

Co. C, 331st Medical Battalion
106th Infantry Division
Unit History

Roster Reference # 30

UNIT HISTORY

November 10 - Company "C" 331st Medical Battalion embarked with the rest of the Medical Battalion and other units on the U.S.S. Wakefield, bound for Liverpool, England. The quarters were crowded and the food was bad. The seas were high practically the whole voyage, consequently many were seasick. No one enjoyed the voyage very much. Land was sighted on the evening of November 16th and on the 17th we landed at Liverpool. Again we carried our packs to a train, this time an English one. We were given coffee and doughnuts by English Red Cross girls and entrained for Cheltenham. There we took trucks to nearby Leckhampton Court, arriving there at 1100 on November. This court was an old English Manor House that rumor said had at one time belonged to King Henry VIII.

November 19th to November 30th - We were busy getting our personal and organizational equipment ready for combat. We entrucked for Weymouth, arriving there in the afternoon. We boarded a LST the next day. The accommodations and food were much better than they had been on the USS Wakefield. On the 5th of December we arrived at Rouen, France, and traveled by motor convoy to the Red Horse Assembly Area, which was nearby. On December 6th, 7th, and 8th it rained continuously, causing a large quantity of thick mud that reminded many of maneuvers bark in the U.S.A.

December 1? - On December 12",1944, **Company "C" 331st Medical Battalion** arrived' at Steinbruck, Germany, and relieved Collecting Co. "B" 2 Medical Battalion. The disposition of our Combat Team at that time was as follows:

2nd Battalion on the right, 3rd Battalion in the center, Cannon Company on the left, with the 1st Battalion in reserve at Steinbruck. The Regimental Command Post and Aid Station were located at Hechhalendfeld, Germany. Telephone communications between Collecting Company and all Aid Stations was 'established.

Vehicles of the Collecting: Company were dispersed as. follows: One ambulance at each Aid Station on the line and one at Regimental Aid Station.

The tactical situation was static except for minor patrol action with few battle casualties evacuated to this station until 16 December 1944. On this day, at approximately 0900, first battle casualties arrived at station and during the course of that-day contacts with Aid Stations were-maintained at all times. All previously planned routes of evacuation were employed. When the casualties were heavy on this date we rearranged our plans to meet the need for more ambulances -and placed an extra ambulance at Regimental Aid Station and set up a 5th at a control point approximately 200 yards in the rear of the Aid Station on the road to the Collecting Station,. (When the Aid Station ambulance passed each point on the way back to the Collecting Station each ambulance moved up, so that we could maintain an ambulance at each Aid Station at all times.

We also caned on Battalion Headquarters to furnish us Army ambulances to evacuate our casualties to. the Clearing Station; Three extra ambulances arrived approximately 2 hours after our call, and the problem was alleviated. One hundred twenty-three casualties were evacuated this day. Two of our litter squads were employed in advance of this 3rd Battalion Aid Station to aid and carry the wounded from the Field of Battle, at times working under artillery and small arms fire.

First Battalion was committed and met the enemy in the vicinity of Winterspelt, Germany, and an ambulance was attached to its Aid Station. During the day artillery barrages occurred in and around the Aid Station injuring

many men, including **1st Lt. Bradley**, MAC, First Battalion Surgeon's Assistant. The attached ambulance made several trips forward from its ALP to the Aid Station, and under fire, evacuated approximately 30 casualties.

Occasional shells burst in the vicinity of the Collecting Station from approximately 2100 throughout the night. Meanwhile the enemy advanced and a portion of the 1st Battalion withdrew to the vicinity of the bridge at Steinbruck, Germany. In view of the fact that only a small force was between us and the enemy, the Station moved across the only available bridge, which was under shellfire, at 0200 hours, 17 December, 1944. Movement was made under full blackout to the vicinity of Breitfeld; Belgium. At the time of the withdrawal six of the ambulances were being employed in the support of the Battalion Aid Stations and transportation of casualties. This shortage of organizational transportation necessitated employing all available transportation for the movement of personnel and essential equipment, and thus much personal equipment was abandoned. By the time the Station was again operating there was a battle in progress at the bridge at Steinbruck which was between the Station and its previous site.

The advance of the enemy and their occupation of Winterspelt necessitated ambulance evacuation of the 2nd Battalion and 3rd Battalion Regimental Aid Stations by coming through roads under direct observation and artillery fire of the enemy forces. Movements of the engaged battalions to the south, left the Collecting Station outside the zone of the Combat Team. Therefore the Station was moved to St. Vith at 1700, into the site previously occupied by the Clearing Station- which had moved. to. Vielsalm.

At this time the route of evacuation to Clearing Station was Highway N28 (northern route to Vielsalm).

At St. Vith the Station operated throughout that night, treating many casualties evacuated from the 7th Armored Division and many other Combat Organizations in the vicinity, as well as our own Combat Team. The morning of 18 December, 1944, an ambulance proceeding on Highway N28 to Clearing Station was fired upon by the enemy, with damage to the radiator, front wheel, and windshield, but proceeded to Vielsalm, from where it was taken to an Ordinance Unit for repairs. Shortly thereafter two ambulances enroute to Clearing were stopped by American Soldiers, and the drivers, being informed that the road was cut off, returned to the Collecting Station.

During this time the city of St. Vith had been subjected to heavy artillery and mortar shelling, many shells falling around the Collecting Station site. No personnel were injured, but two ambulances and a maintenance truck were damaged by shrapnel. Following the barrage an ambulance convoy was formed and carried casualties to Clearing Station over Highway N26 to Beho and N33 from Beho to Vielsalm (southern route). While at St. Vith we established an Aid Station at Div. Hq., per VOCC.

Liaison with the **424th Regimental CP** revealed that the Combat Team was withdrawing to the vicinity of Bracht, Berg-Reuland, and Lascheid. At 1600, 18 December, 1944, the Station was moved to the vicinity of Beho to be on the route of evacuation to Clearing Station. Shortly after the arrival at Beho two squads of Litter Bearers who had been serving as reinforcements at the Aid Stations returned to the Company.

While at this site Collecting Company "C" had 5 ambulances attached from Collecting Company "A" to assist in the evacuation of a 9th Armored Division Collecting Company. The Station site was used as a control point for this evacuation. Casualties evacuated and treated from our own Combat Team averaged about 40 per day. After 4 days in this position the Combat Team withdrew to the vicinity of Commanster and the Collecting Station set up in the vicinity of Vielsalm at 1200, 22 December 1944.

The following day the Collecting Company moved to an assembly area in the vicinity of Werbonnot under Medical Battalion control and set up in the field. The 424th Regiment was attached to the 7th Armored Division on 24 December 1944 and moved to the vicinity of Harre on Highway N15.

On 25 December 1944 the Collecting Company established a Station in the vicinity of Pouhon and evacuated casualties to the Clearing Station, now set up in Louveigne.

The 2nd Battalion engaged the enemy in an attack on Manhay. During an artillery barrage that evening two of our ambulances went forward of the Aid and evacuated 33 casualties. During the following four days the Regiment maintained a position, casualties were light, and no unusual problems of evacuation arose.

On 29 December 1944 the Regiment withdrew to reorganize in the vicinity of Warzee, Belgium. The Collecting Company returned to Division control and set up Station at Hody, Belgium. Ambulances were dispatched to the Battalion Aid Stations twice daily to evacuate sick and wounded.

As of this date the Regiment is not engaged with the enemy and casualties are light.

January 1 to January 5 - Our Division was in reorganization area. After a reconnaissance was made to check on the roads to each Aid Station we decided to dispatch ambulances twice daily, at 0900 and 1400 to evacuate any casualties picked up on sick call by the Regimental and Battalion Surgeons.

January 6 - Our Company was alerted to join up and move with **424 Combat Team**. A reconnaissance was made and our Company moved at 1050 to Farmhouse Berinzenne (vic. of Geronstere, four miles south of Spa). The road was on the main supply route of the 112 CT of the **28th Division**, which we were to replace. At this time the Combat Team was alerted.

January 7 - No change in location. CT placed on 12 hour alert. A reconnaissance was made for a location forward if necessary, and Sanat de Borgoumont (vic. of Cour) was selected, as it was also on main supply route.

January 8 - CT moved to replace **112 CT of 28th Division**. CT was attached to **30th Division** and we evacuated all casualties to their Clearing Station, located in Spa, Belgium. No problems arose in- evacuation at this time.

January 9 - Battalions were ordered to attack with 1st and 3rd abreast and 2nd in reserve. Attack jumped off at 1000 and Aid Stations moved up. 1st to Wanne and 3rd to Spineaux. Casualties were light. **S/Sgt Markley** was put on DS with Div. Hq. for furlough to the United States.

January 10 - CT rejoined 106th Division at 1200 and we began to evacuate to our own Clearing Station which had moved to Niveze (approximately 1-1/2 miles east of Spa). Because of icy roads and time lag from Aid Station to Collecting Station and return, an advance Ambulance Control Point with 2 ambulances and 3 Litter Squads was established in the vicinity of Coe. The Litter Squads were to clean up 2 houses which were selected for a Station site if a short move was necessary. Little Infantry resistance was encountered and CT reached 1st objective. Battle casualties continued to be light.

January 11- Remainder of Company moved to the Sanat de Bourgaumont at approximately 1400. Two men were left behind to hold the farm at Geroushere for Co. A which moved in at approximately 1630 and returned our men to us. Reconnaissance was made for future Station at Trois Ponts with no success because of darkness. Casualties continued to be light and no additional problems in evacuation arose. Our ACP at Coe continued to function smoothly.

January 12 - Reconnaissance was continued at Trois Ponts and another Station site was selected. 2 Litter Squads from Coe were dispatched to Trois Ponts to clean up and hold 3 small private homes for next move. This Station site was selected because it was on our main route of evacuation but outside of town in the event that

Trois Pont was subjected to barrage. This location was 1/2 mile ahead of Regimental Aid Station and approximately 3 miles by road from furthest Battalion-Aid Station.

January 13 - CT ordered to attack at 0800. 1/2 station moved up to Trois Ponts at 0830 to get house ready to begin accepting casualties at 1100. We moved out of Sanatorium at 1300 and Clearing Station moved in. 1st and 3rd Battalions moved against light opposition until approximately 1000 and both of these Aid Stations moved to Wanne. Battle casualties began coming into our Station in considerable numbers at approximately 1400 and continued that way all day. We evacuated approximately 140 Battle Casualties from 1400 to 2400.

Because of icy roads causing ambulances to move slowly, we established an Ambulance Relay Post of 3 ambulances in a defiladed patch of woods approximately 300 yards west of Aisimont on route to Trois Ponts. The road between Aisimont and Wanne was under constant, observed, enemy artillery fire, but since it was the only road to the front it was necessary to use for evacuation. Three ambulances were hit by shrapnel and in one case a soldier with a minor injury sustained a fracture of his femur from shrapnel entering the ambulance. The drivers and assistant drivers making the "Purple Heart Run" have been recommended by **424th Regimental Surgeon** for the "Bronze Star Medal". At night, through the courageous efforts of **Sgt. Magory**, Ambulance Section Sergeant, and **Tec. 5 Ristenpart**, and 11 severely wounded men were evacuated from a point forward of the 3rd Battalion Aid Station. 3 Litter Squads under the command of **Lt. Penney** were sent forward to reinforce the 3rd Battalion Aid Station where casualties were heaviest. **Lt. Col. Welch**, 1st Battalion CO was evacuated during the night with minor (undistinguishable printing)

January 14 - Regimental CO ordered 2nd Battalion to replace 1st Battalion on line and 1st went into Regimental reserve as 2nd passed through them and continued the attack. At this time the 2nd Battalion Aid Station also moved to Wanne. At this time 331st Medical Battalion ordered 2 ambulances attached to us from Company "A". Our plan of evacuation was to keep 2 ambulances at Wanne and 4 at our ARP which has moved up and occupied the site formerly used by the 2nd Battalion Aid Station. Battle casualties continued heavy and we evacuated approximately 100 during the 24 hour period. During the night Col. Read, the Regimental CO, was evacuated with a penetrating wound of his left thigh and a lacerated wound of the left. The objectives of the day were reached.

January 15 - On this day 108 casualties passed through our Station, mainly frostbite. Our plan of evacuation continued the same.

January 16 - CT continued the attack and 2nd Battalion Aid Station moved up to Levaux with attached ambulance and plan of evacuation changed as follows: One more ambulance was dispatched to Wanne, leaving 3 at the Relay Post and 1 at each Aid Station.

Approximately 100 casualties, again primarily frostbite, were evacuated. Regimental objectives were obtained during the early evening. Regimental Aid Station and CP moved up to Aisimont. Four improvised sled using skis as runners were made by **Sgt. Stevens** and **Pfc Eckert**. Each to carry 1 litter to facilitate the evacuation of casualties over the snow and ice by the Aid Stations. These sleds were used with a high degree of success as we were informed by both patients and Battalion Surgeons.

January 17 - The 3rd Battalion was attached to 517 Par CT and their Aid Station moved to Coulee with attached ambulance. The Heavy Weapons Co. 1st Battalion also was attached to 517 and moved to vicinity of Henomont. 2nd Battalion Aid Station moved up to Ennal with attached ambulance and 1st Battalion Aid Station removed to Wanne. From 1200 to 1500 one of the bridges at Trois Pouts was closed for repairs. Therefore at 1130 and until 1500 a forward Station was established at Aisimont and evacuated via another route to Clearing Station, still at Bourgamont. Approximately 90 casualties passed through our station, again mainly frostbite. Mission of CT was

to mop up in the area previously taken, as Division objective was reached. **Pvt Christianson** was appointed Pfc.

January 18 - Regiment was placed in Corps reserve and remained in same area. However, 1st Battalion Aid Station moved to Henomont with an ambulance. Our route of evacuation remained the same. A forward Station was set up at Wanne to operate only in the event of Clearing Station moved to Stavelot. No move was made by Clearing Station and they returned the next day. Our Ambulance Relay Post moved up to Wanne and as casualties were light, 1 ambulance returned to Company, leaving 2 there and 1 at each Aid Station. Pfc Christianson evacuated to Clearing Station.

January 19 - Plan of evacuation continues as on previous day as casualties were still light. During this respite from actual combat with the enemy, extensive motor maintenance was undertaken and various improvements were started on our kitchen truck and weapons carriers. Also a platform was made for each ambulance behind the driver's seat to hold the blankets off the floor and allow the heat to pass to the back of the ambulance.

January 20 - In order to get maintenance work on all ambulances they were withdrawn from ARP and Aid Stations, leaving 1 at Regimental Aid Station and CP. Twice daily ambulances were dispatched to each Aid Station to pick up any casualties from sick call. All Bn. Surgeons were notified of the change, told of the ambulance at Regimental Aid Station, and remained in contact by telephone. **Lt. Slusarz, Bn. Motor Officer**, visited Company and spot checked vehicles which were found in a very satisfactory condition except for minor lubrication deficiency, which was corrected at once.

January 21 - Evacuation continued as previously and casualties remained light. At 1530, our Division Commander, **Brig. Gen. Herbert T. Perrin, Col. Baker**, Chief of Staff, **Lt. Col. Belzer**, Division Surgeon, **Lt. Col. Neigus**, Battalion CO and his staff were at a formal presentation By Gen. Perrin of the "Bronze Star Medal" to the following named Officer and EM of our Company:

1st Lt. David Millman
S/Sgt. Richard C. Reinhart
Sgt. John J. Magory
Tec. 4 Quentin R. Leisure
Tec. 5 Paul O. Deakins
Tee. 5 Elden E. Ristenpart
Pfc. Raymond Bachman
Pfc. Thomas D. Elder
Pfc. Frederick F. Fleischman
Pfc. Talmon Gainous
Pfc. Joseph A. Gelinas
Pfc. John B.G. Hammock
Pfc. William E. Erving
Pfc. Benedict L Leiti
Pfc. Ralph E. Montgomery
Pfc. Carl J. Steinmeyer
Pfc. Ferguson A. Wilson
Pvt. Arley G. Cornet
Pvt. Harvey E. Kolb
Pvt. Philip W. Patire
Pvt. Raymond S. Szyzewski

January 22 - Regiment was still in reserve and all Aid Stations maintained their same positions. Casualties were light and no problems in their evacuation occurred.

January 23 - At 0200 we were given a march order and overlay stating that 424th CT was attached to the 7th Armored Div. and was to replace 508 Parachute CT in the vicinity of Diedenberg (N. Of St. Vith). **Lt. Millman** was sent to the area to find a new Station site. After his reconnaissance he returned and we moved 4 ambulances, 1 Station Section, and 2 jeeps to Rue (vicinity of Waimes) as the order stated only minimum vehicles would be taken initially. We passed our IP (Trois Pouts) at 1300 and closed into our new site at approximately 1430. Each Aid Station of the CT was attached an ambulance for the move and told approximately where we would set up.

Immediately on our arrival a reconnaissance was made to contact 7th Armored Div. Clearing Station, all of our Aid Stations and our drivers, to give them our location. During the day further reconnaissance was made forward for a site to move the entire Company as we were at that time approximately 6 miles from our Aid Stations, and a new place was found in Ondeval (on NSR) approximately 3 miles forward. A few battle casualties were handled during the night but no evacuation problems arose.

January 24 - At 0900 the forward Station moved to Ondeval and a jeep dispatched to Trois Pouts to bring up the kitchen and the rest of the Company. They arrived at 1400. During the day all Aid Stations and Regimental CP maintained their same locations, except except the **591 Field Artillery Bn. Aid Station** which moved to Montenu. However at 2130 the 2^o Bn. Aid Station and attached ambulance moved south of Diedenberg 1 kilometer to get ready for any casualties in the attack at 0715 by the CT next morning. Regimental Surgeon requested 6 men to help out in evacuation of 2nd Battalion and a Litter Squad and 2 technicians were sent out at 2030 to move with the Aid Station. Casualties were very light during this 24 hour period and no problems in evacuation arose.

January 25 - The order for attack was 2nd and 3rd Battalion abreast with 1st in reserve. LD - present position. The attack jumped off at 0715 and primary objectives were reached at 1000. At 0830 an Ambulance Relay Post consisting of 3 ambulances was set up behind a brick house in Elvange on our main route of evacuation, making our ambulance situation as follows: 1 at each Aid Station - 4, 3 at ARP- 3, 5 at Company to be used for Clearing run -5, total 12 including 2 attached from Co. "A". One of our former Litter Bearers, **Pvt. James D. McGregor**, transferred to the 124th Infantry the day before was a BC early in the day when a hand grenade was thrown in his position, killing an officer and several others in his group. His diagnosis was, "shell blast injury, back, thoracic region". He was evacuated to 7th Armored Division Clearing. After supper the Litter Bearers and a technician, on duty with the **424th Medical Detachment** were relieved and replaced with fresh men. Approximately 70 patients passed through our Station during this 24 hour period. There were no further changes in the locations of our medical installations.

January 26 - The CT was ordered to continue the attack at 0800. Our mission was as follows: 2nd Battalion to seize and secure high ground east of Medall, 3rd Battalion to seize town of Meyerode, 1st Battalion to be prepared to move on order to positions east of Diedenberg. Line of departure was our present position. Reconnaissance was made forward of our present location in the event CT was given another objective and Regimental Aid Station and CP moved forward from Diedenberg. The CT attacked as per order and took all objectives quite early. The enemy counter-attacked and it was thrown back with considerable damage to their forces and none to ours. Late in the evening the Battalion Aid Stations and their attached ambulances moved up and their new locations were as follows: 1st at Diedenberg, 2nd at Medell, 3rd at Hochkrouz. Approximately 70 Battle casualties passed through our Station during this 24 hour period to the 7th Armored Clearing Station which remained at Waimes.

January 27 - No additional objective was given to our CT but we moved our ARP to Diedenbert in order to cut the time that the Aid Stations would be minus an ambulance. There were no further changes in the locations or

our medical installations of the CT. **S/Sgt Reinhart** was sent back to Battalion Headquarters at Exneaux for a physical examination before being given a Battlefield Commission. We received a message from General Perrin that he would award his commission on the following day at the Clearing Station at 1500.

During the early afternoon **Lt. Col. Girard** was evacuated to the 7th Armored Clearing with nasopharyngitis acute, temperature of 101. This made a total change in the Battalion Commanders and Regimental Commanders of the Regiment since our baptismal fire. Approximately 30 casualties were evacuated during the day.

January 28 - We received word that CT was being passed through by 82nd Airborne Division that morning and soon as it was practicable the CT would move back to a reorganization area in the vicinity of Esneaux, Belgium. **S/Sgt Reinhardt** was presented a Battlefield Commission as a 2nd Lt. MAC at a formal ceremony by Commanding General of the Division, **Brig. General Perrin**, Div. Surgeon, **Lt. Col. Belzer** and Battalion CO, **Lt. Col. Neigus**.

January 29 - During the day we worked on making ourselves comfortable in our new quarters and we also started getting a complete technical inspection on all our vehicles.

January 30 - Our Battalion CO **Lt. Col. Neigus** visited our Company on an informal inspection. No change in situation and locations of medical installations.

January 31- **Lts. Garcia and Scott**, who were attached to our Company to observe Collecting Company in operation were called back and assigned within our Battalion. No change in situation or location of our medical installations.

February 1 to February 4- No change

February 5 - At 0830 our quartermaster took off for a rendezvous with CT quartermaster at Offet at 0900. Our Collecting Company received a movement order for the next day from our CT. An ambulance was dispatched to each Aid Station for the move as per SOP. That evening our officers attended a dinner in honor of our Division Commander, **Brig. Gen. Perrin**, given by, and held at, the Clearing Company. A late ambulance run was made to our Aid Stations in order to make certain they were clear of casualties before the next day's move.

February 6 - CT was ordered to move to vicinity of Amel in assembly area prior to moving up on line. We were to be attached to the 99th Division immediately upon closing in. **Lt. Blanchard** was notified that he had been promoted to Captain.

February 7 - CT was ordered to move to an assembly area east of Honsfeld. A reconnaissance was made forward and a new Station site was selected at Luchenborn (1 mile west of Honsfeld) 1/2 Station was sent to occupy new site at 1000 and rest of Company closed in at 1400. At this time our Aid Stations were bivouaced in the woods west of Losheimergraben (0098) and an ambulance was with each one. Approximately 35 casualties, mostly nasopharyngitis and foot cases, were evacuated to both 99th Division Clearing Station, still at Ovifat, and the 106th Division Clearing at Ligneville. No problems in evacuation arose except for long trip to either Clearing Station.

February 8 - CT was ordered to move up on line to relieve 394th CT of **99th Div**. Beginning at 0500. Ambulances remained with Aid Stations and moved with them. A reconnaissance was made and a new Station site was selected in the old Regimental CP at Honsfeld. However this site was not large enough for our entire Company, therefore the following plan was devised for our operation. The Station platoon, two ambulances, and the CP were moved to Honsfeld at 0900 to begin operation at 1000.

The kitchen and remaining part of the Company remained at old location. Telephone communication was established between our forward and rear Stations. The 2nd Battalion Aid Station was impossible to get to by ambulance or jeep and therefore an ALP was set up and casualties were brought out from the Aid Station to the ambulance by use of weasels. Casualties consisted of some foot cases and a few Engineers that were injured while clearing a minefield. A total of 24 casualties were evacuated to 106th Clearing still at Ligneville during this 24 hour period. During this day our CT rejoined 106th Division.

February 9 - There was no change in the locations of our Aid Stations. A litter squad was sent up to 2nd Battalion Aid Station to bring out casualties to the furthestmost point that the weasel could go, a distance of 400 yards from the Aid Station. It was also decided that the weasels would bring the casualties out to the main road as it was easier on the patients and the springs of the ambulances. A reconnaissance was made for a Station site forward in the event our Aid Stations moved up and a new site was found in Losheimergraben, as it was on a good road net, both forward and rear.

February 10 - There was no change in any of the Aid Station locations during this 24 hour period. Our front lines remained the same, and the CT continued to send out patrols. Clearing Station moved up and opened at Weverse and opened at 1900. A total of 29 casualties were evacuated. Capt. Blanchard was evacuated to Clearing Station in Ligneville early in the afternoon with nasopharyngitis temperature 101.5 and Lt. Schechter temporarily assumed command.

February 11- Because of the extremely rough roads part of the way back to our Clearing it became necessary to use another route of evacuation. This new route, although 1 mile longer than the old one, was easier on the patients and also because of the better road, the trip back was made in a shorter period of time. Twice during the day the enemy counter-attacked on our 2nd Battalion front, and both times they were repulsed with no loss of ground or casualties for our forces. During this 24 hour period 30 casualties were evacuated to Clearing, still at Weverse.

February 12 - **Capt. Blanchard** returned from Clearing Station at 1100 and resumed command. All Aid Stations and Clearing Station remained at their same locations. No further problems in our chain of evacuation came up and a total of 40 casualties were evacuated during the day.

February 13 - No change in locations.

February 14 - During the afternoon 3 American Airmen who parachuted from their plane were picked up by our ambulances and treated in our Station.

February 15 to February 18 - No change.

February 19 - Because of units moving out of Honsfeld and poor roads from rear to forward Station it was decided to move entire Company to Honsfeld and we closed in at 1030. No change in Aid Stations or Clearing Station location and a total of 20 casualties were evacuated to Clearing Station.

February 20 - No change in any Aid Stations or Clearing Station locations. However the poor roads necessitated our changing our routes of evacuation again. This time both forward and rear. Mine casualties still predominated and very few gunshot or shrapnel wounds were seen in our Station.

February 21 to February 25 - No change.

February 26 - **Tec. 5 Kreuder, Pfc Fleischman and Pfc Freedman** were transferred to be part of cadre for the new Co. "B", which is being formed.

February 27 to February 28 - No change.

Note: A total of 458 casualties were evacuated during the month of February.

March 1- No change in any medical installations during this 24 hour period. At approximately 1400 a pursuit type plane crashed about 1 mile from our position and an ambulance was sent to the area. On their arrival at the site of the crash, the pilot was found dead and his identification tags and serial numbers in his trousers identified him.

March 2 to March 4 - Company remained at same location as did all our other medical installations. Casualties were light and no problems in evacuation arose.

March 5 - Combat Team was ordered to move up and it did so, beginning at 0830. The 1st Battalion moved forward to a road running north and south. The 2nd Battalion then passed through them with the 1st Battalion going into reserve in the vicinity of Neuhoof. The 2nd and 3rd Battalions pushed forward with the 3rd on left and 2nd on the right. By dark they took up their positions on the further bank of the Luvert river. The 2nd Battalion Aid Station was located 1 mile out of Neuhoof on road running to Berk. The 3rd Battalion Aid Station was 200 yards further along this road in a pill-box. Contact was maintained at all times with the Aid Stations. The Collecting Station and 4 ambulances were set up in a house in Losheimergraben. The remainder of the Company stayed in Honsfeld.

March 6 - Battalions remained in the same localities with only patrol activity. Contact was made with all Aid Stations.

March 7 - 2nd Battalion went into reserve and the 1st Battalion took its position on the right CT front. The Battalions moved forward abreast to beyond Berk. In the afternoon it was learned that the 69th Division had cut us off entirely. The three Aid Stations took up their positions the town of Berk. Regimental Aid and Regimental Headquarters also moved to Berk. "A" Collecting Station also leapfrogged the Station at Losheimergraben and set up in a broken down farmhouse beyond the town of Neuhoof. All the Battalion Aid Stations and ambulance drivers were notified of the new Station location. The Station at Losheimergraben closed at 1130 and moved back with the main body of the Company at Honsfeld. Battalion headquarters and Regimental Headquarters were notified of the new Station site. Casualties were light. Evacuation was now over a good highway to Bullingen and thence over a fair road to the Clearing Station at Butgenbach.

March 8 - Battalions remained in assembly area in vicinity of Berk, and Aid Stations remained in same locations as previous day. Casualties evacuated to out Station at Neuhoof were light. Lt. Slusarz inspected all vehicles for lubrication and found them in satisfactory condition.

March 9 - No change with light casualties being evacuated to Clearing Station.

March 10 - Station at Neuhoof was ordered to close at 0900 and return to Honsfeld.

March 11 to March 14 - Preparation were made to move to France to a reorganization area. **Tec. 5 Hoff** was assigned from 14th Cav. Group.

March 15 - Company Moved in Battalion convoy to St. Quentin, France.

March 16 - Company was engaged in settling in their new quarters in St. Quentin, France.

March 17 to March 28 - Training schedule was maintained. Passes to Brussels, Paris and Eupen were increased.

March 29 - A Medical Battalion retreat ceremony was held for **Maj. Gen. Stroh** and his staff. At this time 4 Bronze Star Medals and a Purple Heart were presented to members of the Battalion. **Capt. Blanchard** received one of the Bronze Star Medals.

March 30 - 15 EM arrived as reinforcements in the Company, bringing us up to T/O strength. Many of these men have seen service overseas previous to joining our Company. Ambulances were called in the afternoon to carry casualties from a grenade explosion that occurred during a demonstration in Regimental area. Two EM were killed and many injured.

March 31- Arrangements were made for Company "C" to take over the mess and guard duties for the Battalion and so allow them to get rest preparatory to their departure. **Lt. Petersilge** was notified of his promotion to Captain which was effective 15 March.

April 1 to April 5 - Company remained in St. Quentin and prepared for a motor convoy to new area. **Lt. Millman** and **Tec. 5 Carleson** were placed on TD to attend Athletic School in Paris.

April 6 - Company moved by motor convoy, passing IP at 0557. We covered 220 miles this day and bivouaced in the vicinity of Le Mans, France.

April 7 - Company continued motor convoy and passed our IP at 0720. We arrived at Rennes, France at 1300 and moved into a bivouac area at St. Jacques Airport on the outskirts of the city. **Pfc Wilson** entered the 106th Div Clr. for treatment for Atypical Pneumonia.

April 8 to April 19 - Company remained in reorganization area and continued. with Battalion Training schedule and vehicular maintenance. On the 19th we received an alert order to move with the 424th CT to a secret destination the following day. **Lt. Millman** and **Tec.5 Carlson** returned from TD in Paris. **Pfc Wilson** returned to duty from 106th Div. Clearing.

April 20 - Company moved by motor convoy and passed the IP at 0740. After a 160 mile trip we arrived at our first night's bivouac area in the vicinity of Chateaunuef, France at 1615.

April 21- Company continued motor movement passing IP at same time as on previous day. After covering 165 miles we bivouaced in the vicinity of Reims, France closing into area at 1630. **Pfc Christianson** was assigned and joined from 6900 Replacement Depot. He was formerly of this organization having been evacuated for frostbite of the right foot for which he received the Purple Heart.

April 22 - We continued our motor convoy, passing our IP at 0920 and bivouaced at St Avoird, France, arriving there at 1530 after a 120 mile trip.

April 23 - Company continued motor convoy. We passed our IP at 0920 and traveled 130 miles to destination at Waldalgesheim, Germany in the vicinity of Bad Kreuznach, Germany. We closed into a house at 1615 that formerly was used to billet the operators of a mine in the vicinity and immediately proceeded to clean the house up and occupy it.

April 24 to April 26 - We were given the mission of giving medical and ambulance service to a number of PW enclosures in the area which our Division was guarding. Our Company was disposed as follows: Captain Blanchard in charge of Team #1 consisting of 16 EM, 3 ambulances and 1 officer at an enclosure in the vicinity of Remagen, Germany. **Captain Petersilge** with another team from Company "D" at Heidesheim, Germany. **Capt. Schechter** with Team #2 in the vicinity of Sinzig,, Germany. **Lt. Millman** in charge of the rest of the

Company consisting of approximately 50 men and 2 officers in Waldalgesheim, Germany. In addition to supporting the PW enclosures we had our normal mission of giving support to our **424th Infantry Regiment**, and we made an ambulance run twice daily to each of our Battalion Aid Stations.

April 27 to April 30 - During this period our Company remained in the same location, continued to send out men to PW enclosures, and maintain our liaison with the 124th Inf. Rgt. There were no changes in personnel.

May 1 to May 11 - That part of the Company that wasn't at the various PW enclosures moved on the 3rd to Bad Ems and occupied a luxurious hotel. The time was taken up with classes in small groups and an athletic program.

May 12 - The Company was attached to the **424th Infantry Regiment** and was ordered to move to the vicinity of Ingleheim. As no quarters were available there, a temporary bivouac was made at our old site at the mine, near Waldalgesheim. 75 EM were attached for rations and quarters.

May 13 - A reconnaissance was continued and 3 houses in Gau Algesheim were reserved for our occupation as soon as they were cleared by an Ordinance unit that had already moved its advance detail and was alerted for moving out. This plan was approved by the 424th Infantry Regiment and close liaison was maintained with the Ordinance unit so that there would be no delay in occupying the new location. The S-4 of the **424th Inf. Regt.** was contacted and he agreed to send us, at Bad Ems, three 2-1/2 trucks for our next day's move to Waldalgesheim.

May 14 - The Company left Bad Ems at 0930 and proceeded to Waldalgesheim arriving at 1130. Arrangements were made to billet about 100 EM which we were getting from **83rd Repl Depot** that afternoon. At 1800 there arrived 75 EM who were attached unassigned to us for rations, quarters and administration. After a short orientation by our acting CO and the First Sergeant they were assigned adequate quarters.

May 15 to May 21 - Company continued usual duties, orientation and athletic schedule.

May 22 - Company moved to new location at hospital in Ingleheim.

May 23 to May 24 - Medical Teams remained at PW enclosures giving Medical support.

May 25 - **Lt. Millman** went on DS to Division Headquarters to organize an athletic schedule. **Pvt's Armenta, Glaus, Padgett and Summers** were appointed to the rank of Pfc.

May 26 to May 28 - Usual garrison duties. Teams were at the PW enclosures.

May 29 - S/Sgt Lynch was put on DS with Div. Headquarters to help **Lt. Millman** with the Division Athletic School. **Pfc Graizel** was sent to the 124th Evac Hospital for treatment of bursitis.

May 30 to June 2 - Usual duties were engaged in.

June 3 - **S/Sgt Markley** returned to the Company after his furlough to the U.S.A. He had 58 days in all at home.

June 4 to June 5 - Usual duties.

June 6 - **S/Sgt Curtis** was transferred to the 140th Evac. Hospital. **Tec 4 Manzella** was sent to the Hospital with sinusitis.

June 7 to June 10 - Usual duties.

June 11 - **Pfc Graizel** returned from the Hospital after having an operation performed on his shoulder.

June 12 to June 19 - Usual garrison duties.

June 20 - Medical Teams were returned to the Company from the Winzenheim PW enclosure. Ambulances that were with the three Battalions of the 424th Regiment returned .also. Preparations were made to move to the 106th Div. Training area in the vicinity of Mayen, Germany.

June 21- The Company moved by convoy to the area called "**Camp Allen Jones**" in the vicinity of Mayen. Our area was a thickly wooded spot next to "B" Company. The remainder of the day after arrival was spent in erecting tents and making ourselves comfortable.

June 22 to June 29 - The maximum number of men were sent on passes to Brussels, Namur, The UK, and Paris. The remainder of men attended classes which were conducted by the three Companies. **The 106th Division was placed in category IV**. All men with low scores were to be transferred to other Divisions and we were to receive high score men. A final Company Assembly was held after supper on the 29th of June 1945.

Thus it came about that "C" Company that had performed so excellently in combat and garrison was to be no more.

However, in spite of this, the dangers, the hard trips, the mud and the cold, as well as the fun, the fast friendships that were formed there and the good times would remain in the hearts of all of the men, wherever they went. Men that have been such efficient soldiers will make even better citizens.

This, and previous pages, has been copied from a UNIT HISTORY OF COMPANY "C" OF THE 331ST MEDICAL BATTALION, 106TH INFANTRY DIVISION that was written by **Lt. David Millman**, following the end of WW II in Europe.

Contributed by Edward Christianson. Also credit is given to Sgt. Ray Cole who found his copy of Millman's report and made it available to me.

HEADQUARTERS 331ST MEDICAL BATTALION

A. P. O. #443, U S Army

5 February 1945

331st Medical Unit
UNIT HISTORY

During the month of January 1945, the Medical Battalion was supporting combat for 13 days, and rested, grouped, and re-equipped for 18 days. The morale continued high, as evidence (in part) by no AWOL's and no Venereal Disease.

Jan 1-5: Battalion in reorganization area, with "A" and "C" companies vic HOTY

[Hody], BELGIUM, "D" Company and Battalion Headquarters vic ESNEUX, BELGIUM. The Battalion strength was 32 Officers, 2 WO and 318 Enlisted Men. All activities were concentrated on re-equipping and regrouping the Battalion. Numerous promotions were made, and Capt. Jack H. Kamholz was reassigned to "D" Company, while **Lt Monroe Neuman** was assigned to "B" Company. With a general idea that the Division was to be recommitted, reconnaissance was carried out in SPA and south to TROIS PONTS for routes and billets and station sites.

The sector into which the contemplated move is to be made, is now held by a unit of the **28th Inf Div**, CT 112, which is attached to the 30th Inf Div at this time. **Pvt Kenneth Vandegrift and Pvt Paul F McDaniel** who had been declared MIA returned to the Battalion. They had left the Div Clr Sta at ST VITH with a load of patients for an Evacuation Hospital at MALMEDY. Nothing further was heard from them, and in as much as hostile action occurred along the route they were presumed to be MIA. They did reach MALMEDY, and were pressed into service to assist in moving the hospital, this being necessary because of the approach of the Germans. After leaving the hospital, the two men traveled south in an attempt to rejoin the Battalion, and were directed to various places until they reached the 3rd Replacement Depot whence they were told the new location of the Battalion.

Jan 6: With the 424 Inf Regt at LA REID, "C" Collecting Company moved to FERME BERIZENNE [Berinsenne], 4 Miles south of SPA. The Clearing Station and Battalion Headquarters remain at ESNEUX, and evacuation from 424 CT will be to ESNEUX. Emergency cases, however will be taken to the 30th Div Clr Sta at SPA. On this date, **Brigadier General Perrin**, Div Comdr., came to the Cir Sta and in a formal ceremony presented the order of the Purple Heart to the following Officer and Enlisted Men:

1ST LT VINCENT P. WANDERMAN
M/SGT JOHN J. ADELMAN
PFC WILLIAM R DAUGHERTY
TEC 5 GEORGE MANSFIELD
PFC VERNON PFIFFNER
SGT KENNETH FINLAYSON

Jan 7: CT 424 was alerted for a move forward, and so Company "C" reconnoitered an area, finding SANAT DE BOURGOMONT in the vic of COUR [Coo]suitable. At the Clearing Station, intense excitement prevailed in the evening when planes circled low and the guards on duty reported what they thought to be sounds made by parachutists. **Captain Rinek & LaManche** with a detail of EM went out and searched the area, finding lights signaling in the "Vicinity". G-2, Provost Marshal were notified,

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and **Maj Moulds** arrived, saw that the situation was under control, had a cup at coffee and went to bed. The 820th TD also notified when **Capt LaManche** drove down to ESNEUX. Sequel: One old parachuted dummy was found, no traces in the

snow of any recent footprints and the "signal lights" were found to be made by an Ordnance outfit on a nearby hill. Thus far this month the census in the Clr Sta averaged about 50 cases per day.

Jan 8: Sixteen men from "A" Company, 1 man from "D" Company were placed on DS with 424th Med Det to reinforce the depleted detachment. The men were brought to the Regt Aid Station and sent from there to various positions with the 424 Infantry, CT 424 replaced CT 112, and was atchd to the 30th Inf Div. All casualties were evacuated to the 30th Inf Div Clr Sta at SPA. Daily visits were made to "C" Company by a member of Battalion Headquarters.

Jan 9: CT 424 atkd at 1000 with the 1st and 2d Bn abreast, 3rd in reserve. Casualties were light at this time. The Clr Sta was prepared to move, with **Lt Wanderman**'s selection, the vic of SPA, at NIVEZE.

Jan 10: This was moving day - "A" Company moved to FANGE-MARON, to as a holding station for foot and respiratory cases from the Clr Sta. 29 cases were sent there. "C" Company operate SANAT DE BOURGOMONT and casualties were light. "D" Company moved the 1st platoon to NIVEZE, arriving at 1530, 28 cases left ESNEUX at 1530 for the station at NIVEZE. These were cases who could be returned to duty in a few days. Bn Hq moved with "D" Company.

Despite bad roads, the move was accomplished without incident. "C" Company had its Collecting Station favorably situated, but further back from the aid stations than usual. Thorough reconnaissance with a member of the Med Bn of the **30th Div** resulted in an order to stay at COUR [Coo], but an ARP was set up in the vic at COO. Preparations were made for A Company to move to FERME BERRIZINE [Berinsenne], "C" Company to TROIS PONTS and D Company to COUR [Coo]. "A" Company was obliged to leave their area being outranked by Hq 82d A/B Div.

Jan 11: The Division regrouped as follows: At 1200 RCT 424 & 112 reverted to Div control. (106), at 2400 RCT 112 reverted to **28th Div** control and two Bns. of the **517th Prcht Inf Regt** were atchd to the Division. The Division was ordered then, to continue the present mission of defense.

The 2d platoon of "D" Company left ESNEUX at 0930, and closed at NIVEZE at 1130. "C" Company received few casualties and planned to move to TROIS PONTS. Present positions were considered adequate because of good road net and light casualties, and that weather conditions made treatment of patients in warm building desirable.

Lt Neumann was placed on DS with Forward Echelon of DHQ as Medical Officer, there being no regularly assigned Medical Officer at that installation by the T/O.

For information on the tactical situation see attached overlay.

Jan 12: The Division received other atchmts - elements of the 740 Tk Bn, 643 TD Bn, 634 AAA Bn, 596 Engr Bn, and 460 PFA Bn. Light patrol action continued, with casualties light, only 3 wounded being treated.

Jan 13: The **106th Inf Div** jumped off at 0600 in an attack, and with intelligence that resistance would be light, and progress rapid, all

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units of the Battalion were prepared to move up. Arrangements were made by the Bn CO to assist the 517th. The surgeon of the 517 declined to use "A" Company as a collecting station, and instead operated his Regt aid Sta vic STAVELOT, as a collecting Station. A Company operated an ARP at FRANCORCHAMPS with enlisted personnel, 1 officer, 2 ambulances, and a #2 Chest. "C" Company moved up to TROIS PONTS at 0830 and the Clr Sta at 1300 moved to COUR.

The remainder of "D" Company moved from NIVEZE at 1600, and the patients left at NIVEZE (about 40) were taken over by "A" Company, which began to operate the holding station. When the Clr Sta opened at COUR [Coo], the ARP at FRANCORCHAMPS moved to STAVELOT. "C" Company operated an ARP at AISIMONT. On this date from 1400 to 2400 "C" Company handled 140 battle casualties, and "D" Co handled 186 cases, transferring 107 to the rear.

Evacuation from the front was complicated by heavy snow, icy roads, and narrow roads. But except for the ditching of an army ambulance during blackout driving, the evacuation of patients was uneventful. Most cases were due to artillery and mortar fire, and mines with really serious cases coming thru. Several chest wounds were handled, and one case had a severe nicking wound of the chest, FC of the femur, and probable involvement of the spinal cord.

The road between the "C" Company ARP at AISIMONT and WANNE was under constant observed enemy artillery fire, but since it was the only road usable ambulances ran the gauntlet of fire. Three ambulances were hit by shrapnel, and one patient with a wound of a finger, riding in the ambulance was struck in the leg. First aid was given to him by the ambulance orderly.

At the end of the day the Clearing Station census was 68.

Two new MAC officers joined the Battalion, **Lt Scott and Lt Garcia**. Both were assigned to "B" Company and placed on DS with "C" Company for "seasoning."

Altho every unit in the battalion moved today, and a large number of casualties were processed, and evacuation was slow and difficult, the medical service rendered was of the highest order and worked uninterruptedly. The men of "C" Company worked gallantly and in one instance **Sgt Magory** and **Tec 5 Ristenpart** ran forward of the aid station to get out 11 severely wounded soldiers. Three litter squads under **Lt Penney** also worked forward of the 3rd Bn Aid Station evacuating casualties. **PFC Beach** of "A" Company was lightly wounded by shrapnel while on DS with the 424 Med Det. Two ambulances from "A" Company were atchd to "C" company this date.

Jan 14: The attack continued at 0900, and again casualties were heavy, mostly from shrapnel, Mortar and Mines. 100 casualties were processed by "C" Company, and the

Clr Sta treated 180 cases, of which 61 were transferred.

Large numbers of cases of frost bite were seen with no swelling, but considerable discoloration and paresthesias was seen. The more severe were evacuated, but the remainder held either at COUR [Coo], or NIVEZE.

Jan 15-16: The attack continued. "D" Company received 249 patients on the 15th and 268 on the 16th. Most casualties were still due to frost bite.

Ambulance Relay Points were used and good ambulance service maintained.

Moving of the Clr Sta was discussed but due to poor housing conditions, at STAVELOT, and adequacy of ambulance evacuation, the move was not made. Sleds were utilized to haul litters back to the aid station, being furnished and made by "C" Company. The **3rd Bn of CT 424** was attached to the **517th Regt** at 1200.

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Jan 17: At 1800, the **517th Inf Regt** was attached to the **30th Inf Div.**, and at that time the 3rd Bn reverted to 424 control. At 1600 the 424 CT was pinched off by the advance of the 75th Inf Div to the east, and the 30th Inf Div to the south. The mission of CT 424 then was to mop up in the areas it had taken. During the action from the 12th through the 17th, the Division took every objective assgnd, and on time. The difficult maneuver in the pinching out of a CT was achieved. 1172 cases were handled by the Clearing Station during the attack.

Jan 18: The Division was placed XVIII Corps reserve, for the purpose of regrouping and re-equipping. The strength of the **424 Inf** was 54% Enlisted, and 62% officer personnel. A meeting was held by the Bn Commander with the Company Commanders to discuss re-supply. The main shortages were lamps, and stoves, which S-4 promptly corrected. The 1st Bn 424 moved to HENOMONT, and ARP with two ambulances was set up at WANNE. An ambulance was left with each Bn aid Station. The ARP at STAVELOT was closed. "D" Company held 162 patients at this time, with 81 of this number at COUR [Coo]. Most of the cases being received were frost bite, with a few respiratory cases. Very few exhaustion and self-inflicted wounds were seen. **Lt Neumann** was evacuated with a severely sprained knee.

Jan 19-23: Remained in Corps reserve. The Clearing Station operated bathing service for the Division, furnishing towels, soap, and alleged hot water.

The troops really needed the service. Medical inspection was done at the baths, and one case of pediculosis pubis found. Work was concentrated on vehicles and supply. Recreation was made available by the Bn SSO (movies, bands, singers). On 21 January at 1530 at TROIS PONTS, **General Perrin**, in a formal ceremony presented Bronze Star Medals to the following personnel:

CPT ARTHUR FLEMING
1ST LT DAVID MILLMAN
PFC RAYMOND BACHMAN

PYT ARLEY CORNETT
TEC 5 PAUL DEAKINGS
PFC THOMAS ELDER
PFC FREDERICK FLEISCHMAN, JR
PFC TALMON GAINOUS
PFC JOSEPH GELINAS
PFC JOHN B. G. HAMMOCK
PFC WILLIAM IRVING
PVT HARVEY KOLB
TEC 4 QUENTIN LEASURE
PFC BENEDICT LEITI
SGT JOHN AGORY
PFC RALPH MONTGOMERY
PVT PHILIP PATIRE
S/SGT RICHARD REINHARDT
TEC 5 ELDEN RISTENPART
PFC CARL STEINMEYER
PVT RAYMOND SZYCZEWSKI
PFC FERGUSON WILSON

Jan 23: CT 424 atchd to 7th Armd Div which today took ST VITH. "C" Company moved to an assembly area in the vic of DEIDENBERG, and set up a station at WAIMES.

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Jan 24: CT 424 committed again, with. "C" Company at ODENVAL [ONDENVAL], the remainder of "C" Company was all closed in by 1400. Preparations were made for an attack the following day, and as usual, litter squads were atchd to **424 Med Det**. The 7th Armd Div Clr Sta at WAIMES was utilized, and casualties were light. The **106th Inf Div (CT 424 & 592d FA Bn)** moved back to the vic of ANTHISNES. The 1st platoon left COUR [Coo] at 0930, and opened a Clr Sta at the same place in ESNEUX which had been occupied before.

Jan 25: CT 424 continued to attack. **Pvt Harold D. Smith** of "A" Company on DS with the **424 Med Det** was killed while working as an aid man by a sniper who was promptly dispatched by the men of the company with which he was working.

This constitutes a violation of the Geneva Convention. At this time the Bn CO and the Regt CO of the 424 had all been evacuated. Casualties were light.

Jan 28: CT 424 was passed thru by the 82d A/B Div and moved back to join the 106th Div, "C" Company moved to ESNEUX, closing in their area at 2330.

General Perrin presented **Lt Reinhardt with battlefield commission** as a 2d Lieutenant. **Tec 4 Pawasarat and Pfc Buckley, Tec 5 King** were given the Bronze Star Medal at the same ceremony. Unfortunately **Tec 5 Balantyne and Pfc Balarzs** who were to have been present and receive the Bronze Star Medal were unable to attend the ceremony.

Jan 29-31: Battalion rested, regrouped and refitted. All men were reld from DS with the 424th Med Det.

During the month "D" Company gave 3835 Treatments, had 1145 Admissions, of which 584 were BC [battle casualties] and 561 NBC [non-battle casualties].

Plans were drawn up for reconstituting "B" Company.

Above courtesy of
Henri REGISTER
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BELGIUM
Website: <http://users.skynet.be/bulgecriba>

HEADQUARTERS, 331st MEDICAL BATTALION
A.P.O. #443, U.S. Army

24 March 1945

HISTORY

12 December-31 December 1944

12 Dec 44: The 106th Infantry Division relieved the 2nd Infantry Division at 0001 covering a 27 mile front in the SCHNEE EIFEL. Task Force "X" was attached to the Division and was in position on the left flank. On the left flank of the Division was the 99th Infantry Division, and on the right flank was the 28th Infantry Division. The Division placed all three regiments on the line as well as Task Force "X", from North to South being disposed as follows: Task Force "X", 233d [422d] Infantry Regiment, 423d Infantry Regiment, and 424th Infantry Regiment. The 2d Battalion of the 423d Infantry Regiment was placed in Division Reserve. All regiments were dug in with patrol action being light when the Division replaced the 2d Infantry Division.

The Medical Battalion opened its Battalion Headquarters and Clearing Station in St. Vith, Belgium. The Collecting Companies were disposed as follows: Company "A" at ANDLER, BELGIUM; Company "B" at BUCHET, GERMANY; Collecting Company "C" at STEINBRUCK [STEINBRÜCK], GERMANY.

In addition to the three collecting companies, aid stations consisting of collecting company technicians with an AMBULANCE LOADING POST and one ambulance were established by Company "A" at MANDERFELD, BELGIUM for the **14th Cavalry Group** of Task Force "X", and at WINTERSCHIED, GERMANY by Company "B" for the **18th Cavalry Group**.

Attached to the **106th Infantry Division** were the **14th and 18th Cavalry Squadrons of the 32d Cavalry Group, the 634th AAA Battalion, the 820th TD Battalion, the 740th Field Artillery Battalion and the 275th Armored Field Artillery Battalion.**

The **581st Medical Collecting Company** provided army evacuation for the Clearing Station to the **67th Evacuation Hospital and the 44th Evacuation Hospital, the 4th Convalescent Hospital, and the 618th Clearing Station.** The Third Hospital Unit of the 42d Field Hospital was at Saint Vith, Belgium for the handling of Non-transportable cases.

13-15 Dec 44: Activity was light in our sector and casualties were light also. On 15 December, a prisoner of war processed through medical channels, was taken to "A" Collecting Company for treatment, and gave the information that a German offensive was to begin on the 17 December. This information was relayed to the Battalion S-2, and relayed to the Division.

On this date 151 cases were treated at the Clearing Station, of which a considerable number were trench foot cases. Most of these men had been on duty outside, exposed to extreme damp and cold weather for long periods of time.

16 Dec 44: The enemy opened its battle of the Ardennes Bulge with a tremendous artillery barrage at dawn. Heavy artillery landed in the vicinity of St. Vith, and medium and light artillery fell in the region of the three Battalion collecting Companies. In the Task Force "X" and **422d Infantry Regiment** sector the enemy poured tanks and panzer units from the north and West in a push to take, SCHONBERG [SCHÖNBERG], a vital road junction on the road to St. Vith.

In the **423d Infantry Regiment** sector, the enemy which had patrols stationed in the vicinity of BRANDSCHEID, sent Tiger tanks and panzer units toward SCHONBERG [SCHÖNBERG], evidently using the BLEIALF-SCHONBERG [SCHÖNBERG] road, commonly called [by] the Division Troops "Sky-Line Drive".

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In the **424th Regiment** sector the enemy pushed up through HABSCHEID toward WINTERSPELT to gain control of the highway from WINTERSPELT TO ST. VITH.

The main objective of the German drive was the town of ST. VITH, a vital communications cog in the motorized warfare which was being employed by the Germans with their tanks and panzer units.

The first town to fall to the Germans was AUW, GERMANY, a small community situated on a hill overlooking the road to SCHONBERG [SCHÖNBERG]. In the southern sector of the Division front, HABSCHEID and HECKHUSCHEID fell. In an effort to stem the Nazi push, the Division committed its reserve, the **Second Battalion of the 423d Infantry Regiment**, which moved from BORN to the 422d in the fight for SCHONBERG [SCHÖNBERG]. The **424th Regiment** committed its reserve, the First Battalion which was located at STEINBRUCK [STEINBRÜCK] in the hope of stopping the enemy in the WINTERSPELT

Collecting Company "A", located at ANDLER fell back to HEUEM, BELGIUM when the Germans captured AUW, and continued to provide medical support for its combat team and Task Force "X" until the enemy surrounded the **422th Combat Team**. The ambulance assigned to the 1st Battalion, **422th Infantry**, having carried casualties to the Collecting Station during the night, was prevented from returning to the Battalion Aid Station by an enemy patrol which had infiltrated through the night cutting the road.

Pfc Andrew Gollin and Pvt Thomas Fox were driving an ambulance carrying casualties from the 2d Battalion Aid Station, when stopped and taken prisoner by the same patrol that prevented the other ambulance from returning to the 1st Battalion Aid Station. This was one half miles east of AUW, GERMANY. **Gollin and Fox** were later released after the Germans had loaded several other casualties in their ambulance.

Collecting Company "B" remained with the **423th Combat Team** and was out off with the regiment in the

vicinity of BUCHET.

Collecting Company "C" remained at its position at STEINBRUCK [STEINBRÜCK], but was mobile and was prepared to move to a site northward at BREITFELD.

The last word the Battalion heard from Company "B" was a message signed for **Sergeant Murphy**. It read:

"Casualties being received from Anti-tank and Service Companies. Enemy using 88's, mortars and small arms. Casualties show a slight increase over previous days. Situation remaining the same as reported on previous messages."

NOTE: See attached sketch for disposition of troops on this date, and attached German order for the attack.

17 Dec 44: The attack continued, with the Germans exerting pressure on the left and right flanks. The **422d and 423d Combat Teams** were completely surrounded and remained as islands of resistance. "A" Company was unable to reestablish communications with CT 422 despite repeated efforts. "B" Company was cut off with its Combat Team. Evacuation from the **422d Combat Team and the 423d Combat Team** was to "B" Company, which was last seen still operating at the site it occupied the previous day. Elements of the **9th and 7th Armored Divisions** were moving East to smash the German attack.

The mission of the **106th Infantry Division** was to defend in place until the Armored Divisions set up defenses. "C" Company withdrew to BREITFELD, BELGIUM. The Clearing Station displaced to VIELSALM on DIVISION order, and at 1430 set up a station at a Catholic Boarding School. The First platoon of the Clearing Company departed from St. Vith at 1630, but due to heavy traffic on the ST VITH-VIELSALM road, they did not arrive at VIELSALM until 180615. On this date, "D" Company processed 130 cases of which 64 were battle casualties. The 66 non battle casualties were made up of foot cases, nasopharyngitis infections, and exhaustion. The Army evacuation was still functioning, but Battalion Headquarters supplemented it with ambulances from "B" Company

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The 3d Hospital Unit of the **42d Field Hospital** moved their personnel into VIELSALM with the Clearing Station, but due to lack of transportation, was forced to leave behind all equipment. This left the Division Medical Service in a serious plight, for the non-transportable cases, normally treated by a Field Hospital, were now to be treated at the Clearing Station which does not carry the special equipment necessary for this type of case.

"A" Company moved into St. Vith at 1600, and established a collecting station at the site vacated by "D" Company. An aid station was established one mile East of ST VITH to service the **81st and 168th Engineer Battalions** which took up a defensive position on a ridge 1½ miles East of ST VITH. At this time "A" Company provided aid men, litter bearers, and operated an aid station exactly like a Battalion Medical Section. The organic medical personnel of the Engineers were insufficient to handle the numerous casualties being sustained. **BALANTYNE, BUCKLEY, BALARZS and PAWASARAT** of "A" Company distinguished themselves here by gallantry in action and were awarded the Bronze Star Medal.

"B" Company was still not heard from. Ambulances repeatedly tried to make contact again, but were prevented from doing so by enemy action.

"C" Company was under artillery fire through the night of 16-17 December. At 0200, only a small force was left between "C" Company and the enemy. At STEINBRUCK [STEINBRÜCK], the only bridge over which retreat was possible, was under shell fire, and so **Capt Blanchard** ordered the company to move back under blackout conditions to the vicinity of BREITFELD, BELGIUM. At the time of the move, 6 ambulances were being employed in the support of Battalion Aid Stations, and in transportation of casualties. By the time the new Station opened at BREITFELD, a battle was in progress at the bridge at STEINBRUCK [STEINBRÜCK].

Ambulance evacuation of the 2d and 3d Battalion Aid stations and the Regimental Aid Stations was over roads under artillery fire, and direct observation by the enemy. Later in the day, with **Combat Team 424** falling back to the South, "C" Company was out of the 424th Combat Team Sector, and so moved back to ST. VITH into the building vacated by the Clearing Station at the Town Hall, and set up a Collecting Station.

Evacuation to the Clearing Station at VIELSALM was via Highway N-28. During the entire day, liaison was maintained by "C" Company with all units of Combat Team 424 and operated well. In addition, C Company was ordered to establish an aid station at the Division Command Post in St. Vith to service the elements in that vicinity.

The enemy continued his fierce attacks, exploiting the SCHONBERG [SCHÖNBERG] and WINTERSPELT thrusts in the direction of ST VITH. ST. VITH was attacked from the East, Northeast and Southeast. These attacks were all stopped about two miles from the town. During the day, Combat Command "B" of the 9th Armored Division and Combat Team 424 fell back on order to the line of the AUR RIVER, and held there till the close of the period. Elements of the First Panzer Division, however, had pushed through the 7th Armored Division sector North of ST VITH and advanced West of ST VITH to POTEAUX but were pushed back, until at the end of the period, our forces were advancing on RECHT. Units in contact with the Division were from north to South:

1st PANZER DIVISION
18th VOLKSGRENADIER DIVISION
62d VOLKSGRENADIER DIVISION
and elements of the 116 PANZER DIVISION.

18 Dec 44: The full significance of the German drive was still not understood. The Medical Battalion was ordered to reconnoiter for Clearing Station sites in the rear at BARACQUE de FRAITURE, SAMREE, LaROCHE, and HOUFFALIZE. The enemy assaulted ST VITH, employing the major portion of the 164th Regiment of the 62d VG Division reinforced with armor. Combat Command "B" of the 9th Armored Division, was hit on the flanks and

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within their lines by small groups, and frontally by an estimated 2 battalions of Infantry supported by tanks. Combat Team 112 of the **28th Infantry Division**, on the South flank withdrew under enemy pressure. During the day, HOUFFALIZE was entered by enemy elements which were repulsed later.

At 0430, the 1st platoon of the Clearing Company arrived at VIELSALM, but knowing the road conditions from ST VITH to VIELSALM, a new route of evacuation was necessary. At 0600 Captain LaManche, Battalion S-2, volunteered to take four ambulances back to ST VITH over a new Southern route if it was usable. It was, luckily, and became the evacuation route out of ST VITH. Before **Captain LaManche** arrived at St. Vith, "C"

Company ambulances were fired upon by hostile machine guns West of ST VITH on Highway N-28, and were finally forced to abandon the use of the road. One ambulance did get through, with bullet holes in the ambulance. Route N-28 was under small arms, machine gun and mortar fire at this time.

At the end of a heavy artillery and mortar barrage in ST. VITH, a convoy of ambulances was formed, and was directed to VIELSALM via the new Southern route through BEHO. This relieved the congestion of patients at ST VITH.

Company "A" continued to operate at ST VITH until ordered to withdraw at 1900, at which time the company withdrew to VIELSALM. This company provided excellent medical support and ambulance reinforcement at ST VITH. When ordered to withdraw to VIELSALM, Company "A" immediately made available technicians, litter bearers, and medical officers to assist the 2d Platoon of "D" Company.

Company "B" was still missing in action.

Company "C" moved back to BEHO when Combat Team 424 fell back to the vicinity of BRACHT, BERG REULAND, and LASCHIED in order to be in a better position to service them. Here at BEHO, 5 ambulances were attached from Company "A" to assist in the evacuation of casualties. At this time, two litter squads which had been requested by the Surgeon of the **424th Infantry Regiment** were released to "C" Company.

Company "D" worked hard and well at VIELSALM. The First platoon which finally arrived at VIELSALM after 12 hours on the road from ST VITH never realized how close they came to being ambushed on the road, because it was not many hours later that the ST VITH-VIELSALM highway was cut by elements of the **1st SS Panzer Division**. At noon, again, the First Platoon was directed out of VIELSALM to LaROCHE – a place of supposed safety, far from the enemy. There the clearing company was ordered to establish a holding station for such minor casualties as trench foot and upper respiratory infections, which could be returned to duty quickly.

Had it been known what the extent of the enemy attack was, the Clearing Station First Platoon would not have been at LaROCHE. And no reconnaissance would have been made at HOUFFALIZE. At any rate, all personal and equipment not needed at VIELSALM was sent to LaROCHE, and then all transportation (except a 1½ ton kitchen truck) was returned to VIELSALM in order to expedite a move if one became necessary for the platoon in operation at VIELSALM.

Casualties arrived in large numbers at VIELSALM, many of them very badly hurt. These casualties were from many different units; **7th Armored, Ninth Armored Division, 168th Engineers, numerous artillery units, and from Combat Team 112 of the 28th Infantry Division and from our own Division**. The horrible effect at Armored Piercing projectiles on Tankmen was evident from the injuries sustained by the tankers. Traumatic amputations were numerous, and a few were multiple. Deep shock, hemorrhage, sucking wounds, were frequent. And with everybody concentrating on the job at hand casualties still continued to pile up. Ambulance evacuation to the rear was augmented by attachment of another ambulance platoon, but this, too was not enough. The evacuation

Hospitals were far back, the roads uncertain, ambulances going out of the station with patients never returned, and supplies were running low. Large amounts of plasma were needed, morphine, penicillin,

etc. Much ingenuity was displayed. For example, when patients in deep shock, with collapsed veins into which it was impossible to pour plasma, needed quick infusion, the Femoral Vein was used.

The process was quick, easy, but required skill in technique. Whole blood was needed, and none was available. And so from the men in the station who were less seriously injured, and from some of this medical soldiers, many volunteered to give blood for the badly hurt patients. It was collected in improvised containers, and used to great advantage in cases of deep shock and hemorrhage.

On this date, 175 casualties were evacuated, there were two deaths, both chest wounds with additional wounds of the extremities.

19 Dec 44: The tactical situation of this date in our sector did not change markedly, although the enemy pressure was maintained. All medical installations remained in their previous locations. Only 92 cases were evacuated to the rear out of the Clearing Station. Plans for withdrawal were made, and even a little optimism appeared for G-3 announced that the First Infantry and Tenth Armored Divisions were on their way to help us out.

ST VITH was still held by the Engineers. **Combat Team 112 of the 28th Infantry Division** was attached to the **106th Infantry Division**, and the Medical Collecting Company of this Combat Team, "C" Company of the 103d Medical Battalion, was attached to the 331st Medical Battalion, and incorporated into the Medical Service of the unit.

Captain Grosh, Commander of the Clearing Company, with key technicians returned from LaROCHE to be with the active station. 52 casualties were present at the station at LaROCHE. Plans were made to send patients directly to LaROCHE from the station at VIELSALM in order to keep the Second Platoon mobile.

The Battalion S-4 left for LaRoche early in the morning because gsa, rations, and medical supplies were urgently needed. Supplies at LaROCHE were hauled back to VIELSALM where they were more urgently needed. Mr. ECKWERTH, the Battalion Medical Supply Officer left with a truck to get supplies at LIEGE. About 1700, arrangements were made with the Seventh Armored Division Quartermaster to draw gas and rations, and at 2300 the convoy arrived at VIELSALM with 1200 rations and 1000 gallons of gasoline. The **106th Division Quartermaster** had also provided 400 blankets by drawing one from each man in the Rear Echelon of Division Headquarters, and also 500 rations. So the problem of supply was settled for the time being.

Ambulances sent to the **107th Evacuation Hospital** with patients never returned from LIBIN, and no accurate records could be kept as to just where these patients finally arrived. This also added to our supply problem because we lost blankets, litters, splints, etc.

20 Dec 44: G-3 reports that the Germans were sending patrols north toward the highway between LaROCHE and BARAQUE [DE] FRAITURE. Enemy plans an obvious pincers attack on LaROCHE. The Medical Battalion sent Lt. Wanderman, The S-1 to LaROCHE to alert the station for a move. Just West of BARAQUE Fraiture, he was fired upon, and wounded, but was able to escape the ambush. Upon his return, he told the story of the German road block, and now the situation looked critical, our ambulance evacuation to the rear being cut. New routes had to be found. More ambulances and supplies were needed. Patients were piling into the station from the various units then engaged around ST VITH and VIELSALM. "C" Company reported that artillery was falling around the 424th Infantry Regimental Aid Station.

The Division ordered that the ground would be held in the event that pincers move

developed to envelop LaROCHE.

Reconnaissance showed that evacuation to LIEGE was practicable, using the road through JOUBIEVAL and WERBOMONT, and ambulances were routed that way but never returned.

Lt. Col. Boland, Commanding the **77th Medical Battalion of the Seventh Armored Division** discussed evacuation with **Lt. Col. Neigus, Commanding the 331st Medical Battalion**. Due to the fact that our station contained many patients from the Seventh Armored Division it was requested that we be given as much assistance as possible particularly plasma, penicillin, dressings, adhesive plaster, tetanus toxoid, morphine, blankets, and litters. **Lt. Colonel Boland** informed us that all but combat troops were being evacuated from LaRoche. No word had come in from the platoon stationed there.

"A" Company was still busily engaged reinforcing the Second Platoon of "D" Company at VIELSALM, and assisting "C" Company in evacuation. In addition "A" Company assisted with evacuation to the rear of the Clearing Station,

"C" Company remained at its site at BEHO, servicing Combat Team 424, and assisted in the evacuation of Combat Command "C" of the 7th Armored Division which had a Collecting Station at BEHO. Combat Command "B" of the Ninth Armored Division had a Collection-Clearing Station at BEHO, but due to a shortage of Army Ambulances, brought patients to our "C" Company which set up an Ambulance Control Point at BEHO. Companies "A" and "C" each sent 5 ambulances to this control point.

Orders were issued for "C" Company to pull back to SALMCHATEAU when the Combat Team moved back.

"D" Company treated 188 cases this date, and evacuated to the rear 88 cases of which 64 were taken at night by the Battalion Adjutant in 2 ½ ton trucks obtained from the Division Quartermaster. These 64 patients went in 4 trucks in convoy over unfamiliar roads, but they all arrived safely after a long tiring rough trip to LIEGE.

By 1600 the need for supplies was pressing, and so Captain Rinck, the Battalion S-4 and **Technical Sergeant Weiss, Battalion Supply Sergeant** left with 6 ambulances and 2 ½ ton trucks loaded with patients for LIEGE via the only road left open. The patients were unloaded at 1930 at the **56th General Hospital**. Medical Supplies consisting of whole blood, plasma, blankets, litters, bandages, and blood transfusion apparatus were obtained from the **409th Medical Depot**. The convoy left LIEGE at 2330, and arrived at VIELSALM at 0430 on the 21st. A second convoy left later, as described above, under command of **Lt. Wanderman**.

The First Platoon of D Company at LaROCHE had an exciting experience. With the town under shellfire, and with only a 1 ½ ton truck for transportation, and with large quantities of supplies, both from Battalion Headquarters and "D" Company, the **Platoon Leader, Captain Lewis**, was in a difficult position. He obtained trucks from the 7th Armored Division, and loading personnel and organizational equipment, he had to leave behind much valuable equipment, including both organizational and personal. In the meantime he had evacuated all his patients to LIEGE by requisitioning the 2½ ton truck which **Mr. Eckwerth** brought in loaded with supplies. Mr. Eckwerth knew he could not get back by the LaROCHE-VIELSALM highway, and could not get any information on any other route available.

While loading the station to leave LaROCHE, an artillery shell fall in the courtyard, and killed **Technician 5th Grade Quinlan** who had volunteered to load up the kitchen under fire. Also killed was **Technician 5th**

Grade Lawlor, Chaplain Day's assistant. In the operating room where the surgeons were working on patients, **Sergeant Buriak** was seriously wounded by a shell fragment. The patient was knocked to the floor from the operating table, but he was put back upon the table and took more treatment. This

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First Platoon furnished volunteers in response to a request from the Surgeon of the Seventh Armored Division. These men went out on the Samree-Vielsalm Road, and treated wounded under direct fire, evacuating them to the Station at LaROCHE. The only medical installations at LaROCHE were a rest center operated by the 7th Armored Division, and our Clearing Station. The former installation was busily engaged in getting ready to move, and so our station was the only one in active operation. When our station did finally move, **Capt. Lewis**, the platoon leader, with **Mr. Eckwerth** and several enlisted men volunteered to remain behind and operate a station. At 1700 the whole platoon finally left LaRoche, happy to leave, but saddened by the thought that one of their old friends had been killed and another wounded.

Hope for relief was when it became known that the **82d Airborne, Third Armored and 101st Airborne Divisions** were moving into the sector.

21 Dec 44: The position of the Division was still the same, with no change in the position of the medical installations. The **82d Airborne Division** moved into position North and West of VIELSALM.

Units in contact with the **106th Infantry Division** were the 62d and 560 VG Divisions and the 116 Panzer Division. ST VITH was still under heavy attack with fighting in the streets by 2100.

Elements of the 589th Field Artillery Battalion under Major Parker made a gallant and determined stand at BARAQUE [DE] FRAITURE cross roads.

On this date "D" Company cleared 96 patients.

22 Dec 44: The Division's mission was to make a perimeter defense from Recht to St. Vith to Beho to Vielsalm and keep the road leading North from Vielsalm open for evacuation. Company "C" was to locate in the center of this area and "D" Company was to reconnoiter a new area for Clearing Northwest of Vielsalm.

In the afternoon, the Clearing Station moved from Vielsalm to Werbomont, and "C" Company moved into Vielsalm Building. The Clearing Station set up in tents for the first time in the ETO, with the weather very cold, but clearing. The move was completed by 2130. Practically all patients were now evacuated.

St. Vith fell to the Germans at 1300, and our troops fell back to Vielsalm.

23 Dec 44: On this date the entire Division moved back to an area Northwest of Werbomont and the entire Battalion assembled in the fields in the vicinity of Werbomont. The 1st Platoon of B Company arrived, and now the Battalion was together again, except for "B" Company which was missing in action.

24 Dec 44: CT 424 and CT 112 were attached to the 7th Armored Division and placed in Corps reserve. The remainder of the Division was ordered to assemble in the vicinity of Louveigne. Headquarters and D Company moved to Banneux, Companies A and C to vicinity Florze, and Co C, 112th Med Bn, the vicinity Remouchamps.

"D" Company transferred 117 cases today.

The Battalion was treated to a beautiful sight today when hundreds of heavy bombers were seen flying toward the German lines. It was the first clear day since the 15th, and the American Air Force displayed its might.

On the night before Christmas Chaplain Fleming and Day held services which were attended by all for the first time in a long while. "D" Company and Hq Det at Banneux heard the sweet voices of little children lifted in song, and the men sang Silent Night with deep feeling.

25 Dec 44: While the rest of the Battalion rested, C Company moved to the vicinity FAWEUX, to support CT 424, which was committed in the vicinity of HARRE. That evening CT 424 attacked and took Manhay, the first town retaken from the Germans in the present offensive.

26-28 Dec 44: The units maintained their position until 28 Dec 44 when Division was ordered to move to a bivouac area in the vicinity of Anthisnis.

D Company and Battalion Headquarters moved to Esneux, Belgium.

A Company moved to Hody into comfortable billets.

29 Dec 44: The Medical Battalion rested and regrouped. C Company and 424 CT pulled back with the remainder of the Division.

30-31 Dec 44: Medical Battalion continued to rest and regroup.

BATTLE HISTORY COMPANY "A" 331ST MEDICAL BATTALION [January 1945]

1 January 1945

After a sober opening of the New Year, the company settled down to serious thoughts of helping to win this war. As the year began the company was established in a resting area at Hody, Belgium. The strength of the company at this time consisted of 3 Medical Officers, 2 Medical Administrative Officers and 87 enlisted men. Several of the enlisted men celebrated the day with promotions. **Pvt. Harold E. Bryant** was elevated to the grade of Technician fifth grade while the following men became Privates first-class.

Balarzs, Ernest
Fox, Thomas J.
Giandonato, Alfred J.
Jednzeyowski, Leo
Myers, Robert
Smith, Harold D.
Tulio, Genaro J.
Walters, Wilbert H.

All day preparations were made to attack the huge and delicious turkey dinner provided by our quartermaster. The attack started late in the afternoon and the object taken in short order with no casualties.

2-9 January 1945

During this period the company remained at Hody, Belgium, resting, polishing up the equipment and re-equipping the unit. Station material that had been given to other units in particular was received. Entertainment in the form of stage shows and movies were provided at the rear echelon. All were greatly enjoyed. Tuning the ears to the various sounds of the V 1 bomb (Buzz Bomb) keep many of the company busy and awake at night. The distance they were away from our area could be distinguished and with careful observation it was discovered that they came from three different directions. The feeling that they originated from Von Rundtedts bulge was later confirmed. As the bulge was reduced the number of buzz bombs fell off.

Although many cut out near by none fell close to Hody, but the buildings were shaken. On 6 January **Pvt. Luman F. Woodfin** was assigned to the company. His older brother Lyman is a member of the company. On 8 January sixteen men of the company were placed on detached service with the Medical Detachment of the **424th Infantry**. They were **Technician fifth grade Ballantyne, Grasberger, Guelcher; Privates First class Balarzs, Giandonato, Descb, Waltrip, West, Smith; Privates Hutchison, Judge, Lubovich, Maycroft, Vassallo, Mandel, and Naliwka.**

On 9 January **S/Sgt. Carl D. Peak** left the company for a deserved furlough to the States. He was placed on temporary duty with the 92nd Replacement Bn, 3rd Replacement Depot. On the 9th the company was assigned a mission of setting up a holding station to relieve the clearing company of much load. An area South West of Spa was reconnoitered for the station. This same day an ambulance was placed on detached service with the **592nd Field Artillery**.

10 January 1945

The company moved from Hody, Belgium at 1000 to Fange Maron in the vicinity of Spa, Belgium and established a holding station for the Division. Late this day 29 non-battle casualties were received from the clearing company.

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Here it was learned that the **424th** had been assigned a mission on the line near Trois Point (Trois Ponts). **Technician fifth grade Oscar F. Pawasarat** was promoted to Technician fourth grade while **Pfc. Richard W. LeLong** was promoted to Technician fifth grade.

11 January 1945

As Fange Maron was located in an area assigned to another Division it was found necessary to move. The 29 patients were returned to the Clearing Station. It was located at Niveze, Belgium which is just East of Spa. A move to Fr. Berinzinne [Berinsenne], South of Spa was made by motor convoy. A station was established but no casualties were received.

12 January 1945

At Fr. Berinzenne [Berinsenne] awaiting orders. The company was notified of an impending offensive toward St. Vith. The 517th Para-regiment was attached to the Division. The area North of Stavelot was reconnoitered

for possible Collecting Station site and routes of evacuation to support the 517th. It was later learned that the 517th had a plan of evacuation not necessitating the use of a collecting company. Instead plans were reestablished to have the company function as a holding station. No casualties were received.

13 January 1945

The company moved to Nivize, Belgium and occupied the buildings vacated by the Clearing Station which had moved to Sanat de Borgoumont. A holding station was established immediately with 47 patients. The type of cases received were foot cases, upper respiratory diseases, and exhaustion cases. An ambulance shuttle was set up at Francochamps [Francorchamps] by Lt. Jennings. This was to give additional support to the **517th Regimental Aid Station**. Their run to the Clearing Station was rather lengthy. Two ambulance were attached to C Co. It was reported that **Pfc. Desch** received a Purple Heart while on detached service with the 424th. He was struck by a shell fragment on the right thigh. The wound was not serious enough for evacuation. 18th Corps artillery could be heard throughout the entire night.

14-15 January 1945

Still functioning as a holding station. 58 patients were treated on the 14th and 75 on the 15th. Artillery fire still very prominent. On the 15th **Privates Adinolfi, Bischoff, Casalino, Caswell, Hutchison, Jackson, Maycroft, Warren, and Judge were promoted to the grade of Pfc** A movie "Lost in a Harem" was shown to the patients and men of the company on the 15th. That evening **Technician fourth grade McNaulty** of the special service department entertained the complement and patients with a 9 piece orchestra.

16 January 1945

72 patients were treated on this day. **Capt. Craig** was relieved of assignment and duty and assigned to the **591st Field Artillery**. **Lt. Jennings** with 2 Medical Technicians and 2 ambulances moved to Stavelot and established an ambulance relay point in support of the **517th Regiment**. They had advanced to the South and East. The regimental aid station was now set up in Henimont. They transported casualties to the Clearing Station at the Sanatorium.

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17 January 1945

82 patients were treated. A buzz bomb fell 1000 yards from the station. 8 civilians and one soldier were administered aid for minor cuts received from flying glass. Windows in the building occupied by the station were broken by [but] no casualties here. **Lt. Robson** assigned and joined company.

18 January 1945

81 patients in holding station. The **424th** and the 517th having achieved their objective, the **424th** went into reserve while the 517th was attached to the 30th Division which was on the **106th Division's** left. **Lt. Jennings** relay point was discontinued. The ambulance with the **592nd Field Artillery** returned.

19 January 1945

75 patients treated. P-X supplies were received and distributed.

20 January 1945

62 patients in station. **Technician fifth grade Heillman** and a 15 piece band entertained the patients and men of the company with magic and music. **Lt. Shryock** took the drummer's position for several numbers and was well received.

21 January 1945

57 patients in station.

22 January 1945

75 patients in station.

23 January 1945

61 patients being treated. A three piece musical group entertained the patients.

24 January 1945

80 patients in station. Clearing Station moving to Chau du Grand Chene near Esneux. All units of the Division other than the **424th Infantry Regiment** and the 2 Field Artillery Battalion were not needed to further reduce Von Runstedt's (sic) bulge. Several men of the company sent to Hody to hold the buildings in the town for the company.

25 January 1945

All patients in station not able to be returned to duty were transferred to the Clearing Station now in rest area. **Sgt. Hulsey and Pfc Adinolfi** leave for a 3 day pass in Paris. **Pfc. Harold B. Smith** on detached service with the **424th Inf** was killed in action. At the time he was acting as an aid man with L Company. His actions before his demise were exemplary so much that recommendation for the Silver Star will be made. He braved intense small arm fire to give aid to a Doughboy. On returning for a litter he was deliberately shot in the back by a German sniper who now is extremely sorry that he performed such an act.

26 January 1945

The company moves to rest area at Hody, Belgium.

27-31 January 1945

In rest area at Hody. The men take time to clean up and care for their equipment. Company equipment is repaired and restored to functioning conditions. On the 28th the entire company went by convoy to the Clearing Station where they witnessed **Sgt. Reinhardt of C Company receive a battle field commission**. General Perrin also presented **Technician fourth grade Pawasarat and Pfc. Buckley** with the Bronze Star Award. **Technician fifth grade Ballantyne and Pfc. Balarz** were unable to receive the Bronze Star Award at this presentation as they were still on detached service with the 424th. On the 29th the 424th was relieved from the line. All men on detached service with this unit were returned. Inspection of clothing and equipment was made.

Requisitions were submitted. P-X supplies were received and issued. **Adinolfi and Hulsey** returned from Paris after 3 exciting days of sight seeing. On the 31st some clothing and equipment was received and issued to the men. **Lt. Shyroch** left for a 3 day pass in Paris. **Lt. Jennings** transferred to Division Surgeon's office the 27th but refused position vacated by **Capt. Klett** who was left in England at a General Hospital. **Lt. Jennings** to stay with company. **Lt. Rhinehardt** MAC attached unassigned to company.

Technician third grade Castaldo transferred to B Company but remains with company on detached service. **Pfc. Wilbert H. Walters** promoted to the grade of Technician fifth grade. The month ended with 3 Medical Officers, 2 MAC Officers, and 81 enlisted men in the company. In the minds of all was the offensive that the Russians were waging. We are wondering how this marvelous offensive will effect the outcome of the war. Interesting discussions have been started over this offensive.

Signed
ROBERT C. MITTERLING
Capt. MC
Commanding

COMPANY 'D' 331ST MEDICAL BATTALION
APO #443, U. S. Army

UNIT HISTORY
(10 Dec - 31 Dec 1944)

On the morning of 10 December 1944, at 0900 hours, Co. 'D' 331st Med Bn (Clearing Company for the 106th Inf Div) moved from its bivouac area in the vicinity of St. Vith, via motor convoy, into the town of St. Vith. At this time the actual strength of the Company was as follows: 10 MC Off, 2 DC Off, and 1 MAC; making a total of 13 Off, of which 9 were Captains (1 atchd unasgd) and 4 1st Lieutenants; the enlisted personnel was composed of 97 EM. **Captain Joseph W. Grosh**, M. C. was Commanding Officer and **John J. Buck** was 1st Sgt.

The Company occupied the buildings, with the troops of the 2nd Division which were operating a Clearing Station there, at that time. For two days the Company afforded themselves the opportunity of observing the 2nd Div. Clr Sta in operation, learning a great deal from their combat experiences, and exchanging ideas with them. At 0001 hours, 12 December 1944 the **106th Clearing Station** was opened to receive casualties in the same buildings, #5 Aachen Strasse, St. Vith, Belgium, now vacated by the 2nd Division. The tactical positions, and administrative and technical set-up of troops of the **106th Inf Div** were practically identical with those formerly used by the 2nd Division.

During our first day of operation we treated 78 cases, transferred 13 cases and returned to duty 4 cases from all units served. There were four Battle Casualties admitted during this first day. The first of whom was **Pvt Koukol, John L.**, ASN xxxxxxxx, of Co 'B', 422 Inf Regt with the following diagnosis, BC WIA Shell Wound (High Explosive) Pert W, leg, left, middle third, S, Shell Fragment. Two of the four Battle Casualties were classified as seriously wounded, and two slightly wounded. The remainder of cases admitted on this date included, Cold and moisture, reaction to, feet, bilateral, S, Nasopharyngitis, Furuncles and Gastroenteritis.

On the 13 December 1944 we treated 110 cases, transferred 15 cases; and returned to duty 6 cases. Eleven of these were Battle Casualties and the remainder included cases diagnosed as Trench Foot, Nasopharyngitis, Gastro-enteritis, etc.

On the 14 December 1944 we treated 141 cases, transferred 16 cases, and returned 10 cases to duty. Six of

the 141 cases were Battle Casualties and diagnoses of the remaining included, Pneumonia, Trench Foot, Gastritis, Sprains, Bronchitis, etc.

On the 15 December 1944 we treated 151 cases, transferred 33 cases and returned 22 cases to duty. Again there were a considerable number of cases of Trench Foot (Cold and moisture, reaction to, feet) admitted. A majority of these men were not wearing Galoshes and had been on duty outside, exposed to extreme cold and damp weather for long periods of time.

A survey of the cases of Trench Foot (Cold and moist, reaction to ,ft,) revealed that the major incidence occurred in the **422nd Regt**. The men of this Regt were not issued galoshes until several days after moving into positions along the front lines. They had been required to stay in outpost positions for extended periods of time and facilities for keeping clean dry socks on their feet were inadequate.

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At about 0600 hours 16 December 1944 the 106th Inf Div was subjected to heavy enemy artillery fire which marked the beginning of a major enemy drive which had St. Vith as one of its main objectives. Units of our Division were bearing the brunt of the attack and as a result at about 0830 hours our station began to receive its first large group of battle casualties. Some of the first casualties brought in were Civilians from the vicinity of St. Vith. The majority of the wounds were inflicted by fragments of high explosive shells. The number of cases treated were 272, transferred 190 cases (most of which were Battle Casualties) and returned to duty 25 cases.

No contact could be made with **Collecting Company 'B' 331st Med Bn** on this day and they have not been heard from even at this time and are now listed as Missing In Action. The majority of our casualties were from the **424th Inf Regt** (70 BC and 16 NBC). We had 155 battle casualties of which 25 cases were considered serious. The type of wounds varied, chest and face the most serious and many of the legs and arms very severe. In all cases where necessary Penicillin and Plasma were liberally administered to prevent infection and shock. The use of which improved greatly the condition of most of the patients.

During the day the town of St.Vith was subjected to enemy artillery fire and a few of the shells landed 1000 to 2000 yards from the Clearing Station. Because of the rapid advance of the German Forces toward St. Vith a reconnaissance party was sent to the rear to find a new location for our Clearing station. A site was found at Vielsalm, Belgium.

A member of our organization **Pvt William J. Berry**, ASN xxxxxxxx, was evacuated 16 December 1944 to the 67th Evacuation Hospital with the following diagnosis Nasopharyngitis, acute, catarrhal, S, LOD. Our strength on this day was therefore 13 Officers and 96 enlisted personnel.

Our troops were forced back by the enemy and because of the unfavorable tactical situation on the morning of the 17 December 1944 it was decided to move the Clearing Station to Vielsalm, Belgium. The 2nd Clearing Platoon departed from St. Vith at 1130 hours 17 December 1944 and by infiltration via motor convoy arrived at Vielsalm, Belgium at 1345. The distance traveled was approximately 18 kms and the reason for the delay in arrival was that the 7th Armored Division was moving up to meet the German attack and had the road blocked at many places.

The new Station opened at 1430 hours in a building which was being used as a Catholic boarding school. The 1st Platoon departed from St. Vith by motor convoy at 1630 hours 17 December 1944 and arrived at Vielsalm

at 0615 hours 18 December 1944. The reason for the 14 hr trip was that the St. Vith - Vielsalm highway was jammed with 7th Armored vehicles moving up to St. Vith to engage the enemy.

At this time the general tactical situation was as follows: The 422nd and 423rd Inf Regts were reported to be cut-off in the vicinity of Schonberg [Schönberg], Belgium. The enemy's main effort was a twin pincers drive moving from Malmedy to Stavelot on the north and on the south from south of St. Vith to Bastogne. Both of these pincers were aimed at closing in on LaRoche and Houffalize. By 2400 hours 17 December 1944 the enemy's leading elements had reached Houffalize on the south and Stavelot on the north. A few patrols and paratroopers were reported east of Vielsalm attacking our rear lines of communication leading from Vielsalm to LaRoche, Belgium.

The number of cases treated this day 17 December 1944 was 130 cases, transferred 90 cases and returned to duty 27 cases. Of these cases 64 were battle casualties of which 10 were serious. The non-battle casualties were made up of feet cases, nasopharyngitis, cellulitis and exhaustion. The battle casualties were still varied with wounds of the legs and arms most prevalent, and a few of the face and buttocks.

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Due to the seriousness of the tactical situation and the proximity of the enemy it was necessary to make a reconnaissance to the rear to find a site for our Clearing Station in case movement was necessary. A place was found at LaRoche, Belgium and on 18th December 1944 the 1st Platoon departed from Vielsalm via motor convoy at 1200 hours. They arrived at LaRoche, Belgium (distance traveled 20 miles) at 1330 hours and established and opened a Clearing Station at 1400 hours. The 2nd Platoon remained at Vielsalm handling the more serious cases with the 1st Platoon acting as a holding station at LaRoche.

Casualties were very heavy in the vicinity of St. Vith and Vielsalm and the 2nd Platoon was exceptionally busy during their entire stay at Vielsalm. Enlisted men and Officers were so busy caring for patients that they forgot about the dangerous location they were in and were heedless of the artillery and small arms which was so very close. All personnel of the 2nd Platoon worked day and night. Collecting Company 'A', 331st Medical Battalion joined us at Vielsalm and the enlisted men rendered valuable service both as technicians and litter bearers.

Officers of 'A' Company worked in admission and surgery assisting our Officers in handling the heavy load of patients. The majority of patients received had been injured 24 to 48 hours previous to being brought to the Clearing station and because of the delay in treatment and exposure to extreme cold, many of them were suffering from deep shock. A large number of the seriously wounded cases were suffering from perforating wounds of the chest and many others with compound fractures. Several cases from Armored outfits had their legs blown-off and were in very deep shock on admission. During this period many of our worst casualties were from the 7th and 9th Armored Divisions.

We had lost contact with the **422nd and 423rd Inf. Regts** and hence they were evacuating no casualties to us. However, we received many casualties from the **424th Inf. Regt**. In many instances it was necessary to give at least four patients plasma at the same time. Many patients brought into the station were so deep in shock that no vein could be found for the administration of plasma. In these cases it became necessary to give plasma in the Femoral vein. This was the first time this procedure had been attempted by Medical Officers of this unit. No difficulty was encountered and patients responded to the treatment remarkably well. Two amputations were done in the station during this period of time.

As evacuation of patients being difficult and for a period of time stopped altogether (due to the tactical situation) it became necessary to give whole blood to some patients. As a whole, supplies were adequate but we were unable to obtain whole blood. A request for volunteer blood donors was made through-out the station. Within one hour 30 patients (cases of Trench Foot) had given their names as blood donors. The transfusions were successfully completed by the Medical Officers using makeshift equipment and good American ingenuity.

One day ran into another with no one paying much attention to the time of day but each day seeming busier than the preceding one. Medical Officers from Division Headquarters and from the 42nd Field Hospital who were stranded with us, helped in the work through-out the station; giving a considerable amount of valuable aid to our own overburdened Medical Officers. Along with the Medical Officers, Chaplain Fleming worked both night and day, giving invaluable assistance to Officers and technicians in the surgical treatment room, accomplishing his own work as well as helping in surgery work when he could.

The 22nd December 1944 found the tactical situation very hazardous. There was no contact between the 2nd Platoon at Vielsalm and the 1st Platoon at LaRoche, the road having been cut by the Germans between LaRoche and Houffalize, Belgium.

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The roads on three sides of Vielsalm had been blocked, thus leaving only one escape route. This was the road leading to the northwest, to Werbomont, Belgium, now held open by the 82nd Airborne Division. The enlisted personnel knew little of the true situation around Vielsalm which was probably a sizeable factor in their being able to carry out a large amount of their work without mental alarm.

A resume of casualties treated each day in Vielsalm is as follows:

18 December 1944 we treated 247 cases, transferred 175 cases and returned to duty 2 cases. 2 Cases died in the Station. They were: **Sgt John Jambrano**, ASN xxxxxxxx, Hq 14th Cavalry with the following diagnosis: BC WIA GSW Chest & FC lt arm, GSW rt arm & rt hand (Machine Gun), LOD Yes, death at 1600 hours and **Sgt Daniel M. Bickel**, ASN xxxxxxxx, Co K 424th Inf Regt with the following diagnosis: BC WIA Pen & sucking W rt chest, GSW rt Arm SV, LOD Yes death at 1530 hours.

19 December 1944 we treated 111 cases, transferred 92 cases and returned to duty 1 case. 2 Cases died in Station. They were: **Pvt Valentino Pizzingrillo**, ASN xxxxxxxx, MD 38th Inf Regt, with the following diagnosis: BC WIA Shell Wound Lac W FCC tibia & fibula LOD Yes and **Pvt Edward F. Wallis**, ASN xxxxxxxx, Co B 635 AAA, with the following diagnosis: BC WIA rt lag amputated, FC left leg, SV, Shell Fragment (High Explosive) LOD Yes.

20 December 1944 we treated 182 cases, transferred 88 cases and returned to duty 4 cases.

21 December 1944 we treated 295 cases, transferred 144 cases and returned to duty 22 cases.

22 December 1944 we treated 234 cases, transferred 96 cases and returned to duty 4 cases.

On the 22 December 1944 one section of the 2nd platoon departed from Vielsalm via motor convoy for Werbomont, Belgium at 1230 hours. They arrived at 1500 hours (distance of approximately 18 miles) and established and opened a Clearing Station to receive patients at 1600 hours. The remaining section of the 2nd Platoon continued to operate a Clearing Station at Vielsalm until 1900 hours, when it closed the station

and proceeded with remaining personnel and essential equipment to Werbomont via motor convoy. They arrived at 2250 hours. Artillery fire was continuous throughout most of the night, and enemy planes dropped flares and bombs within a few miles of the station shortly after midnight.

On the 23 December 1944 the Platoon reformed the station tentage. Erecting the six Ward Tents and one pyramidal tent so as to form the pattern of a cross. In the area surrounding our station were located, the **45th Field Hospital**, 1st Army Clearing Station some collecting stations and Company 'A' 331st Medical Battalion. The 1st platoon arrived at about 1700 hours after several hectic days of moving about, keeping just a little ahead of the German forces. This reunion was a happy occasion for all, concerned and the whole company was again intact with the exception of three men; one man killed in action another seriously wounded in action and one man evacuated with Nasopharyngitis.

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The following is a resume concerning the activities of the 1st Platoon at LaRoche, Belgium with a statement by **Captain Grosh**, M.C. and **Captain Elmer Lewis**, M. C. 1st Platoon Commander.

Statement of **Captain Joseph W. Grosh**, M.C. Commanding Officer, Co. D 331 Med BN:

On the afternoon of 18 December 1944 at about 1300 hours I received orders to move the 1st Clearing Platoon from Vielsalm to LaRoche. We proceeded at 1100 hours and arrived at LaRoche at 1500 hours. We set-up our Station in a Catholic school. The station opened at 1600 hours. About a half hour later we received our first casualties from the 2nd Platoon located at Vielsalm. These casualties were walking wounded, Cold and Moisture reaction to feet, etc., and Nasopharyngitis. They numbered approximately 40 cases. They were sent to us to relieve the overburdened 2nd Platoon which was receiving a large number of seriously injured casualties at Vielsalm. In addition to the above casualties we received battle casualties from other units in the vicinity of LaRoche.

I stayed with the first platoon until approximately 1400 hours 19 December 1944 when we were contacted by Battalion Hq and I was requested to return to Vielsalm. I turned the Command of the station over to **Captain Lewis**, Platoon leader of the 1st Platoon and proceeded to Vielsalm where I arrived at 1530 hours.

The following is an account of the action of the 1st Platoon from the time of my departure until the return of the 1st Platoon to Werbomont 23 December 1944.

STATEMENT of **Captain Elmer W. Lewis**, M. C. 1st Platoon Commander:

I assumed command of the 1st Platoon Clearing Station at LaRoche at 1500 hours when Captain Grosh left for Vielsalm.

At 1600 hours we received some casualties from the 45th Field Hospital at St. Vith. These were given hot drinks and one patient who had a tension Pneumo-Thorax. A Thoraco Centesis [thoracentesis] was performed with under water drainage and the patient was evacuated in an improved condition.

On the morning of the 20 December 1944 at approximately 0600 hours enemy shells began landing at irregular intervals in the vicinity of our Clearing Station.

At approximately 0900 hours an Officer was sent to the Hq of Colonel Adams, Tank Cmdr, of the 7th Armored Division to get information as to the tactical situation as we were out of contact with our own Hq and had no

other source of information. We were told there was no immediate danger, advised to sit-tight and if the situation changed we would be notified.

Col. Adams, also, told us that if it became necessary to evacuate he would send us three trucks from the 446th QM transport Troop of the 7th Armored Division. We had no vehicles with us with the exception of one 3/4 ton maintenance truck loaded with tools and equipment and gasoline. **CWO John A. Eckwerth** arrived at 0900 hours from Liege, Belgium with a 2 ½ ton truck completely loaded with medical supplies. We had no other transportation as all our trucks were with the 2nd Platoon at Vielsalm.

The shelling was less for an hour or so until about 1100 hours when after several near hits from High Explosive Shells (probably 88MM) it was decided to evacuate our patients. The 2 ½ ton truck from Liege, Belgium with medical supplies having been unloaded, 34 patients were evacuated in this truck. They were accompanied by **1st Lt. Monroe E. Neuman**, M. C. He was to take them to an Evacuation Hospital at Libin, Belgium but when he arrived there the hospital was unable to accept them and so he went to the 130th General Hospital. He then started back (the following morning 21st December 1944) and rejoined us enroute to Dinant, Belgium at about 1100 hours 21 December 1944.

The last word we had from Battalion Hq was about 0900 hours when **S/Sgt Kirk** (Co. D) arrived from Vielsalm. He had no orders except a request for a report on patients which we planned to send. We later learned that **1st Lt. Wanderman**, left Vielsalm about ½ to 1 hour after **S/Sgt. Kirk** but was unable to get through being fired upon and wounded enroute.

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At 1130 hours **Captain Lifchez** and **1st Lt. Boris Krynski** were sent in a weapons carrier to locate a new site for our station in the event it should be necessary to move which we did not intend to do at this time because of information received from the 7th Armored Division. Lt. Krynski and Captain Lifchez were under shell-fire in leaving LaRoche and after locating a site at Malreaux, Belgium about 5 miles distant. They were forced to return by another route due to enemy action and did not arrive back at our station until approximately 1545 hours at which time they reported that the road to Vielsalm was still closed.

At 1300 hours a request for an ambulance and aid for casualties was reported on the road between LaRoche and Vielsalm in the vicinity of Samree, Belgium. **Capt George M. Osborne**, M.C., and **Tec 4 Leland A. Dubois**, **Tec 4 William C. Essary Jr.**, **Tec 4 Paul M. Eaton**, **Pfc Edward E. Heimann**, **Pvt Domingo P. Perez** were sent. They reported to **Lt. Col. Karpinski** where they were under shell-fire as active combat was going on here with small arms fire, Mortar fire and Armored vehicles. Casualties were given aid and evacuated by ambulance. **Tec 4 Dubois** volunteered to remain behind and assist **Lt. Col. Karpinski** when he requested a man be left with him. The rest returned to our station.

At about 1315 hours we received a direct hit just in front of our station which was probably an 88MM High Explosive shell. Fragments struck and instantly killed **Tec 5 John I. Quinlan**, ASN xxxxxx, Co. D 331 Med Bn. The diagnosis made on this man was: BC KIA SW (HE) Pen occipital region left SV SF, LOD Yes death at 1315 hours. Also killed instantly was **Tec 5 Raymond Lawler** Hq Co 106th Inf Div with wounds of rt chest and rt. arm. These men were in front of the building at the time working on our kitchen equipment which we were getting ready to load.

About 1345 hours another shell burst just in front of our station. A fragment coming through the window wounded **T/Sgt Theodore Buriak**, Co. D 331 Med Bn. His right ilium was shattered and a laceration of the

lower right quadrant of the abdominal wall was present. His leg was splinted, hemorrhage controlled, morphine given and two units of Plasma and he was immediately evacuated to the 130th General Hospital. His condition was good although we were not sure whether he had a perforation of the bowel or not. We also evacuated **Sgt. Ralph H. Brown**, ASN xxxxxxxx, with Nasopharyngitis, cat., ac., to the same hospital.

At about 1415 hours we received word from the 42nd Field Hospital that they were leaving and they took two other battle casualties that we had received from the 7th Armored Division. It was decided to evacuate as much of our material as we could and most of our personnel leaving behind a skeleton crew of one Officer and 8 EM to give aid to any casualties we might receive. We got 3 2 ½ ton trucks from the 443 QM Transport Troop and loaded as much material on them as we could, giving priority to Personnel, essential medical equipment and valuable medical equipment such as Plasma. A large quantity having been brought that morning in the 2 ½ ton truck from Liege by **CWO Eckwerth** (most of which was intended for the station at Vielsalm). These were loaded and left with all personnel including 5 patients who were ready to return to duty, at about 1500 hours, leaving behind the skeleton crew mentioned above.

At about 1530 hours a liaison man was sent to **Col. Adams** Hq. and we were informed that casualties were being cared for at a Collecting Station about 3 miles out of LaRoche on the road to Malreaux and that we were serving no useful purpose in remaining and **Col. Adams** advised us to leave immediately. This we did and left LaRoche at about 1700 hours with **Capt. Lifchez** and **1st Lt. Krynski** and our 8 EM and two Army ambulances that reported in just as we were ready to leave. We met two more shortly after and they joined us. When the trucks with the advance party was leaving they took a water trailer, one trailer containing an electric generator and other equipment but one trailer containing the Company Records and Safe was left behind. This was not noted in the excitement of the shelling and evacuating and we were not able to return for it when its absence was noted the following morning as by this time Malreaux, Belgium was being shelled.

We located at Malreaux, Belgium that night at about 1900 hours and contacted the advance Hq. of the Third Armored Division at Malreaux to see if they could give us any information on how we could get to Vielsalm. They told us that they did not think we could get through and advised us that we should not try it that night.

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At about 2300 hours our guards reported lights in a nearby house flashing on and off at regular intervals, in the manner of signals. **Capt. Osborne** confirmed this and on knocking on the door with the intention of warning them or investigating the door was slammed shut and barred. He reported this to a Reconnaissance Car in town and they came out, shots were exchanged between the house and the car and five prisoners were taken and turned over to the local police.

We had left a liaison agent at the Advance Headquarters of the 3rd Armored Division and he reported at 0615 that there was no change. While serving breakfast at 0730 shells began landing in our vicinity and small arms fire was heard. We had intended contacting Advance Hq of the 3rd Armored Division again and perhaps going to their Hq. at Werbomont, Belgium but this route now seemed cut-off and we left for Durbuy, Belgium which seemed to be the only road open.

Being unable to get any information there we went on to Dinant, Belgium where we hoped to be able to contact our Division Hq. This not being possible at the time it was decided to remain there until we could get word to our own Hq. or learn their location. We contacted QM Hq. in Dinant and they quartered us in an

empty hotel that night. They had no information as to the tactical situation but when I returned at 0800 hours 22 December 1944, they had moved to the other side of the river.

As we could not get quarters there an Advance Agent was sent to Givet, Belgium where he contacted the CO, of the Repl Pool. He advised us to go to Namur, Belgium and try to contact the 1st Army there. We moved our convoy to Namur. Ten more ambulances having joined us after being unable to get to Vielsalm the day before the 21 December 1944. At Namur our advance agent was able to contact G-3 of the 1st Army and after some delay received orders about 1800 to report to the 134th Medical Group at Verviers, Belgium. By the time our convoy was located it was 2100 hours and men were housed in a vacant house in the outskirts of Namur.

We left at 0730 on the 23 December 1944 for Verviers where we reported. We were told there by the CO, to report to our own Hq. in the vicinity of Werbomont, Belgium. We left Verviers at 1700 hours and reported to our Hq. at about 2000 hours on the 23 December 1944.

Equipment we left at LaRoche, Belgium consisted of Footlockers and Duffle bags of Officers and Duffle Bags of Enlisted Men. Medical Equipment consisting of: Litters, several blanket cases and 2 units of our kitchen, stove, etc.

On the 23 December 1944 when the company was again functioning as a whole the strength was still 13 Officers but the enlisted personnel was now reduced to 93 men. On that date we treated 114 cases, transferred 58 cases and returned 2 cases to duty from all units served.

On 24 December 1944, 130 cases were treated, 117 cases were transferred, and 13 were returned too duty. Aside from routine treatment and function, the company was given a lift in spirits when thousands of heavy bombers (B-17 Fortresses) flew over head bound for Germany. A few of these plus a few of our protective fighter planes were downed by flak and enemy aircraft.

The Clearing Station at Werbomont was closed at 1700 hours 24 December 1944, and the Company was transported via motor convoy, a distance of 15 miles, to Banneux, Belgium arriving at 1945 hours.

The **106th Division Clearing Station** was opened to receive casualties at 1000 hours 25 December 1944. In this location the station was operating in a building used as an orphanage and school for small children, war victims, sponsored by the Catholic Church under the direct supervision of two priests and several nuns. Casualty admissions and dispositions for 25 December 1944 were as follows: 17 cases treated, 17 cases evacuated to the rear, and none returned to duty. One of our own units (**424th Inf Regt**) was committed but we were giving no direct support to any other units, hence the reason for such a small number of cases received for treatment on this date.

Our Clearing Station treated few casualties at Banneux, Belgium with the exception of the 26 December 1944. On that day the **424th Inf Regt** was subjected to a heavy enemy artillery barrage which brought us many casualties. Our records show 128 cases treated, 121 cases transferred and 3 cases returned to duty. On approximately the 27 December 1944 the **424th Inf Regt** was sent to a rest area.

Also on the 26 December 1944 **Captain Jack B. Kamholz** was reld fr atchd unasgd and assigned to Company "B" 331st Medical Battalion per Par. I, SO #116 Hq 331st Medical Battalion and **Tec 4 Alexander**

W. Krupka, ASN 11044475, Company "B" was placed on DS with us per the same Special Order Par. 3. Our strength at this time was 12 Officers and 93 enlisted personnel, plus 1 EM on Detached Service with us.

While at Banneux the Company had an opportunity to check shortages and serviceability of equipment. Lists were compiled of both Company and personal equipment shortages were made and turned in on requisition for issue. Many men had lost equipment particularly, the 1st Platoon, who, due to their hasty departure from LaRoche, had little more than the clothing they were wearing.

On the 27 December 1944 we treated 55 cases, transferred 16 cases and returned 3 cases to duty.

On the 28 December 1944 we treated 70 cases, transferred 3 cases and returned 9 cases to duty.

Because we were quite a distance from other units of our Division which were in rest areas near Esneux, Belgium, we made plans to move our Clearing Station to Esneux on the 28 December 1944. At 1630 hours 28 December 1944 the 2nd Platoon left Banneux via motor convoy for Esneux, arriving there about 1730 hours. Distance traveled 12 miles. The 1st Platoon departed from Banneux at 1000 on 29 December 1944.

They joined the 2nd Platoon at Esneux at 1130 hours. The Clearing Station was located in a spacious Chateau which had very good accommodations for treatment and care of patients. On 29 December 1944 at 1630 hours a V-I bomb landed approximately 400 yards from our building and shattered nearly all the windows in the building.

Sgt Kenneth Finlayson was cut by flying glass while on duty in the admission room. Four EM of Hq Det were also slightly cut by flying glass. During our stay at Esneux V-1 Bombs came over the building at frequent intervals and many landed near enough to shake the building. Because our Division was receiving reinforcements and in the process of re-equipping we had very few casualties while here. The year's end found us still at Esneux.

On the 29 December 1944 we treated 67 cases, transferred 14 cases and returned to duty 22 cases from all units served.

On the 30 December 1944 we treated 50 cases, transferred 3 cases and returned to duty 13 cases. On this date **1st Sgt John J. Buck**, ASN xxxxxxxx, was evacuated to the 128th Evacuation Hospital with the following diagnosis: NBC Cholangitis, ac., cat., S, cause undet., LOD Yes. Our strength was now 12 Officers and 92 enlisted personnel. **S/Sgt Walter L. Hearn** was appointed acting 1st Sgt.

On the 31 December 1944 we treated 62 cases, transferred 7 cases, and returned to duty 10 cases. On the last day of the month our strength remained the same as already shown for the 30 December 1944. Our Clearing Station was still at Esneux, Belgium and a Supplementary Report was this date turned in on Casualties handled by the 1st Platoon at LaRoche, Belgium on the 19 and 20 December 1944. Which were: 19 December 1944 we treated 49 cases, transferred 7 cases and returned 0 to duty; 20 December 1944 we treated 146 cases, transferred 146 cases and returned 0 to duty.

COMPANY "D" 331ST MEDICAL BATTALION
APO #443, U. S. Army

UNIT HISTORY
(1 Jan - 31 January 1945)

The first day of 1945 found our Clearing Station still operating in the Chateau near Esneux, Belgium K452158 and our census of patients treated were 59 cases, transferred 8 cases, and returned to duty 9 cases from all

units served. Our Company had 12 Officers of which 9 were MC, 2 DC, and 1 MAC (8 Captains and 4 1st Lieutenants) 92 EM and 1 EM on Detached Service with us from Company "B" 331 Medical Battalion (**Tec 4 Alexander W. Krupka**). **Captain Joseph L. Grosh**, M. C. was commanding officer and **S/Sgt Walter L. Hearn** was acting 1st Sgt.

December 1944 had been a very eventful month for our outfit and we had no idea of what the future might hold for us. The tactical situation was improving considerably in our favor and the enemy was being forced back toward St. Vith while suffering heavy casualties. The 424th Inf Regt was in a rest area. While the two other infantry Regiments of the **106th Infantry Division (422nd and 423rd)** were still Missing In Action with the exception of a few hundred men who had infiltrated through the enemy lines.

During the first week of January most of the time was spent in reorganizing the various remaining units of our Division and as a result the majority of casualties treated at the 106th Division Clearing Station were non-battle casualties with a majority of these being trench foot and frostbite and likewise many cases of Nasopharyngitis. During this week ichthyol ointment was used in some of the cases of frostbite of the feet. The results were not very satisfactory and it was decided to return to the original plan of treatment, namely, using rest and elevation of the feet.

In the period from the 1st January to the 10 January 1945 our Company was completely equipped as to individual personnel and organizational equipment and we were prepared to serve in a more forward echelon. Most of the enlisted personnel had needed almost complete re-equipping especially the 1st Platoon who had through necessity left most of their personal and organizational equipment at LaRoche, Belgium on 20 December 1944. After about a week of comparative inactivity treating mostly foot cases and upper respiratory cases (Nasopharyngitis) the majority of the Officers and enlisted personnel were anxious to get back to work and return to action again as we were at Vielsalm and Werbomont, Belgium in December 1944.

Our **424th Inf Regt** was to be sent back into the line again and therefore a reconnaissance was made to find a site for a Clearing Station. A site was located which was not very desirable at Niveze, Belgium near Spa, Belgium. The Clearing Station was located in a building which was not large enough but due to the concentration of troops in this area it was necessary to make use of it regardless.

Resume of Activities from 1st January to 30 January 1945:

1 January 1945 we treated 59 cases, transferred 8 cases, and returned to duty 9 cases.

2 January 1945 we treated 71 cases, transferred 11 cases, and returned to duty 3 cases. **Captain Jack H. Kamholz** was reassigned to our Company while **1st Lt. Monroe E. Neumann** was transferred to Company "B" 331 Medical Battalion and **Tec 5 Nicos George** was transferred to Hq Detachment per Special Order #1 Hq 331 Medical Battalion dated 1 Jan 45. Also on this day **Tec 4 Jack Reasor** and **Tec 5 Louis A. Schaum Jr.** were reduced to the grade of private without prejudice while **Tec 4 Shimko** was promoted to the rank of S/Sgt. **Tec 4 Essary** to Sgt and the following Tec 5's promoted to **Tec 4, Richter, Wayne Jr, Bauguess, and Eaton**, the following Pfc's were promoted to **Tec 5, Russell, Null, Yochum, Kroboth and Lawson**. Our strength was now 12 officers of which 9 were Captains and 3 1st Lt and now 91 EM.

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3 January 1945 we treated 86 cases, transferred 16 cases and returned to duty 14 cases.

14 January 1945 we treated 83 cases, transferred 8 cases and returned to duty 22 cases.

5 January 1945 we treated 57 cases, transferred 5 cases and returned to duty 214 cases.

6 January 1945 we treated 141 cases, transferred 0 cases and returned to duty 12 cases.

7 January 1945 we treated 44 cases, transferred 3 cases and returned to duty 6 cases.

8 January 1945 we treated 51 cases, transferred 1 case and returned to duty 9 cases. On this date **Pvt Charles J. Zalutsky**, ASN xxxxxxxx, was placed on Detached Service as a medical aid-man with the **424th Inf Regt**.

9 January 1945 we treated 46 cases, transferred 2 cases and returned to duty 8 cases.

On the 10 January 1945 the 1st Platoon of our Company departed from Esneux, Belgium via motor convoy and arrived at Niveze, Belgium K705125 at 1530 hours. The distance traveled was 21 miles. The Clearing Station was set-up and opened at 1700 hours. This was mainly an administrative move and the casualties received here were light, consisting mainly of foot cases and respiratory diseases (Nasopharyngitis). On this day we treated 37 cases, transferred 3 cases and returned to duty 6 cases. The Clearing Station at Esneux, Belgium was closed at 1700 hours.

On the 11 January 1945 the 2nd Platoon departed from Esneux, Belgium at 0900 hours, via motor convoy and rejoined the 1st Platoon at Niveze at 1130 hours. The 2nd Platoon was kept in reserve and prepared to move at any time while the 1st Platoon operated the Station. The tactical situation had changed and we were preparing to attack. The 1st Platoon operated the station at Niveze from 1530 hours 10 January 1945 until 1600 hours 13 January 1945.

On the 13 January 1945 2nd Platoon departed at 1300 hours via motor convoy from Niveze and arrived at Cour [Coo], Belgium K665053 at 1400 hours. They established and opened a Clearing Station in the Provincial Sanatorium (Tuberculosis sanatorium for Belgian Civilians). This was quite a large building and was very suitable for a Clearing Station. The 1st Platoon closed the Clearing Station at 1600 hours 13 January 1945 and rejoined the 2nd Platoon at 1630. The distance traveled was six miles.

The **424th Inf Regt** was sent into combat on the 11 January 1945 and were attacking and gaining much ground. Therefore during the night of 11 January we began to receive but very few casualties and these were still mostly non-battle casualties. The next day 12 January 1945 was still light and mostly non-battle casualties. However, on the 13 January 1945 in our new location at Cour, Belgium we were nearer the front and much better prepared to receive battle casualties.

Our troops composed of the **424th Inf Regt, 81st Eng (C) Bn, and 517th Parachute Infantry** were now attacking on the south and east of Stavelot, Belgium. Our casualties were mostly battle casualties and were quite heavy. Due to the efficient evacuation of patients by First Army Ambulances in spite of very icy roads we were able to clear these patients without creating a bottleneck. Several severe chest wounds were treated and evacuated. One of these was a sucking wound of the chest with probable spinal cord injury and also having a compound fracture of the femur.

The majority of the wounds seen were due to Artillery and Mortar fire. Also, many of our patients had been exposed to zero weather for several hours before receiving initial First-Aid Treatment but in spite of this few were in shock. Nine units of Plasma were used without any untoward reaction. No single case needed more than 2 Units. At about 1800 hours due to the hazardous and icy condition of the roads one of the 1st Army Ambulances turned over about 100 yards from the station with 5 of our patients whom we had just treated and evacuated. Fortunately none of these patients wounds were aggravated due to this accident.

Casualties were not as heavy on the 14 January 1945 as they had been on the previous day but we had many admissions because of frostbite, mostly feet cases, and some Nasopharyngitis. The battle casualties were due to Artillery, rifle, and mines. The German forces were steadily retreating but were leaving anti-personnel mines behind them causing much delay to our troops. For several days we continued to receive heavy casualties most of them though were frostbitten feet, some exhaustion cases, and injuries due to mines.

Resume of Activities for the period from 11 January 1945 to 20 January 1945:

11 January 1945 we treated 39 cases, transferred 14 cases, and returned to duty 2 cases.

12 January 1945 we treated 62 cases, transferred 114 cases, and returned to duty 12 cases.

13 January 1945 we treated 186 cases, transferred 107 cases, and returned to duty 11 cases.

14 January 1945 we treated 180 cases, transferred 61 cases, and returned to duty 3 cases. On this date **Sgt Ralph R. Brown**, xxxxxxxx, and **Pvt William J. Barry** who had been transferred in December 1944 to Evacuation Hospitals due to Nasopharyngitis were reassigned. Our strength was now 12 Officers and 93 enlisted personnel.

15 January 1945 we treated 249 cases, transferred 814 cases and returned to duty 12 cases. On this date **Pfc Oliver B. Winkler**, xxxxxxxx, was placed on Detached Service with Division Headquarters (G-2). His job was to work in public relations office.

16 January 1945 we treated 268 cases, transferred 66 cases, and returned to duty 28 cases.

17 January 1945 we treated 289 cases, transferred 78 cases, and returned to duty 31 cases. On this day **Sgt Vincent J. Mustacchio**, xxxxxxxx, was transferred to the 128th Evacuation Hospital with the following diagnosis: NBC Urticaria, mod, SV, Generalized, type and cause undetermined, S, LOD Yes. Our personnel strength was therefore 12 Officers and 92 Enlisted Men of which two of these were on Detached Service.

18 January 1945 we treated 241 cases, transferred 49 cases, and returned to duty 30 cases. On the 17 January 1945 the Collecting Company "A" 331st Medical Battalion had become a holding company working in conjunction with the Clearing Station and was located at our former station in Niveze, Belgium. They were able to hold approximately 90 to 100 patients and treat them. We sent them mostly foot cases and enteritis and a few respiratory cases. By doing this we were able to hold patients until they could be returned to duty otherwise we would have been forced to evacuate them and they would have been lost to the 106th Division. During this procedure we had at Company "A" at one time as high as 90 patients.

18 January 1945 **Tec 5 Cleveland W. Mitchell**, xxxxxxxx, was transferred to the 96th Evacuation Hospital with the following diagnosis: NBC Bronchitis, cat, ac, cause undet., LOD Yes. Our enlisted Personnel was now 91 EM of which two were still on detached service.

19 January 1945 we treated 198 cases, transferred 8 cases, and returned to duty 12 cases. **Captain Elmer W. Lewis** was put on detached service with Hq Special Troops in the forward echelon. Captain Lewis was platoon leader of the 1st Platoon. In his absence **Captain George M. Osborne** was made platoon leader.

20 January 1945 we treated 210 cases, transferred 21 cases, and returned to duty 20 cases.

21 January 1945 we treated 218 cases, transferred 19 cases, and returned to duty 26 cases.

22 January 1945 we treated 215 cases, transferred 17 cases, and returned to duty 26 cases.

23 January 1945 we treated 195 cases, transferred 10 cases, and returned to duty 26 cases.

On the 24 January 1945 at 0930 hours the 1st Platoon departed via motor convoy for our former location at the Chateau, at Esneux, Belgium K6605. A previous reconnaissance had been made to the rear to see if this chateau was still available before the move was made. We had personal knowledge of this location as we had previously operated our Clearing station from 28 December 1944 until 10 January 1945 and found it very satisfactory.

The move was made from the Provincial Sanatorium because the First Army had priority on the building for one of their medical installations and we were not supporting any front line troops at this time. Our **424th Inf Regt** was on the line near Diedenbergh, Belgium in the vicinity of St. Vith but they were being evacuated through the 7th Armored Division Clearing Station.

The 2nd Platoon remained at the Sanatorium Provincial until 25 January 1945 at 1000 hours when they departed via motor convoy from Cour for Esneux, Belgium. The patients had been transported to Esneux, on the 24 January by Ambulance convoy. Traveling conditions were very hazardous due to icy roads but all, vehicles reached their destination without accident. The distance traveled was 26 miles.

The only patients we were receiving while at Esneux, Belgium were those from the rear echelon and most were non-battle casualties. The majority of our cases during the next week were suffering from either frostbite and nasopharyngitis.

Shortly after midnight on 26 January 1945 a near calamity hit our company. Members of the 1st Platoon were awakened by smoke filling the room in which they were sleeping. They discovered that due to an overheated stove a fire had developed in the floor and was spreading rapidly between the rafters. Members of the 1st Platoon quickly got the fire under control by chopping holes in the floor and dealing with the fire directly. **Pvt Bowers and Tec 4 Swift** showed unusual skill in fighting the fire. There were no casualties and none of the patients were in any great danger.

The following is a resume of the Activities of the Company from 24 Jan - 31 Jan 1945:

24 January 1945 we treated 167 cases, transferred 3 cases and returned to duty 24 cases.

25 January 1945 we treated 167 cases, transferred 21 cases, and returned to duty 42 cases.

26 January 1945 we treated 84 cases, transferred 6 cases, and returned to duty 30 cases. On this date **Pvt Domingo P. Perez**, xxxxxxxx, was evacuated to the 45th Evac. Hosp. with the following diagnosis: NBC

Bronchitis, ac, cat, LOD Yes. This loss brought our enlisted personnel to 90 EM.

5

27 January 1945 we treated 56 cases, transferred 2 cases, and returned to duty 1 case. **Lt. Krynski** went to LaRoche, Belgium on this day to try to locate some of the equipment left there on the 20 December 1944 when it was necessary to make a hasty withdrawal due to the advance of the German Forces. However, it was a fruitless search. And the disposition of all medical equipment, Company records and personal equipment can not be determined whether it was captured by the Germans or whether the 7th Armored Division who occupied this city after our withdrawal managed to collect it.

28 January 1945 we treated 54 cases, transferred 1 case, and returned to duty 9 cases. **Tec 4 Whayne** was transferred to the **5th Evacuation Hospital** in grade per Par 5 SO #6 Hq 1st U. S. Army dated 6 January 1945. Our enlisted personnel was now as low as 89 EM. Also **Pvt Charles J. Zalutsky**, xxxxxxxx, on DS 424th Infantry Regt was hospitalized in the 7th Armd Div Clr Sta with the following diagnosis: LIA BC Frostbite both ft, S, LOD Yes. **General Perrin** visited the Clearing Station this date, and conferred honors on Officers and EM from Hq & Hq Det and Company "C" 331 Med Bn.

29 January 1945 we treated 68 cases, transferred 14 cases and returned to duty 11 cases.

30 January 1945 we treated 72 cases, transferred 9 cases and returned to duty 16 cases. **Pvt Joseph R. DeLizio**, xxxxxxxx, was assigned to our company from the 424th Infantry Regt per Par 1, SO #9 Hq 331 Med Bn this raised our enlisted personnel to 90 EM. **Tec 5 Michael M. Padjen**, xxxxxxxx, was promoted to the grade of Tec 4 and **Pvt Wiles**, xxxxxxxx, was promoted to the grade of Tec 5.

31 January we treated 66 cases, transferred 5 cases, and returned to duty 14 cases from all units served. **Pvt Charles J. Zalutsky**, xxxxxxxx, was relieved of DS and returned to duty. **Pvt William J. Barry**, xxxxxxxx, was transferred to Company "B" 331 Medical Battalion and **Tec 4 Alexander W. Krupka**, xxxxxxxx, was relieved of DS with us and returned to Company "B" per SO #11 Hq 331 Medical Battalion. On the last day of the month our Officer Personnel was **Captain Joseph W. Grosh**, MC, Commanding and consisted of 9 Captains (7 MC and 2 DC) and 3 1st Lieutenants, of which one was MAC (**1st Lt. Hunt**, Ass't Co. Cmdr). Our enlisted personnel was 89 EM with **S/Sgt Walter L. Hearn** acting 1st Sgt.

CENSUS: 3,835 Treatments, 1,145 Admissions, 499 Duty, 546 Transferred, 584 BC, 561 Non-Battle Casualties, remaining in the station on this date (31 Jan 1945) 147 cases.

331st Medical Battalion,
106th Infantry Division,
During the Battle of the Bulge
(December 1944-January 1945)

The 331st Medical Battalion was the organic divisional medical battalion of the 106th Infantry Division. The reports presented here cover the months of December 1944 and January 1945 when the 106th Infantry Division was involved in very heavy fighting in the Ardennes. The German offensive that struck the First U.S. Army on 16 December was heavily concentrated on the newly arrived 106th Infantry Division that had just replaced the 2d Infantry Division on a quiet sector of the front in the Schnee Eifel on the German-Belgian border.

German assault units hammered the new division relentlessly and soon the 422d and 423d Infantry Regiments and many of their supporting troops were surrounded. Within days they would surrender as the Germans punched a huge hole in the American lines that soon became the "Bulge."

According to existing doctrine, the three collecting companies of the 331st Medical Battalion, Companies A, B, and C, were aligned in direct support of the 106th's three regiments--the 422d, 423d, and 424th Infantry Regiments, while Company D was the divisional clearing station. Of the battalion's companies, only Company B was largely lost with the surrounded 423d Infantry Regiment that it supported.

SOURCE: National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD
Record Group 112, Records of the U. S. Army Surgeon General
World War II Histories
Reports, 331st Medical Battalion, Company A, and Company D
Box 270
Copies in Office of Medical History, Directorate of Health Care Operations,
Office of The Surgeon General/Headquarters, U.S. Army Medical Command

HEADQUARTERS 331ST MEDICAL BATTALION

A. P. O. #443, U S Army 5 February 1945 331st Medical Unit UNIT HISTORY
During the month of January 1945, the Medical Battalion was supporting combat for 13 days, and rested, grouped, and re-equipped for 18 days. The morale continued high, as evidence (in part) by no AWOL's and no Venereal Disease. Jan 1-5: Battalion in reorganization area, with "A" and "C" companies vic HOTY [Hody], BELGIUM, "D" Company and Battalion Headquarters vic ESNEUX, BELGIUM.

The Battalion strength was 32 Officers, 2 WO and 318 Enlisted Men. All activities were concentrated on re-equipping and regrouping the Battalion. Numerous promotions were made, and Capt. Jack H. Kamholz was reassigned to "D" Company, while Lt Monroe Neuman was assigned to "B" Company. With a general idea that the Division was to be recommitted, reconnaissance was carried out in SPA and south to TROIS PONTS for routes and billets and station sites. The sector into which the contemplated move is to be made, is now held by a unit of the 28th Inf Div, CT 112, which is attached to the 30th Inf Div at this time.

Pvt Kenneth Vandegrift and Pvt Paul F McDaniel who had been declared MIA returned to the Battalion. They had left the Div Clr Sta at ST VITH with a load of patients for an Evacuation Hospital at MALMEDY. Nothing further was heard from them, and in as much as hostile action occurred along the route they were presumed to be MIA. They did reach MALMEDY, and were pressed into service to assist in moving the hospital, this being necessary because of the approach of the Germans. After leaving the hospital, the two men traveled south in an attempt to rejoin the Battalion, and were directed to various places until they reached the 3rd Replacement Depot whence they were told the new location of the Battalion. Jan 6:

With the 424 Inf Regt at LA REID, "C" Collecting Company moved to FERME BERIZENNE [Berinsenne], 4 Miles south of SPA. The Clearing Station and Battalion Headquarters remain at ESNEUX, and evacuation from 424 CT will be to ESNEUX.

Emergency cases, however will be taken to the 30th Div Clr Sta at SPA. On this date, Brigadier General Perrin, Div Comdr., came to the Clr Sta and in a formal ceremony presented the order of the Purple Heart to the following Officer and Enlisted Men: 1ST LT VINCENT P. WANDERMAN M/SGT JOHN J. ADELMAN PFC WILLIAM R DAUGHERTY TEC 5 GEORGE MANSFIELD PFC VERNON PFIFFNER SGT KENNETH FINLAYSON

Jan 7: CT 424 was alerted for a move forward, and so Company "C" reconnoitered an area, finding SANAT DE BOURGOMONT in the vic of COUR [Coo] suitable. At the Clearing Station, intense excitement prevailed in the evening when planes circled low and the guards on duty reported what they thought to be sounds made by parachutists. Captain Rinek & LaManche with a detail of EM went out and searched the area, finding lights signaling in the "Vicinity". G-2, Provost Marshal were notified,

Page 2 and Maj Moulds arrived, saw that the situation was under control, had a cup of coffee and went to bed. The 820th TD also notified when Capt LaManche drove down to ESNEUX. Sequel: One old parachuted dummy was found, no traces in the snow of any recent footprints and the "signal lights" were found to be made by an Ordnance outfit on a nearby hill. Thus far this month the census in the Clr Sta averaged about 50 cases per day.

Jan 8: Sixteen men from "A" Company, 1 man from "D" Company were placed on DS with 424th Med Det to reinforce the depleted detachment. The men were brought to the Regt Aid Station and sent from there to various positions with the 424 Infantry, CT 424 replaced CT 112, and was atchd to the 30th Inf Div. All casualties were evacuated to the 30th Inf Div Clr Sta at SPA. Daily visits were made to "C" Company by a member of Battalion Headquarters.

Jan 9: CT 424 atkd at 1000 with the 1st and 2d Bn abreast, 3rd in reserve. Casualties were light at this time. The Clr Sta was prepared to move, with Lt Wanderman's selection, the vic of SPA, at NIVEZE.

Jan 10: This was moving day - "A" Company moved to FANGE-MARON, to as a holding station for foot and respiratory cases from the Clr Sta. 29 cases were sent there. "C" Company operate SANAT DE BOURGOMONT and casualties were light. "D" Company moved the 1st platoon to NIVEZE, arriving at 1530, 28 cases left ESNEUX at 1530 for the station at NIVEZE. These were cases who could be returned to duty in a few days. Bn Hq moved with "D" Company. Despite bad roads, the move was accomplished without incident. "C" Company had its Coll Sta favorably situated, but further back from the aid stations than usual. Thoro reconnaissance with a member of the Med Bn of the 30th Div resulted in an order to stay at COUR [Coo], but an ARP was set up in the vic at COO. Preparations were made for A Company to move to FERME BERRIZINE [Berinsenne], "C" Company to TROIS PONTS and D Company to COUR [Coo]. "A" Company was obliged to leave their area being outranked by Hq 82d A/B Div.

Jan 11: The Division regrouped as follows: At 1200 RCT 424 & 112 reverted to Div control. (106), at 2400 RCT 112 reverted to 28th Div control and two Bns. of the

517th Prcht Inf Regt were atchd to the Division. The Division was ordered then, to continue the present mission of defense. The 2d platoon of "D" Company left ESNEUX at 0930, and closed at NIVEZE at 1130. "C" Company received few casualties and planned to move to TROIS PONTS. Present positions were considered adequate because of good road net and light casualties, and that weather conditions made treatment of patients in warm building desirable. Lt Neumann was placed on DS with Forward Echelon of DHQ as Medical Officer, there being no regularly assigned Medical Officer at that installation by the T/O. For information on the tactical situation see attached overlay.

Jan 12: The Division received other atchmts - elements of the 740 Tk Bn, 643 TD Bn, 634 AAA Bn, 596 Engr Bn, and 460 PFA Bn. Light patrol action continued, with casualties light, only 3 wounded being treated.

Jan 13: The 106th Inf Div jumped off at 0600 in an attack, and with intelligence that resistance would be light, and progress rapid, all

Page 3 units of the Battalion were prepared to move up. Arrangements were made by the Bn CO to assist the 517th. The surgeon of the 517 declined to use "A" Company as a collecting station, and instead operated his Regt aid Sta vic STAVELOT, as a collecting Station. A Company operated an ARP at FRANCORCHAMPS with enlisted personnel, 1 officer, 2 ambulances, and a #2 Chest. "C" Company moved up to TROIS PONTS at 0830 and the Clr Sta at 1300 moved to COUR.

The remainder of "D" Company moved from NIVEZE at 1600, and the patients left at NIVEZE (about 40) were taken over by "A" Company, which began to operate the holding station. When the Clr Sta opened at COUR [Coo], the ARP at FRANCORCHAMPS moved to STAVELOT. "C" Company operated an ARP at AISIMONT. On this date from 1400 to 2400 "C" Company handled 140 battle casualties, and "D" Co handled 186 cases, transferring 107 to the rear. Evacuation from the front was complicated by heavy snow, icy roads, and narrow roads. But except for the ditching of an army ambulance during blackout driving, the evacuation of patients was uneventful.

Most cases were due to artillery and mortar fire, and mines with really serious cases coming thru. Several chest wounds were handled, and one case had a severe nicking wound of the chest, FC of the femur, and probable involvement of the spinal cord. The road between the "C" Company ARP at AISIMONT and WANNE was under constant observed enemy artillery fire, but since it was the only road usable ambulances ran the gauntlet of fire. Three ambulances were hit by shrapnel, and one patient with a wound of a finger, riding in the ambulance was struck in the leg. First aid was given to him by the ambulance orderly.

At the end of the day the Clearing Station census was 68. Two new MAC officers joined the Battalion, Lt Scott and Lt Garcia. Both were assigned to "B" Company and placed on DS with "C" Company for "seasoning." Altho every unit in the battalion moved today, and a large number of casualties were processed, and evacuation was

slow and difficult, the medical service rendered was of the highest order and worked uninterruptedly. The men of "C" Company worked gallantly and in one instance Sgt Magory and Tec 5 Ristenpart ran forward of the aid station to get out 11 severely wounded soldiers. Three litter squads under Lt Penney also worked forward of the 3rd Bn Aid Station evacuating casualties.

PFC Beach of "A" Company was lightly wounded by shrapnel while on DS with the 424 Med Det. Two ambulances from "A" Company were atchd to "C" company this date.

Jan 14: The attack continued at 0900, and again casualties were heavy, mostly from shrapnel, Mortar and Mines. 100 casualties were processed by "C" Company, and the Clr Sta treated 180 cases, of which 61 were transferred. Large numbers of cases of frost bite were seen with no swelling, but considerable discoloration and paresthesias was seen. The more severe were evacuated, but the remainder held either at COUR [Coo], or NIVEZE.

Jan 15-16: The attack continued. "D" Company received 249 patients on the 15th and 268 on the 16th. Most casualties were still due to frost bite. Ambulance Relay Points were used and good ambulance service maintained. Moving of the Clr Sta was discussed but due to poor housing conditions, at STAVELOT, and adequacy of ambulance evacuation, the move was not made. Sleds were utilized to haul litters back to the aid station, being furnished and made by "C" Company. The 3rd Bn of CT 424 was attached to the 517th Regt at 1200.

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Jan 17: At 1800, the 517th Inf Regt was attached to the 30th Inf Div., and at that time the 3rd Bn reverted to 424 control. At 1600 the 424 CT was pinched off by the advance of the 75th Inf Div to the east, and the 30th Inf Div to the south. The mission of CT 424 then was to mop up in the areas it had taken. During the action from the 12th through the 17th, the Division took every objective assgnd, and on time. The difficult maneuver in the pinching out of a CT was achieved. 1172 cases were handled by the Clearing Station during the attack.

Jan 18: The Division was placed XVIII Corps reserve, for the purpose of regrouping and re-equipping. The strength of the 424 Inf was 54% Enlisted, and 62% officer personnel. A meeting was held by the Bn Commander with the Company Commanders to discuss re-supply. The main shortages were lamps, and stoves, which S-4 promptly corrected. The 1st Bn 424 moved to HENOMONT, and ARP with two ambulances was set up at WANNE. An ambulance was left with each Bn aid Station. The ARP at STAVELOT was closed. "D" Company held 162 patients at this time, with 81 of this number at COUR [Coo]. Most of the cases being received were frost bite, with a few respiratory cases. Very few exhaustion and self-inflicted wounds were seen. Lt Neumann was evacuated with a severely sprained knee.

Jan 19-23: Remained in Corps reserve. The Clearing Station operated bathing service for the Division, furnishing towels, soap, and alleged hot water. The troops really needed the service. Medical inspection was done at the baths, and one case of

pediculosis pubis found. Work was concentrated on vehicles and supply. Recreation was made available by the Bn SSO (movies, bands, singers).

On 21 January at 1530 at TROIS PONTS, General Perrin, in a formal ceremony presented Bronze Star Medals to the following personnel:

CPT ARTHUR FLEMING

1ST LT DAVID MILLMAN

PFC RAYMOND BACHMAN

PYT ARLEY CORNETT

TEC 5 PAUL DEAKINGS

PFC THOMAS ELDER

PFC FREDERICK FLEISCHMAN, JR

PFC TALMON GAINOUS

PFC JOSEPH GELINAS

PFC JOHN B. G. HAMMOCK

PFC WILLIAM IRVING

PVT HARVEY KOLB

TEC 4 QUENTIN LEASURE

PFC BENEDICT LEITI

SGT JOHN AGORY

PFC RALPH MONTGOMERY

PVT PHILIP PATIRE

S/SGT RICHARD REINHARDT

TEC 5 ELDEN RISTENPART

PFC CARL STEINMEYER

PVT RAYMOND SZYCZEWSKI

PFC FERGUSON WILSON

Jan 23: CT 424 atchd to 7th Armd Div which today took ST VITH. "C" Company moved to an assembly area in the vic of DEIDENBERG, and set up a station at WAIMES.

Page 5 Jan 24: CT 424 committed again, with. "C" Company at ODENVAL [ONDENVAL], the remainder of "C" Company was all closed in by 1400. Preparations were made for an attack the following day, and as usual, litter squads were atchd to 424 Med Det. The 7th Armd Div Clr Sta at WAIMES was utilized, and casualties were light. The 106th Inf Div (CT 424 & 592d FA Bn) moved back to the vic of ANTHISNES. The 1st platoon left COUR [Coo] at 0930, and opened a Clr Sta at the same place in ESNEUX which had been occupied before.

Jan 25: CT 424 continued to attack. Pvt Harold D. Smith of "A" Company on DS with the 424 Med Det was killed while working as an aid man by a sniper who was promptly dispatched by the men of the company with which he was working. This constitutes a violation of the Geneva Convention. At this time the Bn CO and the Regt CO of the 424 had all been evacuated. Casualties were light.

Jan 28: CT 424 was passed thru by the 82d A/B Div and moved back to join the 106th Div, "C" Company moved to ESNEUX, closing in their area at 2330. General Perrin presented Lt Reinhardt with battlefield commission as a 2d Lieutenant. Tec 4 Pawasarat and Pfc Buckley, Tec 5 King were given the Bronze Star Medal at the same ceremony. Unfortunately Tec 5 Balantyne and Pfc Balarzs who were to have been present and receive the Bronze Star Medal were unable to attend the ceremony.

Jan 29-31: Battalion rested, regrouped and refitted. All men were reld from DS with the 424th Med Det. During the month "D" Company gave 3835 Treatments, had 1145 Admissions, of which 584 were BC [battle casualties] and 561 NBC [non-battle casualties]. Plans were drawn up for reconstituting "B" Company.

Above courtesy of Henri ROGISTER 22 Rue du Progres B-4032
LIEGE BELGIUM Website: <http://users.skynet.be/bulgecriba>

HEADQUARTERS, 331st MEDICAL BATTALION A.P.O. #443, U.S. Army 24 March 1945 HISTORY 12
December-31 December 1944 12 Dec 44: The 106th Infantry Division relieved the 2nd Infantry Division at 0001 covering a 27 mile front in the SCHNEE EIFEL. Task Force "X" was attached to the Division and was in position on the left flank. On the left flank of the Division was the **99th Infantry Division**, and on the right flank was the **28th Infantry Division**. The Division placed all three regiments on the line as well as Task Force "X", from North to South being disposed as follows: Task Force "X", 233d [422d] Infantry Regiment, 423d Infantry Regiment, and 424th Infantry Regiment.

The 2d Battalion of the **423d Infantry Regiment** was placed in Division Reserve. All regiments were dug in with patrol action being light when the Division replaced the 2d Infantry Division. The Medical Battalion opened its Battalion Headquarters and Clearing Station in St. Vith, Belgium. The Collecting Companies were disposed as follows: Company "A" at ANDLER, BELGIUM; Company "B" at BUCHET, GERMANY; Collecting Company "C" at STEINBRUCK [STEINBRÜCK], GERMANY.

In addition to the three collecting companies, aid stations consisting of collecting company technicians with an AMBULANCE LOADING POST and one ambulance were established by Company "A" at MANDERFELD, BELGIUM for the 14th Cavalry Group of Task Force "X", and at WINTERSCHEID, GERMANY by Company "B" for the 18th Cavalry Group. **Attached to the 106th Infantry Division were the 14th and 18th Cavalry Squadrons of the 32d Cavalry Group, the 634th AAA Battalion, the 820th TD Battalion, the 740th Field Artillery Battalion and the 275th Armored Field Artillery Battalion.**

The 581st Medical Collecting Company provided army evacuation for the Clearing Station to the 67th Evacuation Hospital and the 44th Evacuation Hospital, the 4th Convalescent Hospital, and the 618th Clearing Station. The Third Hospital Unit of the 42d Field Hospital was at Saint Vith, Belgium for the handling of Non-transportable cases. 13-15 Dec 44: Activity was light in our sector and casualties were light also.

On 15 December, a prisoner of war processed through medical channels, was taken to "A" Collecting Company for treatment, and gave the information that a German offensive was to begin on the 17 December. This information was relayed to the Battalion S-2, and relayed to the Division. On this date 151 cases were treated at the Clearing Station, of which a considerable number were trench foot cases. Most of these men had been on duty outside, exposed to extreme damp and cold weather for long periods of time.

16 Dec 44: The enemy opened its battle of the Ardennes Bulge with a tremendous artillery barrage at dawn. Heavy artillery landed in the vicinity of St. Vith, and medium and light artillery fell in the region of the three Battalion collecting Companies. In the Task Force "X" and 422d Infantry Regiment sector the enemy poured tanks and panzer units from the north and West in a push to take, SCHONBERG [SCHÖNBERG], a vital road junction on the road to St. Vith.

In the 423d Infantry Regiment sector, the enemy which had patrols stationed in the vicinity of BRANDSCHEID, sent Tiger tanks and panzer units toward SCHONBERG [SCHÖNBERG], evidently using the BLEIALF-SCHONBERG [SCHÖNBERG] road, commonly called [by] the Division Troops "Sky-Line Drive".

2 In the **424th Regiment** sector the enemy pushed up through HABSCHEID toward WINTERSPELT to gain control of the highway from WINTERSPELT TO ST. VITH. The main objective of the German drive was the town of ST. VITH, a vital communications cog in the motorized warfare which was being employed by the Germans with their tanks and panzer units.

The first town to fall to the Germans was AUW, GERMANY, a small community situated on a hill overlooking the road to SCHONBERG [SCHÖNBERG]. In the southern sector of the Division front, HABSCHEID and HECKHUSCHEID fell. In an effort to stem the Nazi push, the Division committed its reserve, the Second Battalion of the 423d Infantry Regiment, which moved from BORN to the 422d in the fight for SCHONBERG [SCHÖNBERG].

The 424th Regiment committed its reserve, the First Battalion which was located at STEINBRUCK [STEINBRÜCK] in the hope of stopping the enemy in the WINTERSPELT Collecting Company "A", located at ANDLER fell back to HEUEM, BELGIUM when the Germans captured AUW, and continued to provide medical support for its combat team and Task Force "X" until the enemy surrounded the 422th Combat Team. The ambulance assigned to the 1st Battalion, 422th Infantry, having carried casualties to the Collecting Station during the night, was prevented from returning to the Battalion Aid Station by an enemy patrol which had infiltrated through the night cutting the road.

Pfc Andrew Gollin and **Pvt Thomas Fox** were driving an ambulance carrying casualties from the 2d Battalion Aid Station, when stopped and taken prisoner by the same patrol that prevented the other ambulance from returning to the 1st Battalion Aid Station. This was one half miles east of AUW, GERMANY. Gollin and Fox were later released after the Germans had loaded several other casualties in their ambulance. Collecting Company "B" remained with the 423th Combat Team and was out off with the regiment in the vicinity of BUCHET.

Collecting Company "C" remained at its position at STEINBRUCK [STEINBRÜCK], but was mobile and was prepared to move to a site northward at BREITFELD. The last word the Battalion heard from Company "B" was a message signed for Sergeant Murphy. It read: "Casualties being received from Anti-tank and Service Companies. Enemy using 88's, mortars and small arms. Casualties show a slight increase over previous days. Situation remaining the same as reported on previous messages."

NOTE: See attached sketch for disposition of troops on this date, and attached German order for the attack. 17 Dec 44: The attack continued, with the Germans exerting pressure on the left and right flanks. The 422d and 423d Combat Teams were completely surrounded and remained as islands of resistance. "A" Company was unable to reestablish communications with CT 422 despite repeated efforts. "B" Company was cut off with its Combat Team. Evacuation from the 422d Combat Team and the 423d Combat Team was to "B" Company, which was last seen still operating at the site it occupied the previous day. Elements of the 9th and 7th Armored Divisions were moving East to smash the German attack.

The mission of the 106th Infantry Division was to defend in place until the Armored Divisions set up defenses. "C" Company withdrew to BREITFELD, BELGIUM. The Clearing Station displaced to VIELSALM on DIVISION order, and at 1430 set up a station at a Catholic Boarding School. The First platoon of the Clearing Company departed from St. Vith at 1630, but due to heavy traffic on the ST VITH-VIELSALM road, they did not arrive at VIELSALM until 180615. On this date, "D" Company processed 130 cases of which 64 were battle casualties. The 66 non battle casualties were made up of foot cases, nasopharyngitis infections, and exhaustion. The Army evacuation was still functioning, but Battalion Headquarters supplemented it with ambulances from "B" Company

3 The 3d Hospital Unit of the 42d Field Hospital moved their personnel into VIELSALM with the Clearing Station, but due to lack of transportation, was forced to leave behind all equipment. This left the Division Medical Service in a serious plight, for the non-transportable cases, normally treated by a Field Hospital, were now to be treated at the Clearing Station which does not carry the special equipment necessary for this type of case.

"A" Company moved into St. Vith at 1600, and established a collecting station at the site vacated by "D" Company. An aid station was established one mile East of ST VITH to service the 81st and 168th Engineer Battalions which took up a defensive position on a ridge 1½ miles East of ST VITH. At this time "A"

Company provided aid men, litter bearers, and operated an aid station exactly like a Battalion Medical Section. The organic medical personnel of the Engineers were insufficient to handle the numerous casualties being sustained. BALANTYNE, BUCKLEY, BALARZS and PAWASARAT of "A" Company distinguished themselves here by gallantry in action and were awarded the Bronze Star Medal.

"B" Company was still not heard from. Ambulances repeatedly tried to make contact again, but were prevented from doing so by enemy action.

"C" Company was under artillery fire through the night of 16-17 December. At 0200, only a small force was left between "C" Company and the enemy. At STEINBRUCK [STEINBRÜCK], the only bridge over which retreat was possible, was under shell fire, and so Capt Blanchard ordered the company to move back under blackout conditions to the vicinity of BREITFELD, BELGIUM. At the time of the move, 6 ambulances were being employed in the support of Battalion Aid Stations, and in transportation of casualties.

By the time the new Station opened at BREITFELD, a battle was in progress at the bridge at STEINBRUCK [STEINBRÜCK]. Ambulance evacuation of the 2d and 3d Battalion Aid stations and the Regimental Aid Stations was over roads under artillery fire, and direct observation by the enemy. Later in the day, with Combat Team 424 falling back to the South, "C" Company was out of the 424th Combat Team Sector, and so moved back to ST. VITH into the building vacated by the Clearing Station at the Town Hall, and set up a Collecting Station. Evacuation to the Clearing Station at VIELSALM was via Highway N-28.

During the entire day, liaison was maintained by "C" Company with all units of Combat Team 424 and operated well. In addition, C Company was ordered to establish an aid station at the Division Command Post in St. Vith to service the elements in that vicinity. The enemy continued his fierce attacks, exploiting the SCHONBERG [SCHÖNBERG] and WINTERSPELT thrusts in the direction of ST VITH. ST. VITH was attacked from the East, Northeast and Southeast. These attacks were all stopped about two miles from the town.

During the day, Combat Command "B" of the 9th Armored Division and Combat Team 424 fell back on order to the line of the AUR RIVER, and held there till the close of the period. Elements of the First Panzer Division, however, had pushed through the 7th Armored Division sector North of ST VITH and advanced West of ST VITH to POTEAUX but were pushed back, until at the end of the period, our forces were advancing on RECHT.

Units in contact with the Division were from north to South: 1st PANZER DIVISION 18th VOLKSGRENADIER DIVISION 62d VOLKSGRENADIER DIVISION and elements of the 116 PANZER DIVISION. 18 Dec 44: The full significance of the German drive was still not understood. The Medical Battalion was ordered to reconnoiter for Clearing Station sites in the rear at BARACQUE de FRAITURE, SAMREE, LaROCHE, and HOUFFALIZE. The enemy assaulted ST VITH, employing the major portion of the 164th Regiment of the 62d VG Division reinforced with armor. Combat Command "B" of the 9th Armored Division, was hit on the flanks and

4 within their lines by small groups, and frontally by an estimated 2 battalions of Infantry supported by tanks. Combat Team 112 of the 28th Infantry Division, on the South flank withdrew under enemy pressure. During the day, HOUFFALIZE was entered by enemy elements which were repulsed later. At 0430, the 1st platoon of the Clearing Company arrived at VIELSALM, but knowing the road conditions from ST VITH to VIELSALM, a new route of evacuation was necessary. At 0600 Captain

LaManche, Battalion S-2, volunteered to take four ambulances back to ST VITH over a new Southern route if it was usable.

It was, luckily, and became the evacuation route out of ST VITH. Before Captain LaManche arrived at St. Vith, "C" Company ambulances were fired upon by hostile machine guns West of ST VITH on Highway N-28, and were finally forced to abandon the use of the road. One ambulance did get through, with bullet hole in the ambulance. Route N-28 was under small arms, machine gun and mortar fire at this time. At the end of a heavy artillery and mortar barrage in ST. VITH, a convoy of ambulances was formed, and was directed to VIELSALM via the new Southern route through BEHO. This relieved the congestion of patients at ST VITH.

Company "A" continued to operate at ST VITH until ordered to withdraw at 1900, at which time the company withdrew to VIELSALM. This company provided excellent medical support and ambulance reinforcement at ST VITH. When ordered to withdraw to VIELSALM, Company "A" immediately made available technicians, litter bearers, and medical officers to assist the 2d Platoon of "D" Company.

Company "B" was still missing in action.

Company "C" moved back to BEHO when Combat Team 424 fell back to the vicinity of BRACHT, BERG REULAND, and LASCHIED in order to be in a better position to service them. Here at BEHO, 5 ambulances were attached from Company "A" to assist in the evacuation of casualties. At this time, two litter squads which had been requested by the Surgeon of the **424th Infantry Regiment** were released to "C" Company.

Company "D" worked hard and well at VIELSALM. The First platoon which finally arrived at VIELSALM after 12 hours on the road from ST VITH never realized how close they came to being ambushed on the road, because it was not many hours later that the ST VITH-VIELSALM highway was cut by elements of the 1st SS Panzer Division. At noon, again, the First Platoon was directed out of VIELSALM to LaROCHE – a place of supposed safety, far from the enemy. There the clearing company was ordered to establish a holding station for such minor casualties as trench foot and upper respiratory infections, which could be returned to duty quickly.

Had it been known what the extent of the enemy attack was, the Clearing Station First Platoon would not have been at LaROCHE. And no reconnaissance would have been made at HOUFFALIZE. At any rate, all personal and equipment not needed at VIELSALM was sent to LaROCHE, and then all transportation (except a 1½ ton kitchen truck) was returned to VIELSALM in order to expedite a move if one became necessary for the platoon in operation at VIELSALM.

Casualties arrived in large numbers at VIELSALM, many of them very badly hurt. These casualties were from many different units; 7th Armored, Ninth Armored Division, 168th Engineers, numerous artillery units, and from Combat Team 112 of the 28th Infantry Division and from our own Division. The horrible effect at Armored Piercing projectiles on Tankmen was evident from the injuries sustained by the tankers. Traumatic amputations were numerous, and a few were multiple. Deep shock, hemorrhage, sucking wounds, were frequent. And with everybody concentrating on the job at hand casualties still continued to pile up. Ambulance evacuation to the rear was augmented by attachment of another ambulance platoon, but this, too was not enough. The evacuation

5 Hospitals were far back, the roads uncertain, ambulances going out of the station with patients never returned, and supplies were running low. Large amounts of plasma were needed, morphine, penicillin, etc. Much ingenuity was displayed. For example, when patients in deep shock, with collapsed veins into which it was impossible to pour plasma, needed quick infusion, the Femoral Vein was used. The process was quick, easy, but required skill in technique.

Whole blood was needed, and none was available. And so from the men in the station who were less seriously injured, and from some of this medical soldiers, many volunteered to give blood for the badly hurt patients. It was collected in improvised containers, and used to great advantage in cases of deep shock and hemorrhage. On this date, 175 casualties were evacuated, there were two deaths, both chest wounds with additional wounds of the extremities.

19 Dec 44: The tactical situation of this date in our sector did not change markedly, although the enemy pressure was maintained. All medical installations remained in their previous locations. Only 92 cases were evacuated to the rear out of the Clearing Station. Plans for withdrawal were made, and even a little optimism appeared for G-3 announced that the First Infantry and Tenth Armored Divisions were on their way to help us out.

ST VITH was still held by the Engineers. **Combat Team 112 of the 28th Infantry Division was attached to the 106th Infantry Division, and the Medical Collecting Company of this Combat Team, "C" Company of the 103d Medical Battalion, was attached to the 331st Medical Battalion,** and incorporated into the Medical Service of the unit. **Captain Grosh**, Commander of the Clearing Company, with key technicians returned from LaROCHE to be with the active station. 52 casualties were present at the station at LaROCHE.

Plans were made to send patients directly to LaROCHE from the station at VIELSALM in order to keep the Second Platoon mobile. The Battalion S-4 left for LaRoche early in the morning because gas, rations, and medical supplies were urgently needed. Supplies at LaROCHE were hauled back to VIELSALM where they were more urgently needed. **Mr. ECKWERTH, the Battalion Medical Supply Officer** left with a truck to get supplies at LIEGE. About 1700, arrangements were made with the Seventh Armored Division Quartermaster to draw gas and rations, and at 2300 the convoy arrived at VIELSALM with 1200 rations and 1000 gallons of gasoline.

The 106th Division Quartermaster had also provided 400 blankets by drawing one from each man in the Rear Echelon of Division Headquarters, and also 500 rations. So the problem of supply was settled for the time being. Ambulances sent to the 107th Evacuation Hospital with patients never returned from LIBIN, and no accurate records could be kept as to just where these patients finally arrived. This also added to our supply problem because we lost blankets, litters, splints, etc.

20 Dec 44: G-3 reports that the Germans were sending patrols north toward the highway between LaROCHE and BARAQUE [DE] FRAITURE. Enemy plans an obvious pincers attack on LaROCHE. The Medical Battalion sent Lt. Wanderman, The S-1 to LaROCHE to alert the station for a move. Just West of BARAQUE Fraiture, he was fired upon, and wounded, but was able to escape the ambush. Upon his return, he told the story of the German road block, and now the situation looked critical, our ambulance evacuation to the rear being cut. New routes had to be found. More ambulances and supplies were needed. Patients were piling into the station from the various units then engaged around ST VITH and VIELSALM. "C" Company reported that artillery was falling around the 424th Infantry Regimental Aid Station.

The Division ordered that the ground would be held in the event that pincers move

6 developed to envelop LaROCHE. Reconnaissance showed that evacuation to LIEGE was practicable, using the road through JOUBIEVAL and WERBOMONT, and ambulances were routed that way but never returned. Lt. Col. Boland, Commanding the 77th Medical Battalion of the Seventh Armored Division discussed evacuation with Lt. Col. Neigus, Commanding the 331st Medical Battalion.

Due to the fact that our station contained many patients from the Seventh Armored Division it was requested that we be given as much assistance as possible particularly plasma, penicillin, dressings, adhesive plaster, tetanus toxoid, morphine, blankets, and litters. **Lt. Colonel Boland** informed us that all but combat troops were being evacuated from LaRoche. No word had come in from the platoon stationed there.

"A" Company was still busily engaged reinforcing the Second Platoon of "D" Company at VIELSALM, and assisting "C" Company in evacuation. In addition "A" Company assisted with evacuation to the rear of the Clearing Station,

"C" Company remained at its site at BEHO, servicing Combat Team 424, and assisted in the evacuation of Combat Command "C" of the 7th Armored Division which had a Collecting Station at BEHO. Combat Command "B" of the Ninth Armored Division had a Collecto-Clearing Station at BEHO, but due to a shortage of Army Ambulances, brought patients to our "C" Company which set up an Ambulance Control Point at BEHO. Companies "A" and "C" each sent 5 ambulances to this control point.

Orders were issued for "C" Company to pull back to SALMCHATEAU when the Combat Team moved back. "D" Company treated 188 cases this date, and evacuated to the rear 88 cases of which 64 were taken at night by the Battalion Adjutant in 2 ½ ton trucks obtained from the Division Quartermaster. These 64 patients went in 4 trucks in convoy over unfamiliar roads, but they all arrived safely after a long tiring rough trip to LIEGE.

By 1600 the need for supplies was pressing, and so **Captain Rinck**, the Battalion S-4 and **Technical Sergeant Weiss, Battalion Supply Sergeant** left with 6 ambulances and 2 ½ ton trucks loaded with patients for LIEGE via the only road left open. The patients were unloaded at 1930 at the 56th General Hospital. Medical Supplies consisting of whole blood, plasma, blankets, litters, bandages, and blood transfusion apparatus were obtained from the 409th Medical Depot. The convoy left LIEGE at 2330, and arrived at VIELSALM at 0430 on the 21st. A second convoy left later, as described above, under command of **Lt. Wanderman**.

The First Platoon of D Company at LaROCHE had an exciting experience. With the town under shellfire, and with only a 1 ½ ton truck for transportation, and with large quantities of supplies, both from Battalion Headquarters and "D" Company, the Platoon Leader, Captain Lewis, was in a difficult position. He obtained trucks from the 7th Armored Division, and loading personnel and organizational equipment, he had to leave behind much valuable equipment, including both organizational and personal. In the meantime he had evacuated all his patients to LIEGE by requisitioning the 2½ ton truck which **Mr. Eckwerth** brought in loaded with supplies. **Mr. Eckwerth** knew he could not get back by the LaROCHE-VIELSALM highway, and could not get any information on any other route available.

While loading the station to leave LaROCHE, an artillery shell fell in the courtyard, and killed Technician **5th Grade Quinlan** who had volunteered to load up the kitchen under fire.

Also killed was **Technician 5th Grade Lawlor**, Chaplain Day's assistant. In the operating room where the surgeons were working on patients, **Sergeant Buriak** was seriously wounded by a shell fragment. The patient was knocked to the floor from the operating table, but he was put back upon the table and took more treatment. This

7 First Platoon furnished volunteers in response to a request from the Surgeon of the Seventh Armored Division. These men went out on the Samree-Vielsalm Road, and treated wounded under direct fire, evacuating them to the Station at LaROCHE. The only medical installations at LaROCHE were a rest center operated by the 7th Armored Division, and our Clearing Station. The former installation was busily engaged in getting ready to move, and so our station was the only one in active operation.

When our station did finally move, **Capt. Lewis**, the platoon leader, with **Mr. Eckwerth** and several enlisted men volunteered to remain behind and operate a station. At 1700 the whole platoon finally left LaRoche, happy to leave, but saddened by the thought that one of their old friends had been killed and another wounded. Hope for relief was when it became known that the 82d Airborne, Third Armored and 101st Airborne Divisions were moving into the sector.

21 Dec 44: The position of the Division was still the same, with no change in the position of the medical installations. The 82d Airborne Division moved into position North and West of VIELSALM. Units in contact with the 106th Infantry Division were the 62d and 560 VG Divisions and the 116 Panzer Division. ST VITH was still under heavy attack with fighting in the streets by 2100. **Elements of the 589th Field Artillery Battalion under Major Parker made a gallant and determined stand at BARAQUE [DE] FRAITURE cross roads.** On this date "D" Company cleared 96 patients.

22 Dec 44: The Division's mission was to make a perimeter defense from Recht to St. Vith to Beho to Vielsalm and keep the road leading North from Vielsalm open for evacuation. Company "C" was to locate in the center of this area and "D" Company was to reconnoiter a new area for Clearing Northwest of Vielsalm. In the afternoon, the Clearing Station moved from Vielsalm to Werbomont, and "C" Company moved into Vielsalm Building. The Clearing Station set up in tents for the first time in the ETO, with the weather very cold, but clearing. The move was completed by 2130. Practically all patients were now evacuated. St. Vith fell to the Germans at 1300, and our troops fell back to Vielsalm.

23 Dec 44: On this date the entire Division moved back to an area Northwest of Werbomont and the entire Battalion assembled in the fields in the vicinity of Werbomont. The 1st Platoon of B Company arrived, and now the Battalion was together again, except for "B" Company which was missing in action.

24 Dec 44: CT 424 and CT 112 were attached to the 7th Armored Division and placed in Corps reserve. The remainder of the Division was ordered to assemble in the vicinity of Louveigne. Headquarters and D Company moved to Banneux, Companies A and C to vicinity Florze, and Co C, 112th Med Bn, the vicinity Remouchamps. "D" Company transferred 117 cases today. The Battalion was treated to a beautiful sight today when hundreds of heavy bombers were seen flying toward the German lines. It was the first clear day since the 15th, and the American Air Force displayed its might.

On the night before Christmas **Chaplain Fleming and Day** held services which were attended by all for the first time in a long while. "D" Company and Hq Det at Banneux heard the sweet voices of little children lifted in song, and the men sang Silent Night with deep feeling.

25 Dec 44: While the rest of the Battalion rested, C Company moved to the vicinity FAWEUX, to support CT 424, which was committed in the vicinity of HARRE. That evening CT 424 attacked and took Manhay, the first town retaken from the Germans in the present offensive.

26-28 Dec 44: The units maintained their position until 28 Dec 44 when Division was ordered to move to a bivouac area in the vicinity of Anthisnis. D Company and Battalion Headquarters moved to Esneux, Belgium. A Company moved to Hody into comfortable billets.

29 Dec 44: The Medical Battalion rested and regrouped. C Company and 424 CT pulled back with the remainder of the Division.

30-31 Dec 44: Medical Battalion continued to rest and regroup.

BATTLE HISTORY COMPANY "A" 331ST MEDICAL BATTALION [January 1945] 1 January 1945 After a sober opening of the New Year, the company settled down to serious thoughts of helping to win this war. As the year began the company was established in a resting area at Hody, Belgium. The strength of the company at this time consisted of 3 Medical Officers, 2 Medical Administrative Officers and 87 enlisted men.

Several of the enlisted men celebrated the day with promotions. **Pvt. Harold E. Bryant** was elevated to the grade of Technician fifth grade while the following men became Privates first-class. **Balarzs, Ernest Fox, Thomas J. Giandonato, Alfred J. Jednzeyowski, Leo Myers, Robert Smith, Harold D. Tulio, Genaro J. Walters, Wilbert H.** All day preparations were made to attack the huge and delicious turkey dinner provided by our quartermaster. The attack started late in the afternoon and the object taken in short order with no casualties.

2-9 January 1945 During this period the company remained at Hody, Belgium, resting, polishing up the equipment and reequipping the unit. Station material that had been given to other units in particular was received. Entertainment in the form of stage shows and movies were provided at the rear echelon. All were greatly enjoyed. Tuning the ears to the various sounds of the V 1 bomb (Buzz Bomb) keep many of the company busy and awake at night. The distance they were away from our area could be distinguished and with careful observation it was discovered that they came from three different directions. The feeling that they originated from Von Rundtedts bulge was later confirmed. As the bulge was reduced the number of buzz bombs fell off. Although many cut out near by none fell close to Hody, but the buildings were shaken.

On 6 January **Pvt. Luman F. Woodfin** was assigned to the company. His older brother **Lyman** is a member of the company. On 8 January sixteen men of the company were placed on detached service with the Medical Detachment of the 424th Infantry. They were **Technician fifth grade Ballantyne, Grasberger, Guelcher; Privates First class Balarzs, Giandonato, Desch, Waltrip, West, Smith;**

Privates Hutchison, Judge, Lubovich, Maycroft, Vassallo, Mandel, and Naliwka. On 9 January **S/Sgt. Carl D. Peak** left the company for a deserved furlough to the States.

He was placed on temporary duty with the 92nd Replacement Bn, 3rd Replacement Depot. On the 9th the company was assigned a mission of setting up a holding station to relieve the clearing company of much load. An area South West of Spa was reconnoitered for the station. This same day an ambulance was placed on detached service with the 592nd Field Artillery.

10 January 1945 The company moved from Hody, Belgium at 1000 to Fange Maron in the vicinity of Spa, Belgium and established a holding station for the Division. Late this day 29 non-battle casualties were received from the clearing company.

2 Here it was learned that the 424th had been assigned a mission on the line near Trois Point (Trois Ponts). **Technician fifth grade Oscar F. Pawasarat** was promoted to Technician fourth grade while **Pfc. Richard W. LeLong** was promoted to Technician fifth grade.

11 January 1945 As Fange Maron was located in an area assigned to another Division it was found necessary to move. The 29 patients were returned to the Clearing Station. It was located at Niveze, Belgium which is just East of Spa. A move to Fr. Berinzenne [Berinsenne], South of Spa was made by motor convoy. A station was established but no casualties were received.

12 January 1945 At Fr. Berinzenne [Berinsenne] awaiting orders. The company was notified of an impending offensive toward St. Vith. The 517th Para-regiment was attached to the Division. The area North of Stavelot was reconnoitered for possible Collecting Station site and routes of evacuation to support the 517th. It was later learned that the 517th had a plan of evacuation not necessitating the use of a collecting company. Instead plans were reestablished to have the company function as a holding station. No casualties were received.

13 January 1945 The company moved to Nivize, Belgium and occupied the buildings vacated by the Clearing Station which had moved to Sanat de Borgoumont. A holding station was established immediately with 47 patients. The type of cases received were foot cases, upper respiratory diseases, and exhaustion cases. An ambulance shuttle was set up at Francochamps [Francorchamps] by Lt. Jennings. This was to give additional support to the 517th Regimental Aid Station. Their run to the Clearing Station was rather lengthy. Two ambulance were attached to C Co. It was reported that **Pfc. Desch** received a Purple Heart while on detached service with the 424th. He was struck by a shell fragment on the right thigh. The wound was not serious enough for evacuation. 18th Corps artillery could be heard throughout the entire night.

14-15 January 1945 Still functioning as a holding station. 58 patients were treated on the 14th and 75 on the 15th. Artillery fire still very prominent. On the 15th **Privates Adinolfi, Bischoff, Casalino, Caswell, Hutchison, Jackson, Maycroft, Warren, and Judge** were promoted to the grade of Private First—class. A movie "Lost in a Harem" was shown to the patients and men of the company on the 15th. That evening **Technician fourth grade McNaulty** of the special service department entertained the complement and patients with a 9 piece orchestra.

16 January 1945 72 patients were treated on this day. **Capt. Craig** was relieved of assignment and duty and assigned to the 591st Field Artillery. Lt. Jennings with 2 Medical Technicians and 2 ambulances moved to Stavelot and established an ambulance relay point in support of the 517th Regiment. They had

advanced to the South and East. The regimental aid station was now set up in Henimont. They transported casualties to the Clearing Station at the Sanatorium.

3 17 January 1945 82 patients were treated. A buzz bomb fell 1000 yards from the station. 8 civilians and one soldier were administered aid for minor cuts received from flying glass. Windows in the building occupied by the station were broken by [but] no casualties here. Lt. Robson assigned and joined company. 18 January 1945 81 patients in holding station. The 424th and the 517th having achieved their objective, the 424th went into reserve while the 517th was attached to the 30th Division which was on the 106th Division's left. **Lt. Jennings** relay point was discontinued. The ambulance with the 592nd Field Artillery returned.

19 January 1945 75 patients treated. P-X supplies were received and distributed.

20 January 1945 62 patients in station. **Technician fifth grade Heillman** and a 15 piece band entertained the patients and men of the company with magic and music. Lt. Shryock took the drummer's position for several numbers and was well received.

21 January 1945 57 patients in station.

22 January 1945 75 patients in station.

23 January 1945 61 patients being treated. A three piece musical group entertained the patients. 24 January 1945 80 patients in station. Clearing Station moving to Chau du Grand Chene near Esneux. All units of the Division other than the 424th Infantry Regiment and the 2 Field Artillery Battalion were not needed to further reduce Von Runstedt's (sic) bulge. Several men of the company sent to Hody to hold the buildings in the town for the company.

25 January 1945 All patients in station not able to be returned to duty were transferred to the Clearing Station now in rest area. Sgt. Hulsey and Pfc Adinolfi leave for a 3 day pass in Paris. **Pfc. Harold B. Smith** on detached service with the 424th Inf was killed in action. At the time he was acting as an aid man with L Company. His actions before his demise were exemplary so much that recommendation for the Silver Star will be made. He braved intense small arm fire to give aid to a Doughboy. On returning for a litter he was deliberately shot in the back by a German sniper who now is extremely sorry that he performed such an act.

26 January 1945 The company moves to rest area at Hody, Belgium.

27-31 January 1945 In rest area at Hody. The men take time to clean up and care for their equipment. Company equipment is repaired and restored to functioning conditions. On the 28th the entire company went by convoy to the Clearing Station where they witnessed **Sgt. Reinhardt** of C Company receive a battle field commission. General Perrin also presented **Technician fourth grade Pawasarat and Pfc. Buckley** with the Bronze Star Award. **Technician fifth grade Ballantyne and Pfc. Balarzs** were unable to receive the Bronze Star Award at this presentation as they were still on detached service with the 424th.

On the 29th the 424th was relieved from the line. All men on detached service with this unit were returned. Inspection of clothing and equipment was made. Requisitions were submitted. P-X supplies were received and issued. **Adinolfi and Hulsey** returned from Paris after 3 exciting days of sight seeing. On the

31st some clothing and equipment was received and issued to the men. **Lt. Shyrock** left for a 3 day pass in Paris.

Lt. Jennings transferred to Division Surgeon's office the 27th but refused position vacated by **Capt. Klett** who was left in England at a General Hospital. Lt. Jennings to stay with company. **Lt. Rhinehardt** MAC attached unassigned to company.

Technician third grade Castaldo transferred to B Company but remains with company on detached service. **Pfc. Wilbert H. Walters** promoted to the grade of Technician fifth grade.

The month ended with 3 Medical Officers, 2 MAC Officers, and 81 enlisted men in the company. In the minds of all was the offensive that the Russians were waging. We are wondering how this marvelous offensive will effect the outcome of the war. Interesting discussions have been started over this offensive.

Signed **ROBERT C. MITTERLING**
Capt. MC Commanding

COMPANY 'D' 331ST MEDICAL BATTALION APO #443, U. S. Army UNIT HISTORY

(10 Dec - 31 Dec 1944)

On the morning of 10 December 1944, at 0900 hours, Co. 'D' 331st Med Bn (Clearing Company for the 106th Inf Div) moved from its bivouac area in the vicinity of St. Vith, via motor convoy, into the town of St. Vith. At this time the actual strength of the Company was as follows: 10 MC Off, 2 DC Off, and 1 MAC; making a total of 13 Off, of which 9 were Captains (1 atchd unasgd) and 4 1st Lieutenants; the enlisted personnel was composed of 97 EM.

Captain Joseph W. Grosh, M. C. was Commanding Officer and **John J. Buck** was 1st Sgt. The Company occupied the buildings, with the troops of the 2nd Division which were operating a Clearing Station there, at that time. For two days the Company afforded themselves the opportunity of observing the 2nd Div. Clr Sta in operation, learning a great deal from their combat experiences, and exchanging ideas with them. At 0001 hours,

12 December 1944 the 106th Clearing Station was opened to receive casualties in the same buildings, #5 Aachen Strasse, St. Vith, Belgium, now vacated by the 2nd Division. The tactical positions, and administrative and technical set-up of troops of the 106th Inf Div were practically identical with those formerly used by the 2nd Division.

During our first day of operation we treated 78 cases, transferred 13 cases and returned to duty 4 cases from all units served. There were four Battle Casualties admitted during this first day. The first of whom was **Pvt Koukol, John L.**, ASN xxxxxxxx, of Co 'B', 422 Inf Regt with the following diagnosis, BC WIA Shell Wound (High Explosive) Pert W, leg, left, middle third, S, Shell Fragment.

Two of the four Battle Casualties were classified as seriously wounded, and two slightly wounded. The remainder of cases admitted on this date included, Cold and moisture, reaction to, feet, bilateral, S, Nasopharyngitis, Furuncles and Gastroenteritis.

On the 13 December 1944 we treated 110 cases, transferred 15 cases; and returned to duty 6 cases. Eleven of these were Battle Casualties and the remainder included cases diagnosed as Trench Foot, Nasopharyngitis, Gastro-enteritis, etc.

On the 14 December 1944 we treated 141 cases, transferred 16 cases, and returned 10 cases to duty. Six of the 141 cases were Battle Casualties and diagnoses of the remaining included, Pneumonia, Trench Foot, Gastritis, Sprains, Bronchitis, etc.

On the 15 December 1944 we treated 151 cases, transferred 33 cases and returned 22 cases to duty. Again there were a considerable number of cases of Trench Foot (Cold and moisture, reaction to, feet) admitted. A majority of these men were not wearing Galoshes and had been on duty outside, exposed to extreme cold and damp weather for long periods of time.

A survey of the cases of Trench Foot (Cold and moist, reaction to, ft,) revealed that the major incidence occurred in the 422nd Regt. The men of this Regt were not issued galoshes until several days after moving into positions along the front lines. They had been required to stay in outpost positions for extended periods of time and facilities for keeping clean dry socks on their feet were inadequate.

2 At about 0600 hours 16 December 1944 the 106th Inf Div was subjected to heavy enemy artillery fire which marked the beginning of a major enemy drive which had St. Vith as one of its main objectives. Units of our Division were bearing the brunt of the attack and as a result at about 0830 hours our station began to receive its first large group of battle casualties. Some of the first casualties brought in were Civilians from the vicinity of St. Vith. The majority of the wounds were inflicted by fragments of high explosive shells.

The number of cases treated were 272, transferred 190 cases (most of which were Battle Casualties) and returned to duty 25 cases. No contact could be made with **Collecting Company 'B' 331st Med Bn** on this day and they have not been heard from even at this time and are now listed as Missing In Action. The majority of our casualties were from the 424th Inf Regt (70 BC and 16 NBC).

We had 155 battle casualties of which 25 cases were considered serious. The type of wounds varied, chest and face the most serious and many of the legs and arms very severe. In all cases where necessary Penicillin and Plasma were liberally administered to prevent infection and shock. The use of which improved greatly the condition of most of the patients.

During the day the town of St. Vith was subjected to enemy artillery fire and a few of the shells landed 1000 to 2000 yards from the Clearing Station. Because of the rapid advance of the German Forces toward St. Vith a reconnaissance party was sent to the rear to find a new location for our Clearing station. A site was found at Vielsalm, Belgium.

A member of our organization **Pvt William J. Berry**, ASN xxxxxxxx, was evacuated 16 December 1944 to the 67th Evacuation Hospital with the following diagnosis Nasopharyngitis, acute, catarrhal, S, LOD Yes. Our strength on this day was therefore 13 Officers and 96 enlisted personnel. Our troops were forced back by the enemy and because of the unfavorable tactical situation on the morning of the 17 December 1944 it was decided to move the Clearing Station to Vielsalm, Belgium.

The 2nd Clearing Platoon departed from St. Vith at 1130 hours 17 December 1944 and by infiltration via motor convoy arrived at Vielsalm, Belgium at 1345. The distance traveled was approximately 18 kms and the reason for the delay in arrival was that the 7th Armored Division was moving up to meet the German attack and had the road blocked at many places. The new Station opened at 1430 hours in a building which was being used as a Catholic boarding school.

The 1st Platoon departed from St. Vith by motor convoy at 1630 hours 17 December 1944 and arrived at Vielsalm at 0615 hours 18 December 1944. The reason for the 14 hr trip was that the St. Vith - Vielsalm highway was jammed with 7th Armored vehicles moving up to St. Vith to engage the enemy.

At this time the general tactical situation was as follows: The 422nd and 423rd Inf Regts were reported to be cut-off in the vicinity of Schonberg [Schönberg], Belgium. The enemy's main effort was a twin pincers drive moving from Malmedy to Stavelot on the north and on the south from south of St. Vith to Bastogne. Both of these pincers were aimed at closing in on LaRoche and Houffalize.

By 2400 hours 17 December 1944 the enemy's leading elements had reached Houffalize on the south and Stavelot on the north. A few patrols and paratroopers were reported east of Vielsalm attacking our rear lines of communication leading from Vielsalm to LaRoche, Belgium.

The number of cases treated this day 17 December 1944 was 130 cases, transferred 90 cases and returned to duty 27 cases. Of these cases 64 were battle casualties of which 10 were serious. The non-battle casualties were made up of feet cases, nasopharyngitis, cellulitis and exhaustion. The battle casualties were still varied with wounds of the legs and arms most prevalent, and a few of the face and buttocks.

3 Due to the seriousness of the tactical situation and the proximity of the enemy it was necessary to make a reconnaissance to the rear to find a site for our Clearing Station in case movement was necessary. A place was found at LaRoche, Belgium and on 18th December 1944 the 1st Platoon departed from Vielsalm via motor convoy at 1200 hours. They arrived at LaRoche, Belgium (distance traveled 20 miles) at 1330 hours and established and opened a Clearing Station at 1400 hours.

The 2nd Platoon remained at Vielsalm handling the more serious cases with the 1st Platoon acting as a holding station at LaRoche.

Casualties were very heavy in the vicinity of St. Vith and Vielsalm and the 2nd Platoon was exceptionally busy during their entire stay at Vielsalm. Enlisted men and Officers were so busy caring for patients that they forgot about the dangerous location they were in and were heedless of the artillery and small arms which was so very close. All personnel of the 2nd Platoon worked day and night.

Collecting Company 'A', 331st Medical Battalion joined us at Vielsalm and the enlisted men rendered valuable service both as technicians and litter bearers.

Officers of 'A' Company worked in admission and surgery assisting our Officers in handling the heavy load of patients. The majority of patients received had been injured 24 to 48 hours previous to being brought to the Clearing station and because of the delay in treatment and exposure to extreme cold, many of them were suffering from deep shock.

A large number of the seriously wounded cases were suffering from perforating wounds of the chest and many others with compound fractures. Several cases from Armored outfits had their legs blown-off and were in very deep shock on admission. During this period many of our worst casualties were from the 7th and 9th Armored Divisions. We had lost contact with the **422nd and 423rd Inf. Regts** and hence they were evacuating no casualties to us.

However, we received many casualties from the 424th Inf. Regt. In many instances it was necessary to give at least four patients plasma at the same time. Many patients brought into the station were so deep in shock that no vein could be found for the administration of plasma. In these cases it became necessary to give plasma in the Femoral vein. This was the first time this procedure had been attempted by Medical Officers of this unit. No difficulty was encountered and patients responded to the treatment remarkably well.

Two amputations were done in the station during this period of time. As evacuation of patients being difficult and for a period of time stopped altogether (due to the tactical situation) it became necessary to give whole blood to some patients. As a whole, supplies were adequate but we were unable to obtain whole blood. A request for volunteer blood donors was made through-out the station. Within one hour 30 patients (cases of Trench Foot) had given their names as blood donors. The transfusions were successfully completed by the Medical Officers using makeshift equipment and good American ingenuity.

One day ran into another with no one paying much attention to the time of day but each day seeming busier than the preceding one. Medical Officers from Division Headquarters and from the 42nd Field Hospital who were stranded with us, helped in the work through-out the station; giving a considerable amount of valuable aid to our own overburdened Medical Officers.

Along with the Medical Officers, **Chaplain Fleming** worked both night and day, giving invaluable assistance to Officers and technicians in the surgical treatment room, accomplishing his own work as well as helping in surgery work when he could.

The 22nd December 1944 found the tactical situation very hazardous. There was no contact between the 2nd Platoon at Vielsalm and the 1st Platoon at LaRoche, the road having been cut by the Germans between LaRoche and Houffalize, Belgium.

4 The roads on three sides of Vielsalm had been blocked, thus leaving only one escape route. This was the road leading to the northwest, to Werbomont, Belgium, now held open by the **82nd Airborne Division**. The enlisted personnel knew little of the true situation around Vielsalm which was probably a sizeable factor in their being able to carry out a large amount of their work without mental alarm.

A resume of casualties treated each day in Vielsalm is as follows:

18 December 1944 we treated 247 cases, transferred 175 cases and returned to duty 2 cases. 2 Cases died in the Station. They were: **Sgt John Jambrano**, ASN xxxxxxxx, Hq 14th Cavalry with the following diagnosis: BC WIA GSW Chest & FC lt arm, GSW rt arm & rt hand (Machine Gun), LOD Yes, death at 1600 hours and **Sgt Daniel M. Bickel**, ASN xxxxxxxx, Co K 424th Inf Regt with the following diagnosis: BC WIA Pen & sucking W rt chest, GSW rt Arm SV, LOD Yes death at 1530 hours.

19 December 1944 we treated 111 cases, transferred 92 cases and returned to duty 1 case. 2 Cases died in Station. They were: **Pvt Valentino Pizzingrillo**, ASN xxxxxxxx, MD 38th Inf Regt, with the following diagnosis: BC WIA Shell Wound Lac W FCC tibia & fibula LOD Yes and **Pvt Edward F. Wallis**, ASN xxxxxxxx, Co B 635 AAA, with the following diagnosis: BC WIA rt leg amputated, FC left leg, SV, Shell Fragment (High Explosive) LOD Yes.

20 December 1944 we treated 182 cases, transferred 88 cases and returned to duty 4 cases.

21 December 1944 we treated 295 cases, transferred 144 cases and returned to duty 22 cases. 22 December 1944 we treated 234 cases, transferred 96 cases and returned to duty 4 cases.

On the 22 December 1944 one section of the 2nd platoon departed from Vielsalm via motor convoy for Werbomont, Belgium at 1230 hours. They arrived at 1500 hours (distance of approximately 18 miles) and established and opened a Clearing Station to receive patients at 1600 hours. The remaining section of the 2nd Platoon continued to operate a Clearing Station at Vielsalm until 1900 hours, when it closed the station and proceeded with remaining personnel and essential equipment to Werbomont via motor convoy. They arrived at 2250 hours.

Artillery fire was continuous throughout most of the night, and enemy planes dropped flares and bombs within a few miles of the station shortly after midnight.

On the 23 December 1944 the Platoon reformed the station tentage. Erecting the six Ward Tents and one pyramidal tent so as to form the pattern of a cross. In the area surrounding our station were located, the 45th Field Hospital, 1st Army Clearing Station some collecting stations and Company 'A' 331st Medical Battalion. The 1st platoon arrived at about 1700 hours after several hectic days of moving about, keeping just a little ahead of the German forces.

This reunion was a happy occasion for all, concerned and the whole company was again intact with the exception of three men; one man killed in action another seriously wounded in action and one man evacuated with Nasopharyngitis.

5 The following is a resume concerning the activities of the 1st Platoon at LaRoche, Belgium with a statement by **Captain Grosh**, M.C. and **Captain Elmer Lewis**, M. C. 1st Platoon Commander. Statement of Captain Joseph W. Grosh, M.C. Commanding Officer, Co. D 331 Med BN:

On the afternoon of 18 December 1944 at about 1300 hours I received orders to move the 1st Clearing Platoon from Vielsalm to LaRoche. We proceeded at 1100 hours and arrived at LaRoche at 1500 hours. We set-up our Station in a Catholic school. The station opened at 1600 hours. About a half hour later we received our first casualties from the 2nd Platoon located at Vielsalm. These casualties were walking wounded, Cold and Moisture reaction to feet, etc., and Nasopharyngitis.

They numbered approximately 40 cases. They were sent to us to relieve the overburdened 2nd Platoon which was receiving a large number of seriously injured casualties at Vielsalm. In addition to the above casualties we received battle casualties from other units in the vicinity of LaRoche.

I stayed with the first platoon until approximately 1400 hours 19 December 1944 when we were contacted by Battalion Hq and I was requested to return to Vielsalm. I turned the Command of the station over to

Captain Lewis, Platoon leader of the 1st Platoon and proceeded to Vielsalm where I arrived at 1530 hours. The following is an account of the action of the 1st Platoon from the time of my departure until the return of the 1st Platoon to Werbomont 23 December 1944.

STATEMENT of **Captain Elmer W. Lewis**, M. C. 1st Platoon Commander:

I assumed command of the 1st Platoon Clearing Station at LaRoche at 1500 hours when Captain Grosh left for Vielsalm. At 1600 hours we received some casualties from the 45th Field Hospital at St. Vith. These were given hot drinks and one patient who had a tension Pneumo-Thorax. A Thoraco Centesis [thoracentesis] was performed with under water drainage and the patient was evacuated in an improved condition.

On the morning of the 20 December 1944 at approximately 0600 hours enemy shells began landing at irregular intervals in the vicinity of our Clearing Station. At approximately 0900 hours an Officer was sent to the Hq of Colonel Adams, Tank Cmdr, of the 7th Armored Division to get information as to the tactical situation as we were out of contact with our own Hq and had no other source of information. We were told there was no immediate danger, advised to sit-tight and if the situation changed we would be notified. Col. Adams, also, told us that if it became necessary to evacuate he would send us three trucks from the 446th QM transport Troop of the 7th Armored Division. We had no vehicles with us with the exception of one 3/4 ton maintenance truck loaded with tools and equipment and gasoline.

CWO John A. Eckwerth arrived at 0900 hours from Liege, Belgium with a 2 ½ ton truck completely loaded with medical supplies. We had no other transportation as all our trucks were with the 2nd Platoon at Vielsalm. The shelling was less for an hour or so until about 1100 hours when after several near hits from High Explosive Shells (probably 88MM) it was decided to evacuate our patients. The 2 ½ ton truck from Liege, Belgium with medical supplies having been unloaded, 34 patients were evacuated in this truck. They were accompanied by 1st Lt. Monroe E. Neuman, M. C.

He was to take them to an Evacuation Hospital at Libin, Belgium but when he arrived there the hospital was unable to accept them and so he went to the 130th General Hospital. He then started back (the following morning 21st December 1944) and rejoined us enroute to Dinant, Belgium at about 1100 hours 21 December 1944. The last word we had from Battalion Hq was about 0900 hours when S/Sgt Kirk (Co. D) arrived from Vielsalm. He had no orders except a request for a report on patients which we planned to send. We later learned that 1st Lt. Wanderman, left Vielsalm about ½ to 1 hour after S/Sgt. Kirk but was unable to get through being fired upon and wounded enroute.

6 At 1130 hours Captain Lifchez and 1st Lt. Boris Krynski were sent in a weapons carrier to locate a new site for our station in the event it should be necessary to move which we did not intend to do at this time because of information received from the 7th Armored Division.

Lt. Krynski and Captain Lifchez were under shell-fire in leaving LaRoche and after locating a site at Malreaux, Belgium about 5 miles distant. They were forced to return by another route due to enemy action and did not arrive back at our station until approximately 1545 hours at which time they reported that the road to Vielsalm was still closed.

At 1300 hours a request for an ambulance and aid for casualties was reported on the road between LaRoche and Vielsalm in the vicinity of Samree, Belgium. **Capt George M. Osborne, M.C., and Tec 4**

Leland A. Dubois, Tec 4 William C. Essary Jr., Tec 4 Paul M. Eaton, Pfc Edward E. Heimann, Pvt Domingo P. Perez were sent. They reported to **Lt. Col. Karpinski** where they were under shell-fire as active combat was going on here with small arms fire, Mortar fire and Armored vehicles. Casualties were given aid and evacuated by ambulance. Tec 4 Dubois volunteered to remain behind and assist Lt. Col. Karpinski when he requested a man be left with him. The rest returned to our station.

At about 1315 hours we received a direct hit just in front of our station which was probably an 88MM High Explosive shell. Fragments struck and instantly killed **Tec 5 John I. Quinlan**, ASN xxxxxx, Co. D 331 Med Bn. The diagnosis made on this man was: BC KIA SW (HE) Pen occipital region left SV SF, LOD Yes death at 1315 hours. Also killed instantly was **Tec 5 Raymond Lawler** Hq Co 106th Inf Div with wounds of rt chest and rt. arm.

These men were in front of the building at the time working on our kitchen equipment which we were getting ready to load. About 1345 hours another shell burst just in front of our station. A fragment coming through the window wounded T/Sgt Theodore Buriak, Co. D 331 Med Bn. His right ilium was shattered and a laceration of the lower right quadrant of the abdominal wall was present. His leg was splinted, hemorrhage controlled, morphine given and two units of Plasma and he was immediately evacuated to the 130th General Hospital. His condition was good although we were not sure whether he had a perforation of the bowel or not.

We also evacuated **Sgt. Ralph H. Brown**, ASN xxxxxxxx, with Nasopharyngitis, cat., ac., to the same hospital. At about 1415 hours we received word from the 42nd Field Hospital that they were leaving and they took two other battle casualties that we had received from the 7th Armored Division. It was decided to evacuate as much of our material as we could and most of our personnel leaving behind a skeleton crew of one Officer and 8 EM to give aid to any casualties we might receive.

We got 3 2 ½ ton trucks from the 443 QM Transport Troop and loaded as much material on them as we could, giving priority to Personnel, essential medical equipment and valuable medical equipment such as Plasma. A large quantity having been brought that morning in the 2 ½ ton truck from Liege by **CWO Eckwerth** (most of which was intended for the station at Vielsalm). These were loaded and left with all personnel including 5 patients who were ready to return to duty, at about 1500 hours, leaving behind the skeleton crew mentioned above.

At about 1530 hours a liaison man was sent to **Col. Adams** Hq. and we were informed that casualties were being cared for at a Collecting Station about 3 miles out of LaRoche on the road to Malreaux and that we were serving no useful purpose in remaining and Col. Adams advised us to leave immediately. This we did and left LaRoche at about 1700 hours with **Capt. Lifchez** and **1st Lt. Krynski** and our 8 EM and two Army ambulances that reported in just as we were ready to leave. We met two more shortly after and they joined us.

When the trucks with the advance party was leaving they took a water trailer, one trailer containing an electric generator and other equipment but one trailer containing the Company Records and Safe was left behind. This was not noted in the excitement of the shelling and evacuating and we were not able to return for it when its absence was noted the following morning as by this time Malreaux, Belgium was being shelled.

We located at Malreaux, Belgium that night at about 1900 hours and contacted the advance Hq. of the Third Armored Division at Malreaux to see if they could give us any information on how we could get to

Vielsalm. They told us that they did not think we could get through and advised us that we should not try it that night.

7 At about 2300 hours our guards reported lights in a nearby house flashing on and off at regular intervals, in the manner of signals. **Capt. Osborne** confirmed this and on knocking on the door with the intention of warning them or investigating the door was slammed shut and barred. He reported this to a Reconnaissance Car in town and they came out, shots were exchanged between the house and the car and five prisoners were taken and turned over to the local police.

We had left a liaison agent at the Advance Headquarters of the 3rd Armored Division and he reported at 0615 that there was no change. While serving breakfast at 0730 shells began landing in our vicinity and small arms fire was heard. We had intended contacting Advance Hq of the 3rd Armored Division again and perhaps going to their Hq. at Werbomont, Belgium but this route now seemed cut-off and we left for Durbuy, Belgium which seemed to be the only road open.

Being unable to get any information there we went on to Dinant, Belgium where we hoped to be able to contact our Division Hq. This not being possible at the time it was decided to remain there until we could get word to our own Hq. or learn their location. We contacted QM Hq. in Dinant and they quartered us in an empty hotel that night. They had no information as to the tactical situation but when I returned at 0800 hours 22 December 1944, they had moved to the other side of the river.

As we could not get quarters there an Advance Agent was sent to Givet, Belgium where he contacted the CO, of the Repl Pool. He advised us to go to Namur, Belgium and try to contact the 1st Army there. We moved our convoy to Namur. Ten more ambulances having joined us after being unable to get to Vielsalm the day before the 21 December 1944. At Namur our advance agent was able to contact G-3 of the 1st Army and after some delay received orders about 1800 to report to the 134th Medical Group at Verviers, Belgium. By the time our convoy was located it was 2100 hours and men were housed in a vacant house in the outskirts of Namur.

We left at 0730 on the 23 December 1944 for Verviers where we reported. We were told there by the CO, to report to our own Hq. in the vicinity of Werbomont, Belgium. We left Verviers at 1700 hours and reported to our Hq. at about 2000 hours on the 23 December 1944. Equipment we left at LaRoche, Belgium consisted of Footlockers and Duffle bags of Officers and Duffle Bags of Enlisted Men. Medical Equipment consisting of: Litters, several blanket cases and 2 units of our kitchen, stove, etc.

On the 23 December 1944 when the company was again functioning as a whole the strength was still 13 Officers but the enlisted personnel was now reduced to 93 men. On that date we treated 114 cases, transferred 58 cases and returned 2 cases to duty from all units served.

On 24 December 1944, 130 cases were treated, 117 cases were transferred, and 13 were returned too duty. Aside from routine treatment and function, the company was given a lift in spirits when thousands of heavy bombers (B-17 Fortresses) flew over head bound for Germany. A few of these plus a few of our protective fighter planes were downed by flak and enemy aircraft.

The Clearing Station at Werbomont was closed at 1700 hours 24 December 1944, and the Company was transported via motor convoy, a distance of 15 miles, to Banneux, Belgium arriving at 1945 hours.

The **106th Division Clearing Station** was opened to receive casualties at 1000 hours 25 December 1944. In this location the station was operating in a building used as an orphanage and school for small children, war victims, sponsored by the Catholic Church under the direct supervision of two priests and several nuns.

Casualty admissions and dispositions for 25 December 1944 were as follows:

17 cases treated, 17 cases evacuated to the rear, and none returned to duty. One of our own units (424th Inf Regt) was committed but we were giving no direct support to any other units, hence the reason for such a small number of cases received for treatment on this date.

Our Clearing Station treated few casualties at Banneux, Belgium with the exception of the 26 December 1944. On that day the 424th Inf Regt was subjected to a heavy enemy artillery barrage which brought us many casualties. Our records show 128 cases treated, 121 cases transferred and 3 cases returned to duty.

On approximately the 27 December 1944 the 424th Inf Regt was sent to a rest area.

8 Also on the 26 December 1944 **Captain Jack B. Kamholz** was reld fr atchd unasgd and assigned to Company "B" 331st Medical Battalion per Par. I, SO #116 Hq 331st Medical Battalion and **Tec 4 Alexander W. Krupka**, ASN 11044475, Company "B" was placed on DS with us per the same Special Order Par. 3. Our strength at this time was 12 Officers and 93 enlisted personnel, plus 1 EM on Detached Service with us.

While at Banneux the Company had an opportunity to check shortages and serviceability of equipment. Lists were compiled of both Company and personal equipment shortages were made and turned in on requisition for issue. Many men had lost equipment particularly, the 1st Platoon, who, due to their hasty departure from LaRoche, had little more than the clothing they were wearing.

On the 27 December 1944 we treated 55 cases, transferred 16 cases and returned 3 cases to duty.

On the 28 December 1944 we treated 70 cases, transferred 3 cases and returned 9 cases to duty.

Because we were quite a distance from other units of our Division which were in rest areas near Esneux, Belgium, we made plans to move our Clearing Station to Esneux on the 28 December 1944. At 1630 hours 28 December 1944 the 2nd Platoon left Banneux via motor convoy for Esneux, arriving there about 1730 hours. Distance traveled 12 miles.

The 1st Platoon departed from Banneux at 1000 on 29 December 1944. They joined the 2nd Platoon at Esneux at 1130 hours. The Clearing Station was located in a spacious Chateau which had very good accommodations for treatment and care of patients.

On 29 December 1944 at 1630 hours a V-I bomb landed approximately 400 yards from our building and shattered nearly all the windows in the building. Sgt Kenneth Finlayson was cut by flying glass while on duty in the admission room. Four EM of Hq Det were also slightly cut by flying glass. During our stay at Esneux V-1 Bombs came over the building at frequent intervals and many landed near enough to shake the building.

Because our Division was receiving reinforcements and in the process of re-equipping we had very few casualties while here. The year's end found us still at Esneux. On the 29 December 1944 we treated 67 cases, transferred 14 cases and returned to duty 22 cases from all units served.

On the 30 December 1944 we treated 50 cases, transferred 3 cases and returned to duty 13 cases. On this date **1st Sgt John J. Buck**, ASN xxxxxxxx, was evacuated to the 128th Evacuation Hospital with the following diagnosis: NBC Cholangitis, ac., cat., S, cause undet., LOD Yes. Our strength was now 12 Officers and 92 enlisted personnel. **S/Sgt Walter L. Hearn** was appointed acting 1st Sgt.

On the 31 December 1944 we treated 62 cases, transferred 7 cases, and returned to duty 10 cases. On the last day of the month our strength remained the same as already shown for the 30 December 1944. Our Clearing Station was still at Esneux, Belgium and a Supplementary Report was this date turned in on Casualties handled by the 1st Platoon at LaRoche, Belgium on the 19 and 20 December 1944. Which were:

19 December 1944 we treated 49 cases, transferred 7 cases and returned 0 to duty;

20 December 1944 we treated 146 cases, transferred 146 cases and returned 0 to duty.

COMPANY "D" 331ST MEDICAL BATTALION APO #443, U. S. Army UNIT HISTORY (1 Jan - 31 January 1945)

The first day of 1945 found our Clearing Station still operating in the Chateau near Esneux, Belgium K452158 and our census of patients treated were 59 cases, transferred 8 cases, and returned to duty 9 cases from all units served. Our Company had 12 Officers of which 9 were MC, 2 DC, and 1 MAC (8 Captains and 4 1st Lieutenants) 92 EM and 1 EM on Detached Service with us from Company "B" 331 Medical Battalion (**Tec 4 Alexander W. Krupka**). **Captain Joseph L. Grosh**, M. C. was commanding officer and **S/Sgt Walter L. Hearn** was acting 1st Sgt.

December 1944 had been a very eventful month for our outfit and we had no idea of what the future might hold for us. The tactical situation was improving considerably in our favor and the enemy was being forced back toward St. Vith while suffering heavy casualties. The 424th Inf Regt was in a rest area. While the two other infantry Regiments of the 106th Infantry Division (422nd and 423rd) were still Missing In Action with the exception of a few hundred men who had infiltrated through the enemy lines.

During the first week of January most of the time was spent in reorganizing the various remaining units of our Division and as a result the majority of casualties treated at the 106th Division Clearing Station were non-battle casualties with a majority of these being trench foot and frostbite and likewise many cases of Nasopharyngitis. During this week ichthyol ointment was used in some of the cases of frostbite of the feet. The results were not very satisfactory and it was decided to return to the original plan of treatment, namely, using rest and elevation of the feet.

In the period from the 1st January to the 10 January 1945 our Company was completely equipped as to individual personnel and organizational equipment and we were prepared to serve in a more forward echelon. Most of the enlisted personnel had needed almost complete re-equipping especially the 1st Platoon who had through necessity left most of their personal and organizational equipment at LaRoche, Belgium on 20 December 1944.

After about a week of comparative inactivity treating mostly foot cases and upper respiratory cases (Nasopharyngitis) the majority of the Officers and enlisted personnel were anxious to get back to work and return to action again as we were at Vielsalm and Werbomont, Belgium in December 1944.

Our 424th Inf Regt was to be sent back into the line again and therefore a reconnaissance was made to find a site for a Clearing Station. A site was located which was not very desirable at Niveze, Belgium near Spa, Belgium. The Clearing Station was located in a building which was not large enough but due to the concentration of troops in this area it was necessary to make use of it regardless.

Resume of Activities from 1st January to 30 January 1945: 1 January 1945 we treated 59 cases, transferred 8 cases, and returned to duty 9 cases. 2 January 1945 we treated 71 cases, transferred 11 cases, and returned to duty 3 cases. **Captain Jack H. Kamholz** was reassigned to our Company while **1st Lt. Monroe E. Neumann** was transferred to Company "B" 331 Medical Battalion and **Tec 5 Nicos George** was transferred to Hq Detachment per Special Order #1 Hq 331 Medical Battalion dated 1 Jan 45.

Also on this day **Tec 4 Jack Reasor** and **Tec 5 Louis A. Schaum Jr.** were reduced to the grade of private without prejudice while **Tec 4 Shimko** was promoted to the rank of **S/Sgt Tec 4 Essary** to Sgt and the following Tec 5's promoted to **Tec 4, Richter, Whayne Jr, Bauguess, and Eaton**, the following Pfc's were promoted to Tec 5, **Russell, Null, Yochum, Kroboth and Lawson.**

Our strength was now 12 officers of which 9 were Captains and 3 1st Lt and now 91 EM.

2

3 January 1945 we treated 86 cases, transferred 16 cases and returned to duty 14 cases.

4 January 1945 we treated 83 cases, transferred 8 cases and returned to duty 22 cases.

5 January 1945 we treated 57 cases, transferred 5 cases and returned to duty 214 cases.

6 January 1945 we treated 141 cases, transferred 0 cases and returned to duty 12 cases.

7 January 1945 we treated 44 cases, transferred 3 cases and returned to duty 6 cases.

8 January 1945 we treated 51 cases, transferred 1 case and returned to duty 9 cases. On this date **Pvt Charles J. Zalutsky**, ASN xxxxxxxx, was placed on Detached Service as a medical aid-man with the **424th Inf Regt.**

9 January 1945 we treated 46 cases, transferred 2 cases and returned to duty 8 cases.

On the 10 January 1945 the 1st Platoon of our Company departed from Esneux, Belgium via motor convoy and arrived at Niveze, Belgium K705125 at 1530 hours. The distance traveled was 21 miles. The Clearing Station was set-up and opened at 1700 hours. This was mainly an administrative move and the casualties received here were light, consisting mainly of foot cases and respiratory diseases (Nasopharyngitis). On

this day we treated 37 cases, transferred 3 cases and returned to duty 6 cases. The Clearing Station at Esneux, Belgium was closed at 1700 hours.

On the 11 January 1945 the 2nd Platoon departed from Esneux, Belgium at 0900 hours, via motor convoy and rejoined the 1st Platoon at Niveze at 1130 hours. The 2nd Platoon was kept in reserve and prepared to move at any time while the 1st Platoon operated the Station. The tactical situation had changed and we were preparing to attack.

The 1st Platoon operated the station at Niveze from 1530 hours 10 January 1945 until 1600 hours 13 January 1945.

On the 13 January 1945 2nd Platoon departed at 1300 hours via motor convoy from Niveze and arrived at Cour [Coo], Belgium K665053 at 1400 hours. They established and opened a Clearing Station in the Provincial Sanatorium (Tuberculosis sanatorium for Belgian Civilians). This was quite a large building and was very suitable for a Clearing Station.

The 1st Platoon closed the Clearing Station at 1600 hours 13 January 1916 and rejoined the 2nd Platoon at 1630. The distance traveled was six miles.

The 424th Inf Regt was sent into combat on the 11 January 1945 and were attacking and gaining much ground. Therefore during the night of 11 January we began to receive but very few casualties and these were still mostly non-battle casualties. The next day 12 January 1945 was still light and mostly non-battle casualties.

However, on the 13 January 1945 in our new location at Cour, Belgium we were nearer the front and much better prepared to receive battle casualties. Our troops composed of the 424th Inf Regt, 81st Eng (C) Bn, and 517th Parachute Infantry were now attacking on the south and east of Stavelot, Belgium. Our casualties were mostly battle casualties and were quite heavy.

Due to the efficient evacuation of patients by First Army Ambulances in spite of very icy roads we were able to clear these patients without creating a bottleneck. Several severe chest wounds were treated and evacuated. One of these was a sucking wound of the chest with probable spinal cord injury and also having a compound fracture of the femur.

3 The majority of the wounds seen were due to Artillery and Mortar fire. Also, many of our patients had been exposed to zero weather for several hours before receiving initial First-Aid Treatment but in spite of this few were in shock. Nine units of Plasma were used without any untoward reaction. No single case needed more than 2 Units.

At about 1800 hours due to the hazardous and icy condition of the roads one of the 1st Army Ambulances turned over about 100 yards from the station with 5 of our patients whom we had just treated and evacuated. Fortunately none of these patients wounds were aggravated due to this accident.

Casualties were not as heavy on the 14 January 1945 as they had been on the previous day but we had many admissions because of frostbite, mostly feet cases, and some Nasopharyngitis. The battle casualties were due to Artillery, rifle, and mines. The German forces were steadily retreating but were leaving anti-personnel mines behind them causing much delay to our troops. For several days we continued to receive

heavy casualties most of them though were frostbitten feet, some exhaustion cases, and injuries due to mines.

Resume of Activities for the period from 11 January 1945 to 20 January 1945:

11 January 1945 we treated 39 cases, transferred 14 cases, and returned to duty 2 cases.

12 January 1945 we treated 62 cases, transferred 114 cases, and returned to duty 12 cases.

13 January 1945 we treated 186 cases, transferred 107 cases, and returned to duty 11 cases.

14 January 1945 we treated 180 cases, transferred 61 cases, and returned to duty 3 cases. On this date **Sgt Ralph R. Brown**, xxxxxxxx, and **Pvt William J. Barry** who had been transferred in December 1944 to Evacuation Hospitals due to Nasopharyngitis were reassigned. Our strength was now 12 Officers and 93 enlisted personnel.

15 January 1945 we treated 249 cases, transferred 814 cases and returned to duty 12 cases. On this date **Pfc Oliver B. Winkler**, xxxxxxxx, was placed on Detached Service with Division Headquarters (G-2). His job was to work in public relations office.

16 January 1945 we treated 268 cases, transferred 66 cases, and returned to duty 28 cases.

17 January 1945 we treated 289 cases, transferred 78 cases, and returned to duty 31 cases. On this day **Sgt Vincent J. Mustacchio**, xxxxxxxx, was transferred to the 128th Evacuation Hospital with the following diagnosis: NBC Urticaria, mod, SV, Generalized, type and cause undetermined, S, LOD Yes. Our personnel strength was therefore 12 Officers and 92 Enlisted Men of which two of these were on Detached Service.

18 January 1945 we treated 241 cases, transferred 49 cases, and returned to duty 30 cases. On the 17 January 1945 the Collecting Company "A" 331st Medical Battalion had become a holding company working in conjunction with the Clearing Station and was located at our former station in Niveze, Belgium. They were able to hold approximately 90 to 100 patients and treat them. We sent them mostly foot cases and enteritis and a few respiratory cases. By doing this we were able to hold patients until they could be returned to duty otherwise we would have been forced to evacuate them and they would have been lost to the 106th Division. During this procedure we had at Company "A" at one time as high as 90 patients.

18 January 1945 **Tec 5 Cleveland W. Mitchell**, xxxxxxxx, was transferred to the 96th Evacuation Hospital with the following diagnosis: NBC Bronchitis, cat, ac, cause undet., LOD Yes. Our enlisted Personnel was now 91 EM of which two were still on detached service.

4 19 January 1945 we treated 198 cases, transferred 8 cases, and returned to duty 12 cases. **Captain Elmer W. Lewis** was put on detached service with Hq Special Troops in the forward echelon. Captain Lewis was platoon leader of the 1st Platoon. In his absence **Captain George M. Osborne** was made platoon leader.

20 January 1945 we treated 210 cases, transferred 21 cases, and returned to duty 20 cases.

21 January 1945 we treated 218 cases, transferred 19 cases, and returned to duty 26 cases.

22 January 1945 we treated 215 cases, transferred 17 cases, and returned to duty 26 cases.

23 January 1945 we treated 195 cases, transferred 10 cases, and returned to duty 26 cases.

On the 24 January 1945 at 0930 hours the 1st Platoon departed via motor convoy for our former location at the Chateau, at Esneux, Belgium K6605. A previous reconnaissance had been made to the rear to see if this chateau was still available before the move was made.

We had personal knowledge of this location as we had previously operated our Clearing station from 28 December 1944 until 10 January 1945 and found it very satisfactory. The move was made from the Provincial Sanatorium because the First Army had priority on the building for one of their medical installations and we were not supporting any front line troops at this time. Our 424th Inf Regt was on the line near Diedenbergh, Belgium in the vicinity of St. Vith but they were being evacuated through the 7th Armored Division Clearing Station.

The 2nd Platoon remained at the Sanatorium Provincial until 25 January 1945 at 1000 hours when they departed via motor convoy from Cour for Esneux, Belgium. The patients had been transported to Esneux, on the 24 January by Ambulance convoy. Traveling conditions were very hazardous due to icy roads but all, vehicles reached their destination without accident. The distance traveled was 26 miles.

The only patients we were receiving while at Esneux, Belgium were those from the rear echelon and most were non-battle casualties. The majority of our cases during the next week were suffering from either frostbite and nasopharyngitis.

Shortly after midnight on 26 January 1945 a near calamity hit our company. Members of the 1st Platoon were awakened by smoke filling the room in which they were sleeping. They discovered that due to an overheated stove a fire had developed in the floor and was spreading rapidly between the rafters.

Members of the 1st Platoon quickly got the fire under control by chopping holes in the floor and dealing with the fire directly. Pvt Bowers and Tec 4 Swift showed unusual skill in fighting the fire. There were no casualties and none of the patients were in any great danger.

The following is a resume of the Activities of the Company from 24 Jan - 31 Jan 1945:

24 January 1945 we treated 167 cases, transferred 3 cases and returned to duty 24 cases.

25 January 1945 we treated 167 cases, transferred 21 cases, and returned to duty 42 cases.

26 January 1945 we treated 84 cases, transferred 6 cases, and returned to duty 30 cases. On this date Pvt Domingo P. Perez, xxxxxxxx, was evacuated to the 45th Evac. Hosp. with the following diagnosis: NBC Bronchitis, ac, cat, LOD Yes. This loss brought our enlisted personnel to 90 EM.

5 27 January 1945 we treated 56 cases, transferred 2 cases, and returned to duty 1 case. **Lt. Krynski** went to LaRoche, Belgium on this day to try to locate some of the equipment left there on the 20 December 1944 when it was necessary to make a hasty withdrawal due to the advance of the German Forces. However, it was a fruitless search. And the disposition of all medical equipment, Company records and personal equipment can not be determined whether it was captured by the Germans or whether the 7th Armored Division who occupied this city after our withdrawal managed to collect it.

28 January 1945 we treated 54 cases, transferred 1 case, and returned to duty 9 cases. **Tec 4 Whayne** was transferred to the 5th Evacuation Hospital in grade per Par 5 SO #6 Hq 1st U. S. Army dated 6 January 1945. Our enlisted personnel was now as low as 89 EM. Also **Pvt Charles J. Zalutsky**, xxxxxxxx, on DS 424th Infantry Regt was hospitalized in the 7th Armd Div Clr Sta with the following diagnosis: LIA BC Frostbite both ft, S, LOD Yes. General Perrin visited the Clearing Station this date, and conferred honors on Officers and EM from Hq & Hq Det and Company "C" 331 Med Bn.

29 January 1945 we treated 68 cases, transferred 14 cases and returned to duty 11 cases.

30 January 1945 we treated 72 cases, transferred 9 cases and returned to duty 16 cases. **Pvt Joseph R. DeLizio**, xxxxxxxx, was assigned to our company from the 424th Infantry Regt per Par 1, SO #9 Hq 331 Med Bn this raised our enlisted personnel to 90 EM. Tec 5 Michael M. Padjen, xxxxxxxx, was promoted to the grade of Tec 4 and Pvt Wiles, xxxxxxxx, was promoted to the grade of Tec 5.

31 January we treated 66 cases, transferred 5 cases, and returned to duty 14 cases from all units served. **Pvt Charles J. Zalutsky**, xxxxxxxx, was relieved of DS and returned to duty. **Pvt William J. Barry**, xxxxxxxx, was transferred to Company "B" 331 Medical Battalion and **Tec 4 Alexander W. Krupka**, xxxxxxxx, was relieved of DS with us and returned to Company "B" per SO #11 Hq 331 Medical Battalion.

On the last day of the month our Officer Personnel was **Captain Joseph W. Grosh**, MC, Commanding and consisted of 9 Captains (7 MC and 2 DC) and 3 1st Lieutenants, of which one was MAC (**1st Lt. Hunt**, Ass't Co. Cmdr). Our enlisted personnel was 89 EM with **S/Sgt Walter L. Hearn** acting 1st Sgt. CENSUS: 3,835 Treatments, 1,145 Admissions, 499 Duty, 546 Transferred, 584 BC, 561 Non-Battle Casualties, remaining in the station on this date (31 Jan 1945) 147 cases.

331st Medical Battalion, 106th Infantry Division, During the Battle of the Bulge (December 1944-January 1945)

The 331st Medical Battalion was the organic divisional medical battalion of the 106th Infantry Division. The reports presented here cover the months of December 1944 and January 1945 when the 106th Infantry Division was involved in very heavy fighting in the Ardennes. The German offensive that struck the First U.S. Army on 16 December was heavily concentrated on the newly arrived 106th Infantry Division that had just replaced the 2d Infantry Division on a quiet sector of the front in the Schnee Eifel on the German-Belgian border.

German assault units hammered the new division relentlessly and soon the 422d and 423d Infantry Regiments and many of their supporting troops were surrounded. Within days they would surrender as the Germans punched a huge hole in the American lines that soon became the "Bulge."

According to existing doctrine, the three collecting companies of the 331st Medical Battalion, Companies A, B, and C, were aligned in direct support of the 106th's three regiments--the 422d, 423d, and 424th

Infantry Regiments, while Company D was the divisional clearing station. Of the battalion's companies, only Company B was largely lost with the surrounded 423d Infantry Regiment that it supported.

SOURCE: National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD
Record Group 112, Records of the U. S. Army Surgeon General World War II Histories
Reports, 331st Medical Battalion, Company A, and Company D Box 270
Copies in Office of Medical History, Directorate of Health Care Operations,
Office of The Surgeon General/Headquarters, U.S. Army Medical Command

27 January 1945 we treated 56 cases, transferred 2 cases, and returned to duty 1 case. Lt. Krynski went to LaRoche, Belgium on this day to try to locate some of the equipment left there on the 20 December 1944 when it was necessary to make a hasty withdrawal due to the advance of the German Forces.

However, it was a fruitless search. And the disposition of all medical equipment, Company records and personal equipment can not be determined whether it was captured by the Germans or whether the 7th Armored Division who occupied this city after our withdrawal managed to collect it.

28 January 1945 we treated 54 cases, transferred 1 case, and returned to duty 9 cases. Tec 4 Wayne was transferred to the 5th Evacuation Hospital in grade per Par 5 SO #6 Hq 1st U. S. Army dated 6 January 1945. Our enlisted personnel was now as low as 89 EM. Also Pvt Charles J. Zalutsky, xxxxxxxx, on DS 424th Infantry Regt was hospitalized in the 7th Armd Div Clr Sta with the following diagnosis: LIA BC Frostbite both ft, S, LOD Yes. General Perrin visited the Clearing Station this date, and conferred honors on Officers and EM from Hq & Hq Det and Company "C" 331 Med Bn.

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31 January we treated 66 cases, transferred 5 cases, and returned to duty 14 cases from all units served. Pvt Charles J. Zalutsky, xxxxxxxx, was relieved of DS and returned to duty. Pvt William J. Barry, xxxxxxxx, was transferred to Company "B" 331 Medical Battalion and Tec 4 Alexander W. Krupka, xxxxxxxx, was relieved of DS with us and returned to Company "B" per SO #11 Hq 331 Medical Battalion.

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CENSUS: 3,835 Treatments, 1,145 Admissions, 499 Duty, 546 Transferred, 584 BC, 561

Non-Battle Casualties, remaining in the station on this date (31 Jan 1945) 147 cases.

<http://history.amedd.army.mil/booksdocs/wwii/331stMedicalBn106thInfDiv/331stMedBnCoDJan1945.html>

NOTE: Lengthy paragraphs were split apart to make reading easier - J. West

