

DIARY
OF
G. EDWARD DICKARD
DECEMBER 1944
TO
APRIL 1945

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS TAKEN FROM A DIARY KEPT BY
G. EDWARD DICKARD DURING WORLD WAR II, 1944-45:

2/20/44 BOARD EXAM, BELTON, S. C.
3/6-7/44 PRE-EXAM, FORT JACKSON, S. C.
3/28/44 INDUCTION, FORT BRAGG, N. C.
4/5-6/44 FORT BRAGG TO CAMP BLANDING, FLORIDA
4/10/44 BASIC BEGAN
8/5/44 BASIC ENDED
8/8-9/44 BLANDING TO HOME - FURLOUGH
8/20/44 HOME FOR FORT MEADE
8/21/44 ARRIVED AT FORT MEADE
8/29-30/44 FORT MEADE TO ATTERBERRY
10/11/44 LEFT ATTERBERRY
10/13/44 ARRIVED CAMP MILES STANDISH
10/20/44 MILES STANDISH TO NEW YORK
10/20/44 SAILED ON ACQUATANIA
10/28/44 ARRIVED GREENOCK, GLASGOW
10/29/44 LANDED - TO FAIRFORD
11/30/44 SAILED FROM SOUTH HAMPTON
12/1/44 ARRIVED LEHARVE, FRANCE
12/3/44 LANDED IN FRANCE
12/7/44 LEFT MUDDY FRANCE
12/8/44 ARRIVED IN BASTOGNE WOODS
12/10/44 MOVED UP ON SEIGFREID LINE
12/10-19/44 FOXHOLE FIGHTING
12/19/44 CAPTURED BY GERMANS
12/19-20/44 MARCHED - NO FOOD
12/21/44 BOARDED TRAIN
12/21-22/44 BOX CAR - NO FOOD
12/23/44 BOX CAR - BREAD
12/25/44 ARRIVED BAD ORB
2/6/45 STRAFED BY AMERICAN PLANES
4/2/45 LIBERATED BY LT. BYRNES, COMPANY F, 2ND
CALVERY, RECON SQUAD, APO 403 8PM, NY

LIST OF NAMES IN DIARY:

FRANK SMITH, ANDERSON, S. C.
WALTER ALLEN, KINGSTREE, S. C.
E. L. RALEY, CHARLOTTE, N. C.
RAYMOND SPENCER, COMMERCE, GA.
JAMES EUBANKS, SPARTANBURG, S. C.
LEONARD WHITFIELD TOWNVILLE, S. C.
JAMES BLACK, GREENVILLE, S. C.
STANLEY TURNER, CATSKILL, NY
JOHN NABORS, MEMPHIS, TENN.
NORMAN LEE, MEMPHIS, TENN.
J. A. TAYLOR, PIKEVILLE, LA.
TED SLONE, BAY CITY, TEXAS
PHILLIP IVERSON, ERIE, N. D.
EUGENE SAUCERMAN, DUGGER, IND.
MILBERN HOLLINGSWORTH, CONDEN, TENN.
JACK WALKER, WASHINGTON, D. C.
DELMER TRIBLE, GRANDVIEW, MO.
DONALD VOGLERING, GRANTSBURG, IND.
JAMES M. DICKARD, USS ROY O. HALE, & FLEET PO, NEW YORK, NY.
EARL THOMPSON, RIVIERA BEACH, PASENDA, MD.

DEC. 30, 1944, SAT. - SAME FOOD.
 DEC. 31, 1944, SUN. - SAME FOOD, VERY HUNGRY AND COLD.
 JAN. 1, 1945, MON. - NO MORE FOOD.
 JAN. 2-5, 1945
 TUES. - FRI. - EACH PAGE MARKED ".
 JAN. 6, 1945, SAT. - WROTE FIRST RED CROSS LETTER HOME.
 JAN. 7, 1945, SUN. - CHURCH SERVICE.
 JAN. 8, 1945, MON. - PAGE MARKED ".
 JAN. 9, 1945, TUES. - HUNGRY. LOVE YOU.
 JAN. 10, 1945, WED. - PAGE MARKED ".
 JAN. 11, 1945, THURS- NEED FOOD.
 JAN. 12-13, 1945
 FRI.-SAT. - PAGES MARKED ".
 JAN. 14, 1945, SUN. - CHURCH SERVICE.
 JAN 15, 1945, MON. - TOO WEAK, HAD TO WORK EIGHT HOURS
 OUTSIDE IN EXTREME COLD SHOVELING
 SEWAGE MATTER FROM PIT.
 JAN. 16, 1945 TUES. - NO ENTRY.
 JAN. 17, 1945, WED. - KEEP HEARING DISHEARTENING RUMORS
 ABOUT RED CROSS AID. MANY SICK, NO
 MEDICAL SUPPLIES. SITUATION CRITICAL.
 JAN. 18, 1945, THURS- RECEIVED THICK SOUP, CORN MEAL ADDED.
 HOW BADLY WE NEED FOOD.
 JAN. 19, 1945, FRI. - LYING HERE THINKING OF HOME AND HOW
 WONDERFUL IT IS. LOVE WIFE AND GIRLS
 SO MUCH. WHAT I WOULD GIVE FOR FOOD
 FROM ROWDY OR THROWN IN SLOP. COULD
 EAT ANYTHING. ITS SO TERRIBLE TO BE
 SO HUNGRY.
 JAN. 20-26, 1945
 SAT.-FRI. - NO ENTRY.
 JAN. 27, 1945, SAT. - HAPPY BIRTHDAY, LINDA DARLING. KNOW
 YOU ARE HAVING YOUR PARTY TODAY. LOVE
 ALL OF YOU SO MUCH.
 JAN. 28, 1945, SUN. - WHAT A DAY. TWO OF OUR PRISONERS BROKE
 INTO THE KITCHEN AND A GERMAN GUARD
 CAUGHT THEM AND HACKED THEM UP WITH
 A HATCHET. WE WERE GIVEN NO FOOD AND
 STOOD OUTSIDE IN THE COLD FOR FOUR HOURS
 WITH MACHINE GUNS TRAINED UPON US.
 THREATENED TO SHOOT FIFTY OF US, THEY
 SAID, UNLESS THEY CAUGHT THE TWO MEN.
 THEY WERE CAUGHT AND CONFESSED AT 7:00.
 HOW RELIEVED.

JAN. 29-FEB. 1, 1945
 MON. - THURS. - NO ENTRY.

FEB. 2, 1945, FRI. - RECEIVED SMALL PACKAGE FROM RED CROSS FOR EVERY FOUR MEN. VERY LITTLE BUT OH HOW MUCH I APPRECIATED IT AND NEEDED IT. GOT A LITTLE BUTTER, CORNED BEEF, TWELVE PRUNES, CHEESE, SALMON, MEAT AND BEANS. 25 CIGARETTES.

FEB. 3, 1945, SAT. - EVERYONE STAYED AWAKE UNTIL AFTER MID-NIGHT JUST LIKE CHRISTMAS. SANG AND HAD PRAYER SERVICE THANKING GOD FOR EVERYTHING. THE BIT OF FOOD WAS BADLY NEEDED. OH WHAT A HORRIBLE ENDING. OUR BOMBERS BOMBED NEAR HERE AND DROPPED THREE BOMBS AT THIS CAMP AT 1:30. BUILDINGS DAMAGED BUT NO ONE BADLY INJURED.

FEB. 4, 1945, SUN. - HOW BADLY I NEED A BATH. FRIGID WEATHER. NO FIRE. ATE THE LAST BITE OF CHEESE WHICH I HAD HOARDED SO CAREFULLY. THIS CONTINUAL GNAWING HUNGER IS TERRIBLE AND SO WEAKENING. HOW I DREAM OF HOME. I LOVE ANNABEL.

FEB. 5, 1945, MON. - HOW WE SWEAT WITH EVERY WAVE OF BOMBERS WHICH ARE OVER CONTINUALLY. STARTED EVACUATING THIS CAMP. 350 MOVING TOMORROW. 600 FOLLOWING DAY. HOPE I'M NOT IN THE BUNCH.

FEB. 6, 1945, TUES. - HOW THANKFUL THAT I CAN WRITE THIS. JUST WROTE YOU A CARD. AMERICAN PLANES BOMBED THIS AREA AND STRAFED THIS CAMP KILLING AND WOUNDING MANY P.W.'S. I WAS OUTSIDE AND ESCAPED NARROWLY. HOW I HOPE THIS WAR ENDS SOON. THIS IS SO NERVE-WRACKING. LOVE ANNABEL.

FEB. 7, 1945, WED. - PLANES STAY OVER CONTINUALLY. SO DREADFUL JUST WAITING. WAKING UP AT NIGHT WITH THE PLANES DRONNING EXPECTING BOMBS ANY MINUTE. I LOVE YOU, DARLING.

FEB. 8, 1945, THURS.- HAVE THE G.I.'S BAD. VERY WEAKENING. THESE PLANES. HOW WE ARE SWEATING IT OUT. MOVED 350 BOYS OUT BY RAIL. HOW I DREAD THAT. HOW I LOVE YOU, DARLING, AND PRAY TO GOD THAT THIS SOON ENDS.

FEB. 9, 1945, FRI. - PLANES, PLANES, PLANES! WILL IT EVER END? HAD TO GO TO HOSPITAL TODAY FOR G.I.'S. WANTED ME TO STAY BUT I TALKED THEM OUT OF IT. GOD BLESS YOU, DARLING.

FEB. 10, 1945, SAT. - JUST FINISHED EATING. HAD POTATO SOUP FOR A CHANGE. PLANES! JUST HEARD THAT THE POW'S ARE TO BE MOVED TOMORROW AND WEDNESDAY. HOW I DREAD IT. OH, DARLING, HOW I LOVE YOU.

FEB. 11, 1945, SUN. - VERY SICK. ADMITTED TO THE HOSPITAL. INTESTINAL HEMORRAGES. GIVEN SHOT IN ARM AND PUT TO SLEEP AT 4 P.M.

FEB. 12, 1945, MON. - WOKE UP AT 9:30 A.M. FEELING MUCH BETTER BUT STILL WEAK.

FEB. 13, 1945, TUES - DISCHARGED FROM THE HOSPITAL. STILL WEAK BUT NOT SO SICK. WROTE CARDS TO LINDA AND NANCY AND LETTER TO ANNABEL.

FEB. 14, 1945, WED. - AM I HUNGRY. WISH THEY WOULD FEED US. DO I LOVE ANNABEL, NANCY AND LINDA.

FEB. 15, 1945, THURS- CERTAINLY WOULD LIKE TO HAVE SOME NEWS ON WAR.

FEB. 16, 1945, FRI. - WELL, THIS IS THE 60TH. DAY AS P.W. WOULDN'T HAVE THOUGHT IT POSSIBLE TO HAVE EXISTED ON SUCH LITTLE FOOD. THIS STARK HUNGER AND SLOW STARVATION IS TERRIBLE.

FEB. 17, 1945, SAT. - BOMBERS

FEB. 18, 1945, SUN. - DREARY. NEED FOOD.

FEB. 19, 1945, MON. - PAGE MARKED " .

FEB. 20-23, 1945
TUES.-FRI. - PAGES MARKED " .

FEB. 24, 1945, SAT. - THIS IS TERRIBLE. BOMBING EVERYWHERE AROUND - DAY AND NIGHT. 80 OFFICERS KILLED.

FEB. 25, 1945, SUN. - CHURCH.

FEB. 26, 1945, MON. - PLANES --NEED FOOD.

FEB. 27-28, 1945
TUES.-WED. - BOTH PAGES MARKED " .

MAR. 1, 1945, THURS.- AWAKENED BY BOMB FALLING IN BAD ORB. SEVEN KILLED.

MAR. 2, 1945, FRI. - FIGHTERS AND BOMBERS ALL TIME.

MAR. 3, 1945, SAT. - VERY, VERY COLD AND DRY SNOW. PLANES-- PLANES. SO AWFUL TO HAVE TO SWEAT OUT OUR OWN PLANES. THEY'VE KILLED MANY PW'S.

MAR. 4, 1945, SUN. - COLD -- HUNGRY.
 WE'RE A BUNCH OF YANKEE SOLDIERS
 LIVING DEEP IN GERMANY
 WE'RE EATING SOUP AND BLACK BREAD
 AND A BEVERAGE THEY CALL TEA
 AND WE'RE GOING TO KEEP ON SINGING
 UNTIL PATTON SETS US FREE
 AND WE GO RAMBLING HOME.
 COME AND GET US GEORGIE PATTON
 COME AND GET US GEORGIE PATTON
 COME AND GET US GEORGIE PATTON
 SO WE CAN RAMBLE HOME.

MAR. 5, 1945, MON. - DEAR NANCY, HAPPY BIRTHDAY, DARLING.
 HOW I LOVE YOU. LINDA AND MOTHER.
 HOW I MISS YOU.

MAR. 6, 1945, TUES. - THIS IS TERRIBLE. WAITING AND
 STARVING. BOYS DYING EVERY DAY FROM
 MALNUTRITION AND STARVATION. MENINGITIS
 IN CAMP.

MAR. 7, 1945, WED. - TWO DEATHS FROM MENINGITIS. DR'S SAID
 THEY COULD NOT DO ANYTHING TO PREVENT
 IT.

MAR. 8, 1945, THURS.- MOVED OUT OF BARRACKS TO MAKE ROOM FOR
 1000 NEW PW'S. PUT IN COLD, EMPTY ROOM
 AND SLEPT ON FLOOR. TERRIBLE.

MAR. 9, 1945, FRI. - MOVED INTO REC ROOM AND ALLOWED TO SLEEP
 ON FLOOR. VERY COLD BUT LITTLE LESS
 CROWDED. COLD. WE CAN HEAR CONTINUOUS
 DISTANT EXPLOSIVES. BOMBS, ACK-ACK
 ARTILL?

MAR. 10, 1945, SAT. - THIS IS SO AWFUL. BOY FEEL DEAD THIS
 A.M. AWFUL TO SEE PEOPLE ACTUALLY
 STARVING. GETTING LESS FOOD. HOW
 DEEPLY AND TRULY I LOVE YOU, DARLING,
 AND GOD HELP ME TO RETURN TO YOU.

MAR. 11, 1945, SUN. - GERMANS ANNOUNCED ANOTHER CUT IN BREAD
 AND SOUP. DISTRIBUTION IS 7 MEN PER
 LOAF OF BREAD PER DAY. OUR DRS. PUT
 IN PROTEST POINTING OUT THAT MEN ARE
 ACTUALLY STARVING NOW. GERMANS SAY THEY
 CAN'T HELP IT.

MAR. 12, 1945, MON. - THE SOUP WE GET IS ABSOLUTELY WATER.
 NOT ENOUGH POTATOES TO NOTICE. AND
 THE PIECE OF BREAD IS SO PITIFUL.
 THE RUMBLE OF EXPLOSIONS SEEMS TO BE
 LOUDER. COULD IT BE ARTILLERY?

MAR. 13, 1945, TUES.- HEARD THAT PATTON HAD CROSSED THE RHINE. WE ARE ONLY 35 MILES FROM FRANKFORT. HOW WONDERFUL IT WOULD BE IF WE COULD BE LIBERATED. LISTEN . . . JUST ANNOUNCED THAT WE WOULD GET RED CROSS BOXES TOMORROW OR THE NEXT DAY. HOW WE COULD USE IT.

MAR. 14, 1945, WED. - WHAT A BEAUTIFUL DAY. WARM AND WE RECEIVED R.C. PACKAGES. 3 MEN PER PACKAGE BUT OH HOW GOOD IT IS TO GET A TASTE OF REAL FOOD. ALSO GOT 33 CIGARETTES. EVERYONE IS AS HAPPY OVER IT AS CHRISTMAS TIME. ALSO GOT A BATH TODAY AND CLOTHES WERE DE-LOUSED. OH, ANNABEL.

MAR. 15, 1945, THURS- ANOTHER BEAUTIFUL DAY. OUR PLANES REALLY ARE WORKING THIS SECTION. DIVE BOMBING, STRAFING, HEAVY BOMBERS . . . DOG FIGHTS CONTINUOUSLY. WE CAN SEE FOR MILES FROM THIS MOUNTAIN TOP.

MAR 16, 1945, FRI. - DARLING, HOW I WOULD LIKE TO BE HOME. JUST SHAVED IN LATE AFTERNOON AND IT IS SO BEAUTIFUL AT SUNSET. MISS YOU AND LONG FOR YOU SO MUCH, DARLING. YOU ARE SUCH AN INSPIRATION AND IT IS SO WONDERFUL TO DREAM OF YOU.

MAR. 17, 1945, SAT. - HOW GLAD I AM THAT I HAVE LOVED YOU SO TRULY AND HAVE BEEN SO PERFECTLY TRUE TO YOU. THANK GOD FOR SUCH A WONDERFUL, SWEET PERSON AS YOU FOR A WIFE! "THOUGH AWAY YOU STAY A MILLION MILES AWAY, I'LL ALWAYS BE IN LOVE WITH YOU."

MAR. 18, 1945, SUN. - HAD A FINE CHURCH SERVICE TODAY. I DO ENJOY CHURCH SO MUCH BUT ALWAYS FEEL LIKE CRYING WHEN WE SING OUR FAMILIAR HYMNS. MENINGITIS SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN CONTROLLED. THANK GOD. BOYS ARE DYING DAILY FROM MALNUTRITION, PNEUMONIA, ETC. VERY SAD.

MAR. 19, 1945, MON. - PLANES, BOMBING, SHELLING, FIGHTING CONTINUOUSLY. IT IS TERRIBLE TO LIVE DAY AND NIGHT UNDER THE CONTINUAL STORM. MAY GOD DELIVER US SAFELY THROUGH THIS.

MAR. 20, 1945, TUES.- WE ARE SITUATED ON A MOUNTAIN TOP IN A TRIANGLE FORMED BY COLONGUE, KABLESIZE, AND FRANKFORT, AND ARE 50 Km FROM THE RHINE AND WE CAN OBSERVE PLENTY OF ACTION NIGHT AND DAY. NOW THAT OUR FORCES ARE OVER THE RHINE, WE HAVE HOPES AND ALSO A DREAD OF THEIR LIBERATING US.

MAR. 21, 1945, WED. - NO WATER IN CAMP - WATER PUMPS BOMBED CLAIMED GERMANS. CUT DOWN OUR SOUP AND BREAD. CAN'T GO LONG ON SUCH LITTLE. HOPE PATTON GETS HERE.

MAR. 22, 1945, THURS- THOUSANDS OF BIG BOMBERS AND FIGHTERS WENT OVER TODAY. BEAUTIFUL FORMATIONS IN A REAL SPRING, SUNNY CLEAR SKY. WE HATE TO SEE THEM YET WE ARE GLAD. HOPE THEY DON'T ATTACK HERE AGAIN.

MAR. 23, 1945, FRI. - JUST SHAVED AND AM GOING OUTSIDE FOR A WALK. BEAUTIFUL SPRING DAY. HEARD BIRDS SINGING AT DAYBREAK. FEEL BETTER IN WARM SUNSHINE BUT AM AWFULLY WEAK. OH, ANNABEL.

MAR. 24, 1945, SAT. - THERE IS DEFINITELY AN ARTILLERY BARRAGE GOING ON PRETTY CLOSE. SEEMS TO GET LOUDER. HOW WONDERFUL IT WOULD BE TO BE LIBERATED. SO HUNGRY ALL THE TIME. CUT AGAIN ON OUR BREAD.

MAR. 25, 1945, SUN. - OUR ARMIES MUST BE MOVING CLOSER. CAN HEAR JERRY TANKS, TRUCKS, HALF TRACKS, ETC., MOVING ALONG THE HIGHWAY. ALSO CIVILIANS. WE ARE QUARANTINED AGAIN FOR MENINGITIS. SEVEN CASES. ALSO, MUCH PNEUMONIA, MALNUTRITION. MANY DEATHS EACH DAY. WE WERE TO BE EVACUATED FROM THIS CAMP BUT THE QUARANTINE SAVED US. NOW WE DO HAVE A SLIGHT CHANCE OF BEING EVACUATED.

MAR. 26, 1945, MON. - MORE DEATHS AND HEARD THE MEDICS ARE WITHOUT SUPPLIES AGAIN. HEARD WE WERE TO GET RED CROSS PACKAGES TOMORROW. REMEMBER TODAY - LAST YEAR DARLING, HOW SWEET YOU WERE.

MAR. 27, 1945, TUES.- OUR PLANES STRAFED THIS SECTION ALL MORNING. LINES MUST BE CLOSE. GERMANS CLAIMING OUR RED CROSS PACKAGES WERE DESTROYED. ONLY GOT ONE BOX FOR 11 MEN, WHICH WAS NOTHING. AM SO DISAPPOINTED. TO WAR ONE YEAR AGO.

MAR. 28, 1945, WED. - WELL, I AM A VETERAN ARMY GI NOW. BEEN JUST A YEAR. WHAT A YEAR. THANK GOD FOR YOU DARLING. YOU COMFORT ME SO MUCH. I LOVE YOU DEAR. HEAVY GERMAN MOVEMENT.

MAR. 29, 1945, THURS- I AM CONVINCED THAT OUR ARMIES ARE NEAR. JUST HEARD THAT WE WERE CUT OFF AND BY-PASSED AND WERE SURROUNDED BY OUR ARMIES - PATTON'S ARMY. THRILLED OVER THE THOUGHT OF LIBERATION. WANT TO EAT.

MAR. 30, 1945, FRI. - GOOD FRIDAY. AM AT CHURCH SERVICES WAITING FOR IT TO BEGIN. CAN DEFINITELY HEAR A TANK BATTLE GOING ON NEAR. AM SO HOPEFUL, DARLING. NO BREAD TONITE, NO WATER. DID GET FIVE CIGARETTES. BELIEVE THE YANKS ARE NEAR. SO HOPEFUL.

MAR. 31, 1945, SAT. - ALL KINDS OF RUMORS ABOUT. BAD ORB FALLING. HEAVY BATTLE GOING ON. BELIEVE WE WILL BE LIBERATED WITH THE FALL OF BAD ORB. AM SO CALM AS IT NEARS. EXPECTED TO BE ALL EXCITED. AM SURE IT WILL BE TODAY OR TOMORROW. HAVE THAT FEELING OF THANKSGIVING AND LOVE FOR YOU, DARLING. WANT A SUMMER VEGETABLE DINNER WITH CHICKEN AND LEMON PIE. BY THE WAY, SUGAR, I AM TO BE BAPTISED TOMORROW WITH OTHER GI'S. FEEL THAT IT IS TIME I WAS MAKING THE STEP. NOT JUST FOR MYSELF BUT FOR YOU AND OUR GIRLS.

APR. 1, 1945, SUN. - DARLING, HAVE JUST FINISHED EATING MY SOUP AND HAVE YOURS, NANCY AND LINDA'S PICTURES AND HAVE BEEN DREAMING OF THE D A Y. ALSO OF THE THINGS I AM GOING TO DO AND WHAT I AM GOING TO EAT AT HOME. SO HUNGRY. WHAT A DAY THAT WILL BE. BELIEVE IT NEAR. WAS BAPTISED THIS MORNING WITH OTHERS. VERY NICE. GOLD HERE TODAY. YOU ARE SO WONDERFUL, DARLING.

APR. 2, 1945, MON. - L I B E R A T E D DARLING, AND WE ARE ALL CRYING - LAUGHING AND SINGING. WE'RE ALMOST SOBBING. THOSE AMERICAN DOUGHBOYS SO SWELL. WE ARE GOING TO EAT AGAIN.

APR. 3, 1945, TUES. - FOOD HASN'T COME YET. I'M HUNGRY BUT SO HAPPY AND SO MUCH IN LOVE WITH YOU. I CAN'T DESCRIBE THIS FEELING, DARLING. HAVE AMERICAN CIGARETTES. FOOD IS ON THE WAY. I'M THINKING OF YOU EVERY MINUTE WITH A LUMP. AFTER 5:30 P.M. AND WE ATE OUR LAST SOUP AT NOON. C-RATIONS CAME IN THIS EVENING. PLENTY OF THEM AND I'VE JUST EATEN MY FIRST MEAL. HAD C-CAN OF HAM, EGGS AND POTATOES. ALSO HAD JELLY AND THEY GAVE US A BAR OF CANDY AND PACKAGE OF CIGARETTES. COULD EAT TEN MORE RIGHT NOW BUT O HOW GOOD THOSE WERE. I LOVE YOU, DARLING. DON'T KNOW HOW IT FEELS TO THINK OF EATING THREE TIMES EACH DAY AGAIN. HAVEN'T HAD MEAT IN 110 DAYS. WE ACT LIKE KIDS AT CHRISTMAS. EACH MEAL WE SHOW EACH OTHER EACH BITE. IT WOULD BE PATHETIC TO YOU. THE CHAPLAIN WHO WAS LIBERATED

APR. 3, 1945, TUES. - WITH US TALKED TO US AND CRIED ABOUT
(Cont) OUR CONDITION.

APR. 4, 1945, WED. - ATE FIRST BREAKFAST THIS A.M. IN 106
DAYS. SPAGHETTI AND MEATBALLS - C-
RATIONS. HAVE ALSO JUST FINISHED
DINNER, MEAT AND BEANS (C). REMEMBER
HOW I HATED THEM. HOW FINE THEY ARE
NOW. ALSO, WE GOT MORE CIGARETTES,
MATCHES AND A BAR OF CHOCOLATE.

APR. 5, 1945, THURS.- VERY SICK TODAY. CAN'T EAT C-RATIONS.
WEATHER BAD. CAN'T FLY US OUT.

APR. 6, 1945, FRI. - STILL SICK DARLING, AWFULLY SICK AT
AT TIMES. WISH WEATHER WOULD CLEAR
UP. DOUGHNUTS AND COFFEE WERE FINE.

APR. 7, 1945, SAT. - HAD TO GO TO DISPENSARY TODAY. DOC-
TOR IS SHIPPING ME TO A FIELD HOSPITAL
TODAY. MUST GET WELL, GOING TO A
FIELD HOSPITAL.

APR. 8, 1945, SUN. - FEEL BETTER. BEAUTIFUL DAY. LOOKING
FORWARD TO PLANE RIDE.

APR. 9, 1945, MON. - SEE NO TOP BRASS HERE. REALLY FEEL
HUMAN AGAIN.

APR. 10, 1945, TUES.- COULD EAT LITTLE BETTER TODAY THAN
YESTERDAY. JUST HOPE I WON'T BE TOO
SICK TONIGHT.

THE ABOVE IS THE LAST DIARY ENTRY. DADDY WAS MOVED TO AN
AMERICAN FIELD HOSPITAL IN GERMANY, THEN TO FRANCE AND TO
ENGLAND. FROM ENGLAND HE WAS FLOWN TO NEW YORK WHERE HE
CALLED OUR NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE IN WILLIAMSTON, S. C. AND TALKED
WITH MOTHER, LINDA AND ME. FROM NEW YORK, HE WAS FLOWN TO A
HOSPITAL IN CHARLESTON, S. C. WHERE HE STAYED UNTIL HIS DIS-
CHARGE (ABOUT ONE YEAR). DURING THIS TIME AS HE WAS ABLE,
HE WAS GIVEN CONVALESCENT LEAVES TO COME HOME.

SOME OF THE DIARY ENTRIES WERE SO FAINT THEY COULD ONLY BE
READ WITH A MAGNIFYING GLASS BY MOTHER AND DADDY. I COULD
NOT READ THEM.

DIARY TRANSCRIBED BY:
NANCY DICKARD MORGAN
MAY - 1983



DEATH OF THE GOLDEN LION

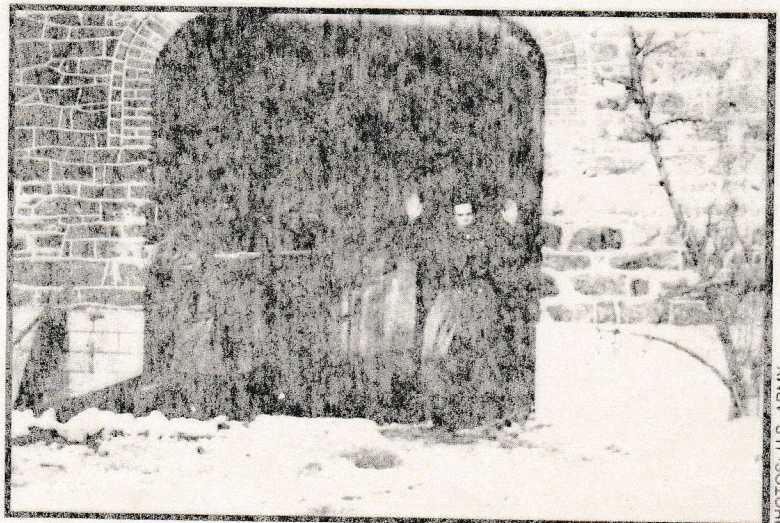
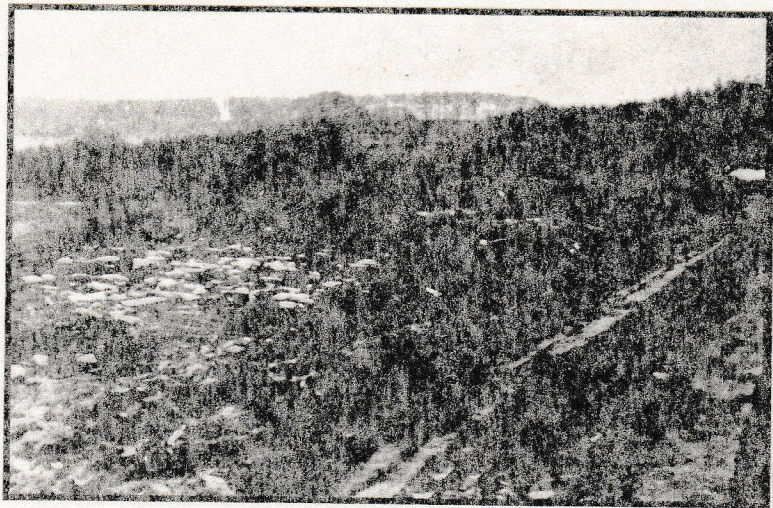
Youthful and green, the 106th Infantry Division blunted Hitler's attack at the Bulge

In the photos at right, American equipment is shown strewn over the battlefield and, below, members of the 106th capture a German soldier. Opposite page, tanks of the 40th Tank Battalion take up positions in the snow outside St. Vith.

By Don Underwood

- By dusk on Dec. 8, 1944, the green, youthful troops of the 106th Infantry Division were hunkered down in heavy snows and dense forests of Germany's Ardennes/ Schnee Eifel waiting to move to the front lines.
- By dusk on Dec. 12, 1944, the "Golden Lion" Division was in its place in dugouts and bunkers along the Siegfried Line. It was the quietest sector of the 100-mile-long "ghost front."
- By dawn on Dec. 16, 1944, the Battle of the Bulge had begun with the German military arrow pointed straight at the heart of the 106th.
- By dusk on Dec. 22, 1944, the Golden Lion, as a combat division, was dead.

Twelve thousand of the division's nearly 16,000 were killed, wounded or captured. One decimated regiment and a handful of men from division units



PHOTOS: U.S. ARMY

survived to fight on. In those seven freezing days of hell in the worst European winter of the century there were 16,000 individual stories of bravery, confusion, panic and paralyzing fear.

It is now 39 years after that terrible week, and 60 percent of today's population was not even born. Military historians have written the story of the 106th as either tragic or heroic. As one of Allied-High-Command bumbling, or division-level-commander ineptness. As one of heroism or cowardice.

Some historical perspective is necessary.

History now sees those GIs of the 106th, who heard shots fired in anger for the first time that freezing morning of December 16, as a major influence in the blunting of Hitler's last major offensive. It sees those youths, who went into their front-line positions with neckties neatly knotted, as decisive in the fatal disruption of von Rundstedt's immaculate timetable for the recapture of Liège, Brussels and the Lowlands.

The German drive failed. The European war ended a little more than four months later.

In the immediate days after that German Christmas offensive was aborted, British Field Marshal Montgomery singled out the "United States infantrymen who stood in the full face of von Rundstedt's overwhelming armored power." He cited the 106th Infantry Division and the 7th Armored Division "for their magnificent battle at St. Vith in the first flash of the

German drive.

"It was," he said, "the 106th and the 7th Armored who clung to those vital goals even though they were isolated and cut off in small units and pockets . . . they held grimly to those highways over which the Germans intended to pass in their drive to the west. Taking the shock and impact of German armor at the very peak of its strength they slowed down the drive . . . at one time they halted it . . . so that other American troops rushing into the lines in the rear could eventually master the German offensive."

" . . . youths who went into their front-line positions with neckties neatly knotted . . . "

"No greater service on the field of battle could have been rendered than that given by the 106th Infantry Division and the 7th Armored in this crucial struggle at St. Vith."

When the Golden Lion itself began its Janus-like existence in the parched pines, heat and dust surrounding Fort Jackson, S.C., in 1943, the division almost seemed marked by fate from the start. During that year, youths from farms, factories, slums; who were insurance salesmen, teachers, clerks —one had been a liquor buyer at Macy's

—became infantrymen.

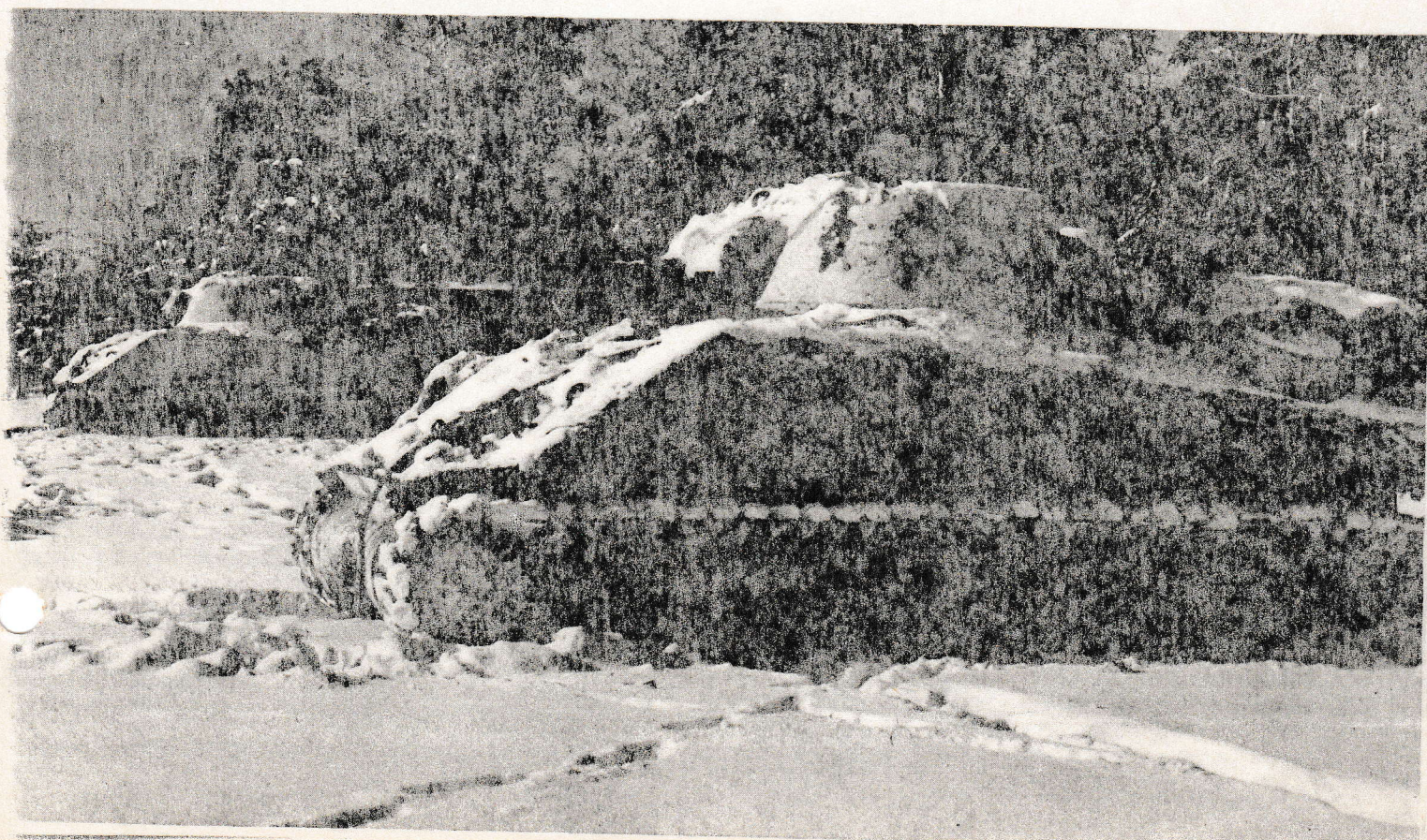
In fact, the division achieved a remarkably high state of efficiency—under stateside conditions. Col. Dupuy, the division's official biographer, wrote, in a symbolic epitaph of many: "The only thing lacking in their training would be that first 30 minutes of combat, the vital kill-or-be-killed moment, which only comes with battle."

Although the war was beginning to turn to the Allies' favor, the cost in manpower was exorbitant. So, to replace those casualties on the battlefields, the 106th was stripped of nearly two-thirds of the men who had been part of that cohesive unit. The replacements who were rushed in to fill the division's ranks were, in great part, students who had volunteered for Army and Air Corps specialist training—not the infantry. Thus, a crash course of training began again.

After two months of maneuvers in, on and around the snake-like Cumberland River in Tennessee, the division's staging for combat was at Camp Atterbury, Columbus, Ind., just outside Indianapolis. The hospitable Hoosiers took the kids from the 106th to their hearts. To the 106th, Indiana became "home." It was the last home hundreds and hundreds in the division were to know.

The division's path to disaster took it to Adderbury, England, for final combat organization. Crossing the English Channel to European soil, the division's flotilla was hit by storms and massive waves that stretched the

(Continued on page 48)



Golden Lion

(Continued from page 23)

40-mile crossing into a five-day nightmare. It was the youngest, highest IQ'd and most seasick division ever to make a landing.

An Army snafu left the troops without transportation at Le Havre, so they stood, slept, slumped or shuffled for a night and a day. One squad built a forbidden bonfire. The first casualties of the war for the 106th occurred when a buried shell, on which the fire had been built, exploded and the squad members were blown away.

Eventually, the truck columns wended their way through France, Luxembourg, Belgium and then just across the German border into the brooding forest of the Schnee Eifel. The woods were dense, impenetrable in spots, with barely passable paths or trails. Here and there stood small picture-postcard villages blanketed in knee-deep snow. The weather was freezing.

As they moved into the front-line dugouts being vacated by the Second Division, they sheepishly took the taunting of those battle-worn veterans who were on their way back to a rest area. Those combat-wise GIs also took all the heating stoves.

The shivering, frostbitten troops of the 106th at that moment shared, in a sense, one secret with the Allied High Command. Neither had any realization that Hitler, losing on all fronts and desperate, had decided to launch a mammoth counteroffensive "to decide," in Hitler's words to his generals on December 12, "whether we shall live or die."

Hitler took the route the experts said was impossible—through the slopes and forest of the Ardennes, in blizzards that negated Allied air power—to try to split the Allied armies and drive a wedge into his immediate goal, the rail center of Liège.

To succeed, he first had to break through to the two major road and rail centers in Belgium, west of the Ardennes: St. Vith and Bastogne. But between him and those objectives was the 106th, spread pitifully thin, with the men dug in so far apart they could only wave to each other in the short daylight hours . . . or "touch" by patrols, day and night.

Massed against them on the German side were the 6th Panzer SS Army in the north, the 7th Army to the south, and in the center—aimed squarely at the 106th—the 5th Panzer Army.

Standing before these armies, the

106th Infantry Division, in its combat nakedness, consisted of three infantry regiments, the 422nd, the 423rd and the 424th; four battalions of field artillery, the 589th through the 592nd; the 81st Engineer Combat Battalion (of which more will be recounted later) and support troops: medics, the reconnaissance troop, signal, ordnance, quartermaster and military police battalions.

All of them became combat infantrymen in that one week. The War Department had devised a special recognition that only those who actually engaged the enemy were honored to wear: the Combat Infantry Badge. The 106th counted, perhaps, the highest percentage of those emblems awarded, as cooks, clerks, supply sergeants, vehicle drivers and orderlies took up weapons and joined the battle. And became casualties.

Today, the 106th lives in the hearts and minds of those who were there.

In various increments of time during that period, the division had the support of the 14th Cavalry Group, 275th Armored Field Artillery Battalion, 820th Tank Destroyer Battalion, 634th Anti-Aircraft Battalion, the 112th Infantry Regiment of the 28th Division, the 168th Combat Engineer Battalion—in addition to bits and pieces of a score more units of all types.

But none was to play a greater part than the 7th Armored Division under Brig. Gen. Robert Hasbrouck, and the commander of his Combat Command B, Brig. Gen. Bruce Clarke, when they were rushed into the action from 100 miles away.

The enemy did succeed in splitting the Golden Lion Division in and around towns, the names of which will be remembered by only a few—Schoenberg, Bleialf, Manhay, Lanzarath, Houffalize, Vielsalm and so many others.

Germany's 5th Panzer Army was commanded by Gen. Hasso von Man-

teuffel. As it poised for the December 16 surprise attack, it included divisions of infantry, paratroops, SS contingents and battalions of artillery up to and including massive railway guns. In his way were the 106th Division's 422nd Regiment, under Col. Descheneaux, on the north of the 106th's perimeter; the 423rd, commanded by Col. Cavender, in the middle, and the 424th on the south, under Col. Alexander Reid. The division commander, Maj. Gen. Alan Jones, was headquartered with his staff in a schoolhouse in St. Vith. Manteuffel's orders were to be in St. Vith in 48 hours.

A hundred different writers have told a hundred different versions of what happened from that point on. Eisenhower, Omar Bradley, Manteuffel, Ridgway—all have had their say. A recent version is recounted by the World War II historian, Charles Whiting, in his *Death of a Division*, and it is coldly critical.

Whiting reconstructs an appalling drama in which he details ineptitude and confusion when the 422nd and 423rd Regiments were quickly surrounded by the German tanks and infantry, of lack of decision by division headquarters and of a faulty telephone line from corps headquarters to the division, which might have averted it all.

Radio transmission was jammed and the efficient German radio teams were listening. Col. Peiper of the Nazi 1st SS Panzer Division later told Whiting that because of radio, he knew his opponents' moves throughout the battle. In St. Vith, the pro-German citizens were relaying every action of the 106th's headquarters to the Germans.

With Jones fearing that at least two of his regiments were either surrounded—or disintegrating—and with the 14th Cavalry in a messy rout, the general desperately tried to talk with Lt. Gen. Troy Middleton, VIII Corps Commander, over the sketchy telephone line.

The question of whether to withdraw the two crumbling regiments never was intelligibly answered. Jones ordered the regiments to hold. They held until December 19. On that day, some 9,000 American soldiers became prisoners. The moral decision by the two regimental commanders in surrendering is still debated.

The crippled and confused 424th Regiment, on the southern part of the

Continued . . .

NEW! Coin Counter/Roller Makes Your Job Easy!



Saves You Hours
Of Tedium,
But Costs
Only
\$2.99

- Ends:**
- Counting
 - Adding
 - Multiplying

- New It's:**
- Fast
 - Easy
 - Accurate

**Counts
Up To:**

\$2.00 in Nickels

50¢ in Pennies

\$10.00 in Quarters

\$5.00 in Dimes

Then, you just slide these perfect rolls of coins into bank rolls.
It's that easy!...**GUARANTEED!**

This New Coin Counter/Roller is for you if your job requires that you count and roll coins, or if you've accumulated some savings in coins.

Saves you the tedious work of and time for sorting, counting, multiplying and stacking ... and trouble getting coins into paper rolls! Ends mistakes and rejects at the bank!

It's a perfect gift for anyone you know who handles cash in a store, drives a cab or bus, works in a restaurant. Give them to children to encourage them to save their money.

Numerals and markings are raised black plastic, molded in, so they can't wear off! Durable, lightweight matte black plastic will last for years!

STERLING HOUSE, Sterling Building
Box CO-7296, Garnerville, N.Y. 10923

YES! I sure would like to make the tedious job of counting and rolling coins easy with this **New Coin Counter/Roller**. Please send the following:

One for only \$2.99 plus 50¢ postage and handling. **ORDER EXTRAS FOR GIFTS NOW**

AND SAVE! Two for only \$4.99 plus 70¢ postage and handling. Three for only \$6.75 plus 90¢ postage and handling.

N.Y. State residents add sales tax.

Enclosed is \$_____.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

DO YOU HAVE KNEE PAIN?

- Stiffness after prolonged sitting.
- Aching around the knee cap.
- Soreness after a day of activity (golf, etc.).
- Aggravated by stair climbing, long periods of standing/walking.

These symptoms indicate you may have knee cap degeneration. This disorder is a common problem, regardless of age, occupation and athletic or leisure activity.

TRY THE ORIGINAL CHO-PAT® KNEE STRAP

The CHO-PAT® Knee Strap was designed by medical professionals to help alleviate these symptoms.

Send check or money order to:

CHO-PAT, INC.

P. O. Box 203

Hainesport, NJ 08036

609-261-1336

Circumference
Size Below Knee Cap

X-Small Below 10"

Small Over 10½-12½"

Med. Over 12½-14½"

Large Over 14½-16½"

X-Large Over 16½"

If in doubt, send exact measurement.

\$11.95 each PPd USA

(NJ Residents add .60 Sales Tax)

Foreign - Pay in U.S. Funds



- Comfortable • Proven Effective
- Easy to Apply and Adjust
- Order Today • Stay Active

Strap includes information and wearing instructions
Canadian Pat. #48053 - U.S. Pats. 4334528 & D265,590
AVAILABLE IN SOME MED./SURG. SUPPLY STORES

Cheney. Because Laura loves this house.



Laura and her husband worked hard restoring this old house. But then an illness made it impossible for Laura to climb stairs. They could have moved to a one-story house, but Laura loves this house. A Cheney Weclator™ was Laura's solution. It lets her ride from floor to floor quickly and comfortably. It's UL approved, virtually maintenance free, and can be installed on almost any stairway, straight, curved or even spirals.

For a colorful brochure on Cheney Weclators or Wheelchair Lifts™, the indoor outdoor Handi Lift™, and other quality Cheney products, contact your local Cheney Representative or write: The Cheney Company, Dept. LE, 3015 S. 163rd Street, New Berlin, WI 53151. (414) 782-1100.

Helping people help themselves
The CHENEY Company

CIGARETTES BELOW WHOLESALE

Smoke and save. All brand names. Cigarettes is our only business. Fast service, 2 week delivery. ONLY \$6.49 per carton. The more you buy, the more you save. Personal checks welcome. Minimum order 10 cartons.

Add \$3.50 to cover postage and handling. SEND your order TODAY.

SMOKE N SAVE, P.O. Box 313 Dept. 3-A
Isleta Indian Reservation, New Mexico 87022

... Continued

line, was barely holding on. Col. Reid was wounded, and Lt. Col. Orville Hewitt was acting commanding officer. It was facing the same extinction as its sister regiments.

The arrival of Clarke in advance of his Combat Command B of the 7th Armored salvaged the disaster. Clarke made a swift decision. He perceived his superior in rank, Maj. Gen. Jones, to be dazed and befuddled. Clarke, on his own, assumed command, gathered the forces of the 424th together and merged into his "army" the 112th Regiment of the 28th Infantry Division, which had also been cut off from any strategic reality. The conglomerate Combat Command B began pulling back in a semblance of order, and the Americans regrouped at Vielsalm, just east of Bastogne.

In the melange of events, Gen. Jones learned that his son, 1st Lt. Alan Jones, Jr., serving with the 423rd Regiment, had been killed. The general himself suffered a heart attack and was evacuated, his military career in shambles.

St. Vith fell to the Germans on the night of December 21-22. It had taken Manteuffel not 48 hours, but six days, and the Americans still were harassing him from front and rear. The enemy timetable crumpled. St. Vith was recaptured a few days later.

While it's true that cowards were exposed in those crucial days—heroes were also born. Whiting cites 1st Lt. Eric Fisher Wood, who gathered stragglers from the 422nd and 423rd into a hit squad that tormented German convoys into the town of Meyerode, which was the headquarters of German Field Marshal Model and of Gen. Sepp Dietrich, commander of the 6th SS Panzer. Wood and his men later were found dead, surrounded by German bodies. The villagers erected a cross to mark Wood's grave.

The bravery of the 81st Engineer Combat Battalion is legend, too, and it was detailed by Capt. Loren E. Souers, now a Canton (Ohio) attorney, for that unit's military citation for valor. The 81st Engineers was under the command of Lt. Col. Thomas J. Riggs Jr of Huntington, W.Va. In support originally of the 422nd Regiment, Riggs and his men, with the 168th Combat Engineers added, fought their way out of encirclement, harassed the Germans as they inched their way toward St. Vith, then sniped at the enemy from the rear as they were bypassed.

Col. Riggs, with remnants of his bat-

talion, headquarters and service troops, fought on in patrol actions until they were captured on December 23. Col. Riggs escaped from the Germans in Poland in January and then fought with the Russians for two months longer.

The pressure grew on the Allied lines between St. Vith and Bastogne. By Christmas the remnants of the 106th were back in battle, and by this time the massive weight of Allied power began choking off the enemy drive. A German collapse began.

As the Germans retreated farther and farther, the 106th was quickly being reconstituted. But it was a shell of its former being. It ended its own war as the guardian of thousands of Germans in prison camps up and down the Rhine.

Probably never in the history of the British Parliament, though, did a prime minister ever give greater praise to an ally of Britain. Facing the House of Commons in a vote of confidence on his conduct of the war, Churchill said that "care must be taken in telling our proud tale not to claim for the British armies an undue share of what is undoubtedly the greatest American battle of the war. The Americans have suffered losses almost equal to those on both sides in the Battle of Gettysburg. I have never hesitated to stand up for our own soldiers when their achievements have been cold-shouldered or overshadowed or neglected . . . as they sometimes are . . . but we must not forget that it is to the American homes that the telegrams of personal loss and anxiety have been coming. We must never forget that there has been a hard and severe ordeal for our brave and cherished ally."

Today, the 106th lives in the hearts and minds of those who were there—and in the memory of the grateful Belgian government that awarded the division its *Fourragere* for gallantry in action . . .

And in the memorial to the dead of the division in St. Vith, placed by the 106th Infantry Division Association . . .

And in the handful of Distinguished Service Crosses, the dozens of Silver Stars, the hundreds of Bronze Stars, the thousands of Combat Infantry Badges awarded those infantrymen . . .

And the thousands of Purple Hearts . . . nearly forgotten today, in catchall shoe boxes in the bottom of dresser drawers.

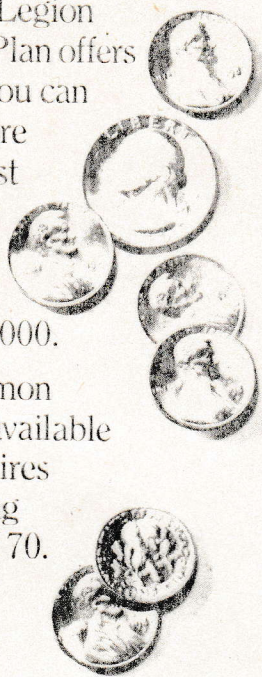
Add to your family's security for as little as 46¢ a week.

The American Legion Life Insurance Plan offers extra security you can afford. Now more than ever. For just 46¢ per week (\$24 per year) you can leave them up to \$12,000.

The only official life insurance plan approved by The Legion has paid over \$43 million in benefits since 1958. Mail coupon now. We'll rush details.

FREE American Legion decal if your coupon arrives by April 30, 1983.

This uncommon opportunity is available to all Legionnaires in good standing under the age of 70.

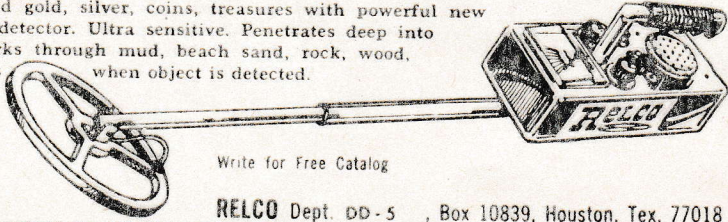


The American Legion Life Insurance Plan
P.O. Box 5609 • Chicago, IL 60680

NAME _____
 STREET _____
 CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
 BIRTH DATE _____
 Month Day Year
 AL3

FIND BURIED TREASURE

Find buried gold, silver, coins, treasures with powerful new electronic detector. Ultra sensitive. Penetrates deep into earth. Works through mud, beach sand, rock, wood, etc. Signals when object is detected.



Write for Free Catalog
 RELCO Dept. DD-5, Box 10839, Houston, Tex. 77018



HEARING AIDS

SAVE \$200
 All-in-the-Ear Aid will help you hear and understand!
 Try 30 days before you buy!
 No salesman. Free catalog!

RHODES, Dept. 34-Z, Brookport, ILL 62910



LEARN MEAT CUTTING

Train quickly in 8 short weeks at Toledo for a bright future with security in the vital meat business. Big pay, full-time jobs—**HAVE A PROFITABLE MARKET OF YOUR OWN!** Time payment plan available. Diploma given. Job help. Thousands of successful graduates. **OUR 60th YEAR!** Send NOW for a big new illustrated FREE catalog. No obligation. C.T. approved. NATIONAL SCHOOL OF MEAT CUTTING, No. T1-02-01977, Dept. A-184 33 N. Superior, Toledo, Ohio 43604.