

Edward Prewett
424th Regiment
106th Infantry Division

LETTER TO HOME

26 May 1945 Germany

Dear Mom & Dad,

At last the lid is off so I can give you a little history. First of all please save this envelope for my collection. I doubt if we'll ever see anything like that again. A two cent envelope converted to a 6 cent airmail.

I can even tell where I am. That is if I can figure it out myself. The town I'm living in is Biebelsheim. I doubt if its on any maps. It's 6 km to Bad Kruesnach (or Kreuznach) in one direction and 11 km to Bingen in the other. If that's still too small — will they say Binven should be on the map. We're practically on the Banks of the Rhine.

Biebelsheim is a one horse town. It is typical of all the owns around here. Every two or three km there is a town. Each has its own home bakery, drug store, etc. Their mainstay is the farming land around the town. Every house has its oxen or maybe a horse and its chickens, etc. And every day they take off out into their fields with a bottle of wine and some bread for their lunch meal.

27 May 1945

They interrupted me by telling me that there would be a show last night. It was "Foreign Correspondent" with Joel McCray. It is an old picture but we get to see a show so seldom that I went anyway. Well lets see shall I start here and work back or start back at Atterbury.

We left dear old Camp Atterbury, Indiana on the 10th of Oct. 1944 and headed North. No one knew where we were going, but there were a lot of rumors. As it is I would have never guessed it because I had never heard of the place. However we did realize that we were seeing some of New England. And soon after we passed thru Providence, R.I., we arrived at our destination—Camp Myles Standish (and I didn't spell Myles wrong that is the way they spelled it.) The closest town to the camp was Tounton; however we could go on pass to Tounton, Providence and Boston. Boston was the farthest - being 35 miles distance.

I never left the camp although I wanted to. We were permitted to leave only twice. Half of us could go one time and half the other. I won on the first time but someone else's buddy didn't so I let him go in my place. When the next time came around we got stuck because of some training, etc. I didn't mind though because there was more than enough entertainment in Camp. About all I cared to go to town for was to see it and any that I'd been to Boston. We stayed in Standish (or CMI as we called it; because we could never name it in public) about a week getting some last minute training and completing our final clothing & equipment check up.

We left CMI on the 20th for places unknown. Most of us thought that we were headed for Boston, but we ended up in New York. However they maintain now that we were supposed to go to Boston only the last minute they caught some spies around there and changed our orders. About that same time it was in the papers about catching or uncovering some espionage work up there; so I guess that, that may have been true.

We arrived in New York under cover of darkness and much to our distaste - rain. By daylight we were all on the ship. The Red Cross handed out doughnuts and served coffee, while we were waiting our turn to board the ship.

We left New York and the good old U.S.A. the next morning — 21st of Oct. 1944. There was a lot of joking about—now we're getting 20% overseas pay etc. But down underneath everyone had kind of an empty feeling. Everything was new to us so we got busy investigating the ship, which took our minds off it. Our ship was the British's 3rd largest — the "SS Aquitania". It was a big baby all right. It had speed so we traveled alone. The trip was uneventful as far as the war was concerned except for a few incidents. Once another ship came a little too close & our ship fired across its bow. It veered off quick. Then later on as we came to England we spotted mines floating loose. But by that time we had picked up a couple of destroyers as escort and they would locate them for us and explode them by shooting them. Also we would spot a few planes now and then but all friendly.

I've already told you how we all got sick. The trip was a lazyman's trip so you know I liked it. However it wasn't pleasant like you'd imagine. We were crowded and the air conditioning system (or ventilation) broke down. We were down in the hole where they used to store the luggage and keep the pets. Then we were continually having inspection, etc. And they would have boat drill which kept us out in the rain and icy wind for hours. Also we had different chores. They didn't amount to much — mine was carrying boxes of P.X. rations from the swimming pool, which was being used as a storage room, to the P.X. That was a good job, if you know what I mean. The chow was terrible, which I think made a lot of the guys sick. Not only that, but we just seemed to have our rounds with Limey Merchant Marines. There were a lot of Scotchmen, etc., on board. They were all soldiers, who had been thru quite a bit. A lot of them had been evacuated from Dunkirk. They were being used as MPs and were taking prisoners to America and this was their return voyage. We could get along swell with them. They were swell guys but these blasted Limeys. Even before we left the New York Harbor; in fact before we got on the boat, one of our cooks, who was in the advanced party, landed in the brig. It seems that he told them to stick his royal Majesties royal ship up his royal ass.

We never knew our destination. But when we got in close the Scotch started identifying places for us. We slipped in close by the Isle of Man and on up into Scotland and up the Clyde River. The name of the port slips my mind and no one seems to be able to remember it. Its name isn't prominent although its a big port. However it was the same one used by the Queen Mary, Elizabeth, etc. The same one where they torpedoed that air craft carrier in, etc. Its on the West coast of Scotland opposite Glasgow. Just over the hill from there was the "Bonny Bonny Banks of Lak Lommon".

We arrived on the 27th of October and first set foot on Scotland on the 28th of October — Zarrago's birthday (19 yrs.). From there we boarded a train. Once again our destination

was unknown. While it was daylight we enjoyed the beauty of Scotland. It is beautiful. Not rugged like one thinks. It's roaming hills like our small foot hills. Everything was green and nice — it seemed so clean. It wasn't cold either although it probably would be at night because a way far off you could see snow capped mountains. Once again before we left the station we were served coffee and doughnuts. This time by little red headed Scotch Lassies — Red Cross once again. They were darlings. Someday I'd like to go back to Scotland. The country just seemed to be alike with rosy checked healthy little children. We figured them to be the evacuated children from London, etc.

Our destination before daylight the next morning turned out to be a little town in Oxford county with quite a famous name — Banbury. I dropped a hint to Sis at the time. There is some poem: "Something about riding a horse to Banbury Cross to see a fair maiden. She has rings on her fingers and bells on her toes and she shall have music where ever she goes" (or something). Tried to memorize it; but have had too many things to remember. Didn't stick very well. Our homes while there were some old factories, etc., which had been fixed up with double-decker chicken wire beds. These billets (as the English call them) were used by the D-Day invasion soldiers, while they were waiting for that eventful day.

I've told you all about Banbury and its people & pubs etc. We stayed there about a month getting our land legs back and toughening up by breaking our feet down hiking all over the English countryside on hard pavements. The hikes were long, but they wouldn't have been so hard if we wouldn't have had to stay on the roads. We had our Thanksgiving Turkey there and I celebrated my 23rd birthday.

Around the end of the month we packed up and left. Had a few dry runs to throw any enemy off the track then one night slipped away. Down to South Hampton and onto another Limey boat. This time the "Cheshire" was our home for a few days. This English boat was manned almost entirely by Indians. The damned Limeys like to use some one else for their hazardous duties. The trip was short, but we had to land in L.S.T.s, which would run right up onto the beaches. We had to wait for the water to be very calm. So we stayed on board quite a few days. We landed at Le Havre on the 6th of December, just 6 months after D-Day. We say we landed on D+6. We don't have to tell them that the 6 stands for 6 months. There we boarded trucks and took off. We had heard all kinds of rumors as to where and how we would spend the night. It had rained for quite a few days. So all along the way the trucks would stop and then go on again, each time we to make cracks about — no this can't be the place, the water is only 3 feet deep, etc.

Finally we arrived — naturally after dark and it was raining cats and dogs. We picked out our spot to pitch by feeling out a spot in the dark — a clear spot between the cow turds. Then the details flew thick and fast. We spent two days there. "There" this time is Yervillia (or Yersville or something close to that) I doubt if its on any map either. But that's where I got my first taste of Cognac. I was on a detail, which took me to the town, — soooo. There also we received our arctic's (golashes.) I lost out there because I was on detail and when I got back all that were left were size 7's. You know what good those would do a Prewett's feet. Right there was the start of foot trouble. We also got paid there. Our first contact with the wall paper Francs. They really came in all shapes and sizes.

From there we headed North and ran into our first snow. We were soaked from sleeping in the rain and everything was damp and over crowded on the trucks. The cold really hurt. We spent one night traveling all night and the next night we landed in the Hurgenten Forest, in the dark as usual. We were getting used to that by now. All in all we were on the road about 2 days and one night. A lot of the fellows really suffered from cramps, etc. Well our new home was covered with snow. I hadn't had much experience with it and was kind of scared of it. But we made out all right. We only stayed there a couple of days, while our officers went up on line, etc. and found out the situation. They came back with good stories. "Its a quiet front. We send out patrols in the day time and they send them out at night, so that they'll never meet, etc." Well you know the story — its been written up enough.

We soon moved into our new home again; this time up on line. Only, our battalion was in reserve for about a week, so our home was the little town of Lommerswieler. (Relieved 2nd Div.) We did some training, not much constructive - mainly just aggravating. We lived right with the civilians, whom at the time we considered friendly Belgium people. According to our maps, Lommerswieler was in Belgium. According to German maps, it was in Germany. I don't care how the map showed it, I'm sure that it was German now.

My platoon was kind of separated from the rest of the Company and Battalion. We lived down at, the railroad, about a mile from the town. Some of the guys lived in the railroad station. Others of us lived in the attic of the civilians homes. How I'd like to find that attic again with everything untouched. There everything I owned, except the few things I carried on me, were left when the Krauts broke thru.

We had it figured out that we would be on line Christmas, so we (the 3rd platoon) were kind of planning to plan a little party for ourselves before we left. We were going to hunt down a deer and have a real dinner. Well we never got the dinner or did we complete our week and go up on line. The line came to us. One night all hell broke loose (Dec. 16th). The noise of the Field Artillery echoed and re-echoed down our canyon. Long before we got any news, we knew that something was up. We packed our stuff up, ready either way the orders came. They came down, "fighting equipment only".

Being green, we started off wrong to start with. We left our shovels on our packs. We sent back after them and later were damned glad we had, because it turned out to be one of our most valuable weapons. We made lots of mistakes, in our choice of clothing and everything. I wore my O.D.'s the extra clothes was a sweater under my shirt and a field jacket. My weapons were a rifle, a shovel, two hand grenades and eight clips of ammo. That wasn't of our choosing. That's all we had. We boarded trucks and raced across into Germany to help our boys hold them. We didn't know what it was. I figured that since we were a new outfit on line, the Krauts were throwing a little attack to see what we were made of. Anyway we held them all that day. But that night we were over run and we had to get out as best we could. That first night we got busted up and although I stuck with my platoon leader, he wasn't with the company and only about half of my squad was with us. From then on we never knew what happened to the rest of the Company until we were all ordered out and reorganized ourselves. As it worked out although each Company was split up --the parts all banded together and reformed new fighting companies. And they did a good job.

Here is where my story and the man body of the company's story differs. After we were over-run that first night, the group I was with withdrew to Stienbruck where we fought

for about 3 days and held the bridge there. There also is where I learned a lot. After freezing thru that first night I managed to get a hold of another shirt and pair of pants, also a blanket, which later had to be left behind. From that day on until we moved back into France I always wore double pants and shirts. Besides keeping you warm it gave you more pockets. There isn't much that we can say about the fighting. For some reason or other most of it seemed to be done at night. Everything would be more or less quiet during the day, then about 3 o'clock in the morning, all hell would break loose. If we held them until daylight, we were sure of another day. Of course all the time they would lob in 88's and mortars, but not as intense as early in the morning.

At first we moved back across the river and set up road blocks with bazooka teams, but we didn't have the equipment to carry them thru. So finally, we just stuck to Steinbruck. Then after about 3 days (a guy kind of loses track of time - every minute seemed like years), I went with my platoon leader and about 4 others back to Lommerswieler to try and find some food (We had been getting food and ammo at first). While we were back at Lommerswieler, the rest of the men were ordered out of Stienbruck. We found ourselves, six men, alone, cut off and facing the whole German army coming over the hill into Lommerswieler.

We took off across country and met up with some units of the 9th Armored. From there its all mixed up. The Lt. and I were the only two who got back with the outfit. (The rest may still be tankers.) But for the time being we were tankers. The first night I was with a light tank. But things got too hot for us the next afternoon. We were just foot soldiers riding the back (exposed on the top of the tank) and helping during the night keeping anything from sneaking up on them. They could button up and ride out, we were exposed.

We hooked up with a half-track mortar bunch next. (I say we because the five of us enlisted men tried to stick together --- we'd usually be with different vehicles, but all a part of the same group we didn't know where the Lt. was.) Incidentally the tank I had worked with later got knocked out and all occupants killed. We were only with the mortars a short while when they needed some Infantry men to stop some enemy in a wooded area. We were part of it. We went with their reconnaissance men and their Armored Infantry. There is where we got separated. I was with a machine gun as its ammo bearer. I don't know what happened to the rest. I was with the machine gun group a couple of days during which time we drove them out.

For a long time now the enemy had been practically all around us. St. Vith was it their hands. We were ordered back and once again I rode back on a tank. We swung by a column of Infantry heading back. They were a sorry looking bunch. Yes, it was the 106th. Right then and there I rejoined my outfit.

I jumped the tank and joined the column. It was the same Regt. but the wrong battalion. I went with them as far as they went then tried to locate my company. I hitched a ride from there to Commanster where at last I found my unit. They had just with-drawn from Bracht.

Much to my delight I found a lot of the guys that I never expected I'd see again. We were hoping to get relieved but we found out differently. We were due to join some tanks and

ride back in. That would have been sad. My Lt. was back also and he was kind of glad to see me. At least right there I was put in charge of the squad. At least what was left of it.

From that time on guys kept showing up each one with his own adventures. There were glad hands to welcome him whenever one of the boys did make it back. Well, our orders did change and trucks (wezzles) arrived to take us back. We later heard that not two hours after we left, Commanster was taken.

We went under cover of darkness and arrived the next morning at Ferrieres. There we were allowed to crawl into a hay mound and pass out. We rested all day. The old Johnny on the spot Red Cross was on the ball again. They issued a few razors and blades, a little candy, gum, etc. They couldn't have been nicer. The people of the town were swell. The little kids gave us apples, etc. It seemed the Germans committed some of their atrocities against them there.

We got a little cleaned up and they held a sick call. There wasn't anything that they could do. We all had rheumatism and trench feet. I'd gotten a pair of arctic's at Lommerswieler, but even they couldn't protect us. After the first night our feet were soaked and never given the chance to dry out. I faired better than most because of my few days with the 9th Armored. When night came we moved out of the town and the woods once again was our home for the next couple days.

We didn't have anything but that was nothing new for us by now. Three of us shared one blanket and one overcoat between us. The overcoat, I stole from the 9th Armored and the other guy stole the blanket at Ferrieres. We weren't far behind the lines, because we had to keep fires down to the minimum. Also from there we watched the famous air flight on the 23rd or 24th of Dec. The one which was talked about so much and photographed so much. It was in "Life" and in the News Reels.

We spent Christmas Eve there and I happened to be one of the lucky few who had an old wrinkled up V-Mail form in one of my many stuffed pockets. So I wrote you a letter and then addressed it to myself. What a guy! That I found was one way to be sure to get mail. Although it took until the 15th of January to get back to me. That's fast service.

We started back up Xmas day and moved up to Harre. There we each got an overcoat and a few other things were given around. We cleaned up all the weapons. In the meantime we (my platoon) found a building with a stove and everything. We all went on a scavenger hunt and dug up quite a Christmas dinner for ourselves.

We were to stand by so I snuggled into one of the beds for a little while anyway. It was heavenly. But just like Alice in Wonderland at one minute after midnight my dream was over. We moved on up into the line. However we were only used as a secondary defense. By this time the Break thru had been checked and we were backing up the front line in case another attack came. We weren't far back, only about 500 yds. behind the front line. Artillery and what pt was zooming over our heads. We could see it set fire to buildings, etc. But we now had superiority. They were throwing Screaming Meemies and 88's back at us naturally. But in comparison it was a quiet front. I understand that the towns out to our front were Manhay and Granrdmenic. We were there about a week and then were relieved by the 75th Division — Green as could be. The first Sgt. actually came along with

his flash light and inspected each hole before he put his boys into it. He got a few Screaming Meemies down on his head for doing it.

From there we drew back to Clavier, where we stayed in a school house. There we spent our New Years Eve. We got some reenforcements. The only celebrating was done by one of the new men, who shot a hole in the bumper of a Jeep when the driver was a little too slow in giving the password. The Company Commander was more than pleased because he knew that he had one good soldier in the new men anyway.

We didn't stay there long but moved to Tavier. The reason for these moves might be explained on a map. I don't know the reason, unless it was to move us to where they were expecting trouble. Anyway at Tavier, we were going to be quartered in an old fort like barn. It was one of those with high walls all around it and the barn house combination inside and a big court yard or barnyard inside the walls. The kitchen was set up in one of the barns and we were to live in another part above the people who owned it. We scouted around and found some people, who could spare a room or two until we'd gotten almost everybody in more comfortable places. My squad stayed in one room of a swell little Belgium lady. She had a sweet little baby, who promptly won us all. I think the baby got all our soap and a good part of our candy rations. There wasn't anything we wouldn't do for the baby. Even to this day its a big joke among the fellows, who used to be in my squad, that when ever they get to wrestling around they always come out with, "remember the baby down stairs". Those who did have to stay in the barn were about three stories up. Everyone's kidneys were weak from sleeping on the ground and in the dampness too long. One of the guys couldn't make it one night and the next day the 1st. Sgt. had to give the company a little talking to because of complaints made by the people who lived below.

From Tavier, we went to Winamplanche, which is just outside of Spa. But we spent one night at Balmoral. Ah! Balmoral! It's a resort hotel above the city of Spa. What a palace! It was like a dream to us, because we didn't know where we were going and it was snowing and miserable. The trucks stopped — "De-truck". Oh my God! There wasn't a building in sight — nothing but woods and snow, lots of snow. Well there wasn't anything we could do — we braced ourselves for the worst and de-trucked. But practically before our eyes our palace arose up around a bend and there it was. Beds. electric lights, mirrors galore, everything. Like all good dreams, it was short lived. That was too good for the Dough Boys, an Engineer outfit was due to take over that for their home in the morning. So come morning, we packed our belongings and reluctantly left our Palace in the sky and moved down the hill to Winamplanche.

There my platoon was barracked in the upper stairs of a coffin makers home. It was very pretty country around there. In back there was a babbling brook with all the scenery to go with it. It was here that I wrote you about how beautiful the snow looked, especially when you're on the inside looking out. And from that you tried to picture me hurt and in the hospital by reading between the lines.

From there we went up on line again, relieving the 112 Regt., which was part of the 82nd Airborne Infantry Division.

(Spinaux) From there we kicked off into an attack. For this attack the 517th Infantry Airborne Regimental Combat Team was attached to our division, giving us two regiments. Enclosed is the clipping from the Stars & Stripes about that. During the attack the 30th

Division was on our left and the (now not so green as before) 75th Division was on our right. We took the town of Lavaux and got to the outskirts of Coulee. But darkness kept us from entering the town. Darkness and the possibility of booby traps. So we withdrew to Wanne. However, we drove the Krauts out of Coulee, because the next day the 517th entering it — at sling arms, so we kid them. Which they themselves will admit, because the town was abandoned.

It was at Wanne that I picked up the stamps and scarf. Evidently the party, who occupied the building before us was a collector. The collection must have been blown to hell. But while looking for things to make my stay more comfortable, I spied a stamp on an envelope, so naturally I investigated. I found that I'd not only found one stamp but inside was a collection of them. I looked around and found a few more but couldn't find any real collection. That was quite a place, I'll always remember it because of the swell home we had. This just goes to show you what a swell bunch I had in my squad. They didn't need a squad leader all they needed was someone to represent them. Anyway this is how it happened and this is the way it always worked. Our company was more or less around this building. It was a matter of everyone for himself. That night most of the gang spent the night in a cellar. A few of us found other places. But the next morning, without anyone guy knowing what the other was up to, we went out scouting. One guy found an old room with a lot of junk in it and a stove. One of the other guys happens along and they cleaned it out and we had a room. Someone else found something and so forth until our squad had the best set up in town. We all added ideas, etc. We even had a gasoline torch-light and a double black out doorway, so that we could keep a light. My largest contribution to the household was a freshly liberated case of 10 in 1 rations. I was getting pretty good at it by then and the tank men always had plenty. Much to my sorrow, I had to leave the gang there. The platoon Sgt. looked over our feet and ordered me to go on sick call. The doctor said — "evacuate". I didn't want to go exactly. I wanted to go all right; everybody was glad to get back for the rest, but after getting everything fixed up. The best set up we'd had in a long time. Well I didn't see why it had to come at a time like this.

The rest of these name to me are just names, but to the rest of the gang they each spell adventure. From Wanne to Henumont, Eibetange, Diepenburg, Medell and Meyerode and then Strivax. You mentioned something about Medell being announced over the radio as being taken by the 424th. I'll remember Medell, be cause my squad (no longer Mine) got into a little trouble on a patrol.

Enclosed is my hospital tag, which incidentally was supposed to have been turned in. It gives my history better than I can tell it. I went from Wanne back to collecting and from there to clearing. I stayed a couple of days there. Saw a swell movie — just laid back on my stretcher an watched it. About Abbott and Lou Costello in a "Night in a Harem" or something. Also had a tooth yanked. The Doctor did a good job, too. From there I went on to a special hospital set up by the medics of the 422nd and 423rd, just for treatment of frost bitten feet and bad colds. This was just outside of Spa. We were permitted to go in groups to take baths at one of the famous bath houses. It was swell, brass tubs, etc. Spa was a swell place. It was strictly resort stuff. There was plenty of beer and cognac. Also we could get pie's and cookies and ICE CREAM. It was really kind of tasteless but it was ice cream. In the hospital we all swapped stories, etc. There were a few Paratroopers of the 517th and they got the razzing about taking Coulee at sling arms. They paid us some nice compliments. They said, "That next to their airborne infantry division, they would rather be working with the 106th Division than with any other outfit". I considered that to be quite a tribute coming from paratroopers.

From the hospital, I worked my way back to my outfit. That turned out to be quite a process. I had to go thru a Casual Company, where I would get re-equipped, etc. There I got held up quite a while, while waiting for certain equipment to arrive. There is where I met Madam Henin. Once again, we more or less had to take care of ourselves for a home. They provided an old, abandoned building, but that was mighty cold. So when we got the chance, we looked over the town. We weren't exactly looking for a home then, but Madam Henin came upon us and offered. It was a language of signs — our international one, but we easily understood that she was offering us a bed to sleep in and we graciously accepted.

She gave me the enclosed card. Evidently her sons were in the transporting business before the war. They had a Ford truck. The card also shows the town to be "Anthisnes". I told you all about her and she wrote that note in my letter to you. They really were swell to us.

I finally got hack to the Company around the end of the month and joined them at Strivax. Strivax is near Esneux. Its a little bigger town, I visited it and was able to get a post card picturing it. There I rejoined the gang and the world had gone on without me. My assistant had my squad and he had a new assistant.

At Strivay, Marie Jose came into our life. We lived up stairs in this old ladies home. Evidently from this address, which Marie Jose wrote, her name was Madame Bouillon. (Marie Jose Pouilus, Strivay Plainevaux, No. 216 Chez Mame Bouillon.) She was a swell old lady, who took care of this little girl, Marie Jose Paulus. Marie was about 9 or 10 and quick to catch on to things. We called her "no compree". By the time we left, some joker had taught her to say, "I love you kiss me quick". And no cracks, I wasn't the guy.

From Strivay, we were supposed to go back into France; but it seems that there was a little hole, which we could fill up on a quiet sector on the Front. Another of those quiet sectors, hum! But this time it really was quiet. We relieved the 99th up in Germany and for better than a month we sat and stared at the pill boxes and dragon teeth in front of us. It was too well fortified so they were breaking thru at other spots and coming around it.

At that time we were the right wing of the 1st Army. On our left was the "Fighting 69th" and on our right was the 87th Div. (a part of the 3rd Army). Around the 5th of March they broke thru some place and the Kraut started to pull stakes. We moved in on them. Could have picked up a lot of nice souvenirs from the Pill Boxes, but didn't know how long we'd have to pack the stuff, before we could send it home. We moved on passed the pill boxes, etc. and took the towns of Berks and Bassum, then we were pinched off and were out of the fight again. There wasn't any fighting on my part at those two towns. Some of the forward elements might have hit some. The Germans were on the run by then and didn't stop until they were on the other side of the Rhine. In fact they didn't stop long there.

We spent one night in Bassum, then drew back to some abandoned pill boxes and prepared to spend the night there. Right there is when my pass came thru to go to one of our rest areas in Eupen, Belgium. I wrote you all about that with out naming Eupen. Enclosed is my pass to Eupen. From Eupen, I came back to the Pill Boxes. We were still in the same place awaiting orders. I spent one night there. Then was sent as advance party

to San Quentin. (here we became a part of the 15th Arm^y) And you know all about that. Enclosed also is my pass used while there. Again I'm not supposed to have had that.

While there, we lived in an old factory and had double-decker beds with wooden springs, if you know what I mean. While there they started training this special demonstration platoon, which was supposed to be the best in the Division. Just before we left San Quentin, I went on Pass to Paris. Enclosed also is that pass. I told you all about that.

From Paris, I joined the motor convoy just outside of Paris on its way to Rennes, The most of the outfit came by 40 & 8 box cars. At Rennes, the Demonstration platoon was separated from the rest of the company and sent to this Infantry School, where we did the demonstrating and other work around there. There we lived in our chateau, which I wrote all about. We moved down. there, I think to take over those pockets of resistance at St. Nazaire and Lorient. Some of the outfit did see some action here, but I wasn't in on it.

All of a sudden, we got orders to pack up again. On to the 40 & 8's again. 40 & 8 stands for box cars, which hold 40 men or 8 horses. We ended up a few miles from here on the banks of the Rhine. There we pitched tents and stayed (here the news came of the end of the war in Europe, which I wrote you about) until we got our duties assigned over here and came to live at our present home Biebelshelm.

We're still on the West Bank of the Rhine. but I'll cross it before I leave this country if I have to swim it. Well that's the story from start to finish, now I'm beginning to wonder how I'll ever mail it to you. I'll need a special envelope.

Love, to all,
"Dutch"
Ed Prewett

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