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424/F

Excerpts from a letter

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I was with 424th Infantry Regiment, Company "F" from the beginning, up to mid April 1945, when I went to an Armed Service School and was appointed as a 2nd Lieutenant. At that time instead of sending me back in the 106th Division, I went with the 78th Division, then on to the 36th Infantry Division. I got back to the States in June 1946.

We were in the right flank of the 424th Regiment; the 28th Division's 112th Regiment was to the right of us. On the night of the 15th of December as Communications Sergeant, I was monitoring the SCR300 from midnite on. When things started popping on the morning of the 16th I twirled the channel dial and heard someone from the 28th Division say that they were being over-run. Maybe it was Charlie Haug's Company "B", 112th Infantry Regiment down near Lützkampen, Germany.

I was on the ridge with 1st Platoon Sergeant Ramsey, T/Sergeant Victor Chapple and some other 1st Platoon men. When the anti-tank gun knocked out the 5 German tanks coming out of Lützkampen at angle about 2,000 yards. A bit later the anti-tank gun crew leader said; "*they have to get out of here.*" They hooked the gun to a truck and went off. Most of our phone lines were out and I was busy splicing wire....

On Christmas Day with "E" & "F" Companies abreast, about dusk, Manhay, Belgium was attacked. The elements were severely cut up by enemy fire of all kinds, and our own artillery TOT. Withdrawal was necessary. Manhay was an important crossroads junction on Highway N-15, Liege to Bastogne and another which crossed it. I think

that this was the deepest point that German troops came. "F" Company ended up withdrawing quite a ways back and from 1 January 1945 spent several days in and around the small, friendly village, of Warzee, Belgium.

Later "F" Company on 14 January made an unsuccessful attack on Ennal with two platoons. They were going down a heavily snow-covered hillside when severe fire forced most of them down to the shelter of a small creek where they were able to make their way back up to Lavaux where they spent the night.

The next-mid-day of the 15th of January with the 1st and 2nd Platoons, went in again along the road to from Lavaux. We had been getting lots of fire after clearing two houses, when Colonel Reid and General Perrin showed up where Captain Cassidy and I were, with a Platoon Sergeant behind a house. A burst of enemy fire hit Colonel Reid in the buttock. I radioed for his medical evacuation. Then General Perrin took the two platoons, one at a time, behind a hedgerow cover and explained the big picture to the troops.

Then it was clearing house to house on each side of the street. About half way through a rear-guard German cut loose with auto fire and I turned to get behind a building. A bullet grazed my top lip and one went through my field jacket, tearing apart my whistle, Thunder and my packages of bouillon. I told the Captain and General that I had been hit, but I was OK. Lieutenant Marcinkowski had just stepped out of a doorway and took a slug in the chest which took him back to the hospital....

I went back next morning with the chow crew to a Battalion Aid Station. After clearing the serious cases Captain (Medic) Antrim shaves my top lip, medicated it, put a bandage on it and handed a purple heart. I stuck it in a rear pocket and went to our Command Post, on the edge of Lavaux.



I was eating a candy bar when a Signal Corps Sergeant took my photo and wrote down my name. The photo appeared in Star's and Stripes in an editorial dedicated to the Infantryman. The article, in part, stated, "*In place of the usual picture, we went into our file for this shot of an infantryman in combat.*"

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<http://www.battleofthebulgememories.be/stories26/us-army25/867-excerpts-from-a-letter.html>
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