was the job of personnel while the staff poured over maps and planned routes and battles ahead of us.

The 103rd Inf. Div. cleared the way for us through the Hagenau Forest. On December 12th the 1st platoon pulled out of Reidheim and joined the 62nd Inf. at Wittersheim whose column they were to point in the approaching attack. On the 14th of Dec. the 2nd and 3rd platoons also moved out — the 2nd platoon becoming an element of CCA Reserve. Along with Company Hqs. and Company Maintenance, the 3rd platoon joined the 25th column of CCA.

As the columns advanced each platoon went into the lead as the point. In the point you move slowly and cautiously, the engines barely hum. As he keeps his eyes glued to his sight the gunner scans one side of the road while the bog watches the other and the tank commander dismounts occasionally to go ahead on foot. At least that's the way we did it in Tennessee, but in combat you throw the book away and move fast. If we slowed down to less than 15 miles per hour staff was sure to be on the radio with, "What's holding up the column?" In the point you look for trouble, always wondering whether you can beat the concealed, lurking enemy to the draw. Your job is to draw fire so that the big guns can open fire; you're clearing the way for the rest of the column.

The 1st platoon led by Lt. James Fraser from East Orange, New Jersey followed by Sgts. George Smith, Harold Knisley, then the second section with S/Sgt. Robert Gilliland and Sgt. Henry Germano rolled out from Wittersheim on December 14th. First, they led the column through battered Hagenau, and at dusk were overlooking Soultz. At this point S/Sgt. Gilliland and Sgt. Germano's tanks went ahead to cross the bridge that led to the heart of the city. Once on the bridge a heavy barrage of timefire crumpled low over the vehicles and a hail of shrapnel fell around them. One shell lit on the road itself and an infantryman fell. The Krauts were pinpointing the bridge now. A second shell shook the tanks violently and a medic ran forward to see if everything was OK. "Yeah, we're alright!", Gilliland shouted down to him. It was an hour later before a lull in the barrage permitted the infantrymen who had been pinned beneath the tanks fer cover to withdraw and so enable Gilliland's section to move back to the waiting column. Another lull in the firing and we were moving again. This time across the bridge and on into the shelled out streets of Soultz where we finally ground to a halt. The enemy had withdrawn but had left snipers behind in the further edge of the city. All through the night Jerry sent artillery and mortar shells raining on what he had lost. There wasn't much sleeping for anyone that night.

Meanwhile the 2nd platoon led by Lt. Chrisman had moved with CCA Reserve through Hochfelden, Hagenau, Surburg, and Schwabwiller to Hohwiller.

## In the point

The 25th Column was also pushing ahead, with the 3rd platoon in the lead. The formation was S/Sgt. John Wilson followed by Lt. Paul Klinfelter, Sgt. Manuel Mello, Sgt. Arthur Roman, and Sgt. Robert Goodrich. The day was uneventful, mostly reconnaissance by fire into the forgotten and crumbling pillboxes of the Maginot Line. The column moved through Hagenau, Surburg, east of Hoffen and the north again. At 1430 S/Sgt. Wilson reported a blown bridge. The column halted at the railroad station there until the engineers put up a bridge and at dusk crossed the river and proceeded on the road to Oberseebach.

Morning came and the 62nd column took off again but this time things were quiet for them as they moved out. Early in the afternoon they were forced to halt again in a village. The town was clear but this time the bridge in their path had been blown, delaying the column several hours while the engineers constructed a treadway. The makeshift bridge completed, they mounted up, engines roared, and once more they were hot on the trail. That night tracers from the mediums who had now taken the lead screamed into Redseitz as the column rolled down the road leading into the city. This was to be the bivouac area for the third night of the mission. The third night of the mission and another sleepless one for as usual the Jerries pounded the tanker's new-found billets. Another blown bridge lengthened their stay here for another day and night. The five tanks outposted the town, one section guarded the eastern approaches and the second section guarding the western. The engineers relaid the bridge; the Heinies continued their shelling. The first platoon took up the lead when the column moved out in the morning, December 16th and that day reached Wissembourg.

On the right flank the 25th column and the 3rd platoon had also entered Wissembourg after bitter fighting. At day-break on December 14th with the 3rd platoon in the point the column had come through Oberseebach. The platoon formation was Sgt. Mello in the lead, followed by Lt. "Smiley" Klinefelter and S/Sgt. Wilson, recon peeps, and then the tanks of Sgts. Roman and Goodrich. South of Wissembourg there is a bend in the road and then a bridge. As Mello's tank cleared the bend and neared the bridge the others heard him yell to Freitas (the driver) to "slow down" — Then they heard the crack of AT guns. They had hit resistance. Sgt. Mello's tank was hit twice and Lt. Klinefelter's was burning. The column stopped, concealed from the enemy by the bend of the road all watched and prayed for the survivors. Lt. Klinefelter had popped from his tank as a cork from a bottle and though burned was reporting the guns positions to Lt. Col. Watson. Pfc. Emory Lanehart and Ross J. Cali were safe but suffering from burns. As the bullets whizzed around him, Cali had set a new record for the 220 yd dash up the hill from the tank to the body of the column. Sgt. Mello, T/5 John Freitas and Pfc. Robert Menzel were out of their tank. S/Sgt. Wilson and Pvt. James Wuellner went to aid them. The projectile had spun the turret completely around and locked the gun over the drivers hatch, T/5 Freitas followed Menzel out of the bog hatch. Sgt. Mello, with both hands broken and twisted, had managed to scramble from the turret into the safety of the ditch. Pfc. Menzel stayed behind to care for the injured man and was struck in the head by a piece of flying shrapnel. Leaving Sgt. Mello, he went back down the road, running and crawling, for medical attention for the severely injured Mello. Pfc. Peter Mazzone and T/5 Lewis T. Crook were still in their tanks and supposedly dead. That night Pete was found still alive, and though in a coma, was cursing "the bastards".

Mello's position caused our big guns to hesitate in opening up on the still-firing enemy. When he was evacuated they really cut loose with motars, 75's, 105's and 155's. Finally the German positions were silenced. Once again the column tried to cross the bridge, but were forced to withdraw because of heavy enemy fire. Sgt. Goodrich's tank, in the lead, dodged 7 shelling attempts by the Kraut gunners before he was able to move to safety. The column set up defensive positions on our side of the bridge. Crook's tank flamed as a funeral pyre all night, guiding in the Jerry artillery. The next morning, Sgt. Goodrich's tank in the lead, the column entered Wissembourg, meeting no resistance.

CCA Reserve entered Wissembourg the afternoon of the same day, having followed in the lead column's wake through Soultz, Reidseltz, and Oberhoffen.

## Task Force Myers

The columns were racing for the Siegfried now: the 1st platoon with the 62nd column, the 2nd platoon as the point for "Task Force" Shedd, and the 3rd platoon with the 25th column. The 1st platoon, after leaving Wissembourg, halted just outside of Schwiegen. The road leading into town was mined! There was no time to clear the road. The order of the day was "Push on vigorously", and so Lt. Fraser, motioning Sgt. Smith's tank to follow swung into a dirt road to his left — an alternate route into Schwiegen. The two tanks raced through the narrow streets firing at anything and everything. This was reconnaissance by fire, if Jerry was there he'd return that fire and so expose himself. Rettenbach was also clear and the enemy had pulled out leaving behind only a flaming tank, apparently knocked out by the artillery barrage that proceeded our attack. By this time the other light tanks were following although the heavier and slower vehicles had been left behind. The road led into a valley and then dwindled off until it was just a trail too soft for a tank to follow. While the tanks were trying to cross this field Lt. Fraser said he thought he saw an AT gun and the column was definitely drawing small arms fire. The column stopped to give the lead elements time to study the terrain. Lt. Col. Myers, commander of the 62nd Inf., who was by this time running along side the tanks with his service automatic in one hand and waving the tanks to "Push on vigorously" with the other, jumped aboard Lt. Fraser's tank shouting, "That's what tanks are for isn't it? What are you stopping for?"

The Germans were machine gunning the position as the tanks started up again. The ground became too soft for the tanks to go forward and the lead vehicle attempted to cut across the field in order to reach the road that ran parallel to the column. This tank bogged down, however, and couldn't be towed. In the meantime the rest of the vehicles had spotted enemy "doughs" on the right flank and saw them break into a run as they sprayed them with .30 Cal. The platoon would have to backtrack onto the harder road which would support the vehicles. Lt. Fraser changed tanks at this time with Sgt. Germano who remained with the crew of the bogged tank. The enemy now began to bracket in on the tanks with HE.

When the column reached the road they were exposed to murderous direct fire and it was only the cover they got from the approaching night that kept the enemy from picking off the vehicles. Shelter was sought in a nearby courtyard. This enclosure proved to be another "hotspot" for it was part of a huge chateau, the only building on the horizon, and Jerry didn't take long in zeroing in.

By now the rest of the task force had also assembled at the Chateau. Here in the Haftehof, as the building was called, all prepared to sweat out the night as the enemy proceeded to shoot the walls down around them. First, however, Lt. Fraser attempted to reach his stalled tank; three times he tried and on the third managed to reach the vehicle as heavy mortar fire dropped around him. He found the crew had already managed to escape. Led by Sgt. Germano, T/4 Paul Crowley, Pfc. Robert L. Hammitt and John T. Devine had crawled through the waist-deep, icy water of a creek that led from a spot near the tank

back to the comparative safety of the road. Retrieving his maps the Lt. made his way back to the Chateau. At four the next morning orders came to pull back to Wissembourg to undertake a new mission. After 11 hours of sweating them out, the remaining light tanks made a dash for the road that led back to Wissembourg.

## Task Force Shedd

Meanwhile the 2nd platoon, as the point for Major's Shedd's Task Force, had received orders to conduct a reconnaissance of the route between Wissembourg and Berg-Zabern. The Task Force was divided into two units. Lt. Chrisman's platoon became the point for the leading unit. The formation was S/Sgt. McClarren, Sgt. Kimbley, Lt. Chrisman, Sgt. Mello and Sgt. Durbin. A recon section preceded them. At Rechtenbach a portion of the road had been destroyed but a bypass was found. "Mac's" section and the recon section moved into a draw but a heavy concentration of artillery fire forced them to withdraw to Rechtenbach. After a foot reconnaissance by Lt. Chrisman and "Mac" the column moved out again, this time receiving no opposition. They came to the outskirts of Ober-Otterbach — here enemy installations consisting of pillboxes, dugouts and trenches were plainly visible. The first two tanks moved into firing positions and fired intermittently into nearby houses and bunkers. As the lights fired our assaults from the main body moved into position to fire. Enemy infantry were visible as Sgt. Kimbley's tank flushed them from houses in the town. The enemy began to send artillery fire in our direction. Radio silence was broken as the recon platoon leader called his forward section leader.

"Springfield to Nick, Springfield to Nick, what seems to be the trouble up there? Over."

"This is Nick. We need a squad of 'doughs' to see what's in town."

"This is Springfield, Roger out."

The Task Force commander then called the recon platoon leader saying that in the force were an insufficient number of infantrymen to undertake such a mission. At that moment came the ominous order to send a couple of light tanks into the town.

"Mac" went back to the assault gun section to direct fire on the enemy OP which had been spotted by section. As he arrived there the assault gun commander spotted what the thought were two Jerry tanks. Earlier in the day freshly made tracks of a German Mark VI or SP were found at the turn of the road adjacent to the firing positions and the reconnaissance elements reported that they had heard the sound of tanks in the distance. The heavy haze which surrounded the column made Lt. Martin uncertain but the familiar "whocoosh" and "crrumpf" of incoming mail verified his observation. Artillery was dropping around them accompanied by the patter of shrapnel. Our troops were not able to retaliate for the Task Force commander had given the order to cease fire. As the enemy fire continued it became more and more accurate.

Finally over the radio came the order to withdraw. It was a slow, torturous process. The tanks were headed north on the narrow road and were forced to wait until the main body was on its way before they could back up to the turn in the road and proceed ahead. As they did so the enemy stalked him, scoring near-miss after near-miss. At last all vehicles were turned and the column withdrew through Wissembourg to Geitershof.

## Kapsweyer

Meanwhile the 3rd platoon had proceeded through Wissembourg and Altenstadt to Schwighofen. Captain Smith was now in command of the platoon and the maintenance tank commanded by T/5 Glen Burgraff was in Sgt. Mello's spot. Just north of Schwighofen Sgt. Goodrich radioed back that he had spotted an enemy AT gun. The AT gun opened up and the column halted. A fierce dual began between the enemy AT gun and our assault guns. All that night the gun splattered the column's position but fatigue had caught up with the men and they slept.

The column moved off again the following morning with the tank of Sgt. Roman in the lead. Our tracks ground over German soil for the first time. At Kapsweyer the mediums passed us and began their assault. As the column moved up the road into the town one could see on the hill to the rear of the town the dragon's teeth and pillboxes of the Siegfried defenses. The command tank was now in the lead of "D" Company with the mediums of Charlie Company ahead of them and in the town. The counter-battery was terrific. The shells seemed to be passing inches over the turrets of the tanks. The infantry was coming down the draw beside the road and into the town — many of them never got there. Meanwhile the co-axes of the lights were spurting flame into every barn and house in range to combat sniper fire.

Suddenly the mediums left town and rumbled by the lights in the direction of Schwighofen. The 3rd platoon quickly followed imagining that the Germans must have unleashed V-2's or the like. No one seemed to know the reason for the retreat. Back at Schwighofen all learned that the Air Corps was going to take a crack at the defenses of Kapsweyer and the following town, Steinfeld. The sight of the 30 or more A-20's was a welcome one, but they missed the target.

Back into Kapsweyer the column went that afternoon, south of the town, deploying into the field. All that afternoon our assault guns and the 155 rifles of the 501st F. A. battered the town. The steeple in Kapsweyer disintegrated piece by piece as the guns poured it on. The mission became to stay in Kapsweyer and hold.

Task Force Shedd after also withdrawing because of the TAC mission hat moved out again on the same mission as before on a route paralleling the morning axis of advance. The platoon formation was the same as had been used that morning. From Geitershof the column moved through Altenstadt to Schwighofen, here they turned and followed a narrow lane through an orchard and sugar beet fields. After moving nearly a mile they approached the same Chateau, Hattlehof, that the 1st platoon had occupied. The day was a quiet one and the visibility poor but from the map overlay it was known that below the hill on which stood the Chateau were AT ditches, dragon's teeth, and communication trenches, forts, and other obstacles. The bluish, milkish haze was a curtain separating the Task Force from the enemy. This was the Siegfried line.

As Task Force Shedd moved up onto the hill Lt. Fraser's deserted tank came into view. Its suspension system buried to the hull in the mud below.

The recon elements moved into the courtyard of the Chateau while Lt. Chrisman deployed his platoon into defensive positions around the building. At the sound of this movement the Jerries began to throw artillery into and near the building. Since several of the light tanks were exposed (concealing terrain features were few) the enemy began very accurately to pin-point their position. Near misses were scored on the tanks of Lt. Chrisman and Sgt. Kimbley. At dusk the order to withdraw came and the Task Force moved to Schwighofen where they spent the night in a deserted German house.

## Night Patrol

Shortly after dawn on the following day the Task Force moved forward once again. The column moved into position in the lane they had moved on previously and the mediums deployed to the right and to the left of the road in defilade. Forward to the Chateau went men from the recon elements to set up an OP from which fire was directed into the enemy position. Laison planes circled lazily overhead. Sounds of heavy firing came from the vicinity of Rechtenbach and Kapsweyer where the 25th column had set up defenses.

Another dusk and Task Force Shedd withdrew again. The recon elements set up a listening post in the Chateau. The Task Force set up outposts on all roads while the 1st platoon of Dog Company plus the 94th Recon held the line at Schwighofen. Battalion wanted a detailed report of the enemy fortifications. Lt. Fraser of the 1st platoon was to take 4 men with him on a patrol to examine the dragon's teeth. Platoon Sgt. Gilliland was the first to volunteer and the remainder of the patrol was made up of Pvts. Joseph Terranova, Oliver A. Roberts, and Robert Leatherman. At 2100 hours they started out, together with 5 men from the recon platoon. The original plan had called for two separate patrols but at the last minute it was decided to combine them into one — to be if necessary a combat patrol. With blackened faces, they managed to crawl, after 5 tense hours, first through their own outposts, across "no-man's land", and into the enemy lines. Bypassing enemy guns firing on nearly Schwighofen they finally reached their objective, measured the dragon's teeth, and came back early the next morning with the desired information.

That night the recon detachment was sent to establish a defense line near the Chateau and S Sgt. McClarren and Sgt. Kimbley's tanks were sent with them as support. In mid morning the 68th A.I.B. relieved the 94th Recon and McClarren and Kimbley were once again detached from the 2nd platoon as support.

## Withdrawal

That afternoon the order came to withdraw, as CCB was taking over CCA's positions. The company met at Schwighofen, the 2nd platoon coming from the Chateau and the 3rd platoon returning from Kapsweyer where they had spent 5 days and 3 nights. Kapsweyer had been a war of nerves, the German artillery constantly pounded at our troops, supplemented by the burrupp of the "burp" gun and the whine of sniper bullets. The nights were torturous and cold, no one slept anticipating an expected and predicted attack by the Germans, safe behind their defenses and warm in their pillboxes. Twice our dive bombers gave us support and strafed and bombed Steinfeld, which was in the first ring of dragon's teeth. On the 18th 3 ME-109's had zoomed at tree-top level over the platoon's position, without firing a round. Our 50's on the mediums opened up but the Messerschmidts were too fast. By the time the 48th had relieved them the men's spirits were low and their nerves ragged.

On December the 19th the company moved with the Battalion to Schliethal. Schliethal was a rest from the fatigue of battle, a chance to enjoy life again and sleep!! Here the company set up outposts to support the 19th Infantry which held the town. On the 21st of December the battalion fired indirectly over the woods near Schliethal and into the Siegfried. Firing our 37's maximum elevation Dog Company joined them. Here the 2nd platoon lost Lt. Chrisman to "C" Company and Lt. James A. Williams, formerly motor officer, took over the platoon. Lt. Carey E. Hand joined the company.



On Christmas Eve the company moved via Oberseebach, Tirenbeck, Buhl, and Hatten to Rittershoffen. Pancakes for breakfast and then the traditional Christmas dinner — Turkey with all the trimmings and schnapps and wine substituted for Tom and Jerries and Egg Nogs. In addition to schnapps drinking the company maintained a perimeter of defense in the orchards in the southwest quarter of town. The stay was uneventful except for the afternoon when German flown P-47's bombed and strafed the neighboring town of Soultz-Sous-Fores. We were for the first time in days out of artillery range and felt somewhat like rear-echelon troops. We assured the very hospitable and friendly civilians that the Germans would never return. Little did we know.

## Counter-Attack

On the 16th of December the German winter offensive popularly known as the "Battle of the Bulge" began. In the wake of it Von Rundstedt launched a second offensive against the entire 7th Army front. It swept from the Saar River Basin on the left to the Rhine River on the right. Rapidly our troops were forced to fall back from the Franco-German border. Wissenbourg, Kapsweyer, and the rest, for which we had fought so hard, were lost.

After six days in Rittershoffen we moved out once again, this time to Neuwieller. It was after midnight when we reached this mountain village and most of the way we had been driving through a blizzard, the first real snowstorm of the winter. We spent New Year's Day here and left the next afternoon but not until we'd enjoyed a real turkey dinner. From Neuwieller we moved to Zinzwiller, which we reached that same day, to meet Von Rundstedt's thrust. We took up positions on a hill, covering the roads and woods from this high position. That night we moved to Uhrwiller, where several roadblocks were established. On the 3rd the entire company moved to Ingwiller where the 62nd A.I.B. only two days before had had a bloody battle. The first platoon outposted the crossroads here on the main supply route. Fighting was now going on only two towns ahead in Wingen. After several days here the 1st platoon was sent back for the second time to establish another roadblock in Uhrwiller. This time their stay was even shorter as they were sent back to Ingwiller to join the main body of the company.

The second platoon established defensive positions across the main road on the north side of Ingwiller. They remained a week in this vicinity, shifting positions occasionally. Once the platoon moved several miles to the east and went into defensive positions at the south edge of the Forêt De Domanile De Ingwiller.

It was a similar story at first for the third platoon. Billets again and guard — guard for each man 6 hours of the 24. You weren't alone on guard for Jerry nightly was sending 88's slamming in and near the town. Then, the 70th Inf. Div. moved up and the first section the third platoon went along as the point. All pictured a freezing night on top of the mountains as the tanks slithered back and forth across the slick, ice-covered road. They careened recklessly near the edge of the cliffs with jutting rocks below — the tracks vainly tried to bit the ice. The 4 km. trip down the mountain took nearly 3 hours.

On the 10th of January, the 3rd platoon, minus the second section, moved to Zinzwiller and an outpost at the crossroads was set up there. At 11 o'clock that night they moved to Uhrwiller to combat any German patrols in the vicinity. Finally, in the morning back once more to the outpost at Zinzwiller and then again to Ingwiller.

## Rittershoffen

The Company together once more, we moved to Worth. At this time the enemy had broken through as far as Rittershoffen, our quite haven over Christmas, and the 25th was assembling to attack and retake the town. Before dawn on the morning of the 12th we left Worth and by midmorning we had closed into an assembly position on the west edge of Hohwiller. The weather was cold but clear. Visibility was good. The battalion attacked. "D" Company moved out behind the mediums. Our part in the attack was to be left flank guard, to oppose any attempt the enemy might make to cut into that otherwise exposed flank of our moving battalion.

The attack progressed slowly across the long, rolling open fields and narrow treacherous drainage ditches in the vallies. By early afternoon we had reached the wide T shaped valley midway between Kundwiller at our right rear and Rittershoffen at the right front. Great flames leaped from Rittershoffen which was the scene of an attack of another of our divisional units. Here our advance was halted by a heavy crossfire from AT guns sweeping the valley. The company was forced to disperse along with the rest of the battalion and sweat out the deadly barrage that had already knocked out three of our mediums. This kept up all afternoon and on into the night when the battalion was drawn into a lighter formation for security. The still burning tanks, lit earlier in the day, threw an eerie light on the now powder-blackened snow. At 2200 hours the order came to pull back to Hohwiller. Picking our way across the boggy terrain at night, however, wasn't as simple as it had been during the daylight hours and several tanks became bogged down enroute. Three crews were forced to stay with their vehicles until they could be reached the next morning by retrievers. At Hohwiller the battalion licked its wounds and awaited further orders. The town of Ritters-

hoffen hadn't been taken, but more important, we had managed to hold the high ground adjacent to it. Also a foothold had been established in the edge of town. The German advance at this point had been definitely stopped.

At noon of the following day the 2nd platoon was given the mission of reconnoitering the valley to the left of the previous day's axis of advance. It was forced to return after it had received heavy direct fire upon arriving at the position held by the battalion on the previous day.

On the night of January 12th the first platoon was sent out to establish contact with a platoon of mediums of "B" Company on the outskirts of Rittershoffen and to set up an outpost along the main road in order to prevent any enemy infiltration through this weak point in the line. This was done and the men spent a long frigid night watching the white phosphorous from our mediums indirect fire churn up the inferno that was once Rittershoffen. The following night the platoon was sent out again to occupy the same position but this time remained for three bitter, cold and nerve racking nights. For now the enemy had discovered their general location and threw in countless barrages until every inch of the once white snow in sight had been blackened by his through shelling. A man who lay hidden during the day would maneuver to within burp gun range at night and then, by firing an arc of tracers over the tanks, would give his artillery an easier target to register on. Relief came for the first platoon on January 16 and they were sent to Hotschott as guards for the General's CP.

During this time, however, the 2nd and 3rd platoons had been carrying out reconnaissance missions around Rittershoffen. A small road followed the crest of a hill for nearly a mile then descended the north slope, across a small iron bridge and disappeared from sight among the bright buildings of Leiterswiller. Friendly infantry had laid a mine field along the road and across it in the section from the slope of the hill to the iron bridge. This area was at the left opening of the T shaped valley which had been occupied by our battalion on the first day of the attack.

At 1400 hours on the 14th Dog 3 rode out to make a reconnaissance of the German positions northeast of Rittershoffen. No one had been able to advance because of the intensity of fire from these gun positions. A fog was beginning to settle as they rolled down the road, out into the field, through a gap in our minefields, and past the dig-in positions of the "Rainbow Division". Sgt. Caldwell was in the lead and bogged down. The platoon left him to wait for the tank recovery vehicle and proceeded through another mine field to phase line "B". A German dough was spotted and then their artillery chased the tanks out. Meanwhile Sgt. Caldwell had been pulled out and Dog 3 went back to Hohwiller.

It was a mission that looked like suicide, light tanks against AT guns and dug in Tiger tanks, still on the 13th the 3rd platoon moved back to their previous position. Sgt. Roman in the lead tank, dismounted and made a foot reconnaissance. At his report of "all clear" Sgt. Caldwell's and S Sgt. Wilson's tanks skirted the hill moving into the valley and the orchard on the left. The platoon spotted vehicles and enemy doughs who didn't seem to fear our presence at all as they ambled around their guns and tanks. All guns opened up but there was no way of telling what damage was done. The Kraut guns were not to stay idle and they sent volley after volley in our direction. Once again Lt. Klinefelter's platoon began a withdrawal to the comparative safety of the slope north of the town. Sgt. Caldwell was heard to cry out "I'm hit!" and some choicer language as he directed his tank through the gap in the first minefield. Pfc's Unger and Phil Contre-ras applied first aid within the moving tank and Caldwell was evacuated as soon as they stopped. Lt. Klinefelter relayed to the F. A. the gun positions of the enemy and our counterbattery began. The German guns ceased their barking for about an hour and then went at it again — their accuracy improving. Pfc. Robert Taylor dove under his tank but a piece of shrapnel followed. As jet-propelled planes strafed near their positions, he was evacuated. The platoon stayed in its position that afternoon and withdrew to Hohwiller that evening along with the 2nd platoon, which had come up that afternoon to support them. That afternoon after the 2nd platoon had set up their position T/5 Harry Fitch was wounded in the forehead by a bit of shrapnel, as he sat in his tank with the driver's hatch opened.

The following day with a make-shift platoon consisting of Captain Smith's tank, "Smiley's", Wilson's, Roman's, and Sgt. Goodrich's tanks the platoon went back. They were ordered now to go past the orchard and up to the ridge on which ran the MSR to Rittershoffen. With the Captain and "Smiley" directing the platoon from the hill the remainder of the platoon started forward, with Wilson in the lead. With artillery dropping near, they proceeded into the orchard. Wilson's voice came to them as he radioed that he had spotted dug-in enemy doughs ahead. The platoon was ordered to withdraw and just in time. As they rumbled the hill and sought cover on its reverse slope, four German Mark IV's came into view. As they rumbled over the ridge and down the road, the 76's of "B" Company got two of them.

Meanwhile the 2nd platoon had relieved the 1st at their outpost on the road between Rittershoffen and Kulendorf. They remained there for 2 days and on the 19th the 2nd platoon joined the 3rd platoon in making their reconnaissance. As they arrived at their jump-off position enemy artillery came in. Shrapnel flew hitting Pfc. James Sechrist, McClarren's gunner, in the arm, leg, and buttock. The tank returned to Hohwiller for maintenance repair, while the rest of the platoon moved through the break in the minefield. After completing their reconnaissance they returned to Hohwiller with the 3rd platoon.

## Rest

The battle of Rittershoffen and Hatten raged for 8 days and on 5 of them "D" Company sent out its light tanks on their suicidal recon missions, always exposing themselves to enemy fire in an effort to make the Krauts expose the positions of their well concealed guns. On the 20th of January the 7th Army moved out of that area leaving the Germans "swinging at air" and threw them off balance. All units withdrew and the company moved by way of Surburg, Hagenau, Momenheim, and Hochfelden to Dettwiller. At Dettwiller it was the same old story, more roadblocks. On the 22nd the company moved southeast a few kms. to Litenheim. In the woods around Hagenau the Krauts were making a stubborn stand and so, on the night of the 23rd we moved to Huttendorf, a small village near Hagenau. Here the tanks were white-washed and we supported the infantry around us. T 5 Harry Fitch rejoined the company there. Except for a one-night stand in a fierce snowstorm while supporting the infantry as they cleared the Krauts out of Ohlungen Wald the company stayed in Huttendorf until the 3rd of February.

The battalion and the company moved to Bischwiller on February 3rd, once again in support of the infantry. The Krauts sporadically shelled our position. On the 5th the company moved to Gries, on the 6th to Weitbach, and by the 8th we were back in Huttendorf again.

The division was going for a rest and reorganization, the battle had been a costly one both in men and vehicles, but the 7th Army had stopped Von Rundstedt. On February 14th the battalion moved into Alteckendorf some six kms. west of Huttendorf. Here Sgt. Bruce White, T 5 Jose Calderon, Pfc. Robert Taylor, and Pfc. Ross Cali rejoined the company. On the 6th of March Lt. Klinefelter left the company to join Able Company. Lt. Carey Hand became the platoon leader of the 3rd platoon. S/Sgt Robert McClarren became 2nd Lt. Robert McClarren assumed the leadership of the 2nd platoon. Sgt. Hank Germano became his platoon sgt. Tank and weapon maintenance were the order of the day. At Alteckendorf we established roadblocks and prepared for another attack on the Siegfried.

## Through The Siegfried

The order to move out came on the 11th of March and as a company we marched to Ohlungen. In the vicinity we established 5 outposts on the main road junctions and intersections. There were artillery positions in every direction — the Krauts and ours. On the 13th Sgt. James Kimbley was struck in the leg by shrapnel from one of the many harassing barrages that the Krauts threw into the town.

As a unit of CCA Reserve the company moved to Ringendorf on March 15th. On the 18th the offensive began and we once again saw Rittershoffen and Hatten — the dust and ruins mute testimony to the ferocity of the battle there. All that was left standing of our Christmas billets were a few chimneys. We wondered what had happened to the people to whom we had said, "The Germans will never return." That night we moved to Oberseebach through Leiterswiller, Oberreider, Sundwiller, Buhl and Tirebach. We were once again treading on familiar ground. Time fire burst over Wissembourg as we moved in on the night of the 19th. We traveled to the northwest edge of town and set up defensive positions. The 2nd and 3rd platoons moved into an orchard on a hill overlooking the town. The 1st platoon was at the foot of the hill with the CP. To the rear of the hill and on our flanks were dug-in 155 Hows. The guns set up a deafening and vilolent crescendo which shook the ground as though a quake were in progress. On the ridge before us TD's were being dug-in to act as artillery. We were throwing the book at the Siegfried. It was here that we heard for the first time the elephant-like whine of German rockets.

On March 22nd the company moved ahead. The first platoon deployed their tanks around Schwighofen, one section going ahead as outposts. The 2nd platoon guarded the left flank of CCA Headquarters and the 3rd platoon the right.

After dawn the 2nd platoon moved ahead through Kapsweyer, then north to take up defillade positions overlooking the Siegfried defenses. Later in the day they were joined by the 3rd platoon. That day witnessed the terrific pounding that our artillery and tanks were giving the pillboxes. Toward dusk they themselves joined in, the 37's must have annoyed the enemy for they retaliated with their own artillery. As night fell the 2nd and 3rd platoons were relieved by the 94th Recon and withdrew to outpost Kapsweyer. The town burned and buildings collapsed around them as they set up their outposts. The Krauts were exhausting the stores in their pillboxes. The basket and rear of Sgt. Leatherman's tank were punctured as a sieve when a Nebelwerfer (German rocket) landed a few feet away from it. A rocket launcher had fired near their position and then left, leaving the light tank to suffer the tremendous return fire.

Morning came and the battle had lost much of its intensity and news came that Jerry was on the run. The Company rejoined and with CCA Headquarters pulled out of Kapsweyer that night going through Steinfeld, Schaidt, Fredchenfeld to Minfeld. Traveling was difficult for the convoys of the reckless, carefree French were jamming traffic. Non-linguistic MP's tore their hair in despair as they tried to maintain traffic control. In Minfeld the company set up outposts and maintained foot patrols on the following morning. That afternoon we moved on to the woods northeast of Minfeld. Here we heard that all Germans except for a few surrounded pockets were across the Rhine. We were relieved from CCA and joined the battalion at

Schaidt within the Siegfried defenses. We rejoiced that we were for once in the "light zone" and built roaring fires at our outposts which we shared with the 68th A.I.B. Everyone took a crack at looting and exploring the pillboxes there — wondering all the while how we ever got through the Siegfried with its intricate and strong fortifications.

On the 29th the 1st platoon went to Schwighofen to guard Div. Hq. Trains. The remainder of the company left Schaidt on the 30th and went to Steinfeld to guard Div. Supply Trains.

## Over The Rhine

On April 1st, Easter Sunday, the division moved to cross the Rhine. Through Berg-Zabern, Landau, Offenbach, Lochen, Hassbach, Mechenheim, Friedesheim, Frankenthal, by passing Worms and crossing the Rhine at Rhine Durkheim. The 2nd and 3rd platoons with Div. Supply Trains went on to Ober-Ramstadt through Bihles, Burshstadt, Loesch, and Darmstadt. Four tanks of the 1st platoon were forced to fall out of their column because of a gas shortage, but S/Sgt. Gilliland had proceeded across the Rhine. With gas tanks filled the others moved ahead and joined their column the next morning at Rheinheim.

The Germans were advancing to the rear rapidly and it was becoming increasingly difficult for our advance elements to keep engaged with them. Towns became little more than mileposts along the path of victory.

The company minus the 1st platoon left Ober-Ramstadt with Div. Trains on April 2nd and in rapid succession moved through Shippach, Lohr, Neustadt, Heldburg, Wattendorf, Pependorf arriving in Hersbruck on the 18th. Hersbruck meant beautiful women and the 65 dollar question, the bridge and the dive bombers, and the inevitable "bed-check Charlie", who was now unloading eggs.

On the 21st of April the first section the the 3rd platoon under "Mac's" leadership went ahead with a patrol to establish CP's preparatory to moving Div. Trains to Hippolstein. As they neared the outskirts of the town the Germans counter-attacked and amidst a hail of artillery the patrol was forced to withdraw to Hersbruck. That night at 8 o'clock the enemy or civilians moved an AT gun up on the hill overlooking town. The position was detected after the first rounds flew into the city. Everyone opened up and splattered the hillside, 37's, AA 50's, 75's, and 76's. There was no further sound from the German position. The next morning a patrol led by Lt. McClarren found no trace of the gun or of its tracks, only the pile of used ammunition. The following day the 68th Inf. Div. came up to protect the flanks and we learned that up until then Div. Trains had been the furthestmost eastward element of the 7th Army. At Hersbruck Lt. McClarren and Lt. Hand switched platoons.

Meanwhile the 1st platoon had traveled with Div. Hqs. through Parthenstein as far as Hammelburg and the prison camp there that had been liberated 2 days before. Leaving Div. Hqs. they had first gone to guard the medics at Goosenheim and then joined the battalion the next afternoon. After a short stay with our Sv. Co. the became the point for the 25th column. The formation became Lt. Fraser's tank, Sgt. Abbott's, S/Sgt. Gilliland's, and Sgt. Sopczynski's. The fifth tank was now at Ordnance. They started out with four reconnaissance peeps in the lead. They were ahead of schedule and they went on until they reached Sheena. Here the bridge was out and sniper fire whined over their turrets. The fire came from across the river. The tanks pulled off to the left to wait in the town while supporting 105's took up positions. The accompanying assault tanks threw direct fire into the edge of the adjacent town while the infantry crossed the river. Lichtenfeld was cleared and several prisoners were taken. The four light tanks didn't move, but established outposts at various points within the town along with other units and remained here overnight. Besides several villages a number of Lugars had been liberated that day. The mediums led the way as the column forded the river but once on the opposite side the 1st platoon took its place at the head of the column. As they rolled through town after town the only Germans they saw were civilians, frightened groups of women and children who stared in surprised as the tankers passed them by.

The country was mountainous now. The column turned off the road to follow a trail. The light tanks struggled over the boulder strewn hills following the set of wagon tracks that led them into the "backdoor" of tiny mountain villages. Occasionally sniper fire whined overhead as they passed a wooded section but, more often, the tankers saw only the bewildered civilians for whom, until now, the war had been, so far away.

That evening the column had gone as far as Altdorf and here spent the night. The following night the 1st platoon was sent to guard the 975th F.A. located several villages behind Altdorf in the mountains. Three outposts were maintained here throughout that night and early the following morning the platoon retraced its steps back to Altdorf where it joined the 25th column, which was moving up again. The third night found the entire battalion bivouaced in a field on the outskirts of Haag. That night the first platoon sent out patrols to establish contact with the 94th Recon in nearby Littinhard. Leaving the battalion again the platoon was sent to establish an outpost on the superhighway adjacent to Troceau where the elements of the 62nd Infantry were set up. They remained here all that night and the following day went to take over outposts from "B" Company of the 25th. That evening the 25th was relieved by the 86th Inf. Div. and once again assembled at Haag where another night was spent.

## Altenfeld

While elements of the 14th were fighting in nearby Bayreuth and Nuremberg the first platoon was attached to Service Company as guards and after several days of long, uneventful road marches arrived at Fuch. Here the fifth tank returned from Ordinance, the platoon left Service Company on the 22nd of April for Altenfeld. The platoon now had six tanks with it. Our maintenance tank, commanded by T/5 Schnell and driven by T/5 Hollman had come to them as a replacement on the platoon's first day as point for the 25th column. Previous to joining the first platoon it had acted as the liaison vehicle for Col. Watson.

At Altenfeld enemy S. P. guns managed to tie up the advance. Stopping here the tanks were scattered for protection against the incoming artillery. Tank commander Schnell was hit by shrapnel and evacuated. That night the platoon lost a tank, ambushed while patrolling the road between Altenfeld and Fuch. The mission here was to guard the autobahn and keep the highway between those two towns clear. Two tanks were sent out at two hour intervals to patrol the road. The third time the tanks went out the lead vehicle was struck by a bazooka. Driver T/5 Caldron was seriously wounded and the other two members of the crew, Lt. Fraser and gunner Pfc. Harold Martinez, were seriously burned. The rest of the story is best told by the citations received by the crew of the second tank awarding them the Bronze Star.

"For heroic achievement near Altenfeld, Germany, on 22 April 1945. When Sgt. Abbott, commanding, and T/4 Williams, driving the second of the two tanks on patrol, saw the lead tank receive a direct hit, that disabled it, they unhesitatingly and in disregard of personal safety went to the aid of its crew. Skillfully maneuvering their tank, they forced the enemy to take cover while they evacuated the casualties and rushed them to a medical aid station."

When word got back to the outpost at Altenfeld two tanks were sent to aid Sgt. Abbott. In the meantime artillery had driven the bazooka team back into the thick woods that bordered the highway on both sides of this point. S/Sgt. Gilliland and Sgt. Sopczyński reached Sgt. Abbott and T/4 Williams and the three tanks began their return to Altenfeld. The next patrol ran into more trouble. In the pitch blackness a peep collided head on with the lead tank. The smaller vehicle was demolished and its occupants killed. Although the impact had disabled the light tank its crew was not seriously injured.

Patrols were maintained throughout the night and during the next day. S/Sgt. Gilliland had assumed command of what remained of the platoon in Lt. Fraser's absence. With two tanks and 4 men less the first platoon left Altenfeld to join the rest of the company on April 23rd.

Meanwhile the 3rd platoon had once more moved to Hilpoltstein, without meeting any resistance, and Div. Trains had established their CP there. Soon afterwards the main body of Div. Trains and the rest of "D" Company, minus the 1st platoon joined them. Here it was learned that the 14th AD was now in the 3rd Army. The company was relieved of its mission with Div. Trains and reverted to battalion control.

The 1st platoon joined the company and we moved to Unter-Massing on the 24th. Before leaving there the next morning the 3rd platoon became engineers making a bridge which the column could pass. From Unter-Massing we marched to Schulyendorf and after clearing the woods spent the night there. On the 26th the battalion went into an attack position near Hernstetten and received orders to proceed with all possible haste with the purpose of securing an intact bridge across the Danube. The 2nd platoon moved ahead as the point of the column. Late that night we moved into Menning, a small village on the north bank of the Danube. The bridge that we were to take had been destroyed. The column billeted and waited for the engineers to repair the bridge. The Germans held the opposite bank and poured artillery into and near the village for most of our 24 hrs. there. It became a duel between our assault guns, the 8th Inf. Div's, 81mm mortars, and the German weapons.

During the previous day and night a battle had been raging in the large city of Ingolstadt on the other side of the Danube. That evening we crossed the river and billeted in the homes of the city. There were outposts set up and we ran patrols during our stay there. The company was once again split up, the 2nd section of the 2nd platoon going with battalion trains and the 3rd platoon going to join the 62nd column. The remainder of the company moved with the 25th column.

The 3rd platoon's task was to act as rear guard and protect the trains of the 62nd column. With them they drove to Aiglsbach and on the following day to Moosburg where the 14th AD had liberated 110,000 Allied PW's. From Moosburg the column moved on the 30th to Vilsbiburg. The war was practically over — the once invincible Wehrmacht was now nothing more than a mass of dejected, exhausted, men being herded to the PW cages. The SS still held out but the ordinary soldier was surrendering, coming along the roads, from the hills, woods, and the villages to give himself up.

The remainder of the company meanwhile was now bivouaced at Stephanskirchen after moving with the 25th column through Ober-Pinchart, Furth, and Loiting.

The 3rd platoon moved from Vilsbiburg to Töging on the 31st and to Ampfing on the 3rd of May. They rejoined the company at Stephanskirchen.

## The War Ends

We became part of the Army of Occupation (until further orders) and garrison soldiers. We were back in the old routine and we quietly observe the end of the war. On the 11th of May we made the long trek back to Ingolstadt, a week there, and then back over the same route into Töging.

At two battalion formations at Töging the following men of "D" Company were awarded the Bronze Star:

Captain William H. Smith, 1st Lt. James Williams, 1st Lt. James Fraser, T/Sgt. Christopher Koster, S/Sgt. Robert Gilliland, S/Sgt. Henry Germano, S/Sgt. Edward Lebanowski, Sgt. Charles Abbott, Sgt. John Ribaric, Sgt. Willard Mellott, T/4 Marvin Williams, and T/4 James Petrie.

We have been here nearly two months now. "Spit and polish" is the order of the day. There is still guard to pull but otherwise the war seems far away. We bitch about the point system and the Charlie Sugar and sweat out the CBI. Two down, one to go, thoughts of home and loved ones, gratitude for being alive, and the bull sessions which inspired, and from which this history is derived. The combat history of "D" Company.

## Epilogue

In memory of those who were lost to us in combat we have named our barracks at Töging "Mello Hall". The name is a symbol for it might just as well be Crook, Lanehart, Sechrist, Mazzone, Caldron, Gage, or Caldwell Hall. We shall not forget these men — to them we say not goodbye, but au revoir.

The following is a roster of Officers and EM of "D" Company, and their home addresses, as it stood upon entering combat:

Capt	William H. Smith	620 Elm St, Ravenna, Ky.
1st Lt	Robert Chrisman	2015 Bonny Castle, Louisville, Ky.
1st Lt	James A. Williams	359 Dodd St, E. Orange, N.J.
1st Lt	James D. Fraser	Waneco, Ill.
2nd Lt	Paul M. Klinefelter	5318 42nd Place NW, Washington, D.C.
2nd Lt	Robert R. McClarren	602 1/2 Madison St, Clarksville, Tenn.
1/Sgt	Bernard Oldinsky	Cawker City, Kansas
T/Sgt	Christopher P. Koster	941 Highland St, Syracuse, N.Y.
S/Sgt	Philip C. Fallico	339 Lyell Ave, Rochester, N.Y.
S/Sgt	Robert J. Gilliland	731 E. Main St, Rochester, N.Y.
S/Sgt	Henry Germano	1827 A No. Pulaski St, Milwaukee, Wis.
S/Sgt	Edward M. Lebanowski	Uree, N.C.
S/Sgt	John P. Wilson	Norridgewock, Maine
Sgt	Charles H. Abbott	159 14th St NW, Mason City, Iowa
Sgt	Glenn E. Burgraff	7020 Upland St, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Sgt	John M. Caldwell	47 S. Catalina St, Pasadena, Calif.
Sgt	Charles V. Craig	Brainardsville, N.Y.
Sgt	Howard H. Gardner	RFD No. 3, Albuquerque, New Mexico
Sgt	James W. Kimbley, Jr.	RFD No. 2, Urbana, Ohio
Sgt	Harold E. Knisley	Needmore, Pa.
Sgt	Willard C. Mellott	85 Lake St, Seekonk, Mass.
Sgt	Manuel Mello	Vale, N.C.
Sgt	Robert F. Leatherman	Mercer, Pa.
Sgt	George M. Moretti	516 Jean Ave, Johnstown, Pa.
Sgt	John J. Ribaric	29 Olive St, Newburyport, Mass.
Sgt	Howard E. Sass	105 Mount Hope Place, New York, N.Y.
Sgt	George T. Smith	2016 W. 21st St, Chicago, Ill.
Sgt	John E. Sopczynski	6 Cardington St, Roxbury, Mass.
Sgt	Edward J. Sullivan	Grindstone, Pa.
Tec 4	John T. Angeline	1650 E. 33rd So, Salt Lake City, Utah
Tec 4	Lloyd Bruner	RFD No. 3, Staunton, Va.
Tec 4	Hugh M. Chandler	Byrant Court, Belleview Acres, Peoria, Ill.
Tec 4	Paul E. Crowley	CDunkirk, Ind.
Tec 4	Paul M. Dickson	1238 N. Sheffield Ave, Indianapolis, Ind.
Tec 4	Harry L. Fitch	Evant, Texas
Tec 4	James C. Lee	2085 Canalport Ave, Chicago, Ill.
Tec 4	James W. Petrie	92 N. Brinker Ave, Columbus, Ohio
Tec 4	Orville E. Post	RFD No. 2, Boyertown, Pa.
Tec 4	Elam Schaeffer	

Tec 4	Clifton R. Smith	Irving, Ky.
Tec 4	William E. Stanton	1554 W. 11th St, Los Angeles Calif.
Tec 4	Marvin F. Williams	Springville, N.Y.
Cpl	Gilbert S. Nickerson	#65 Mills St, New Bedford, Mass.
Cpl	Walter H. Vos	Kansasville, Wis.
Tec 5	Milton E. Alexander	82nd Maryland St, Gary, Ind.
Tec 5	Jose J. Calderon	723 Western Ave, Chicago, Ill.
Tec 5	Lewis T. Crook	
Tec 5	Lewis D. Flanigan	Gen Del, Arkansas City, Kansas
Tec 5	Robert C. Fleckenstein	8427 W. Rivershore Drive, Niagara Falls, N.Y.
Tec 5	John Freitas	76 Query St, New Bedford, Mass.
Tec 5	Robert F. Goodrich	521 Crain Ave, Kent, Ohio
Tec 5	John F. Haines	68 S. St, Florence, Mass.
Tec 5	Robert L. Hammitt	2603 E. 9th St, Wichita, Kansas
Tec 5	Henry H. A. Hollman	Wayne, Nebraska
Tec 5	Kenneth Justice	Eifort, Ohio
Tec 5	Donald C. Midyette	New Bern, N.C.
Tec 5	Raymond A. Ott	51 Lehigh Ave, Rochester, N.Y.
Tec 5	Magnard A. Schnell	2820 W. Main St, Louisville, Ky.
Tec 5	Clair D. Shilling	Port Matilda, Pa.
Tec 5	Fred Vanarsdale	Exie, Ky.
Tec 5	Garold D. Veale	Warsaw, Mo.
Pfc	William C. Alvey, Jr.	1108 Salem Ave, Louisville, Ky.
Pfc	Charles W. Beck III	1251 Devonshire Rd, Grosse Point, Mich.
Pfc	Harold R. Brink	Naples, N.Y.
Pfc	John P. Buchanan	RFD No. 1, Crab Orchard, Ky.
Pfc	Ross J. Cali	204 Washington St, E. Rochester, N.Y.
Pfc	John J. Chmiel	81 Wilkesbarre Ave, Lackawanna, N.Y.
Pfc	John T. Devine	417 Hays Ave, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Pfc	Auralio Di Paolo	P132 White Horse Park, Collingwood, N.J.
Pfc	Edgar L. Durbin	312 Sycamore St, Carrollton, Ky.
Pfc	Harold W. Eagley	RFD No. 1, Shortsville, N.Y.
Pfc	Floyd R. Germain	216 Northerest Ave, Chekiowaga, N.Y.
Pfc	Ralph Holst	1740 Los Alamos Rd, Santa Rosa, Calif.
Pfc	Elmer L. Kammer	2424 Wilson Ave, Louisville, Ky.
Pfc	Pablo S. Luna	Sabinal, Texas
Pfc	Harold A. Martinez	Box 1654 Miami, Arizona
Pfc	Peter Mazzone	1142 E. 9th St, Erie, Pa.
Pfc	Robert Menzel	5220 St Marga Ave, Hannibal, Mo.
Pfc	John E. Mulligan	215 Parkdale Ave, Buffalo, N.Y.
Pfc	Edward H. Parker	701 E. 3rd St, Sedalia, Mo.
Pfc	Oliver A. Roberts	7 Fairmount Ave, Wakefield, Mass.
Pfc	Arthur J. Roman	6127 S. Wolcott Ave, Chicago, Ill.
Pfc	James L. Sechrist	4529 W. 168th St, Lawndale, Calif.
Pfc	Robert J. Taylor	130 Elmwood Ave, Evanston, Ill.
Pfc	Joseph Terranova, Jr.	103 Seaton Place NW, Washington, D.C.
Pfc	Emil C. Unger	913 S. Warren Ave, Saginaw, Mich.
Pfc	John J. Weiss	73 Union St, Westfield, N.Y.
Pvt	James P. Campbell	22 N. Elden, Flagstaff, Arizona
Pvt	Roy Gage	Lawton, Oklahoma
Pvt	Lawrence J. Heckle	1212 W. 8th St, Appleton, Wis.
Pvt	James A. Wueliner	1712 Maple St, Alton, Ill.

The following Officers and EM joined the company while it was overseas:

1st Lt	Richard M. Grandin,	301 Berkly St, Boston, Mass.
2nd Lt	Carey E. Hand	1514 Marengo Ave, S. Pasadena, Calif.
Sgt	Arnold J. Caleb	RFD No. 2, Medina, N.Y.
Tec 5	Leslie J. Jolls	Maple Rapids, Mich.
Pfc	Theodore W. Anderson	213 W. 6th Ave, Lancaster, Ohio
Pfc	Philip R. Contreras	Garfield & Delaware, Huntington Beach, Calif.
Pfc	Francis P. Campana	1612 West Adams St, Chicago, Ill.
Pfc	Alfred L. Dunlap	340 S. Grove, Wichita, Kansas
Pfc	Chalmer Huff	Kodak, Ky.
Pfc	Federick G. Moe	109 N. Butler St, Madison, Wis.
Pfc	Daniel Pena	Port O'Conner, Texas
Pfc	Lyndon D. Pruner	Box 493, Altkin, Minn.
Pvt	George F. Bastian	270 S. Grove St., E. Aurora, N.Y.
Pvt	Joseph S. Battisti	Gans, Pa.
Pvt	Walter E. Buchert	4 Rod Rd, Alden, N.Y.
Pvt	Alfred B. Callaway	Rushville, Mo.
Pvt	Frederick J. Dillemath	631 Wyoming, Buffalo, N.Y.
Pvt	Thomas H. Gaston	RFD No. 4, Pinckneyville, Ill.
Pvt	David J. Giardina	215 E. 107th St, New York, N.Y.
Pvt	James J. Mondo	287 9th St, Brooklyn, N.Y.
Pvt	Frazer W. Murphy	Cherry Grove, W. Va.
Pvt	John T. O'Donohue	453 Court St, Brooklyn, N.Y.
Pvt	Albert W. Tomlinson, Jr.	RFD No. 2, Elizabeth, Pa.