

## VII -- DISPLACING TO THE BRIDGEHEAD

"Hubert Kenyon recently reminded me of a dramatic mutual experience.

"On a cold, gray, miserable day in early November of '44 - yet a lucky day for us - I went up with 'Hube' in one of our observation planes to observe the progress of the attack east of Mt. St. Jean and to locate potential artillery targets.

"We circled over a wooded area, labled 'Bois de Manche Seille' on the maps, which reportedly was well within our lines. While scanning the enemy terrain, I heard a sharp, metallic crack above my head to the left, looked up, and saw a jagged break in a welded junction of the fuselage braces. Metal fatigue, I thought. Then my map board was splintered and knocked out of my hands, and there was a big hole in the clear plastic canopy above us. Luckily, I had not been sitting with my legs crossed, as I occasionally did in order to brace the map board while making notes.

"Apprehensive about where the next round would hit, I leaned forward, tapped 'Hube' on the shoulder (he was not aware of the hits), pointed to the damage, and yelled: 'We're being shot at.'

"Hube' pushed the plane into a 180 degree turning dive to tree top level and streaked back to our airstrip where we landed and assessed the structural damage.

"Hube's super-fast reaction time and professional airmanship had saved us from certain disaster." ---Daniel J. Minahan

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"Sometime during the three days on Mt. St. Jean I lost one of my favorite pipes. Several days after we had been withdrawn from the mountain an infantryman came up to me and inquired: 'Aren't you the one who always smokes a pipe? Is this yours?' He handed me what looked like a dried-up thing you would find in a pasture. It was my pipe, heavily encrusted with Mt. St. Jean's mud." --- John Beard

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" I was serving as Btry Agent the day Gen. Patton stopped at the CP in Millery. The General paused outside to talk to a man in the AA Section who had a 50 cal. machine gun set up with a camouflage net draped over it. The man, whose name I can't recall, told

me later that the General sure gave him hell. 'He ordered me to take down that blankety blank net. We're not going to fool around. If an ME-109 came over that hill you'd never get to fire at the SOB because of that blankety blank net. We're going to bring those SOBs down.' The net came down and didn't go up again."

--- Francis Neighly

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"One night, just before the attack on Mannoncourt, Paul McAndrew and I were laying wire from the 2nd Bn CP back to the 314th CP. The whole area was under a pretty heavy artillery and mortar bombardment and shells were bursting all around us. There was little open ground and no roads or paths so much of the time we were blazing a trail through woods and underbrush. It was mighty rough going in the dark. Paul was driving the jeep and I was stumbling along in the back stringing the wire. After a mile or so I asked Paul to come back and string the wire and let me drive awhile because I was exhausted. He said: 'No.' -- 'Why in the hell not?' -- 'Because I'm scared.' -- 'Well I'm scared too.' -- 'Yes, but you might drive off and leave me.' -- Anthony DiPangrazio

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"Several weeks after we had crossed the Moselle, I was forward on reconnaissance with the Colonel. We were in one side of a very large forest through which the infantry was working its way. I mentioned to the Colonel that from where our guns were located we might not be able to support the infantry if the advance continued much beyond the other side of the forest. The distance would be too great.

" On our way back to the batteries I found an open area where there were no trees and which was fairly flat in the otherwise hilly terrain. I told the Colonel this was the only place we would be able to put a battery that could provide support beyond the forest.

" When I arrived back at the battery there was a brand new, newly arrived officer, whose name I just can't remember. While we were getting acquainted, the Colonel called and said if I recalled where that potential gun position was, to take a gun up there quickly and register it. He would have the plane go up and fire the registration. The rest of the battery could be brought up at night and surveyed in.

"I told the new officer I would take the gun up and for him to get the battery ready and start to move forward.. I showed him on the map the road I wanted him to follow and designated a

crossroads where we were to meet at a specified time. From there I would lead the way to the new position.

"I went forward with the gun and the plane registered us. It was dusk and starting to rain again. Then I hurried back to the crossroads where I was to meet the battery although I had plenty of time before the scheduled meeting. When I got to the crossroads, Lt.(Paul) Bassett and his survey crew were passing. Paul waved to me and shouted: 'That's your battery up ahead.' It had gone by just before I got there.

"I raced down the road with Bassett and finally stopped the battery. There were no good turn-around spots so we had to uncouple and turn the howitzers, then turn the trucks around and hookup the guns again. When this was finally completed we went back and into position. It rained like hell all night long. Everyone and everything was covered with mud. Guess who came for a visit very early the next morning?" --- Michael Heneghan

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I don't recall exactly where we were but it was several weeks after we had crossed the Moselle. We (B Btry) had just gone into position one fairly quiet afternoon when all of a sudden we were being shelled by screaming rockets. One landed near my truck. Not having a foxhole yet, I dove under the truck and curled up beside the dual wheels. Many of the shells were white phosphorus ones and flaming bits were flying all around. There I was under the truck with about 80 rounds of ammunition above me. I was plenty scared.

--- John Hix