

Belgian Woman Tells How Eight American Prisoners Were Slain

LIGNEUVILLE, Belgium— (AP) — A middle-aged Belgian spinster who said she saw a German non-commissioned officer murder eight captured American tankmen, one by one, led a U. S. burial squad today to the frozen bodies which lay in a roadside snowbank.

On the same day, December 17, the same German reconnaissance battalion of an armored SS division moved up the road two miles and slaughtered some 100 other Americans in an open field.

This Nazi elite guard outfit has been blamed for a number of other atrocities against Americans and civilians all across Belgium.

Mlle. Marie, who keeps house for her farmer brother, told the story of the murder of the eight Americans to Capt. George W. McBurney of Tuscaloosa, Ala., assistant inspector general of the 30th Division; Lieut. Henry Schmitz, New York, a 30th Division officer, and Sergt. Mark B. Carl of Chambersburg, Pa., McBurney's assistant.

"I was milking December 17 when the Germans came down the road, marching 24 American prisoners before them," Mlle. Marie said. "The Germans, all of whom were young and loud, were shouting at the Americans and knocking them about.

"About 20 yards from our house, they halted the Americans and ordered eight of them to dig graves for three Germans who had been burned to death in a knocked-out tank in front of the house.

"After the Americans finished

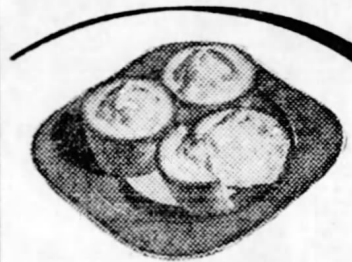
digging the graves, the eight were lined up along the road. The German non-commissioned officer then stepped out and shot them in the face one at a time. The Germans then kicked the bodies over the hill into a ditch."

The woman continued: "Afterward, the Germans asked if I'd seen what happened. I told them no. I knew that if I'd said yes, they would shoot me, too.

"Later other Germans came and looked at the bodies. They wanted and stole the shoes—all except one's, whose shoes apparently wouldn't fit the Germans."

The arms of most of the victims still were upraised stiffly in surrender when the bodies were found.

In the shirt pocket of one 18-year-old sandy-haired tankman was a letter from his girl back in New York state, received only a few days before. It was dated November 13.



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