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BAPTISM OF FIRE.

ON AUGUST 6, 1944, THE SECOND BATTALION, 318TH INFANTRY REGIMENT OF THE 80TH DIVISION, LED BY ITS COMMANDING OFFICER, LT. COL. JOHN C. GOLDEN, CROSSED UTAH BEACH, FRANCE TO BEGIN THEIR MARCH THROUGH THE FIRST OF FOUR MAJOR CAMPAIGNS WHICH CARRIES US THROUGH FRANCE, LUXEMBOURG, BELGIUM, GERMANY AND AUSTRIA.

ASSEMBLING IN THE TOWN OF BRECEY, FRANCE, THE 80TH DIVISION MADE READY FOR ITS FIRST OBJECTIVE, THE TOWN OF ST. SUZANNE.

THE SECOND BATTALION, ON AUGUST 10, REACHED THE TOWN OF ST. SUZANNE WITHOUT ENCOUNTERING MUCH ENEMY RESISTANCE. MINED ROADS WERE CLEARED BY COMBAT ENGINEERS ATTACHED TO THE BATTALION BUT ENEMY SNIPER FIRE CONTINUALLY HARRASSED THE ADVANCE.

IT WAS HERE THAT THE BATTALION SUFFERED ITS FIRST CASUALTY. PFC. GROVER F. NEVILLE, 'F' COMPANY RIFLEMAN WAS THE FIRST TO MAKE THE SUPREME SACRIFICE WHEN HE WAS KILLED IN ACTION BY ENEMY SNIPER FIRE.

WITH 'G' COMPANY AS THE POINT OF AN ADVANCE GUARD, THE SECOND BATTALION LEFT ST. SUZANNE ON AUGUST 10, 1944. ENCOUNTERING AND REPELLING ALL SORTS OF ENEMY RESISTENCE, THEY REACHED THE TOWN OF SILLE LE GUILLAUME ON AUGUST 11TH. CONCENTRATING ALL ACTIVITY TO PATROLLING, THE BATTALION, ON AUGUST 12TH, CAPTURED AN ENEMY RADIO STATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CENTER. LATER THE SAME NIGHT, THE SAME PATROL CAPTURED THREE ENEMY PILLBOXES NORTH OF SILLE LE GUILLAUME.

EARLY ON THE FOLLOWING MORNING OF AUGUST 13TH, THE SECOND BATTALION PRESSED FORWARD TO OBTAIN POSITIONS ON THE HIGH GROUNDS SOUTH WEST OF THEIR FIRST MAJOR OBJECTIVE, ARGENTAN.

THOUGH CONSTANTLY HARRASSED BY ENEMY SNIPER FIRE, MINE FIELDS, ROAD BLOCKS AND SMALL ISOLATED POCKETS OF ENEMY RESISTANCE, THE BATTALION, ON AUGUST 14TH, REACHED LORRAI, FRANCE. HERE THE NAZIS FOUGHT DESPERATELY TO STEM THE ADVANCE ON ARGENTAN, TO PROTECT THIS KEY DEFENSIVE POSITION, THE ENEMY EMPLOYED MOBILE '88' ARTILLERY AND MORTAR FIRE WHILE THE LAFTWAFFE RAINED BOMBS FROM ABOVE. AFTER A HECTIC NIGHT AT LORRAI, THE BATTALION MOVED AHEAD THROUGH THE TOWNS OF ST. GEORGE, ST PAUL, ST. LEONARD, ENVIRON AND MORTREI TOWARD THE HIGH GROUND THREE MILES SOUTH WEST OF ARGENTAN.

ON AUGUST 17TH, THE SECOND BATTALION WAS POISED FOR ITS STRIKE AT ARGENTAN. EARLY THE NEXT MORNING, AT 0800, THE DOUGHS STARTED UP THE ARGENTAN-TRUM ROAD. AT A POINT A MILE AND A HALF NORTH EAST OF ARGENTAN, THEY SWUNG SOUTH EAST INTO THE ATTACK.

'E' AND 'F' COMPANIES SUPPORTED BY 'H' COMPANY'S HEAVY MACHINE GUNS, FACED WITHERING FIRE AND CONSTANT ARTILLERY BARRAGES BUT MANAGED TO CARRY ON THE ATTACK UNTIL CONCENTRATED FURIOUS COUNTER ATTACKS OF ENEMY ARTILLERY AND '88' FIRE COMPELLED THE BATTALION TO DEPLOY AND DIG IN.

THE FOLLOWING MORNING, JUST BEFORE SUNRISE, WITH 'F' COMPANY ON THE RIGHT, 'E' COMPANY ON THE LEFT AND 'G' COMPANY IN RESERVE, THE ATTACK WAS RESUMED. AGAINST MURDEROUS BARRAGES OF ENEMY ARTILLERY AND DIRECT FIRE FROM SELF-PROPELLED '88' WEAPONS, THE ADVANCE CONTINUED, WITH GAINS MEASURED IN TERMS OF YARDS.

HEROISM DISPLAYED ON THIS DAY BY T/SGT. (THEN A PFC) THOMAS DIMARTINO OF COMPANY 'F' WILL NEVER BE FORGOTTEN BY HIS COMRADES OF THE SECOND BATTALION. THOUGH WOUNDED, HE REFUSED EVACUATION AND REMAINED TO DIRECT ARTILLERY FIRE ON AN ENEMY 20 MM GUN POSITION UNTIL IT WAS KNOCKED OUT. FOR HIS HEROIC ACTION, SGT. DIMARTINO WAS AWARDED THE BRONZE STAR.

DESPITE HARD FIGHTING, THE ATTACK WAS AGAIN HALTED BY TERRIFIC ENEMY ARTILLERY BARRAGES. THE SAME NIGHT, SEVEN BATTALIONS OF OUR CORPS ARTILLERY SUBJECTED ARGENTAN TO A TERRIFIC BOMBARDMENT, SETTING IT AFLAME AND CRUMBLING THE GERMAN'S DEFENSES.

THE NEXT MORNING, AUGUST 20TH, 1944, THE SECOND BATTALION FORGED AHEAD INTO ARGENTAN WITH E, F AND G COMPANIES SWEEPING THROUGH THE TOWN AND TO THE HIGH GROUNDS BEYOND.

THE CAPTURE OF ARGENTAN RESULTED IN THE SEALING OF THE FAMED ARGENTAN-FALAISE GAP, TRAPPING THOUSANDS OF THE SEVENTH GERMAN ARMY AND ADMINISTERING A CRUSHING BLOW TO THE ENEMY'S PLANS FOR CONTAINING THE ALLIED ARMIES IN WESTERN FRANCE.

MOSELLE RIVER CROSSING

TO SECURE THE HIGH GROUNDS WEST OF THE FLOODED RAGING MOSELLE RIVER THE SECOND BATTALION LEFT ARGENTAN ENROUTE TO THE TOWN OF TREMBLE COURT, PASSING THROUGH THE TOWNS OF MORTREI, ALMENECHES, ORLEANS, SENS, VILLELOUP, ORVILLE, TREON, BAR LE DUC AND COMMERCY. TO REACH TREMBLE COURT, THE BATTALION CROSSED MANY RIVERS AND BATTLE FIELDS OF WORLD WAR I. THE LOIRE, ARMANCAN, SIENE, AUBE, MARNE AND THE MEUSE RIVERS WERE ALL IMPORTANT NATURAL BARRIERS IN THE LAST WAR BUT THE GERMANS OF WORLD WAR II CHOSE THE OVER FLOODED RAGING MOSELLE AS THEIR MAIN DEFENSIVE BARRIER.

ON SEPTEMBER 7, 1944, THE SECOND BATTALION JUMPED OFF INTO ATTACK FOR THE HIGH GROUNDS AND WOODED AREAS OF FOREST DE L'AVANT GARDE.

AFTER MARCHING OVER MUDDY FIELDS, MINED ROADS AND THROUGH FREQUENT BARRAGES OF ENEMY ARTILLERY, THE BATTALION REACHED THE OUTSKIRTS OF FOREST DE L'AVANT GARDE. THE SAME DAY, SEPTEMBER 7TH COMPANIES "E" AND "G" BRAVING ENEMY SMALL ARMS FIRE, MANY AUTOMATIC WEAPONS, MORTARS AND 20MM GUNS, CROSSED OPEN TERRAIN AND STORMED UP THE HILL TO SECURE THE VALUABLE HIGH GROUNDS.

IN THE EARLY HOURS OF THE FOLLOWING MORNING, THE NAZIS DETERMINED TO RETAKE THE VALUABLE HIGH GROUND NOW IN THE HANDS OF THE SECOND BATTALION, MASSED ALL AVAILABLE ARMOR AND INFANTRY AND COUNTERATTACKED FURIOUSLY. BY SUNRISE THE NAZIS HAD SPEARHEADED THROUGH "E" COMPANY'S OUTPOSTS, CAPTURING, KILLING AND WOUNDING A GREAT PORTION OF THE COMPANY.

COMPANIES "F" AND "G", WITH THE SUPPORT OF TANKS AND COMPANY "H" MORTARS AND MACHINE GUNS MANAGED TO STEM THE ATTACK. THOUGH CASUALTIES WERE GREAT, ALL PREVIOUS POSITIONS WERE SECURED BY NIGHTFALL.

THE FOLLOWING DAY, SEPTEMBER 9TH, WHILE THE DEPLETED "E" COMPANY OUTPOSTED THE REGIMENTAL ANTI-TANK GUNS, THE REMAINDER OF THE BATTALION WITH THE SUPPORT OF "G" AND "F" COMPANIES OF THE 318TH INFANTRY REGIMENT STORMED AHEAD IN IT'S ATTACK FOR THE HIGH GROUNDS WEST OF THE MOSELLE RIVER.

DURING THIS ATTACK COMPANY "G" KNOCKED OUT THREE ENEMY TANKS, CAPTURED NUMEROUS MACHINE GUNS AND EMPLACEMENTS AND SIX 20MM FLAK GUNS THAT THE GERMANS WERE USING AS DIRECT FIRE DEFENSIVE WEAPONS.

WITH COMPLETE SECURITY OF THE WEST BANK OF THE MOSELLE, THE BATTALION, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF COMPANY "G", WHICH OUTPOSTED AND PATROLLED THE RIVER BANKS, DREW BACK TO REORGANIZE BEFORE CROSSING THE RAGING MOSELLE RIVER.

ON SEPTEMBER 12, 1944, UNDER CONSTANT RAIN OF ENEMY ARTILLERY FIRE, THE SECOND BATTALION, MINUS "G" COMPANY WADED ACROSS THE MOSELLE RIVER. COMPANY "G" CONTINUED TO OUTPOST AND PATROL THE WEST SIDE OF THE RIVER PROTECTING THE BATTALION'S FLANKS AND REAR AGAINST POSSIBLE ENEMY ATTEMPTS TO RECROSS BELOW OUR BRIDGEHEAD AND CUT OFF THE FORWARD COMPANIES.

UPON REACHING THE EAST BANKS OF THE MOSELLE, THE BATTALION BATTERED ITS WAY TO THE HIGH GROUNDS AND ESTABLISHED ROAD BLOCKS AND OUTPOSTS.

EARLY THE NEXT MORNING, SEPTEMBER 13TH, AT 0300, TRYING DESPERATELY TO BREAK THROUGH THE DEFENSES OF THE SECOND BATTALION, THE NAZIS, LAUNCHING NUMEROUS HIGH POWERED COUNTER ATTACKS MANAGED TO BREAK THROUGH A ROAD BLOCK AT LOISY. MASSING ARMOR AND INFANTRY, THEY RECAPTURED LOISY AND PUSHED TOWARD THE BRIDGES AT DIEULOUARD.

THE GERMAN SPEARHEAD OF TANKS SPLIT THE BATTALION, LEAVING "E" COMPANY STRANDED ON THE HIGH GROUNDS SOUTHEAST OF LOISY.

JOINING THE THIRD BATTALION IN THE SOUTHEAST, THE REMAINDER OF THE SECOND BATTALION FORMED A LINE OF DEFENSE AND BEFORE DAWN KNOCKED OUT NUMEROUS ENEMY TANKS AND FOUGHT FURIOUSLY TO PUSH BACK THE ATTACKERS. BY 0830, ALL PREVIOUS POSITIONS WERE AGAIN OCCUPIED BY THE SECOND BATTALION.

AFTER CONSOLIDATING POSITIONS, CAPTAIN CHARLES GAKING, THEN TEMPORARY COMMANDER OF THE SECOND BATTALION, ORDERED ELEMENTS OF "H" COMPANY OUT TO SUPPORT THE THIRD BATTALION'S DRIVE TOWARD TOWERING MOUSSON HILL, A HIGH VANTAGE POINT, THE KEY TO THE MOSELLE RIVER ADVANCE. #

THE OUTSTANDING COURAGE DISPLAYED BY VARIOUS MEMBERS OF THE SECOND BATTALION IN SUCCESSFULLY DETERING THE ENEMY IN IT'S DETERMINED COUNTER-OFFENSIVE TO DESTROY OUR BRIDGES AND ROUT OUR FORCES EAST OF THE MOSELLE, IS IN FACT ONE OF THE PRINCIPLE REASONS THE MOTTO OF THE 80TH DIVISION, "WE ONLY MOVE FORWARD", WAS ABLE TO SURVIVE THAT NIGHT.

LORRAINE AREA

AFTER CLEARING THE ENEMY OF KEY TERRAIN FEATURES AND MOPPING UP POCKETS OF ENEMY RESISTANCE, THE BATTALION MOVED NORTH ENROUTE TO HIGH GROUNDS IN THE VICINITY OF BRATTE, FRANCE. TERRIFIC RAINS KEPT ROADS BARELY PASSABLE AND MUD BOGGED DOWN SUPPORTING TANKS, BUT THE INFANTRY, AS ALWAYS, SURGED AHEAD.

VICIOUS COUNTER-ATTACKS WERE CONSTANTLY BEING REPULSED AND THE NAZIS WERE BEGINNING TO FEEL THE MIGHT AND DETERMINATION OF THE WELL LED AMERICAN FIGHTING MACHINE.

ON SEPTEMBER 24TH, IN THE VICINITY OF BRATTE, THE "SUPERMEN" WERE BEGINNING TO SURRENDER IN DROVES, COMPANY "F" AND "G" CLEARING WOODED AREAS WERE SENDING GROUPS AS HIGH AS 50 PRISONERS BACK AT ONE TIME. FIFTY POW WERE, AT THIS TIME, A VERY LARGE GROUP.

WELL COORDINATED PINCHER ATTACKS BY THE BATTALION FORCED THE NOW DIS-ORGANIZED GERMAN FORCES TO THE HIGH GROUNDS ON MT. ST JEAN.

ACROSS OPEN TERRAIN ON SEPTEMBER 25TH, COMPANIES "F" AND "G" WITH "E" IN RESERVE, STARTED FOR THE VALUABLE HIGH GROUND OF MT. ST JEAN. FROM BITTERLY DEFENDED POSITIONS, THE GERMANS OPENED WITH ALL AVAILABLE WEAPONS, COVERING THE VALLEY WITH VICIOUS AUTOMATIC WEAPON CROSS FIRE, MORTAR AND ARTILLERY BARRAGES. ADVANCING SLOWLY THROUGH MUD, RAIN AND MURDEROUS ENEMY OPPOSITION, THE CASUALTIES MOUNTED AND LACK OF REPLACEMENTS FORCED THE SECOND BATTALION TO CONSOLIDATE POSITIONS.

'T WAS HERE THAT T/SGT. JAMES STONE, (THEN A SGT.), OF COMPANY 'F' ONLY ONE OF MANY HEROS TO RECEIVE THE BRONZE STAR, PURPLE HEART WITH TWO CLUSTERS, WAS AWARDED THE SILVER STAR FOR HIS GALLANT DISPLAY OF LEADERSHIP AND COURAGE. UPON FINDING HIS PLATOON WITHOUT A PLATOON LEADER, SGT. STONE, REORGANIZED AND LED HIS CRIPPLED PLATOON AGAINST MURDEROUS COUNTER-ATTACKS.

DURING ONE OF THESE COUNTER-ATTACKS, COMPANY "E" WAS FORCED TO SHIFT POSITIONS IN ORDER TO GET A BETTER FIELD OF FIRE. IN THE COURSE OF THIS STRATEGIC WITHDRAWAL, PFC. WILLIAM SWIRE AND FOUR OTHER MEN FELL INTO THE HANDS OF THE ENEMY. WHILE ACTING IN THE CAPACITY OF LITTER BEARERS, PFC. SWIRE AND THE OTHER AMERICANS BRIBED AND TALKED A GERMAN FIRST SERGEANT AND MANY OTHER KRAUTS INTO SURRENDERING.

FOR THE NEXT FEW HOURS THE RIFLE COMPANIES, WITH THE AID OF THE ACCURATE MACHINE GUNS AND MORTARS OF "H" COMPANY, BITTERLY REPULSED COUNTER-ATTACKS AND MANAGED TO ADVANCE UP THE HIGH GROUND OF MT. ST JEAN.

ON THE 27TH OF SEPTEMBER, THE FIRST BATTALION OF THE 317TH INFANTRY RELIEVED OUR SECOND BATTALION WHICH IN TURN MOVED TO BRATTE TO REORGANIZE AND PREPARE FOR AN ATTACK ON MANONCOURT.

WHILE OTHER ELEMENTS OF THE 80TH DIVISION CONTINUED TO ENGAGE THE ENEMY AT MT TOULON AND MT ST JEAN, THE SECOND BATTALION OF THE 318TH INFANTRY REGIMENT STARTED FOR THE HIGH GROUNDS OF MANONCOURT SEIR-SEILLE.

ON THE MORNING OF OCTOBER 8TH, UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF ITS NEW COMMANDING OFFICER, CAPTAIN GLENN GARDNER, THE SECOND BATTALION PUSHED OFF FROM VOISE DE BRANZ WOODS. WITH THE AID OF A NATURAL FOG AND A PROTECTIVE CEILING OF AUTOMATIC FIRE SUPPLIED BY COMPANY "H", THE BATTALION STORMED ACROSS THE 1200 YARDS OF OPEN TERRAIN TO REACH THE OUTSKIRTS OF MANONCOURT. COMPANY "E" REACHED ITS OBJECTIVE WITHOUT OPOSITION BUT COMPANY "F" AND "G" RAN INTO STUBBORN OPPOSITION IN THE FORM OF SMALL ARMS AND MORTAR FIRE. #

✓ HERE PFC FRANK FRALIN, MORTAR MAN WITH COMPANY "F", COMBINED EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE AND DROPPED 60MM MORTAR ROUNDS DIRECTLY INTO TWO ENEMY MACHINE GUN ENPLACEMENTS. THE SILENCING OF THE MACHINE GUNS ALLOWED THE COMPANIES TO ADVANCE. WITH THE AID OF SUPPORTING TANKS, AN ENEMY MORTAR OP WAS QUICKLY ELIMINATED THUS ALLOWING THE BATTALION TO STORM THROUGH MANONCOURT AND TO THE HIGH GROUNDS BEYOND.

PREPARATION FOR A RIVER CROSSING IS ONE OF THE MOST DREADED PERIODS OF THE INFANTRY DOUGHBOY'S LIFE. NOR WAS THIS ONE TO AN EXCEPTION. THE STEADY DOWNPOUR OF RAIN TURNED THE AREA INTO A VAST SEA OF MUD, MAKING DIGGING IN A DISCOMFORT AND ADDING TO THE HARDSHIPS OF CONSTANT NIGHT PATROLS. CONSTANT BARRAGES FROM WELL PLACED ENEMY ARTILLERY ACROSS THE FLOODED SEILLE RIVER HARDENED THE TASK OF PREPARATION.

HAZARDOUS PATROLS AND CONTINUED NIGHTLY PREPARATION IN THE SWEEPING RAINS THAT FLOODED THE AREA AND SWELLED THE RIVER, DID NOT DISCOURAGE THE BATTALION. IT MADE IT MORE DETERMINED TO DO THE JOB IT HAD TO DO.

ON THE MORNING OF NOVEMBER 8TH, AT 0600 HOURS, THE SECOND BATTALION CROSSED THE FLOODED SEILLE RIVER. COMPANY "E" CROSSING IN ASSAULT BOATS AND COMPANIES "F" AND "G" BY MEANS OF AN AVAILABLE FOOT BRIDGE. THE BATTALION SWUNG RIGHT INTO THE TOWN OF ROUVES WITH COMPANIES "E" AND "F" ENGAGING IN VICIOUS HOUSE TO HOUSE FIGHTING AS COMPANY "G" MOVED OUT TO SEIZE THE HIGH GROUND BEYOND THE TOWN. STEADILY ADVANCING THROUGH CONSTANT ENEMY OPPOSITION, THE BATTALION PUSHED AHEAD STOPPING THAT EVENING TO REORGANIZE AND CONSOLIDATE NEWLY WON POSITIONS.

AGAIN PUSHING AHEAD ON THE MORNING OF NOVEMBER 9TH, THE BATTALION ADVANCED THROUGH NOMENY, SAILLY AND ON TO THE HIGH GROUND NORTH EAST OF THE TOWN OF MONCHEAUX.

WITH SKILLFULL MANEUVERING, THE BATTALION STORMED THE TOWN, CAPTURING MANY BAFFLED NAZIS WHO NEVER DREAMED A HUMAN BEING WOULD ATTEMPT TO CROSS THE FLOODED SEILLE RIVER.

WITH NO AVAILABLE ARMOR SUPPORT, THE BATTALION CONTINUED ONWARD TO CLEAR WOODED AREAS BETWEEN MONCHEAUX AND FLAUCOURT. OVER DESTROYED BRIDGES AND MUDDY FIELDS, THE BATTALION MOVED SWIFTLY THROUGH THE DIFFICULT TERRAIN AND ON TO THE HIGH GROUNDS BEYOND, SURROUNDING AND CAPTURING GERMAN SS TROOPERS WHO WERE SENT UP AS REINFORCEMENTS LESS THAN AN HOUR BEFORE IN A VAIN ATTEMPT TO STEM THE ADVANCE.

DESPITE THE SPEED AND FEROCITY OF THE ATTACK, THE SECOND BATTALION SUFFERED AN AWESOME NUMBER OF CASUALTIES. WHEN IT ENTERED THE TOWN OF FLAUCOURT, IT'S EFFECTIVE RIFLE BATTALION STRENGTH WAS ABOUT 130 MEN, LESS THAN THE EQUIVALENT OF ONE COMPANY.

WITH THE CAPTURE OF DELME RIDGE, THE PATHWAY TO THE SAAR BASIN, THE METZ-NANCY LINE WAS SECURED. THE BATTALION MOVED SWIFTLY FOR THE MAGINOT LINE. PASSING THROUGH BOUDRECOURT, ST EPREVRE AND HOLACOURT, THE SECOND BATTALION, ON THE 25TH OF NOVEMBER LEFT DARVILLE, CROSSED THE NEID RIVER AND BRAVELY STORMED UP THE SLOPING HILLS INTO THE MAGINOT LINE. CONSTANT ENEMY RESISTANCE FROM PILLBOXES SLOWED THE ATTACK BUT THE DETERMINED SECOND BATTALION SURGED AHEAD CLEARING PILLBOXES AND SENDING THE ENEMY REELING BACK TO THE TOWN OF ZIMMING. WHILE THE ENEMY RETREATED THROUGH ZIMMING, THE SECOND BATTALION MOVED THROUGH TO THE WOODED AREA AND THE SECOND CAVALRY GROUP SEIZED THE TOWN. RELIEVED BY THE SECOND CAVALRY GROUP, THE BATTALION MOVED THROUGH LONEVILLE AND ST AVOLD TO HENREVILLE. ON THE MORNING OF DECEMBER 4TH, THE COMPANIES AGAIN REELED OFF INTO ATTACK FOR THE TOWN OF THEDINGEN.

WITH SUPPORTING TANKS BOGGED DOWN BY SLUSH AND MUD, COMPANIES "E" AND "G" ADVANCED ACROSS OPEN TERRAIN FACING WITHERING FIRE FROM ENEMY SMALL ARMS, AUTOMATIC WEAPONS AND ARTILLERY. SURGING AHEAD, THE BATTALION SLUGGED ITS WAY THROUGH THEDINGEN AND SEIZED THE HIGH RIDGE BEYOND.

'T WAS HERE THAT THE SECOND BATTALION, AFTER OVER 100 DAYS OF CONSTANT CONTACT WITH THE ENEMY, WAS RELIEVED AND MOVED TO THE TOWN OF FREYMING, FRANCE FOR A WELL DESERVED REST.

AGAIN THE BATTALION, LIVING UP TO THE TRADITIONAL 80TH DIVISION MOTTO, "ONLY MOVES FORWARD", SUCCEEDED IN PUSHING THE SUPERMEN WHO ONCE DREAMED OF WORLD DOMINATION BACK TO THEIR OWN MAIN LINE OF DEFENSE, THE SIEGFRIED LINE.

THE ARDENNES

DURING THE STAY AT FREYMING, FRANCE, THE SECOND BATTALION CONTINUED PATROL ACTIVITIES, REPAIRED, REPLACED AND REORGANIZED THEIR BATTERED WAR MACHINES, ORIENTING AND CONCENTRATING FOR THEIR STRIKE AT THE SIEGFRIED LINE.

LEAVING FREYMING ON DECEMBER 18TH, THE BATTALION MOVED TO SCHMITTVILLE, FRANCE, THE SOUTHERN FLANK OF THE THIRD ARMY, READY TO STRIKE SOUTH OF SAARBRUCKEN, BUT THE BATTALION WAS HELD UP AT A LAST MINUTE CHANGE OF ORDERS.

THE GERMANS, MASSING ALL THEIR AVAILABLE MECHANICAL MIGHT, SENT AN ARMORED SPEARHEAD STRONGLY SUPPORTED BY STORM TROOPERS AND INFANTRY ROARING INTO THE ARDENNES AREA. GENERAL VON RUNDSTEDT'S MAIN OBJECTIVES WERE THE CITIES OF LIEGE AND ANTWERPT, VITAL AMERICAN SUPPLY POINTS. THE VITAL COMMUNICATION CENTER OF BASTOGNE HAD TO BE RETAKEN IF THIS OPERATION WAS TO BE A SUCCESS. THE 101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION STUBBORNLY RESISTED WITHIN THE TOWN OF BASTOGNE AND WAS IN DESPERATE NEED OF RELIEF.

THE AFTERNOON OF THE 19TH OF DECEMBER SAW THE BATTALION LOADED INTO TRUCKS AND MOTOR TO MONDERCANGE, FRANCE ON THE FIRST LAP OF A LONG, BITTER COLD DRIVE NORTH TO RELIEVE THE ENCIRCLED AMERICANS. COVERING THE DISTANCE OF 150 MILES IN 36 HOURS, THE BATTALION BRAVED COLD RAINS AND SNOW TO REACH AND RELIEVE ELEMENTS OF THE TIRED 28TH DIVISION AT BERG, LUXEMBURG.

EARLY IN THE MORNING OF DECEMBER 23RD, THE BATTALION LEFT THE TOWN OF BERG, DETERMINED TO PUSH THE NAZIS BACK OUT OF LUXEMBURG AND BELGIUM.

MOVING SWIFTLY UNDER COVER OF DARKNESS, COMPANIES "E" AND "F" MARCHED THROUGH THE VALLEY AND UP THE OPPOSITE SLOPE TO REACH THE OUTSKIRTS OF LOPERT. AT SUNRISE THE ENEMY POURED MURDEROUS ARTILLERY, MORTAR AND AUTOMATIC WEAPON FIRE ON THE ADVANCING SECOND BATTALION. WITH THE DIRECT SUPPORT OF THE ATTACHED 702ND TANK BATTALION AND THE 808TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION, THEY FOUGHT FURIOUSLY TO CLEAR THE TOWN AND SEIZE THE HIGH RIDGE BEYOND. HOUSE TO HOUSE FIGHTING FINALLY ROUTED THE ENEMY OUT OF THE TOWN AND FORCED THEM TO RETREAT FOR THE HIGH GROUNDS. SWIFT FLANK ADVANCES PUSHED PAST THE RETREATING SUPERMEN, ENCIRCLING THEM AT THE TOP OF THE HILL, RESULTING IN THE SURRENDER OF ALMOST A BATTALION OF ENEMY ARTILLERY AND OTHER INSTALLATIONS.

WITH ITS EFFECTIVE RIFLE STRENGTH REDUCED TO SOME 200 MEN, THE SECOND BATTALION ON CHRISTMAS EVE MCTORED FROM NIEDERFEULEN, LUXEMBURG TO BURON, BELGIUM, A DISTANCE OF 30 MILES TO JOIN THE 4TH ARMORED DIVISION IN AN ATTACK THROUGH THE RING OF ENEMY STEEL TO REACH THE BESIEGED AMERICAN DIVISIONS WITHIN BASTOGNE.

GENERAL G. S. PATTON JR., COMMANDER OF THE 3RD UNITED STATES ARMY, DREW A PENCILED LINE OF ATTACK BY WHICH WE WERE TO ADVANCE.

ON CHRISTMAS DAY, IN COORDINATED ATTACKS WITH THE 4TH ARMORED, THE BATTALION SURGED SLOWLY THROUGH WOODED AREAS, OVER SNOW COVERED OPEN TERRAIN AND TERRIFIC ENEMY OPPOSITION.

DESPITE THE COLD, SNOW AND CONSTANT OPPOSITION OF THE ENEMY'S ELITE 5TH PARACHUTE DIVISION, THE BATTALION BATTERED AHEAD FACING WITHERING FIRE FROM MORTARS, SMALL ARMS AND HEAVY MACHINE GUN FIRE.

IT WAS HERE THAT S/SGT PAUL WEIDORFER (THEN A PFC) OF COMPANY "G" EARNED THE NATION'S HIGHEST AWARD, THE CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR FOR EXTRAORDINARY HEROISM BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY. WHEN HIS COMPANY WAS PINNED DOWN BY MACHINE GUN CROSS FIRE, SGT WEIDORFER, DISREGARDING HIS OWN SAFETY, DASHED FORWARD IN THE DIRECTION OF THE ENEMY EMPLACEMENT. FIRING HIS RIFLE, HE KILLED THE OCCUPANTS OF THE FIRST GUN EMPLACEMENT AND CONTINUED ON UNTIL THE SECOND MACHINE GUN WAS SILENCED THUS ENABLING HIS COMPANY TO ADVANCE ACROSS THE OPEN TERRAIN TO THEIR OBJECTIVE.

FOR TWO DAYS AND NIGHTS, THE BATTALION BITTERLY FORGED AHEAD, BRAVING WEATHER, TRENCHFOOT, AND ENEMY OPPOSITION TO WHITTLE THE RING OF STEEL TO 4000 YARDS.

A COORDINATED PLAN OF ACTION WITH THE BESIEGED HAD TO BE PLANNED. MEANS OF COMMUNICATION HAD TO BE ESTABLISHED, SO AT 0300 DECEMBER 27TH, 1ST LT WALTER P. CARR OF COMPANY "E" AND A THREE MAN PATROL INFILTRATED THROUGH TO AN ENGINEERS OUTPOST AT 0430, CONTINUING ON TO THE HEART OF BASTOGNE AND ESTABLISHING COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE 101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION.

FOR UNDERTAKING AND SUCCESSFULLY CARRYING OUT THIS HAZARDOUS NIGHT MISSION, LT CARR RECEIVED THE SILVER STAR MEDAL. T/SGT EDWARD MARTINEZ AND PFC MULFORD JONES OF "E" COMPANY, MEMBERS OF THE PATROL EACH RECEIVED THE BRONZE STAR MEDAL.

ON DECEMBER 28TH, IN THE CLIMAX OF ONE OF THE GREATEST BATTLES IN THE HISTORY OF THE SECOND BATTALION WITH THE COORDINATED ATTACKS OF THE BESIEGED 101ST AIRBORNE AND THE 4TH ARMORED DIVISION, THE BATTALION LEFT OSSENOIRS AND MET THE BESIEGED AIRBORNE DIVISION AT APPROXIMATELY 1000 HOURS THE SAME DAY. AT 2200 HOURS THE BATTALION ENJOYED THEIR CHRISTMAS DINNER ORIGINALLY PLANNED FOR CHRISTMAS DAY. BUT THE BATTALION STRENGTH THAT DAY WAS LESS THAN 200 MEN.

(AS PUBLIC EVIDENCE OF DESERVED HONOR AND DISTINCTION, THE LATE FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES CITED THE SECOND BATTALION OF THE 318TH INFANTRY REGIMENT)

THE CITATION READ: "THE AGGRESSIVENESS OF THE HEROIC INFANTRYMEN OF THE SECOND BATTALION REFLECTS THE FINEST TRADITION OF THE ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES."

TO CONTINUE THROUGH THE ARDENNES CAMPAIGN, THE SECOND BATTALION LEFT BASTOGNE FOR THE TOWN OF SCIEREN AND LATER MOVING THROUGH NIEDERFEULEN INTO ETTTELBRUCK. ALL THESE LUXEMBURG TOWNS WERE IN ALLIED POSSESSION AND CONTINUAL OUTPOSTING KEPT THE BATTALION ACTIVE WHILE THEY WORKED THEIR WAY BACK TO THEIR FORMER POSITION WITH THE REMAINDER OF THE 80TH DIVISION.

THROUGH BITTER COLD, BLINDING BLIZZARDS THE SECOND BATTALION ADVANCED AND SEIZED THE TOWN OF BURDEN, LUXEMBURG. PREPARATIONS FOR ATTACK ON BOURSCHEID BEGAN THE SAME NIGHT. AT MIDNIGHT, WITH PATROL PARTIES LEADING THROUGH SEIRLING SNOW STORMS, THE BATTALION FORGED AHEAD FIGHTING BITTER COLD, TRENCHFOOT AND NUMEROUS ENEMY MACHINE GUN POCKETS OF RESISTANCE.

BY NOON OF THE FOLLOWING DAY, THE TOWN OF BOURSCHEID AND THE HIGH GROUNDS BEYOND WERE SEIZED.

ON THE 25TH OF JANUARY, THE SECOND BATTALION MOTORED THROUGH WILTZ AND ON TO BEAUFORT, LUXEMBURG WHERE THEY OCCUPIED POSITIONS OVER-LOOKING THE SAUER RIVER AND THE *IMPREGNABLE* SIEFGRIED LINE.

SIEGFRIED LINE

ALL ALONG THE ALLIED FRONTS THE GERMANS WERE SLOWLY BEING PUSHED BACK TO THEIR OWN COUNTRY AND WERE DEPENDING ON THEIR IMPREGNABLE SIEGFRIED LINE TO STOP THE ADVANCING ALLIED FORCES.

BETWEEN OUR FORCES AND THE SIEGFRIED LINE WAS THE NATURAL BARRIER, THE SAUER RIVER. THE NOW SWOLLEN ICEY WATERS OF THE RIVER WERE RISING RAPIDLY AND MOVING AT A TERRIFIC RATE OF SPEED.

TO REACH THE BANKS OF THE SAUER RIVER, THE BATTALION HAD TO CARRY ASSAULT BOATS A DISTANCE OF SOME 500 YARDS OVER TREACHEROUS HILLY TERRAIN, THROUGH SNOW, ICE AND MUD. THE ENEMY ADDED TO THE HAZARDOUS TASK WITH CONSTANT BARRAGES OF "SCREAMING MEEMIES", HEAVY AND LIGHT ARTILLERY, MORTAR AND SMALL ARMS FIRE.

ON THE COLD MORNING OF FEBRUARY 7TH, A SMALL PORTION OF "F" COMPANY SECURED A BEACH HEAD ACROSS THE RIVER AND BITTERLY ENGAGED THE ENEMY, WIDENING THE BEACH HEAD, WHILE THE REMAINDER OF THE BATTALION BITTERLY BATTLED THE RAGING RIVER AND CONTINUING THE FLOW OF MEN AND SUPPLIES. DURING THIS ACTION, S/SGT EDWARD H. MILLER OF COMPANY "F" RECEIVED THE SILVER STAR MEDAL FOR SILENCING AN ENEMY MACHINE GUN WHICH KEPT ADDING TO THE HAZARDOUS TASK OF CROSSING THE RAGING SAUER RIVER. FROM AN EXPOSED POSITION HE EFFECTIVELY FIRED HIS MORTAR UNTIL THE ENEMY MACHINE GUN WAS SILENCED.

ALL EFFORTS BY ENGINEERS TO SPAN THE RAGING TORRENT OF NOW MORE THAN 200 FEET WITH BRIDGES, WAS UNSUCCESSFUL. HEAVY ENEMY ARTILLERY BARRAGES CONSTANTLY KNOCKED OUT HALF COMPLETED BRIDGES.

INFANTRYMEN CONTINUED TO PADDLE THEIR WAY ACROSS THE SWIFT CURRENT, MANY OF THEM FORCED TO SWIM PART OF THE ICEY CHANNEL FROM CAPSIZED BOATS.

TYPICAL HEROISM WAS DISPLAYED HERE BY PFC PAT H. MORESCHA, A MEDIC ATTACHED TO COMPANY "F". THOUGH WOUNDED BY ENEMY MORTAR HE PLUNGED INTO THE ICEY WATERS BRAVING THE SWIFT CURRENT AND ENEMY FIRE TO REACH WOUNDED MEMBERS OF THE BATTALION. AFTER ADMINISTERING AID, HE HELPED EVACUATE THE WOUNDED BACK ACROSS THE RIVER. FOR HIS SUPREME DEVOTION TO DUTY, PFC MORESCHA RECEIVED THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS.

FOR THE NEXT FEW DAYS, MEASURING GAINS IN YARDS, THE BATTALION BITTERLY FOUGHT, PUSHING IT'S WAY TO THE HIGH GROUNDS A MILE AND A HALF SOUTH EAST OF BIESDORF, GERMANY. A MAIN LINE OF DEFENSE IN THE SIEGFRIED LINE, THE TOWN OF BIESDORF WAS FORTIFIED BY A CHAIN OF PILLBOXES STRINGING ALONG THE NORTH AND WEST SIDE OF THE TOWN. FROM THE WOODED AREAS SOUTH EAST OF THE TOWN, THE SECOND BATTALION,

ON FEBRUARY 13, 1945, INFILTRATED AROUND THE FORTIFICATIONS ATTACKING FROM THE REAR, CATCHING THE ENEMY BY SUPRISE. BITTER HOUSE TO HOUSE FIGHTING CONTINUED UNTIL THE TOWN ITSELF WAS CLEARED. TO ROUT THE WELL EMBEDDED ENEMY FROM THE PILLBOXES PROVED A HAZARDOUS TASK. DESPITE HEAVY ARTILLERY AND MORTAR BARRAGES AND CONSTANT CHARGES OF RIFLEMEN WITH POLE CHARGES AND WHITE PHOSPHOROUS GRENADES, THE ENEMY HELD IT'S POSITIONS WITHIN THE PILLBOXES.

MANY INDIVIDUAL ACTS OF HEROISM WERE PERFORMED HERE. AFTER TWO UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPTS TO BLAST THE DOOR OF ONE PILLBOX WITH POLE CHARGES, LT WALTER HODGES, T/SGT WILLIAM PENROD, T/SGT RAY HOOVER OF COMPANY "F" AND SGT ARTHUR KUHN AND PFC PETER HUSMAN OF COMPANY "G" FINALLY MANAGED TO DRIVE THE ENEMY OUT BY DROPPING WHITE PHOSPHOROUS GRENADES THROUGH THE APERATURES OF THE PILLBOXES. FOR THEIR HEROIC ACTIONS THEY WERE AWARDED THE SILVER STAR MEDALS.

CONTINUING ON THROUGH THE SIEGFRIED LINE, THE SECOND BATTALION ON FEBRUARY 18TH, MOVED FOR THE HIGH GROUNDS AND OTHER FORTIFICATION OF THE SUPERMEN'S MAIN LINE OF DEFENSE OF THEIR DEUTSCHLAND.

DRIVING HARD THROUGH BITTER ENEMY OPPOSITION OF TANKS, MACHINE GUN FIRE, MORTAR AND ARTILLERY FIRE, THE BATTALION SURGED THROUGH AND CLEARED NUMEROUS PATCHES OF WOODED AREAS THAT HOUSED A VERITABLE NETWORK OF TRENCHES AND DUGOUTS FROM WHICH THE ENEMY LAUNCHED COUNTER ATTACKS USING 20MM AND 88MM GUNS AS DIRECT FIRE WEAPONS.

IT WAS IN ONE OF THESE ENGAGEMENTS THAT 2ND LT RAYMOND E. BROADBENT, THEN T/SGT WITH COMPANY "G", RECEIVED THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS FOR KILLING THE CREW AND CAPTURING TWO ENEMY 88MM GUN INSTALLATION IN TACT.

LT BROADBENT SUBSEQUENTLY WAS KILLED IN ACTION AT WEISKIRCHEN, GERMANY.

THE ENTIRE OPERATION OF PENETRATING THE SIEGFRIED LINE AND SECURING THE GROUNDS BEYOND BIESDORF ENABLED THE AMERICAN ARMORED ELEMENTS TO GO THROUGH AND START THEIR SWEEPING DRIVES ON TO THE RHINE VALLEY AND TO THE LAST NATURAL ENEMY BARRIER, THE RHINE RIVER.

AFTER A SHORT REST PERIOD AT LAHR, GERMANY, THE SECOND BATTALION MOVED INTO THE TOWN OF SEFFERWUCK, GERMANY WITH THE MISSION OF SETTING UP A DEFENSE ON THE FLANKS OF THE 4TH ARMORED DIVISION.

ON THE 5TH OF MARCH, THE BATTALION MOVED OUT TO SEIZE THE TOWN OF NEIDERBACH AND BALESFIELD, GERMANY. AFTER TAKING THE HIGH GROUND OVERLOOKING THE KYLL RIVER, THE BATTALION REVERTED BACK TO DIVISIONAL RESERVE REMAINING IN THE TOWN OF NEIDERBACH.

AFTER A FEW DAYS REST, THE SECOND BATTALION ON MARCH 10TH, MOVED BY MOTOR THROUGH LUXEMBURG CROSSING THE SAUER RIVER AT SAARBURG ARRIVING AT THE TOWN OF IRSCH, GERMANY. UNDER THE COVER OF DARKNESS, THEY MOVED INTO ZERF, GERMANY WHERE, DURING THE NIGHT, WERE SUBJECTED TO A TERRIFIC BARRAGE OF ARTILLERY AND "SCREAMING MEEMIE" FIRE.

AT 1200 MARCH THE 13TH UNDER INTENSE ENEMY ARTILLERY AND MORTAR FIRE, THE BATTALION MOVED OUT OF ZERF WITH THE MISSION OF CLEARING THE HEAVILY ENEMY INFESTED FOREST DE ZERF, ONE OF THE LARGEST FOREST IN ALL GERMANY.

SMALL ADVANCES DURING THE DAY ENCOUNTERED MUCH ENEMY RESISTANCE NETTING THE SECOND BATTALION SCORES OF PRISONERS. CONTINUING THEIR ADVANCE AFTER DARKNESS, THE BATTALION WAS FORCED TO DIG IN BY INTENSE ENEMY MACHINE GUN FIRE AND HEAVY ENEMY ARTILLERY, STEMING THEIR ATTACK UNTIL THE BREAK OF DAWN.

AT 0830 THE FOLLOWING MORNING, THE ADVANCE CONTINUED UNTIL THE PRIMARY OBJECTIVE, THE HIGH GROUNDS, FROM WHICH THE ENEMY SO EFFECTIVELY DIRECTED THEIR ARTILLERY, WAS SEIZED.

THE SAME EVENING, MARCH 14, THE BATTALION AGAIN MOVED FORWARD. THIS TIME THE OBJECTIVE BEING THE TOWN OF WEISKIRCHEN, THROUGH WHICH RAN AN IMPORTANT NETWORK OF ROADS ESSENTIAL TO THE ENEMY FOR BRINGING SUPPLIES TO THEIR MAIN DEFENSIVE POSITIONS.

ADVANCING PARALLELED TO THE MAIN ROAD LEADING TO THE TOWN, THE BATTALION BY-PASSED ENEMY ROAD BLOCKS AND INFILTRATED THROUGH THE ENEMY MAIN LINE OF RESISTANCE, CAPTURING MANY PRISONERS, AMONG THEM WERE SEVERAL RANKING OFFICERS, BEFORE THEY COULD RECOVER FROM THE SUPRISE. CONTINUING ON THROUGH THE DARKNESS, THE SECOND BATTALION INFILTRATED SOME FIVE MILES INTO THE ENEMY INFESTED WOODED AREA BEYOND THE ENEMY'S ARTILLERY POSITIONS.

IN THE DARKNESS, TWO PLATOONS OF COMPANY "G" AND A SECTION OF COMPANY "H" MACHINE GUNS BECAME SEPARATED FROM THE REST OF THE BATTALION. THIS GROUP DROPPED BACK AND SET UP A ROAD BLOCK WHILE THE MAIN BODY OF THE BATTALION MOVED INTO WEISKIRCHEN.

ASSUMING RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE MAIN BODY OF THE BATTALION, CAPTAIN PAUL CHMAR, COMPANY COMMANDER OF "E" COMPANY, LEAD THE BATTALION INTO THE TOWN OF WEISKIRCHEN. PROTECTING THE MEN FROM ALBUSH, CAPTAIN CHMAR QUICKLY DISPERSED HIS MEN WHEN ENEMY MACHINE GUNS OPENED UP ON THEM. DISREGARDING THE SAFETY OF HIS OWN LIFE, HE PROCEEDED TO ELIMINATE THE MACHINE GUNS THUS ALLOWING THE BATTALION TO CONTINUE INTO THE TOWN. THOU SERIOUSLY WOUNDED, CAPTAIN CHMAR CONTINUED TO LEAD THE MAIN BODY OF THE BATTALION INTO WEISKIRCHEN. FOR THIS BRILLANT AND COURAGEOUS LEADERSHIP AND HIS HEROIC ACHEIVMENT, CAPTAIN CHMAR WAS AWARDED THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS.

AT APPROXIMATELY 0300 THE LEADING ELEMENTS OF THE BATTALION OCCUPIED THE FIRST HOUSES ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF WEISKIRCHEN WITHOUT ENCOUNTERING MUCH ENEMY RESISTANCE. FOR THE EXCEPTION OF A ROAD BLOCK AT THE ENTRANCE OF THE TOWN, THE BATTALION CONTINUED THEIR SWIFT SUPRISING ADVANCE. SUPPORTING ARMOR FROM THE 702ND TANK BATTALION KNOCKED OUT TWO ENEMY MACHINE GUNS THAT COVERED THE ROAD BLOCK AND AS THE SECOND BATTALION ADVANCED PAST THE BARRIER, THE REAL FIGHTING STARTED.

FOR THREE DAYS THE BATTLE RAGED, WITH THE DOUGHS FIGHTING FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE, ROOM TO ROOM. THE TOWN WAS BITTERLY DEFENDED BY CRACK SS TROOPS OF THE 6TH MOUNTAIN DIVISION WHO LAUNCHED NUMEROUS COUNTER ATTACKS SUPPORTED BY TIGER TANKS WHICH WERE HASTILY KNOCKED OUT BY DOUGHS WITH BAZOOKA FIRE.

ALL RADIO COMMUNICATIONS WITH FRIENDLY TROOPS WERE OUT BUT THE BATTALION CONTINUED TO BITTERLY ENGAGE THE ENEMY WITHIN THE TOWN. DURING THE NIGHT, THE ENEMY MINED THE ROAD LEADING BACK TO THE REAR AND ATTEMPTS TO BRING AMMUNITION AND RATIONS TO THE HARD PRESSED FIGHTERS WERE IMPOSSIBLE.

WITH THE AID OF THE REMAINDER OF THE 318TH REGIMENT, THE WOOD-ED AREAS OF THE REMAINDER OF THE FOREST DE ZERF WERE CLEARED WHILE ENGINEERS CLEARED THE ROADS OF MINES.

NOT UNTIL TWO DAYS LATER DID TANKS AND VEHICLES ENTER THE TOWN WITH AMMUNITION AND RATIONS FOR THE DESPERATELY FIGHTING SECOND BATTALION.

FINALLY ON THE 17TH OF MARCH, THE TOWN OF WEISKIRCHEN WAS TAKEN AND THE ENEMY'S MAIN LINE OF DEFENSE WAS COMPLETELY SMASHED. THE NAZIS WERE SENT REELING BACK TO THEIR LAST NATURAL DEFENSE LINE, THE RHINE RIVER, BEING CONSTANTLY HARRASSED BY THE 10TH ARMORED DIVISION, WHO ROARED THROUGH WEISKIRCHEN IN CLOSE PURSUIT.

SO COMPLETE WAS THE ROUT THAT THE ROADS LEADING BACK WERE PACKED WITH GERMAN VEHICLES MAKING THEM EASY PICKINGS FOR THE 19TH TATICAL AIR FORCE WHO ENJOYED ONE FIELD DAY AFTER ANOTHER IN DESTROYING THOUSAND UPON THOUSAND OF ENEMY RETREATING VEHICLES.

ONCE AGAIN THE SECOND BATTALION OF THE 318TH INFANTRY REGIMENT HAD PROVEN IT'S SUPERIORITY OVER THE SO CALLED "SUPEREN", THIS TIME ADMINISTERING A CRUSHING DEFEAT FROM WHICH THEY NEVER RECOVERED.

THE MOP UP

REVERTING TO DIVISIONAL RESERVE, THE SECOND BATTALION MOVED THROUGH THE TOWN OF ST. WENDEL TO KAISERSLAUTERN.

AFTER A SHORT STAY THERE, ON MARCH 24TH, THE BATTALION MOTORED AGAIN THROUGH THE TOWN OF IMSWELER AND ON TO OBER-INGELHEIM FOREVER STAYING CLOSE TO THE PURSUING NAZIS AS POSSIBLE.

WITH PREPARATIONS COMPLETED FOR THE CROSSING OF THE HISTORIC RHINE RIVER, A SUDDEN CHANGE IN PLANS ORDERED THE 318TH REGIMENT IN RESERVE FOR THE CROSSING OF THE RHINE RIVER.

WITH THE 317TH REGIMENT SPEARHEADING THE CROSSING, THE SECOND BATTALION OF THE 318TH REGIMENT ON MARCH 28, 1945, UNDER THE HAIL OF ENEMY ARTILLERY CROSSED THE RHINE RIVER IN LSM NAVY CRAFTS.

SECURING BRIDGEHEADS AND CLEARING HIGH GROUNDS INLAND, THE SECOND BATTALION WAS AGAIN ON THE FORWARD MOVE.

THE RAPIDLY RETREATING NAZIS FANATICALLY RESISTED, LEAVING REAR GUARDS WHO UTILIZED "88" AND "20" MM ANTI-AIRCRAFT WEAPONS FOR DIRECT FIRE BUT THEY FAILED TO HALT THE ADVANCE.

DURING THIS PERIOD MANY PRISONERS WERE TAKEN. ONE PLATOON OF COMPANY "G", LED BY T/SGT JOHN WARD, WERE DETACHED FROM THE REST OF THE BATTALION TO CLEAR OUT SEVERAL TOWNS ON THE RIGHT FLANK OF THE LINE OF ATTACK, ACCOUNTED FOR OVER 225 PRISONERS IN THE SINGLE DAY'S OPERATION.

THE NEXT MORNING, MARCH 30, 1945, THE SECOND BATTALION WAS ATTACHED TO THE 6TH ARMORED DIVISION AS A COMBAT TEAM IN HOT PURSUIT OF THE RETREATING "SUPERMEN".

ON EASTER SUNDAY MORNING, THE BATTALION LEFT THE TOWN OF OBER-MOLLRICH ABOUT 10 MILES FROM THE LARGE INDUSTRIAL CITY OF KASSEL.

ADVANCING THROUGH THE HEAVILY WOODED TERRAIN, THE BATTALION, ALTHOUGH CONSTANTLY HARRASSED BY SMALL ARMS FIRE, CONTINUED THE ATTACK ON THROUGH THE NIGHT. THE ENEMY DETERMINED TO HOLD THE CITY EMPLOYED THE USE OF 20MM ANTI-AIRCRAFT AND "88" GUNS AS DIRECT FIRE WEAPONS. ALSO IT WAS HERE THE ENEMY ROLLED NEW "TIGER ROYAL" TANKS DIRECT FROM THE ASSEMBLY LINES IN FACTORIES TO THE FRONT LINES ONLY A FEW KILOMETERS AWAY.

WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE TANKS AND TANK DESTROYER UNITS ATTACHED TO THE REGIMENT, THE DOUGHS BITTERLY FOUGHT FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE FORCING GENERAL ERZLEBEN TO SURRENDER THE CITY OF KASSEL ON THE 4TH OF APRIL.

RELIEVED BY THE 69TH DIVISION ON APRIL 6, 1945, THE DOUGHS, AT 1700 LEFT THE CITY OF KASSEL FOR AN ATTACK ON THE TOWN OF SCHMIRA, A KEY POSITION IN THE MAIN LINE OF DEFENSE TO THE CITY OF ERFURT.

FROM THE TOWN OF GOTHA ON APRIL 10TH, THE SECOND BATTALION JUMPED INTO ATTACK AT 0700, MEETING TERRIFIC ENEMY RESISTENCE OF 20MM DIRECT FIRE WEAPONS, MORTARS, AUTOMATIC AND SMALL ARMS FIRE.

FORMING A LONG SKIRMISH LINE ACROSS THE ROLLING FIELDS, THE ADVANCE ON SCHMIRA CONTINUED UNTIL COMPANIES "E" AND "G" WERE ABOUT 1000 YARDS OF THE TOWN. HERE A HEAVY CONCENTRATION OF MORTAR AND MACHINE GUN FIRE CAUGHT THE DOUGHS AS THEY MOVED ACROSS OPEN TERRAIN AT THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE TOWN.

IT WAS HERE THAT LT AUGUST A. STORKMAN AND HIS PLATOON SERGEANT T/SGT WOODROW BUGG, BOTH OF COMPANY "G", CHARGED THROUGH A HAIL OF FIRE TO SILENCE ONE MACHINE GUN NEST AND THOU WOUNDED, T/SGT BUGG CONTINUED WITH HIS PLATOON LEADER TO FIGHT ON WITH SUPREME GALLANTRY UNTIL HE DIED. HIS SELF SACRIFICING ACTION WILL LIVE ON FOREVER WITH HIS COMRADES.

FOR THEIR HEROIC ACHIEVEMENTS, BOTH MEN WERE AWARDED THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS, AMERICA'S SECOND HIGHEST MILITARY AWARD.

DESPITE HEAVY CASUALTIES, COMPANY "G" TOOK THE TOWN OF SCHMIRA THE SAME DAY, APRIL 10TH. MEANWHILE THE REMAINDER OF THE SECOND BATTALION TOOK THE TOWN OF BISCHLEBEN AND THE WOODED AREAS SURROUNDING THE HUGE REICH CITY OF ERFURT.

THE NEXT DAY, APRIL 11TH, AT 0600, COMPANY "G" WHILE MANEUVERING INTO ATTACK ON ERFURT, FLANKED THE TOWN OF HOCHHEIM AND SURPRISED A REAR ECHLON UNIT OF APPROXIMATELY 60 GERMANS. BEFORE THEY COULD OVERCOME THE SURPRISE, THEY FOUND THEMSELVES BEING MARCHED TO PW ENCLOSURES IN THE REAR.

POISED ON THE HIGH GROUND OVERLOOKING THE CITY OF ERFURT, READY TO ATTACK, COL LUCKETT, 318TH REGIMENTAL COMMANDER, ON APRIL 11TH, ISSUED AN ULTIMATUM TO THE ENEMY FORCES WITHIN THE CITY; "SURRENDER OR HAVE THE CITY LEVELED TO THE GROUND".

THE ULTIMATUM WAS IGNORED; THE CITY WAS BLASTED BY BOTH THE AIR CORPS AND SUPPORTING HEAVY ARTILLERY THAT EVENING.

THE FOLLOWING MORNING THE CITY OF ERFURT WAS STILL PUTTING UP FURIOUS RESISTANCE.

AT 0630 THE MORNING OF APRIL 12TH, THE SECOND BATTALION JUMPED INTO ATTACK ON THE CITY. WITH COMPANIES "E" AND "F" ADVANCING THROUGH THE HEAVY WOODS, FIGHTING OFF ENEMY COUNTER ATTACKS OF ENEMY

INFANTRY SUPPORTED BY TANKS, COMPANY "G" MANUEVERED AROUND THE ADVANCING COMPANIES TO A SMALL VALLEY AND ENTERED THE CITY. SOON ALL THE BATTALION ENTERED THE CITY CONTINUING THEIR ADVANCE THROUGH THE CITY WITH BITTER HOUSE TO HOUSE FIGHTING.

NUMEROUS DISPLAYS OF HEROISM WERE PERFORMED IN THE TOWN OF ERFURT. ON ONE OCCASION, TO DRAW ENEMY FIRE AND LOCATE AN ENEMY MACHINE GUN POSITION, T/SGT GERALD HEATH, S/SGT DAVID DICKS, S/SGT LYNN STRAIT, PFC OSCAR DILLON AND PFC JOSEPH KANE ALL OF COMPANY "F" RECEIVED THE BRONZE STAR AWARD FOR ELIMINATING A HARRASSING MACHINE GUN EMPLACEMENT EMBEDDED IN ONE OF THE HOUSES, SLOWING DOWN THE ADVANCE. WHILE TWO MEN BRAVELY EXPOSED THEMSELVES TO DRAW FIRE, THE REMAINDER OF THE GALIANT CREW RUSHED THE HOUSE WITH GRENADES ROUTING THE ENEMY FROM THE HOUSE AND SILENCING THE MENACING GUN.

CONTINUED BITTER HOUSE TO HOUSE FIGHTING CARRIED THE SECOND BATTALION THROUGH THE CITY OF ERFURT FORCING MOST OF THE "SUPERMEN" TO SURRENDER. BY 2000 THAT NIGHT, THE HUGE CITY WAS IN THE HANDS OF OF THE SECOND BATTALION.

ON THE 13TH OF APRIL, FOLLOWING THE FAST MOVING 4TH ARMORED DIVISION, THE 318TH REGIMENT CHASED ACROSS THE PLAINS OF GERMANY MOPPING UP SMALL POCKETS OF RESISTANCE. MAIN OBJECTIVE WAS TO REACH THE RUSSIAN ALLIES IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA THUS CUTTING OFF THE RETREAT ROUTE OF THE GERMAN ARMIES FROM THE NORTH.

ON THE 18TH OF APRIL, THE SECOND BATTALION REACHED THE TOWN OF ZIEGELHEIM, GERMANY, A SUBURB OF THE GREAT INDUSTRIAL CITY OF CHEMNITZ LOCATED ON THE EASTERN BORDER OF GERMANY. RELIEVED BY THE 76TH DIVISION, THE DOUGHBOYS OF THE 80TH BLUE RIDGE DIVISION HEADED SOUTHWEST TOWARD THE CITY OF NURNBERG, THE SHRINE OF NAZIDOM.

80 MILES FROM PERLIN

** TOLD TO LET RUSSIANS TAKE*

AFTER A SHORT REST PERIOD IN NURNBERG, THE SECOND BATTALION PUSHED SOUTHEAST, MOTORED MOST OF THE WAY TO CATCH UP WITH THE FAST RETREATING NAZIS WHO WERE MAKING FOR THE HIGH BAVARIAN ALPS.

AT TUNZENBERG ON APRIL 30TH, THE SECOND BATTALION CROSSED THE ISAR RIVER WITH THE LOSS OF ONLY ONE MAN. CONTINUING SOUTHEAST OVER ROLLING HILLY TERRAIN, THE BATTALION CONTINUED MOPPING UP OPERATIONS SENDING LONG COLUMNS OF BEATEN "SUPERMEN" BACK TO PW CAGES.

ON THE 3RD DAY OF MAY, THE SECOND BATTALION REACHED SIMBACH, GERMANY, THE SOUTHEASTERN BORDER OF GERMANY.

ON THE SAME DAY THE SECOND BATTALION LEFT SIMBACH, GERMANY, CROSSED THE INN RIVER AND ENTERED THE TOWN OF BRAUNAU, AUSTRIA, THE BIRTH PLACE OF THE MAN WHO ONCE DREAMT OF WORLD DOMINATION, ADOLF HITLER.