

THE STORY OF THE
330th INFANTRY
ACROSS



MEMORIAL

THIS BOOKLET IS HUMBLLY
AND RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED TO OUR COMRADES
WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES THAT OTHERS MIGHT
LIVE IN A FREE WORLD.





FOREWORD

These pages are dedicated to the men of this Regiment; to those brave men who have made this story of success. Multiplied many times it unfolds the story of the gigantic assault launched against "Fortress Europe" by the armed might of the United States and her allies. It has spelled VICTORY.

It has been proved that, even in modern war, it is still the infantryman who carries the brunt of the battle. His ability, stamina, determination and courage have been the greatest single contributing factor to the success we have attained against a formidable enemy. He has won the respect and admiration of the entire world.

The going has been rough. The hardships and deprivations you have endured, your heroic deeds, have been written into the pages of history.

To those of you who were with us from Normandy across the Elbe; to you reinforcements who joined us along the way; to our comrades who made the supreme sacrifice for their country; to all I sincerely express my deepest affection, admiration and respect.

R. T. FOSTER
Colonel, 330th Infantry
Commanding

AMERICA TO ENGLAND

The history of the 330th Infantry Regiment in World War II began on August 15, 1942, at Camp Atterbury, Indiana. On that day the 83rd Infantry Division was reactivated. Our basic training began in November.

We participated in the Tennessee maneuvers in July and August, 1943. At the close of the maneuvers we marched to Camp Breckinridge, Kentucky, where our training prior to moving overseas was completed.

On April 6, 1944, we embarked from New York for England. Two months we spent in the British Isles. Training was resumed in the Midlands. Stoke-on-Trent, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Leek, Market Drayton, were places we remember there. We had a lot of fun in those days but back of it all, when we were serious, we thought and wondered. Wondered what war was like, but most of all we wondered how each of us as individuals would react. There was no doubt in our minds of the final outcome and we promised ourselves we would do our part.

When "D Day" came we were in northern Wales in the middle of strenuous combat-problems. We moved fast after that; back to our camps in the Midlands, on to the marshalling area at Southampton, then on boats for the Channel crossing.



ON THE ENGLISH CHANNEL-NORMANDY BOUND

NORMANDY

We landed on Omaha Beach June 23, 1944, after lying offshore a week while a storm raged that almost doomed the beachhead. After assembling in the vicinity of Bricqueville, Normandy, we moved into the lines southeast of Carentan, relieving elements of the 101st Airborne Division.

The 4th of July, 1944, was no holiday for the infantrymen of the 330th. On that day, at 0500 hours, we attacked; the first of hundreds of attacks which were to carry us from the hedgerows of Normandy to the flat plains beyond the Elbe river.

It is difficult to describe now what we did and how we felt then. We knew hate then — and fear — the kind of fear that becomes actual pain. We attacked every day for twenty-three straight days, from dawn till dark. We repulsed the enemies counter-attacks and we moved forward. We became exhausted, physically and mentally. It showed in our dirty and drawn faces. We lost our closest friends, reinforcements became veterans in a few days - if they lasted.

We were opposed initially by the 17th SS Panzer Grenadier Division, one of Hitler's best. We drove them back beyond Hotot, across the swamps and out of Remilly sur Luzon, off the Le Port Peninsula and across the Periers - St. Lo road. We destroyed them. Our advances were measured by the number of hedgerows we took, but we kept going. Forward, hedgerow to hedgerow. From one ruined Norman village to the next. From one destroyed farm with its' dead, stinking cows to the next.

On the morning of the 25th of July, the bombers came; some 3,000 of them, dive-bombers, mediums, heavies. On they came for eighty minutes. The air was filled with their noise and the dust rose for miles. It choked us. It was wonderful. We attacked again. The German lines were broken, we had helped open that hole. Then we saw the armor, the fresh divisions pass through that hole in the German lines we had fought so hard to open. The breakthrough had come.



BRIDGE ON MAIN SUPPLY ROAD NEAR CARENTAN-JERRY
SHELLED IT AT 10, 2, AND 4



MORTAR FIRING IN NORMANDY

BRITTANY

Early in the morning of August 3rd, after three days rest, we moved by truck through Granville, Avranches and Pontorson into Brittany. The Division had been transferred to the Third Army for the Brittany campaign and was assigned the mission of capturing the ports of St. Malo and Dinard, thus giving our forces another seaport.

While the rest of the Third Army raced across France, we began the slow process of driving the enemy from his defensive positions guarding the Bay of St. Malo. This time he had concrete fortifications. Ones he began building four years before to prevent our landing. It was an infantryman's fight again.

We took Dol and Pierguer and drove on toward St. Malo. By August 5th we had cleared the enemy from his pill boxes, anti-tank ditches and barbed wire guarding the approaches to the port itself. We were ready to make the final assault.

While the 329th Infantry Regiment attacked the Citadel, our Second Battalion took the solid granite fortress of St. Joseph and advanced on to the dock area. The First Battalion assaulted and captured the old walled city of St. Malo. Then the Second Battalion moved to the other side of the bay and assisted in capturing the city of Dinard. The Third Battalion, during this time, was attached to the fast moving "Task Force A" and went on into Brittany to assist in the capture of Brest.

Offshore the island of Cezembre, which dominated the port of St. Malo, held out against terrific artillery and air bombardment. It had to be taken to secure the harbor for our use. The Second Battalion began training with landing craft to seize the island. The softening process against the island continued with artillery, air, and naval bombardment. Then, on September 2nd, the day set for the assault of the island, the German commander surrendered to the Regiment.



THE FRENCH GREETED US WITH OPEN ARMS IN BRITTANY



CLOUDS OF SMOKE BILLOW FROM ILE DE CEZEMBRE UNDER ARTILLERY AND AIR BOMBARDMENT

LOIRE VALLEY

Finishing our mission at St. Malo, we moved again — this time 180 miles east to the Loire valley region. Our mission there was to protect the right flank of the Third Army in its rapid advance across France.

After the intensity of the Normandy and Brittany campaigns, the Loire valley was a change — a welcome change. There we set up defensive positions and sent patrols across the river. But at the same time, we enjoyed life once more. We ate hot meals, slept in beds. We met the French, drank with them, laughed with them. After Normandy and Brittany, it was fun to laugh, to talk to a pretty girl.

True, we enjoyed our stay along the Loire. But at the same time, we kept our weapons clean, we trained. We knew that the war was far from finished and that soon we would be called once again to more actively participate in crushing the enemy. We were called. On the 20th of September we waved goodbye to our French friends and left for Luxembourg.



BRIDGES WERE BLOWN

LUXEMBOURG

The Duchy of Luxembourg was a revelation to most of us. We found it to be a unique combination of small villages, famous resort towns, such as Mondorf, and a clean, picturesque "old world" city — the city of Luxembourg.

We found the people filled with a deep national pride and heartfelt appreciation for what the Americans had done to release them from the yoke of four years of Nazi occupation.

The enemy was no longer running away. He was hitting back now, trying to anticipate our next move. Along the Moselle river, famous for its wine, combat patrols frequently crossed the river, seeking information of enemy troop dispositions. The enemy countered by sending patrols into our line; patrols would meet and a brisk fire fight would ensue. After a bitter fight, we took Stromberg hill from the enemy and thereby deprived him of one of his last vantage points on Luxembourg soil.

The 1st of December saw us on the move again. Once more we were needed elsewhere. We moved into Germany — and the Hurtgen forest.



THE FIGHT FOR STROMBERG HILL WAS ROUGH

HURTGEN FOREST

On December 3rd, 1944, the Regiment moved through the Hurtgen forest to take up positions against a strong German force. Other American units had begun the assault and it was now up to us to permit no loss of Allied momentum in the drive to the Roer river.

In direct contrast to the density of the wood, the terrain from Grosshau to the Roer opened into an expanse of rolling land affording the enemy excellent observation. Here began the final push to the river's edge.

It was going to be tough — trees, scarred by searing artillery fire, and log-covered dugouts were mute testimony of the determined and tenacious resistance of the enemy. Artillery and mortar concentrations were many and intense. Enemy air activity was constant. Strafing and bombing was frequent during day and night.

The First Battalion took Hill 375, a particularly strong position and key point in the enemy's defence plan, then held it through terrific artillery and mortar fire and against repeated counter-attacks. With the seizure of Hill 375 our right flank was secure. The stage was set for our main attack.

On December 10th, the Third Battalion launched a surprise attack before dawn and took Strass. The enemy succeeded in closing in behind them. Cut off from the rest of the Regiment for three days, without food, ammunition, or medical aid, they repulsed every counter-attack aimed at wiping them out. The Second Battalion took Schafberg and went on to cut through the Germans and relieve the Third Battalion. Later, the Second Battalion, attached to the Fifth Armored Division, secured the high ground on the west bank of the Roer river on the Regiment's right flank. Christmas Eve found the First Battalion entering the town of Winden on the Roer. Christmas day the job had been completed; Winden was secure and the Regiment firmly implanted on the west bank of the Roer river.



MAIN STREET OF STRASS



ALWAYS A SMILE



LOG HOUSES BEING BUILT NEAR FRONT

THE ARDENNES

The day after Christmas found us moving out of the Hurtgen forest. The story was that we were going into Army Reserve. We needed rest, time to lick our wounds, to reorganize. A good many Christmas dinners were left uneaten, however, when we learned that we were going back in the lines. We were needed again. This time, in the Ardennes.

We moved on the 26th of December. That night found us on the road to Liege, with the skies constantly illuminated with ack-ack fire and the cometlike trails of buzz bombs.

On the 3rd of January, the Regiment, attached to the Third Armored Division, was given the mission of driving south into the "Bulge" to cut the Houffalize - St. Vith highway and to affect a junction with allied troops driving north.

The newspapers called it the "Ardennes", the "Breakthrough", or the "Bulge". But we in the line didn't describe it with such poetic terms. We called it all the foul, vile things that it really was. It wasn't fighting only an enemy flushed with sudden victory; it was fighting the weather as well. It was Valley Forge, edition of 1945. Clothing froze on bodies, weapons failed to function. Feet turned black and purplish from trenchfoot. Any wound was serious. If you fell, you froze. The only covering for the dead was a blanket of snow. But we kept going forward, as usual.

Once again it was a job for the infantry. Clear the roads, the woods, so the tanks can operate more efficiently. Hold the towns so the armor can move to the flank. It was the infantry-tank combination in action again, each secretly respecting the ability and help of the other. The Third Battalion took Malempre, the Second seized Lansival and then dashed on to take Jevaigne; the First drove through to Bihain, secured this town after eighteen hours of fighting and then repulsed a heavy infantry-tank counter-attack the next morning. It was fight all the time: fight the fanatical enemy, fight the devastating cold, fight the tiredness, the fatigue that comes after days and days of continuous combat.

We complained, we swore, we cried; but we took our objective.



HEADED FOR THE FRONT



CONDITIONS WERE BAD



PRISONERS WERE TAKEN

FROM THE ROER TO THE RHINE

We had shattered von Rundstedt's counter-offensive in the "Bulge" and now we drew up along the Roer river to begin a drive aimed at exploding for all time the myth of the "super race". The Roer was not new to us. We had seen it before when we drove out of the Hurtgen forest to its banks in the vicinity of Duren. Now we were ready to cross that river. The Regiment was attached to the 29th Infantry Division to establish the bridgehead. It looked bad.

All night long on February 23rd our artillery pounded Juelich and the east bank of the Roer. We wondered how the Germans could stand such a pounding but we knew from bitter experience that Jerry would be there waiting for us.

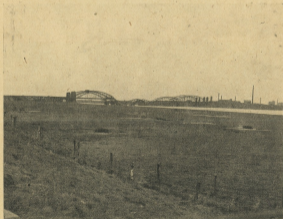
That we crossed the river and raced on to be the first division to get to the lower Rhine river is history. The folks back home have seen the pictures of Juelich and the Cologne Plains. But they didn't look at that flat, open ground in the same light as the rifleman who, as usual, had to make the initial crossing. The German 88's were all over the place. Their muzzles were depressed. They looked straight down our throats.

Pattern, Mersch, Hasselsweiler, Gevelsdorf, are some of the places we remember. Small stuff as far as the big picture goes but to the man with the rifle who had to take them — well — to him the whole war is seen over the sights of his rifle.

We moved fast after that. Jerry didn't have another chance to get set for us west of the Rhine river. By March 1st we were fighting in the streets of Neuss and we could see the city of Dusseldorf just across the Rhine. On March 2nd we had cleared Neuss and were sitting on the west bank of the Rhine waiting for the rest of the Ninth Army to come up.



STREET IN NEUSS



LOOKING ACROSS NO-MAN'S LAND AT DUSSELDORF

ACROSS THE RHINE RIVER INTO THE HARZ MOUNTAINS

We crossed the Rhine river on March 29, 1945. Once across the river we moved fast. All our fighting before had been the slow, bitter kind. The kind where each yard of advance was paid for with the lives and blood of our buddies. Teamed with the Second Armored Division we advanced rapidly. When the First and Ninth Armies joined at Lippstadt on April 1st, we relieved elements of the Second Armored Division and prevented the enemy, encircled in the Ruhr pocket, from breaking out in that sector. During this defensive phase the Regiment was under direct command of the XIX Corps, Ninth Army.

On April 7, we crossed the Weser river and advanced eastward taking Negenborn, Stadtolendorf, and Greene and seized a bridge across the Leine river. Resistance became stronger; the enemy was trying desperately to halt our rapid advance. We fought day and night but it was worth it. We had the enemy retreating and we didn't let him stop.

While the rest of the Division swept eastward toward the Elbe river, the Regiment was given the mission of clearing the northern part of the Harz mountains. Our job was to protect the right flank of the XIX Corps and prevent the enemy, known to be attempting a reorganization in the Harz mountains, from attacking our flank and cutting the supply and communication lines. Thus far we had fought in the hedgerows, on the plains, in the woods, and crossed rivers. Now it was to be mountain fighting.

The resistance encountered was spotty; from crack Panzer troops and fanatical Hitler Youth to old men in the uniform of the Volksturm. The woods and underbrush were thick, we couldn't see. It was a sniper's paradise. We moved forward from the valleys to the top of the ridges and along them. We hunted the snipers down — after they had taken their toll. We fought for, and cleared road blocks only to advance a few hundred feet to find more.

During our operations in the Harz mountains we cleared an area extending forty-seven kilometers in length, fifteen kilometers wide, through two-thirds of the way, then narrowing to five kilometers at the western end. In the ten-day period we took 2,516 prisoners of war.



WE ADVANCED WITH CARE



THE HILLSIDES WERE THICK WOODS AND THE SNIPERS MANY

THE ELBE RIVER BRIDGEHEAD

After clearing our sector in the Harz mountains, we took up positions along the east bank of the Elbe river near Zerbst, Germany, where our Division held the only permanent bridgehead across that river.

By this time the fight had been taken out of the enemy and our sector remained generally quiet. We improved our defenses. Our patrols went east and met the Russians, and we celebrated the junction of the two armies.

During this time we captured a German regiment, consisting of forty-one officers and eight hundred fifty-six enlisted men, thus adding to the thousands of prisoners we had previously taken in our advance across Europe.

On May 7th we received the news, Germany had surrendered unconditionally. It was over. That for which we had all fought so hard had been accomplished.

We are proud of the part we played in combat. We are proud of our victories, proud of those men who gave their lives for us all. We are proud that we are members of this Regiment. We feel that we have truly lived up to our regimental motto — "Verus ad Finem" — true to the end.

TRACE YOUR ROUTE

