

History of Company "M"

330th Infantry

83th Infantry Division



The deeds performed by the members of this company can never be measured by decorations. All were brave, all were scared — but a certain few came to the front. Their actions merited some recognition, and it came in the form of a decoration.

MEN RECEIVING THE BRITISH MILITARY CROSS

William Priest, 1st LT.

MEN RECEIVING SILVER STAR

William D. Clark,	S/Sgt.
Clell Martin,	S/Sgt.
Charles E. Gray,	Sgt.
Andrew W. McKenna,	Captain
Cary A. McArthur, Jr.,	Pfc.
Robert J. Semler,	1st LT.
William Priest,	1st LT.
Henry Vaughn,	Cpl.
Edwin Helitz,	T/Sgt.
Paul O. Martinez,	S/Sgt.
Robert F. Moore,	Cpl.
Ronald A. Messier,	Cpl.
Leo T. Hury,	1st LT.
Evgseft J. Bishop,	S/Sgt.
Eugene V. Tetrick,	S/Sgt.

MEN WHO WERE AWARDED THE BRONZE STAR MEDAL

George Krivak,	T/Sgt. (also cluster)
Antoni Cammarottil,	S/Sgt. (also cluster)
Raymona H. Houston,	Jr. 2nd LT. (also cluster)
Edwin T. Sullivan,	1st LT.
Arthur C. Nelson,	Pfc.
Waller B. Wheeler,	Sgt.
Edward J. Mellon,	Pfc.
James M. Hare,	Pfc.
William C. Porter,	Pfc.
John Casella,	Pfc.
Harold E. Eubank,	Pfc.
William Mackowski,	1st LT.
Franklin L. Ashe,	Cpl.
John J. Ferraro,	Pfc.
Edward I. Maurer,	Pfc.
Melvin C. Oliver,	T/Sgt.
Edward H. Eiler,	S/Sgt. (also cluster)
Thomas C. Page,	1st Sgt.
Robert J. Semler,	1st LT.

BRONZE STAR MEDAL (Cont.)

Archie L. Cropper,	Pfc.
Henry Vaughn,	Cpl.
Max Alexander,	Pfc. (Posthumous)
Nick Maszton,	Sgt.
Lawrence M. Stearns,	Cpl.
William D. Clark,	S/Sgt.
Alfred Russo,	Sgt.
Hadley T. Caulder,	Sgt.
Robert G. Blackwell,	Sgt. (Posthumous)
Andrew W. McKenna,	Capt.
Robert W. Zwick,	2nd LT.
Steve M. Click,	2nd LT.
Pete Pehamich,	2nd LT.
Thomas M. Langhorn,	1st LT.
Joseph L. Kotenko,	S/Sgt.
Eugene V. Tetrick,	S/Sgt.
Nick A. Vangelos,	S/Sgt.
Leo T. Hury,	1st LT.
Clell Martin,	S/Sgt.
Henry J. Suman,	Sgt.
John E. Beal,	S/Sgt.
Charles B. Hand,	Pfc.
Francis G. Scavoitha,	Sgt.
Robert B. Turner,	S/Sgt.
James Amato,	T/Sgt.
James W. Fowler,	S/Sgt.
Pate Komarinski,	Cpl.
Staley Johnson,	T/Sgt.
William G. Howard,	S/Sgt.
Watson E. Meeks,	Sgt.
Henry S. Hine,	Sgt.
Samuel Borrello,	S/Sgt.
Porter M. Moss,	S/Sgt.
Joseph E. Ritterskamp,	Cpl.
Lee M. Ormon,	T/Sgt.
Joseph J. Halam,	Sgt.
William S. Burns, Jr.,	Cpl.
Forrest B. Stubbs,	Pfc.

The men who were wounded in combat were unfortunate. Every man took his chance, and it was a certainty that some would get hit, in recognition of their suffering, the Army gave the Purple Heart Medal to the following:

MEN RECEIVING THE PURPLE HEART MEDAL WHILE WITH "M" COMPANY

Note: KIA — Killed in Action
SWA — Seriously Wounded in Action
LWA — Lightly Wounded in Action
DOW — Died Of Wounds

Mack Alexander, Jr., Pfc. KIA
Samuel J. Balsama, Pfc. LWA
Howard L. Banker, Sgt. SWA
George E. Barrie, Pvt. KIA
William A. Barger, Cpl. LWA
Louis Barikus, Pfc. KIA
Frank R. Barton, Sgt. LWA
John E. Beal, S/Sgt. LWA
Mike Becze, Jr., Cpl. LWA
Wesley S. Berry, Pvt. SWA
John D. Biscay, Pfc. SWA
Arlon T. Bittle, Cpl. LWA
Marlon D. Blackwell, S/Sgt. SWA
Robert G. Blackwell, Sgt. KIA
Stanley L. Borngroeber, Pfc. KIA
Samuel Borrello, S/Sgt. LWA
Kenneth F. Bowen, Pvt. SWA
Franklin E. Bowers, Pfc. KIA
Kilburn R. Brannon, Pvt. SWA
William Burdy, Pfc. KIA
John M. Burt, Pfc. LWA
Everett J. Bishop, S/Sgt. LWA
Corbin D. Buddiel, Pfc. LWA
Arlon K. Buss, Pvt. LWA
John T. Bielski, Cpl. LWA
Alphonse P. Carrella, Pfc. KIA
Wallace E. Carter, Pfc. LWA
William D. Clark, S/Sgt. LWA
Sieve M. Click, 2nd Lt. SWA
John A. Cornell, 2nd Lt. LWA
Robert A. Costello, Pfc. SWA
Archie L. Cropper, Pfc. LWA
Hadley T. Caulder, S/Sgt. LWA
Frank Domiano, Jr., Pvt. LWA
Rufus L. Dudley, Pvt. LWA
Robert J. Dunn, Sgt. LWA
James W. Edwards, Pvt. LWA
Carlton G. Ely, 1st Lt. LWA
Donald J. Evans, Cpl. SWA
Wallace Edwards, T/1. LWA
Robert M. Ferguson, Cpl. KIA
John H. Flowe, Pfc. LWA
Ellert Fegler, Pfc. LWA
James W. Fowler, S/Sgt. LWA
Thomas J. Flanagan, Pvt. LWA

Howard M. Finnerly, Pfc. LWA
James H. Garrett, Pfc. SWA
William George, Pvt. SWA
Charles W. Gillent, Pfc. LWA
Anthony J. Ginnelli, S/Sgt. KIA
David A. Glascock, Pvt. LWA
John A. Griesler, S/Sgt. KIA
Charles E. Hanley, Pvt. LWA
James M. Hare LWA
Frederick E. Harman, 2nd Lt. LWA
William H. Harter, Pvt. SWA
Leonard J. Hatt, Jr., Pfc. LWA
Edwin O. Henitz, T/Sgt. KIA
Clayton D. Hicks, Pfc. KIA
Merlin G. Hodgson, 2nd Lt. SWA
Albert P. Hoffmann, S/Sgt. SWA
Charles J. Horvath, Pfc. SWA
Charles B. Hand, Sgt. LWA
Leo T. Hurry, 1st Lt. LWA
Robert L. Horne, Pfc. LWA
William G. Howard, S/Sgt. LWA
Frank J. Jaskolski, 2nd Lt. KIA
Merion H. Johnson, Pfc. SWA
Edward T. Jones, Pvt. LWA
Stanley Johnson, S/Sgt. LWA
Henry R. Koronowski, Pfc. SWA
Raymond F. Koslik, Pfc. SWA
Chestor P. Kuklinski, Pvt. SWA
George Kivvak, T/Sgt. LWA
Paul S. LaBresque, Pvt. DOW
Adelard Larue, Jr. LWA
William H. Leader, T/Sgt. SWA
Michael J. Leonard, Sgt. KIA
Homer Likins, S/Sgt. KIA
Edward E. Lindcamp, Pvt. LWA
Oscar D. Long, S/Sgt. KIA
Charles W. Lybarger, Cpl. SWA
Robert H. Lemieux, Pfc. LWA
Irvin Maleh, Pfc. LWA
H. D. Martin, Pvt. LWA
Paul O. Martinez, S/Sgt. DOW
Nick J. Maston, Sgt. KIA
Edward P. Maurer, Pfc. LWA
Edward J. Mellon, Pfc. LWA
Thomas E. Mica, S/Sgt. LWA
Jesse L. Miles, Pfc. KIA
Clarence B. Morrow, Sgt. DOW
Andrew W. McKenna, Capt. LWA
Cory A. McArthur, Jr., Pfc. LWA
Thomas J. Naughton, Pfc. LWA
Arthur C. Nelson, Pfc. LWA
Walter J. O'Connor, Pfc. LWA
John Olivani, Pfc. LWA
Wilmer A. Orendorf, Cpl. SWA
Melvin C. Olives, T/Sgt. KIA
LWA

HISTORY OF CO. "M" 336th INF.

Lee M. Osman, T/Sgt.	LWA
Raymond Patrie, Cpl.	LWA
Clarence D. Pellan, Pvt.	LWA
Benjamin J. Prebel, Pvt.	KIA
Donald F. Powell, 1st Lt.	SWA
William Priest, 1st Lt.	LWA
Thomas C. Page, 1st Sgt.	LWA
George E. Riggins, Cpl.	LWA
Norman K. Ream, S/Sgt.	SWA
Edgar J. Renaud, Pfc.	LWA
Elmer H. Reuter, Pfc.	SWA
Grady O. Ripley, S/Sgt.	LWA
Peter C. Rocca, Sgt.	KIA
Wilmer A. Ryan, Pvt.	LWA
Rynkowski, Pfc.	LWA
Alfred Russo, Sgt.	LWA
Arthur Sabar, Pfc.	SWA
Ralph F. Schwamberger, 1st Lt.	LWA
Elmer Schwalmbraun, Pfc.	LWA
Robert J. Semler, 1st Lt.	KIA
Anthony P. Skowro, Pvt.	KIA
Lawrence M. Stearns, Cpl.	SWA
Void T. Stewart, Pvt.	LWA
Forrest B. Stubbs, Pfc.	KIA
Edwin T. Sullivan, 1st Lt.	LWA
George M. Schmalzer, S/Sgt.	LWA
Claude M. Thompson, Pfc.	SWA
Chester H. Thurman, Cpl.	LWA
Anthony J. Triano, Sgt.	LWA
Henry A. Trimmer, 2nd Lt.	LWA
Eugene V. Tetric, Pfc.	LWA
Henry Vaughn, Cpl.	LWA
Jerry Vild, Pfc.	SWA
Arnold Warren, Pvt.	KIA
Wayne Watkins, Sgt.	KIA
Richard A. Weitzbarger, 2nd Lt.	KIA
Charlie Whitaker, Pfc.	LWA
James R. Widmeyer, Pfc.	KIA
Walter S. Wilson, Sgt.	LWA
John E. Wright, Pfc.	LWA
Arthur B. White, 1st Lt.	KIA
Henry L. Yellon, Pfc.	LWA

The history of Co. "M" begins back at Camp Alterbury, Indiana on August 15, 1942. The cadre came from a cavalry outfit, and for most of them a heavy weapons company was something new. (We were all fresh from civilian life, and when we met our new officers and noncoms, we were half afraid of them. It was quite a change from "civies" to "O. D.'s", from living our own way to the Army's routine).

After many long weeks of gun drill, hikes, field problems, and firing practice, we went to Tennessee to take part in the maneuvers there.

We all expected to take it easy after maneuvers, but no—Once more the 83rd Division went on the march. Many miles passed under our tired feet, but a last we came in sight of our new home, Camp Breckinridge, Kentucky. After we were given furloughs, we entered a new phase of training—combat firing, combat team exercises, and many other things we would soon need to know. Our days in Breckinridge passed swiftly, and suddenly we found ourselves alerted for overseas movement. (Remember your feeling at the first thought that you, yourself, were going overseas. We were all excited and a little scared). Many days were spent by our taking physical exams, checking equipment, drawing new equipment, having our records brought up to date in short order, and getting ourselves P. O. M. qualified. At last the day to leave Camp Breckinridge arrived. On the 28th of March 1944 we entrained for Camp Shanks, New York. At this staging area we listened to lectures, got shots, and learned how to use our new gas masks and other equipment.

Then one cold, snowy evening, April 5th we left Camp Shanks and loaded onto an English ship, H. M. S. Orion. The 6th of April was the beginning of an exciting chapter in the history of our division. Early on the morning of that day the ship pulled out from the harbor past the Statue of Liberty and bound for England. (We were on our way. We will never forget the funny feeling we had as our boat passed the Statue of Liberty and we watched the last traces of America fade away in the early morning light). The trip "across the big pond" was uneventful and after ten days at sea, we finally reached Liverpool. The trip across wasn't so bad as we had expected. We slept in hammocks, some even stretched out on the tables. There was plenty of time for writing letters, reading books, and chasing the "galloping dominoes". The ships store carried plenty of candy and soft drinks, and we took full advantage of it.

After staying on board ship in the harbor for two days, we finally landed in "merry England" on April 18th. Our new home turned out to be Camp Doddington Hall where we lived in pyramidal tents. After a week's stay here, the company moved to Blackshire Moor near Leek, and there we began a new type of training—toughening ourselves up for the coming battles by hiking and running problems up and down those beautiful English mountains (we enjoyed ourselves very much here learning all about the English—their pubs, their warm beer, their shortage of beer, and the almost complete lack of Scotch. From here several of us received passes to the nearby towns of Newcastle and Stoke-on-Trent where the people treated us very nice, even asking us into their homes. We also met our first "foreign" girls here and rather enjoyed the meeting).

But the time for having fun had come to a "whoa" We hadn't come all the way from America on a sightseeing tour, and soon we departed for Wales and even more strenuous combat problems. "D-Day" found the company engaged in a firing problem with the rifle companies. (The rain is the principal thing we remember about Wales.)

NORMANDY

From here on we moved fast. First, back to Blackshire Moor. Then to an assembly area, next Southampton; and finally early the morning of June 19th, we left the British Isles bound for France and WAR.

The platoons were split up. The jeep drivers with their jeeps, squad leaders, gunners, and assistant gunners left on board a troop ship, and the platoon sergeants, section sergeants, and ammunition bearers boarded a Canadian LCT to be transported across the narrow channel. The men on the LCT reached Omaha beach on the morning of June 20th. But because of damage to the landing piers from a storm, we had to remain on the ship for almost a week. (At night we waited for the Jerry planes to come, and they always came. The sky would be filled with tracers and flares and the muffled burst of ack-ack could be heard as they tried to bomb ships and supplies on the beach. We were all scared—no one ever tried to deny it. There we sat, just like ducks in a shooting gallery while the Jerry planes bombed and strafed).

Finally we set foot in France, wearing our O. D.'s and impregnated clothing on top. The company reassembled about 12 miles from the front lines. At night we could hear the big guns roaring, hurling shells through the air into the Germans lines, and we began to think that sooner or later we would be up there, engaging with the "Krauts". The day finally came, and on June 27th, 1944, we moved up and relieved the elements of the 101st Airborne Division near Carentan. After training so long, we found ourselves face to face with a real enemy—the real thing. (We were green as grass about this "combat stuff", and those hedgerows—we never received any training on that type of fighting. We had to learn, and we did—the hard way).

July 4, 1944 will be remembered by those that were there for as long as they live. That day, the attack began in the hedgerows for us. We were up against one of Hitler's best combat divisions, the 17th SS Panzer Grenadiers. (It was a bitch, those hedgerows! Dead, stinking cows, the flesh and smell that arose from it—not to mention those 88's coming in constantly.) By nightfall though, we had advanced almost two miles and dug in to hold the ground until we could attack again.

The night of the 5th is one we'll never forget. Recall the orchard we moved into in order to prepare for a surprise dawn attack! Instead though, the Heines surprised us, laying 88's and artillery and mortar fire down on the orchard. All night long we were pinned down, but we repelled their counter-attacks until the 329th attacked through us and drove the Jerries back.

After a few days we got some new reinforcements and moved up to the swamps around Tribhove. It was a living hell through there! The rifle companies jumped off and were cut off for 72 hours. Our mortars fired continuously until the tubes got red hot and burnt out. This was the toughest fighting of the entire campaign. We lost a lot of good men in the swamps and we'll never forget them.

Finally we drew back, to Remilly-sur-Luzon, set up a MTR, and waited. Then they came, winging their way over our heads and almost blacking out the sky—three thousand bombers. Standing in our foxholes and watching them raise hell with the Germans was the most beautiful sight we had ever seen. That 25th day of July was a happy one for us. For two more days we fought and then the tanks broke through. Then we had our first rest period.

BRITANNY

On July 29, we began again, this time on the "Task Force". There was artillery, tanks, airplanes, engineers, trucks, jeeps, and INFANTRY—All

headed for Brest. The Brittany campaign was to prove an entirely new kind of warfare to all of us. Gone were the heart breaking days of the hedgerows and swamps. We were moving fast and had very little hard fighting. Our battalions job (The rest of the division had been left behind,) was to clear out the pockets of resistance. The Jerries didn't have a chance, and they had to do the next best thing to dying—give up.

The next few days made us wonder what was wrong with that guy Sherman when he said "War is Hell!" The roads and streets of the town were lined with beautiful Mademoiselles who showered us with flowers, cider, wine, cognac, and best of all, beaucoup kisses at every halt. The Huns were on the run, and the F. F. L. were doing their part in helping us round up the prisoners. It was seldom we had to fight for a town, but Guingamp proved to be an exception. Here the Boche were determined to stop our push, but here too the first section of mortars did one of its most masterful jobs. Going into position right on a corner of the main street, they used a chimney for an aiming stake and the rear of one of our tanks for a O. P. They fired HE, Heavy over the tops of the Huns, and then Captain McKenna walked forward calling for the Germans to surrender. Soon seventy deflated supermen came out with their hands up. The town was ours, and we pushed on.

We will never forget the reception the French people gave us at Morlaix. The people were so grateful to us and so happy for freedom that they were almost insane, which made us realize that our fighting was for a worthy cause.

All was not to remain so easy for us on the peninsula—the Jerries ran as far as they could, and then like a cornered rat they had to fight. We suffered casualties and with the death of our friends and the sweating out of baggage of the big coastal guns that the desperate Germans turned on us, those of us who were new began to realize what real war is like. The Jerries were determined to stand but our rifle troops were more determined that they would reach the end of the peninsula. Here the entire platoon of mortars fired day and night, sometimes firing as close as fifty yards, and at times even twenty-five yards of our own troops. This was to knock out Jerry pillboxes and counterattacks. When the fighting was over, we took up defensive positions across the water from the port city of Brest. Here the machine gunners collected all the .50 Caliber machine guns in the battalion and used them in long range fire to sink small boats and fire on anything else they could see. Plenty of ammunition was fired, but it was mostly for training. Target practice with live targets! We again had life easy living in style in our never-to-be forgotten home, the pig-pen. We had pushed off from Normandy on the third of August, and on the thirtieth we found ourselves at the end of the peninsula where our drive had ended. We stayed in defensive positions until the city of Brest was captured on the twentieth of September. Three days later we were again on the move.

This time we moved six-hundred miles by truck and train to Hettange-Grande, France. For four days here, we engaged in pill-box training using the famous Maginot Line as our objective. The mortar platoon would lay down smoke and the machine gun platoons would cover the riflemen as they worked forward to blow up the pill-boxes. Soon we had it down pat, and thought that now we would take a crack at the Siegfried Line. (Here we saw our first clubmobile since we had left England. The way we went after those doughnuts! It's certain everyone ate his fill, and we could speak and look at an AMERICAN girl once again.)

LUXEMBOURG

Instead of the Siegfried Line which we were all "sweating out", our new Mission was to occupy the west bank of the Moselle River in the small country of Luxembourg. Here across the river we got our first glimpse of German soil. The machine gun and mortar sections were rotated weekly between the "front" and a rest and training area a few miles back. There was very little action, only a few Jerry patrols at night and a occasional artillery or mortar shell. Whenever a section moved back from the river to the rest area, they said they were the ones doing the relieving.

All the old men of the company remember the towns of Waldbredimus, Bous, Straßbredimus, Gravenmacher (with its Champagne factory) Remich, Beck (Those that were in it will always remember the cave; the wind and Harris setting off our booby traps, Eiter and Marshall eternally stringing more wire, and Doc Maas and his snoring.)

In Remich the mortars occupied a big hotel and ate G. I. rations supplemented by pigs and chickens (Killed by a booby trap of course) off of a white table cloth. In Luxembourg the living was swell after the one man foxholes to which we were accustomed, and everyone thought he was a pretty important man to get a bed with a mattress for himself. It was also in Luxembourg that we saw our first V-2 launched. It was quite a thrill to watch the jagged column of smoke form behind the rocket, but we sadly realized that five minutes later it would be landing in England. Finally the whole company was relieved and we moved to the famous resort town of Mondorf for further training.

HURTGEN FOREST

The life that we were living just couldn't go on forever and we all knew it. Because of this we were pretty interested in the fighting around Aachen, where we expected to go. Then one day the orders came, and we were to relieve the 4th Div. that was fighting in the Hurtgen Forest. On the cold, rainy morning of December 2nd we left Luxembourg and its friendly people and good times behind.

After spending the night in the mud of a rear assembly area, we began early the next morning the long hike to the front lines. We passed more artillery than we had ever seen before, and we began to wonder what was ahead! The Hurtgen Forest no doubt must have been beautiful at one time, but now it was very different because most of the once beautiful pine trees had been destroyed. Just as we were about to the front, several airplanes came into view. Much to our surprise and consternation they bore German Swastikas and proceeded to open up with their machine guns. Everyone hid for cover, but the first platoon rapidly went into action and brought one down.

It was almost dark when we got to our positions, but it was the only way to get there because of the enemy's excellent observation. The machine gun positions were located on high ground in a thinning brush. No one could move, because if he did, artillery shells from the enemy would be "swooshing" in. The mortar platoon stayed in position three days firing on the average 400 to 800 rounds per day. Plenty of ammo, was on hand to really lay down a barrage if Jerry should try to counterattack.

On December 10th came that unforgettable day when the battalion jumped off in the attack having the German town of Strass as their objective.

The attack began at 0530 in the midst of a swirling snow storm. The machine gunners accompanied the rifle companies and entered Strass at 0700 hours. The mortars were split up. The first and second sections remained in position firing a supporting barrage while the third moved with the battalion, hand-carrying their mortars and ammunition. Shortly after defensive positions had been established, the enemy succeeded in closing behind us, and the entire battalion was cut off.

There followed numerous counterattacks by the "Supermen", but the rifle companies with our help succeeded in repelling the infantrymen and tanks. An enemy counterattack early on the morning of the 11th with tanks managed to capture one section of the 2nd Platoon. The following morning Jerry repeated his tactics and had the same luck with the other section. Enemy artillery fire was continually falling on the town, and it seemed as though Hitler thought Strass was essential to his plans.

Numerous patrols were sent out from another battalion, but they couldn't break through to us with their supplies. Our wounded could not be evacuated, and the situation really looked desperate. Finally, though on December 12th a patrol managed to break through and rations reached us. This was the only food we had eaten since the 10th with the exception of a very few "D" bars dropped from an observation plane.

Slowly and surely the town was reinforced and finally on the 14th we were able to pull back out of Strass quite aware of the fact that we had taken all Jerry had and were still around. Replacements (now known by the better sounding term "reinforcements") came up and we were soon reorganized and ready to go again. Several of the non-coms of the first platoon were transferred to the second to form the base for the almost entirely new platoon.

Instead of a long rest though, we were soon on the go again. We moved up to the banks of the flooded Roer River, set up our guns, and it was here we spent our first Christmas out of the States — eating cold K-rations and trying to keep warm (It just wasn't possible). Our division had made the farthest penetration into Germany of any division thus far. Our battalion was the farthest forward of all, and we received praise from the commanders for the excellent support we had given the rifle companies.

ARDENNES BULOGE

It was here that we learned about Rundstedt's counter offensive, and after being relieved by a cavalry unit, we moved to a small town in Belgium to get ready for our part in stopping the drive to "push the Allied troops into the sea". Here we ate our Christmas dinner — Turkey and all. It was a week late, but we all appreciated it.

On January 3rd our Battalion, attached to the 3rd. Armored Division moved out at 0630 in a column of companies. Besides the Jerries we had to fight against the bitter cold weather. Clothing wasn't enough, and to start a fire was useless. We had to guard against trenchfoot. (Those of us who got it knew that it is no joke.) and take care that our weapons would work when called for. The least any of us wore was: heavy woolen underwear, fatigues, wool O. D.'s, field jackets, overcoats, overshoes, hoods, scarfs and anything else we could find. It was very unhandy for fighting. But it was that or freeze.

It was a constant, bitter fighting in snow and freezing cold, pushing the enemy back step by step, yard by yard, town by town through Fraiture, Regno, Langlitz, Lomre. Our mission was to cut the St. Vith-Houffalize high-

way, last escape route for Rundstedt's once mighty offensive. The rifle companies rode tanks. After they took a town with the support of the mortars, the machine gunners would move in and set up their guns to hold the newly captured ground. This was one type of fighting that found the mortars ahead of the machine gunners. During the fierce fight for Cherain, the mortar platoon suffered its heaviest casualties of the war.

RHINELAND

After fighting for 24 days, our mission was accomplished and we moved to Hameln, and later Pilsen, Badlium. Billed in private homes we enjoyed all the comforts of home (well, not quite all) Warmth, the pleasure of stepping between white sheets and on soft beds, showers, clean clothes, and movies twice nightly. (Remember the reason for the "off limits" sign going up.) Quite a change from the Bulge.

The company was brought up to training and started training to give the Nazis that last lick. After three weeks we were ready, and we moved to Moulend for a short intensive training period.

On the 24th of February we crossed the Roer River and relieved the elements of 29th Division on their newly won bridgehead just on the outskirts of Jülich. Gone were the soft beds and once again we slept in foxholes. Before dawn we jumped off, following an all night artillery preparation. The mortars now were firing entirely by battery, and their fire helped the rifle companies, to which were attached the machine gun platoons, take the town of Paffert against moderate resistance. Later the same day we took Sevenich. Then the Armor was able to shake loose, and we joined in the race to the Rhine. We passed through towns that had been taken only an hour before, but the "ride" was uneventful until we hit the industrial city of Nüss. The city was only partly taken and we flushed the cellars and houses and took several German soldiers in civilian clothes before we were certain that it was safe to bed down. (Lt. Rubin captured a German general here all bedecked in his dress uniform. It wasn't his fault he turned out to be a fireman.) Everyone found a bed in some of the apartment houses around, and all went to sleep in comfort for a change. There wasn't much sleep though because at noon the battalion moved out to clear the rest of the town. The night of the march on Oberkassel was the scariest of all. Bed Check Charlie's flying in the sky had us all on edge, and in the dark of the night, a file of German Volksturmers unknowingly walked abreast of us. Unfortunately for them, they challenged our tanks. Despite their use of machine guns and Panzerfausts, they were soon overpowered. Moving on, dawn found us almost to the Rhine and by noon our battalion occupied positions on the west bank of the Rhine; thus gaining the distinction of being the first Allied troops to reach the Rhine.

After being relieved by elements of the 95th Division on the 21st of March we entrucked for a small town in Holland and extensive river crossing training.

CENTRAL GERMANY

After other units had established the Rhine bridgehead the Armor sped across. We were to follow the 2nd Armored and clear out pockets of resistance they had to leave behind because of their speed. This is never the easy job that the newspapers make it seem. On April 1st we established

defensive positions along the northeastern corner of the Ruhr pocket. The 7th of April found us again on the move, this time crossing the Weser River and moving deeper into the heart of Germany. We were riding deep in German territory, but it meant that we were helping to win the war as quickly as possible. On the 8th we moved out on foot and pushed some 20 miles to cross the Leine River. April 16th found us on the northern edge of the Harz Mountains still clearing our pockets of resistance. We had done much riding on trucks, tanks, destroyers, jeeps and plenty of walking to get here. From here on, foxholes and dirty slit trenches were forgotten, and wherever the opportunity (it most often did) permitted, we slept in German homes from which the Germans had departed or were helped to depart. The mortar platoon once again was split, a section being attached to each of the rifle companies in the battalion. We now encountered that long expected guerrilla type of warfare. The Wehrmacht, Volksturm, remnants of S. S. Troopers, and the teen-age Hitler's Youth resisted our advances at every turn and we ran into a lot of small arms and Panzerfaust fire. However, they were no match for our superior weapons and better trained troops. We began liberating the forced laborers and heard for the first time the horror stories of the mistreatment these people received at the hands of the Nazis. The roads were full of these people who were now liberated and starting the long journey home on foot. We traveled by jeep, trucks and captured German scout cars, motorcycles, and trucks until we finally reached the Elbe River where other units of our division held the only bridgehead the Allies had across the Elbe. After two weeks in this position had been spent firing countless machine gun and mortar ammunition at the confused Jerries and filling our P. W. enclosures with the same, the Russians at last appeared. It was a "beautiful" sight.

We then moved to Järsied, Germany near Goslar. There we celebrated the official V-E day May 8th. Trying our hand at Military Gov. was a novelty at first, but all the guard was horse sense and we were happy to learn that the British were going to take over our duties. Here we began our first I & E classes. (Incidentally, as we go to press we're still wondering what kind of a fire they built with those very personal questionnaires.) For the sake of some, we'll drift hastily over how we passed our free time but there was viel schnapps, wasn't there!

The first part of June we moved from Järsied by truck and jeep to the American occupation zone. Our destination proved to be the small town of Altentreuenau in the beautiful Bavarian mountains. (That's all that was beautiful.) Since the war with Japan was still going on, we began training on the Japanese tactics of war. But then the news of the Japanese surrender came just in time to keep us from having to go on maneuvers. It was really a glorious feeling to realize that we were all going to get to go home at last and again be with our loved ones.

At this time more than half of the company has left, and only one man who was in the division in the States remains—Robinson. We are all supposed to load on board ship for home within two months, so soon all that wish it (darned few don't) will once more be civilians.

We have come to the end of hostilities with the full knowledge that "M" Company 330th Infantry, "our Company", has done its part well. And we sincerely hope and pray that what we have seen and what we have gone through will not have to be repeated by the coming generation, Our Sons...