

Memoirs of L.R. Condict
June 1, 1943 to Dec. 17 1945
Company B, 1st Battalion, 274th Infantry Regiment
70th Infantry Division

3 Jun 1943 - Graduated from Winter Park High School at 10pm and left immediately afterwards for a short beach party at Coronado Beach. Those attending were Helen Dodd, Martha McCord, B.J. Singleton, Bunny McDowell, and Suzette Brauer. Also Tommy Townes, Chuck Whitmore, Loyd King, David Verdery, and Larry Condict. Altho it only lasted about eighteen hours for Chuck and myself, everyone had a good time.

4 Jun - At noon Chuck and I left the beach with Dad and drove to Gainesville, Florida where we enrolled in the 1943 Summer Term. We took basic mathematics, Man and the Social World, and Engineering Drawing. We lived in Fletcher "K", a dormitory on the north end of the campus.

26 Aug - Summer Term is over and we came home for about a month to wait for the Winter Term to begin. During the summer we had made frequent trips to Winter Park and a few trips to Jacksonville too.

Sep - (date missing) Back to the old Grind (?) and this time we took more courses: Reading, Speaking, and writing; the Humanities; Differential Calculus; General Physics and Lab; First Year Infantry (ROTC); and Physical Fitness. Oh Yes, Sometime during the summer we moved to the Kappa Sigma Fraternity House to live. We were pledged KS two weeks after we started to the U. of F.

Nov - (date missing) Chuck and Billy Moore received their orders to report to Camp Blanding on Nov. 29.

Nov - (date missing) Before Mr. And Mrs. Whitmore, Mrs Condict and I took Chuck and Billy to Camp Blanding we went to Jacksonville and I took my oath upon joining the Army. We then went to camp and then on the Gainesville where I again picked up my college classes. Here I began to sweat out my call to active duty.

Dec - (date missing) My eighteenth birthday spent in classes and the show that night.

Dec - (date missing) Two weeks Xmas vacation starts. Dad had arrived in Africa about here.

1944!! Hail to the New Year and all that stuff)

Jan - (date missing) Back to U. of F. and immediately received a notice to report on 25 Jan with a clause stating that if for any reason I couldn't report write to Atlanta before Jan 10. I had a letter in the mail before it went out that afternoon. The next day the Registrar of the U. of F. sent Atlanta a note stating that I be allowed to remain in school until 29 Jan.

Jan - (date missing) No reply and no orders to report.

Jan - (date missing) End of tests and still no reply or orders to report. Went home and started to really enjoy civilian life for the last few days.

Feb - (date missing) In the morning received orders to start travelling for Fort McPherson on 1 Mar and in the evening we had a crowd and a good time at the Tommy Tucker dance at the Coliseum in celebration of my going away. Good time had by all and so in to the morn.

Mar - (date missing) Left from Orlando Airport on the National Airlines plane for Jacksonville at 1pm and got a slight case of air-sickness. Took the Ga. RR to Atlanta at 9 PM.

Mar - (date missing) Arrived at the front gate of Fort McPherson with a bunch of enlistees at 9 AM. Fort Mc was the Reception Center for Georgia and Florida located three miles south of Atlanta.

8 Mar - Today I received the first GI clothing that I ever owned and discarded the civilian clothes that I had wore since I left home on 1 Mar. I just stood the civvies in the corner of the barracks and put on my O.D.'s

12 Mar - First employment in the Army was a job at the receiving station typing service records for new men as they came in. This job lasted only two days because I was destined to have my Basic Training about here.

15 Mar - We were alerted to ship to a training camp so got all my stuff together in two barracks bags and stayed in

the barracks all day waiting for our call which did not come until 9 that night.

16 Mar - Up at 4 AM, had chow, as they call eating the Army, Mess in most places, and some more waiting for the shipment lists to be read. Here I got introduced to the old Army game of "hurry up and wait". At 6 AM we got on the train and the engineers were playing tag in the yards at Atlanta with our cars or something because we didn't leave there for two hours. Rumors had it that our destination was Fort Bragg, then it was California because there were some Air Corps jerks in the car behind ours going to California and then it was some camp in the Pacific Northwest. At about noon we arrived at Anniston, Alabama and there we found out that Fort McClellan was just over the hill, six miles. The proverbial Pfc met us at the train and pushed us around because we didn't know what the score was yet.

17 Mar to 28 Mar - Nuthin' doin' until noon and then B-A-N-G. and we are loaded into trucks with all sorts of tools and on our way over the mountain to the east known as Bain's Gap. We found out we were to build ten transition machine gun ranges during the next two weeks. "We dood it" and got them all built somehow. It rained and was cold, we got into a lot of clay and got our equipment and clothes stained, and we were all miserable. They told us it was to get us in shape for the next seventeen weeks but we never heard of any other companies going out and doing what we did. My address was then Co. B, 16th Bn., 6th Regt.

28 Mar - In the afternoon we moved three companies to our right to our permanent company in which we were to take our Basic. Some new equipment was issued and we got settled in the remainder of the afternoon. New address was Co. C, 21st Bn., 6th Regt.

3 Apr. - Finally got around to starting our "cycle" today. We were not at all happy over the prospects of the next 119 days and an entirely different life. During those 119 days I did more marching, more hiking, more running, more "do this, do that", more "hitting the ground", more "hup, hoo, hee, hor", and less sleeping than I ever done or ever hope to do in that last period of time. Not to mention the weight I lost (31 pounds), eating the worst food I'd ever eaten, got the angriest and the hottest (pertaining to heat) that I have ever been. By the time one hundred of those days had passed we started counting them by the hours

that were left. By now I had fired the M1 rifle, the Browning Automatic Rifle, the Browning 30 cal. air-cooled machine gun, the bazooka, the rifle grenade, the 60mm mortar, the Springfield rifle, the carbine, the 45 cal. pistol, and thrown the fragmentation hand grenade, and others. Also training in the laying and picking up of minefields, arming mines and disarming mines, all sorts of booby traps, building road blocks, rendering vehicles and machinery and weapons ineffective, digging foxholes and gun emplacements with and without enemy fire, how to operate and clean all weapons we fired, how to roll a full field and light combat pack, some of the principals of the 37mm and 57mm anti-tank guns as well as the 105mm and 155mm howitzers, their nomenclature and the nomenclature of their shells, and the 81mm mortar, bayonet training and hand to hand fighting and disarming with a knife and bayonet, scouting and patrolling, first aid, compass reading in the day and night and also some other things that can't be mentioned here. About the 90th day we left on a weeks bivouac with full field packs. We hiked over Bain's Gap (1200ft) and on until we had gone over 11 miles. When we got back we cleaned our equipment and took off again in three days for another bivouac this one being two weeks. We started on one Sunday at 7 AM and hiked 17 miles and lost 250 men out of our battalion of 850. We lost them from sun-stroke, heat exhaustion, and heat cramps. We arrived at 12 noon after having only losing one man from my platoon. Many passed out after we arrived and the whole crowd was exhausted and tired. Some got March fracture. During the next two weeks we went through artillery problems, scouting and patrolling problems, more hiking, night problems, and combat rations, etc. At the end of our bivouac, we hiked back to camp by a different route which took us 25 miles. We left at 5 PM and arrived at 1 AM without losing a man. The remaining week of our "cycle" was spent cleaning our equipment, turning it in, and we got a pass to town any time we wanted it. There was great speculation as to where we would be ship and to what theater we would go to fight. Many "latrinograms" were going around and they were all "Official" and came directly from the orderly room. The majority came from the third bowl from the end in the south latrine. As fate would have it fourteen of the company of 200 were chosen as cadremen and would remain at Fort McClellan and train the next bunch of "feather merchants".

FOOTNOTE: The aforementioned Fort McClellan is the "hellhole of the south".

When I went into service my sizes were as follows:

Waist: 36
Inseam: 29
Chest: 39
Seat: 40
Neck: 15
Sleeve: 32
Hat Size: 7½
Shoe: 10½
Height: 5' 10"
Weight: 190#

My sizes after Basic training were as follows:

Waist: 31
Inseam: 31
Chest: 37
Seat: 36
Neck: 15
Sleeve: 32
Hat Size: 7½
Shoe: 10½
Height: 5' 10½"
Weight: 161

15 Sept - The first Sgt. and I and a couple of officers didn't get along so well and they had a chance to send me to the 70th Division so home on a delay enroute I went and so thru to division.

19 Sept - I left on a 15 day delay enroute to the 70th Division Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri by way of Winter park. I had ten grand and glorious days at home.

1 Oct - Boarded train for St. Louis via Jacksonville, Atlanta, Nashville, Nortonville, Evansville, East St. Louis, St. Louis and then Newburg, 35 miles from Ft. Leonard Wood. The trip took 48 hours altogether.

2 Oct - My bags sent from Ft. McClellan to Ft. Wood haven't arrived yet so I laid around the company with a couple of other boys and tried to avoid the First Sgt. and avoid details. We got caught several times as well as caught a

few details. Here the food is much better than that we had at Fort McClellan and there was more of it too!!

12 Oct to 30 Oct - The bags finally arrived on 15 Oct but I ran some problems with the company before they came. During this period I pull the wrong move and got promoted from #7 man in the rifle squad to #2 and the position of second scout. Soon after this on 23 Oct I was promoted to Private First Class. I later found out that to be second scout may be ok in the States but you don't last long on the job overseas.

1 Nov to 4 Nov - About here I got my first three day pass in the Army so the first scout, William H. Durante, and I went to Columbia, Missouri, where we saw Stevens, Christian Jr. colleges and the U. of Mo. Columbia was a soldier's paradise with no M.P.'s and plenty of girls and a lot of places to go.

6 Nov - We were officially alerted for overseas service.

16 Nov - At midnight we boarded the train, bag and baggage, for Port of Embarkation. We were swamped with rumors as usual and that we were bound for St. Luis Obispo, New York, Newport News, Washington state, and finally Boston. During the trip we passed through St. Louis, Springfield, Cleveland, Toledo, Erie, Albany, and so to Boston, Mass. The trip wasn't too bad. We went in troop sleepers which look like cattle cars from the outside but really aren't bad except the bunks come three on top of one another. I was in a top bunk and it seemed that I was in the stratosphere.

20 Nov - Arriving at Boston we were met with somebody on the loudspeaker booming out that we just arrived at a secret destination. That was the best laugh we had in a long time. It was a three and one-half day trip.

23 Nov - I had a pass to the big city, Boston. I went there with John Micklesavage and we hit most spots in one evening; Mayfair Club, Latin Quarter, Childs', the Rogue Room of the Statler, Lindy's, and others. On our way back to the south station to catch the train back to camp, I saw my first snow. I got small flakes in the face and on the train I saw drifts of about a foot along the tracks.

26 Nov - We had another pass to Boston and this time I went to see the Holy Cross-Boston College football game and also at the RKO Boston we saw Bert Wheeler and Hal McIntyre and his orchestra on the stage.

28 Nov - A pass to Providence with "Smitty" Smith. We went on Saturday night and expected to see crowds of people but instead the streets were almost deserted. Nevertheless we visited all the places, from Narraguansett Bar to the Mexican Village including Port Arthur and the Chinese American.

30 Nov - About here we boarded the train for the docks in Boston with all our baggage and some more they issued at POE. We boarded the boat at 3 PM after spending a few minutes on the dock during which we got hot coffee and doughnuts from the Red Cross women of Boston. We got off the train and got the coffee and donuts and BANG we were on the boat with them still in our hands and no time to eat them. There were a lot of us who got what they call the "gangplank blues" and I don't mind noting here that I had a slight touch myself. The "weather" was cold and rainy with some ice on the decks and snow in the air. We couldn't stay out on deck for more than ten minutes at a time because it was so cold. This condition lasted for about three days and then the weather turned out to be beautiful all the rest of the way.

1 Dec - At 7 in the morning we left the moorings at the dock and the tugs pulled us away from the sacred soil of the United States of America. Once in the harbor we drifted around the whole day waiting for the weather to calm down before we started out but it didn't so we started anyway. For the first two days it was the roughest trip I ever hope to take. During the rough weather I saw quite a few men carrying their steel helmets with them at all times. When we went down for chow we made the trip as fast as we could and then got back up on deck and got the fresh cool sea air because the mess hall was small and we had to stand and the chow wasn't too good and only came twice a day and the mess hall was as hot as the boilers on the ship. The boat we were on was the U.S.S. Mariposa, which was a converted steamship of the Matson line which operated from the west coast and went to the Philippines and to India. It was a two-stacker with eight decks and the hold which made it pretty fair sized ship. It made about 23-26 knots and could go as fast as 28. It had a 5-inch gun, two 3-inch guns and

four 50-cal machine guns aft and two 50's amidships with a 5-inch, two 3-inchers, and two 50's forward. There was a promenade deck on both sides on "B" deck and "C" deck forward and aft were open. "A" deck was open all they way around. There were life rafts and boats all over the place, strapped to the sides and stacked on deck.

6 Dec - On my nineteenth birthday I saw more and more water, the same old boat, ate the same terrible food, and the same faces and cramped quarters. We were sleeping in four-decker bunks with about 15 inches between bunks. I remember one morning I awoke before most of the men and I couldn't seem to move and the light in our quarters were dimmed for the night. I quickly found out that the man in the bunk over me was on my chest and that was the reason I couldn't move. The ropes that held his canvas bunk had slackened during the night and had lowered him to a position of rest on my chest.

8 Dec - We passed through the Straits of Gibraltar at 4:30 p.m. with Africa, rather Spanish Morrocco to our right rising out of the sea with steep cliffs and white-washed little towns near the water. To our left was Spain rising equally as steeply as Africa and the same white-washed houses. The "Rock" was to our left also and the last fleeting rays of sunshine were spotlighted on it with both shores in the semi-darkness. It looked just as it is pictured in the books, travel folders, and on the Prudential Insurance papers, only more beautiful.

10 Dec - It was about 3 in the afternoon when we sighted land again and again it was the steep shoreline and it looked pretty roughed country to us. There were some big rocks and little islands in the harbor before we could see the city of Marseilles. Also all over the place we could see the masts of ships that had either been sunk or scuttled by the French and the Americans had taken many of these and put them together and taken concrete and made a big breakwater behind which we could see the city and many more ships tied up at docks on the waterfront as well as about a dozen ships riding at anchor waiting to unload when there was room. At 4:30 we were at dock and from the ship we could see that the first two blocks from the water were completely destroyed and the remains of what once had been one of the world's greatest ports had been temporarily killed. As soon as the French wharf-rats saw our ship come into sight they probably said to themselves "here comes

another load of suckers". This was probably true too because the Americans had been there in southern France since August and the French don't take long to catch on to a good thing when they see it and to them the American soldier was the best thing that had happened to them in many a year. As we left the boat, we dropped our barracks bags in the only sheltered place I saw on the whole waterfront and hiked down the cobblestone streets through some darken homes and shops and out of town to a Receiving area where we loaded into trucks and went up and up into the hills and finally came out on a flat plateau with very, very few trees and a great number of rocks. This was to be our new home for the next ten days. We got set up after a few changes of campsites. In the early morning it began to drizzle and it continued to drizzle for the next two days so by that time the whole joint was under about three inches of French mud including the blankets and everything and we were thoroughly soaked and stayed that way for nearly a week. On the way over they told us that we were "seasoned troops". We were very proud to be "seasoned troops" until we found out what they meant by it. It meant that we were so conditioned that we could fight in any and all weather. When we were going up the gangplank way back in Boston, USA some joker stopped at the top of the board and asked the assembled troops if "this trip was necessary". Some brass said it was so he goes in to his quarters. Getting off the gangplank over here in Marseilles, someone said, "this joke has gone far enough, let's go home." Altogether for the seriousness of the occasion a bunch of GI's are the craziest bunch of guys that you could have in such a small space. The Staging area was near Barre on Et de Bere on a bay near the harbor at Marseilles.

FOOTNOTE: Along here somewhere days ceased to be days and all we had was a little light then a little darkness and then some more light. Also here started guard duty and you did not mind pulling it over here because it meant your hide if you messed up on guard and maybe the hides of some of your buddies. UNFOOTNOTE:

13 Dec - I was on dock detail that went to the dock area and went through all the equipment of any kind unloaded there and got all that belonged to our regiment. By the way, I should mention that my address changed from POE to APO 17814. While in Marseilles hunting for our equipment we took off for the downtown section. Somehow we found

ourselves in the nearest "Bar" as they are called in the United States. While there we had to try the French wine we had heard so much about and the cognac. Altogether that day we had "rojo vino" or red wine, cognac, 1% beer which the French drink and thrive on (to us it tasted like gutter water that has run over a dead horse) and also some stuff they call anisette and some clear drink they call merybelle. The anisette smells and tastes like licorice and is habit forming just as much as opium and the merybelle smells and looks like 80 octane gasoline and tastes like pure alcohol and has a bigger than any mule. During the next eight days we were quite miserable, ate 10-in-1 rations and sloshing around in the mud. I did have another pass to Marseilles and had a little fun. On the road between the staging area and Marseilles we passed naval shells thrown there during the bombardment of the coastline by our ships. As far as we could see they were still alive so we didn't much want to mess with them. In the downtown section all the buildings were shell-pocked and across most of the buildings could be seen results of strafing runs planes had made on the town. In several hotels we saw windows like those sketched on the preceding page (editor's note: missing from original as are most of the pictures and sketches mentioned) where a sniper had held up in a hotel room and eventually had to be literally blown out of it. In sketch numbered five, you see the trees that are in great abundance in southern France although there are straight ones there too but there is differently a great scarcity of all kinds of wood for building and cooking. We took a number of hikes to get our bodies over the crampness of the trip across. The sketch on the following page is an example of some of the little villages to be found around where we were. We passed through this particular village and little boys and girls ran out to us in nothing but short pants and sleeveless shirt and thin dresses in weather that was down as low as 20 degrees. Their skins were blue from the cold.

20 Dec - At 11 PM we boarded another train, this time it was for the front or as close to the front as a train could go. There were twenty-five of us in ours which was 24 feet long, 8 feet wide and 8 feet high. In the car were 25 men and all their equipment and rations for three days. The cars were called 40 & 8 boxcars. (Forty men and or eight horses) To prove that they were also meant for horses, when we got into the cars we had to clean out horses manure and straw before we could even get in. Our train was for our regiment only. The two other regiments of our division

landed on the West Point two days after we landed. They came up on a different train a couple of days later. On the way up we passed through Avignon, Valence, Vierme, Lyon, Chalon-Saone, Dijon, Langes, Neufchateau, Nancy, Luneville, Sarrebourg, Saverne and Brumath. The French people along the way didn't appreciate our coming particularly because the Germans had only been in occupation in southern France for a short time and then we came along and tear up the whole countryside getting the Germans out. Also we took everything that our little hearts desired from wine to chickens and from bicycles to dishes and food on the tables. Once the French police came to us for a chicken someone had taken right out from a coup a short way from the train. It was found several cars down from ours. While at the staging area, some of us took off to a little village on the cove I told you about before and had our picture taken by an old Frenchman with a very old box camera and tripod. He developed them in a lightproof box in about 30 minutes in which time we had to see most of the village and get a few drinks.



The picture was taken sitting on a fountain in the center of town. Those pictured are (l to r): L.R.C., 2nd scout, 3rd Platoon, R. Largy (Mass.), transferred to 80th Div., S/Sgt Inzer (La.), "Swamp-rat", squad leader 1st squad (later got a field commission and was hit in the arm, back and leg three days after he got it), William "Shorty" H. Durante (Pa.), 1st scout, 3rd Platoon (was later killed while on patrol by a burst of machine gun fire in the stomach). He was the best friend I had in the Army and when he was killed I was in the hospital.

24 Dec - The train was completely dark on the way up to the end of the line which happened to be about 20 miles from the front. At 9PM we passed through Saverne and at 9:30 arrived on the outskirts of Hockfelden. Here we detrained and left our overseas bags and the rations and carried 2 blankets, overcoat, raincoat, extra socks and underwear, shoe-packs, shelter half, rifle, extra set of O.D.'s and fatigues, and more ammo than a mule can carry. We hiked and

hiked and every little village we came to we would think this is where we are going to stay but on we would go and we kept going so long that we said "Merry Christmas" on the open road between two villages in about eight inches of snow on the roads. Our destination was Bischweiler and we arrived there at 1:30AM and the regiment split up and went down all the streets and then the battalion split up and our company went into the schoolhouse. For Xmas dinner we had some German black, hard bread and some German milk that we found in a store across the street from the school. The bread and milk was all the food we had on Xmas because the rations had not yet arrived at Bischweiler from the train. A fine example of inflation was proved to us in the German milk dealer. The first day we found him, he sold us a canteen cup full of milk for one franc and the next morning we went back for more milk and the price was two francs. The next day it was five and in the afternoon of the same day it cost seven. The reason for that was the same old story of the GI overseas with more money than he knows what to do with so he pays the dealer a franc or two more than he asks so naturally the French or German thinks that if he can do that that to every GI can pay that franc or two so up goes the price. We transferred five men out of the platoon to the 80th Division. Bischweiler was located seven miles west of the Rhine banks. We had 240mm guns in the empty lot next to us and the Red Cross had set up a temporary hospital and canteen down the street but the day before we got there they closed down because things were expected to get hot and they had some need of the hospital up near the Bulge because some hospital units had been captured. With the pump outside the school yard, the German milk dealer pumped us 35 gallons of water and brought it in to us but we didn't know what he might have done to it so we waited until dark and then threw it out into the yard. The house in the right backyard received a hit from a German mortar as did most houses in Bischweiler. The streets also were hit and some houses were hit with artillery shells like the school. The shed to the left is where we set up the kitchen and park the jeep and trucks.

27 Dec - My company moved ten miles to the southeast into the countryside around Gamsheim. This town was two miles from the Rhine River and 300 yards on the French shore from the river was a dike built by the Germans after the last war. The ground between the dike and the river was so marshy that neither the Americans nor the Germans held it. Technically we held it because we had two outposts on the

river banks and our positions on and behind the dike enabled to cover that ground effectively with gun fire. If there had been an attack of any kind the outposts couldn't get back because of the water and the fact it took us about a hour to change the guards in the posts.

28 Dec - We could see the Jerries in their emplacements on the other side of the river and I guess they could see some of ours too but neither side could accurately estimate the force of the other so nothing happened except the mortars would fire about 30 rounds a day and Jerry would throw back the same number. Theirs were very ineffective and we couldn't find out how ours were landing but we could see that ours were closer and making them a little uncomfortable several times. Today Co B got it's first Jerry. He was a machine gunner and could have raised havoc with us if he wasn't stopped where he was. We got him when he crossed the top of the dike. The outposts had reported that he had passed their position and about where he would cross the dike and so we were there waiting for him. He wasn't dead but very few minutes before our boys had all his clothes and equipment up at the Co C.P. and we left our positions one at a time and went up and looked them over. The Rhine at this point was fairly narrow, deep, and cold, rapid current and almost clear. At 2 AM we changed companies and we went back to Gambshiem for a short rest (?).

29 Dec - Rest (HAW!!) , at 6 AM we got up and had some fair chow for a change and were ready to move out at 8. As per usual in the Army we waited for nearly an hour and finally took off on an eight mile jaunt to the north along the river. We were carrying our blankets, four in number, extra O.D.'s and fatigues, underwear, overcoat, shelter half, etc., raincoat, and some more ammo. It pulled the rings out of some of' the packs and, when the load gets that heavy it shouldn't be carried by anything on two feet. Oh my, I almost forgot that we had our gas masks with us still and they were the main pain in the side from the time that we got them in the States til I got rid of mine in a few days. The positions we dug here were to be our permanent ones for at least two weeks but someone got the wrong dope somewhere. It's cold now and the chow is the same old K ration, morning, noon, and night.

31 Dec - For the last ten days we had been pulling guard one hour on and one hour off sleep for twenty-four hours

seven days a week. Snow had fallen about eight inches deep on the ground and the roads were mushy and we had fixed our foxholes so that they were light proof after dark and fairly warm as well as fairly safe and camouflaged. At midnight I come off guard and stayed up a few more minutes for the new year and the fireworks the artillery on our side put on for the Jerries. The townspeople had a few too but over there the first minute of the new year was as same as the last minute of the old year of any other minute for that matter.

Jan 1 - Hail to the New year with the celebrations they were having over in God's country, the U.S.A. The new year's baby in those diapers, with the scythe, hourglass, streamers, horns, confetti and all the noise. For it being a whole new year I slept awfully sound that night.

Jan 3 - Today we moved back to Bischweiler. We hiked back two miles and then got into trucks and rode another five miles to town. Almost immediately we started on twenty four hours guard duty on the R.S.O. (the regimental supply office) being on guard four hours and then off eight rotating with three other groups from our company. Also our company furnished the town MP detail which later stayed when we moved on.

Jan 5 - At 5 in the afternoon we boarded "ducks", 2½ - ton trucks with amphib bodies on them, and we all said to ourselves that it was about time someone crossed the Rhine and we thought we were the ones to do it but instead we went northwest and the Germans came across the river near Gambshheim with some armor and badly bent our line down there for a time. On the "ducks" we preceded through Haganeau, Rechtsfoflen to Niederbronn where we landed about 4:30am. We dropped our full field packs and made combat packs, (It was here that I "lost" my gas mask.) and picked up rations and ammo. We then ate breakfast, and I use the word in a laughing manner because our breakfast was of K rations, and we moved out of the railroad shed we were in and on to the road a few blocks away where we (my platoon only) loaded onto tanks, five men to a tank (there were seven on mine because we had a radio operator and our platoon leader, 2ndLt Thompson beside the first five men in the third squad. Durante, L.C., S.L. Bergstrom, BARman Dennison and Ass't BARman Harrison. The tanks pulled out in the directions of some shell fire we could hear. The roads were ice covered and the tanks had quite a time of it and

we thought to ourselves that we made very good clay pigeons for any enemy who found us slipping and sliding all over the roads on top of a medium tank. After we left the town itself there was no valley anymore, just the steep sides of the mountains on the right and a railroad, destroyed at various intervals, and a icy stream and then some more steep cliffs to our left so the prospects of our getting out if anything dropped in on us were slight to say the least. By the way the mountains of which I speak are the Vosges and are the steepest in Europe second only to the Alps. At the next valley in the mountains we came out into what was called Philippsbourg. As we entered the outskirts of town I left the tank and went up to a GI I saw on a knoll and asked what we were supposed to do because before we left we were not told one thing that we were to do and the GI said the town was ours and all we had to do was to drive the scattered snipers out and then hold what we had. I supposed he knew what he was talking about so we went on. We could see some of our boys in the houses in front of us. As we passed the third house there was a burned out tank for a few days fighting previous in the road and as went around it an 88 landed so close it almost blew us off the tank. It didn't take long for us to dismount after a show like that. I got behind what I thought at the time to be a very safe place and later I found out it wouldn't have stopped a 30-cal bullet. It was a woodpile eight feet long, five feet high, and about 22 inches across. There were two of us behind that woodpile too!! We just hadn't had enough combat experience to know when to be scared and what would stop what but something tells you darned quick when to duck and it doesn't take too long to get the life scared out of you and then you stay scared from then on not knowing when some Jerry would get the bead on you from some hidden place and drop you on the ground with a bullet hole through the head. The company's first casualty came on this day. One of the boys on the tank behind ours was hit with a piece of mortar shell in the back and laid in the gully beside the tank for about five hours during our first real baptism of artillery fire. While running around out there in the streets and in the fields with all hell breaking loose on all sides of me was real enough only it didn't seem so real at the time and seems even more unreal now. It didn't seem real even when the boy next to me got a piece of mortar shell in the calf of his leg and I bandaged it for him and helped him back to the aid station. I said to myself over and over again that I wasn't going to get hit but then again I thought how nice it would be to get hit

slightly and get out of this hell for a short while. That seemed to be the general consensus of opinion up there. If 10 men went out on a routine patrol and the captain said to them before they left that nine of you lads won't come back, all the boys would turn to one another and say "I'm sure going to miss you guys." The night of the fifth of January we withdrew with the tanks as local infantry support. We were supposed to stay fairly close to the tanks to try and guard against possible anti-tank guns and the like. We went to the tank headquarters in the area which was a house with a large barn and a few other buildings. When we pulled back it was only the second time the tanks had moved during the day and the first time they moved they so close to getting hit they decided it would be too risky to move in the daylight so me, the infantry, went out and knocked out a machine gun and killed one Jerry, captured two, and drove the rest of them off into the mountains. The tank motors starting about eight o'clock in the evening again brought a hail of 88's but then as we went down the road they lost the range temporarily but as we approached the tank headquarters we ran into some more shells and it was about this point that I dove off the rear of the tank and sprawled myself all over the road as two shells went over the home and landed in the field beyond but it wasn't so long after the first two that two more, time shells this time, exploded about ten feet above the ground. Between the shells all of us had made our way into the barn. Once in the barn we felt safe but in the morning we found that someone could have thrown a rock through the roof. We were so tired that we found some hay in a loft and some on the floor and there were also some of the farmers cattle in the barn too. I laid down in the hay about six feet from a cow and calf.

6 Jan - In the morning I woke up and looked straight at the belly of the cow I had lain down beside. During the night she had side-stepped and was directly over me. When we got up it was about eight or nine. Sometime during the night the tanks had pulled out and had gone back to Niederbronn where they came from the day before. Since we were no longer with the tanks we were ordered to return to the company, which at the time was dug in behind up in the mountains. We were told that they were about to attack the town and this time it was to be taken at any cost. We rejoined the outfit and as soon as we got there, they got up out of the foxholes and started for town. It was learned that the Germans had withdrawn somewhat from the town and

we were going in to clear out any stragglers and to dig in on the other side of the hills. And so into town, in the first house we found nine Jerries in the cellar, one wounded and the others there because they wanted to surrender. In the church on following page there were about twenty-five medics. It was the aid station for the first battalion. On the hill to the rear of the church seven men in my squad were dug in an old Jerry zig-zag trench. In that trench were two Americans and three Jerries that had been dead for about two days. During the next four hours we more continuously ducking because of the shells landing in the woods around us. One volley of shells landed on the edge of an unoccupied portion of the trench and completely covered it over. All this didn't do too much to us and we were alright even though a couple of us did take a piece of shrapnel off of our overcoats. This is the only time that I was glad to be bothered with my overcoat. During the next two days, sometime I don't recall, I got rid of it along with almost all my equipment. At three in the afternoon, we were called around the side of the mountain we were on to be with the other two platoons of the company. On the way around is the first time that anything had really made an impression on my mind! Half way up the mountains I saw a dead man from our company. He was lying face up, there was no evidence of bleeding but he had already gotten the yellow look dead men get in the cold. About this time a shell came close over the top of the mountain and I threw myself on the ground harder than I'd thrown a tennis ball. The shell was not heard until it was close and there wasn't too much time to ease myself to the ground. Most of the time that day we were in such a position that we could hear the guns go off in the distance and knew when to duck when not to duck. When I reached the top of the mountain I found out the man I couldn't recognize down in the snow was a man I'd played cards with on the boat over. He was Richard C. May from Cleveland, Ohio. We called him "Cleve". On the way to POE from Missouri we had a layover in the rail yards in Cleveland and he lived about three blocks from there but he wasn't allowed to see his parents. Now its dark and we begin to dig new positions, it seems I've been digging most of the day now. Between shovels of rocks and the very hard French soil in the mountains, my foxhole buddy and I ate the K rations we'd been saving all day. At eleven o'clock on the dot the word came that we were moving out. We packed up and moved to the rear over the mountain and dropped down into town from a only house in town that couldn't be touched with artillery fire. Out in the street once more we

stocked up again with another hand grenade and water and K-rations. An hour or two of rest and then off again around the mountain across a mine field and into the woods on another mountain. New instructions were then passed back that we were to be extremely quiet and to avoid making any noise whatsoever. It wasn't too long before we found out the reason. We were walking into the territory of the Germans in a column. Half way up the hill the road took a hair-pin turn back to the left, across a stream that was frozen over all except the...

Jan 7 - ...middle which was flowing clear, cold water We were in position to take the hill at five in the morning. It was just before breaking daylight and it was hard to see. There was some light because of the snow. Three hundred yards from the hair pin turn in the road the company scout was halted by a German and before the Heinie knew that he was gone, our scout over the side of the road and back to the forward point of the first platoon. We stopped and then a machine gun on top of the hill began to shoot at the sound of what he thought was us. The way the road was cut out of the side of the mountain, it wasn't hard to flatten against the uphill side and be safe there. Then the first three men out of my platoon and the BARman and his assistant went up the hill toward the machine gun. Half way up the hill from the road to the machine gun, we turned and went around the hill for about fifty yards, and then dropped down on the road again, twenty-five yards behind the German roadblock. We got instructions not to shoot before we started because it couldn't be determined at the time how many of the enemy were on the same hill. On each side of the road we found two Jerries in a shelters. These we took back, stripped of their equipment, searched thoroughly and the only clothes we left on them was the shirt and trousers and boots. Then we faced them into the roadside cliff with a foot of snow on it, for five or six hours waiting to take them back to the battalion C.P. for questioning. After the five of us brought in the two prisoners, the first scout(William A. Durante, Wilkes Barre, Pa.) and I decided to go back to the roadblock and pick up the rest of the equipment that we had left there. On the way back just before we got to the roadblock, I saw what I thought, at the time, that it was a pile of wood. The first scout went up the hill and went I went down to have a look at my supposed wood pile. As I got to it I saw that my woodpile had turned into two Jerries in their sleeping with their rifles up against the tree at their feet. I slowed down here a wee bit. Then I kicked the

rifles off into the snow down the hill. I then poked the first one in the side toward me with the muzzle of my rifle. He was a little slow so I hit him quite hard with the muzzle and when he turned over and when he turned over he was looking up the barrel of a 30 caliber rifle and it didn't take him long to get his hands over his head even while he was on the ground. I told him to wake the other one so this he did after I got him stood up. They were both on their feet now and I started to march them off to the company. After I got all the equipment that I could carry, I met Durante on the road and he had a couple of Krauts too, so off to the company we went with our four prisoners. To tell you the truth, Durante and I were just as scared of the krauts as they were scared of us. Back at the company, we got a new assignment along with the first squad. Fourteen of us started out for the machine guns on top of that hill. I went around the back of the machine gun and tried to come up on them from the rear. On the way to the top I stopped as I saw what I thought looked like a man's head out of a foxhole. We hit the ground and I hollered at the head in something in German I learned out of our phrase book but got no response so I hollered again and no answer so I shot at it twice and twice bullets ricocheted off a black rock. This was most disconcerting but on to the top. Up we got and started off. Two shots rang out and we hit the ground again. We figured out that it wasn't the krauts doing the shooting. On top of hill the we found a machine gun and some ammunition. On the way down we found the other part of the patrol, which had found a hole with some Krauts in it. The two shots were from the squad leader's "grease gun" and they ended up in one of the Kraut's shoulder. The squad leader had almost fallen in the hole and told the Krauts to come out but they wouldn't so he was okay to shoot now because the machine gun on the top of the hill was the only enemy on this particular hill. There were evidently two machine guns on top but all we found was one, the other one was found back of the hill on the road. The machine gunner had taken it off the hill but it had gotten too heavy so he left it. The company was then spaced out around the hill and we began to dig in in expectation of the counter-attack the German always pulls off. All that day we prepared for it and kept guards at all possible places and put out an outpost 50 yards in front of our positions to warn us of anything that moved in front of them. Not one single thing happened until about four In the afternoon, the men in the hole on our right flank reported some men coming up the valley from the German side of the

hill. We got ready for worst because we didn't know if they were the only ones on the patrol. After almost an hour, all hell broke loose behind us on the side of the hill A company was supposed to be watching. The Jerries had come up the saddle in the hills and come between A Company and our company. Shooting was going on all over the place and since we were on the slope of the hill we got into it last. The Krauts ran over the second platoon and came over the top of the hill running down at us. I was turned around in my hole now and looking up toward the top just as a Kraut came running over the ridge firing as he ran. He had a "burp gun" and the bullets coming thick and fast. I saw the top of his head before he saw me so when he hit the top of the hill I fired he stopped firing because I had hit him in the in the head. The momentum of his weight and the downhill run made him keep coming. I put another bullet in his head and he was still coming so I fired twice into his body. At my last shot he was so close I thought he was either going over my hole or was going to land in it with me, so I put my rifle on the bottom of the hole and aimed it into the air. This was done so that if he came in with me he'd land on top of the barrel and all the time I had my finger on the trigger and it would have gone off again. Almost as soon as I got down I heard him hit the ground out front somewhere. I looked over the top of the hole and saw his body not more than three feet from my hole. The largest of the ones we killed we stretched out on the ground and found him to be six feet, two inches tall. The Krauts had evidently thought that we were only in platoon strength because they sent only thirty-five Storm Troopers to rout us out and reoccupy the hill. We killed twelve of them, capture five and drove the rest away.

Jan 8 - We improved our defensive positions the next day and two...

Jan 9 - ...patrols were sent out during the day and one that night. I went only on one of the ones in the daytime. Twenty-four hour guard over here wasn't so bad because you were really guarding something, you skin, but you can really get tired because the way the guard was run was that in every hole there were two or three men. During the day all were up usually and at night beginning at nine we started regular tours of guard duty with my luminous watch going around so we could see the time without a light. The guard for a hole a hole with three men in it was a little

better than the two man hole because the three men alternated guard and sleep: one hour guard and two hours sleep. In the two man hole guard came around every hour with an hour sleep in between. Sometimes we've tried to pull guard for a two hour stretch but sometimes we'd go to sleep so we cut it to an hour.

Jan 10 - At 1500, a 18 man patrol was gathered to go down the hill to the valley and capture a couple of Kraut prisoners. It may sound easy but when you get around to thinking it, it's quite a trick. This was the afternoon and the time we captured those other prisoners was early in the morning. A staff Sgt., a buck sgt., and I were the right flank guards and we went out from the patrol some fifty yards and looked through the woods for any sign enemy. The weapons on this patrol were: Two BAR, two light machine guns minus tripods, a grease gun, four 45cal pistols, and eight 30cal rifles. We were, not more, four hundred yards down the road from our starting point when we got fired on by a machine gun. All of us hit the ground and immediately started returning their fire. When all our firepower was laid on them they picked up and took off. We chased and didn't get too far, before we ran into machine gun fire. Firing back again they picked up again and so did we. The third time the Krauts fired and we returned the fire as they crossed a small trail in the woods. In the meantime the patrol had turned up the hill back toward our positions so that put the right flank guard the rear and the sgts. and I each got a Jerry a piece when they crossed the road. It didn't take long after that for the artillery to start falling in on us. It was direct fire from their guns and therefore it didn't take long for the shell to get there once it was in the air. Mortars came in between the bursts of artillery and kept us ducking. The patrol was almost to the road when I heard a shell coming that was going to land awfully close and I didn't care to be standing upright so into the snow I went again. This was one of the twenty times I hit the ground that day. The slope, hill was quite steep and difficult to climb with the frozen ground, leaves, twigs, and so forth on the ground. By maneuvering from the right and up the hill we avoided a large part of the shells because the Jerries seemed to be working a pattern on the on the hill, up and down, right, up and down, right, etc. After ducking from the shell that landed so close I was about to get up when I got knocked down with one that exploded before or at the same time I heard the report gun that fired it. At the time of the explosion I

thought some limb or rock had hit my arm but when I tried to bend it no bend. I then supposed the worst, that my arm was shattered at the elbow. This shell killed my platoon Sgt., Tec Sgt. John Grumn, and wounded the light machine gunner who went with us and who was later captured because he couldn't travel after being wounded and we couldn't stay because the fire was too hot. Jerry followed up his fire and came up on the same hill where our positions were and got him. Soon after I knew I was hit I realized that I had something in my glove. When I back to the cave where the weapons platoon was and where I got bandaged up, I took off my glove and found the piece of shell that had penetrated my arm and taken with it a piece of my field jacket, sweater, ODs, and long-johns. At the time I got hit the patrol was still about 500 yards in front of our position and almost in the Jerry's lap. I was face down in the snow with my rifle in my right hand and when I got hit, I got up and left the rifle there and took off like a "ruptured duck". From the same shell the man to my right was hit in the back with six pieces of shell fragment, another ahead of me with a piece in the calf of his leg and another man to my right and farther up the hill got hit in the leg just above the ankle with a piece of frag that broke both the bones in his leg and yet he was right along beside me when we were running for the weapons platoon cave. To get to the cave we had to go about twenty yards and he couldn't make it so he stayed down on the road. When he got calmed down from the excitement he was lying on his back on the road and couldn't even rise up off his shoulders. After the barrage that the Jerries threw on us had died down, the other two men that were wounded, excluding the man on the road, and I started down the mountain to the aid station a mile away. I was better off than the other two so I took the lead and had no equipment save my cartridge belt, the man wounded only in the leg carried rifle and the man wounded in the back carried nothing. On the way down the mountain, we encountered the stretcher bearers coming up to carry the man who was wounded by having both bones in his legs broken. You should have seen the others and me when we spotted them, they couldn't see us yet in the light of the woods and they were out an a field on snow. I took the rifle from the man carrying it and waited on the side of the road for the men to come closer. We didn't at the time know who they were so when they just got into the edge of the woods and about twenty yards from us, I told them to halt and the password and countersign were exchanged and went up to talk to the stretcher bearers and tell them

where the man was and about how bad he was hit. After that we were off to the aid station and some hot chow. On the way the moonlight on the snow lighted our way when in the open and when under the trees well enough to get along although we did trip and fall several times on the icy ground. Once at the aid attention we were immediately taken care of and I being the only one of the three on my feet went around to some other boys from my company who were there and then into the kitchen where I saw other wounded who were getting hot chow and coffee. I got some chow and took it to the men I had brought down off the mountain and then went back and ate my first really hot meal in two weeks and brother don't kid yourself that this boy didn't stuff himself to the bursting point. Right here I want to pay tribute in my humble way to the best darned men in combat - the medics. They did the unbelievable every day as part the duty. All they fought this war with was their bags and boxes of pills and that takes plenty of guts when you know Jerry is out to get you to. Three hours after I got hit I was in the front of an Army ambulance with the driver tearing off down the road for the evac hospital. In the back were the two men I brought and two others from some other company and none of us felt like talking so the following trip was mostly in silence except for the times we were stopped by GIs on roadblocks along the sides of the road. When the guard was on my side of the ambulance, I rolled down the window with my left hand and gave him the password. On the way to the evac, we stopped twice for checkups of the men who were badly hurt and to rest and get some hot coffee. One of the men with us got a blood transfusion at one of the stops because his blood test or something checked up short. We rode about forty miles in complete darkness and then when the driver flipped on the bright driving lights after passing through a particular town it almost blinded me because I hadn't seen a light of any kind a night for two weeks except of some Jerry tracers from their machine guns. After riding six or seven hours, we arrived at Saareburg and turned into a courtyard with a high stone fence around it with guards at the gates and this was the 95th Evacuation Hospital. I was taken to the second floor where all of my possessions and equipment except my clothes were taken from me. Then I was placed on a stretcher after walking in and all over the place and carried by two Italian prisoners in the room which adjoins the operating room and then on to a table to await the doctor for the pre-op examination. While I was waiting, a nurse came by and was reading the cards on the foot of all

the beds. We filled them out when we came in and turned over all our possessions. When she got to mine she paused and read it again and then came in along side my bed and told me that she was from Tampa, Florida and took my hand. She asked when I had come over and she was over there before I was so she wanted to know anything about the state and we had a nice talk for a half hour. Then another nurse came down the aisle and the one from Tampa called to her and she came over and lo and behold was from California and immediately wanted me to argue with the merits and demerits of Florida and California oranges. Then the doctor came in and began his examination and the nurses said they'd see me in the operating room. With the exams through the Italians carried me into the operating room and I got onto the operating table. The nurses were there as they said they would be and we started to talk again. All the time the conversations were going on the doctor and nurses were unbandaging my arm cleaning it and the area around it and generally getting ready for the operation. And then the time came that I had been dreading one of the nurses regularly in the operating room put a rubber tube around my left arm and told me to count to ten real slow and to talk it out. The nurse from Tampa said she'd hold my hand so when the other nurses shot the penethol into my arm, I was about out anyway. Penethol is the most quick and effecient anesthetic I've had. In the operation, my arm was cleaned out all the way through for metal particle and cloth and to out all the dead or injured flesh from my arm so the danger of infection would be reduced. The whole operation is called a debridement. When l came out from under I was as tight as a tick from the penethol and was it wonderful. I felt like everything was rosy. I slept the rest of the night there and about noon the next day I was again put on the stretcher and carried down the stairs and put in another ambulance and taken to a collection point in a warehouse near the railroad sidings. Rumors again flew thick and fast and when we got on the train they flew that much thicker and faster because we couldn't tell which direction we were going. We were riding in third class French coaches with eight to a compartment, four facing four and those French trains are the bumpiest and the jerkiest trains in the world. All in my car were ambulatory and there were about six other cars of ambulatory patients as well as five cars of stretcher cases. All day long we rode in those cars with nothing to do except look at the four other characters across from you. Again I've got to say something about those Frenchies at the throttles of the

engine in front and the one in the rear. If those guys knew how to drive those engines, Balboa used rockets on ships when he landed in Suez on his way to discovering the Pacific. When the engineer in front of the train would stop the one in the rear would keep right on going and bang the cars together, if the one in front started up from a standstill the engineer in back would have his brakes on or would be trying to go in reverse. We could hear the boys on the stretchers in the car in front of us crying out with pain as those Frenchies were playing around. On the way back to the hospital we passed through town marked in the railroad stations, Luneville (which I also passed through on the way to the front), Nancy and many other small towns. Almost everywhere along the way we saw ammunition dumps and lines of trucks and the spoils of war and the devastation of a thoroughly war-ravaged country, France. At 2100 we arrived in the town of Commerce (pronounced Com-mer-cy). We unloaded from the train and got into ambulances again and this time there were nine of us in one "meatwagon". The driver told us the name of the town and where we were going. There was snow on the ground and if there's anything this "cracker" boy doesn't want it's snow. Nevertheless I was standing in it for the next two hours after we got off the train in a barn waiting to be registered in the administration building by a bunch of brass and a few French. I guess the French were there to look after the joint. I later found out that it had been a French garrison in the last war, used by the French, Germans, then British and now by the American Medical Corps. When I got registered they split all of us up and sent us to different buildings for some reason. I was placed in a room with three beds in it. In one bed was a Canadian boy and he was really young, who had been a tailgunner in a Lancaster that had been hit a short distance from this hospital. The plane exploded when hit and was at a great altitude because when he hit the ground in his 'chute he almost froze to death even with a fur flying suit on. He had been uninjured when the plane exploded but was hurt in landing as well as frozen. The room was as cold or colder than the weather outside. I was told by the nurse that he had to be thawed out slowly and that I was to be moved to another ward in the morning. I climbed into bed immediately partly to keep from freezing myself and because I was almost dead from the train and ambulance ride not to speak of the standing in the cold I had just experienced. We only had on summer pajamas and a bathrobe with combat boots wear and it was plenty cold. When in bed, I was under four blankets and I

got the nurse to bring in three more pronto because I was freezing even under the original four.

Jan 16 - At 0600 my breakfast was brought to me in bed and when the nurse came in I sat up and noticed that the other Bed in the room and been filled by someone that came in after I did. As soon as we were through with our breakfast we were taken out of that Canadian icebox and taken upstairs to another ward. This ward went from one side of the building to the other side and there two lines of beds, twelve on each side. As I looked around I saw that all the patients in this particular ward were ambulatory. I had walked into the room but they put me in bed and there I stayed. As some of the other patients came over to talk to me I found out that I was in the 50th General Hospital which was in the 3rd Army sector. I was from the 7th Army and evidently the first one from the 7th in that ward. The APO was 350 and Plant No. 4347, whatever that means. Maybe that's the plant where they try to turn out whole bodies from broken ones. Toward the end of the day I had an interview with the ward officer. He informed me that I was to have no supper and was to remain in bed and to do nothing. From the others men in the ward I found out that was the preparation for all operational I guessed I was in for another one.

Jan 15 - No breakfast either and "sho nuff" they came in about 8 AM with two Italians with a stretcher and I got out of bed and got on it. They bundled me up in three blankets and took me downstairs and put me on a stretcher with bicycle wheels on it like the sketch at the right (missing, ed.) I was wheeled out of this building and out across a courtyard to another building where I immediately picked up the real smell of a hospital. It was very clean and the light was pretty good. They took me off this contraption and put my on an operating table with wheels on it. I had my pajama top off and the nurse dressed and washed my arm again and got me ready for my operation. Then when I was wheeled into the operating room, four men and two nurses were working over a man on a table just like the one I was on. I could see two other nurses trying to bring another man out of the anesthetic by slapping his face and falling and talking to him in low tones. I could see myself there on that stretcher about an hour later with those nurses slapping my face and I didn't seem to like it so well. They were soon through with the man ahead of me and then I was put under the strong lights where they had

just finished with the other man. The nurse almost immediately tied my arm to a board and put on a tourniquet and shot penethol into my left arm. I counted to about four and I was out like a light, quick and easy. That's the way I want to die and not like a helluva lot of guys got theirs over here. When I first remember walking up I was back in my bed and I sat up on the side of the bed and for no reason whatsoever started talking to someone. I must have been making quite a lot of noise because the first time I found out that I wasn't time to be talking to anyone was when the ward boy came in and the light streaming in through the door brought me around to my senses. He told me to get the hell back into bed and be QUIET!!

Jan 16 - Morning came early and they served me breakfast in bed again, the first meal I'd had in over twenty-four hours, and told me that the bed was to be my home for at least five days. Today I learned that I had thirteen stitches in my arm, seven at the elbow and six in the hole just below it. The food was the best I'd had in a month or so. All this time I was writing to Helen and mother and telling of the patrol I had gone on but nothing of the trouble we ran into. Although I told them all about the patrol except the rough part, nothing in those letters was even a little white lie. When I was able to get up, I started to go around the hospital and see if there was anyone there I knew but there was no one that I had ever seen before. There was the ever constant card game going on in the ward and I found out it was pinochle that was being played on a bed near mine. Naturally that's something that I can't turn down so I got in to play one day and played morning, noon, and night everyday after that. During the time I played with these particular men, we used up about twelve decks of cards. Being able to get out of bed I was also able to go to chow in the mess hall that was about three hundred yards from my building across the courtyard to a building at the far end of a drill field. The kitchen and dining room were evidently used as such when the place was being used as a garrison but not quite as extensively as it was being used now because when the French were using it. A maximum of four hundred men were housed and trained but now the hospital had about a thousand men housed and fed there. The wearing apparel around the hospital was a pair of thin summer pajamas and a bathrobe with combat boots but as we got better we were able to go over to the warehouse and draw some clothing. We had to turn them in to the ward when we came in so that we couldn't take off for

town without a pass.

Jan 25 - Today the stitches in my arm came out and my arm doesn't look to bad. It certainly feels good to have those things out. When they sewed it up, they sewed it tight and the skin was pinched up so that there was more skin there than there was when I got hit but this soon stretched out. About three days later, the doc found that it was festering up under the wound. When he investigated, he found that he had overlooked two pieces of thread and it had become infected. I had been waiting until I found out that I was going to be completely alright before I told the home folk the entire story.

Jan 30 - I wrote mother and Helen and told them exactly what had happened and told them that I was fine and able to do about anything with my arm now that I was able to do before I got hit and so there was no reason to worry.

Feb 2 - Mother received this day a telegram from the War Department saying that her son had been wounded "slightly" and that she was to receive weekly reports on my condition. Audrey heard of this through another source and called home from a skating party to find out if it was true.

Feb 13 - The letters that I wrote on 30 January arrived in Winter Park but were no surprise to anyone because of the telegram. After the telegram and before thee letter from me, Mother wrote to me at the company and told me that if anything happened again to write immediately.

Feb 20 - I had a pass into the town of Commerce but didn't see anything of interest. The town was overrun with the men of the 5th Division because this was their rest town and they were now resting and the whole outfit was in town. I had about eight hours to be in town but I got my fill in five and went back and played cards and talked, and wrote letters until lights out at 9:30. For the last two weeks I've had physiotherapy. It consists of exercises with canvas bags filled with ball-bearings as well as doing push-ups, hot water whirlpool and a massage by a nurse on my arm.

Feb 23 - The day that I've been hating to see come around has finally come. Last night we went down to the QM warehouse and drew a complete issue of battle equipment again just like me did in Missouri before leaving the States. The boys on the ward gathered all around to see

what they gave us. Five of us left this one ward and only twenty from the whole hospital but there were men leaving every day. At nine in the morning we were put in the ambulances again and tore off down the road. We knew we were going to a Replacement Depot but we didn't know how far. After riding for ten minutes we came to a small town called Void, and everyone was looking for signs of military but saw very little and we just kept on tearing down the road and on out of town. Twenty minutes later we came to another town and this was it. There were soldiers all over everything. The town bore the name of Vaucouleurs and didn't show the signs of too much wear as most of the others had shown. Most of the town was in a valley but there were quite a few beautiful, large homes built right out of the side of the mountain that rose out of the center of the town. It was a typical French town, with its cobblestone streets, bums trying to get all the cigarette butts they could and begging chocolate from everyone, girls on bicycles and their boyfriends riding close-by, children with rags for clothes carrying loaves of bread like fire wood. The buildings are built right on the curbs and only leave about two feet to walk on so most of the time you are walking in the street. There aren't many cars so you don't have to watch for anything except the bicycles. A lot of the men in town had cattle and them in the cellar of their house in town and in the morning they would take hay that had been on the floor of the cellar and stack it just outside of his front door and put fresh hay for that day. This is just like all the towns I saw and had their relief stations along the main street and thought of nothing of carrying on a conversation with a member of the opposite sex while making a visit. To get back to Repl depot, it was formerly a warehouse for something that I haven't figured out yet. This is just the start of the times I seemed to claim the top floor of every place I went. Here I was on the third floor and three bunks from the floor. It was the 87th Repl Depot APO 583. The food was even better here than at the hospital. We were RTUmen (return to unit) and we got out of alot of the details and stuff that flies around a place like this. We got our temporary service records made out on the second floor of the former City Hall. The first night in town we had a pass and went to see an American movie in an old French Opera house. The seats were as old as the country itself I believe but the show was good. The next night we got a pass again and this time saw a French movie in the French theater in town. Here we drew our new rifles and zeroed them for two days and did

some hiking on the side but again the RTU men got out of most of it but one thing I didn't want to get out of and that was zeroing my rifle. When your skin belongs to that rifle you want it to be in the best of condition. Mine was in the pink!! Saw Marvin Burke from basic here.

Feb 27 - Again we move and this time not in ambulances. Two and a half ton trucks this time with fourteen men and equipment aboard. We rode for some eight hours in these things with two breaks which were unintentional but we had them because the driver got lost and had to go get now directions from the military. At 11 PM we got to our destination, Thaon, the 7th Army Repl Depot and reported to the headquarters building and got our building numbers and set out to find them. We soon found out that our new home was an old textile mill and was very big. To my dismay again I was placed on the top floor. This time it wasn't the third floor but the fourth. There was a freight elevator which the stairs went around that didn't work so we walked up and got our bunk and didn't waste time in "hitting the sack".

Feb 28 - While I was enjoying my stay here the higher ones thought I might as well have a jobp so on my third day I was down in the mess hall doling out the C rations to the patrons. It was the best job of KP I've seen in many a moon. We were through with our work early all the time and sat around in the mess hall and played cards and talked or went to the PX or did about anything we wanted to except leave the Depot on pass. When the supper, and I use the word very loosely, was finished, the cook called us over to where he had been working for quite some time and presented us with a cake, iced and everything. If I ever saw that done by a stateside cook I faint cold away. The cake was darn good and he thanked us for working and all the day he asked us to do things and never ordered us to do anything and never even raised his voice once.

Mar 1 - Were off to greener fields it says here in small print. Loaded into the 2 1/2's again we moved in a five hour trip to Saarburg, 71st Repl. Depot located northeast of town in another French garrison. My luck is still holding out, I drew the top floor for the third time in a row. This garrison was smaller than the one at the hospital, only four buildings here and over ten at the hospital. As soon as we got settled and drew some more equipment, we got passes to town and I went in with three

other boys and we went to all the vino places in town and over to see the Saarburg version of the Follies Bergiere. We went on two hikes while in Saarburg and zeroed our rifles again.

Mar 3 - Still traveling toward the front. This time to Merhange, the 70th Division headquarters. As soon as we arrived we were taken to the mess hall and fed and the chow was really good. I see now that my job should have been at some typewriter in the division headquarters. Went to see our company clerk and found that we had finally gotten rid of Capt. Da Camp. In his place, I was told that our new CO was Edwin O. Mitchell. That almost floored me because the last time I'd seen Capt. Mitchell, he was my CO in Fort McClellan and later went to join the paratroops. When I had left the battalion, we were assisting the 275th regiment and the whole division was split up and assigned to different other outfits. Now we are in the line as a whole division and when I came up we were a little over the regular combat strength. Also when I left, our APO was 17814 and now it's changed back to the one we had in Missouri before we left the States, 461. Now another truck ride to the regimental supply and our kitchens and most of all our mail clerk. I had about five letters. The mail clerk had been sending them back to a central directory near ____ for my latest address and these five letters had come in and he hadn't as yet had the chance to send them off. Here is where I got the letter from Mother telling me to write if and when anything went wrong again. From regimental I went by jeep to our rear company CP where I found the 1st Sgt and the supply men and three jeep drivers for the one company jeep. I got rid of all my equipment except my rifle, two blankets and ammo here. When I got to the company about 4 in the afternoon, I looked for the old men in my platoon so that I might get caught up on all the news including the men wounded, killed, and captured. I found 5 old men that I knew. They were the only ones left out of 43 men I came overseas with. These old men told me that the company had a complete turnover twice since I had gone, January 10.

Mar 4 - When I went on patrols the next day I found out more about the things that had happened during the last two weeks. Our company was the spearhead of the front at this point and we were closer to the objective than any company, We were overlooking the city of Saarbrucken, 10 miles away. Between our positions and the city were some lesser

communities and open mines. These lesser towns proved not to be so "lesser" when we started to walk into them to take over. They held us up for about three days.

Mar 7 - Today we finally moved forward again and we ripped off 2 1/2 miles this afternoon and got into the town of Styring-Wendel. Upon entering town we could see the whole town boarded up. The town had been under quite constant artillery fire for the last two days and was damaged to a



great extent. When we got around to breaking into every house in town we found that there were civilians living in the cellars but a very, very few on the first floor. The French homes are built much more

substantially than our homes in the United States. We found that in the town to our immediate front contains 1400 POW's: Polish, French, Russian, Dutch and a few others. 80% of the 1400 were suffering from third degree TB and couldn't even be moved until the medics arrived. At night we ran patrols to them to get food and medical supplies to them. (Picture: Liberated Allied soldiers from camp at Styring-Wendel - ed.)

(Here LC makes reference to a drawing of a dugout where he spent 2 days guarding a heavy MG that was firing intermittently at a crossroad. He then left the dugout and dug in 25 yards from the Metz-Saarbrucken Highway. Sketch missing from original. - ed.)

Styring-Wendel was split by the German-French border. One block of houses was in Germany and the rest of town was in France. That night was cold as the devil, but nevertheless, we stayed in a house that had neither doors nor windows. All night we stood guard and were so sleepy that we didn't give a darn if the Jerry had pulled a fast one on us or not by letting us into town so easily after three days resistance. In the morning, it fell on my platoon to go on patrol again so a six man patrol was formed. My squad

leader was to head the patrol. I was scout and we had a BAR team with us and a getaway man. Our first job was to cross into Germany and scout out and bring back any information or prisoners that we found in a mine ½ mile from town. When I approached the first buildings of the mine - I noticed that it seemed to be abandoned. (I might say here that I'm glad that it was abandoned because I was afraid it wouldn't be). After I had crossed four tracks of abandoned and bombed railroads, I scouted out a switch house and waved two of the other men into the house with me. After I had proceeded, the others crossed the tracks (this section ends here and does not continue. Picks up with next section, same day - ed.) The afternoon we finished scouting the whole countryside, we moved off into Germany with the whole company. Germany is not what I thought it would be. Most of the forests we passed through were reforested. By dark we had penetrated into Germany 5 to 6 miles. The way we were going we thought that we would spend that night in Saarbrücken in houses. Such was not our lot. The Jerries had been running hard and fast but they had evidently attempted to make a stand outside the city. We dug in when the artillery started falling again. This was the first artillery we had gotten in three days but we weren't out of practice of digging in. During the lulls in the fire we obtained barn doors, mattresses, and the like from nearby farms building to cover our foxholes with. We had learned that it was best to have something over you as well as around you. I knew particularly because one day, one of my buddies came over to see me while my foxhole mate had gone on patrol. While we were talking a artillery barrage started and we had to duck. At this time our holes had no covers. We sat on the floor of the hole facing each other and continued to talk. The a shell landed fairly close to the hole and in back of me. While I looked right into his eyes a piece of shrapnel came down from the top and entered his body just below the chin and into his body in the region of the belt line through his body. He was killed instantly. The piece must have pierced his lungs and heart. During this night, we were dug in outside Saarbrücken and I went on guard at 7:50pm and I went off at 8:15. All that time planes had been passing over going towards Germany. In the distance I could see flashes of the anti-aircraft fire as well as the flash of the exploding bombs. All this seemed to be taking place about 30 or 40 miles from my position. (On the map as close as I can ascertain, the city that night was Zweibrücken) I had four more hours of guard that night at different times.

Mar 15 - Bright and early in the morning we had our breakfast: fresh scrambled eggs, fried ham, hot toast, jam, cold, fresh milk and an orange. Say, who in the hell am I fooling! We had the old standby, K ration: cold eggs and ham, 6 dried soy biscuits, 3 lumps of sugar, one stick of gum and 3 cigarettes. Two of our platoons had managed to get themselves pinned down on the forward slope of the hill we were on so it fell on us, the platoon in reserve, to get them out of the mess. No one had been injured when they got pinned down but they were very desirous of getting out of it in a hurry. Most of the day they were calling artillery fire almost on themselves in an attempt to get the machine guns without having to sacrifice an attack by us from the side. About 3 in the afternoon we were told that the artillery was ineffective and to cross into Saarbrucken and put these machine guns out of commission. I was one of the scouts of the third platoon so I was out scouting the field we had to cross by myself seeing if there were any mines or the like in the field. When I returned I reported to the Tech Sgt who was platoon leader since we had no LT. I found no evidence of mines but had found a single strand of barbed wire strung 3½ feet from the ground and another strand of wire, plain, 6 inches from the ground. This wire went across the field about 350 yards from our starting point perpendicular to our lines. My platoon leader was in a bomb crater in the hedgerow bordering our side of the field. It was half filled with water and we had to sit on the inside just above the water. The final instructions were given me by the platoon leader. Our artillery had hit the city limits of Saarbrucken with a four hour barrage. The signal that the shelling was to stop and we to move forward was to be two red smoke shells. The platoon leader had a two-way radio and I told him that to cross that field was suicide and he radioed back to the Bn CP and told them that but the orders were to forward so forward it was. The smoke shells came over and exploded in the houses of the city and I was up and out of the bomb crater and out in front of the platoon about 75 yards. I wasn't too far from the crater when the first Jerry shell came over us and landed well to one side. This didn't seem to affect anyone so on I went. I got out to the wire and went through. All the time I was walking at a steady gait, I was thinking, "I know damned well I'm a fool to even be here and all hell is going to break loose in a few seconds". Every once and awhile I'd turn while walking and look for signals from the platoon leader. About 200 yards after I'd passed the wire

once when I turned he signaled me to hit the ground. I took quick inventory of my position and signaled him to hit the ground and ran toward the Jerries as fast as I could and jumped in a shell hole about three feet across and 2 feet deep. I wasn't a bit to soon either. I hadn't even gotten in the hole good when machine gun bullets spat dirt up all around the top of the hole. It was at this time that I got scared the most of all. Here's my situation: I was 400 or so yards from our lines and not much farther from the German side. I was by myself in a hole scarcely large enough for a baby pup with some Jerries shooting at me. They were sure where I was and were going to keep me there. I was doing some hurried thinking about all the bad things I'd done my life time and was doing some heavy praying too. As the first machine gun fired I spotted it and then took the chance of getting hit in order to give to my platoon leader the relative positions of the machine guns I had spotted. When I signaled the position of the first gun I found out that two more guns were on my position so signaled their position too. When signaling the positions of these guns I had to put both of my arms and my gun completely above the ground out of the hole and the guns didn't take too long to get some bullets out my way. I did a lot of thinking about trying to find out if the guns were still trained on me after everything had quieted down. I had seen the cowboys in the movies put their hat on a stick and put it around the corner of a building to see if the villain was still shooting at him. I thought I might do the same and if they weren't on me anymore I'd take off as best I could. When I thought about it a little more, I decided that putting my metal helmet on the end of my M-1 and put it over the top of my hole wasn't exactly the best way stay healthy. Since I thought better of the idea, I was content to stay in the bottom of that shell hole and wait. Again I thought to myself "Is this what I went through 17 weeks of training to do?" I had come to the conclusion that all was lost when three of our tanks rolled up across the wire and came up and parked abreast of my position. They blazed away at the Jerries point blank and didn't even slow up their fire. Jerry wasn't idle either as I could see the tank out of position and there were machine gun bullets ricocheting off the turret of the tank. There was about fifty yards between the tank and my position and artillery shells were frequently landing between us. I was waiting for one of them to land on top of me and end it all but that was not what I got. Men from my platoon were attempting to get in the cover of the tank and renew the attack on Saarbrucken.

Only three men reached the tank safely. They were adding to the fire by firing around the tank at the Jerries or at least in the same general direction. While I was watching the men attempting to reach the tank, I saw at least twelve men hit by withering, grazing machine gun fire of the Jerries. The bullets were just skimming the ground, most of the boys got it in the leg but some got it in the head too as they went down to the ground. So many were getting hit attempting to continue the attack that the whole attack was abandoned. Three men got off from behind the tank and I was thinking out loud now, "what if the Jerries should counter-attack and catch me out here in the middle of the field?" I didn't like what I thought and the answer might be so I made the quickest decision I believe I have ever made. I decided I that I had to get the heck out of that field and quick. I turned over on my stomach, got my rifle in my right hand and thought again quickly to myself, "it wouldn't do me any good to run and hit the ground like I have been taught in the States. The reason for this was because the grazing fire of the machine gun bullets would have pierced me in my side many times instead of hitting me in the leg." Right here I did something I hope I will never have to do again. On the back of a V-mail I had received the previous day from my mother I wrote the address of my mother and of my girlfriend and gave them my parting wish and placed this note in my dog tag, that being the first place that anyone seeing that I was dead would go to look to find my name. Therefore, I knew that they would find the note too. At the time I wrote this note I could see no possible way of getting through alive. When I came up out of that hole heading for our lines I knew it was going to be a run for my life literally. After much quick deliberation I finally said to myself "this is it, now or never" and from here I ran for my life. I claim to be the fastest man alive on two feet, at least I temporarily was on my two feet. When I was 6 feet from my position machine gun bullets again raked the ground there and then they began to follow me across the field popping all around, -just flying in all directions. As close as I could figure there were two machine guns firing on me simultaneously. I was really flying low and really fast for I covered 150 yards at least before reaching the barb wire fence that I had previously come through. When I reached this wire I was so laden with equipment, namely, my rifle, my canteen full of water, 2 bandoleers of ammunition, 8 clips of 30 caliber for bandoleer, 1 cartridge belt completely full of ammunition and clip, my bayonet and my entrenching tool,

not to speak of two hand grenades in the pocket of my field jacket. Being unable to hurdle the barb wire fence it was necessary for me to slowdown and duck under the strand of barb wire - Jerry had followed me all the way to the barb wire fence with his bullets and they were still all over the place. As I ducked wider the barb wire fence my helmet rolled off my head. As I got one foot through and was bringing the other foot through the fence bullets hit my left leg. When the bullets hit my leg they spun me around and threw me on my back about 7 yards from the wire fence. How I got that far from the barb wire fence I will never know. Yet I was hit again I said to myself. I knew my leg was broken so I thought "England here I come!" I looked at my watch and it was 5:00 o'clock in the afternoon. Almost immediately two Sergeant buddies of mine came to me and wanted to carry me off the field. I was hurting so badly that I could not be moved and them to got the heck out of the field before they got hit themselves. From where I lay I could see seven other wounded men, hit mostly in the leg, but one of them hit in the head. This man was lying close to me. In fact too close for comfort as I found out later. All these wounded men had been new replacements and had never been in combat before and were hollering their heads off for the medics. When Jerry heard the hollering he opened up again to try and finish us off. The man doing most of hollering was the one hit in the head close to me and as he hollered he was lying on his left side he threw his right arm up in the air and Jerry could see his hand at least and every time his hand went up in the air they would shoot at it. I spent most of my first anxious minutes trying to quiet the other wounded men and especially the one close to me because I knew that he would endanger all of our lives, at least those that I could see that were still living. Everyone would quiet down for what seemed about 30 minutes and then they would start again and Jerry would start again. About this time I realized that my helmet had rolled up to my side. I reached down and picked up the helmet and to my great surprise saw that there was a bullet entering the helmet from the inside and going completely through. The only way this could have happened was to have the bullet pass between my ear and my head on the one side and my helmet on the outside while it was still on my head. Being very uncomfortable at the time anyway this situation that I had just realized didn't help one bit. Seeing my helmet and the man to my left who had been hit in the head I was quite worried about putting my hand to my head because you don't necessarily feel it when

you get hit in the head because it stuns your whole body. Since I was the last one to leave the attack, since I was the farthest out in the field, the tanks that had come up in our support began to withdraw, firing as they went. When they pull a strategic withdrawal they back up thereby always having the majority of their armor plate toward the enemy. The rear is too exposed. Either I had run to my right or the tank was backing up crooked. In any case the tank was coming my way drawing fire as it came from artillery and machine guns. The tank to my left was coming as if it were going to run over me. Just before I went out of sight of vision of the tank commander in the top of the turret he turned his periscope around and saw me lying there and almost immediately the tank changed directions and missed all of us. If he had not seen me first it would have been impossible for me or anyone else lying there in the field to attract his attention to us lying there on the ground. As he turned his tank and continued for the rear the artillery was still following him and falling dangerously close to all of us in the field. As the tank passed by me a shell landed uncomfortably close and at the time I didn't know it happened but I received a small piece of shrapnel just below my right knee on the outside of my leg. With all of this hell breaking loose I was again waiting for a shell to land right on my chest or in my stomach and blow me to smithereens. Waiting for darkness to come and for the medics to arrive to remove us from the field there was nothing much to do but sit tight and wait and hope they come soon. During this time I ate a K ration for supper, took my wound tablets and drank my whole canteen of water, cut the pants leg on my left leg and tried to dress my wound. I was unable to do so because I could not raise my shoulder from the ground, neither could I reach the wound by bending my body laterally to the left. One of the reasons I could not raise my shoulders from the ground was that the bullets which Jerry was firing were not passing over my head at more than two feet from the ground. Being that I was unable to help myself very much in a way of bandaging my wound and thereby stopping most of the bleeding I applied traction myself by pushing my left instep with my right foot and pulling up on the skin and bone around my knee and thereby relieving quite a bit of the pain which developed later. There wasn't much pain at first but as time grew longer it began to hurt. At 2100 or 9:00 P.M. four medics and one of my sergeant buddies came out in the field under cover of darkness and I was the first they came to. They immediately wanted to put me on

the stretcher and get me out to the waiting Jeep, but I told the sergeant that there were more men in this field that were wounded more badly than I was and to remove them first. After they had removed seven men they came back for the eighth that was lying close to me and they touched him on the shoulder and he did not move or make a sound so the sergeant said hurriedly that he was done for and motioned the stretcher bearers toward me. I told the Sergeant that the man that he had just touched wasn't dead because a few moments before I had seen him move and heard him speak so they went back and found out that I was right and removed him from the field and I hope thereby saving his life because if he had stayed in that field the remainder of the night I do not believe that he would have come out alive. When they came back for me the four medics threw me bodily on the stretcher and began to carry me off the field on their shoulders. All the time the pain was about to kill me but I knew that it was all for the good so I grabbed the side of the stretcher, gritted my teeth and said nothing. We passed through the hedgerow from where I had started and continued on to the road behind where there was a Jeep waiting to take me to the aid station. I thought at this time when they were about to lift me on the rear of the Jeep cross ways that I was out of danger but Jerry had other ideas. Just as the medics lifted me on the Jeep machine gun bullets splattered around on the road and the jeep several times. When this happened the medics dropped me in the middle of the road and dove for the ditches on either side. This is understandable to me because I was wounded and they as yet were not. In three bursts of machine gun fire from Jerry this time I was not touched. The Jerry machine gun was firing at sounds made by the Jeep and by us attempting to get on the Jeep and was thereby firing very ineffective fire. Finally I got on the Jeep and the driver and his assistant held the forward edge of my stretcher and I held the rear end of the Jeep in the vicinity of the fire. This began a twelve mile ride which I hope I will never experience again. We passed over a road that was a shell pocked with artillery holes, blown bridges, dry river beds, up and down shoulders of the road, across a railroad that had hurriedly been thrown across the highway on top of the highway and proceeded to the First Battalion Aid Station in Forbach. Upon reaching the First Battalion Aid Station I found out that I could not be taken care of because they were full to capacity at that time, so again I was loaded on the back of the Jeep and we proceeded down the street in the same town toward the Second

Battalion Aid Station. Upon reaching the Second Battalion Aid Station, I was carried into a small room where two other men were on stretchers on the floor. There were two doctors and about four enlisted men assisting, First the doctor came to me and asked me where I was wounded, I told him, he removed the shoe from my left foot and the pants leg which I had cut also. My wounds were clean from blood and foreign material. Upon examining the wound doctor told me that "you have a million dollar wound and you will go to the States". Previously men who had been wounded in the leg always went to England. Therefore, that was the reason for my saying "England, here I come.," while lying in the field. When the doctor told me I was going the States I didn't exactly believe him and I believe I told him so. Since I was now out of danger and knew that I was going to come through O.K. I went into my shirt and got the note which I had written and placed in dog tag, tore it up and gave the pieces to the Captain there and asked that they be burned. He immediately put them in the furnace which was burning in one corner of the room. It was now about 11:00 or 11:30 on the night of March 15th, 1945. After I left the aid station began the same routine that I had gone through on the 10th, 11th, and 12th of January of the same year, collecting stations, other Aid Stations, Regimental Aid Stations, Divisions, and finally to the 93rd Evacuation Hospital at Sarrebourg.

Mar 16 - Upon arriving at the 93rd Evacuation Hospital I was again examined by the doctor and told that I had a million dollar wound and was going to the states. I began to believe them now - in fact I was pretty happy over the whole over the whole situation. Here they removed the temporary bandages and temporary framework from around my leg that had been placed there by the doctors at the Second Battalion Aid Station. They performed a debridement which is cutting away dead flesh, removing pieces of bone and in cleaning up the wound so it may begin to heal at once. After they finished with the debridement my leg was wrapped in gauze with vaseline dressing inside and a drain from the wound to the outside. Covering the gauze was a plaster of paris cast. Immediately after the cast was applied it was cut on the inseam and the outer seam from top to bottom all the way through to my leg to allow for the swelling which always accompanies a wound of this nature.

Mar 17 - Before the debridement I had an injection in my right arm of penethol and when I came out of it it was

pretty close to being the 17th of March. All during the day of the 17th I rested and the doctors and nurses came in to observe my condition. At 2100 or 9:00. PM we were loaded on a plane for Southern France. All members in my car were stretcher cases. Most of them cases that had been wounded in the lower portion of their body. We traveled slowly all that night.

Mar 18 - On our trip south we passed through Luneville, Nancy and Lauges. About 1600 in the afternoon we unloaded half our plane load of patients at Dijon, completing the unloading of the patients we again filled the plane with patients seriously enough wounded to warrant their traveling to Southern France and eventual evacuation to the States. It was a rough ride being thrown around quite a bit by the French engineer who does not know how to drive an engine anymore than I know how to build a passenger car single handled.

Mar 20 - At 0500 we arrived in the Marseilles area. The countryside there is much like what you would see in the mid-west in various places. It was not until 1000 or 10:00 A.M. that we arrived at Aix. Here we were unloaded by German prisoners from the plane and placed in ambulances for transportation to the hospitals. Those Germans smiled very complacently and I felt like hitting them over the head with my leg - the one in the cast that is - even in the condition I was in. From the train we were transported to hospitals, three of them in that area, the 43rd, 3rd, and the 1st I believe. I was taken to the 3rd and was in bed there at 12 noon. To my left, in the bed to my left rather, there was a soldier from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, by the name of Jack Albaugh. He had been a First Sergeant in the 100th Division and had been wounded in the left femur by a large piece of shrapnel which had scattered that bone. Albaugh had been there in the hospital for four months I later found out and there fore I expected to stay at that hospital for quite some time. The bed to my right was at the time of my entrance vacant but later on day that day - I suppose from the same train I came down on - a soldier from the 45th Division came in. He had been wounded in the same leg as mine only he had been wounded by a piece of shrapnel instead of bullets. He was from Portland, Oregon and had been in combat only four hours before he was hit. When I arrived in Southern France my leg was not hurting as badly as I expected but soon after I was placed in the bed in the 3rd General Hospital it again began to hurt. To

relieve some of the pain the nurses gave me one sleeping pill and two codeine pills every six hours. Everyone there did not have to get these pills since everyone there didn't seem to be hurting as badly as I was. The Codeine pills and the sleeping pills made me appear to be, and also feel like, I was in a doped up condition. As a result of the effect of these pills it seems that there was a motto among the patients on the ward: "I'm hurting."

Mar 25 - Today I got a bright new shiny bath, after having the old one removed, and the and the stitches taken out of the left side of my left leg. The right side of my left leg was still draining too badly and too badly mangled for them to remove the stitches. Here I might add one little note about the food we got at this hospital. In a few simple words it was terrible. There was a nurse that came around and asked us how we liked the food. The brass there had called her dietician but all us in the ward had another name for that will not bear mentioning here. When she asked us how the food was we would tell her that it wasn't worth a damn but this didn't seem to do any good. One day the Major came around, our Ward Officer, and it was just as breakfast was being finished about 6:30 in the morning, and he came over and tasted the boy's coffee in the bed next to mine. Our buildings here are three stories high and I thought the Major was going to go all the way to the top of the building I was in when he tasted that coffee. It was as cold as putting a couple of ice cubes in your mouth, without taste and to use that word again, terrible. He immediately called together all the nurses in the building for a conference in the nurses' room at the head of the ward. As a result of this conference the nurses were forced to go to the kitchen and get a small two-burner stove, electric and heat our coffee every morning after it was brought over from the kitchen which was about three blocks away.

Mar 27 -It has been two days since I had the new cast applied and already it has drained through and is smelling to high heaven. Today we had C rations for dinner, spam for supper. We have had these two or a combination of these two in every conceivable way imaginable. For the first time since I hit Southern France we had fresh eggs and they even came around asking us which way we would like to have them cooked. It would seem incredible it could happen all the time but every time we had eggs they were as cold as icebergs. We could not get the Major to do anything about

these eggs.

April 1 - Today a USO show happened to hit our hospital. This being the first day of April - April Fool's Day - they had a very appropriate program. Just before the USO show came to our ward the patient across the aisle from my bed called the Italian ward boy and wanted a B-29 and fighter escort as we knew the best. Our beds were regular hospital beds that could have the sides cranked up on them and this patient had the back on his bed almost vertical while flying the B-29. While in this position the USO show entered. The show lasted a good hour with jokes, music and dancing going on up and down the aisles between the beds. While all this entertainment was going on there were four girls, two to each side of the ward that were coming down the line talking individually to the men in bed. During the show and for about two or three hours afterwards my leg did not hurt me in the least. In fact it felt pretty well. To get back the patient flying the B-29. Immediately after the last entertainer had left the ward our flying patient hollered "ward boy" so loud that it rocked the very walls of our ward.

Apr 3 - Again my cast was changed and the last stitches were taken out of my leg. To date I had had 27 stitches in my leg and 13 in my arm. As I watched the whole operation the doctor and I agreed that my leg looked very much better than it did at the first cast changing.

Apr 4 - Rumors are flying that two hospital ships have entered the harbor at Marseilles. The first Sergeant in the bed next to mine is now much excited over the possibility of getting on this shipping list after missing all those for the last four months. The reason that he has been off the shipping list this long is that he has been "sweating out" a battle field commission that has been approved by everyone up to SHAEF. When he talked to the Major about getting him on the shipping list this time the Major advised waiting a little while longer. Albaugh said he didn't want the commission and told the Major where to put it.

Apr 5 - Nothing much doing all day except rumors still flying thick and fast. At 1900 just after chow a GI that is a patient working for the Major, just before shipping time, dropped around with the shipping list asking everyone his date of preference. Med was number 25 in ward 2-A. After

talking with all the men on the shipping list from bed number 1 - 20, he came to our side of the ward and got the state of preference of a man in bed number 21 and proceeded on down toward mine. The First Sergeant in the bed next to me was not in the bed next to me but in a wheel chair in another part of the ward. The shipping list carrier passed his bed, bed 24, and came to mine. I had only been on the ward for a little over two weeks so I thought naturally that I had very little possibility of being on this shipping list. When he came over to me with the list and sat down on my bed and asked my state of preference I felt like doing a flip even with my leg in the cast. That night we all were rather restless before lights out and the nurse brought around a few extra sleeping pills for those who thought they might need them. Just before lights out 1st Sergeant returned to his bed and when I told him that he had missed another shipment I thought that he was going to explode. That night lights out was very uneventful except for the usual book throwing, paper throwing and "sour ball" throwing not to mention the plasma bottles filled with water.

Apr 6 - The day set for shipment is tomorrow. Ward boys who have had passes to Marseilles tell us that the Thistle and the Algonquin, both hospital ships, are tied up in the Marseilles harbor. Bright and early this morning the 1st Sergeant was up and out to see everyone with any authority that he could get in touch with. About 9:00 in the morning, he returned and said that he was on the slipping list. Three boys who at that time were in traction and had been scheduled to go were taken off the list by the Major because they were unfit for sea travel at that time. Now the 1st Sergeant was happy again and had a smile from here to here. This 1st Sergeant was not like the 1st Sergeants you know or hear about. He had been in a line outfit only three years enlisting just after the war began. He was a college boy at the time and was then (at the time of shipment) only 24 years of age. All during the day everyone was much elated over the prospect of leaving France the next day. As usual our night nurse came around just before lights out and personally went to every bed - 88 in number - in two wards, and fluffed every man's pillow. She was a good looking 2nd Lt. Named McCabe and was very nice to everyone on the ward. I had to ask her to get me 2 sleeping pills because I knew that I could not possibly get to sleep without them.

Apr 7 - Before the sun came up we were awakened, washed, and fed our breakfast and were ready to go by 0630. This day was to be one of the biggest days in my life up to this time. At 0700 we were in ambulances on our way to Marseilles, 18 miles away. This was my last ride on French territory over rough cobblestone streets and I did not shed one tear upon leaving them. At 0800 we were on the wharf beside the hospital ship Thistle. I was then assigned bed number 4, ward 12, on B deck. At 1100 British summer time our boat pulled away from the dock. Even before we pulled away the mess men in the kitchen across the corridor from our ward were preparing dinner. There were 16 men in my ward on double-decker bunks with innerspring mattresses, clean sheets and all the trimmings that had been missing for so long. Before dinner was served we went out into the Mediterranean. The smooth, blue Mediterranean as it is called, was now dark green with whitecaps and was rolling heavily. At noon we had the best meal we had had since Thanksgiving. There was steak, fresh field peas, fresh cold milk, bread and real butter, tomatoes, pickles, olives, pie and ice cream. It seemed almost unbelievable that we were not more than 25 miles from the hospital where we had been eating C rations and spams for the last two weeks and now were eating steak with all the trimmings!

Apr 9 - At a little past 12 noon we passed the "rock". I didn't even attempt to get up and look at it. One reason I didn't was because I was hurting too badly because of the ship rolling and tossing so much. The truth was running downhill quite bad. We were still getting plenty of it but it was too much to hope for that it could last as good as it was the first day. The Captain came around to our ward about once every two days. A Red Cross representative came around every day with books and showed movies for the ambulatory patients on B deck. Loud speakers all over the ship played music from 0800 to 11:30 and after dinner and our rest period 1400 to 1630 and after supper from 1800 to 2100. They also gave weather reports, the news and a regular report on the ship that left Marseilles 4 hours behind us which we were racing to the U.S. (that wonderful, beautiful, free country). The Commander of our hospital ship had a bet with the Commander of the ship behind us that we would beat his ship to the U.S. The first two days out I heard 19 new tunes that I had never heard before. After we left Marseilles 8 days of rough weather followed. The only moving I did during that time was that about once every other day I would get up to have the

sheets on my bed changed.

Apr 17 - I got out on deck today with the aid of two ward boys and my nurse and pair of crutches. I was aided into a deck chair on the port side and stayed out on deck for 6 hours, having my dinner brought to me on deck. The day was beautiful with green water, clear blue sides and our boat painted white all over. Most of the day I had my pipe, which I had purchased for one pack of cigarettes in Marseilles, in one hand and a cold drink or a book in the other. Between 3:00 and 4:00 every afternoon we had fire and boat drill. The ward boys had wire stretchers into which we could be placed in case of an emergency.

Apr 21 - This morning we sighted the good old USA. We know we were headed for Charleston, South Carolina and as we passed through under the Cooper River Bridge I was standing straight up and down at the port hole watching the proceeding. After that our ward nurse got us all ready for debarkation. At 9:15 we moored at the dock and were unloaded into waiting ambulances on the dock. An army band and a Wac band were playing as we left the boat and upon leaving the debarkation area a Red Cross Canteen gave us ice cream, milk and donuts in the ambulance. It certainly was grand to ride over a smooth, concrete highway again and see beautiful American girls standing beside the road at bus stops waiting for the bus. By 11:00 o'clock we were in our ward at Starke General hospital 9 miles outside Charleston. It was good to see whole homes instead of homes full of holes. I called home at 1:20 P.M. and talked to mother for the first time in 9 months. At Starke all we got was a routine check-up on our condition and necessary cast changes and X-rays.

Apr 23 - Called home again at 5:30 P.M. through the courtesy of the Red Cross.

Apr 24 - I called home again at 7:30 to say that I was going to Augusta, Georgia to Oliver General hospital. That night I attended a USO show being pushed there in a wheel chair and attended all the time by a Wac. After the show she pushed me and a buddy of mine all around the hospital area showing us the whole layout from fence to fence and gate to gate.

Apr 26 - At 11:30 we left Starke on a hospital train made up of cars going to Atlanta, New Orleans, Texas and

California. We were the first to be dropped off. American hospital trains are as different as black is different from white as compared to French hospital trains and French engineers. We had a very smooth ride speaking of the road bed and the engineers. We arrived in downtown Augusta and were immediately greeted by a Lt. Col. Chaplain and from there placed in ambulances that were to take us to the hospital. It was about 6 miles to the hospital from the train, and after registering I was taken to ward 20, arriving there just after 5:00 P.M. I had arrived too late for supper had had nothing to eat since dinner in Charleston. The ward boy was about 23 years of age, was by himself on the ward and was very indignant toward anyone about getting them anything. He told me to get up and fry some eggs for myself in the ward kitchen if I wished anything to eat. I couldn't even stand up much less walk and an ambulatory patient on the ward named Jones from Miami offered to fry some eggs for me in the kitchen. On April 26th, 5 days after I had arrived, I saw my first doctor. He immediately recommended that I get the old cast cut off since it had already drained through.

Apr 27 - I went to the operating room today and was sent from there to the plaster room where I had the cast removed. My ward officer, 2nd Lt. McAllister and the orthopedics officer, Captain Foley, decided to graft skin on both sides of my leg. This they decided while waiting for X-rays they had taken of my leg to be developed. When they were developed and we all saw them my leg was in "foul" shape and with respect to the straightness of the bone. The tibia in my left leg, the bone which was broken, was very crooked. The doctor decided that it was not too late to straighten it without having to re-break the bone in order to straighten it. Three ward assistants and two doctors all got their hands on my leg and began to straighten it. They gave me no anesthetic or anything whatever to try and soothe the pain so all I could do was grab the edges of the table and squeeze. They straightened my leg where it was perfectly straight and bent it a little in the opposite directions. After this they began to apply the plaster of Paris in three different sections. One section was from my toes to just below the wound, another section was from my thighs down past my knee to just above the wound. Most of this was applied before they had completely straightened my leg. Upon completing the straightening they applied the third part of the cast which bound the other two parts together and was placed

immediately over the wound. Again X-rays were taken of the leg and it was clearly shown that my leg was again straight. They started to speak again of grafting skin on my leg but I got them to put it off until after mother and Helen had come to see me.

May 1 - They arrived at 7:20 P.M. and it certainly was swell to see them again. Neither had changed one bit. We talked in the ward until 10:00 P.M. - lights out.

May 2 - Mother and Helen returned at 12:00 noon to take me in the car for a ride around Augusta. A Lt. nurse pushed me up hill through corridors for about half a mile to the main building in a wheel chair, and from there I "crutched it" to the car which was in front of the building. We went all around Augusta eating out twice and talking and sightseeing until 11:00 o'clock that night.

May 3 - Mother and Helen stayed from 12:30 until 10:00 and we got a lot of visiting done. I was getting caught up on what had happened since I had been gone.

May 4 - At 7:30 this morning mother and Helen left for Winter Park. When left they left my spirits as high as they could have possibly been.

May 11 - I went to the operating room at 8:00 A.M. and came out at 9:15. I had a spinal shot which was given too high on my back and temporarily caused loss of breath, gasping, and missing a heart beat. Skin was grafted only on the rear wound which was the worst since the other one had already grown together so that they decided not to graft skin to it. I was then moved to ward 10, a post-op ward, and compelled to remain the rest of the day flat on my back with pillow and I could not raise my shoulders from bed. Soon after I had arrived on ward 10 from the operating room the nationally known band leader Dean Hudson, a Kappa Sigma, from the Delta Delta Chapter at the University of Florida, came to see me. He was on tour and was playing at the Bon-Air Hotel in Augusta that night.

May 20 - For the past 5 days I have been getting pre-op treatment of boric acid solution on the wounds that are to be skin grafted tomorrow. While flat on my back I have had rather an interesting time with a cute night. Geraldine Wesley from Birmingham, Alabama. Every three hours during the night she comes in and soaks the bandages on both sides of leg with boric acid solution. Very interesting time.

May 29 - After about 18 of the darkest days I have spent during which time I was waiting for the doctor to take the bandages off of the right thigh, the place where they got the skin from I about went crazy from wanting to scratch the raw skin that was left. This place was covered by an 8 by 8 bandage, securely held down on every side by 12 four inch pieces of adhesive tape, 4 inches wide that is. I was also waiting for them to take the bandages off of the wound to see if the graft had taken. In a position like mine you get many people's opinions about what they think of skin graft, what they have heard and very little reliable information. Nevertheless when the doctor finally took the bandage off of the wound they had done a beautiful job of grafting skin. The wound was completely grown over with skin except for a very small corner which readily covered itself with new skin. Before they had taken the skin from my right thigh they had shaved the right thigh and during the 10 days which the tape had been on the hair had again grown out and it not being permitted to grow up had grown in and around the adhesive, so when the doctor cut the bandage in two and jerked one side of the bandage off and then the other it left nothing on my leg underneath the tape except little pimples of blood and certainly no hair as well as leaving me about 18 inches off the bed. Somewhere along here I struck up quite an acquaintance with a Cadet Nurse from Scranton, Pennsylvania, by name, Virginia Longo.

Jun 15 - During the past two weeks I have done nothing but lie in bed and put on more weight and wait for the doctor to come around and look at the graft. Finally he and the other officers decided to change my cast again. The reason this time for changing my cast was that in order to skin graft they had to cut a window over each wound and had therefore greatly weakened the whole cast. This time they applied a full length cast and the Captain mentioned something about a furlough after I had needled him a little bit.

Jun 27 - The Captain has said that my furlough went in quite a while ago and he does not understand why it hasn't been approved. Later on today I got word to prepare to go home on furlough. One day during the past two weeks while shaving I banged the heel of the cast down a little too hard and cracked the plaster of paris, so this afternoon I went to the room and had the whole heel built up in anticipation of coming home on furlough.

Jun 28 - At 5:30 A.M. this morning after staying up all night I boarded the bus for Winter Park. At 3:30 I arrived in Jacksonville, Florida and met Helen there. I stayed with her Aunt and Uncle overnight - the Dixons - and went down that night to the train depot and got my ticket for the train for Winter Park in the morning. While at the station, a friend of mine, Mr. Lamb, from Orlando, former patrolman there who at that time was in SP in the station and he agreed to get me on the Streamliner in the morning if I would present myself to the SP window there at the station. I was unable to get chair reservations on the Streamliner so he got me the reservation also. This morning I presented myself at the SP window in the station and Helen and I were escorted through the crowd, and there was quite a crowd, through the gate and on to the train 20 minutes before any other passengers entered. At 1:00 P.M. we arrived on the streamliner at Park being met by Mother and Audrey and here started a wonderful 30 days furlough.

July 2 - Ade Leonard, nationally known dance band leader, was at the Coliseum tonight from 7:00 to 1:00. Helen and I went to the dance and Helen was grand about my not being able to dance. We had a grand time and a big party with Charles Whitmore, Bunny McLowel, Bruce Webster, and Ann Royal, Otis Mooney and Beverly Wyckoff and many others.

Jul 6 - Today I drove the car for the first time since the first of October last year. I drove it from Fausett Road home. I was dating every night.

Jul 13 - Tonight I had my Friday, the 13th party, with 13 as guests invited. It rained all day up until the time for the party and then cleared off beautifully. The party went off just like clock work with Mother doing a fine job of getting everything together and running it smoothly. Everyone here autographed my cast.

Jul 15 - Helen, Bunny, Chuck and I, in Whitmore's Chevrolet, took off for Coronado Beach. I got in my bathing suit but didn't go swimming as did the rest. Later on that afternoon we went to Daytona Beach and got home about 12 midnight.

Jul 19 - This day is Chuck's 20th birthday. We had a small party at his house and then proceeded down the Orange Blossom Trail to the Show Boat Night Club. Attending were Donald Chubb and Delores Mowery, John Knight and B.J.

Comth, Bunny McDowell, Chuck Whitmore, Helen Dodd and I. I got some more autographs on my cast and everyone had a good time, especially Chubb. Before we came to the Show Boat, while we were at Chuck's house, Mother called from home and said that Daddy had just arrived back in the States at Newport News, Virginia. This made the whole evening a greater success.

Jul 21 - Dad arrived on the Champion looking good although he has lost a lot of weight which makes him look better. For the past two weeks off and on I have been able to secure the car for dates, driving it all by myself around town. I am afraid there are a few startled citizens around Winter Park when they see me drive up, stop the car and hobble out on a pair of crutches. Had a grand week following the 21st of July talking with Dad about our war experiences. Get lowquarter shoes for my brace tomorrow.

July 27 - I drove about two hundred miles of the way from here to Augusta, Georgia. The four "Crackers" are together again. We drove in the Mercury to Augusta stopping in Jacksonville for the night at the George Washington Hotel, and we Rainbow Roomed it.

July 28 - We arrived in Augusta about 4:00 in the afternoon. I went to the hotel with Mother and Daddy and Audrey and checked them in, then Dad and I went to the hospital, turned in my furlough and got a week end pass, and I went back down to the Bon-Air Hotel where the four of us ball roomed it that night. When everything was closed Dad and I had a long "talk" until 4:00 A.M.

July 29 - Three "Crackers" left number 4 "Cracker" at Oliver General hospital and went south about 3:00 P.M. today. My spirits were again high from the furlough, Dad being home again and the prospects of brace bringing on another furlough soon.

August 2 - some more--

Aug 3 - Finally cast comes off -- X-rays taken and Capt. & Col. looked the peg over & then I was expecting to get a brace measured but the Capt. hit my leg & said "Get up & walk back to your ward but be careful." -- Then he asked me if I'd argue with him about that & I said I wouldn't say a word -- It really felt awkward & sent tingling sensation thru my leg when I put it on the floor. This day

started a period I hope I never go thru again -- I started to learn how to walk all over again -- It was grand to put both feet on the floor again -- I was walking with crutches -

Aug 30 - Today I threw away my crutches & picked up a cane -- I had previously practiced with the cane but only in the ward -- Still keep crutches to go to chow with because we get served at the table -- otherwise we'd carry trays cafeteria style

Sep 14 - Went before the disposition board made up of a Lt. Col., two Capt.'s and a 1st Lt.--They decided that I was ready for convalescent hospital & Welch at Daytona was recommended by the Col. -- Called home several times in the next two wks.

Sep 27 - Orders came at 2pm for me to be ready to leave at 11 pm tomorrow -- I'd been almost ready since I went before the board so I didn't have much to do -

October 1 - We reported & were in bed at am -- up at G we began processing -- clothing issue, physical, interviews, orientations, etc.

Oct 3 - In P.M. I was transferred to Co. A - 5th Bn. With the assistance of Lt. Paul Buck

Oct 4 - At 6am I left Welch with Lt. Buck & Capt. Bush for W.P. & Orlando on a 4 day pass -- Saw football game between Apopka & W.P. (W.P. won)

Oct 8 - Back to Welch

Oct 9 - Deep Sea fishing 9am to 7prn, 25 miles out, didn't catch a thing

Oct 10 - To beach at Welch cottage

Oct 12 - Home on three day pass: game with W.P.& St. Cloud at St. Cloud. (W.P. won)

Oct 13 - Helen and I went to U of F Homecoming game at G'ville -- Vanderbilt won 6-0 Good weekend at house -- Back home 2:45 Sunday.

Oct 15 - Back to Welch -- Col. made rounds & said take 30

days & see if that ankle won't loosen up some

Oct 17 - 5pm furlough started with Dad coming for me.

Oct 19 - Football between W.P. & Kissimmee - (W.P. won 21-11)

Oct 20 To Oct 25 - Next week was dating & work(?) at the office and around the house -- tore down the little house by myself -- should have gotten another battle star because I was scratched and cut from lumber, nails, stucco, wire, falling stuff, etc. Played golf Thurs. With Dad at Orlando Country Club -- I won by 4 strokes for 12 holes.

Oct 26 - Game between W.P. & Unmatilla -(W.P. won 38-6)

Oct 27 To 1 Nov - More dating & some work -- cut hedges & mowed lawn -- put boat in the lake to swell bottom

Nov 2 - W.P. played W.Garden & won 19-7

Nov 3 - Col. Aubrey Akin arrived from Ft. Worth by plane.

Nov 4 - Visited Lt. Col. Wilder in his room at San Juan-- Col. Akin was there also the pilot came from Tampa, Lt. Col. Reddell -- Sometime the conversation got around & someone said, "Why don't you come back to Texas with us?" then we took off from Orlando Air Base at 7:20 pm in an Army B-25 -- I was in the waist with a corporal & a Pvt. -- It was a clear, smooth night and we had a good trip traveling over Pensacola; Mobile, Ala.; Jackson & Vicksburg, Miss., Shreveport, La.; Dallas, Tex.; and finally landing at Ft. Worth (Tarrant Field) at 11:45 EST - - I checked in at Base Operations & went to bed in the Transient Barracks-

Nov 6 - At Base Operations at 7 & start to sweat again -- very, very slow -- at 12:30 pm a Col. was filling out papers for Washington, DC-- I asked if he had room for one more, he said go out to the plane and if we have a `chute for you, you can go Soon after we took off the ground was clouded in -- we passed over Hot Spgs., Ark. And as we passed Little Rock we radioed for weather ahead but no answer came back so we called again & then turned back & radioed again -- No answer so we turned back toward DC & continued -- as we crossed the Miss. The clouds were not there anymore -Nashville, 'Penn. Was passed next -- Then we

called Charleston, W.Va. & got our weather report & at 6:45 EST we landed at Andrews Field, Md., 10 miles east of DC. We happened to arrive about 4 hrs. after all buses & trolleys had gone on strike in DC.. there was a bus that ran to DC from the Army base every two hrs. & 7 pills happened to be one of them so we were on it -- While in route to DC I had decided to go to Plainfield to see the Searings so when we reached Union Station at 7:45 I bought a ticket for New York on an 8 o'clock train -- This day for breakfast I had a cup of coffee -- for dinner I had a baloney sandwich & we got supper on the train to NYC -- was on Penn RR & that does go to Plainfield so changed at Newark & went to Elizabeth & changed stations & on to the B&O for Plainfield -Nov 8 - Back at Union Station at 7 am to get ticket on B-25 to Tampa --out to Bolling Field doing 75 mph in cab to be there by 8 -- arv. 7:48 & went to Flight Operations at 8:15 nothing had happened so I started to check because plane was to leave at 8:30 -- Found out plane had gone -- Then began to sweat again -- at 9:45 a GI motioned me to him & he had overheard a Col. was going to Eglin Field, Fla. So I went into the dispatchers office & asked him if he had room for me -- he said he had so at 10 we left the ground and as he banked to the west we were over the dome of the capitol & flew right down the avenue to the Wash. Monument & then Lincoln Memorial across the Potomac & Arlington Cemetery & the Pentagon bldg. On our left -- now were headed south & passed over Charlottesville, Va. & Winston-Salem, NC with the Allegheny range to our right about 20-30 miles & to the west of Atlanta & landed at Eglin Field at 1:45 EST -nothing moving as there were officials from all over the east arriving for an airshow the next day & things would have been slow next am too so I took the bus at 6:10 pm for Jax.-- arrived Jax 5:45 & left 7 am for W.P. arr. 11:55

Nov 7 - Arrived Plainfield at 1:33 am & went to 155 then went to YMCA -- to bed at 2 & up at 6 & back to 155 at 6:30 -- waited until 6:45 & no one up yet & it was getting cold so I rang the bell & Granddad answered the door & said "Yes?" quizzically, not knowing who I was, then realized I was me & in I went -breakfast, saw Aunt Edith & went to the store at 9 -- downtown with Granddad & then to Rotary Luncheon -- in the afternoon I went over and saw Mr. Penny & Mrs. Herring -- At 5:15 I left for Elizabeth, Newark, & Washington, DC, arriving at 10:25 -- called base & spent night there.

Nov 9 - at 6 HMD & I went to Sanford for the game at 7:30
(W.P. lost 33-19) in the best defensive game of the year --
home arrived 12