

# HISTORY



SECOND BATTALION  
318 INFANTRY REGIMENT  
80<sup>th</sup> DIVISION



## SECOND BATTALION

### STAFF OFFICERS — V-E DAY

MAJOR MATTHEW G. DYWER, JR.  
Commanding Officer

MAJOR RALPH B. SESSOMS, JR.  
Executive Officer

CAPTAIN PRENTISS W. FOREMAN  
S—3 OFFICER

CAPTAIN WESLEY G. SPRING  
S—1 OFFICER

1st LT. JOHN A. SHUFORD  
S—2 OFFICER

1st LT. GEORGE SPAYD  
S—4 OFFICER

### COMPANY COMMANDERS

1st LT. WALTER P. CARR  
COMPANY "E"

CAPTAIN JOHN R. SINGLETON  
COMPANY "F"

CAPTAIN GABRIEL R. MARTINEZ  
COMPANY "G"

CAPTAIN TANDY E. JACKSON  
COMPANY "H"

## INTRODUCTION

During hostilities in the European Theater of Operations, a record of events and functions were kept in the form of a Battalion Journal. These records, with the aid of actual participants of the four campaigns through which the Second Battalion carried on to victory, were compiled into a history form.

This history was written for Officers and Enlisted Men of the Second Battalion by members of the Second Battalion with the complete cooperation of the Battalion Staff Officers, of Company Commanders and many other battle-scarred members of the Second Battalion.

This is YOUR history.

### Historians:

Sgt. Peter J. Stanchak — Co. G  
PFC Thomas B. Castle — Co. E  
PFC Martin G. Jenkins — Co. F  
PFC Basil Verlangieri — Co. G

## PREFACE

In the following pages we attempt to bring to you a small record of events which occurred during the victorious march through Fortress Europe by the Second Battalion of the 318th Regiment — 80th Infantry Division.

Those who were with the Battalion from the early stages will well remember Argentan, the Moselle, Bastogne and many other events. Others who joined one of the companies at a later date will recall the little town in which they first met their buddies with whom they were destined to fight side by side.

But no history such as this can attempt to put into words the feelings that each man had for one another, nor describe the life of the foxhole, the bitter cold, rain and always present mud, or the dread of a night patrol, the deadly whine of the snipers bullet or the sharp crack of an 88. Only those who trembled at the mournful wail of a screaming meemie or stood helpless during the noiseless approach of the deadly mortar can appreciate how comforting it is to have a buddy at your side, someone to share your troubles and terrors with.

Throughout this little booklet we have attempted to mention names, of both officers and enlisted men, but to do this and give equal credit to every man who made this history possible, it would require not one but many volumes. We therefore have picked out incidents which fit in the story most appropriately. It is with this thought in mind that we now present to you, your history of the Second Battalion.

HEADQUARTERS  
SECOND BATTALION  
318<sup>TH</sup> INFANTRY

DEDICATION

The pages of this book are hereby dedicated to the Officers and men of this Battalion who, through their courageous effort and unceasing devotion to duty, made possible the enviable record compiled by this unit in its struggle to assist in the defeat of the so-called Superman.

The initial stages of our commitment saw the bloody days of the costly engagement at Argentan. Followed successively and almost unbelievably the swift flight through France to the nightmares and heroic stand on the Moselle river, thence across the Seille river, across mighty Delme ridge, through the vaunted Maginot line, or to the bitter days of Bastogne which began the destruction of the "Bulge". Then quickly back to Luxembourg past the Siegfried line down to Weiskirchen. A breathing spell to the Rhine thence to Kassel, Erfurt, into Austria and the complete destruction of the mythical Superman.

To those of us so very fortunate to survive and to the memory of our fallen comrades whose supreme sacrifice aided and abetted our advances, we cannot amply apply words adequately but say "You were men".

MATTHEW L. DWYER, JR.  
Major 318th Infantry  
Commanding

Chapter 1  
BAPTISM OF FIRE

On August 6th, 1944, the Second Battalion, 318th Regiment of the 80th Infantry 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 carried through France, Luxemburg, 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 10th, 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.

'Twas 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 10th, 1944. Encountering and repelling all sorts of enemy resistance, 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 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 Luftwaffe 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 it's 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 their 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 Di Martino 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. Di Martino 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 20, 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.



## Chapter 2

### 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 1. The Loire, Armancon, 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 Sept, 7. 1944, the Second Battalion jumped off into attack for the high grounds and wooded areas of Foret De L'Avant Garde.

After marching over muddy fields, mined roads and through frequent barrages of enemy artillery, the Battalion reached the outskirts of Foret De L'Avant Garde. The same day, Sept, 7th, Companies "E" and "G" braving enemy small arms fire, many automatic weapons, mortars and 20 MM 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, Sept. 9th, while the depleted "E" Company outposted the Regimental Anti-tank guns, the remainder of the Battalion with the support of "C" and "F" Companies of the 319th Infantry Regiment stormed ahead in its attack for the high grounds west of the Moselle River.

During this attack Company "G" knocked out three enemy tanks, captured numerous machine guns emplacements and six 20 MM 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 Sept. 12th, 1944, under constant rain of enemy artillery, 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

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Battalion battered its way to the high grounds and established road blocks and outposts.

Early the next morning, Sept. 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, Capt. Charles F. 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 deterring 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 principal reasons the motto of the 80th Division, "We Only Move Forward" was able to survive this night.

### Chapter 3

#### 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 coordinated, well led American fighting machine.

On Sept. 24th, in the vicinity of Bratte, the "Supermen" were beginning to surrender in droves. Companies "F" and "G" clearing wooded areas were sending groups as high as 50 prisoners back at one time. Fifty POWs were, at this time, a very large group.

Well coordinated pincer attacks by the Battalion forced the now disorganized German forces to the high grounds on Mt. St. Jean.

Across open terrain on Sept. 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.

'Twas 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 re-organized and led his crippled platoon against murderous counterattacks.

During one of these counterattacks, Company "E" was forced to shift position 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 gun and mortar fire of "H" Co., bitterly repulsed counter attacks and managed to advance up the high ground of Mt. St. Jean.

On the 27th Sept. 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. Jean, the Second Battalion of the 318th Infantry Regiment

started for the high ground of Manoncourt seir-Seille.

On the morning of October 8th, under the leadership of its new Commanding Officer, Capt. 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 opposition but Companies "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 with knowledge and dropped 60 MM 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 tankers, an enemy mortar OP was quickly eliminated thus allowing the Battalion to storm through Manoncourt and to the high grounds beyond.

With Mt. Toulon, Mt. St. Jean and Manoncourt firmly in our possession, the cry again was "One more river to cross!"

Preperation for a river crossing is one of the most dreaded periods of the infantry doughboy's life. Nor was this one to prove 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 emplaced enemy artillery across

the flooded Seille river hardened the task of preparation.

Hazardous patrols continued nightly while the sweeping rains continued to flood the area and swell the river.

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, Saily 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, its effective rifle 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. Epvre and Holecourt, 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 attackers 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 Cavalry Group seized the town and the Second Battalion moved through to the wooded areas beyond to outpost and protect its gains. Relieved by the Second Cavalry Group, the Battalion moved through Loneville and St. Avold to Henriville. 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.



'Twas 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's 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.

## Chapter 4

### THE ARDENNES

During the stay at Freyming, France, the Second Battalion continued patrol activities, repaired, replaced and reorganized their battered war machine, 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 Saarbrücken; but the Battalion was held up 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 Antwerp, 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 load 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 Bat-

talion braved cold rains and snow to reach and relieve elements of the tired 28th Division at Berg, Luxemburg.

Early in the morning on 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 motored from Niederfeulen, Luxemburg to Buron, Belgium, a distance of 30 miles to join the 4th Armored Division in an attack thru the ring of enemy steel to reach the besieged American Division within Bastogne.

On Christmas Day, in coordinated attacks with the 4th Armored the Battalion surged slowly thru 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 Weiderfor (then a PFC) of Company "G" earned the nations 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 communications had to be established, so at 0300 December 27th, First Lt. Walter P. Carr of Company "E" and a three man patrol infiltrated through to an engineers outpost at 0430; continueing on to the heart of Bastogne establishing communications with the 101 Airborne Division.

For undertaking and successfully carrying out this hazardous nite mission, Lt. Carr recieved the Silver Star Medal. T/Sgt. Virgil Miller, T/Sgt. Edward Martinez and PFC Mulford Jones of "E" Company

members of the patrol each recieved the Bronze Star Medal.

On December 28, 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 approximantly 1000 the same day. At 2200 the Battalion enjoyed their Christmas Dinner originally planned for Christmas Day.

As public evidence of deserved honor and distinction, the late Franklin D. Roosevelt, President of the United States cited the Second Battalion of the 318 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 thru the Ardennes campaign the Second Battalion left Bastogne for the town of Scieren later moving through Niederfeulen into Ettelbruck. 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 Battalion advanced and seized the town of Burden, Luxemburg. Preparations for attack on Bourscheid began the same nite. At midnite with patrol parties leading thru swirling snow storms the Battalion forged ahead fighting bitter cold, trenchfoot and numerous enemy machine gun pockets of resistance.

By noon 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 overlooking the Sauer River and the "impregnable" Siegfried Line.

## Chapter 5

### 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 lines was the natural barrier of the Sauer River. The now swollen icy 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 Feb. 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 continuing the flow of men and supplies. During this action S/Sgt. Edward H. Miller of Company "F" recieved the Silver Star Award 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 as heavy enemy artillery barrages consistently knocked out half completed bridges.

Doughs continued to paddle their way across the swift current many of them forced to swim part of the icy 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 icy 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 stinging 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 surprise. Bitter house to house fighting continued until the town itself was cleared. To rout the well embeded enemy from the pillbox fortifications 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. Ray Hoover, T/Sgt. Wm. Penrod of Company "F" and Sgt. Arthur Kuhns and PFC. Peter Husman of Company "G" finally managed to drive the enemy out by dropping white phosphorus grenades thru the aperatures of the pillbox. For their heroic actions they were awarded the Silver Star Medal.

Continuing on through the Siegfried Line, the Second Battalion on February 18, moved for the high grounds and other fortifications of the Supermen's main line of defense of their Deutschland.

Driving hard through bitter enemy opposition of tans, 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 20 MM and 88 MM guns as direct fire weapons.

It was in one these engagements that 2nd Lt. Raymond E. Broadbent, then a T/Sgt. with "G" Company, recieved the Distinguished Service Cross for killing the crews of and capturing two enemy 88 MM gun installations intact.

Lt. Raymond E. 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 10, 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 nite, were subjected to a terriffec barrage of artillery and "screaming meemie" fire.

At 1200 March the thirteenth 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, styming 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, thru which ran a important network of roads essential to the enemy for bringing supplies to their main defensive positions.

Advancing parallel 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 even beyond the enemys 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, Capt. Paul Chmar, Company Commander of "E" Company lead the Battalion into the town of Weiskirchen. Proctecting the men from ambush, Capt. Chmar quickly dispersed his men when enemy machine guns opened up on them. Disregarding the safety for his own life he proceeded to eleminate the

machine guns thus allowing the Battalion to continue into the town. Though seriously wounded, Capt. Paul Chmar continued to lead the main body of the Battalion into Weiskirchen. For his brilliant and courageous leadership and his heroic achievements, Capt. 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 surprising 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 by 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 was 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 wooded 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. The enemy's main line of defense was completely smashed and 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 Tactical Air Forces who enjoyed one field day after another in destroying thousand upon thousand of enemy retreating vehicle.

Once again the Second Battalion of the 318th Infantry Regiment had proven it's superiority over the so called "Supermen", this time administering a crushing defeat from which they never recovered.

## Chapter 6

### THE MOP UP

Reverting to Divisional reserve, the Second Battalion moved through the town of St. Wendel to Kaiserslautern.

After a short stay here, on March 24, the Battalion motored again through the town of Imsweler and on to Ober-Ingelheim forever staying as 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 317 Regiment spearheading the crossing, the Second Battalion of the 318 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 left fanatically resisting 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 days, 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 Möllrich, 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 20 MM 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 April 4, 1945.

Relieved by the 69th Division on April 6th, 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 10, the Second Battalion jumped into attack at 0700, meeting terrific enemy resistance of 20 MM 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.

'Twas here that Lt. August A. Storkman and his platoon sergeant, T/Sgt. Woodrow Bugg, both of Company "G", charged thru a hail of fire to silence one machine gun nest and thou wounded T/Sgt. Buggs, 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 10, 1945; 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 11, 1945, at 0600, Company "G" while maneuvering into attack on Erfurt, flanked the town of Hochheim and suprised a rear echlon unit of approximately 60 Germans. Before they could overcome the suprise 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. Lockett, 318th Regimental Commander, on April 11, issued an ultimatum to the enemy forces within the city, "to 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 12, 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 infantry supported by tanks. Company "G" maneuvered 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 A. Dicks, S/Sgt. Lynn Strait, PFC Oscar Dillon and PFC Joseph Kane all of Company "F"; recieved 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 enemy fire, the remainder of the gallant crew rushed the house with grenades routing the enemy from the house silencing the menacing obstacle.

Continued bitter house to house fighting carried the Second Battalion on through the city of Erfurt forcing most of the "Supermen" to surrender. By 2000 that nite the huge city was in the hands of the Allies.

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 the same month, 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 south west toward the city of Nürnberg, the Shrine of Nazidom.

After a short rest period in Nürnberg, the Second Battalion pushed south east, 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 30, 1945, 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 of May 1945, 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.

During the Battalion's four day stay at Braunau, the doughs assisted in the liberation of captured American Airmen.

Leaving Braunau by train, the Second Battalion continued on to the vicinity of Tuffelsham, Austria. Here on the 8th of May, Captain Gaberiel Martinez, "G" Company commander, lead a small task force to recapture the Hungarian Crown Jewels, several Rembrandt paintings and hords of valuable loot consisting of millions of dollars of American currency and gold.

On this same historical day, May 8, 1945 the cease fire order was issued announcing the capitulation of Germany.

Continued patrol activities of the Salzkammergut area, high in the Alps Mountains, brought out of hiding numerous high ranking Nazis officals plus numerous treasures of the beaten "Supermen".

The long hazardous bitter struggle thru the four campaigns ended only after some 3015 miles were journeyed.

The Second Battalion with the remainder of the 318 Regiment expended 923 tons of ammunition and figured in the capture of 28,170 Nazis "Supermen".

With complete victory and proud of their record, the Second Battalion, 318 Infantry Regiment, repledged themselves to the Blue Ridger's motto: "The 80th Only Moves Forward".

## SECOND BATTALION

### INDIVIDUAL AWARDS



### CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR

S/Sgt. Paul Weidorfer



### DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

Capt. Frank A. Williams

Capt. Gabriel R. Martinez

Capt. Paul Chmar

1st Lt. August A. Storkman

2nd Lt. Raymond E. Broadbent

2nd Lt. Virgil S. Burks

T/Sgt. Woodrow Bugg

S/Sgt. Oscar M. Langenkamp

Pvt. Patrick Morescha



SILVER STAR AWARDS — 100



BRONZE STAR AWARDS — 144



PURPLE HEART AWARDS — 2808