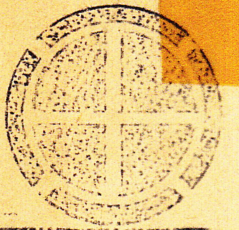




SANTA FE Express



VOL. 2 NO. 10

APRIL 1, 1945

ACROSS THE RAIN:

55th HAMMERS RUHR



THERE WAS NOTHING LIKE THIS IN "MEIN KAMPF"

More than 6500 German civilians were found in the shafts of a coal mine in the Gladbeck suburb of Bentfort captured by 134th Infantrymen in a night attack.

The doughs learned of the mine from a German doctor who mistook them in the dark for Nazi soldiers.

"I could have gone with the Wehrmacht," claimed the doctor when he discovered his mistake. "But I have no love for Hitler and I stayed."

"I don't like to call you a liar, Bud," said German-speaking rifleman Lt. John Tnot, of Booneville, Ind., "But I wouldn't believe you on a stack of bibles."

For five days the civilians had huddled in the mine, stifled by the smell and heat of their own crowded bodies. Just outside the mine entrance were testimonies to the fear that drove them underground - gaping bomb craters 12 feet deep, 20 feet wide, and three-story houses smashed to cellar junkyards.

Lt. Col. George Schneider, of Brooklyn, N. Y., appointed police and returned the people to their homes.

The civilians all asked the same question as they left the mine: "Is the bombing finished?"

The 55th's trans-line push into the Ruhr leaped out of the Ninth Army's Wesel bridgehead 24 hours after D-Day.

As part of Task Force Hiltnerberger, the 14th Inf. moved forward quickly from its crossing sites and drove 2-1/2 miles in 4 hours.

The 2nd and 3rd Bns. met stiff SS and SSV fire, but with support from attached tanks, TDs and artillery, the enemy was driven back. Then TF Hiltnerberger swept into the strategic city of Gladbeck, knifed past it into Duer as the month of March came to a close.

The 137th Inf. smashed across the autobahn super-highway, reaching the outskirts of Bottrop after annihilating the enemy in the battle of the Rheinbahn coal works (see p. 2).

The regiment launched a sharp night attack to overcome severe Nazi resistance along a railroad track and the highway.

Fighting abreast with the 14th and 137th, the 20th also cut the Ruhr Autobahn and cleared the Sterkrade Wald (forest) and the town of Walsumermark of paratroops and Volksturm. The 2nd Bn. was committed first, then was joined by the other battalions to outflank Sterkrade through an industrialized section of buildings and factories described as a "Pittsburgh-like terrain."

Battering enemy roads and strongpoints in built-up areas, division artillery sometimes fired in mortar range of the enemy to give close support to the fast-moving Santa Fe doughs.

SANTA FE EXPRESS

The 35th Infantry Division
Major General Paul W. Baade
- Commanding -
Editors: S/Sgt Ed Stone
Sgt George Curtiss
Artist: 1st Chic Stone

★ ★ ★

VICTORY LINE

The Nazis in the Rhur are trapped like flies by a spider web of communications lines.

From army headquarters to rifle platoons, lines crackle with information that means life for 35th fighting men and death for the enemy.

If we get our signals crossed the Germans may be able to hold on for months longer than seems possible.

For this reason we've got to protect our lines. One way is to leave wires alone unless it's your job to work on them. Another way is for drivers of trucks to watch for wires strung between trees. Sometimes these lines seem to be hanging carelessly, but more often they are lifelines for the Division.

The shortest distance to victory is a straight, unbroken line.

LONG TIME NO SEE

There's one Joe in the WTC who definitely wants to go to the CHI. His name is Joe Chin Yow Kin.

Chin is going on 34, but everyone takes this Div. Forward Echelon officers' messman for a slim lad of 18 or 19.

Chin says he keeps young because "I keep moving all the time."

He wants to go to China as soon as Germany is licked.

He'd like to go as an interpreter and has a good reason for hoping his job would take him to Chungking.

In that city wait his wife Leo Shee and his two sons, George and Albert.

NO JOYRIDE!

AUTOBAHN WAS TOUGH ROAD FOR DOUGHS OF 137th INF.

All around town work between units of the 137th Inf. and supporting organizations out the Autobahn through one blocked road and succeeded in depriving the Nazis of the use of a two mile stretch of this vital highway near the large city of Bottrop, taken by the regiment March 30.

A 7-man patrol reconnoitered the Autobahn, but found huge slabs of concrete blocking the advance. Led by S/Sgt. Jack Gaher, Pittsburg, Pa., 1st Lt. Graner Simpson, Brookville, Pa., Harry Benz, Jamesville, Wis., Felix Lopez, Bronx, N.Y., John Duc, Cleveland, O., John Wiker, Athens, Ill. and Floyd Gary of Saginaw, Mich. squeezed through the debris to the other side. They were not with enemy fire from the front and both flanks and were forced to withdraw.

In the meantime, H and L Co.'s on the right received intense fire from ST guns, mortars and small arms which prevented them from crossing the Autobahn in their sector.

Calling for smoke from artillery and throwing smoke shells from his own mortars, Lt. Col. Albert Butler, Pasadena, Cal., ordered H and L to faint an attack by increasing fire against the Nazis. Then he called the engineers to remove the concrete slabs.



W/S James L. Williams, Albany, N.Y., of the 60th Eng. got his bulldozer up, while 12 I Co. riflemen went thru the debris alone to the other side of the Autobahn to cover removal of the block. Working seven minutes behind a smokescreen and under scattered enemy fire, Williams shoved the slabs away and I Co., followed by G, pushed through with negro gunners of the 284th Tank Bn. moving right along with them.

Fire from three sides met the Yanks as they moved from the Autobahn toward Bottrop, a city with a pre-war population of 87,000. Returning the fire as they moved forward, infantrymen and tanks forced the Nazis to withdraw to the outskirts of the city. The Germans on the flanks were forced to abandon positions along a two mile stretch of the Autobahn.

Pursuing the Nazis through unfamiliar streets, the I Co. men made contact with them at the Rheinladen factory, a series of plants formerly employing 1700 workers in the manufacture of coal products. Here a fire fight again took place, the Yanks moving through the plant and shooting everything that moved. The Germans pulled out after two hours of fighting and the huge works fell into our hands.

By Staff Sgt. David Gordon

"REAR ECHELON" ENGINEERS SEE ACTION ON RHINE

320th FIGHTERS BRUISE PARATROOPS + VOLKSTURM

Headquarters & Service Company men are often referred to as "Rear Echelon Commandos" within the 60th Eng. (C) Bn. But when the crossing of the Rhine was made, Tec 4's Benjamin Juliano and James G. Leisel, Tec 5 Carl O. Madison and Pfc Geo. J. Muller, along with Tec 5 Leo C. Davis, of B Co., manned assault boats.

At 0300 on the morning of the initial crossing, they were behind the dykes on the western bank of the river. They went "over the top" at the signal. Beneath a barrage of artillery which started on the western bank and rolled back into hostile territory load after load of infantry men was hauled across.

When shell fragments took a sizable chunk out of his boat and water seeped in, Muller reassured the doughboys, "he said, 'I've got my fist in the hole.'"

On another trip, Muller hit a submerged rock, and his propeller shaft was broken. With Leisel's help Muller repaired it, working in water up to his shoulders.

Juliano and Madison ran out of gas when they reached the friendly shore after several trips. When they attempted to refill their tank, they discovered that shell fragments had gone through it. Gas was running out faster than they could pour it in. They exchanged motors and continued crossing until all the doughs were on the east bank.

GAPS BRIDGED

Putting more bite into Joes of the 35th, the Dental Laboratory under direction of Capt. Robert Kaplan, Camden, N.J. has completely remade or repaired nearly 300 prosthetic plates for tooth-troubled soldiers.



Spearheading the attack for Lt. Col. Warren T. Hannum's 2nd In. Doughs, Co. G under the command of 1/Lt. William W. Dodge of Terry, Mo. captured the town of Falsamermark in a night assault and next morning cut the Ruhr Autobahn, killing 60 to 70 Nazis.

Most of the opposition came from paratroopers, but there were also some Volksturners. Among the Volksturners captured were six who said they represented their company's anti-tank section.

"What were your weapons?" asked S/Sgt. Martin Selling, an interrogator.

"Rifles," they replied.

But Volksturners can kill too. One of his men was wounded by a German sniper and he himself knocked down by a bullet that tore through his steel helmet.

net, S/Sgt. Samuel Iamacone of Newark, N.J. was in no mood to distinguish between paratroopers, Volksturners and possible civilians who were grouped in some of the houses from which fire was being poured on the advancing doughs.

"When they're fighting side by side we let 'em all have it," Iamacone declared.

Sgt. William Bigham of Peterson, Ala. captured a Nazi officer and led three patrols during the fighting for the Autobahn. "A tough hombre" is what 2/Lt. Edgar Danies of Granite City, Ill. called him.

"There was right smart firing afore we cleared the woods," drizzled Bigham. "I guess they wanted to keep their highway."

HOLD IT!

LENSMEN "SHOOT" AT FRONT

Corporalmen of the 910th Photo detachment went "shooting" with 35th doughs in the Ninth Army's breakthrough out of its Rhine bridgehead.



T/4 Pat Burke, movie lensman from Los Angeles did his shooting in one torn from the third story window of a cement factory with a rifleman at his elbow sniping at Germans on the other side of the railroad tracks.

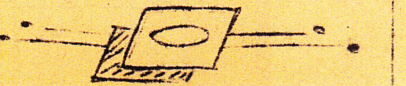
"I caught a tank lumbering up to the railroad embankment and lobbing shells over it on the Jerries," states Burke. "I got a real honey of a house fired by in-

condieries and the Krauts rushing out to be picked off by the GI's around me. Boy, how those babies handle an M-1. I wish I could do as well with my camera."

Lt. John Wardwick of Atlanta, Ga. and T/5 Vernon Edlund of Minneapolis, footed it into Moenighardt through sniper and mortar fire to get their photos.

"From the top of the GI school building, we could see the Jerries running and crumpling in the street where our artillery hit," says Edlund. "We wanted to get close-ups of exploding shells but...some shells exploded too close up. Our best shot was catching the firing of a mortar and explosion of the shell on a house 100 yards away - all on one shot."

...ife. Dan Giffannon



FRONT-LINE ARTILLERY:

105'S MOVE UP FOR ATTACK

In the fast-moving Rhur battle, 105 Howitzers are so close to front lines that crews are using Charge 1 (the lightest charge) for the first time. At Battery C, 216th FA Bn., Charlie's guns were hitting targets only 2500 yards away the other night. A regimental cannon company was further back and mortars were emplaced near Charlie's four guns.

Firing from high ground south of Tonigs-Wardt, the battery poured III and smoke shells into the thick buildings up ahead and slammed roads that fed German supplies and reinforcements. A thick pall of black smoke from a burning oil dump nearby flooded the gun positions. Gun crew chief S/Bgt. Lawrence Gray of Lyons, Kan. said it reminded him of the smoke-covered Rhine crossing.

At the Exec. Post in the bedroom of a farmhouse, acting Battery CO Lt. Allen Dingwall, Detroit, Mich. said that Charlie's 105s could hit Essen, 12,000 yards to the east. Acting Exec. Officer Lt. Jim Healy, who used to live near Belmont Race track in New York, said the 105 was a real thoroughbred. He thought the doughs would like to know that Charlie had fired 40,000 rounds in close support and that they worked hand in glove with the forward observers who called back to them.

Around midnight a call came in from the Exec. Post to number one gun and Cpl. Lewis C. Hobley of Birmingham, Ala. passed the word around that five rounds an hour would be fired until further orders. He laughed and said it was some difference from the three-a-minute rate they fired before the Rhine jump-off.

"Tonight" he explained, "it's just regular III fire. We mix III with smoke shells and keep the Germans guessing when they'll hit and where and what they'll hit." He lined up the sights with the green and red lights on the aiming posts 50 and 100 yards away and Pfc. Hubert Brookshire, Marietta, Ga. loaded a III shell into the gun and checked the elevating mechanism.

"Let her go," Hobley said quietly. Brookshire pulled the lanyard with his left hand and there was a big flash and a loud report. The camouflage net shuddered overhead. Then the unseen target lit up in a quick flash and Scout Cpl. Jim Allgood said no wonder the Nazis really hate those white phosphorous shells.

--S/Bgt. Ed Stone.

CO. A CLAIMS "1ST" IN 110TH MED

Leaving no doubts about which was the first unit of the 110th Medical Bn. to cross the Rhine, Co. A made the crossing 36 hours after the bridgehead was established.

Led by Capt. Stephen D. Peabody of Newburyport, Mass. Co. A was attached to CT Miltenberger.

When it reached the city of Dinslacken, reliable sources told the medics that the only other medical installations in the vicinity were advance loading posts.

In its first few hours of operation across the Rhine, the company evacuated casualties by amphibious ducks to the nearest station in Rheinberg, Germany.

MEET.....
"THE ARM"

"The Face", "The Shape" and "The Body" have a front-line competitor known as "The Arm."

Cello-shaped, 30-year-old S/Bgt. Byron Levite of the Division Photo Interpretation Team acquired the tag by his inspired conducting of the Maastrecht Symphony Orchestra in a recent concert for allied troops and citizens of Maastrecht.

A violin prodigy at the age of six, "The Arm" was born in Kirov, Russia, near the Ural Mountains. Before he was old enough to say "Voyarish" he was playing mazurkas in Moscow. At the age of 10 he gave a concert in Havana for the President of Cuba.

Trading his violin for a baton, Levite later became conductor of the Brooklyn Symphonic Orchestra and earned a score of 16 lines in the 1941 "Who's Who in Music" before entering the army.

Out of condition after a three-year lay off, he was hardly able to shake the hands of admirers who crowded backstage after his performance.

"Oh," he cried, "my aching arm!"

448th LEADS IN
SOFTBALL

In the recent rest period the 448th Medical Bn. softball team won six straight games to take a long lead in the division's pennant race.

Pvt. Tom Koczvara, Youngstown, O. pitched the first two games and held down the opposition to a slim total of hits and runs.

Pfc. Charles L. Davis, Canton, O. pitched the high spot of the series by tossing a no-hit, no-run game against the 35th's Signal sluggers. Twenty-one men came up to bat and went down in order.