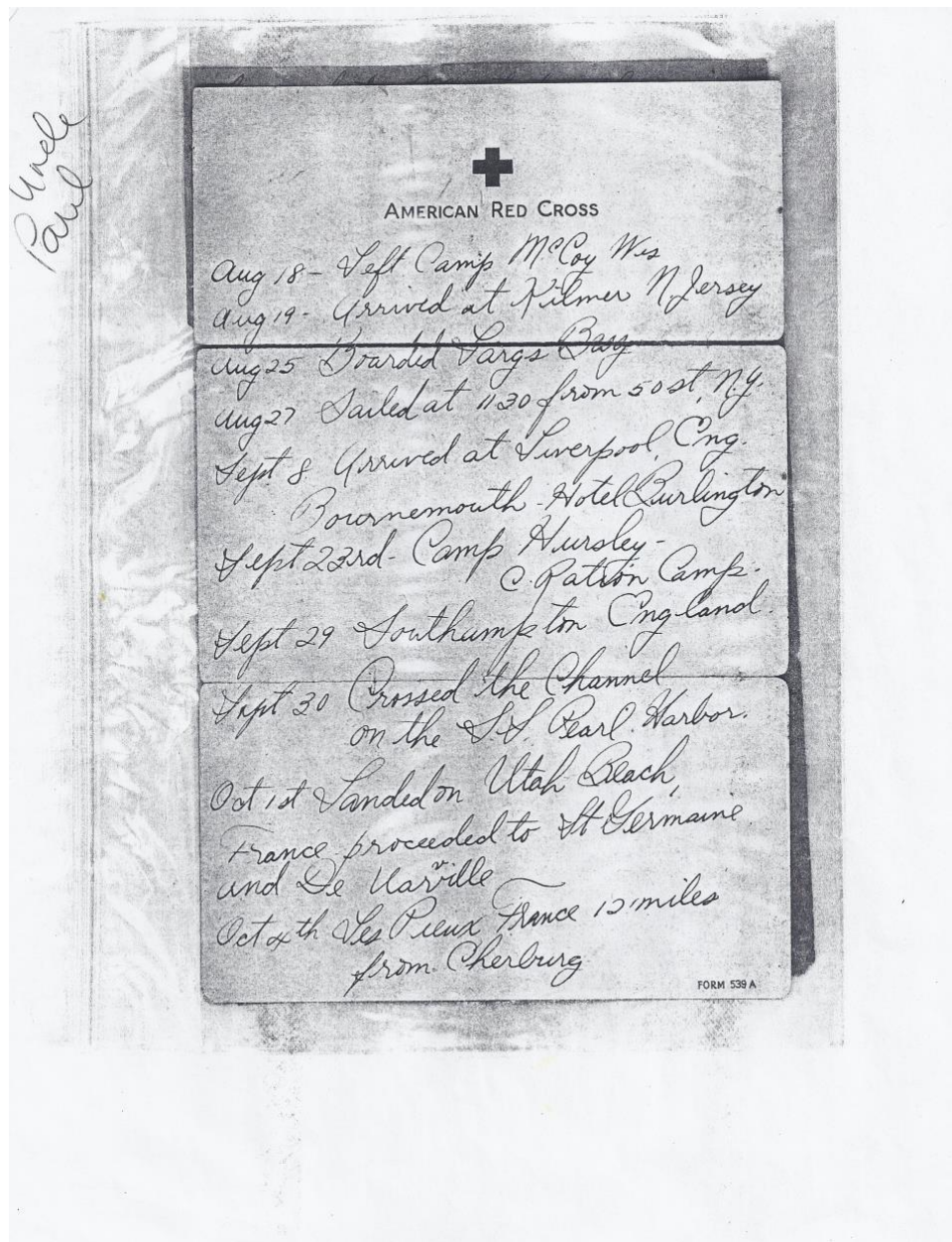


Paul Hensler (Uncle Paul) never talked about his experience in World War 2. But somewhere along the way, he jotted down 5 pages of notes on an American Red Cross notepad with dates and places.

Here is what I learned by researching these dates and places to help capture some of his personal history.





AMERICAN RED CROSS

Feb 22, 23-24. Per crossing
started the morning of the 23rd

Feb 26, Moved to Luckhoven a
head of the 5th armored. Div.

Mar 2 Moved to Amrath a
short way from the Rhine

Took patrols accross Rhine.

April 6 Moved accross Rhine
to Rheda via of Prefeld

& Munster

April 10 Moved to Cistergen
into the town on edge of the
prebet

April 12 Moved to Hannover

April 16, 17, Trip from Hannover

to Calbe on Mulda act as infantry
to hold Germans from breaking

FORM 539 A



AMERICAN RED CROSS

Feb 22, 23-24. Per crossing
started the morning of the 23rd

Feb 26, Moved to Luckhoven a
head of the 5th armored. Div.

Mar 2 Moved to Amrath a
shortway from the Rhine

Took patrols accross Rhine.

April 6 Moved accross Rhine
to Rheda via of Priefeld

+ Munster

April 10 Moved to Cistergen
into the town on edge of the
procket

April 12. Moved to Hannover

April 16, 17, Trip from Hannover

to Calbe on Mulda act as infantry
to hold Germans from breaking

FORM 539 A

the pocket. Mesturb - sleep in
the open

April 17 Calbe on the 19th went
to Gardelagen to see 210 people
slain by the Nazi SS troops.

April 22 Moved to Jalywold.

Luftwaffe barracks worked with
the 5 armored clearing the lines
in front of them

April 24 Moved to Calbe.

April 25 Moved back to Hannover
to the same place.

April 27 Rehnborn 2. Dist

April 30 Moved to Lehrte 12 miles
from Hannover

May 8 V.E. Day

Wiesbaden
Rudesheim
Lorch
Kaub
Kester St. Goarshausen
Comp. Bommhofen
Hilsen Dachsenhausen
Osterspai Braubach
Lahnstein
Horchheim
Koblenz
Vallendar
Left on 48 to
Autobahn South







| Notes written by Paul Hensler | MAJOR WW2 EVENTS |
|---|---|
| | <p>June 4, 1944 The Allies capture Rome.</p> <p>June 6, 1944 D-Day. Operation Overlord -- the Allied invasion of German-occupied Western Europe -- begins on the beaches of Normandy, France.</p> <p>June 13, 1944 Germany launches the first V-1 flying-bomb on Britain.</p> |
| <p>August 18, 1944: Left Camp McCoy Wis</p> <p>Aug 19: Arrived at Kilmer New Jersey</p> <p>Aug 25: Boarded Largs Bay</p> <p>Aug 27: Sailed at 11:30 from 50 st NY</p> | <p>August 25: Allies liberate Paris</p> |
| <p>Sept 8: Arrived at Liverpool. Bournemouth – Hotel Burlington</p> <p>Sept 23rd: Camp Hursley @ Ration Camp</p> | <p>September 4: Allies liberate Brussels and Antwerp</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Sept 29: Southampton England</p> <p>Sept 30: Crossed the Channel on the S.S. Pearl Harbor</p> | |
| <p>Oct 1st: Landed on Utah Beach, France and proceeded to St Germaine and De Marville</p> <p>Oct 4th: Les Pieux France 12 miles from Cherburg</p> <p>Oct 30th: Moved by motor convoy through France and Belgium 450 miles to Liege</p> | <p>October 21 The Allies capture Aachen, the first city to be taken in Germany.</p> |
| <p>Nov 3: Bommershaven near Tongres, Belgium. Buss bombs</p> <p>Nov 7th: Schinnen Holland. First house in Tavern.</p> <p>Nov 19, 20, 21: First fixed timber bridge in Germany in support of 2 Armor at Zuriebriggers near Palenburg Germany Palenburg photos http://www.oldhickory30th.com/PHOTO16Page.htm</p> <p>Nov 23: Moved to Tereven near Geilenkircken</p> | <p>November 24, 1944 In Europe, the Allies capture Strasbourg.</p> |
| <p>Dec 10: Moved to Scherpenseel</p> <p>Dec 24: moved to Hongen in support of 29th Div</p> <p>Bastogne</p> | <p>December 16, 1944 Germany begins its last-ditch offensive in the Ardennes, beginning the Battle of the Bulge.</p> <p>December 26, 1944 U.S. troops hold Bastogne, stalling the German offensive in the Ardennes.</p> |
| <p>Jan 21, 1945: Moved to Palenburg and worked in Roerdorf and Linnich 102 and 84</p> | <p>January 17: Advancing from the East, Soviet troops capture Warsaw. January 27: Soviet troops liberate the Auschwitz and Birkenau concentration camps, discovering hundreds of corpses from people who were recently murdered, thousands of people barely alive,</p> |

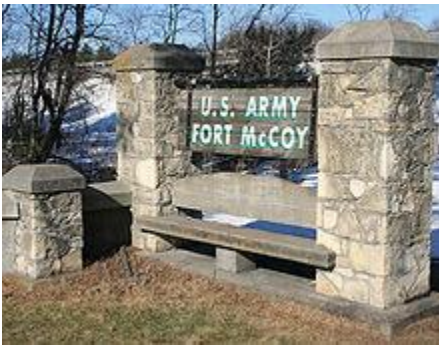
| | |
|---|--|
| | <p>and the earthly remains of approximately 1,000,000 men and women.</p> <p>January 28: In Western Europe, the Battle of the Bulge ends. Americans suffered some 75,000 casualties and the Germans lost 80,000 to 100,000. The Americans can recover from their military losses; the Germans cannot. Few people besides Hitler believe Germany can still win the war.</p> |
| <p>Feb 22 and 23 and 24: Roer River crossing started the morning of the 23rd</p> <p>Feb 26: Moved to Kuckhoven ahead of the 5th armored division.</p> | <p>February 4, 1945:</p> <p>The Yalta Conference between the U.S., Britain, and the USSR begins. Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin discuss their plans for Europe after the war, and Stalin agrees to declare war on Japan. In the Pacific, the Allies finally retake Manila in the Philippines after three years of brutal Japanese occupation.</p> <p>February 13, 1945</p> <p>The Allies begin firebombing Dresden, Germany, killing at least 135,000.</p> <p>February 19, 1945</p> <p>In the Pacific, U.S. Marines land on Iwo Jima.</p> <p>February 20, 1945</p> <p>In Europe, the Allies capture Saarbrücken.</p> |
| <p>Mar 2: Moved to Anrath, a short way from the Rhine. Took patrols across Rhine.</p> | <p>March 7, 1945</p> <p>The Allies capture two significant targets in Germany -- the Remagen bridge over the Rhine, and the city of Cologne.</p> <p>Anrath near Neuss/Krefeld/Düsseldorf</p> |
| <p>April 6: Moved across Rhine to Rheda via of Krefeld and Munster</p> <p>April 10: Moved to Eisbergen into the town on the edge of the pocket</p> | <p>April 10</p> <p>The Allies capture Hanover.</p> <p>April 11</p> <p>U.S. troops reach the Buchenwald concentration camp and discover that the prisoners had liberated themselves</p> |


| | |
|--|--|
| <p>April 12: Moved to Hannover</p> <p>April 16, 17: Trip from Hannover to Colbe on Milda. Act as infantry to hold Germans from breaking the pocket. Mersterb – sleep in the open.</p> <p>April 17: Colbe on the 19th went to Gurdelagen to see 200 people slain by the Nazi SS troupes</p> <p>April 22: Moved to Salzwedel Luffwaffe barracks worked with the 5 armored clearing the lines in front of them.</p> <p>April 24: Moved to Colbe</p> <p>April 25: Moved back to Hannover to the same place</p> <p>April 27: Rinteln</p> <p>April 30: Moved to Lehrte 12 miles from Hannover</p> | <p>from a forced evacuation. A few days later, British troops liberate the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp for women.</p> <p>Nordhausen factory discovered. V1 flying bomb.</p> <p>April 12 President Franklin D. Roosevelt dies of a cerebral hemorrhage at age 63. Harry S. Truman becomes president of the United States.</p> <p>April 13 Soviet troops capture Vienna, Austria.</p> <p>April 15 The Allies capture Arnhem, in the Netherlands.</p> <p>April 18 The last of the German troops trapped on the Ruhr River surrender. Largest surrender of war.</p> <p>April 23, 1945 Soviet troops reach Berlin.</p> |
| <p>May 8: VE Day</p> <p>Wiesbaden Rudesheim Lorch Kaub St. Goarhausen Dachsenhausen Lahnstein Hochheim Koblenz Vallendar</p> <p>Left on 48 to Autobahn South</p> | <p>May 8: VE Day</p> |
| | |

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

[timelines](#)

August 18, 1944: Left [Camp McCoy Wis](#)



 Sign outside the main gate



 Guardsmen board a Canadian CH-146 Griffon helicopter at Fort McCoy during a joint exercise.

Fort McCoy is an active [United States Army](#) installation. It is located on 60,000 acres (240 km²) between [Sparta](#) and [Tomah](#), [Wisconsin](#), in [Monroe County](#). Since its creation in 1909, the post has been used primarily as a military training center.

[\[edit\]](#) History

The post has been in virtually constant use since it was first formed as the "Sparta Maneuver Tract" on 14,000 acres (57 km²) in 1909. At first, the tract was made up of two camps, Camp Emory Upton and Camp Robinson. These were separated by a line of the [Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad](#) that ran across the land from east to

west. In 1910, the army renamed the entire tract "Camp Bruce E. McCoy" for [Robert Bruce McCoy](#), a retired [major general](#) who first proposed the area as a training ground and bought part of the property on which the fort stands. In 1926, the name of the post was shortened to "Camp McCoy".

In 1938, the United States began a major expansion of the camp. This included the addition of over 45,000 acres (180 km²) to the post, as well as the construction of several new structures including living quarters for the troops. This increased the camp's capacity to 35,000 soldiers. In all, the project was estimated to have cost about \$30 million. The expansion was officially concluded with a new inauguration on August 30, 1942.

During [World War II](#), Camp McCoy was used as a training facility for units from across the United States that were preparing to enter combat. The post was also used as a Prisoner Of War (POW) camp during the conflict. The camp was briefly deactivated following World War II, but with the advent of the [Korean War](#) in 1950, it was once again used for training. This continued until 1953, when the camp was again deactivated. It was then used to house various small national, state and civilian projects, and served as a training center for the [National Guard](#) and the [Job Corps](#).

In the 1970s, a variety of ideas were offered to make use of the camp's land including a suggestion by researchers to balance Wisconsin's population distribution by creating a major city on the 60,000 acre (240 km²) post that would rival [Milwaukee](#). In response, a Milwaukee official proposed that the camp be used as a landfill for Milwaukee garbage.^[1] In 1973, the Army reactivated Camp McCoy as a permanent training center, and on September 30, 1974, it was officially re-designated as Fort McCoy.

Aug 19: Arrived at [Kilmer](#) New Jersey

Toward the end of 1941, with the threat of war imminent, the War Department chose a site between Edison and Piscataway, New Jersey as a staging area for troops. They named the camp for the poet Joyce Kilmer, who enlisted in the U.S. Army during World War I and was killed in action in the Aisne-Marne offensive. Construction began at Camp Kilmer in January 1942 and was completed in six months. The facility covered over 1,500 acres and consisted of 1,120 buildings, including rows of wooden barracks, seven chapels, five theaters, nine post exchanges, a gym, three libraries, four telephone centers, a post office, a 1,000-bed hospital, 28 miles of roadway, and about 11 railheads that fed into the main line.

From its opening in 1942 through the end of the War, Camp Kilmer was a major transportation hub for U.S. soldiers traveling to and from the European Theater. More than 20 divisions with over 1,300,000 servicemen staged at Camp Kilmer before being deployed to Europe. The site also hosted various Allied units before they were sent elsewhere for training.



-
- [Larger Version](#)
-

Closing the summer sports season after the All-Sports Day dinner, September 20 (1945?), representatives of winning units posed with the trophies awarded to their outfits. The photo's original caption lists the men: Standing, left to right, Pfc. Donald Condit, Quartermaster Branch, softball runner-up; Pfc. Edward Murphy, Det. 1, 4200 SCU, softball champions; Cp. Gurnell Herron, 3176th Quartermaster Service Co., All Sports Award; T/5 Harry Nimms, 3155th QM Service Co., volleyball plaque. Crouching, left to right; Pfc. Elvoid A. Owens, 3165th QM Service Co., first place track, second place intrapost baseball; S/Sgt. Edward A. Hailes, 3372nd QM Truck Co., second place volleyball; and Pfc. Sam Odom, 3155th QM Service Co., intrapost baseball winners.



-
- [Larger Version](#)
-

The first radio broadcast to emanate from Camp Kilmer was heard over 193 stations of the Blue Network on March 15 (1945?) when the "Victory Parade of Spotlight Bands," featuring Benny Goodman and his orchestra, came to camp. Here the "King of Swing" and the rest of the show hold rehearsal on the stage of Theater 4, which had been equipped for radio broadcasting.

Camp Kilmer operated more like a small city than a typical army facility, and servicemen enjoyed all types of entertainments and activities. The Camp had its

own baseball and football teams and hosted exhibition games with professional clubs from New York. There were 20 softball diamonds, 30 volleyball courts, and 160 horseshoe courts available for recreation. The Camp had their own band and orchestra, and there were also dances and movies.

USO-Camp Shows put on productions of plays at Camp Kilmer, and the troops had visits from professional athletes and top Hollywood stars. Benny Goodman performed at the first radio program to be broadcast from the Camp on March 15 (1945?). As many as 21,000 returning troops a day would be entertained by the USO's eight-hour continuous shows.



-
-
-

[Larger Version](#)

In the spring and summer, outdoor entertainment, including eight-hour continuous shows, were offered for the benefit of newly-arrived veterans who had served overseas. Here, movie star Betty Grable starts off one of the all-afternoon and evening programs for a crowd of 11,500 debarkees within a few hours after their arrival in camp.

New York Yankee star Joe DiMaggio and comedian Red Skelton, both serving with the Army, were temporarily assigned to the Camp. DiMaggio autographed baseballs for wounded soldiers and gave hitting and fielding lessons, while Skelton made unannounced visits to the hospital for his version of "laugh therapy."



-
-
-

[Larger Version](#)

A typical group of veterans flown back to the states under the "Green Project" for furloughs or discharges from airbases in Europe and Africa, wave a greeting at Camp Kilmer. Speedy processing would get them to reception centers only 48 hours after taking off from foreign soil.

With the ending of hostilities in 1945, the Camp became the main receiving center for soldiers returning from Europe and the Pacific. By September 1945 over 300,000 of these returnees had been processed, and at times over 5,000 a day were coming through the Camp. In December 1945, Sgt. Melford Fabricant became the one millionth soldier to pass through Camp Kilmer.

Camp Kilmer was deactivated in the fall of 1949. It was briefly reactivated for the Korean War, but by the mid 1950s Fort Dix, in central New Jersey, had overtaken it as the major processing point in the area. Camp Kilmer's last major role came near the end of 1956 when it served as the receiving center for those fleeing the Hungarian Revolution during "Operation Mercy."



-
-
-

[Larger Version](#)

A crowd of 13,000 newly-arrived debarkees, station complement officers, enlisted men, WACs, and camp civilian employees in the Kilmer Bowl in a special V-J Day Ceremony.

By the 1960s much of the Camp's properties and land were dispersed. Today, there is a Vocational Training Center located at the site as well as housing and schools.

Aug 25: Boarded Largs Bay

Largs Bay



Largs Bay was launched in 1921, as a mixed passenger/cargo ship. During WW2 she took part in a large number of convoys. She survived the war and was scrapped in 1957 so had a service life of 36 years. Her sister ships were **Jervis Bay**, **Moreton Bay**, **Esperance Bay** and **Hobsons Bay**. There is further information about voyages on this ship on the Recollections section of the Benjidog website [HERE](#).

At the outbreak of WW2 she was in transit from Australia to Britain with passengers and cargo. She unloaded her cargo at Malta and made it safely back to Britain with her passengers. She continued to be used for commercial purposes until being requisitioned as a troopship in August 1941.

Largs Bay took part in 38 convoys according to information shown in the table below which is provided courtesy of [Convoyweb](#) - see [Ext. Ref. #5](#). Convoyweb also lists a large number of independent voyages undertaken by this ship.

She was deployed as a troopship in August 1941 and transported troops from Singapore amongst other places. There are accounts of some of these convoys on this site [HERE](#) from Stan Mayes.

Career Highlights

| Date | Event |
|--------------|---|
| 20 June 1921 | Launched |
| 22 Dec 1921 | Completed |
| 4 Jan 1922 | Maiden voyage |
| 1928 | Sold to White Star Line London |
| 1931 | Rebuilt to 14,184 grt. And converted to 550 single class tourist berths. |
| 1932 | Sold as part of the Aberdeen Line to Shaw, Savill & Albion following the collapse of the Kysant shipping group. |
| 1933 | Transferred to Aberdeen and Commonwealth Line, London |
| 1936 | Transferred to Furness Withy & Co. when they took control of Shaw, Savill & Albion |
| August 1941 | Requisitioned as troop transport in WW2 |
| 1948/9 | Refitted and returned to Aberdeen and Commonwealth Line for "all tourist class" passengers |
| 22 Aug 1957 | Broken up at Barrow |

Image

| Convoy No. | Route | Convoy | |
|------------|---------------------------------|--------|-------------------------------|
| | | No. | Route |
| HG.1 | Sep 1939: Gibraltar - Liverpool | KMF.17 | Jun 1943: Clyde - Algiers |
| BLUE.1 | Sep 1939: Port said - Gibraltar | MKF.17 | Jun 1943: Algiers - Gibraltar |

| | | | |
|-----------|--|--------|-------------------------------------|
| SL/MKS.42 | Aug 1940: Freetown - Liverpool | RS.7 | Jul 1943: Gibraltar - Freetown |
| OB.219 | Sep 1940: Liverpool - Dispersed 57.11N 29.32W | WS.32 | Jul 1943: Clyde - Freetown |
| HX.139 | Jul 1941: Halifax - Liverpool | MKF.25 | Oct 1943: Port Said - Clyde |
| WS.11 | Aug 1941: Liverpool - Split into ws11f & ws11s | KMF.27 | Dec 1943: Clyde - Port Said |
| WS.11F | Sep 1941: Formed at sea - Freetown | NSF.11 | Dec 1943: Oran - Naples |
| WS.11X | Oct 1941: Formed at sea fm ws 011d - Bombay | GUS.28 | Jan 1944: Port Said - Hampton Roads |
| NA.2 | Jan 1942: Halifax - Clyde | GUS.29 | Jan 1944: Port Said - Hampton Roads |
| WS.17 | Mar 1942: Oversay - Freetown | MKS.38 | Jan 1944: Port Said - Gibraltar |
| WS.17A | Apr 1942: Freetown - Durban | NV.16 | Jan 1944: Naples - Augusta |
| AS.2A | Apr 1942: Freetown - Capetown | GUS.35 | Mar 1944: Port Said - Hampton Roads |
| WS.21 | Jul 1942: Clyde - Freetown | CU.29 | Jun 1944: NYC - Liverpool |
| CF.5A | Sep 1942: Capetown - Freetown | CU.37 | Aug 1944: NYC - Liverpool |
| CF.5B | Sep 1942: Freetown - Clyde | UC.32 | Aug 1944: Liverpool - NYC |
| CF.5A | Sep 1942: Capetown - Freetown | UC.38A | Sep 1944: Liverpool - NYC |
| CF.5B | Sep 1942: Freetown - Clyde | CU.43 | Oct 1944: NYC - Liverpool |
| WS.24 | Oct 1942: Liverpool - Bahia | DS.65 | May 1945: Clyde - Iceland |
| HX.225 | Jan 1943: NYC - Liverpool | SD.65 | May 1945: Iceland - Clyde |

Largs Bay travelled as part of a large convoy of ships. Here's a list of all the ships that took part in Convey 37 in August 1944.

<http://www.convoyweb.org.uk/cu/index.html?cu.php?convoy=37!~cumain>

Sept 8: Arrived at Liverpool. Bournemouth – Hotel Burlington

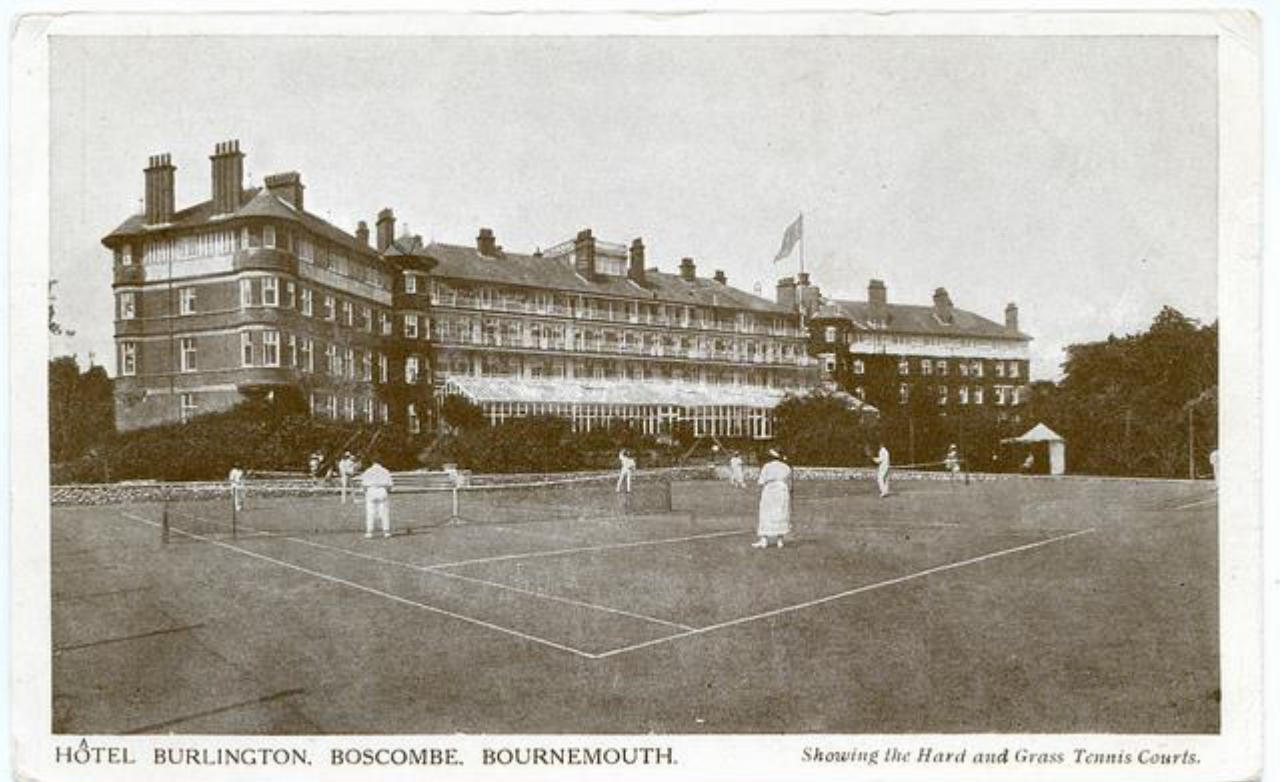


The Meyrick Estates sold their Boscombe Towers and Tankerville freeholds on 20th October, 1892. Mr Chappell won the tender to build the Burlington for £23,000. The architect was Thomas Edward Colcutt, who also designed the Savoy in London and became president of the RIBA. It opened in August, 1893, with 200 bedrooms, 13 suites, and a ballroom (and probably cost nearer £70,000). It was requisitioned during World War 2 and never fully recovered as a hotel. In 1948 plans were approved for it to become flats but it was bought as a hotel in 1950 (for £79,000). In 1955 it closed with an application to demolish it and build flats. This was turned down but, in 1960, permission was granted to build 352 flats but the reserve price was not reached at auction. Bournemouth's first casino club was then opened here on 12th January, 1962, whilst plans to convert it into retirement accommodation were discussed. A plan, in 1964, to turn it into a shopping precinct was refused and the Burton family bought it in 1972 for £175,000. It became a Grade II Listed Building in 1976 and was sold to a Bournemouth business group in 1984 for £800,000 and has been converted into much sought-after flats. I bought one of the brass chandeliers from the hotel's restaurant when the contents were auctioned off (allegedly part of a set presented by an east European royal guest). The east and west wings were converted into apartments in the 1990s. The central section remained a hotel until 2001 but has now also been converted.

- entrance to Boscombe Towers



Burlington Hotel, Owls Road, Boscombe, Bournemouth



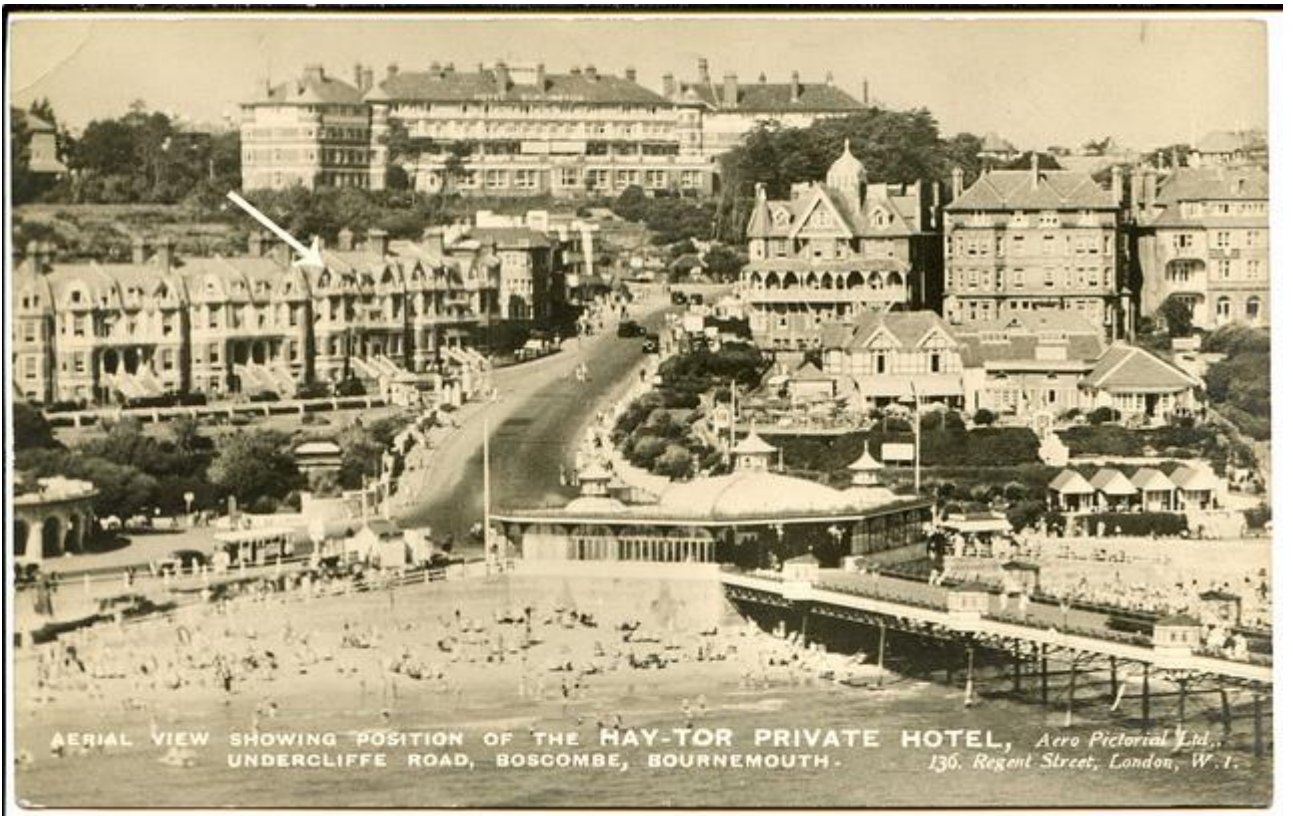
Burlington Hotel, Owls Road, Boscombe, Bournemouth

Showing the hard and grass tennis courts.
Site of the former Boscombe Towers.



Burlington Hotel, Owls Road, Boscombe, Bournemouth

Inset: moonrise from balcony of hotel.
Postally unused.



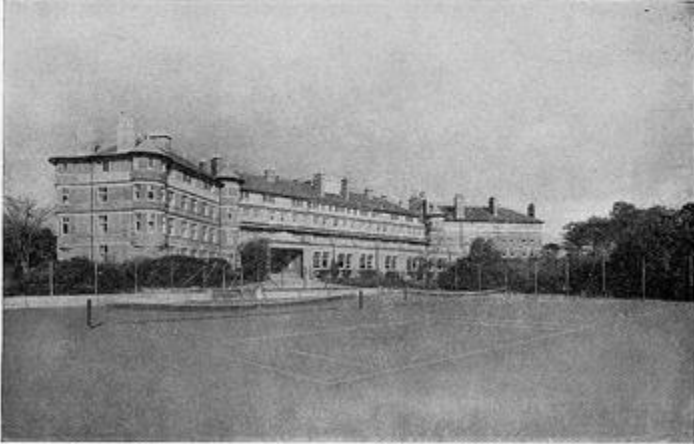
AERIAL VIEW SHOWING POSITION OF THE MAY-TOR PRIVATE HOTEL, *Aero Pictorial Ltd.*
UNDERCLIFFE ROAD, BOSCOMBE, BOURNEMOUTH. *136, Regent Street, London, W. 1.*

Hay-Tor Hotel, Undercliff Road and Boscombe Pier Approach

LICENSED HOTEL

HOTEL BURLINGTON

(Street Plan: Square H9)
Bournemouth's Popular Licensed Hotel
A.A. R.A.C.



SOUTH FRONT VIEW OF HOTEL. ALL ROOMS OVERLOOKING THE SEA

The largest and best-appointed Hotel in Bournemouth. Accommodating 200 visitors, facing due South, overlooking the Bay, standing in its own spacious grounds

Hot and Cold Running Water. Private Suites. Balconies to Bedrooms
Central Heating. Garage and Lock-ups. Recreation Room
Ballroom. Three En Tout Cas Hard Tennis Courts
Modern Cocktail Lounge. Sea Water Supply to Bathrooms

OTHER HOTELS :

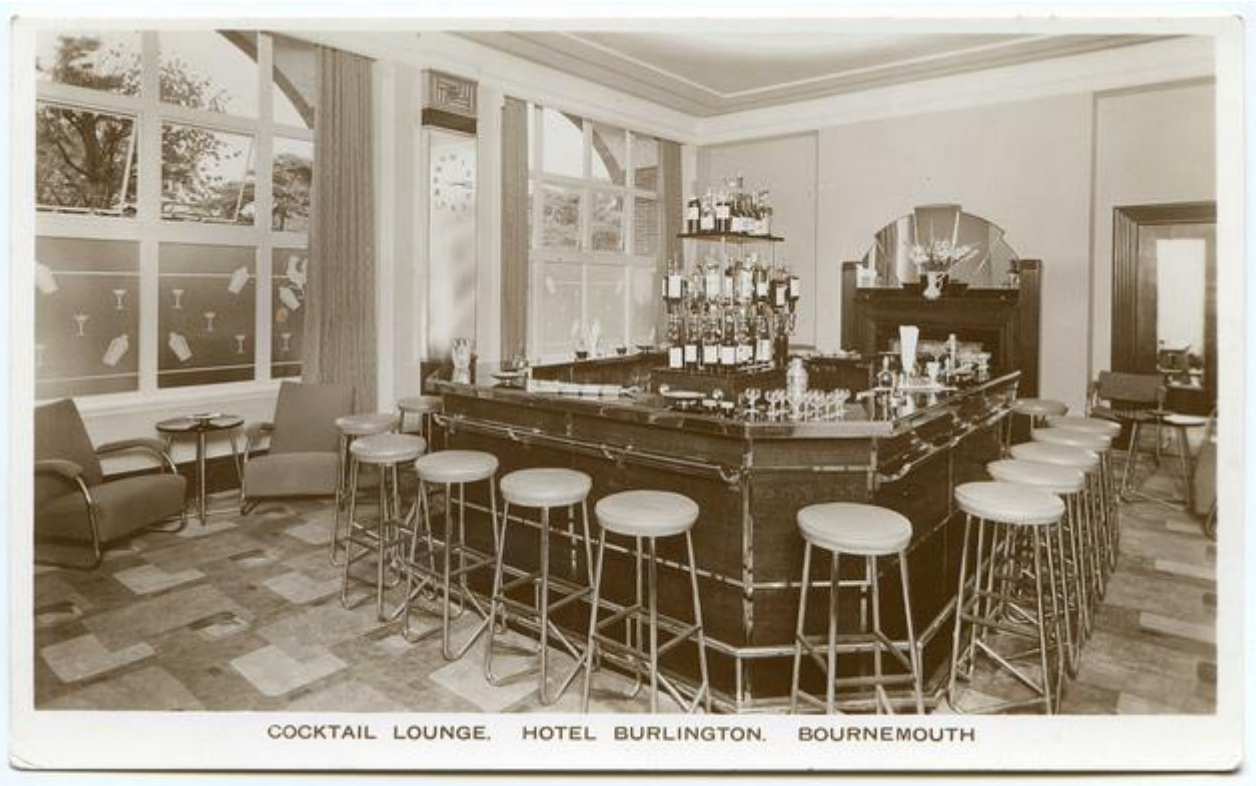
| | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Linden Hall Hydro, Bournemouth | Hotel Grosvenor, Swanage | Sandbanks Hotel, Sandbanks |
| | Royal Victoria Hotel, Swanage | |

BOSCOMBE - BOURNEMOUTH

Telegram: "BURLINGTON, BOSCOMBE" Telephone: Boscombe 1750

g .149

1938 Bournemouth Guide page 149



Burlington Hotel, Owls Road, Boscombe, Bournemouth, Dorset

Cocktail lounge.

Sept 23rd: Camp Hursley @ Ration Camp

Madcap Memories

That time waits for no one is a proven fact, but there is nothing to stop us from turning back the worn pages of our "Petty Girl" calendar to see what the score was at this time last year.

The date, June 10, 1944; the place, Camp Li-vingston, Louisiana. The 134th AAA Gun Bn observed its first anniversary as an organized outfit with all the batteries participating in a parade. Good conduct medals were awarded to some of the fellows who had a clean record for a year. The sharp stepping "D" battery fellows won the blue ribbon pennant for their superior marching in a parade. After the parade the battalion went to a special showing of a movie at the camp theater. The athletic program scheduled for the afternoon was cancelled because of the intense heat, so the refreshments were served and most of the fellows went swimming or found some shade to rest in the remainder of the day. Several wives were visiting their husbands and joined us for chow that evening.

After organizational day was over, we spent the next two weeks finishing packing and doing the million and one little things that had to be done before shipping overseas. When the night

of June 23rd rolled around and everyone was sleeping on the floor because we had turned our beds in, we knew that this was “it”. We were up before daylight the next morning and after getting our personal baggage loaded, we entrained from Camp Livingston – destination unknown but rumors were having a field day. As the train crept thru the midwestern and eastern states, several fellows got a last glimpse at their home towns. We arrived in Camp Miles Standish, Massachusetts June 26. As soon as we detrained, a loud speaker started barking orders and soon we were lugging our duffle bags thru the darkness for what seemed to be miles.

Our stay in Camp Miles Standish was limited to six days which was spent taking shots, seeing training films, and hearing lectures. Finally on July 2, we got on the train and headed for Boston. Kougeas was dashing thru the aisles looking for Tremont Street and betting 100 to 1 that we would never leave the States. Everyone was hoping that this was just a dry run. We ate box lunches on the train and got our first glimpse of the harbor as the train pulled up to the pier. After we got off the train and were lined up on the pier, American Red Cross girls came around with donuts and orange juice, but no one was hungry. Finally we trudged up the gangplank while a band was playing and soon we were settled down in a dark compartment of the former Luxry liner U.S.S. Brazil.

July 3rd we sailed from Boston harbor and got our last look at the good old U.S.A. We were hardly out of the harbor before we started getting instructions on how to use Mae West jackets and the procedure of life boat drill. This just took a few minutes each day and left plenty of time for the flourishing crap games.

Everyone felt alright the first day out. We didn't do much celebrating July 4th, but everyone thought they might see some real fire works. Some of the boys didn't find that turkey we had for supper very appetizing.

As we got farther out on the high seas, the stakes in the crap games kept getting higher. Several acts were whipped up by the talented fellows on board, and recorded programs were broadcast throughout the ship to keep us entertained.

When July 12th rolled around and we had been at sea for nine days, everyone gave up hope of our voyage being a dry run and we docked in Gourock, Scotland. The harbor, with white hospital ships, gray aircraft carriers, and many other types of boats in camouflage battle paint anchored in the deep blue water and set off by the rolling green hills made a sight very beautiful to behold. Occasionally a sea plane would circle overhead and land in the harbor, adding to the activity and beauty of the scene.

Impatiently we waited to go ashore but we had to stay on board that night and the launches picked us up the next day, July 13, 1944, to take us ashore. The first strange thing we noticed, even before we got off the boat was how short the

nights were here. It didn't get dark until after midnight, which seemed incredible to some of the more romantic Joes.

Everyone was tense with excitement at stepping ashore on foreign soil after the long boat ride. We got off the launches and right on to a waiting train. The trains seemed small and quaint after riding on streamlined jobs in the states. As soon as we were settled in the train, Scottish Red Cross girls invaded us serving coffee and donuts and humming Pistol Packing Mamma!

July 14th we arrived in Camp Blackshaw Moor, near Leek, in Staffs county. It was raining when we got there, but that didn't dampen our spirits because we had our first mail call since we sailed.

Not wasting any time, Havranek and Branco took some of the fellows the next day, July 15, to get our trucks and pick up our 90's. A few days later, on the 24th, Kaser took a detail to Kimpton to pick up the radar equipment. The next week everyone was kept busy cleaning the cosmoline off the equipment and getting it ready for combat.

On August 1st we left Camp Blackshaw Moor to convoy to our new position. On this convoy we had our first big encounter with the famous England fog. Many of the fellows were giving first aid to their broken hearts after finding the girls from Leek so very friendly, and everyone was trying to run Frankie Sinatra out of business by singing the No. 1 song on the Yank Hit Parade, "Roll Me Over in the Clover". It was this day, too, that we experienced our first reality of what war was actually like when we drove thru London with air raid sirens screaming and enemy planes overhead.

We arrived at our new position, which was later to become known as Shrapnel Heights, at Hythe, in Kent county, August 2nd. Everyone was eagerly waiting to see their first buzz bomb after hearing the dramatic stories the advanced party was telling about them.

Three days after we arrived at this position, the area was a network of super fox holes with all the rough spots ironed out from constant use. August 5th was a great day for the history books, for it marks the turning point of the war. Yes, it was then that Dog Battery went into action and Shrapnel Heights was born. When that ATS girl with the "telephonic" voice said "Folkestone Harbor Diver Alarm",

Lt Szubrowski automatically gave the order to commence fire, and we the outfit who would never see foreign soil, were in action.

Soon after this, 'Doc' Shumate and partner, Meek, were snowed under with fellows wanting to know why their hair was turning gray, why they couldn't sleep nights, and getting treatments for fox hole blisters. Shovien was perfecting a new type swan dive about this time too. Using his bunk for a spring board, he makes a beautiful half turn thru the flap in the communications tent and does a 20 foot glide to his elegant foxhole. Saves time, he says. 'Radar Ears' Dalessio is giving able assistance to the range section these days and Brostoff with his 'echo box' is extremely jealous.

As time goes by, dark circles begin to appear under the eyes of the energetic boys from Battery D, and it isn't from worrying and losing sleep over buzz bombs. Yes, the ever adventurous Madcap Green fellows discover that the English have wonderful scotch, gin and lemon, gin and orange, gin and grapefruit, gin and also some infamous bitters, and that the ATS, WRENS, WAFFS, and civilian girls are damn friendly and entertaining.

On August 30th the battery shut down operations for 24 hours and everyone took off on pass. Several of the fellows went to London, Canterbury, Dover, and all points in between. Each battery was allowed to cease operations for one day each week now that the robot attacks were beginning to recede and our fire power was so deadly accurate that one battery could be off duty and still guarantee that few bombs got through.

The next time we ceased operations for a 24 hour pass was September 7th. A battery party was scheduled for that night at Leas Cliff Hall, but the German channel guns started shelling the coast and the Hall didn't open. The refreshments, including the girls, were taken out to the battery position and the party was held in the house there and the surrounding area. Wonder why Dino slept in the hall that night ---?

All good things must come to an end, damn it, and so on September 16th we were alerted for departure, and left the morning of September 21st. American Red Cross girls came up to our house on the hill and gave us coffee and donuts. Orlando and Scotty were crying on each others shoulder and

there were a lot of other blood shot eyes in the battery. "Roll Me Over" in still no. 1 on the Hit Parade.

We convoyed to Camp Hursley, Near Winchester, and stayed overnight. The next day we went to Southampton and finally boarded the liberty ship S.S. James Caldwell.

September 23rd found us enroute to France, eating those undescrivable "C" rations. This wasn't bad enough tho, for that Liberty ship was built so fast that they forgot to install latrines until after it was off the assembly line, and the makeshift jobs certainly weren't built for comfort. Never-theless we arrived off the coast of France at 1900 hours and anchored there for that night and the next day. Three puppies were discovered stowed away on the boat that some of the fellows brought from Leek. The one, Lady, survived the entire war and is still with the battery and is worshipped like a queen.

Finally the water became calm enough to permit barges to come alongside, and on the 25th the equipment was loaded on them and taken ashore. We followed the equipment the next day, landing on Omaha Beach September 26, 1944. (No casualties when we hit the beach).

As soon as we landed we got our trucks that were waiting for us and convoyed to an assembly area. From here we went to our new bivouac area. We lined our pup tents up in three rows and settled down to usual bivouac duties. We had alot of free time and sports was our main occupation, when it wasn't raining. Movies were shown each night a few miles from our area. We didn't have any overshoes here and each day the mud got deeper. It really took an artist to get into a pup tent, undress, and get into bed without getting mud all over the blankets or knocking the damn tent down.

To keep up the morale in spite of the mud, a truck took fellows to Le Mont St Michel, which was an interesting old castle on the channel coast that formerly belonged to the Duke of Normandy.

Finally the mud got so deep and made walking so hazardous that we turned engineers and constructed some super sidewalks and roads. Naturally this was an invitation to a march order which came October 25th.

We left muddy old Normandy at 2320 the night of October 25th and traveled all night and all the next day,

covering a distance of 160 miles. We bivouaced that night in a forest and pitched pup tents. The next day we traveled to Lemans and bivouaced there for the night. Lemans is just outside Paris, so Capt Foley, Lt Szubrowski, and Lt Young drove into Gay Paree to see the sights – as soon as it got dark. Top, Kouc, and Gabby went into Paris too, period. The next day we traveled 120 miles and bivouaced at Etampes, France. When we passed through Paris this day the beautiful French mademoiselles gave us bread, fruit, wine, and cognac, and as the morning report reads, the morale was excellent. Our fourth day of convoying we traveled 116 miles and bivouaced at Laon, France. Some of the fellows found that cognac makes good liquid heat and not only keeps them warm, but happy too. How about that Sam? The 29th of October we traveled 120 miles and bivouaced at Namur, Belgium. On the 30th of October we arrived at our new position at Liege, Belgium. Here we had a big chateau for our quarters, and the gun and range positions were already dug as we relieved “D” battery of the 413th AAA Gun Bn here. We are now assigned to the First U.S. Army and the 49th AAA Brigade. November 1st we fired on flying bombs that were starting to hit Liege which was vitally important for the First Army installations there and the Meuse River crossings, which were main supply routes. Downtown Liege had several facilities for entertaining G.I.’s, but most of the fellows preferred to stay around Beyne Heusay, didn’t they Wolfe? The caretaker at the Chateau kept us supplied with apples and pears. Beer and cognac were plentiful in the village.

We engaged enemy aircraft that were trying to bomb out the supply route bridges across the Meuse on November 10th.

November 23rd we left Liege, our big chateau, and some broken hearted Belgique girls, and convoyed to our new position which happened to be a forest and hilltop outside the village of Murrigen, Belgium. We put up pyramidal tents, determined to make the best of it after living in the chateau, and prepared for action as we were only 500 yards from the front lines. This also happened to be Thanksgiving Day. We had a “D” ration bar for lunch and had our turkey dinner in the woods about 2100 in total darkness.

The next day we fired 175 rounds at buzz bombs. The weather was cold and cloudy. On November 26th we had a

field day, firing ten different courses at buzzers. The next week was also a busy one and we put in claims for ten buzz bombs.

The following week we claimed four more buzz bombs. There was several inches of snow on the ground then and the road leading into our position was muddy as hell. We took a break on December 11th and closed operations for 24 hours for a rest and maintenance.

We were awakened early on the morning of December 16 by German fire whistling overhead. This was our first time under direct enemy artillery fire and many of the fellows enthusiastically began construction of fox holes, but toot sweet. About ten O'clock we got word to be on alert for enemy patrols coming in the area under smoke screens. All day long reports kept coming in on enemy patrols in the area, and the guard was increased. In the afternoon the artillery fire quieted down and the atmosphere seemed liked the calm before the storm, and little wonder, for that night the desperate German breakthrough began, the spearhead striking in our immediate vicinity. First the battery was alerted and all secret fuzes were removed. Then we got orders to move the range equipment out, and finally the entire battery was given march order at 2300. By this time the artillery fire had started in again but we succeeded in getting the equipment out without damage. However, just as the radar mount was pulled out of it's position an 88 shell landed in the spot where it had been operating and demolished the emplacement. No one was hurt by the incident and after a short delay in getting the equipment out of the muddy lane, we began a strategic retreat under the nose of the famous Adolph Hitler Panzer Division and other crack Wermacht troops who were making a suicidal attempt to breakthrough our lines and sever the army supply line at Liege. We convoyed through the early morning hours, the darkness lightened by a skyful of German flares, to Waimes, Belgium. Here the battery was reorganized for a tank destroyer mission.

At 1400 on the 17th we left Waimes, the range equipment and the personnel under the guidance of 1st Sgt Kapala going to Liege and the rest of the battery going to Saurbrodt, Belgium and setting up as tank destroyers.

On December 19th S/Sgt Delaney returned to the battery after missing in action for three days. He was stranded in Bulligen when the Germans entered the town. After hiding out in a cellar for two days, he managed to infiltrate the German lines and joined the 1st Infantry Division and from there he made his way back to the battery.

On Christmas Eve, December 24, 1944, enemy aircraft attacked, strafing convoys and trying to bomb strategic crossroads. Our M-51 quadmounts engaged the planes and one enemy plane was claimed.

Christmas was observed in a rather unusual setting, but nevertheless we had turkey with all the trimmings and a big mail call. American light, medium, and heavy bombers and fighter planes of all types filled the air all day leaving long white vapor trails in the cold December sky.

The day after Christmas we moved to a new position nine miles west of Verviers, Belgium. Here the range section joined us again and we had an AA mission once more.

We stayed in this position three days and then moved to Eupen, Belgium on the 29th. We were attached to the 413 AAA Gun Bn for a tactical mission as Anti aircraft. We bivouaced in a field that night until the outfit we were relieving moved out.

The next day we went into position and everyone was busy building shacks and getting German huts to live in.

January 1 the M-51 quadmounts fired on enemy aircraft. One plane claimed.

January was a pretty quiet month for us. Lt. (the mole) Szubrowski left the battery to become adjutant for the battalion. His place in the battery was filled by Lt. Kummer who left "A" Battery to join us. While we were here at Eupen got day passes to Verviers and 48 hour passes to Eupen. Show trucks ran to Eupen and Headquarters each day. The Donut Dugout in Eupen received a lot of patronage from Dog battery.

February 1st the sun came out and it started to warm up and it also started to get muddy. For the next three weeks until we moved out on February 27th we were slopping around in knee deep mud.

When we finally left Eupen on the 27th of February, we entered Germany at 1000 and convoyed to our new position

at Eicherscheid, which was a beat up little town on top of a cold windy mountain, on 'Dead cow lane'.

For our first action on the sacred soil of the father land, we engaged enemy aircraft at 0800 on March 2nd.

We stayed in this position nine days and then left for a new position at VoiBet, Germany, better known as Foleyville, on March 8th. Here we started a practice of giving civilians 'march order' out of their homes, which was later to become an habitual practice when we took a new position.

March 9th we got one of those late march orders at 2300. The battery left at 0800 the next morning and convoyed to Green, Germany to give anti aircraft protection to the newly captured Ludendorff bridge at Remagen. Half an hour, after we arrived in Green, a flight on enemy planes attacked the bridge and were engaged by our M-51 quadmounts. One enemy plane was claimed.

Enemy planes attacked the bridge four times on the 13th, and were engaged each time by our guns. One plane was claimed. The following day was a duplicate of the 13th and also our first encounter with the new German Jet propelled planes.

I think everyone in the battery will always remember Green, Germany, for it was there that the big winery was discovered about a block from the battery area. Not since the Gold Rush of '49 has there been such a mass movement of men with sacks, wagons, wheel burrows, jeeps and 2½ ton trucks carrying the precious liquids back to the area. And that old saying that all good things come at once still holds true, for even after the discovery of all the wine, Headquarters came thru with a ration of wine and champagne for the battery.

We claimed another plane March 18th when enemy planes attacked the bridge and still another one on the 19th. Old Dusty Shaw doesn't have any trouble getting his feet to move now, after he got them moving when that shell landed near him in the orchard.

There were four enemy air raids on the bridge March 20th and we claimed two planes. It was about this time that the battalion opened up a rest center at a place outside Sinzig, complete with mineral baths, movies, etc.

The machine gun section went on T/duty with the 581st down on the banks of the Rhine April 2nd, and the machine gun section of "C" battery was attached to us. Top and Willie Halverson left for a seven day furlough at the Riviera in Southern France. Operations were closed in preparation for a move.

April 4th we left Green, Germany and what was left of the winery, and traveled to our new position which was 2 miles north of Koblenz. Here we made a "show" position, as our mission was to give protection to the Army day show at Koblenz and possibly be a target for inspectors. It was at this position that we had those super looking gun pits etc with the transplanted sod and flowers and then no inspectors showed. Zannini couldn't even persuade officers traveling down the highway to stop and see the place.

After the Army Day show was over we got march order and left Koblenz at 0900 April 7th. We crossed the Rhine river on the longest pontoon bridge ever built about 1145, and arrived in Fritzlar, Germany at 2130 and bivouaced there at an airport for the night. We left Fritzlar the next morning and traveled to our new position at Kassel, which was nothing but a mass of ruins. Our new area was full of bomb craters and unexploded bombs and the rail yards nearby were totally destroyed.

It was while we were here in this position that the avalanche of rifles, swords, helmets, and what not began to flood Flora's mobile post office. Don't get the impression that the "D" battery boys would loot anything, but they certainly have an uncanny gift for finding things.

When April 18th rolled around, it looked like the end of an era for the 134th AAA Gun Bn. We ceased operations as a result of Luftwaffe inactivity and moved the range equipment and 90 MM guns to battalion headquarters. The next day Lt. Young and the majority of the motor pool personnel returned from T/Dy at the first Prov. Trucking Battalion in Buchenau. Rumors were again having a field day.

April 21st we left Kassel and traveled to our new position at Mahlhausen. We had the school house there for our barracks. We were assigned as security guards for Muhlhausen and its county, foreign refugee camps, and railroad and other vital Military installations. Also had motorized patrols patrolling the streets.

A detail of men with an M-51 took over the guard of Dreffurt. I heard rumor that the charms of the battery "D" yanks were more effective than the M-51 in keeping the Germans under control.

Our acute transportation situation was eased a little bit by some of the fellows confiscating German cars and motorcycles. From Muhlhausen we went to Gotha for our next assignment on April 28th. We bivouaced there all night as no suitable location for a battery position was found, and the next day we traveled to a little village about two miles outside the city limits of Gotha, named Trugleben. We took over an inn for our barracks, and established outposts in Waltershausen and Aspach.

We left Trugleben May 2nd and traveled about 10 miles to our new position in Waltershausen (need I say more). Yes, Waltershausen turned out to be a good deal. One remarkable thing was the way no one bitched. Everyone seemed perfectly content, even tho they were getting less sleep than they had all during the war. Waltershausen and the towns where our outposts were – Wolwinkel, Fredricksroda, etc were an epoch in the lives of the "D" Battery men. Two blondes who lived on Waltershausen "Pig Alley" wrote several chapters for the fellows too.

Civilians in Waltershausen kept us busy checking on bits of information they brought in. Then there was the historical morning when our own Blackie Farris, the notorious jeep driver from Ohio was coming back to Waltershausen after an early morning run to Headquarters and captured single a German Officer who had been hiding in the woods. Later that same day, May 8th, 1945 the German High Command surrendered unconditionally, marking an end to the European War. Most of the fellows took the news calmly, muttered "So what" and wondered if they would be sent to the CBI. Headquarters came thru with a ration of cognac, champagne, and rum and a mild drunk was pitched to celebrate the end of the war.

May 11th we picked up 17 PW's and 1 SS Officer, and on May 14th we packed up and left Waltershausen, traveling 120 miles to our new assignment in Wetzlar. I could say that many of the fellows hated to leave Waltershausen, but since

there isn't supposed to be any fraternizing I won't say it. We arrived in Wetzlar about 1800 and moved into houses vacated by civilians, upon request. There is a Russian and Polish DP camp about 100 yards in the rear of our area and a river runs parallel with the street in front of our area. Guarding the Russian camp is our mission.

The inevitable happened on May 20th. After fighting our way through four campaigns and now the war is ended we are starting a training schedule! Yep, the rugged boys of Battery D are learning to be garrison soldiers, complete with training schedule. Lt. Lenaeus has that school room look in his eyes and I suspect him of encouraging the idea.

Evidently Hasty didn't like the song "Don't Fence Me In" because he started construction on a beautiful picket fence, only to get morsch order the day he got it finished. Incidentally, I wonder what he'll use his tool chest for now that we have modern plumbing and he doesn't have to build these 5 holed box affairs. How about that, Hasty?

We closed shop at the Russian DP camp and moved to the other side of town on May 28th. Here we took another step toward becoming full fledged garrison soldiers by having a streamlined kitchen and dining hall, complete with dishes and silverware. Also have a "big time" battery office, and Capt. Foley spends all his time at that big six by six mahogany desk he inherited. We requisitioned some German PW's to clean out the swimming pool and get it in operation. On May 29th we took over the guard at the Leica Camera Plant in downtown Wetzlar. Also on May 29th the entire battery was some what shocked and saddened by the death of "Pop" Wargo who died suddenly. He is the only one deceased since the battery was organized.

June 2nd we were finally convinced that soldiers do get out of the army, sooner or later, and naturally it's always later. Yes, today five of our hard fighting comrades who had been thru hell with us left for the States and discharges. All five, Halverson, Howard, Fell, Norby, and Whitehouse had service in Panama and had points totaling over 100.

We left Wetzlar June 4th and traveled to what was the Dulag-Luft Allied Prisoner of War Camp about one mile out of Wetzlar. The entire battalion is concentrated in this camp, and we are real garrison soldiers once more. This day will

also be remembered as the day Lt. Col. Hunt, our commanding officer gave up his command to return to the States and civilian life. Major Hamann is now our commanding officer. June 6, 1945, was the first anniversary of "D" day, and was a holiday for all men except those unfortunate ones who were on guard. Memorial services were held here in camp and at Magpie.

Then June 7th a horrible thing happened. Our beloved 1st Sergeant got up early with that fiendish look in his eyes, grabbed his nerve shattering whistle and dashed madly thru the barracks blowing the whistle for everyone to fall out for reveille. Pfc Henry couldn't take it any longer so he left for the States to get a discharge June 9th.

June 10th was our second anniversary of being an outfit. Since it fell on Sunday we had the organizational day celebration on the following day, June 11th. Much water has flowed under the bridge since our last organizational day celebration. It has been a year that will go down in history and always be remembered, especially since it saw the end of the war which our own fighting outfit helped to bring to an earlier end.

Our Organizational Day began with a snappy parade to the time of the marches played by the 70th Inf. Division band, imported especially for this occasion. Brigadier General Timberlake and Col. Newton were the guests and reviewed the parade, after which they made speeches in the recreation hall. Gen. Timberlake will long be remembered for his rugged humor and witty personality. The afternoon was spent by playing softball games. In the evening a stage show was presented in the recreation hall with talent from all the batteries, bringing to conclusion the Organizational celebration.

Amidst the flourishing rumors after "O" Day came a few and startling facts. First the mass transfer of high point men who are eligible for discharges began. In the shuffle we lost Kapala, Banditelli, Branco, Dean, Zumbaugh, Vastano, Dusenburry, Eichorn, Rodehorst, and Wm. Wallace, and Lt. Kummer, Lt. Col. Shearouse is our new commanding officer and brought his entire staff with him.

As we wind up this narrative, the new regime has just announced that the 134th is slated for action in the Pacific

or CBI, but not until after we have had at least a 30 day furlough in the States. It won't be the same old outfit with so many of the familiar faces – and the voice missing, but we intend to carry out our superior operations wherever we are sent, and as long as there is Dog Battery, history will be made.

Sept 29: Southampton England

The Titanic disaster

In common with most of the luxury liners of the time,^[53] *RMS Titanic* sailed from Southampton.^[21] Most of the crew came from Southampton; 549 Sotonians died in the sinking. The Maritime museum in the old Wool House includes an exhibition related to the vessel.

The period between the two World Wars saw an increase in the volume of traffic, as the motor car and Southampton Corporation Tramways evolved. It became essential to develop new routes around the Bargate as the central arch was too much of an obstruction.^[56] By 1931, a tram passed through the Bargate every 30 seconds^[56] and over the course of 14 hours, 2000 cars^[56] and 6000 bicycles^[56] would use the same narrow passage between Above Bar and the High Street. The photographs (below) illustrate the problem. Several old buildings and part of the medieval walls were demolished on both sides of the Bargate.^[56] In 1932, the Bargate was bypassed on its eastern side.^[56] The Bargate became an island when it was bypassed on its western side in 1938.^[56]

The Clock Tower, further up Above Bar at the junction with New Road, was re-located to Bitterne Park Triangle in 1934^[11] to facilitate further road improvements.



• Above Bar, 1926



• High Street, circa 1930



High Street, circa 1930, showing the Gaiety cinema



Clock Tower in its original location, Above Bar, circa 1930

On 25 March 1929,^[56] Southampton Corporation purchased Northam Bridge from the Northam Bridge Company. On 16 May 1929,^[56] the tolls on that bridge were removed. At the same time, the tolls at Lances Hill,^[56] [Hedge End](#)^[56] and the bridge at [Bursledon](#)^[56] were also abolished. The only remaining toll in Southampton was at the [Floating Bridge](#), which was eventually taken over by Southampton Corporation in 1934,^[56] remaining a toll-crossing until it closed in 1977.

World War II (1939-1945)

Air Raids

[Southampton Blitz](#) The Second World War hit Southampton particularly hard. Pockets of Georgian architecture remain, but much of the city was leveled during the Blitz of November 1940. 476 tons of bombs were dropped on the city by the [Luftwaffe](#).^[57] Southampton was a prime target because of its general strategic importance as a major port and industrial area, and particularly because the [Supermarine Spitfire](#) was designed, developed and built in Southampton.

On 24 September 1940, the Supermarine factory in [Woolston](#) was bombed, killing many, though not damaging the factory. Two days later, the factory was destroyed. After the air raid Nazi propaganda declared that the town had been left a smoking ruin.

On 6 November 1940,^[58] during a raid on the town centre, three bombs hit the School of Art in the Civic Centre,^[58] (now known as the Art Gallery), killing students that were sheltering in the basement.^[58]

The main blitz, a series of sustained nighttime raids, started on 23 November 1940.^[59] There was a pause until 30 November,^[59] when the resumption of raids destroyed repairs that had made during the lull.^[60] The blitz continued on 1 December,^[59] but these raids

were sporadic and smaller.^[61] A total of 137 people died during the period of the Blitz, of which 96 were lost to direct hits on public air raid shelters.^[60]

The accuracy of the locally-based [Ordnance Survey](#)'s maps did not go unrecognized by the [Luftwaffe](#): German bomber pilots used them to bomb Southampton.^[62] One building that survived the bombing was Southampton's oldest, St. Michaels Church. The spire was an important navigational aid for the German pilots and consequently they were ordered to avoid hitting it.^[63] Other buildings in Southampton were found to be used as aids to navigation; Elmfield flats in Millbrook had a flat concrete roof which was clearly visible from the air until it was grassed over.

There were 1605 air raid warnings^[57] in Southampton, the last raid occurred on 5 November 1944.^[57] Only one flying bomb fell within the boundaries of Southampton,^[57] at Sholing on 12 July 1944.^[57]

D-Day and the Invasion of Europe

In July 1943,^[64] military exercise *Harlequin* tested the ports' capacity for embarking troops and equipment.^[64] Original estimates were that 11,000 troops could be embarked on each high tide.^[64] The exercise showed that 44,000 troops could be handled.^[64] By [D-Day](#), that figure had increased to 53,750 troops and 7070 vehicles,^[64] aided by the construction of additional facilities^[64] specifically with [D-Day](#) in mind.

Besides the embarkation of troops, Southampton was used for other purposes in the preparations for the [Invasion of Europe](#). US servicemen and [Lend Lease](#) imports arrived at the docks.^[65] Sections of [Mulberry Harbour](#) were constructed in the harbour.^[66] A planning team for the [PLUTO](#) pipelines that provided fuel to the Normandy sector was based at [HMS Abatos](#).^[67]

Southampton was at the heart of *Area C*,^[64] a huge marshalling area in southern Hampshire, which extended as far north as Winchester. Detailed maps of the time show that within *Area C*, *Sub area Z* extended around the north of Southampton and as far as [Hedge End](#) in the east.^[68] There were military camps on [the common](#),^[68] Harefield,^[68] Thornhill,^[68] and Netley Common.^[68] The maps even show that there were Chemical Warfare dumps to the north of the town.^[68] The town centre, the docks, Woolston and Weston were part of Embarkation Area C5.^[68] The plan was that troops and equipment would be assembled in the camps in sub-areas W, X, Y and Z then brought to the embarkation area to be loaded aboard the ships that were waiting there. That plan was tested in May 1944,^[69] during Operation Fabius,^[69] with troops that passed through Southampton rehearsing their landings at [Hayling Island](#), [Bracklesham Bay](#) and [Littlehampton](#).^[69]

After [D-Day](#) Southampton continued to work at full capacity to re-supply the Allied Forces on mainland Europe.^[70]

From 1 April to 25 August 1944, Southampton was within [Regulated Area \(No 2\)](#), which placed the local population under certain restrictions that were intended to secure the military operation.^[71]

Sept 30: Crossed the Channel on the S.S. Pearl Harbor+
October - November 1944





October, 1944

The month of October would see the end of LCI 35's duty as a landing craft infantry ship. However, before completing its work, the LCI 35 transferred troops at Omaha Beach, made its final landing at Utah Beach and as its last act of service, provided escort service for an LCT to Omaha.

October 1-7, 1944

Daily Routine

From October 1-7 the LCI 35 crew continued with their daily cleaning routine, deck duties and painting. Repairs were made by repacking rudder posts and a reconditioned port generator was installed. Small arms and ammunition were turned over to the base gunnery officer. At 1115 on Sunday October 8th American Quartermaster Corp troops came aboard. Captain Gabbard, the Commanding Officer, came aboard with 153 men and 2 officers. After boarding, the LCI 35 cast off to Portland Harbor for fueling. At 1715 British Naval Officer Lieutenant Hurst, OTC of LCI Convoy and British seaman came aboard. At 1830 LCI 35 took up the forward position of LCI convoy as O.T.C. and sailed for Normandy.

October 9, 1944

Transfer of Troops to LCT - Omaha Beach

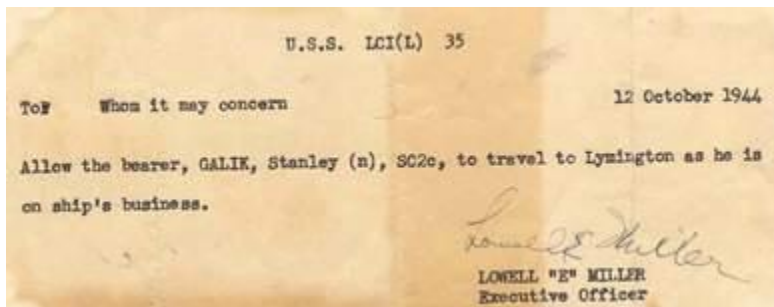
At 1030 proceeding to the beach the LCI 35 tied up to LCI 33 anchored offshore at No 3 beach. The LCI 35 received orders by blinker to get underway and discharge troops at No 5 beach and with the LCT tied up alongside at 1400 all troops disembarked on the LCT for transportation onto the beach. At 1500 the LCI 35 anchored off shore waiting for the return convoy.

October 10-15, 1944

Routine Duties Continue

On Tuesday October 10th at 0530 the LCI 35 was underway and returned to Weymouth where at 2045 she tied up to LCI 33 at the docks. From October 11th until October 14th the crew returned to normal duties and ship routine. Engineers installed a reconditioned starboard generator.

As part of normal duties, Dad was sent to Lymington on October 12th. Dad saved his pass signed by Executive Officer Lowell E. Miller as part of his scrapbook collection.



Dad's Pass for Lymington dated October 12, 1944

October 15 -21, 1944

American Troops Spend Almost a Week Aboard the LCI 35 Waiting for Transport To Utah Beach

On Sunday October 15th, American (colored)* troops from the Aviation Engineers** (Commanding Officer identified as Captain Del bean) came aboard the LCI 35 expecting to be transported to Utah beach no later than the next day. However, bad stormy weather prevented these 143 men (colored) and 3 officers (white) from sailing until October 21st. During their stay aboard the LCI 35, one of the troops, Sgt. William J. Porter, became seriously ill, and after being tended to by the Pharmacist Mate and an Army Medic, was taken ashore to the US Navy Hospital by ambulance.

It was not until October 21st that the troops were disembarked for physical exercise and returned aboard by 1600. The LCI 35 finally sailed at 1800 in a convoy of 3 USS LCIs and 18 HM LCTs and 3 USS LCTs.

*The word colored was taken directly from the Deck Log of the LCI 35.

**During WW II, the U.S. military segregated black military members into separate units; however, many units were given a unique opportunity to do sophisticated engineering work in segregated Engineering Aviation Battalions (EABs).

Air Force Print News
February 2, 2007

October 22, 1944

Utah Beach

In what was to be their last landing, the LCI 35 hit the beach smoothly at 1437 and when the ship dried out at the bow, the soldiers began disembarking at 1615 from the starboard ramp. By 1700 all soldiers were ashore except for a clean up detail that stayed behind. Finally at 1800 all soldiers were ashore. The LCI 35 stayed on the beach until 2330 when she backed off the beach and anchored offshore for the night. While on the beach Lt. Commander Jackson and a British seaman came aboard for transportation back to Weymouth.

At 0745 on October 23rd the LCI 35 was underway back to Weymouth alone escorted by an English minelayer. Upon arrival at 1855 the LCI 35 tied up to LCI 495 at the docks in Weymouth. The crew continued cleaning the ship as part of normal duties until Wednesday October 25th when the LCI 35 was called upon for its final duty -- providing escort service for a single LCT going to Omaha Beach.

*****LCI 1065 Sunk off Leyte, Philippine Islands, 24 October 1944***

October 26, 1944

Escort of LCT to Omaha Beach - Final Wartime Service

On October 25th, after moving from Weymouth and dropping anchor in Portland Harbor, the LCI 35 waited for its sailing orders. One hour after dropping anchor the LCI 35 received its sailing orders at 1735 to take up escort service at the rear of the convoy. The LCI 495 led the convoy. At 1030 on October 26 the LCT arrived at Omaha Beach. The LCI 35 proceeded to Utah Beach waiting for a return convoy of LCTs. In the rear position of the LCT convoy returning to Weymouth, the LCI 35 slowed its speed before reaching Weymouth to ensure that 3 HM LCTs that straggled from the convoy would arrive safely. Finally, the LCI 35 arrived in Weymouth and at 0850 on Saturday October 28th tied up to LCI 490 at the docks. This was the last assignment of the war for the LCI 35. Finally, the LCI 35 could proudly state - Mission Accomplished!!

From October 28th until its decommissioning, the crew of the LCI 35 continued routine cleaning and maintenance of the ship and finished painting the ship a dark blue. Remaining repairs were made and those eligible were granted liberty. On October 31st the LCI 35 headed into Weymouth Beach for painting of the hull. At 1850 the LCI 35 tied up to LCI 231 at berth 4 where she remained until November 12th.

| October 1944 | Other WW II Action and Notable Events |
|---------------------|---|
| October 2, 1944 | Nazi troops crushed the two-month old Warsaw Uprising, during which a quarter of a million people were killed. |
| October 3, 1944 | U.S. troops cracked the Siegfried Line north of Aachen Germany. |
| October 13, 1944 | American troops entered Aachen, Germany. |
| October 14, 1944 | German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel committed suicide rather than face execution for allegedly conspiring against Adolf Hitler. |
| October 18, 1944 | Soviet troops invaded Czechoslovakia. |
| October 20, 1944 | Gen. Douglas MacArthur stepped ashore at Leyte in the Philippines, two and a half years after he'd said, "I shall return." The Yugoslav cities of Belgrade and Dubrovnik were liberated. |
| October 21, 1944 | U.S. troops captured the German city of Aachen. |
| October 23, 1944 | The Battle of Leyte Gulf began. |

November 1944

**USS LCI (L) 35 Decommissioned- November 15, 1944
Transferred to British Under Lend-Lease**



The LCI 35
"Little But Mighty"

With the October 26, 1944 escort service completed, the journey of the LCI (L) 35 and its crew that began in January 1943 was now over. The ship that served her crew so well during the invasions and follow-up landings of Sicily, Salerno, Anzio, and Normandy was turned over to the British Navy. This little "Elsie" overcame many obstacles throughout the war that normally would have stopped other ships. Despite getting stuck on sandbars and needing many repairs caused by the frequent "bumps and bruises" she suffered along the way, she served her crew admirably throughout the war.

While the LCI 35 did her job magnificently, the officers and crew that served aboard her were truly the "Big Men in Little Ships" that Commander Lorenzo Sherwood Sabin, Jr. referred to. The LCI 35 crew did their job superbly and should be remembered for a "Job Well Done"!!



**The Officers and Crew of LCI 35
Photo Taken in August - 1944 in Newhaven, England**

On Sunday November 12th the LCI (L) 35 sailed from Weymouth up the Thames Estuary in a single column of other USS LCIs and arrived at the Queenborough Pier in Sheerness, England. The LCI (L) 35 tied up to USS LCI (L) 193. In a strange coincidence, the LCI (L) 229, the ship that Dad was on when it crossed the Atlantic Ocean in March 1943, was on the starboard side of the LCI (L) 35.



**LCIs 75, 231, 229, 35, 193 and 238
Queensborough Pier in Sheerness, England**

Photo Courtesy of Philip Reed, LCI 35

On Tuesday November 14th, in preparation for turning the ship over to the British Navy, British officers came aboard to check the ship's inventory. All remaining 20 mm ammunition (10,700 rounds) was taken ashore, and the inventory, fuel receipts, average and shortage lists were checked and found correct. At 1430 the acceptance agreement was signed by Lt. L. Mitchener, RNVR for the British Admiralty. The LCI (L) 35 was turned over to British command and the ship's records were sent to Exeter, UK by registered mail.

November 15, 1944 - Formal Decommissioning of LCI 35

The ship, with all hands mustered for the ceremony, was formally decommissioned at colors (1700) on Wednesday November 15, 1944. The ceremony was followed by hoisting the British Ensign.

| November 1944 | Other WW II Action and Notable Events |
|----------------------|--|
| November 5, 1944 | British official Lord Moyne was assassinated in Cairo, Egypt by the Zionist Stern gang. |
| November 7, 1944 | President Franklin Roosevelt won an unprecedented fourth term in office, defeating Thomas E. Dewey. |
| November 24, 1944 | U.S. bombers based on Saipan attacked Tokyo in the first raid against the Japanese capital by land-based planes. |

Oct 1st: Landed on Utah Beach, France and proceeded to St Germaine and De Marville

Videos of landing

http://www.criticalpast.com/video/65675022976_United-Stats-soldiers_Liberty-ships_Amphibious-truck_Landing-Crafts

Utah Beach



Utah Beach was the [code name](#) for the right flank, or westernmost, of the [Allied](#) landing beaches during the [D-Day invasion of Normandy](#), as part of [Operation Overlord](#) on 6 June 1944. Utah was added to the invasion plan toward the end of the planning stages, when more [landing craft](#) became available.

Utah Beach, about 3 miles (5 km) long, was the westernmost of the five landing beaches, located between Pouppeville and the village of [La Madeleine](#),^[1] which became the right flank anchor of the allied offensive along the left bank (western bank) of the [Douve River estuary](#).^[2] The German sector code was W5.

Despite being substantially off course, the [US 4th Infantry Division](#) (part of VII corps) landed with relatively little resistance, in stark contrast to [Omaha Beach](#), where the fighting was fierce.

Plan of attack

The landing was planned in four waves. The first consisted of 20 [Higgins boats](#) or LCVPs, each carrying a 30-man assault team from the 8th Infantry Regiment. The 10 craft on the right were to land on Tare Green Beach, opposite the strong-point at les Dunes de Varreville. The 10 craft on the left were intended for Uncle Red Beach, 1,000 yards (900 m) farther south. The entire operation was timed against the touchdown of this first assault wave, which was scheduled to take place at 06:30 am. Eight [LCTs](#) (Landing Craft, Tanks), each carrying four amphibious [DD Tanks](#), were scheduled to land at the same time or as soon thereafter as possible.

The second wave consisted of another 32 Higgins boats with additional troops of the two assault battalions, some combat engineers, and also eight naval demolition teams that were to clear the beach of underwater obstacles.

The third wave, timed for H plus 15 minutes, contained eight more Higgins boats with DD tanks.

It was followed within 2 minutes by the fourth wave, mainly detachments of the 237th and 299th Combat Engineer Battalions, to clear the beaches between high- and low-water marks.

D-Day



Southern Utah Beach with obstacle overprint from 30 May 1944



Southern Utah Beach



Map of the Utah beach landings



Having secured the beach with relative ease, American forces move inland.



Utah Beach, 2011. View to the north.

Two hours before the main invasion force, a raiding party swam ashore from [Landing Craft Assault](#) at [Îles Saint-Marcouf](#), thought to be a [German](#) observation post. It was unoccupied.

The first wave arrived at the line of departure on time and all 20 craft were dispatched abreast. Support craft to the rear were firing machine guns, possibly with the hope of exploding mines. When the LCVPs were 300–400 yards (270–360 metres) from the beach, the assault company commanders fired special smoke projectors to signal the lifting of naval support craft fire. Almost exactly at [H Hour](#) the assault craft lowered their ramps and 600 men waded through waist-deep water for the last 100 or more yards to the beach. The actual touchdown on the beach was therefore a few minutes late, but the delay was negligible and had no effect on the phasing of the succeeding waves. Enemy [artillery](#) had fired a few air bursts at sea, but otherwise there was no opposition at H Hour.

The first troops to reach shore were from the 2nd Battalion, 8th Infantry. Captain [Leonard T. Schroeder](#), leading Company F, was the first man from a landing craft to reach the beach.^{[3][4]} The 1st Battalion landed a few minutes later. Both came ashore considerably south of the designated beaches. The 2nd Battalion should have hit Uncle Red Beach opposite Exit 3. The 1st Battalion was supposed to land directly opposite the strong-point at les Dunes de Varreville. The landings, however, were made astride Exit 2 about 2,000 yards (1,800 metres) south.

This error was potentially very serious, for it could have caused great confusion. But it did not. The original plans, in which each assault section had a specific mission, could not be carried out in detail, of course.

Brigadier General [Theodore Roosevelt, Jr.](#), assistant commander of the 4th Division, had requested several times, against his commander's best judgement, to go in the first wave and personally lead the initial attack on the beach strong points. His written request was finally approved by General Barton, 4th Division Commander.

Roosevelt was the only general to land with the initial seaborne assault wave on D-Day, coming ashore in Schroeder's LCVP.^[4] At age 57, he was the oldest soldier to land. When Roosevelt realized the landing craft had drifted south with the current and smoke more than a mile from their objective—and that the first wave was a mile off course—he personally made a reconnaissance of the area immediately to the rear of the beach to locate the causeways which were to be used for the advance inland.

He then returned to the point of landing, contacted the commanders of the two battalions (Lieutenant Colonels Conrad C. Simmons and Carlton O. MacNeely), and coordinated the attack. Roosevelt's famous quote was, "We'll start the war from here!" These impromptu plans worked successfully and with little confusion. With artillery landing close by, each followup regiment was personally welcomed on the beach by a cool, calm and collected Roosevelt, who inspired all by humor and confidence. He pointed almost every regiment to its changed objectives. For his actions on Utah Beach, Roosevelt was later awarded the [Medal of Honor](#).

The German forces responsible for the defense of the beach were elements of the [709th Infantry Division](#), commanded by Generalleutnant [Karl-Wilhelm von Schlieben](#), and the [352nd Infantry Division](#), commanded by Generalleutnant [Dietrich Kraiss](#).

Success



American paratroopers in the village of [St. Marcouf](#) off Utah Beach, 8 June 1944

By the end of D-Day, some 23,250 troops had safely landed on the beach, along with 1,700 vehicles. Only about 200 casualties were recorded during the landings. Several factors contributed to the success at Utah compared to the bloody battle at nearby Omaha:

- Fewer German fortifications: The defense of the area was largely based on flooding the coastal plain behind the beaches, and there were fewer bunkers.
- Effective pre-invasion bombardment: Many of the known large bunkers, such as the coastal battery near [Saint-Martin-de-Varreville](#), were destroyed from the air prior to D-Day. [B-26 Marauder medium bombers](#) of the US [Ninth Air Force](#), flying below 5,000 feet (1,500 m), provided [close air support](#) for the assaulting forces.
- [DD tanks](#): Nearly all of these swimming tanks made the beach, because they were launched half as far out as at Omaha and were able to steer into the current more effectively to avoid swamping in the rough seas.
- Mis-landings: Because most of the invasion force landed opposite Exit 2, this one was the most used; other exits were more heavily fortified.
- Paratroopers: The most significant difference was the 13,000 men from the [101st Airborne Division](#) and the [82nd Airborne Division](#) already fighting inland. For five hours before the first Utah landings, the paratroopers (and glider forces) had been fighting their way toward the beach, clearing the enemy from positions along the exits. The paratroopers also greatly confused the enemy and prevented any significant counterattack to the landing area.

The true cost of Utah Beach is reflected in the heavy airborne casualties: The 101st alone lost about 40% of its forces on D-Day. Also, the 1,000 casualties during [Exercise Tiger](#), a practice run for the Utah assault, could also be considered part of the price for D-Day.

Oct 4th: Les Pieux France 12 miles from Cherburg

Oct 30th: Moved by motor convoy through France and Belgium 450 miles to [Liege](#)

Nov 3: Bommershaven near Tongres, Belgium. [Buss bombs](#)

The Germans returned in 1940, this time taking the forts in only three days. Most Jews were saved, with the help of the sympathising population, as many Jewish children and refugees were hidden in the numerous monasteries. The German occupiers were expelled by the [Allies of World War II](#) in September 1944 but Liège was subsequently subjected to intense aerial bombardment, with more than 1,500 [V1](#) and [V2 missiles](#) landing in the city between its liberation and the end of the war.



V-1 flying bomb

The [Fieseler Fi 103](#), better known as the **V-1** ([German: *Vergeltungswaffe 1*](#), "retaliation weapon 1") and **Buzz Bomb**, also colloquially known in Britain as the **Doodlebug**, was an early [pulse-jet](#)-powered predecessor of the [cruise missile](#).

The V-1 was developed at [Peenemünde Airfield](#) by the [German *Luftwaffe*](#) during the [Second World War](#). During initial development it was known by the [codename](#) "Cherry Stone". The first of the so-called [Vergeltungswaffen](#) series designed for [terror bombing](#) of London, the V-1 was fired from "ski" launch sites along the French ([Pas-de-Calais](#)) and Dutch coasts. The first V-1 was launched at London on 13 June 1944, one week after (and prompted by) the successful [Allied landing in Europe](#). At its peak, more than one hundred V-1s a day were fired at southeast England, 9,521 in total, decreasing in number as sites were overrun until October 1944, when the last V-1 site in range of Britain was overrun by [Allied](#) forces. This caused the remaining V-1s to be directed at the port of [Antwerp](#) and other targets in Belgium, with 2,448 V-1s being launched. The attacks stopped when the last site was overrun on 29 March 1945. In total, the V-1 attacks caused 22,892 casualties (almost entirely civilians).



Liege today

Nov 7th: Schinnen Holland. First house in Tavern.

Nov 19, 20, 21: First fixed timber bridge in Germany in support of 2 Armor at Zuriebriggers near Palenburg Germany

Palenburg photos <http://www.oldhickory30th.com/PHOTO16Page.htm>

Many great photos at link above

Nov 23: Moved to Tereven near Geilenkircken

Übach-Palenberg. Palenberg is located at the border with the [Netherlands](#), at approx. 10 km east of [Heerlen](#) and 15 km north of [Aachen](#). The river [Wurm](#) flows through the area. The town has an area of 26.106 km². More than half the area is agricultural.



Palenberg today



Oct. 8th 1944 Palenberg





Dec 10: Moved to Scherpenseel

Dec 24: moved to Hongen in support of 29th Div

[Bastogne](#)



SCHINNEN, Netherlands -- In 1944, all seven main roads in the Ardennes mountain range converged on the small town of Bastogne, Belgium, making control of that crossroads imperative for a German advance in World War II -- a place allied forces had to defend at all cost. It remains the scene of the largest land battle in U.S. Army history.

Today monuments commemorate the siege of Bastogne and the Battle of the Bulge. The 31st annual Bastogne Historical Walk, scheduled Dec. 13-14, salutes the region's place in history as well.

Every year, thousands participate in the walk. One of them is Jan Maessen, a Dutch Ministry of Defense employee at U.S. Army Garrison Schinnen who said the event is a living monument to the town's historical legacy.

"I was very impressed with how the memory is still very alive after 64 years and how people from many nations come together to enjoy a special day," Maessen said.

This year's walk passes through Mande-Saint-Etienne, west of Bastogne, where 101st Airborne Division paratroopers arrived by truck from Reims, France, on Dec. 19, 1944, to block and later halt the Germans' advance towards Bastogne.

Historic re-enactors, some of whom appeared in the HBO television network series "Band of Brothers," set up authentic military positions along the route, complete with period uniforms and equipment. The walk follows the exact route of the 1944 battle and re-enactors representing all sides give participants a foxhole view of "then," allowing today's Soldiers to compare it to their own deployment experiences.

"You're walking along a beautiful wooded path, then suddenly you discover (the re-enactors) and there is a calm climate of friendship. The walk is very well done," said Maessen, who said he plans to join a group from USAG Schinnen on this year's hike,

"I'm going ... to get an idea what Soldiers faced (during the battle)," said Sgt. Jorico Canty, who has deployed twice to Iraq and is now assigned to Schinnen's Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment.

To remind visitors of what happened during the World War II campaign, a historical center and a two-story, star-shaped Mardasson Hill American Memorial are located just outside Bastogne, honoring those who fought and died there. In all, German, American and British casualties totaled more than 181,000. From atop the memorial, visitors can view the area and imagine how the battle unfolded.

"The Bastogne historical walk (allows for) civilian-military interaction that is very friendly and spontaneous," said German Lt. Col. Jan Schraudy, executive officer for the NATO E3A Component in Geilenkirchen, Germany. Schraudy and other NATO airmen said they plan to participate in this year's event.

"It's remarkable to see NATO military members walking together as a team of allies 64 years after that battle," Schraudy said. "The walk is great for fitness, of course, and there are many events, some with buglers and bagpipes, which makes the day special."

The Dec. 13 walk costs 6 Euros and features four distances: 6, 12, 20 or 30 kilometers. Event organizers encourage pre-registration to avoid long lines and ensure walkers get a participation patch. Directions and registration details can be found on the Web at www.bastognehistoricalwalk.be.

Admission to the historical center ranges from 6 to 8 euros; information can be found online at www.bastognehistoricalcenter.be.

[me](#)



[Explore the BBC](#)

ON THIS DAY 1950-2005

17 December 

Search ON THIS DAY by date





US tanks run into trouble at Amonines in Belgium

1944: Germany counter-attacks in Ardennes

The Germans have mounted a series of counter-attacks on the Western front allowing them to re-cross the borders of Luxembourg and Belgium.

On the second day of what now appears to be a full-scale counter-offensive, the Germans are attacking with tanks and aircraft along a 70-mile front guarded by American forces in the Ardennes region.

The main thrust has been launched from the northern Ardennes near the town of Monschau.

Two further attacks have taken place further south.

German paratroops have been dropped behind Allied lines. Allied army reports say some of them have been "mopped up", others are still at large.

“ Khaki uniforms do not
blend well with the white
snow, we were very
vulnerable ”

[People's War memories »](#)

Reports from the US 9th Army, attacking a line to the north of the Ardennes region, say the German Luftwaffe also launched a concerted bombing campaign in support of its ground forces.

The United States Army Air Forces claim to have shot down 97 Luftwaffe planes overnight, and 31 of their own aircraft were lost.

According to the reports, the Luftwaffe put up "what was probably its greatest tactical air effort since D-Day".

German aircraft appeared in force over the western front. More than 300 German planes were deployed in the Bonn and Cologne areas last night and a similar number have been active again during the day.



In Context

The German port.

The attacks, Model, as un

The first few takes its nam

The Allies w

Low cloud ar

The Luftwaff

The America

Churchill cal

More than a

During today's action, the USAAF has strafed infantry and tanks from Monschau to Prum, 24 miles to the south-east. Initial reports say 62 armoured vehicles, tanks and horse-drawn wagons were put out of action. They say the recent failure of German fighters to interfere with heavy bombing attacks on the Reich in daylight now makes it clear they have been saving their resources for this concerted attack.

One US officer told The Times newspaper: "The German pilots showed more aggressiveness than at any time in the last three months."

The German Commander-in-Chief in the west, Field Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt, has ordered his troops to "give their all in one last effort". The message was broadcast on Friday (15 December) the day before this latest offensive began.

He said: "Soldiers of the western front, your great hour has struck. Strong attacking armies are advancing today against the Anglo-Americans. I do not need to say any more to you, you all feel it strongly. Everything is at stake."

Malmedy Massacre

It emerged later a number of American prisoners of war were shot dead by German troops in what has become known as the Malmedy massacre on 17 December 1944. Up to 86 were killed - a number of others escaped by playing dead or running for their lives.

The soldiers who escaped passed on the details of the massacre and when the news reached General Eisenhower he is said to have released it to the American press. However, there does not appear to be any record of the massacre in the British press.

The bodies were left where they fell and were preserved in the snow. When the Americans recaptured Malmedy on 13 January their first task was to identify and bury the dead. Many had fatal gunshot wounds to the head confirming they had not died in combat.

Several German officers were convicted at the so-called Dachau trials in May 1946 for the atrocities committed at Malmedy. Some, including the officer in charge SS Standartenführer Jochen Peiper of the 1st SS Panzer Division were sentenced to death but their sentences were later commuted.

Attack on Linnich, Flossdorf, Rurdorf

29 November—4 December 1944

With the Division fully reassembled, and holding a critical sector of the Corps front, the moment came when it was to undertake its first all-Ozark offensive operation—the drive to the Roer River in the Linnich area.

On 25 November the Division's sector extended from a point 1,500 meters north of Gereonsweiler to three hundred meters south of Ederen. On the left the 405th Infantry tied in with the 335th Infantry of the 84th Division, and on the right the 407th Infantry was in contact with the 2d Armored Division. The boundaries between the two regiments in the line ran parallel to and immediately south of the Gereonsweiler-Linnich road ([Map 7](#)).

East from Gereonsweiler and Ederen the ground stretched flat and bare until it began to shelve off to the river, approximately 4,000 meters away. The terrain in the area bounded by Lindern, Ederen, Gereonsweiler, and Welz was a flat tableland of fields, which at this season of the year were bare of vegetation and thoroughly soaked by the November rains. The ground in the Lindern—Gereonsweiler—Linnich triangle sloped gently toward Linnich, starting approximately 2,000 meters from the town. Nowhere in the area was there much cover for advancing troops, except for an occasional very small rise or ridge.

A small valley which extended from Ederen to Welz and from there to Linnich broke the evenness of the tableland in the sector south of the Gereonsweiler-Linnich road, but there was also very little cover in that area. The valley, which was lightly wooded, was virtually the only irregularity of the terrain along the Division's front. The ground around Flossdorf and Rurdorf was also featureless except for another small valley running out of Welz toward Flossdorf. Welz, a dirty little farming village, was located in the valley and below the level of the flat land to its east and west.

After it moved up on 24 November, the 102d spent the next few days getting ready for the forthcoming attack. The front remained fairly quiet, although enemy shellfire was occasionally heavy. On 25 November three tanks of the 771st Tank Battalion, in support positions south of Gereonsweiler, were knocked out by flak guns from the outskirts of Linnich. The Linnich water tower which enabled the enemy to direct fire finally was shot down by American artillery on 26 November.

The final reorganization of the -Division was set for 28 November when for the first time all its regiments would be under its control. On the afternoon of 25 November, General Keating recommended to XIII Corps that no action be taken by the Division prior to its reorganization. Later that night, however, the Division was notified that the attack had been set forward from 1 December to 29 November which allowed a bare twenty-four hours in which to prepare for the coming offensive.

The 405th Infantry immediately began to relieve the 335th, one battalion at a time, on the night of 26 and 27 November. Meanwhile, on 27 November, elements of the 407th on the right of the regimental sector moved forward approximately 200 yards to establish contact with the 2d Armored Division in its attack that day. In the afternoon, a small enemy counterattack there was beaten off without difficulty and elsewhere the front remained relatively quiet.

PANZERS ON THE FRONT

Opposing the Division along the Roer River line was the [10th SS Panzer Division](#) and a part of the 340th Volksgrenadier Division, plus a scattering of other troops. The 10th SS Panzer Division had been clearly identified in the line by the time the 102d launched its attack, and it was learned later that it had borne the brunt of the battle, employing its 21st and 22d Panzergrenadier Regiments and the 10th SS Reconnaissance and Engineer Battalions. The Volksgrenadier unit, which had committed its 695th Regiment, was composed of a miscellany of troops, including Poles, disgruntled Luftwaffe personnel, over-age soldiers and advanced convalescents.

The general morale of the Volksgrenadiers, as opposed to that of the elite SS troops, was low. However, after the withdrawal of the SS units across the river during 1 December, the last defense of the sector was left to the less valuable Volksgrenadiers. The latter took a dim view of this situation with the result that many gave themselves up during the night of 1 December or surrendered without a struggle the next day.

Of the Ozarks' three regiments, the 407th was in the best condition. The 405th had suffered considerable losses while attached to the 84th Division and had had practically no time for rest. The 406th, after almost a month of fighting, was likewise fatigued and slightly understrength, although replacements for earlier losses had previously been received.

PLANS

In conjunction with the offensive of the 84th Infantry Division on Lindern, scheduled for 29 November, the 102nd Division was to stage a limited objective attack in the left portion of its sector. Specifically it was to maintain contact with the 84th as it advanced, and to seize and cut the Lindern—Linnich road which bisected the high ground dominating Brachelen and Linnich.

The scheme of maneuver provided for the 405th Infantry, on the Division left, to jump off from its front-line position, maintain contact with the 84th Division on its left, and seize the high ground overlooking the river along the Lindern—Linnich road.

As a diversionary effect the 407th Infantry, on the Division right, was to assist the 405th Infantry, maintain contact with the 2d Armored Division on its right, and seize the three towns along the Roer River directly to its front. The 406th Infantry, in Division reserve south of Beggendorf, was ordered to prepare to attack through either regiment to capture the prescribed objectives or repulse a counterattack should one develop.

ARTILLERY SUPPORT

Division Artillery, to which were attached the 252d Field Artillery Battalion; Battery A, 557th Field Artillery Battalion (155mm self-propelled assault guns); 771st Tank Destroyer Battalion; and the 548th Antiaircraft Artillery (AW) Battalion, was ordered to lend both direct and general support to the attack. The 927th and 252d were selected to furnish direct support to the 407th, and the 379th was assigned to direct support of the 405th. The 380th and 381st were pooled in general support, with priority of fire on the first day to the 405th. The battery of self-propelled guns likewise was to directly assist the 405th's attack from frontline positions with

fire on pillboxes and favorable, targets of opportunity. The 771st Tank Destroyer Battalion was to support the 405th with Companies A and C and the 407th with Company B. The 771st Tank Battalion was attached to the 405th for use during the attack if and when it was needed.

The morning of 29 November broke cold and chilly, with slight mist and rain. Old Man Mud predominated, and foxholes were inches deep in water. All in all it was miserable and the troops envied the Germans in their modernly equipped and well-protected troop shelters. Possibly this had something to do with the spirit they displayed—the determination to complete the mission as quickly as possible and become tenants in more suitable quarters.

405TH INFANTRY

At H-hour, the 1st Battalion of the 405th Infantry was holding the left of the regimental zone, and the 2d Battalion was on the right. A gap of some three hundred yards existed between the two battalions but was adequately covered by fire. The 3d Battalion moved up to the left of the 2d Battalion sector, and took position to attack northeast through the 1st Battalion at H-hour. The immediate objective was a strong line of enemy defenses about three hundred yards to the front. The 1st Battalion was directed to remain in position while the 2d and 3d attacked.

Promptly at 0630 the 3d Battalion moved silently forward into the blackness. They had not moved far when enemy flares forced them to freeze in position, but they were not fired upon.

The terrain offered little cover and was flat and open. A low ridge afforded some protection from emplacements to the east and northeast down the long slope toward Linnich and it was not until the battalion crossed this rise and was on the way to the objective that the enemy opened fire. Future progress resolved into a process of slowly creeping from anthill to anthill at the rate of 150 yards in two hours. Fire gradually increased so that further movement over the naked terrain was impossible. The battalion therefore dug in, awaiting daylight.

Meanwhile Company A of the 771st Tank Battalion moved out from Gereonsweiler at 0800 to a position behind the 1st Battalion. While the 1st Platoon was supporting the infantry, the 3d Platoon was engaged by 88mm guns firing from high ground between Beeck and Lindern. Two of the 88mm guns were promptly put out of action, but two of our tanks were hit and two others became immobilized in the mud. The company withdrew to Gereonsweiler and recovered the bogged tanks that night.

The 2d Battalion, attacking almost directly east, had progressed only a little more than a hundred yards over the naked terrain beyond the line of departure before heavy fire forced the men to dig in. The Germans' defenses were so emplaced that attacking troops, after crossing a slight rise, were brought under heavy fire as soon as they reached the low ridge which marked the beginning of the slope toward Linnich. It was a skillfully planned reverse-slope position.

The Germans fought chiefly from fire trenches running around square,, concrete troop shelters set flush with the ground. To these they could retire when American artillery became too heavy, and it was almost impossible to destroy them. The 2d Battalion was supported by fire from Company A of the 771st Tank Destroyer Battalion and Company B of the 771st Tank Battalion, but fire from east of Lindern could not be stopped. The tanks of Company B placed fire on the shelters with their 76s and machine-gunned the trenches, but were also forced to withdraw from the open terrain after two tanks had been put out of action.

Contact with the 84th Division was faulty all day. Elements of the 84th Division and the 405th Infantry were in contact periodically, but the situation remained confused. As a result, Col. Laurin L. Williams, commanding the 405th, was hesitant to push forward too vigorously

on his left for fear of exposing his flank, and by early afternoon both battalions were halted, although Colonel Williams informed General Keating about 1230 that he could advance if the 335th Regiment could cover his flank.

The 1st Battalion (reserve) was able to advance fairly rapidly and received little fire. It moved northeast in column of companies passing through the left and rear of the 3d Battalion position. As it neared the Lindern—Linnich road, however, still without having established contact with the 84th, several enemy tanks were sighted on the road near Linnich. At about the same time, a by-passed enemy position, located in a bramble patch about eight hundred yards directly south of Lindern, opened fire with automatic weapons. The threat from the enemy combined with the growing darkness and the fact that the battalion's contact with the other battalions was tenuous, caused the 1st Battalion commander, Major (later Lt. Col.) Leroy Frazier, to halt his men and organize a perimeter defense until the situation became clearer. The battalion later dug in on its objective just south of the Lindern—Linnich road and about three hundred yards from the contact point where the 84th was to have been.

The 405th had failed to gain the majority of its objectives by distances varying from approximately 1,200 yards on the left to 600 on the right. The day ended with both sides nursing their wounds.

407TH INFANTRY

The attack by the 407th Infantry was, as contemplated, little more than a long rush. By 0830, Lt. Col. William I. Danskin, Regimental Executive Officer, reported that the regiment was on its objective all along the line, and that the 2d Armored Division was coming up on the right. It then demonstrated by fire during the remainder of the day as directed. Although a few casualties were suffered from artillery and small-arms fire, the enemy did not make his expected counterattack. The ground before Welz was now clear of the enemy and the 407th was in a good position to launch its attack on the Roer River towns.

30 NOVEMBER

Field Order No. 4 directed the 405th to attack on 30 November and seize Linnich and the high ground to the north. At this same time, the 407th was to continue its attack against Welz, Rurdorf and Flossdorf. The 406th was directed to remain in Division reserve, prepared to pass through the 405th Infantry and cross the Roer River on Division order.

As the 29th wore on and the 405th remained short of its objective, the plan to seize Linnich the next day became less and less feasible, especially in view of the situation in the 84th's sector. The left flank was wide open and the terrain favored an attack by armor and infantry.

As a result, Letter of Instructions No. 15, published later in the day radically changed the 102d's plan of attack for the 30th; it shifted the main effort to the right of the Division sector where the 407th was ordered to attack with all three battalions against the objectives assigned it. The 405th was to continue on the mission assigned by XIII Corps, while the 406th was ordered to hold itself ready to pass through the 407th and seize Linnich if opposition was greater than anticipated. The enemy definitely had superior fields of fire. The task of seizing the river towns began to appear difficult, indeed.

The attack was scheduled for 0730, but unfortunately during the night one of the battalion

commanders of a neighboring Division spoke to another over the radio, mentioning the plan and hour of attack. A German monitoring station cut in at the end of the conversation and a strange guttural voice said "*SeAr gut!*" This necessitated a change in H-hour which was reset by Army order for 0930. The 84th Division, still occupied with the job of cleaning up Lindern and the high ground immediately to its east, attacked at 0700 to cover the left flank of the 405th.

The regimental plan for the 407th was an assault by all three battalions, supported by companies of the 771st Tank Battalion. The 1st Battalion was to attack from the west directly against Welz, and the 3d was to move on the town from the southwest and enter it from the southern side. The 2d Battalion, attacking from inside the boundary of the 2d Armored Division to the south, was to drive hard to the north against Flossdorf. After Welz and Flossdorf had been taken the regiment was to proceed on Rurdorf in a coordinated attack from the captured towns. The 2d Battalion was supported by Company C of the 771st Tank Battalion and the 1st and 3d Battalions by Companies D and B, respectively

The attack was launched promptly on time. The weather remained clear and visibility was good after the morning haze had disappeared. Close air support, however, was at a minimum because of the nearness of the troops to the river line. Linnich, however, had been dive-bombed on the afternoon of 29 November and XXIX TAG had since flown 237 sorties, dropping 33 tons of general-purpose bombs on towns east of the Roer.

The 1st Battalion, 407th Infantry, moved directly east across the field under cover of a heavy artillery barrage laid on Welz. The assault companies were forced to move slowly because of enemy artillery fire from east of the Roer, but there were few halts and few casualties. Companies A and B entered the town directly while Company C moved slightly to the north to guard against any counterattack that might develop out of Linnich. By 1000 the infantry was well within the western edge of the town and began house-to-house fighting against the comparatively few defenders still there. Meanwhile Company D and the light tank company of the 771st, because of friendly antitank mine field east of Gereonsweiler, moved through Ederen to Welz. One tank struck a mine and was disabled as the Company entered Welz.

Resistance in Welz was principally from scattered snipers, but the task of clearing them out was made harder by the fact that enemy artillery fire began to fall on the town almost from the minute American troops entered the outskirts. By noon the infantry was ringed around the northern and eastern edge of the village, with the tanks emplaced in support. One more light tank was knocked out by fire from an antitank gun to the north which could not be located.

On the right, the 3d Battalion attacked northeast towards the southeast corner of Welz. Company K, supported by the 1st Platoon, Company B, 771st Tank Battalion had little difficulty advancing to the objective although the armor ran into a minefield and lost four tanks. Fire from Welz, however, was not heavy and the infantry was fighting in the town in less than an hour.

Company L advanced less than three hundred yards to a point directly south of the town before it was brought under fire from a strong enemy position located at the head of a U-shaped draw running between Welz and Flossdorf. The enemy, from cleverly concealed emplacements in the draw, delivered a heavy volume of fire on assault units attempting to attack Welz from the south, and was in a position to fire east across the open ground between Welz and Flossdorf. They could also direct fire down the draw to the south. So well concealed were the positions and so heavy was the fire placed against the attackers that reports from the front referred to "enemy pillboxes." When the position was finally taken it was found that there were no concrete fortifications, but that the Germans had been firing from well dug-in emplacements.

FLOSSDORF HOLDS

To the south, the 2d Battalion attacked Flossdorf a half hour later than the other two battalions in order to allow the assault on Welz to 'gain momentum. Their line of departure was slightly more than two thousand yards south of the objectives. Lack of sufficient time for reconnaissance had hindered plans for the attack. The battalion had been notified of the attack late in the afternoon of 29 November and it was nearly dark before an attempt could be made to inspect the terrain. However, the attack was launched on time (*See Map 7*).

The infantry advanced about six hundred yards when they were halted by heavy fire, not only from Flossdorf, but from the positions in the draw to their left front and from across the river. The supporting heavy machine guns, one platoon of which had been assigned to each assault company, were not of much use because the terrain was so flat and the distance to the target so short that they could not safely fire over or through the troops. Our mortars, however, fired effectively from defiladed positions to the south.

The troops remained pinned down, and at 1400 the tanks were committed to lend support. Six of the eight tanks in the two leading platoons were disabled by antitank fire from east of the river within a few minutes after starting forward and the remaining two tanks withdrew to a defiladed position under cover of fire from the reserve tank platoon. Hostile fire was so heavy that the crews of the disabled tanks were forced to remain in their vehicles until dark.

Heavy artillery barrages were then placed ahead of the infantry and on Flossdorf in an effort to help the attack, but enemy resistance continued to be so intense that little progress could be made. Nightfall found the leading companies about eight hundred yards short of the objective.

405TH INFANTRY

The 405th's projected attack had hardly started before the troops were halted for the second straight day. Some of the men in the 2d and 3d Battalions succeeded in working forward short distances, but no appreciable advance was possible.

The 2d Battalion's right moved forward a short distance in the afternoon down the Gereonsweiler— Linnich road where resistance was lighter. About 1330 an enemy force consisting of an estimated five hundred infantrymen supported by five heavy tanks was observed advancing toward the 3d Battalion's lines from the northeast. A heavy artillery concentration dispersed the force before it reached our positions and there were no further counterattacks during the day.

On the left of the sector, the 1st Battalion remained in its perimeter defense. It still had little contact with the 84th Division which had troops in Lindern, but had been unable to advance to the commanding ground beyond. During the day, the 334th Infantry of the 84th Division attacked from Apweiler to strike Lindern from the south, pass through the position of the 1st Battalion, 405th Infantry, and then move northward to the high ground east of Lindern. The 334th, however, advanced only as far as a position on the Lindern— Gereonsweiler road before it was subjected to a heavy volume of artillery and small-arms fire from the east and from Lindern; the attack stopped almost immediately after it was launched.

Enemy fire in the 405th's zone was so intense that control of the men was difficult, and, as a result, they were considerably scattered. At several local points where advances had been made against troop shelters under cover of artillery or tank fire, German troops retired within the shelters, closed the openings, and elected to fight it out. Several shelters which had been surrounded the previous day were reduced by a combination of methods and several more were encircled. One platoon of Company A, 771st Tank Destroyer Battalion, fired at three of the shelters located along a secondary road that roughly represented the farthest point of the advance in the 2d and 3d Battalion sectors. Their fire enabled the infantry to force the defenders out by tossing white phosphorus grenades down the ventilators, or by placing demolition charges against the steel doors. The enemy in one shelter located about 1,500 meters from Gereonsweiler, attempted to surrender but, when they emerged, were shot down by fire from other German positions in the area. Among the prisoners who were captured in the shelters during the day were several civilians (including two women).

The capture of Welz left the Division in a better position to launch a final attack on 1 December on the three towns along the river. Early in the evening of 30 November, General Keating requested additional tank support and at 2156 that night the 17th Tank Battalion of the 7th Armored Division was attached to the Division. Corps stipulated, however, that the battalion was not to be committed unless absolutely necessary.

Plans for 1 December again directed the 405th Infantry to take its final objective, the high ground immediately north of Linnich. The 407th was to finish mopping up Welz, resume its attack on Flossdorf from the south, and then move out of Welz on Rurdorf. The 406th Infantry was also warned to be ready to operate in the 407th Infantry sector.

Day came, overcast and chilly, with visibility limited by the usual early morning fog. The sky cleared as the day wore on, but the morning overcast made it impossible for aircraft to operate before 0930. Thereafter XXIX TAG flew 178 sorties, dropping 34 tons of bombs. Six enemy tanks were destroyed and Baal set afire by this air support.

405TH INCHES FORWARD

Some of the Germans immediately to the front of the 405th's line had pulled out of their defenses, which permitted limited gains down the road toward Linnich, and elements of the 3d Battalion moved forward during the morning. However, heavy small-arms, machine-gun and artillery fire from other points still pounded the regimental front. Moreover, the left flank remained exposed due to the 84th's inability to advance. This prevented all attempts of the 1st Battalion to advance. During the morning, seven enemy tanks were observed, just north of the Lindern—Linnich road and were driven off by 8-inch artillery fire. Major Winder, Regimental Executive Officer, reported to Division at 1415 that the regiment "couldn't budge an inch." It was a critical day for the "Up-Fronters."

WELZ CLEARED

The 407th Infantry also struggled under great difficulties during the entire day. By noon the last resistance in Welz was stamped out by the 1st Battalion, but the other battalions were unable to advance. During the night a patrol from the 3d Battalion attempted to advance against the strong-point at the head of the draw southeast of Welz but the men had hardly moved out of their foxholes before they were driven back by intense fire. A platoon from Company F worked its way partly up the draw from the south during the night and reported that they suspected a big pillbox there.

At 1147, our P-47s bombed the outskirts of Welz by error. Little damage was done and no

casualties inflicted on our troops clearing snipers from the buildings.

FLOSSDORF STILL HOLDS

The action on 30 November had so depleted Company C of the 771st Tank Battalion that it had only five tanks left. On 1 December the 2d Battalion, 407th Infantry, could make no appreciable progress in the face of the fire which continued to come from the front and from across the river. After more than twenty-four hours without advancing most of the men were dug in and the fire made it difficult to organize and advance. A heavy rolling barrage was placed ahead of the battalion as the attack started, and heavy artillery continued to be placed on Flossdorf. Smoke was also used to screen the east bank of the Roer, but leading elements of Companies E and G were unable to move forward more than about two hundred yards to a road intersection. At noon the battalion commander reported to regiment that his unit was “pinned down on all sides.”

Efforts to work the 2d Battalion forward continued all day without success. A combination of open terrain, enemy mines, and direct high-velocity 88mm fire from across the river made armor support in the area virtually impossible.

LINNICH ATTACKED

In the course of the morning, the Division Commander, who directed the attack from the 407th Infantry command post in Ederen, decided to commit the Division reserve (406th Infantry) as soon as the situation became reasonably clear. Not long after, he set the time for the attack at 1400. This required prompt and aggressive action on the part of the regiment as darkness was due about 1800.

The 406th's plan was for the 1st Battalion and 2d Battalion to attack abreast with the 1st Battalion on the right. The 2d Battalion was to attack on a broad front across the open field west of Welz, supported by Company B of the 17th Tank Battalion. The 1st Battalion was to attack north from Welz up the draw toward Linnich. It would be supported by Company C of the 17th Tank Battalion. Tanks and infantry were to go forward together with each tank accompanied by six or eight soldiers, and when Linnich was reached the infantry was to hop off and lead the tanks into the town. However, a foot reconnaissance of the draw running from Welz to Linnich revealed that the terrain made employment of more than a platoon of tanks impracticable. It was therefore decided to send only one platoon to Welz and keep the remainder of Company C assembled near Ederen.

The 2d Battalion of the 406th was assigned a line of departure almost directly west of Welz. The boundary for the attack on the left was the same as the boundary line between the 407th and 405th, just south of the Gereonsweiler—Linnich road. Both the 1st and 2d Battalions moved from Ederen to Welz, and shortly before time for the jump-off the 2d Battalion moved out to meet the tanks at the line of departure on the open plain west of Welz.

The 92nd Chemical Battalion's company, which during the day fired several thousand smoke shells, was ordered to maintain a continuous blanket of smoke along the river. The heaviest artillery barrage of the three-day attack was fired just before and during the assault. Fighter-bombers were scheduled to bomb Linnich at 1315. Over the target, however, they were attacked by German airplanes and had to jettison their bombs wide of the mark and engage in a dogfight.

Both battalions of the 406th attacked on time. The 2d Battalion met the tank company at the line of departure a few minutes after 1400 and began its assault. As the attack rolled forward on a wide front across the tableland toward the slope to Linnich, the battalion seemed in a zone of comparative calm, like that in the center of a tropical hurricane. The friendly barrage rolled fifty yards in front of the advancing troops, while German artillery burst simultaneously behind them.

Enemy antitank fire occasionally slowed the tanks, but when this occurred the infantry waited and placed fire on the enemy guns until the tanks were able to go ahead. One antitank gun located on the southern outskirts of Linnich was silenced in this manner, but other antitank fire was received from west of Linnich and from across the river. Two medium tanks were knocked out, but the infantry continued their advance and by 1615 had reached the edge of Linnich. Here a drainage ditch immediately south of town stopped the supporting tanks while mines prevented their entry by road. Infantry alone rushed passed the first row of houses to engage a force later estimated at between 150 and 200 enemy riflemen.

The tanks of Company B withdrew during the night to a defiladed position south of the town, and the 2d Battalion took up its position in the row of houses on the southern edge of the principal east-west street and did not attempt to push farther. The next morning, after the mopping up of Linnich had started Major (later Lt. Col.) Isaac Gatlin, 2d Battalion commander, discovered that his command post and that of the Germans had been directly across the street from each other throughout the night.

Heavy enemy artillery fire on Welz made the 1st Battalion's task particularly difficult from the start. The troops had trouble getting through the town to the jump-off point. The infantry eventually got through as the fire lifted and the attack started on time. A platoon from Company A and the tank platoon headed the advance. When the two units had gone a short distance up the draw out of the town, a heavy mortar and artillery barrage fell and slowed the attack. At about 1430 the infantry again moved forward, this time without the tanks, their value being limited by the terrain.

At about the same time the 1st Battalion began its second attack up the draw, an enemy infantry counterattack developed out of Rurdorf against Welz. To help the 1st Battalion of the 407th stave off the threat, reserve companies of the 1st and 2d Battalions of the 406th were ordered to the eastern edge of the town to await results. The German assault, however, was effectively stopped short of Welz by our artillery fire.

Leading elements of the 1st Battalion again advanced, and had reached a point approximately six hundred yards up the draw before they were pinned down. This draw had high banks, with scattered woods on the west slope, and enemy riflemen along its sides were able to fire on any troops coming toward Linnich. This situation continued until about 1600 when the Division Commander ordered the battalion to abandon its route up the draw, return to Welz by infiltration, and follow the same route as the 2d Battalion. Two hours before, the 3d Battalion of the 406th, the only large infantry reserve left in the Division, had been ordered to move from Puffendorf to Ederen prepared for employment on the left of the 2d Battalion in a final effort to secure Linnich.

The 1st Battalion's next attempt to reach Linnich was successful. The advance was in column and the route lay along the right of the broad front over which the 2d Battalion had attacked. Progress was slowed by enemy artillery, but by about 1700 the battalion was on the southern edge of the town where it swung right into an orchard and took up a line facing generally east along canalized Merz Creek.

The 3d Battalion was released to regimental control and, attacking from Ederen at 1700, followed the route of the 2d Battalion without meeting opposition other than artillery and some fire from the north. By 1750 it was tied in on the left of the 2d Battalion south and slightly west of the town. This put the regimental line on the southern edge of Linnich from the intersection of the Gereonsweiler—Linnich road to the canal where it bent south for approximately a hundred yards. The troops dubbed the intersection Windy Corner due to the constant burst of enemy shells.

By late afternoon the 113th Cavalry Group had seized Beeck and 84th Division troops occupied the high ground north of Beeck and to the rear of the 405th's sector. Lindern too, was taken, and Rail-splitter infantrymen were across the Lindern—Linnich road on the right of the 84th's zone. The 334th Infantry, which had been pinned down the previous day, succeeded on the afternoon of 1 December in getting past the 1st Battalion of the 405th although contact was not yet firm. The threat to the left and rear of the 405th was thus considerably eased, and this, plus the imminent capture of Linnich by the 406th, made it possible for the 405th to advance.

405TH INFANTRY

As darkness descended, the 2d Battalion of the 405th, on the right of the regimental sector, began to move toward Linnich parallel to and slightly south of the road from Gereonsweiler. There were no enemy emplacements to their front but the battalion, after three days of fighting in the mud and cold, was considerably weakened. As the 2d Battalion moved toward Linnich, the 3d Battalion of the 406th began to extend to its left to contact the approaching troops. It was planned that the two battalions, when joined, would cross the road near Windy Corner and seize the high ground north of Linnich. As the 2d Battalion moved forward, now against little opposition, the 3d and 1st Battalions demonstrated to their front with fire to keep the Germans in their troop shelters.

When the 2d Battalion of the 405th and the 3d Battalion of the 406th made contact at about 1800 hours, the troops halted while the commanders of the two regiments and the Division staff debated the advisability of proceeding on to the objective that night. Orders were subsequently issued for the troops to hold tight for the rest of the night and attack at first light in the morning. This ended operations for the day.

2 DECEMBER—VICTORY

During the night of 1-2 December there were signs that the enemy had given up the fight in the division's sector and was evacuating the bulk of his troops to positions across the river. The, severe fighting had caused him to lose both the heart and initiative to continue the battle any longer.

On the morning of 2 December, a tankdozer pushed several crossings through the ditch which had halted Company B of the 17th Tank Battalion the day previously. Infantrymen laid logs over this fresh fill and the tanks crossed without incident. The 1st and 2d Battalions of the 406th moved north and east through Linnich to clear out the remaining Germans. During these mopping-up operations the two battalions captured approximately forty Germans and killed about a hundred who had been left behind to cover the withdrawal.

The high ground north of Linnich was occupied by the 405th on 2 December. The 2d Battalion, supported by Company A of the 771st Tank Battalion, jumped off at 0730 from its positions to the west of Linnich and within

BBC ON THIS DAY | 27 | 1945: Auschwitz death camp liberated - Windows Internet Explorer

http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/january/27/newsid_3520000/3520986.stm

Norton Safe Search Search Safe Web Identity Safe

Home Search Explore the BBC

ON THIS DAY 1950 2005 27 January BBC NEWS

Search ON THIS DAY by date 27 January GO

Front Page | Years | Themes | Witness About This Site | Text Only


1945: Auschwitz death camp liberated

The Red Army has liberated the Nazis' biggest concentration camp at Auschwitz in south-western Poland.

According to reports, hundreds of thousands of Polish people, as well as Jews from a number of other European countries, have been held prisoner there in appalling conditions and many have been killed in the gas chambers.

Few details have emerged of the capture of Auschwitz, which has gained a reputation as the most notorious of the Nazi death camps.

Watch/Listen



Thousands of items of children's clothing were found after the camp was liberated

PLAY AUDIO
Auschwitz survivors remember 50 years on

PLAY AUDIO
Auschwitz: One man's story

Stories From 27 Jan

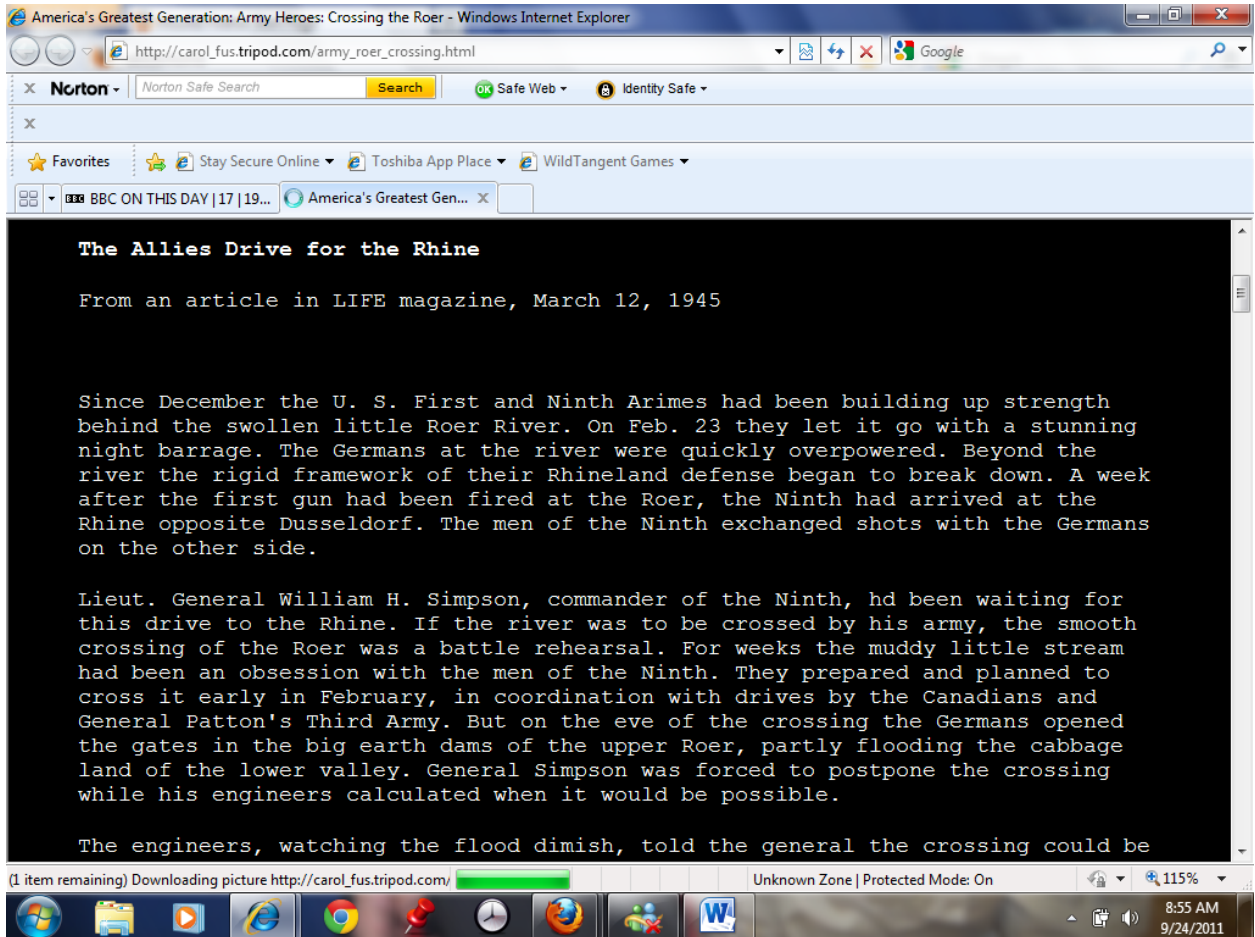
- ▶ 1945: Auschwitz death camp liberated
- ▶ 1967: Three astronauts die in Apollo 1 tragedy
- ▶ 1944: Leningrad siege ends after 900 days
- ▶ 1980: Exiled Mugabe returns to Rhodesia
- ▶ 1984: Michael Jackson burned in Pepsi ad
- ▶ 1969: Rebel students take over LSE
- ▶ 1995: Cantona banned over attack on fan

Done Internet | Protected Mode: On 115% 8:43 AM 9/24/2011

Feb 22 and 23 and 24: Roer River crossing started the morning of the 23rd

Feb 26: Moved to Kuckhoven ahead of the 5th armored division.

<http://www.maplandia.com/germany/nordrhein-westfalen/koln/heinsberg/kuckhoven/>



America's Greatest Generation: Army Heroes: Crossing the Roer - Windows Internet Explorer

http://carol_fus.tripod.com/army_roer_crossing.html

Norton Safe Search Search Safe Web Identity Safe

Favorites Stay Secure Online Toshiba App Place WildTangent Games

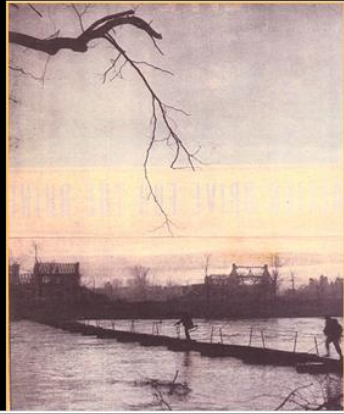
BBC ON THIS DAY | 17 | 19... America's Greatest Gen...

while his engineers calculated when it would be possible.

The engineers, watching the flood diminish, told the general the crossing could be made on Feb. 23. The Ninth began to get ready again. The men and tanks and portable sections of pontoon bridges moved up to the river. At 2:45 A.M. the barrage began and a smokescreen drifted over river to cover the crossing.

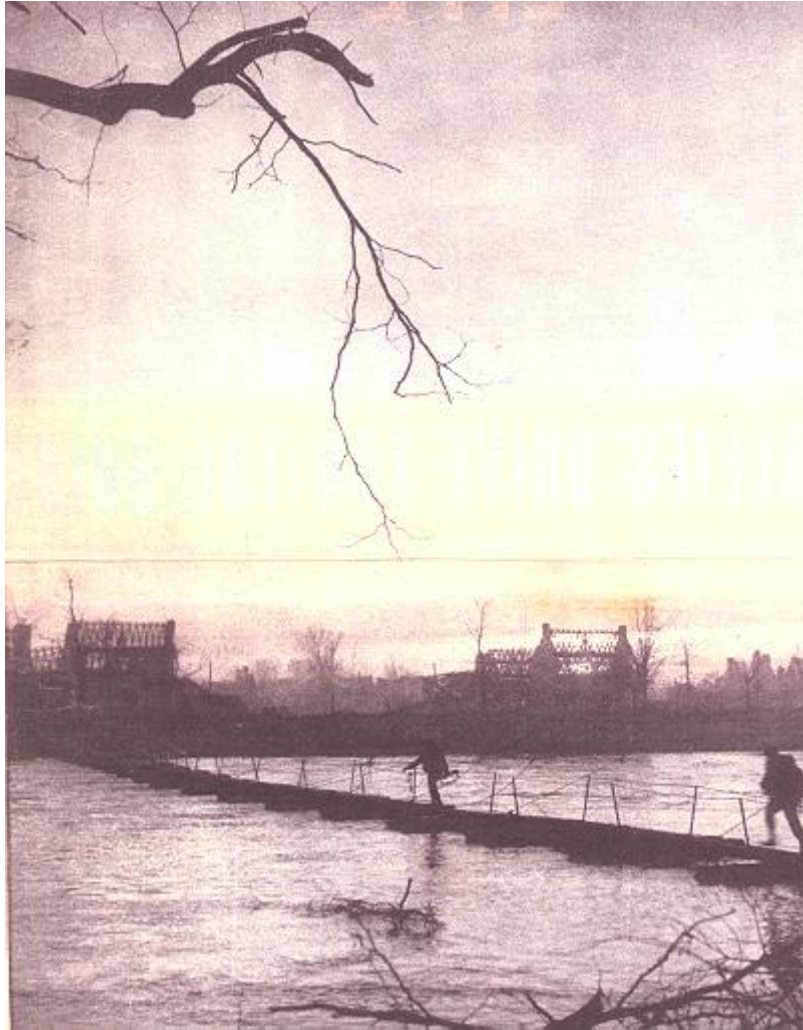
As the morning sun shines through the open roof of a house in Julich, Ninth Army infantrymen dash across Roer under German mortar and machine-gun fire.

The U. S. Breakthrough Begins with the Crossing of the Roer: The Ninth Army's crossing of the Roer was a short, violent struggle against the Germans and the river. Forty-five minutes after the night barrage had begun, assault boats and amphibious tractors started across in a great wave. In some of the boats were combat engineers, ferrying cables to moor their pontoon bridges in midstream. It was an excruciating few hours for the engineers. The flood had lessened but the current was still swift and strong. Runaway boats and pontoons careened downstream crashing into the bridges as they were being built. As the work went on the Germans kept up a blind but deadly machine-gun and mortar barrage through the smokescreen. But in spite of difficulties there were two footbridges across the Roer in the morning. Later the engineers put in bigger bridges for trucks and tanks.



(1 item remaining) Downloading picture http://carol_fus.tripod.com/ Unknown Zone | Protected Mode: On 115%

8:57 AM 9/24/2011



[Roer River Crossing](#)

America's Greatest Generation: Army Heroes: Crossing the Roer - Windows Internet Explorer


http://carol_fus.tripod.com/army_roer_crossing.html

Norton Safe Search Search Safe Web Identity Safe


Stay Secure Online Toshiba App Place WildTangent Games

BBC ON THIS DAY | 17 | 19... America's Greatest Gen...

the smokescreen. But in spite of difficulties there were two footbridges across the Roer in the morning. Later the engineers put in bigger bridges for trucks and tanks.



Click on image to see larger view



Click on image to see larger view

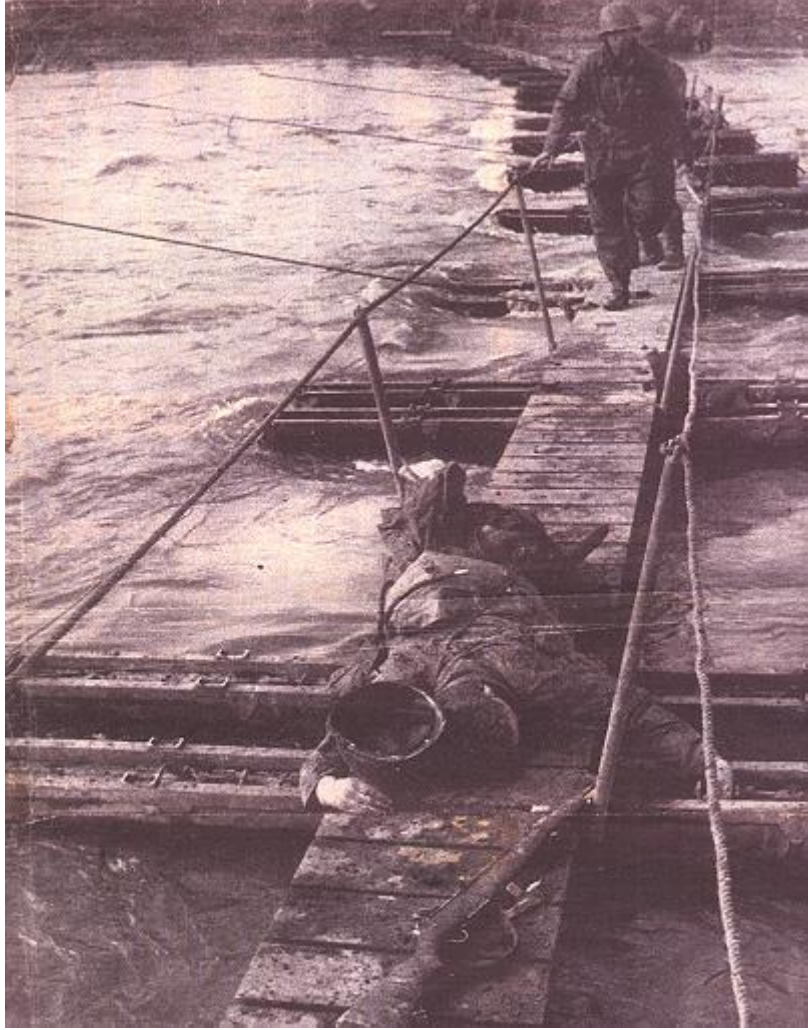
On another Roer footbridge lies the body of an American soldier who was hit by German mortar-shell fragments when he was only 50 feet from east bank.

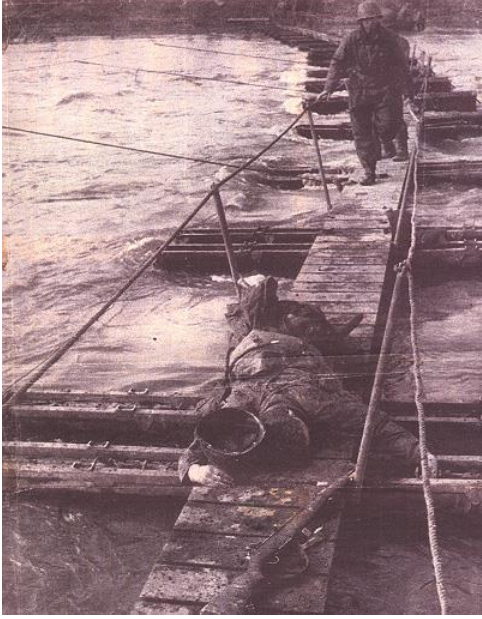
The hardest crossing on the Ninth Army front was made by teh veteran 29th Division of julich, which appears on the far side of the river on the opposite page.

The wreckage along the Roer at Julich was reminiscent of Normandy. All of Julich except the ancient moated citadel was taken by afternoon, freeing the 29th to join the power drive across the Cologne plain. But even after the entry into Julich, the crossing of the Roer were places of danger. The Germans still had the river under observation and shelled it heavily. The little bridge above and the dead soldier on it were principals in a grisly little drama which is unfolded on the following pages.

Internet | Protected Mode: On 115%

8:59 AM 9/24/2011









Feb 26: Moved to Kuckhoven ahead of the 5th armored division.

<http://www.maplandia.com/germany/nordrhein-westfalen/koln/heinsberg/kuckhoven/>

- **26 February 1945: Erkelenz was captured by the 407th infantry regiment of the U.S. 102nd Infantry Division (Ozarks), US Ninth Army.**

Mar 2: Moved to Anrath, a short way from the Rhine. Took patrols across Rhine.

During World War II, Willich/Anrath suffered only minor damage to its infrastructure. During Operation Grenade on March 1, 1945 American forces who had entered



On March 7, 1945 the 9th Armored Division captured a bridge across the Rhine River at Remagen. The 899th Tank Destroyer Battalion arrived at the bridgehead that afternoon with the 9th Infantry Division. I was in awe as the Ludendorf railroad bridge came into view. It seemed like a miracle of miracles.. .the only Rhine bridge the Germans failed to blow up. C Company of the 899thTD BN crossed on March 8 with the 47th Infantry Regiment. The battalion remained on the west bank in Remagen until March 10th. That first night was a rough one, with the battle of the Remagen bridgehead building up to a crescendo. The Germans were desperately trying to destroy the bridge. About that time we found out that a trainload of champagne was located at the Remagen railroad station. The rumor was that several boxcars of French champagne had been shipped from France into Germany, arriving in time to be confiscated by the United States Army. I got my ration. . . a box of twelve bottles wrapped carefully in straw. Since we did not have a basic load of 90MM rounds stored in our M-36 Tank Destroyer, I found space in the ammunition racks for several bottles of French champagne.

As "B" Company Tank Destroyers proceeded across the bridge on March 10, 1945 German artillery blew up a truck ahead of us. The one-way traffic was blocked. At high noon I looked up into the sky and saw a lone Stuka dive-bomber release a bomb angling for the bridge. I stood up in the open turret of the TD and filled my canteen cup with champagne and said, "drink up men... this is it". The bomb missed. One of the rounds of 14 Antiaircraft Battalions blew up the Stuka one hundred feet high over the bridge. I filled my canteen cup up two more times, and repeated the same toast. Two more bombs were aimed at the bridge. They missed over or under. Two more Stukas were blown up over the bridge. We crossed the bridge that afternoon. I was glad I didn't have to drive the TD, let alone load the gun, since as the TD crew 90MM Weapons Leader I was well "loaded".

That which follows is probably one of the best-kept secrets of World War II in Europe.

I have always liked Ike.



In July 1966, as a Lt. Colonel I discovered the real source of the champagne at the Remagen bridgehead. While on temporary duty at Ft. Riley, Kansas I traveled to Abilene to visit Eisenhower's boyhood-home and the Eisenhower Museum. While browsing in the museum I came across some of the Generals' WW II orders and memoranda. One specific memo got my attention. Under the heading of SUPREME HEADQUARTERS ALLIED FORCES EUROPE, in Rheims, Belgium March, 1945 the general stated that the letter order to the left of the memorandum was the most unique order issued during WW II. He explained that at a January, 1945 meeting of Division Commanders in Rheims, one general asked the "what if" question about the capture of a bridge across the Rhine River. The General wrote that there was a ninety nine percent chance out of one hundred that it would not happen... but in case a division did capture a bridge he said "General I will send you a trainload of French champagne". He further stated in the memo that the champagne was sent to the 9TH ARMORED DIVISION at the Remagen bridgehead. In the letter order dated in January 1945 the General specified that the Director of Transportation, SHAFE, procure a trainload of French champagne...to be placed in boxcars on a siding in Paris to be dispatched on his (Eisenhower's) order with the highest priority to the destination given. The Ninth Infantry Division and the 899th Tank Destroyer Battalion closed at Remagen in good time to share the champagne with the 9th Armored Division and other units.

April 6: Moved across Rhine to Rheda via of Krefeld and Munster

<http://www.maplandia.com/germany/nordrhein-westfalen/detmold/gutersloh/rheda/>

<http://www.maplandia.com/germany/nordrhein-westfalen/dusseldorf/krefeld/krefeld/>

April 10: Moved to Eisbergen into the town on the edge of the pocket

<http://www.maplandia.com/germany/nordrhein-westfalen/detmold/minden-lubbecke/eisbergen/>

April 12: Moved to Hannover

April 16, 17: Trip from Hannover to Colbe on Milda. Act as infantry to hold Germans from breaking the pocket. Mersterb – sleep in the open.

April 17: Colbe on the 19th went to Gurdelagen to see 200 people slain by the Nazi SS troup

On 13 April 1945, 1016 concentration camp prisoners were killed by the [Nazis](#) in the [*Isenschnibbler Feldscheune*](#). Today this area is the site of a memorial for the dead.



Under the direction of an American soldier, German civilians from Gardelegen carry wooden crosses to the site where they were ordered to bury the bodies of concentration camp prisoners killed by the SS in a barn just outside the town. It had been widely reported that members of the local population provided support to the SS during the operation

April 22: Moved to Salzwedel Luftwaffe barracks worked with the 5 armored clearing the lines in front of them.

April 24: Moved to Colbe

April 25: Moved back to Hannover to the same place



Five Jewish survivors pose for a U.S. Signal Corps photographer in front of Block 2 in the Hanover-Ahlem camp, a subcamp of Neuengamme. Hanover-Ahlem, Germany, April 11, 1945.

84th Infantry Division was formed in 1917, the year the United States entered World War I. In [World War II](#), the "Railsplitter" division landed on Omaha Beach in Normandy in early November 1944, five months after [D-Day](#) (June 6, 1944). From France, the unit moved quickly into the Netherlands in preparation for an offensive into Nazi Germany. During the [Battle of the Bulge](#), the 84th was diverted to Belgium to stop the German offensive. In March 1945, it moved into the Rhineland and subsequently advanced northward, capturing the city of Hannover on April 10. The 84th eventually made its way to the Elbe River and made contact with Soviet armed forces in early May 1945.

As the "Railsplitter" division advanced into the interior of Germany, its troops uncovered [Hannover-Ahlem \(April 10, 1945\) and Salzwedel \(April 14, 1945\)](#), both satellite camps of the [Neuengamme concentration camp](#). The SS established the Hannover-Ahlem camp on November 30, 1944, after transferring the camp and its inmates from the Continental Gummiwerke factory at Hannover-Stöcken. In Ahlem the inmates were forced to work in the nearby asphalt tunnels. These were to be cleared for the production of aircraft and Panzer parts for Continental Gummiwerke and Maschinenfabrik Hannover

When the soldiers of the 84th entered the camp in Ahlem, they discovered an undetermined number of starving and ill Jewish prisoners. Reports range from 30 to 250 persons. The SS guards had abandoned these prisoners when they

evacuated the camp, taking with them some 600 "healthy" prisoners. Of the prisoners sent on this death march, only 450 made it to the [Bergen-Belsen camp](#). The SS guards had shot many of those who were unable to maintain the pace of the march. The U.S. Army war crimes investigators reported that many of these survivors died soon after liberation from the accumulated abuse, mistreatment, and neglect they had suffered. They estimated that only 300 to 400 Jewish prisoners at Hannover-Ahlem survived the war.

Several days later, the 84th Infantry captured **Salzwedel, a camp formed by the SS** in July 1944 to supply forced labor for a German munitions factory. The unit found some 3,000 female inmates, mainly Jewish women who had been transported from the [Auschwitz](#) camp complex, and several hundred political prisoners. The U.S. Army reported that sanitary conditions at the camp were poor because of overcrowding and a lack of water. Some 100 of these prisoners were seriously ill and 33 of them required immediate medical attention at a local hospital. The town's mayor was ordered to provide food immediately for the former inmates, who were subsequently moved into modern German barracks nearby.

The following is a day by day report of the 5th Armored for April 1945.

http://www.5ad.org/04_45.html

On 24 April, CCA and, CCR remained in place awaiting relief by the 29th Inf Div which was to assume the responsibility for the zone. Relief began during the morning, and at 2130, both combat commands had been officially relieved. CCB remained in place in the southwestern portion of the Division zone on 23 - 24 April.

Letter of Instruction No. 75, Hq, XIII Corps, was received by Division. This letter outlined an area of occupation for the Division. The area to be bounded on the north by WITTINGER - HANKENEBUTTEL - SPRAKENSEHL - WEYHAUSEN, ROTTORF - MARIENTHAL, on the south by BARMKE - OCBSSEN - DORF - ESSENHOF - WENDEBERG - WENDEZELLE - WAHLE - BATTMAR - MUNSTEDT - TELGTE - SIEVER - SHAUSEN - ARPKE, and on the west by ARPKE - RAMLINGEN - WESTERCELLE - ALTENHAGEN - GARSSSEN - ESCHEDER - and WEYHAUSEN. CCB and CCR were given the northern portion with boundaries generally through HANKENSBUTTEL - WESENDORF - KASTORD, CCA the southern portion with north boundary DANNDORF - CALBERLAH - LIEFERDE - HELERSE - EDEMISSEN - AMBOSTEL.

The remainder was given to Div Tn with the 85th, Cav Rcn Sq Mecz and 22d Armd Engr Bn to assist. The entire area was to be occupied upon relief by the 29th Inf Div of the

Division in present positions. Included was the protection of the MSR and guarding of various captured installations in the Division's new area. CCB was ordered to take over patrolling activities on the MSR from the 407th RCT (102nd Inf Div) This was accomplished by 2000.

The advance Division CP at SALZWEDEL moved back to the rear CP near NEUEMUHLE.

Enemy losses for 24 April were reported in one category only, that of PW's, one hundred fifty two (152).

On 25 April, CCA and CCR moved to the newly assigned areas. The CCA CP was set up at WEDELHEINE, the 46th Armd Inf Bn at GR SCHWULPER and the 34th Tank Bn at MORSE, with companies at KHMEN and HEILLIGENDORF.

The CCR CP closed at GR OSINGEN, the 10th Tank Bn at HANKENSBUTTEL, with companies at REPKE and surrounding areas, and the 46th Armd Inf Bn going to TACHENDORF.

The 22d Armd Engr Bn moved to UETZE, closing at 1630. The remainder of the Division stayed in place.

The Division's combat command began patrolling their areas on 26 April. CCB was relieved of the responsibility of patrolling the MSR east of the new Division zone. Division Artillery was assigned the west portion of the CCA zone from a line WEDTLENSTEDT - WENDEBERG - SCHWULPER running west to the Division rear boundary, exclusive of the town of PEINE. The 628th TD Bn moved into this zone with the Bn CP at ZWEIDORF, Co. "A" at WOLTORF, Co. "B" at SIERSSE and Co. "C" at SCHMEDENSTEDT.

Division Trains moved from CHEINITZ to its new zone. Tn Hq set up at NEUBOKEL, 75th Med Bn Armd at WILCHE, 127th Ord Maint Bn at RIBBESBUTTEL, with Co. "A" at LEIFERDE, Co. "B" at ISENBUTTEL and Co. "C" at GAMSEN, the 145th Armd Sig Co at ETTENSBUTTEL. The Division Headquarters (Rear Echelon, Administration Center) moved into GIFHORN. Thus, with the exception of Division Artillery, which remained in position on the ELBE, and the Division CP, all units had closed in the new area.

From 27 through 30 April, the Division continued to occupy, screen civilian personnel and handle the displaced persons in its area. Division Artillery was under Corps operational control as the month ended. CCA moved its CP to the vicinity of HESSLINGEN. (NOTE: As the month of April ended reports on enemy stragglers decreased. However, civilians on several occasions are known to have attacked soldiers. This was usually accomplished at night and while the soldier was alone.)

6. COMMENTS:

Section I - Personnel Matters

Casualties were relatively light in view of the Division's almost constant employment this month. The officer shortage however became more acute during the month, total losses being 48 and returnees-to-duty numbering 10. An additional 3 officers were gained by battlefield appointment and 2 by nonbattlefield appointment. Enlisted casualties during the month amounted to 623 (includes battle and non-battle casualties). This loss was offset approximately by half by receipt of reinforcements and returnees-to-duty. Cavalry trained enlisted reinforcements remained unavailable during the month, and not much success was had in obtaining Infantry reinforcements suitable for conversion to Cavalry.

Decorations were awarded this month as follows:

| | |
|-------------|-----|
| Silver Star | 13 |
| Bronze Star | 93 |
| Air Medal | 4 |
| | 110 |

Prisoners of War captured during the month totaled 23,343 of whom 4,512 were captured while sick in German military and civilian hospitals, where they were left under guard. Evacuation was extremely difficult due to limited transportation and guard personnel and the distances involved. Because of the limitation as above, hundreds more were disarmed and left under armed guard or with local burgomeisters enroute.

Allied Ex-Prisoners of War uncovered in German installations or freed in transit amounted to 7,207 nationalities as follows:

| | |
|---------------|------|
| United States | 1656 |
| Russian | 1640 |
| British | 1349 |
| Polish | 1155 |
| French | 716 |
| Italians | 457 |
| Belgian | 167 |
| Hungarian | 150 |
| Czech | 15 |
| Norwegian | 2 |

Evacuation of these Allied Ex-Prisoners of War was accomplished by use of Division supply trucks, plus a loan of trucks from a regiment or the 35th Inf Div and from XIII Corps. Personnel were fed from captured German military foods stocks, supplemented by our own rations. Medical evacuation and emergency medical treatment were not major problems.

Section II - Intelligence Matters

During the past month as the Division advanced from the Rhine to the Elbe there was a continuation in the enemy's use of his AA as &I flat-trajectory, ground defense, weapons. Having many of these type guns situated around towns, installations, airports, etc, which were rapidly over-run by our forces, and having no means of removing the guns, the enemy concentrated this defense near these sites.

An interesting development during the period was the enemy's use of "spot" discharge's from the Army and the subsequent changing into civilian clothing. One theory on this, obtained from PW statements; was that the individual soldier after donning civilian clothes could better make his way back through our lines and once more into a fighting unit. Actually, this didn't appear to work in the majority of cases as the individual enemy once obtaining his discharge seemed more interested in remaining out of the Army. A few cases of guerrilla activity by these enemy in civilian clothing have been reported and this may well be a second reason for this action. Constant alertness on the part of our troops, and through CIC screening is the solution to this enemy activity.

Two, apparently new and highly secret weapons of the enemy were captured during the period.

At STENAL, Germany a German research technician was taken prisoner. This technician had in his possession and installed on his automobile, Infrared equipment which he was removing from the vicinity of BERLIN and the ultimate danger of capture by the Russians. This equipment was designed for installation on tanks for the purpose of night fighting. The entire equipment, plus the technician was turned over to Enemy Equipment Intelligence Service, NINTH Army. A secret report has been subsequently rendered on this equipment and a copy of the report is on file at this Headquarters.

At RIEKAU, Germany, A V-1 assembly plant was over-run, several V-1s were taken intact. Among the V-1s taken was a new "RE-IV" or Pilot type V-1. The bomb was complete with controls and a parachute was part of the individual bomb equipment, as it was contemplated that the pilot would fly the bomb to its target and then bail out. The entire plant was a lesson in perfect camouflage, built into the wooded area at the surrounding territory. Higher Headquarters was immediately notified and representatives of Target Force, SHAEF, made a subsequent inspection.

April 1945 The 5th (US) Armored Division's Push toward the Elbe River

By LTC Karl-Heinz Heineke
Active German Army Officer

In April 1945, as the noose tightened around the German units on the Rhine and Ruhr rivers, available American and British troops pushed vigorously toward the River Elbe. The objective was to prevent German units from setting up an organized defense on the Weser River. Our area was occupied by the 9th (US) Army. One of its spearheads was the 5th (US) Armored Division. The British attacked north of a line running from Minden to Celle.

On 3 April 1945, first elements of the 5th (US) Armored Division reached the Weser River south of the town of Minden. Now they only had to find an intact crossing site, if possible the autobahn (highway) bridge near Vennebeck in order to drive for Hanover from there. This plan however, failed as the bridge had been blown up somewhat earlier as British troops entered Minden.

As the next day still had not brought success, a crossing was to be forced near Minden on 5 April. For this purpose, the 84th (US) Infantry Division moved up forces until nightfall, but this attempt in the area of Porta Westfalica had to be abandoned due to stiff enemy resistance. As a result, the commanding XIIIth (US) Corps decided to postpone the crossing to 6 April.

In the meantime, the forces of the 5 (US) Armored Division had gathered in the Herford - Bad Oeynhausen - **Rinteln area**. Secured by roadblocks and reconnaissance patrols, the division started to comb through the area, netting a large number of German soldiers and other civilian refugees. In addition to these activities, the division was preparing to provide personnel and materiel support to the crossing by the 84 (US) Infantry Division. However, this was not to materialize. In the meantime, the right-hand neighbor, the 2nd (US) Armored Division assisted by the 30th (US) Infantry Division, had forced a crossing near Hameln and started to build an emergency bridge as a prelude to the drive for Hildesheim.

As a result of this development, the 5th (US) Armored Division was diverted on 8 April and ordered to quickly cross the bridge near Hameln. First the Combat Command Reserve was ordered to leave **the Rinteln**

area and march to Hameln. This was out of the ordinary as Hameln was located in the area of responsibility of the XIXth (US) Corps and to reach it a wide southward turn was required. As so often, the order surprised the troops. Subsequently, a northward turn would be required again to reach the area around Gestorf south of Hanover. The Combat Command Reserve (similar to a modern-day manoeuver brigade) was to cross the bridge between 1400 and 1900 hours. When the order arrived, it was already noon. Thus, the Combat Command Reserve had only a few minutes in which to take the lead and start out on its roughly 60 - 80 km move. At 2130 the entire Combat Command Reserve (CC R) had reached the Springe - Gestorf area and was thus back in the zone of operations of its parent XIII Corps. There was some stiff resistance in Springe, which was reduced by the reinforced 10th (US) Tank Battalion, clearing the way to crossings over the Leine River near Ruthe and Koldingen.

On 9 April, the attack was continued at 0730 hours. Reconnaissance forces quickly pushed towards the crossings and reported their seizure in less than an hour. Now

the Combat Command Reserve (CC R) was able to follow up immediately and attack in the direction of **Lehrte** in order to cut the important lines of communications east of **Hanover**. Nothing seemed to jeopardize this endeavor until the leading units, the 47th (US) Armored Infantry Battalion (Task Force Boyer) on the left and the 10th (US) Tank Battalion (Task Force Hamberg) on the right, reached the Mittelland canal north of Müllingen. They were less than 100 yards away when the bridges blew up. When the lead elements came under heavy artillery fire and friendly close air support failed to materialize due to cloudy weather, the attack bogged down. In general the resistance around Hanover seemed to be growing.

At this point, the right-hand neighbor, again the 2 (US) Armored Division suggested bypassing the enemy to the south in order to cut the road network west of Peine. Earlier, the division commander, Major General Lunsford E. Oliver, had visited the command post of Combat Command Reserve (CC R) near Rethen to discuss the further course of action. The southern route of march was identified quickly since the only road with an adequate capacity to accommodate the forces of an entire division ran from Harsum - Hohenhameln - Rosenthal to Vöhrum. In the meantime, the engineers of 2 (US) Armored Division installed bridging equipment on the Hildesheim branch canal near Harsum, creating the

conditions for even heavy tracked vehicles to cross. Thus, the reinforced 10th (US) Tank Battalion only had to turn south and subsequently attack toward the north-east. According to the available reports, the further march of the Combat Command Reserve went according to plan.

Only in the Equord - Schwicheldt area, when lead elements had already passed Rosenthal in the direction of the autobahn (highway) near Vöhrum - Eixe, a firefight between German tank destroyers (of the "Panther" variant) and the following companies developed. At least four German tank destroyers were identified and forced to withdraw with the assistance of the American air forces. The report by the 10th (US) Tank Battalion states that one "Panther" tank destroyer was hit in the tracks and was set on fire by its crew. In Schwicheldt another "Panther" tank destroyer is reported to have been abandoned as a result of the air attacks and was captured by elements of C Company.

In advance of this action, the "Panther" tank destroyers had deployed from Braunschweig to the Härmelerwald woods (Hämelerwald) where they took cover. Apparently, this detachment had orders to delay the advancing Americans and withdraw to the Oker River. This plan was obviously made without consideration of the American air forces. As soon as the skies had cleared the Germans were unable to hold any longer. Peine lay unprotected and the American move had brought it into the line of fire. Low-flying aircraft flew strafing missions everywhere. What everybody had been fearing for days and weeks was a reality now. The Bürgermeister of Peine sought a quick surrender of the town, which accommodated three large military hospitals. By contacting A Company of the leading reinforced 10th (US) Tank Battalion he opened negotiations, which ended the next day with the surrender of the city and the Americans continued to pursue their original objective. The autobahn (highway) near Eixe and Vöhrum was cut that same evening and they succeeded in holding the area around Rosenthal and Schwicheldt. What is more, Rosenthal even had to accommodate the command post of the advance unit for the night; and all access points were secured. Further to the south, contact was established with elements of the 2nd (US) Armored Division and the 30th (US) Infantry Division, which were part of the right-hand neighbor, the XIXth (US) Corps. Braunschweig, Salzgitter and Magdeburg were their next objectives.

After the surrender of Peine on 10 April, the leading Combat Command Reserve briskly departed that town but encountered the resistance of more "Panther" tank destroyers even before reaching Edemissen at the swampy Schwarzwasser brook. One American tank and one half-track were knocked out. Delays were short, however, thanks to the American close air support. Ahnsen, Meinersen (CC R) and Meine (CC A) were reached and seized that same evening. Subsequently, further forces arrived from the Weser River. Thus, the 5th (US) Armored Division was on its way again even though it was rerouted several times. The unit was now to make every effort to reach the Elbe River. The objectives were Tangermünde, Stendal and Wittenberge

April 24: Moved to Colbe

April 25: Moved back to Hannover to the same place

April 27: Rinteln

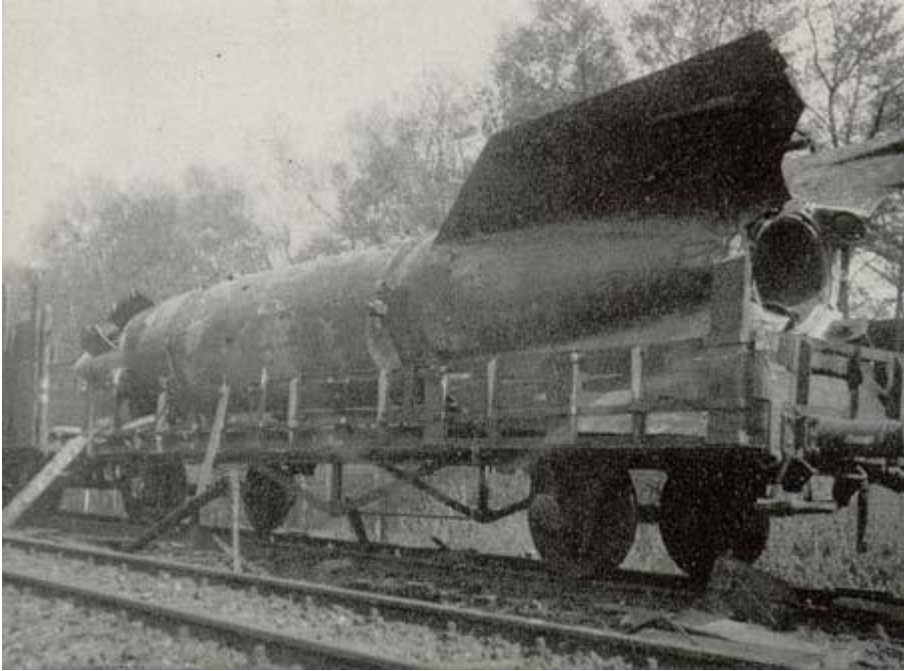
April 30: Moved to Lehrte 12 miles from Hannover

May 8: VE Day

The Final Battle: April 12 - May 8, 1945

Gen. Eisenhower's final offensive for the conquest of Germany began on April 5, 1945. Objective: the Elbe River, to be reached by April 12th. All the Allied Armies launched blitz-like strikes eastward.

Gen. Simpson, commanding our Ninth U.S. Army, ordered the 83rd, 84th, and 30th Divisions with the 2nd Armored Division to attack with speed in convoys along the Autobahn (a modern concrete divided highway) which reached directly toward Berlin, some 270 miles away. The route bypassed to the North the combat divisions of the German Army encircled in the Ruhr. 320,000 German soldiers were surrounded and pounded by American Divisions including the 35th Division in a steadily tightening noose.



A V-2-rocket bomb found near the Elbe River.

On April 12th, Gen. Baade received orders for the 35th Division to join the assault on the Elbe River, disengaging from the fighting along the North edge of the Ruhr where it was then assaulting along the Rhine-Herne Canal, and turning over its sector to the 75th and 79th Divisions and pulling out units as soon as they could be released. Gen. Baade ordered the division to move by combat teams as soon as they were able to do so, beginning with Combat Team 137 on April 12, followed by Combat Team 320 on the 13th, Combat Team 134 on the 14th of April, accompanied by attached tanks, tank destroyers, engineers, and anti-aircraft units, the 35th G.I.'s loaded into 2½ ton trucks, ½ ton trucks, and jeeps and barreled along the Autobahn through fresh, beautiful farmland and woods and some scattered towns along the way.

Admittedly, many apprehensive eyes were cast at the terrain to right and left as we passed defensible hilltops and strategically located possible roadblocks which could have concealed hidden German guns and armor, just waiting to ambush speeding American invaders. They weren't there, but we did pass numerous sites where only a few days before our spearheading American divisions had decisive but brief encounters with disorganized German defensive troops.

Near the City of Hamelen on the Weser River, we encountered a bridge that had been destroyed, but Ninth Army Engineers had lost no time in replacing it with a pontoon bridge. No serious organized resistance faced the Combat Team 137 as it closed into positions along the West bank of the Elbe River, North of Magdeberg and in the vicinity of Stendall, reached late on April 13.

The 320th Combat Team was not so fortunate. There was trouble up ahead of which they were not aware as they road along enjoying the freshness of the spring-like weather, crossing fields and scattered woods. The 83rd Division had reached the Elbe River, along with the 2nd Armored Division to its left, about 15 miles South of Magdeberg and had together forced a river crossing and had troops and some tanks on the East side of the Elbe River. That was the good news. Now for the bad news. They didn't have sufficient force to hold the bridgehead against the developing counter attacks.

It seems that the 83rd Division, while passing the Harz Mountains on its right about fifty miles before reaching the Elbe, a rough mountain region of some 1500 square miles, had uncovered the Germans in force, perhaps three divisions, ready to give battle. The 83rd Division dropped off its 330th Infantry Regiment to engage and contain this force while First Army Divisions closed on the Harz Mountain retreat from the South. The Harz Mountains contained deep underground factories which made V-1 and V-2 rocket bombs for use against the British Isles, and other factories making the new German jet fighters.



The 35th Division on the Saar River at Sarreguemines.

So it was that our 320th Combat Team was intercepted on the Autobahn and re-routed and attached to the 83rd Division to replace its 330th Regiment now seriously occupied in the Harz Mountains. The 320th Combat Team reached the Elbe River South of Magdeburg and near Darby and joined the embattled 83rd Division. On arrival on the 15th of April, our regiment was ordered to attack immediately, across the Saale River where it joined the Elbe River, and drive the German defenders from the West bank of the Elbe. This action would help secure the bridgehead and permit the engineers to put up a second pontoon bridge across the Elbe without being under fire from the Germans and supplementing the Harry Truman Bridge built in the initial crossing. This became the last coordinated major attack for a 35th Division unit and the last river crossing of the war for us. Fortunately we accomplished our objective with light casualties. We then crossed the Harry Truman Bridge and took up positions to protect the bridgehead along its North side, digging in, which wasn't very reassuring as the ground was level, with no cover, and we could look across the flat Eastern fields and scattered woods which barely concealed the German Panzer units and infantry which had been only recently repulsed in their last counter attack of the 83rd's positions. At the moment the enemy did not seem particularly aggressive, but there they were.

Captured German prisoners told us that the Germans would rather surrender, if they had to, to the Americans rather than to the Russian troops which were now fighting in East Berlin, some 45 miles away from where we now were. We didn't know then that in January, 1945, at a conference in Moscow of American and Allied and Russian leaders, it had been agreed that the Elbe River would be the boundary line beyond which the Americans were not to go. Gen. Eisenhower communicated this on April 12th to his Army commanders. We now wonder how generals like Patton and Simpson must have turned the air blue around them when they got these orders!

At any rate, we were not to have the opportunity to find out whether the Panzers would have let us through to Berlin. We do know that the Germans attempted to attach a floating 500 pound bomb to the Truman Bridge by one of their underwater swimming teams. The 60th Engineers and the 320th Riflemen frustrated the attempt and captured two of the German swimmers dressed in tight fitting black rubber suits. We assumed that had the bridge been destroyed we likely would have had the honor, if not the pleasure, of being the last 35th Division unit to have faced a frontal counter attack by Panzers and Infantry against an indefensible position. Fortunately it didn't happen. On April 22nd, Combat Team 320 was relieved and released from the 83rd Division and moved westward across the Truman Bridge to mount up on the trucks and resume the trek to rejoin the 35th Division, going into reserve in the rear of the 134th and 137th Regimental positions along the West bank of the Elbe.

Resuming the story of the rest of the 35th Division, on April 15th came Combat Team 134, having been the last to leave the Ruhr fighting, and closed along the Elbe River between the 137th Regiment, and spread very thin towards the 30th Division which was in Magdeberg. The two regiments established several isolated defensive positions which fought off several night patrols from across the river. German prisoners were rounded up in large numbers and over 1,500 Allied P.O.W.s were found and released, fed, clothed, given medical care and sent home. On April 16, the division was transferred from XIX Corps to the XIII Corps, and on the same day sent patrols across the Elbe to locate enemy positions and determine the best places to cross the river if we were ordered to do so. Over 5,000 German prisoners were processed to P.O.W. camps including top German officers like General Unrein and SS Gen. Heintz Jost. Some scattered artillery dueling was conducted with the enemy, more often at night.

We were aware that the 35th Division in the Stendel area was the closest of any American division to Berlin when on April 27th, the division was alerted to move again, this time to the West. Relieved by the 102nd Division, we again mounted our 2½ ton trucks and headed to the area around Hannover-Lehrte, some 75 miles behind the front where the division entered upon several weeks of military government duty in one of the leading industrial and farming centers of Northern Germany, an area that had a pre-war population of some 450,000 persons, an area that had suffered heavily from Allied bombing and destruction.

New duties were added to the old of rounding up P.O.W.s, chasing down small bands of die-hard Nazis who still had weapons and ammunition, rounding up, feeding and controlling displaced persons by the thousands, freeing slave labor, restoring civil government under Allied supervision, helping civilians resume living and caring for themselves, like assisting farmers to find seed potatoes for the Spring planting, restoring order and helping shattered or isolated communities to function again.

We followed the news carefully, radio reports, the stars and stripes, and discussed and analyzed rumors which came from every source. The link-up of the Russians and the Americans in the 69th Division area, at Torgeau on the Elbe River about 50 miles South of where we had fought, focused attention on the final collapse of Germany. We speculated on the whereabouts of Hitler, and didn't know at the time that he was in a bunker in Berlin, so close to where we were, or that on April 30th he had shot himself. We knew that Mussolini had been caught in Italy by partisans and executed. We learned that the German Army in Italy had surrendered. All signs pointed toward the imminent cessation of hostilities.

Of greater interest to some G.I.s was the prospect of furloughs to the French Riviera, and other exotic places – Paris, Brussels, London. And the prospects of just going home. It is May 7, 1945 and tomorrow is just another day. Or is it?

On May 7, 1945, at the Red School House in Rheims, France, the German High Command's representatives, Gen. Jodl and Admiral Von Friedeburg, having been there since arriving at 5:30 p.m. the day before to argue the German position that they were surrendering only on the Western front and not on the Eastern front, finally had conceded

and signed the surrender documents which called for a complete cessation of all hostilities on May 8, at 11:01 p.m.

The news of the unconditional surrender, by agreement of Churchill, Truman and Stalin, was not to be released to the public until 3:00 p.m., London time on May 8th (9. a.m., Washington time). A frustrating delay to the attending reporters and indeed to Churchill himself who wanted to break the news immediately as crowds gathered in London anticipating the announcement. Pent up emotions exploded in Europe. Riotous celebrations broke out. Londoners and Parisians realized the war was finally over. Bonfires, ship whistles, rockets streaking, frenzied masses of dancing, cheering people snaking through the street as VE Day was announced for the following day, May 9th – but the celebration was already in full swing.



Our war is over

In New York, there was also celebration but more tempered as Americans, while excited, knew that there was still a war to be won in the Pacific. Among American troops there was joy and relief, both jubilation and soberness. Perhaps most felt a vast relief over still being alive, the prospects of being able to think about going home, and the emerging realization that there would finally be a future out there somewhere after all.

Some of the 35th Division soldiers paraded through the ruins of Hanover and perceived a welcome relief even in the faces of the German observers. The Division Headquarters

was at Dohren, just outside of Hanover, and all were now enjoying the freshness and beauty of Spring as the troops continued their assigned duties of occupation in the surrounding neighborhoods. Some officers were sent to I and E (Information and Education) schools to help in the adjustment of troops to the post hostilities era. Some discussion centered around the war in the Pacific and the need for troops to be sent to the Pacific theatre to participate in the coming invasion of the Japanese Islands. There was speculation that the 35th Division might go.

Ten days later, on May 17th, the British Army and the 84th U.S. Infantry Division began the relief of the 35th Division in the Hanover area and we moved by truck to Recklinghausen, Germany, in the Munster sector for eleven days, moving once again after turning this sector over to the British on Memorial Day, May 30th, as this part of Germany was to become a part of the permanent British occupation zone. During June 1st to the 4th, we moved by motor and by rail to the 15th Army zone, to Koblenz and along the Rhine River, relieving the 66th U.S. Infantry Division, taking over their governmental and occupational duties. We were to remain there until July 10th.

This, it would develop, would be the last tour of duty for the entire division as a unit. We learned that, as anticipated, the division had been selected for the Pacific War area and we began the process of making the choice, either to remain in the Army and go with the division, or to join with the high point men, those with the longest service who would elect to go home and resume their civilian lives. Gradually the division would begin to bid goodbye to many of the old timers who were transferred to the 75th Division and other units. New low point men and volunteers for the Pacific were welcomed into the division to fill the gaps in the ranks. It was not a happy time, and buddies parted company reluctantly.

One of the highlights of our stay on the Rhine was the re-dedication of the Sante Fe Stadium in Koblenz, originally built in 1919 by the 35th Division during the First World War. Two battalions, one of them the 1st battalion of the 320th Infantry Regiment, were presented the Presidential Unit Citation Award for heroism at Mortain in July, 1944, in breaking through the German lines and rescuing the "lost" battalion of the 30th Division which had been cut off by the German Panzer counter offensive. Another thrill was to see our outstanding baseball team beat the team of the 106th Division later in the day in the same stadium.

On July 10, 1945, the 35th Division was relieved all along the Rhine River by the 10th French Infantry Division, as this was to be a part of the permanent occupation by the French. This was the first movement by the division to go to the Pacific.

Our 137th Infantry Regiment was selected for a signal honor, that of furnishing the Honor Guard for President Harry Truman in Brussels en route to the Potsdam Conference. The President had been a captain with the 129th Field Artillery, part of the 35th Division in France in 1918 and he had looked forward to meeting and talking with members of his old division. It was a mutually gratifying experience for both Truman and the men of the 137th!

Wiesbaden
Rudesheim
Lorch
Kaub
St. Goarhausen
[Filsen Osterspai](#)
Dachsenhausen
Lahnstein
Hochheim
Koblenz
Vallendar
Left on 48 to Autobahn South



Burg Osterspai



Filsen on Rhine

March 3, 1945

Finland declares war on Germany.

March 9, 1945

U.S. firebombing of Tokyo kills about 85,000 Japanese.

March 16, 1945

U.S. troops complete the capture of Iwo Jima from the Japanese, at the cost of 20,000 American casualties.

March 20, 1945

The Allies capture Mandalay, Burma.

March 30, 1945

Soviet troops capture Danzig.

May 2, 1945

Soviet troops complete the capture of Berlin. The remaining German troops in Italy surrender.

May 7, 1945

Germany surrenders unconditionally.

May 8, 1945

V-E Day is declared -- Victory in Europe.
