



# Albert Dominick

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U.S. Army

Infantry and Engineers

World War II

Niles Public Library Veterans History Project Transcript

15 March 2006 Niles, IL

**Albert A. Dominick**  
**Veterans History Project Interview Transcript**  
**15 March 2006**  
**Interviewer Kate Wolicki**

*This interview is being conducted on March 15th, 2006, in Niles, Illinois, at the public library. My name is Kate Wolicki. I am speaking with Mr. Albert Dominick. Mr. Dominick was born on September 9th, 1918, in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, and now lives in Niles, Illinois. He learned of the Veterans History Project initially through newspapers and spoke to someone in Florida about it. But when he learned the Niles Public Library was doing it, he decided he wanted to share his things with us. He has kindly consented to be interviewed for the Veterans History Project. Here is his story.*

*So, I don't know if you want to start out with how you entered the military or if you wanted to talk about what you think about it?*

**007: ENLISTMENT, 1940**

Well, in these-- in this little brief that I am going to give you, I've written, I was going through Wharton School of Accounting and Finance. And, of course, I lost my job. And I came from a big family. I'm number ten in a family of eleven. And since I had no recourse but to join the Service, I did that. I know my family didn't want me to, but I did. I enlisted at Philadelphia in September. I can't remember the date, but it's in the writing that I'm going to give you.

*It says the 26<sup>th</sup>, 1940.*

Right. Right.

**011: FORT JACKSON, SC: BASIC TRAINING**

And they sent me to Fort Jackson, South Carolina, right outside of Columbia, South Carolina. And, in those days, we lived in tents. They didn't have any barracks in the area, nothing like that. Everything was tents. And I was surprised that in the winter months, we had buckets of water in front of the tents for washing, and shaving, and things like that and, in the winter months, there was ice in the buckets. So, it was colder than I thought.

But, anyway, it was interesting. I went through the regular three months activity and training, you know, firing range and then different battlefield operations, things of that nature, and then I was assigned to the Service company because I had, when I was in high school I felt I may never get a college education, so I took a business course, so I could go to business school. In other words, I could write shorthand, type, and things of that nature. So, anyway, they thought I would be good in a Service company. So I did a lot of typing and learning about ammunition and things of that nature. Well, they gave me a sergeant's, I was only in a month and a half, and I got sergeant's stripes, but

*Wow*

I wouldn't get sergeant's pay because I wasn't in long enough. I had to be in six months for—someone--

**036: A GOOD COMPANY COMMANDER “He sponsored me”**

*There's-- someone is at the door. Hang on.*

We were at, anyway--so, I had to work, you know, before I got my sergeant's pay.

And I had a company commander. His name was—it's in the book, and it's in this story, and I can't think of it. I'm sorry.

*That's okay.*

But, anyway, he was a West Point man, very military, he reminded me of General Patton. He was a very good leader. The men liked him, which you don't find too often in the military. And, anyway, he took me under his charge, through him I really got ahead in the Service. I never expected to, but, anyway, the captain told me to go to First Army Headquarters because of my ability. And I went there and came back. And he asked me if I got the position. I said, no, I didn't. So, he asked me what I told them, and he made a remark that lives with me to this day. And I've done it. He said, “Don't be afraid to tell some lies as long as you can support them with your ability.”

*Mmm Hmm.*

And I never forgot that. And I have done that. Well, anyway--

*Were you concerned when you joined the Service because the war was going on already in Europe, you know, because we weren't in the war, but the war was going on?*

I figured if I got in, I might be able to establish myself fairly well.

*Yeah.*

And I didn't even think of war, even though I knew what was going on in Europe. But, anyway, he became, let's say, he sponsored me a lot. Well, anyway, I came back and began to work again. And we went on maneuvers in the Carolinas, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia. And there's some funny things that I think it's best that you read the stuff that I give you.

*Okay.*

Because we were pulled out of, 1940, we were pulled out of maneuvers. Now, the Japanese people were negotiating with the United States at this time we were pulled out of maneuvers.

And any man who was thirty-five years and older was removed from our unit. And we got the new recruits from New York and New Jersey. Younger--Younger men.

*Were they all-- were all the people in your unit from the Northeast or--*

A mix.

*Yeah.*

There was some from Tennessee, Kentucky, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania.

And one Southerner, I think he was from Kentucky, we would be standing in line to do something, he would fall asleep leaning against a tree. I never saw anything like this in my life! Or some of them would get a shot and they'd faint getting a shot, you know. Some, you know, everybody isn't strong, you know, but, anyway--

**075: CODE WORD "PLUM": ORDERS TO THE PHILIPPINES  
090: PEARL HARBOR'S BEING BOMBED!**

*Or awake enough, I guess.*

Yeah.

We received orders. And it's in the story that I'll give you, and there was a code word, "plum," which we discovered later on was Philippine Islands. Now, I was going to the Philippine Islands before Pearl Harbor.

Now, we crossed the continent in a train, a troop train, went through the Rocky Mountains. We stopped there a while playing with snowballs and things like that. Then we got to the city of San Francisco. There, we started to get ready to go abroad. In other words, we were loading the ship with our equipment, guns, trucks, and whatever we were going to take. And we were going on a Matson liner which was a, had a beautiful American flag on it, and, you know, it wasn't a troop ship. It was a tourist ship.

And, then, December the 7<sup>th</sup>, the troops were already on the ship. And I was told to stay behind and check, make sure that nothing was left behind, that it was clean, things of that nature. So, as we were-- I was checking everything, one of my friends ran up to me. He says, "Al, Pearl Harbor's being bombed!" And I said, "Oh, one of Orson Welles's shows." I remember his show on radio that, you know,

*Yeah, "The War of the Worlds"*

that the Martians were attacking New Jersey and, so, I, you know, I laughed it off. He says, "No, really!" I said, "Okay, I'll come down." And we had a portable radio in another section of the



barracks. So, I went down there, and I could hear the bombs, and everything else, and the announcer saying the United States is under attack by the Japanese Navy.

And then I got word from the ship that we were-- men were coming back to the barracks with just their regular stuff. The ship was going to stay and be painted battleship gray, whatever they did. So, we were there a week. And we boarded the ship and, of course, on the ship were some 37 caliber guns, and fifty machine guns mounted on the decks, and things, of course, like that for our defense. And, of course, I often wonder with 37mm would do – probably couldn't sink anything!

#### **109: TO HAWAII, DECEMBER 1941**

#### **121: TRAVELING TO SCHOFIELD BARRACKS, HORRIBLE DESTRUCTION**

And, so, we set sail. I can't remember the date but, anyway, it was a week, a week and a half, after Pearl Harbor. And we were accompanied by six destroyers. We arrived at the Hawaiian Islands. And we docked in the Honolulu Harbor, Oahu, they had the towers and things like that. All the troops left the ship. I had to stay on to check things that were being sent to other barracks and all, Schofield Barracks, wherever we were going to be put. So, I didn't see anything yet. And it was very tense, because we were there just a few days before Christmas, a week before Christmas, and--

*You must have crossed fairly quickly.*

Oh, yeah. I think it was just about four or five days we crossed.

And, so then, I, after all the loading was done, I got orders to go to Schofield Barracks. And I got there.

We had a jeep so, as we were traveling, we could see there were no homes bombed or any downtown bombings in the Hawaiian Islands in Honolulu. Everything was military. So, as we were approaching Hickham Field and Pearl Harbor, you could see the horrible destruction of the hangers, and the planes, and the ships. We saw the Arizona sunk, and some other ships were laying on their sides. And it was just a horrible experience.

And then we got into Schofield Barracks and, of course, my company wasn't there yet. They were in another area of the island of Oahu. We were on the island of Oahu. That's where Honolulu is. And, so, we hadn't eaten, so we were scrounging around looking to see if there was a kitchen open. We found one, and the cook was there. He was waiting for some people, for some of his unit to come in. And we didn't have anything to eat, so he made us grilled cheese sandwiches on the hot plate of the stove. It was good. And that was our meal. And then, soon, the troops arrived with all their equipment. Honolulu was not lit up after that. It was very dark. The barracks were open, because it was so warm, and there were just screens, so you had to be in total darkness. The lights were not put on in the night at all.

*Wow.*

#### **144: CHRISTMAS AT SCHOFIELD**

And it was near Christmas time, so I thought I'd play a joke on some of my friends in the unit. I found an old, some old stockings back in a junkyard and hung them on the end of their cots, so when they woke up in the morning they saw them. But, anyway, our Christmas dinner consisted of, it looked like spam, and rice.

*It looked like spam!*

And rice, and that's about all, and, of course, bread.

*Oh, very festive.*

Hmm?

*Very festive.*

#### **153: BEDBUGS & BEER**

Yeah. And, of course, the next thing we found out that the barracks were infested with bedbugs!

*Oh.*

What a mess! So, we stripped all the mosquito netting over-- your bunk in the corners of the-- mosquito netting were just infested with bedbugs. So, we got all that stuff, soaked it in gasoline, and everything else. And we, everything, the beds, were all out in the open, and sprayed, and so forth, so that we could have a comfortable sleep. It's a mess how they got. You know, they multiply very rapidly. Very rapidly. Horrible! Well, anyway, that was one incident.

And the other, we didn't hear from anybody for almost three months, and some of the supplies were coming in, food and stuff like that, but one funny incident was happening that I witnessed, and I thought it was pretty clever how these things happened, they were bringing beer and some other stuff, and food, and they were putting it in warehouses that were camouflaged and hidden in the mountains, so some of these drivers would take a case of beer out and hide it. Well, someone who worked in a barracks building or in a shack somewhere saw them putting it there, so they stole it. And, so, the truck driver coming back would never find this beer.

#### **173: COMBAT TRAINING ON OAHU**

But, anyway, we began to do training after that-- what they called it, was really combat training. We would take hikes into the mountains of Hawaii. And the volcanic mixture of that island just tears your shoes to nothing! You're walking in the mountains on narrow trails, and you have to stick to the trails because down below are hundreds of feet of drops, you know. And, often, the clouds would come over and we're walking in clouds because, you know, they're not that high, but, you know, the clouds are low. And we would witness some of that stuff.

*Was it very different? Did you-- you were from Pennsylvania? Was it interesting to be someplace just so--*

Oh, yeah. It was different, totally different. The weather was different. It would rain. You'd walk in the rain. It didn't matter because, in fifteen or twenty minutes, the sun would be out again. It rains that way in Hawaii so, you know, it didn't matter.

And, in those days, of course, the pineapple fields were full of the plants. And you could see how they picked them. Of course, today they're mechanized. And they also raised a lot of sugar cane. And when they harvested that, they would have a track and a small, little engine pulling the cars loaded with the sugar cane to a certain area that they would then deliver to the factory. You know, but they never wasted anything because some of the, even from the pineapple they would make something, rabbit food and things like that. And so while we were there, I visited, you know, the pineapple producing people, pineapple juice and so forth, which was interesting,

### **199: ARMY OBSERVER ON A DESTROYER**

And being-- I would like to volunteer for things, so this, my captain, this captain, my commander, asked if I would go and be an Army observer on a destroyer. And, so, I agreed, and I went to Pearl Harbor and boarded a destroyer that was going out with a lot of recruits that were going for gunnery practice. So we went out, I would say, maybe ten miles out into the ocean and then they would bring a silhouette of a ship in the distance, and the recruits then would be firing the guns and so forth.

*Now, were those Navy recruits that were firing or you're--*

No, no.

*Was there a reason there was*

Navy, I was--

*Right, you were in the Army.*

I was an Army observer.

*Yeah, so you were an Army observer on a boat.*

Yeah. On a military boat. It was a good experience. But, I'll tell you, I don't think I could be a good sailor. As soon as I went downstairs to eat, uh-uh, no! My stomach said no! So, I came back up, and I talked to the captain. I told him my problem. I said, "I can't sleep downstairs." He said, "Well, you could sleep on deck. They have a little room. It's like a repair shop." He said, "You could stay in there." And I did. And, so, the sailors would bring me the coffee and the sandwiches I ate at one time, and bring me to eat-- but it was interesting to see the Navy recruits maneuver and practice.

*So what was your, as an Army observer, what was your role? Did you have to report about them?*

Oh, yeah. I told the captain who sent me out there about it, and so forth. They just, I imagine the Navy wanted some observers so they could see, you know, how they maneuver because, you know, we maneuver on the ground. Well, they maneuver in the sea, too. So, it was a good experience for me.

### **231: HITCHED A RIDE ON A BOMBER**

But while I was there, we did some other things, too. We hitched a ride on a bomber out of Hickham Field. They were going on just a dry run, and I sat in the bubble in the front where just you're like suspended in space.

*Ooh.*

You know, the gunner--

*Yeah.*

The front gunner had a bubble in front, and there was a bubble in back, so my other friend, one of the other ones and I, selected a front one. It was really weird, because you are like suspended in space! And then we, that was one experience we had that was over with.

### **240: "The Army Steals."**

But we-- then we moved from the Schofield Barracks to the National Guard section of the Hawaiian Islands. And it was in a little mountain area. The mountains looked very funny. We called it-- we nicknamed it. It looked like a pregnant woman. And, so, while we were there, these friends that I had from-- my companions, my soldier companions, were from New York, New Jersey, and some of them were butchers, some of them were from the dead end kid areas. You know, it was a mixture. And they were pretty clever kids. So what they did, they went to the-- they found where the supply depot was that supplies you with ammunition, and food, and so forth. Because we were a Service company, so we had to supply the food, and clothing, and all, to the other members of our regiment. So, they stole a portable shack, and we had-- they stole it.

*For what?*

The army steals. I stole, we stole a lot. Anyway, they stole the shack, and they put it up in the mountains, and we had our own club there. And you've heard about M\*A\*S\*H, well, this was very similar to M\*A\*S\*H. And, of course, the Italian guys, they would know the meat cuts and so forth. And one of them could make spaghetti, so we would have good spaghetti dinners and things like that. And they would get the beer and the GI cans, you know, the cans-- the GI cans were filled with beer. And we just sunned ourselves when we were not working. And we enjoyed ourselves. And then we would--

*So sort of a supper club resort hut then?*

Hmm?

*Sort of a supper club kind of resort?*

### **270: HONOLULU ENTERTAINMENT, BARRACKS ENTERTAINMENT!**

Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. And, of course, then, motorcycles came in for us. And we were-- everybody was trying to ride a motorcycle. That was the first time I rode a motorcycle, but I didn't stay on long! You have to be-- you have to balance it very well. I wasn't a very good balancer. But we would often go to Honolulu. The Moana Hotel, is it, where they broadcast "The Banyan Tree Court"? The banyan tree is the kind of tree that will release from its branches to root itself. So we were in that court and heard some good music that they were broadcasting to the United States.

We went to a lot of Honolulu hula-hula dances, but the first affair that we had, about three months after we were there, they told us there was going to be a big party, a big show in the triangle in Schofield Barracks. So we came from our area, in the mountainous area from where we were at, into the Schofield Barracks. And it was pretty crowded. And it turned out to be these women were all strippers! And you should see the shouting, and hooting, and hollering with these young, you know, with the soldiers.

*Uh huh.*

And I don't know where or who developed this show, because there was never another one like that! In other words, it wasn't a U.S. canteen show. I don't know, yeah, they were stripping, and the guys were hooting, and hollering, and yelling. You know, well, it was a good release too for the guys but-- and it was very funny.

But we would go-- the Navy took over the Royal Hawaiian Hotel, and we went there a lot when we went to the city to Honolulu, because they had refreshments there, and things of that nature.

### **300: PILOT TRAINING TEST, JUNIOR WARRANT OFFICER**

And when I was in the Hawaiian Islands, I took a pilot training test, and some of my other friends did, to be pilots. They would ship us to the United States when, you know, if we passed and if they recommended us. So, I did that. And while there I took a test for a junior warrant officer. It's a mental test, and then you appeared before twelve military men for an oral review. Well, Janasek and Kirby were regular Army. Well, so was I, but I was twenty-two, and Janasek must have been forty, and Kirby must have been about thirty-five. Well, what happened, Janasek and Kirby became junior warrant officers, and I didn't pass.

*So what does a junior warrant officer do?*

It's strictly technical, strictly technical. Well, I didn't pass it. I went before the board of these what, eight, twelve, officers. And, of course, I'm twenty-two and, you know, I was regular Army, too, but I was young, so I didn't pass. Well, Janasek didn't realize he was overage. So, he was called before the commanding officer in our company, and he was told that they were going to have to take it from him. And he was an old-timer, and he said he wasn't going to tolerate any young guy telling him what to do. Well, Janasek was of a Slavic race. Well, so am I, so I understood his Slavic language when he was teed off, and cussing, and everything. Anyway, he said he wouldn't tolerate it. Well, Captain Adams was this gentleman that I was talking about, well, Captain Adams called me to his office and he asked me if I would like to be a warrant officer. And I said, "Why," I said, "I don't think I could pass." I said, "The mental stuff wasn't anything." But I said, you know, "I'm before this board of officers, and I'm twenty-two years old." So, Captain Adams said, "Let me worry about the politics. Do you want to be a warrant officer?" And I said, "Yes." The next day I was discharged as a staff officer, staff sergeant, and reenlisted as a junior warrant officer.

*What did Janasek think about that, yeah?*

So, politics works in the Army, too.

*Yeah.*

Yeah, and that's how I became a junior warrant officer. He was a major, Major Adams, then. He was a brilliant man. He became a general later on during the war.

### **347: THE SOUTH PACIFIC**

And, so, we got orders that we were now going to be-- we were called what they called a bastard outfit. We were a 34<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment with no affiliation to a division or anything. They just pulled us out of the regiment to go to the Philippine Islands. Well, we never got to the Philippine Islands. So what they said that we would now join the 24<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, and we were heading for the South Pacific. So, they had a troopship. It had a lot of military on, plus baggage, whatever it was, guns and trucks, and everything else. And the Service company was put on a liberty ship. The Kaiser people built them.

*Yeah.*

They're very flimsy. They bounce all over the sea, things like that.

*Must have been great for you!*

Hmm?

*Must have been great for you!*

Oh, yeah, got seasick again.

Anyway, so, the Service company was put on this liberty ship. I don't know the name of it. And, of course, as we crossed the Equator, they had these initiations into the Neptune of the Deep or whatever they call it. The sailors, not the Service--the military-- the Army. And we experienced that. That was a lot of fun. But I'll tell you, three days after we were out, I got so sick. And, you know, we were on a Navy ship. They had beans for breakfast. I'd never had beans for breakfast! And, so, well, we had to eat, so we ate the beans.

And we got to within the coral reef. By the way, we stopped at, I think they pronounce it Pongo-Pongo. And we stopped there, because we had a Philippine freighter with us that could not travel far and had to refuel. So, while they were refueling the Philippine freighter, the natives came in canoes and were passing up fruit. And we were dropping money for them and things of that nature. But we couldn't land. They wore the nice, bright, you know, whatever they call them?

*Like a loincloth?*

Yeah, yeah. And, after the Philippine freighter was refueled, then we continued our journey. And our ship, I can't remember the name of the ship, our ship left the, what do you call them, our ship left the convoy. And we landed at Gladstone, British Columbia, no, not British Columbia. Victoria, is it right beyond the coral reef? We were scraping bottom, you know, it was--

*Wow.*

The liberty ship was low and, of course, the harbor wasn't deep, so the big military ships couldn't land there. They went to Brisbane, Australia, so, while we were up at Gladstone, they put us into a, oh, a-- big area, palm trees, all kinds of trees, and kangaroos running around, and all the strange animals. And we had to establish a camp, so we were building the tents, and structures, and things like that. And while we were there, something funny happened. One of the gentlemen had to go to the john and, you know, they use a lot of creosote there. It smelled, and things like that. And he went into the john. He came out fast. He was smoking a cigarette and dropped it. And he almost burned his butt. And, so, I guess he'll never smoke in a creosote

*No*

toilet. But some of things like--, anyway, pretty soon, the troops came. And then we began to get ourselves ready for moving out to the, you know, New Guineas. We didn't know where we were going.

In the meantime, I was able to contact the Red Cross, because I heard one of my first cousins was nearby. So, I went to visit him. He's deceased now, Frank Mudla. And, so, I had a nice visit with him. And then I came back. I got orders to return to the States for pilot training.

*Wow.*

**428: A B-24 TO SANTA ANA AIR BASE**

So, that was another adventure. I had to go to Brisbane, and they took me to Brisbane, and I boarded a, what was similar to the 747 today, except it had the gasoline powered engines, a B-24. It was converted to carrying mail and things like that. So, our first stop was at the Fiji Islands. And there we got some more people boarding, and our next stop was Christmas Island. I don't know how these navigators could find a piece of sandbar in the middle of the Pacific. But we were told to keep quiet, because "Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt just arrived and she's gone to bed."

*Wow.*

So we said, okay, you know, so we had our coffee. And our plane took off again for another seven hour flight. We landed at Honolulu. Then I boarded another flight, and I landed at San Francisco. And I decided, we decided, there was three of us going for pilot training, and I decided I'd like to visit San Francisco. So, I had some dental problems. I went to the dentist there and met some nice people. And they showed me around San Francisco. And it was wonderful. You know, dinner and things like that. And then I had to take another flight to Santa Ana Air Base in the lower part of San Francisco, the lower part of California, just south of Los Angeles. And, after about three months, I washed out. I can't remember why. It's been so long.

#### **460: 304<sup>TH</sup> COMBAT ENGINEERS TO EUROPE**

So I wanted to go back to the Pacific. And they said, no, you can't. So, I joined the 304th combat engineer unit in Salina, Kansas. And I thought Chicago was the windy city, but Kansas was just as bad! It was blowing all the time. And those barracks were not built --you could hear the wind whistling through them and everything else! And, so, I stayed there a month or so. This was in 19, what, 1940...I can't remember. There's more.

*43, maybe.*

Anyway, I joined the combat engineers. We went to maneuver into deserts in Arizona and California. And they said we were going to go overseas, but we didn't know where. And I figured, well, if we were doing desert, we might go into the African desert.

But it turned out, no, they, after the maneuvers, we were sent to Fort Dix. And at Fort Dix, then we got ourselves ready for Europe. After that, we sailed on a British troopship. And they, for breakfast, have herring or something else. Fish, I don't eat fish in the morning! Anyway, I didn't get seasick on this ship because it was big. Okay, it didn't rock and roll like the other. So, we got to our base in England. It was near Edinburgh somewhere. And we stayed there until August sometime. And, in August, we were sent down to Southampton and from there we sailed to Yomaha Beachead, I think, and that was a month and a half after the troops landed. And when we arrived there, we were told to stay within, they had white-- white tape put in certain areas, so you wouldn't go over in that area, because there were still landmines that they would clear. And it was kind of cold. And we stayed in this bivouac area waiting for, you know, special orders.

So, we were assigned to General Bradley's First Army for a while and

#### **515: SENIOR WARRANT OFFICER: RESPONSIBILITIES & STORIES**



*So, what was your job?*

Hmm?

*What was your responsibility?*

Now, I was a senior warrant officer.

*Yeah, so what did you have to do?*

It was still technical. I had to order all the demolitions, the bridges that they built, and the boats, and things like that, and supplied the entire division with engineering equipment. And it was still supply, but I became the chief warrant officer.

But that reminds me of a story. I'll go back. While we were getting ready in the States to ship out, my captain had to go ahead to England to get our place ready. And I had to take care of all the logistics for the entire division for engineering stuff. While I was alone, I asked for help, and they would send me first or second lieutenants that would just put their feet on the desk. And I didn't care for that, and I told them off. And, so, I called the colonel. I said, "If you don't give me a person, I can't do my job." And, so, he sent me a wonderful lieutenant that helped me a lot. But while there, I sent all my clothes to the dry-cleaners, so I'd have clean clothes to ship when I go overseas. The colonel sent a man to tell me that I have to take pictures. I'm a staff officer, so I have to take pictures with the staff. And I called the colonel back, and I said, "I'm sorry. I can't, because I have no clothes. I sent all my material away." He said, "Oh," he said, "I'll send someone over." So, another gentleman was built like I am. He was first lieutenant. He gave me his outfit to put on to take the pictures. And, so, I did pose for the pictures. I don't know where they're at now, because I never saw them.

### **557: BARTER, STEAL, "GIVE GERMAN STUFF": SUPPLYING OUR GUYS**

But, anyway, I wasn't afraid of telling anybody off. And, for example, during the war in Europe, this aide was a Third Army officer. He was a lieutenant colonel. He asked for some material, and I gave him that, and I would always give German stuff because German equipment we could use, you know, some way or other. So one day, he calls me. He said he didn't want any German stuff anymore. And I got a little teed off. Of course, I always addressed him, Sir. And, so, I said, "Sir," I said, "When I become Jesus Christ, I'll create American stuff. I can't do it now!" And the next day, he asked me for something special. I said, "Okay, I'll get it for you." I contacted the signal corps officer, because he wanted a phone. And he had plenty of phones, so I asked this buddy if we could barter something. And he said, "Yeah, I'll give you this, if you give me that." So, he gave me the phone. And I gave him some engineering equipment.

But we stole a lot. I stole a lot from the supply depots, and I never got caught. But the guy that controlled the supply depots saw me. He said, "One day, I'm going to catch you." I says, "You got to run faster than that!" And we would go through the backwoods and we would, our guys, would take what wire we needed and all that stuff. We stole a lot from our own people.

### **597: "I HEARD THAT DOMINICK IS PRETTY TOUGH"**

*Did you feel really responsible for the people you were supplying? Did you feel--*

Yes. Yeah. Yeah. In the Battle of the Bulge, a young soldier came down. Of course, I never wore my insignias. They didn't know who I was. In other words, I looked like a private. I never wore anything. Nothing.

*On purpose?*

Yeah, I didn't want to get shot. Anyway, this young sergeant came down. He said, you know, he said, "My captain needs this ammunition. And some of these engineering things, and we do have sufficient, but we'd like extra because of the Battle of the Bulge. We might need it." And he said, "I heard that Dominick is pretty tough." And, so--

*So, what did you say?*

I didn't say anything. I said, "So, let me see what you need." And I had plenty of supplies, so I gave him what he needed. And, of course, I had-- we had to sign everything, because you still had to sign for things. And, so, he signed it. And then I signed it, and I said, "I'm Dominick." And he just looked at me. His face dropped. But, anyway, that's some of the stuff.

### **628: SIDE CHANGE**

#### **628: AMERICAN INGENUITY**

And, of course, we did some things that military would do any place. The American has an ingenuity to do things and make things that surprises you. Like these, if we were able to get a different kind of food, we would-- like they would shoot the deer, and we would have venison, and we came across a trout fishery in Austria, and we bartered for some fish, and we had trout dinners, and things of that nature. And another thing, we had some good men that were good mechanics, and we ran across a huge German diesel generator. It was on a big bed truck. And they checked it and they found out it could function. So, we carried that big diesel power-- I called it a powerhouse-- with us. And we plugged it in, and we had lights in every house we went.

#### **639: MEETING POLISH PEOPLE, BARTERING**

*Did you find the people-- did you see regular people when you were in Europe, because you really went through a lot of Europe?*

Oh, yeah, we saw like-- we got acquainted with some Polish people that were slave laborers. In other words, they worked the farms, and they only got room and board. They didn't get any money. And the young lad, he must have been about twelve or thirteen, he said his mother would wash our clothes, you know, and our payment would be food. So that's what he did. He would take our clothes, and his mother, or his sisters, or whoever would do it, washed them, and dried them, and brought them back nice, clean. And we would then give them some GI food, whatever

we had. So, we bartered all the time. We didn't give them money. Their money was no good. In fact, the money that we used was money that the government issued. It didn't even look like our dollar bill. And I don't know, I have some samples of that, but I don't know what I did with them.

But, anyway, when the war was near its end, we were near Lintz, Austria, a beautiful place, gorgeous lakes surrounded by the Alps, the Austrian Alps. But that water was ice cold! Very cold, couldn't stay in there too long. And we played ball, and went into the mountains, and saw that-- The war was over then with Germany at that time. There's more, but I think if I give you this thirty or forty pages, you could look at it. It would tell you a little bit more.

### **658: PHOTOS IN A WATERPROOF CONTAINER**

*How did you keep in touch with your family, or did you keep in touch with your family?*

I wrote. I wrote a lot of V-mail letters. They went the fastest. And the pictures that I gave you, we were authorized, the photographer, the Engineer Corps, and any time he had extra copies, he would give me them. And I didn't send them home, because I knew they would be confiscated, so I wrapped them in a waterproof container. And I carried them. And hoping I would get home, and eventually I did, and that's when I put them in the book.

*They're amazing, your pictures.*

Yeah.

*You also-- do you have pictures that you took, or pictures that friends took as well, or are those all?*

No, I didn't keep—there's very few of those. The few that are in the book, that's about what I got. Some of them, some of them, picked up cameras. You know, in the war, you pick up something that if it could-- if it works, you use it. But I didn't have my own personal one, no. Everybody else carried something. It was an interesting experience.

*You also have some photos that --did you have some photos you picked up, did you say, from a German soldier's--?*

Oh, yeah, I saw it was like a knapsack or something like that. And it was laying during one of the battles, and I picked it up, and looked at it, and it was some photographs. I don't know who the soldier was. He was a German soldier. So, I picked up the photographs, because they were photographs of the, apparently Russian, when Russia was being invaded by Germany. So, they were more of the Carpathian Mountains, and the Black Sea, and that area. So, I took them just for memory.

*It's very interesting.*

Yeah.

*It's very interesting to know.*

#### **680: INVESTIGATING FALAISE GAP**

Well, I tell you, I only experienced-- I experienced a lot of stuff. But when the Battle of the Falaise Gap happened in France and we went to investigate and some of -- Americans are no different than anybody else. They'll, when they see a ring on a dead man's finger, they will cut it off, or take it. But I'm not that kind of person. And, oh, you could see the dead horses and the dead people laying there. You could-- the smell of death is the worst thing. When you get it on your car, it lasts for weeks until it dissipates in the air.

#### **689: LOST IN NEW ZEALAND, A GERMAN HOSPITAL**

And so when we got to New Zealand, I became lost with some of the other men. And we figured we should go in this direction, so we were going, and we came across a German installation for, because it had a red cross on it, for, you know, a hospital. And the building was stacked with dead German soldiers, so we knew that wasn't a place for us. So, we finally spotted the jeep that was waiting for us in a distance. And we yelled and all. It was already starting to get dark. And they heard us, and they turned around, and they came back. Otherwise, we'd have to walk a few miles to camp because, you know, you're not in a tent anymore. You're just in the truck. You're sleeping any which way you can.

#### **697: TO THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE, FAST**

I remember when we were down in mostly the Southern part of France, and we heard about the Battle of the Bulge. Our unit had to move fast. See, I'm skipping a lot. I hope it doesn't make--

*We don't care.*

We had to get to the Battle of the Bulge area fast. So, we must have rode about twelve hours. And we stopped in the day, one day, just to make ourselves some warm coffee. And a chaplain stopped by to ask us how we were doing. And we said we were okay. We were warming some coffee to keep warm. So, he offered us some altar wine. We had some altar wine with our coffee. He was a nice chaplain.

*Yeah.*

And we thanked him for it. So things like that happened.

But it was very funny. I never saw a USO show in all my Army days.

*Wow.*

#### **709: ON DUTY, MISSING MARLENE DIETRICH**

Except for the strippers, and they weren't USO. I don't know who they were. But, no, I never saw one. The only one that I heard, Marlene Dietrich appeared with a woman that played the accordion. And I had duty that night so I could hear the music and all in, they were-- our unit was in a factory, so they were in a factory. And they heard the performance. Marlene Dietrich, and she had a woman with her that played an accordion.

*So what did you have to do? Were you that night--*

I had duty that night so, you know, I would have to-- in case something happened, I would have to order everyone.

*So what did you-- were you sitting somewhere, were you--*

Yeah. I was in the factory office. I couldn't see them, but I could hear everything.

*So, just—*

**720: "Sometimes, your own men could be dangerous to you."**

And, you know, sometimes, your own men could be dangerous to you. Like this one Southern lad, he had to go for some supplies. And he came to the factory. This was the same factory that I was telling you about. And he must have got, must have bought some booze, and some of the booze that they pick up could be very powerful. So, this one Southern soldier, he drank it. And then he had his gun. He was going to shoot somebody. And, so, I was trying to talk to him while my sergeant was getting, you know, while I was talking to him, distracting him, my master sergeant was getting around the back of him to disarm him. So, we got him disarmed. But we didn't press charges against him. We decided he just was drunk. So, the guys put him to bed. Things like that happened, you know. You never know. Your own men could shoot you if they didn't like you. Never know, you never know.

*So, did you think people liked you?*

**733: ONE CHRISTMAS EVE, IN GERMANY**

Well, I wasn't an officer, and I wasn't an enlisted man. So, for example, I'll show you. I, even when I worked with people, when I worked with the airlines, I wasn't a company man. I was more the people. Well, anyway, for example, one Christmas Eve, we were in Germany somewhere and this captain called me because I had a lot of booze with me. When my captain was killed, he had a lot of old weapons and booze. So, after Captain, after Captain was killed, I took the booze and let anybody who wanted the guns take the guns. So, I had the booze during the war. And here was a cold Christmas Eve night, so the officer called me and he says, he said, "I know you have a lot of booze. Could we have some?" He said, "We're going to have a party." And I said, oh, because there were some American girls, what do they call them? They weren't WACS. They were part of the Red Cross, I think. Anyway, they had invited the girls to a party. And I said, "Well, am I invited?" They said, "No." I said, "No booze." So, I gave the booze-- I

gave so much bottles, every four guys, so they could have a good Christmas evening. So that's the kind of guy I am.

But where I worked, oh, this should be on-- when I worked for the United Airlines, they called me Uncle Al, and the bosses didn't like it.

*Why would they care?*

Well, they—see, I could never go manager, because I was more of a people person. I wasn't a company person. I was a people person for the company, but—

**759: “You learn lessons about life from everybody you meet.”**

*So, in the Army, did you meet a lot of people? I'm always curious, you know, being from Chicago. I'm always curious whether you meet a lot of people of different ethnicities or from different parts of the country and whether that's different from when you were at home?*

Well, no, well, I'll tell you, when I was young, I suppose mostly influenced by my mother, because my mother used to bake twenty-four loaves a week of bread, and I know when she baked them, and I was playing with the kids, she'd call them all in and give them a slice a bread with a lot of butter on it. And I think from that, I learned to, well, let's say, people, you know, I made friends easily. And I liked to do things for people. And maybe that's where it comes from. See, when I worked, we worked as a team. And my group, when we had a problem, we sat together and tried to resolve it. And whoever had the best solution, we would accept and try it. If it didn't work, see, because I was in computers with United Airlines, and I designed a lot of their accounting software package, so that's the way we would do it. I didn't say mine was a better idea than yours. I didn't do it that way so-- and then I was honest with them, things of that nature, never backstabbing, things like that.

*Do you think that you learned some of your people skills in the Army in working with people like that?*

Oh, yeah. I think I did. I think you learn lessons about life from everybody you meet. And I'm a person that likes to help people. See, right now, I visit a man a year older than I am who is losing his eyesight and, so, I can only converse with him. And he tells me all about the old stuff. He can't tell you much about new stuff. And he has a problem. He has no friends. He is the type of person that, “Well, if they don't call me, I'm not going to call them.” And I told him, I said, “Jerry, you shouldn't be that way.” I said, “There's an old saying that no man is an island. I can't remember who made it, the quotation.”

*John Donne.*

Hmm?

*John Donne.*

Yeah. I said, "No man is an island." I says, "You're not a-- you don't want to talk to your relatives, because they don't talk to you. You have to initiate something. You can't be a lonesome guy." And he has-- he has no friends. I have a lot of friends.

*Well, he has you.*

Hmm?

*He has you.*

Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Yes.

**795: BACK HOME WHEN THE WAR ENDED: "I was just baggage going."  
815: IN AN AUSTRIAN APARTMENT WITH GERMANS AND POLES**

*So when the war ended, you were in Austria, did you say?*

Yeah, then I was in Austria.

*So how did you get back home, or when did you get back home?*

Well, I got home when the war ended. There was a general order sent that anybody, any soldier, who had so many months or years overseas had to be sent home first.

So, I had-- I had a year and a half in the Pacific, and I had a year and a half in Europe, so I had three years of service. And because I, for service, you got a yellow stripe to put on the sleeve of your coat. So, I had six of them. And, anyway, so then they shipped me to a place in Germany. Now, I was no longer with the unit. I was just baggage going.

And, anyway, we got to this place near where Hitler was born. I can't remember the town. And I, they told me I could, there's a home that I could sleep and get room in. I didn't sign the papers yet. So, I went up there, and the only room, the only place, that was available was the porch. Well, two lieutenants came by and they said, "You can't stay here." I said, "Why not? No one's using this, the porch or the bed." They said, "You can't stay here." I said, "Okay. I won't stay here."

So, I was in the lineup for food, you know, canteen cup and all that, for coffee and food. And I was talking to some of the guys. And an Austrian was standing near us. And he said, "I could get you a place to sleep in." And I said, "Okay." I said, "Let me, could you, I'll have to get the papers for you." So, I got the papers and signed it. There's big apartment houses, so there was a lot of families living there. Very few men, because most of them had gone to war. There were Germans and other nationalities. So, I found there was a two bedroom apartment that they gave me. And a German woman whose husband was missing she, you know, she didn't know where he was, and couldn't speak too much, you know, to me, very little, but she was a wonderful woman. I don't know why she did this, but when I came back in the evening to go to bed, she had my shoes polished, my suits pressed, and everything else. And I would bring her food. I

would bring her food what I didn't eat, of course. [After] I ate, I threw [that] away. And then I would get a second helping, and I would bring it. And then she said there were Polish people living upstairs, so I met the Polish people. And I could talk a little bit Polish and I could make them understand. So we had a nice—now, I don't know what the other people thought about it. I was in a building with all women, and I didn't give a hoot. You don't know how these people talk. They talk. Anyways, that was—and, so, then, from there, they shipped me to Lahar, France.

And I boarded a ship that sailed and landed in New York. And then they shipped me by rail to Indiantown Gap in Pennsylvania. And I was discharged there. They wanted to know if I wanted to join the Reserve or anything. And I says, "No." I said, "I had enough of the Army." I said, "I believe in life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and the Army doesn't give that to me." So, I didn't join the Reserve.

#### **847: COLLEGE, GETTING A JOB AFTER THE WAR**

But when I got home, I told my folks I was going to go to college. I'd send money home. My mother would buy things for herself, you know, and family. And she would put the others in a savings account for me. So, I had enough at least to cover a couple years of college. And, so, I couldn't get back to the University of Pennsylvania. It required a language, and I didn't have a language. So, I contacted Rider College at that time. They're now Rider University. And they were in Trenton, New Jersey, at that time I entered their institution. But now, they have a big campus at Lawrenceville, New Jersey, outside of Trenton. Huge. It's a beautiful place. And now they're a university. And, so, I took accounting courses there, and Spanish. I was hoping to go to South America, but never got there. And, anyway, I-- it was difficult getting a job after the war.

*How come?*

Well, my age, I was now twenty-five, and I was told in New York City, could I take orders from an eighteen-year-old boss? Oh, yeah! And, so, I did. I worked out of New York City for Haskins & Sells. I was sent to Syracuse as an auditor. I did auditing for them, but that only lasted for, what, three or four months, because of, you know, income taxes.

#### **868: CROSS COUNTRY WITH ARMY FRIENDS**

Then I took a bus across country, and I visited some of my Army friends and got to, where did I wind up? I wound up with an aunt and uncle of an old Army buddy in, what, San, right near Claremont, California. They were wonderful to me.

So, their nephew had married. And he was living in Laguna, in Laguna, and, so, I went to visit him. His wife came. And when I met her during the war, she was on the plump side. And she was in real estate. She must have made a lot of money. Now, when I saw her, she trimmed down very well, had red hair. She had black hair when I met her. She had a Packard. It was an expensive car with the kind, where you put the-- what do they call them?

*Like a convertible?*



A convertible. She had a convertible. It was a chocolate-colored car. I can't remember the name of the car. And she took me down to meet Gar English, that was the buddy I had in overseas Pacific. And I looked around, and there was a job in one of the yachting clubs. But I found out that, after Friday, they're all partying and drinking. And that wasn't my kind of lifestyle.

So, I went to see another buddy in Claremont, California. And he-- they didn't have any openings. He worked for a bank, I think. It was Wells Fargo, one of those. So, I decided I better come home and do something about it. I did come to Pennsylvania, worked a little bit. It wasn't-- I couldn't support a family like that if I ever got married. And I was approaching my thirties. And, so, I asked one of my brothers if I could get on the boats. And he said, "Sure." So, I went to Philadelphia, got my seaman's papers and passport, and I worked on the Great Lakes for four or five months as an able bodied seaman. Then I landed in Milwaukee, called my cousins in Chicago, told them my problem. They said, "Come on and see what you could do here," so I came to Chicago. I found a job with United Airlines and stayed here.

*So that's how you ended up in Niles, huh?*

Mmm hmm.

*Did you join any veterans' organizations ever?*

Yeah. I'm a member of the Park Ridge VFW. I've been there-- I haven't been there too long. I'm not a drinker, so I don't—I'm not a bar-- I do not like to sit at a bar alone, period. You know, I wasn't brought up that way. Oh, yeah, I'd had—I'd been in saloons and things like that, but never, I never went to sit in a bar alone and just drink.

## **919: MARRIAGE**

*Yeah. So-- did you, did-- you said you were looking for a job, so you could support a family? Did you get married? Did you--*

Oh, yeah. I met my wife, Edith, working with United Airlines. She worked in another department, and I met her at a picnic. She was a good dancer. I'm a fair dancer. And I enjoyed her company. And I'll tell you one thing she would always bring up to me. On our first date, I had cousins that raised schnauzers at that time, not the miniature, but the next size. And her husband was a fireman. He's retired now. And she called me one day, and she said, "Al, I need some help. Mike has duty, and the puppies need some attention." I says, "Okay." Now, I, so, I called my wife to be, and I said, "Edith," I said, "Could I cancel this date, and we'll have one next week?" And I told her why. I said, "I have to help my cousins give the little puppies suppositories." And I did. And she used to bring that up to me. She says-- Really, that's what I did!

*I would bring that up! That's pretty funny.*

That's what I did. And, so, we had dates, and, after that, and, I think it was within a year, I asked her to marry me, and told her father and mother. And she was good-- a wonderful woman. She

was very athletic, more athletic than I am, because she would-- I'm left-handed, so I can't use my-- I couldn't teach my son-- but she used to play ball during the war. She was in the women's baseball team.

*Really?*

Oh, yeah. And she could whistle. I couldn't whistle like that.

*She must have had some interesting stories as well.*

Very small woman, about five, six, nice dresser, very outgoing. She had girlfriends that formed a club when they were in high school. And they got together, stayed together. They got married and, finally, when I married her, then they started having the husbands come to the meetings. So, we would meet once a month, go out to dinner and things like that, and we still do. There's, what, one, two, two widows, one is in a nursing home now, a third one, she's got Alzheimer's, and there's a couple still together, and then Tony and I are widowers. We still go out. We're supposed to meet before I go to Connecticut.

*That's nice.*

You know, a theatre and dinner type of thing.

#### **967: TELLING STORIES OF THE WAR, OF LIFE**

*So, did you talk about the war? Did you talk about your experiences when you came home?*

Not too much. I put the pictures together. I showed that a lot. I didn't write anything or tell too much. I told some funny things that happened, and some bad things that happened, but not too much.

*So when did you--*

It didn't bother me really.

*When did you write down your--*

Well, my son, a couple years ago, "Dad," he said, "I don't know anything about my relatives. Could you tell me something about them?" I said, "Okay." So, I wrote, and this is part of it, what I'm going to give you is part of it.

And I told him about being the tenth child. And my father named me Andrew. And my mother didn't like Andrew, because it was her brother's name, and she didn't like her brother, so when I was baptized, I became Albert.

*Wow.*

And, so, then, when I was getting confirmed, my mother said, "You'd better take Andrew." I said, "Mom, I'm Andrew Albert Andrew. Makes a big--"

Well, the same with my wife. She was Margaret. Her mother was Margaret. So, her middle name was Edith. So, she was Edith, because, you know, bank accounts and all.

*Mmm hmm.*

Because her brother who was still living, now, he's Bill Cannon, Bill Cannon, Jr. His father was Bill Cannon, Sr. Well, some of Bill Cannon's checks would go to his father's account.

*Oh, no.*

Yeah, because, you know, so my wife was the same way. She'd had to be sure she used Edith, her middle name instead of, and I was Albert all the way through the war and all.

Like that-- just to show you how you could cheat. Remember how I told you Major Adams said you could tell a little lie as long as you could balance it up. Because I was disappointed everywhere I went, like I said, I was twenty-six, going on twenty-seven. And I'm not kidding you, they said I was too old. I had an education, but could I take orders from someone twenty-five? I told the guy in New York when he told me that, just forget I was in the war. I'm twenty.

#### **1005-022: SOLVING THE DIFFICULTY IN FINDING A JOB**

This section not transcribed.

#### **1023: AT UNITED: "Life is a challenge."**

**"If you're a good worker, and you have a lot of knowledge, you have power."**

When I got there [at United], I was a good worker. I was a good worker, and I produced, and I progressed. To tell you, you know, I wrote a little bit about life, and I called it "Life is a challenge." And it doesn't work for everybody. What I'm about to relate is something that happened. That's why I wanted to show you that it's a challenge, and you have to face it, and just, like, pack in anyway you can.

I was with United for some years, and any time new equipment came in, I was always left with old equipment to work. And I'd go to IBM School and things like that. And, one day, ratings were given. See, I used to, this was before I got married, I used to play poker and all that out with the gang. After I got married, I stayed away, because of the children and all of that stuff. Well, all of the men who played poker got the raise and the new rank. I didn't. So, I bumped into a director of the computer division. I was down in the computer division. And I told him I was going to leave the computer division. And he said, "Why?" And I told him. I said, "If you think," I said, "I have more knowledge than half of these people there, and if you think I'm going to take this kind of crap, you've got another guess coming." He said, "Don't do anything." The next day I got everything they did.

And my immediate superior hated me. He gave me the worst review I got in a lifetime. And they could hear me. We're in a glassed-in office, and everybody heard me in that office. I told him what I thought of him and everything else. And I said, "If you think I'm going to just accept this, you're mistaken." I wrote a twelve page letter of what I knew, and my knowledge, and what my knowledge is doing for the company. And I said, because he didn't like what I pulled, he's persecuting me, and I sent that to the highest officer. I'm not afraid.

No.

If you're a good worker, and you have a lot of knowledge, you have power. Here's an incident that happened when I got, after my wife died, I was in the hospital for a week. I had all kinds of problems. After I recovered, I came back, and I found out that everything was a mess. And they were blaming this one kid that took over for me. And I said, "He's not really to blame." They were going to fire him. And I said, "If you fire him, I'm going to take an early retirement." And I said, "It's your fault. You said before I went to the hospital that you were going to give us seven people to help. You didn't give us any, and here I was there a week, and I'm here now, and you still haven't got the seven people." And Bruce was a good worker, except he'd like to do favors for people too often. And that was one of his faults. So I said, that's what I told them. I said, "If you fire him, I'm going to take an early retirement, and I don't care what happens to your, to the schedule." And, so, they didn't. And I got everything I finally wanted, and I got the thing done on time.

Oh, yeah, I had a lot of power. The same way with one, I was designing something, and I told this department to give it to me before December the 15<sup>th</sup>. They didn't give it to me until January the 3<sup>rd</sup>. so I had to break all kinds of records to get it done, work overtime and so forth. Then I gave it to—we'd done a test on it, I gave it to the guy to review, he reviewed it, found out six months later, it wasn't working right. So, this guy wrote a letter to the top echelon that, you know, I screwed everything up. And, so, I was going to write a letter. But this woman who was my boss, she said, "No, Al, I'll write it." So, I told her what happened. We gave samples to this big, this manager's people who were supposed to review it. They should have found it. We could have caught it six months ago. They didn't. So, I wrote a letter back to go to this man and tell him what I did, and how I presented it, and they were supposed to review it, and they didn't. So, I'm a fighter.

**1108: STRENGTH: "I told the lieutenants what I thought of them..."**

*So you have great strength of character. Do you think that your time in the military affected that? Do you think it helped you be a stronger person because, you clearly have always been that way, but do you think it made a difference having been in the military?*

I don't know where it started. I think I wanted to do good all the time. And if I made a mistake, I would correct it. But if it was a mistake that could have been caught by somebody in review, well. It was the same way with the Army. I told the lieutenants what I thought of them whether they liked it or not. They couldn't do crap because I was a subordinate officer. I wasn't an enlisted man nor an officer. I was a technician. But I think maybe I developed it in the Army more than otherwise. But I've been that way ever since. I'm not afraid to challenge anybody.

I know I'm a hard worker, and I produce. A lot of these people you go to work with, they go to coffee often. One time, you know, these guys invited me-- a half hour already passed. I said, "Don't you guys go back to work?" They said, "Oh, no, we'll just sit around a while." I said, "I'm sorry. I have a lot of work to do. I can't do this kind of thing." And I left them.

#### **1140: KEEPING UP WITH FRIENDS**

*You know, you said you made a lot of friends with the people you met during the war. Did you stay friends with them afterwards?*

Oh, yeah, I wrote to them. In fact, now, because we're older, I get Christmas cards from their wives. They're deceased now, most of them. I don't know, there's some gentlemen, some guys in Florida. They moved to Florida. I get Christmas cards from them. And I've got to write them, because I go back and forth to Connecticut, so I haven't been keeping up.

*Do you ever have reunions, or do you ever visit any of them?*

I never was in an Army reunion. I was in high school reunions. College reunions, no.

#### **162: GI BILL, COLLEGE LIFE**

*Did you use the GI bill when you went to college? Did you get money from the government when you went to college?*

Well, I, yes. And I told you that my mother saved enough money, I had enough for at least two years. And I worked when I went to college. I worked in a factory. I worked in a grocery store. I worked as a busboy. I did all kinds of work. I'm trying to get to the point that you asked?

*The GI bill?*

Hmm?

*The GI bill.*

Did I work—oh, the GI bill? Yeah, when it came in, it made me very happy, because it would pay for some of my stuff.

And what I did, since the college had places where we could live, but I joined a fraternity which didn't do too much for me. If you were in a fraternity, you could live in the fraternity house.

I rented a room from Sarah Brown, a good, old Irish woman—funny.

Her husband died. So, she had a home in Trenton. It had three good bedrooms, and she had a bedroom downstairs, and a bathroom downstairs, and there was a bathroom upstairs for all the young men. And she rented to all the college kids, so that where-- and I worked, see, I worked

part time, so I was there, but every Friday we would come home from work, and she had a bucket of beer, and pizza. And we'd sit around the table talking, and having pizza, and drinking beer. And on Sunday, she'd make a meal for us. We told her not to, but she would make a meal for us. There was one, two, three, there was five of us. She wouldn't take anything for the meal, but we-- I can't remember what I'd pay her. It was very nominal, really, but she had five, let's say, we paid ten dollars a week. That was fifty dollars a week she was getting.

But she passed away. She had some very beautiful antiques, very beautiful, yeah. I wrote to her a lot. She passed away. She was old, when I met her, must have-- we were in our twenties and thirties, and she was, like, in her fifties, fifty-five, going on sixty.

*Oh, ancient.*

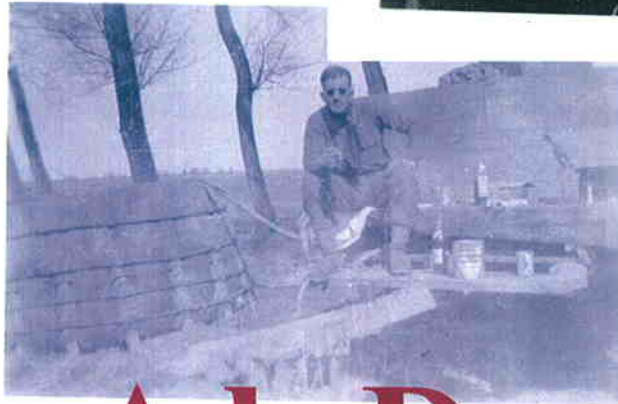
Yeah, ancient.

But she was a wonderful woman. And before I met her, I was with another widow and her daughter. And I lived in the attic with four other guys. That was-- they were nice to us, too, because we could put stuff in the refrigerator if we wanted to. It was a nice college town, Trenton, and the people were wonderful. Really, they were nice to us.

*I think your people were always wonderful. I think you like people.*

Maybe this is why my experience is with people a lot. See, I don't mind it. And that's why I volunteered to feed the hungry, poor, and homeless in Chicago. Now, they would have three different meals, meatloaf, beef stew, or chili, so whatever they asked for, I'd make a couple of pots of it, things like that. But I like people. I enjoy people. And, some of them, I met some people that I wouldn't want as a permanent friend, but they're people!

**251: END**



*Al Dominick, slept  
here in the back room  
next to the kitchen stove*

# Al Dominick Slept Here

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Photographs &  
Memoir of Army Life

Niles Public Library Veterans History Project

#### Chapter 4: Early Days of Army Life.

One day I lost my job in the shoe store, and the part time work was not enough to help me pay for the night evening college courses. I went to Connecticut to see if I could find a job. But was unsuccessful. I did not want to go into the tobacco industry again. I returned home and decided to join the US Army. My folks did not liked the idea. But I was 22 years old. No way was I going to hang around the coal mine country. I enlisted in the US Army, Sep. 26, 1940. One year and 2 ½ months before Japan attack the Hawaiian Islands.

I enlisted at Philadelphia, Pa. and was shipped to Fort Jackson, South Carolina, the same day. Ft. Jackson had very few barracks. So, all regulars and recruits were quartered in large tents. Four guys were assigned to each tent. There was water in the Mess halls, Recreation halls, and the shower stalls. The shower stalls were in a large tent set aside from the sleeping quarters. Each tent had an ten-gallon pail filled with water for soldiers to use for shaving or just freshening up. These pails had to be filled up each day. Bunks had to made military style. A chest stood at the foot of the bed containing clothing and other items for the military man. Shoes were usually under the bed with a good shine on them. There were racks for hanging clothing at the head of the army cot. Often in the winter months ice would form in the bucket.

For the first three months we underwent very strict training. Our drill sergeant was a tough guy from New Britain, CT. During the months of training, we were not allowed to go into town. Our free time during those months was spent playing pool in the recreation hall, read the paper, magazines or books. TV did not exist. There was a radio in the recreation hall. We also could go to the canteen, or PX as it was known to buy things like shaving supplies, magazines, and many other things. I believe PX meant Post Exchange. Today, I believe its called canteen. While on the firing range, I was fairly good, and received the Marksman's Medal. This was accomplished with a Springfield rifle. This weapon was a single shot type with a bolt action. Since I was left handed, I sighted through my left eye, and squeezed the trigger. I also used my left hand to pull the bolt back to reload the rifle. It looked confusing to the right-handed people, but to me it was okay.

We did a lot of marching. Took long hikes. Crawled on our belly to get under barbwire obstacles in attacking an invisible enemy. There were other training things that I think is unimportant to mention.

After our three months training, we were given passes to go to town. The closest town was Columbia, S.C. Most of us went to get a few beers, go to a movie and just sight see at first. Some areas in the town did not like the soldiers. Since it was peacetime, we were



allowed to wear civilian clothes. It was easier to get around. If we met some girls, we would pretend that we were divinity students from a religious college near by.

I was assigned to the 34<sup>th</sup> Infantry Service Co. They selected me because I could type, and take shorthand. I was given the rank of Sergeant, only after three months in the army. The military would not pay me a sergeant's pay because I was in the army only four months. On the sixth month, I did get the increase in pay. I always sent some money home, I believe at that time; the soldier's pay was very small. I believe that I received about \$100 a month. My duties in the Service Company were to: type many communication between companies in the regiment, handle the logistic for clothing, food, ammunition, and all equipment. My company commander was Captain Adams. He was a West Point graduate. He would rise to the rank of a General eventually. He was a brilliant leader. Was tough on the soldiers, but they liked him. He really knew how to handle men. It was because of him that I become a Warrant Officer. Will tell you about this further in the story. Captain Adams sent me to 3<sup>rd</sup> army headquarters to get to work for a General. I didn't get the job. When I told Captain Adams about my interview at the headquarters and the officers that did quiz me. His advice was "Don't be afraid to tell a few white lies. As long as you can prove you can perform the work very well, you should not be afraid of a few white lies." Several time when he was dictating a communication, he would talk very fast. I would have to tell him to slow down because I did omit some of his dictation.

Our regiment would go on weekend maneuvers. One time we went to Myrtle Beach. At that time there were small islands near the shores. One could get to these islands when the tide was out, because they were lands connected to the mainland. But, when the tide came in you had to be in the middle of the island, or you would be knee deep or more in sea water. One day we were returning just as the tide start coming in and it does come in fast. We were almost to our area, and the sea was as high as the hubcaps on the truck. We were lucky that we made the camp in time. Otherwise, we would have to go back to the mainland.

Some funny things occur in the army. One day a guy from the next tent told us he got the crabs. That occurs from messing with dirty women. So we had a good laugh. In order to get rid of them, he asked a buddy to throw some gas or kerosene on the part of his body that had them. He stripped to bare skin. His buddy got a pail, and put in some of the gasoline he obtained from the motor pool. He threw the liquid on the guy's private parts. He yelled a bit, because it burned. But he did get rid of the crabs.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Army Division decided to have maneuvers for three months, Sept., Oct., and Nov. of 1941. This was a war mock-up kind of thing. It covered the states of North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. Manuvers were very interesting. If you were captured, you were no longer active for the rest of the maneuvers. It was a rugged deal. Some time we slept in pup tents. But most of the time we just rolled out our blankets and slept on them. It was very hot during those maneuvers. Covered a lot of territory. Yes, some of our troops were captured, and some of the opposition troops were captured. The 8<sup>th</sup> Army

Division was trying out new war tactics. Little did we know that a real war would soon occur for the USA.

In early Nov. 1941, the 34<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment was recalled by the 8<sup>th</sup> Army Division to return to Fort Jackson, S.C. There was lot of rumors flying around. Some of them were: Our division would be sent to Foreign Service: Take part in a forthcoming coal strike; Or sent to another Domestic Army Post. Everyone speculated that the entire 8<sup>th</sup> Division would go. But that wasn't so. The US Government knew that Japan was ransacking China. Our government protested to the Japan Government, but Japan ignored. They sent peace ambassadors to Washington D. C. But this was a cover up. USA didn't have enough spies in the Asian Countries.

Back in Fort Jackson, the 34<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment began preparations for our journey. In our Supply Company we had to order equipment, clothing and many other supplies for the trip. We only knew that we were destined for "PLUM" The men who were over 35 years old were removed from our unit, and we received replacements of younger men to take their place. Two days before our departure by troop train, we all got together with the over 35 year guys and had a good party. Boy, I think everybody was loaded to the gills even though the liquor was beer. I had some very good friends over 35 years old. Did correspond with some during and after the war.

On Nov. 28, 1941, the men of the 34<sup>th</sup> Infantry regiment boarded a troop train that would take them across country to the Presidio of San Francisco. We took quite a devious route. Since we were a troop train some times our train had the right of way of other freight traffic. There were times when our train was shuttled to a side rail to wait until the passenger trains or a special freight train had the right of way. We left Fort Jackson, S.C, went through South Carolina, Tennessee (crossed the Mississippi River at Memphis), Arkansas (Little Rock), Texas (Amarillo & panhandle), and Colorado. We had to stop in the snow covered mountains, because the Railroad Company had to get a fresh engine to continue out journey. While we had this stop, we all had a snowball fight. After Colorado, we entered California and made our way to the Presidio of San Francisco. This army base is just a short distance from the Golden Gate Bridge. In fact some of the barracks were right under the beginning of the bridge.

We reached the Presidio of San Francisco on Dec. 3, 1941. Sailing dates of Dec. 3 through Dec. 5 were cancelled. At this time I felt there must be some reason for the change. On Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> we began to load the ship. It was a Matson Liner, which was painted a bright white color with a very large US Flag on each side. I was given orders to remain in the barracks to make sure that nothing was left behind. Also, the crew and I had to make certain that all was clean. No garbage left behind. On Dec. 7, 1941, one of my crewmembers ran up to the second floor, and yelled, "Pearl Harbor is being attacked by the Japanese." My reply was, "Maybe it's just another Orson Wells Show." (Orson Wells was well known actor. He was also a director, who prepared Radio Shows. In 1938 he produced a radio show which caused great excitement in the USA. The show was about Martians attacking the Earth around New York City. The people in the US had phone ringing off the hook to police stations, and government offices. We did not

have any TV in those days. The show created a sensation. I'm not sure if it effected the rest of the world. Even the newspaper had headlines about it.

All the troops had to return to the Presidio of San Francisco barracks. We did not unload the ship. The ship was then painted battle ship gray. The government mounted machine guns and 37MM guns on the bow or stern of the ship. The ship also had a few fighter planes tied down in the empty area of the top deck. On Dec. 14, 1941 all the troops boarded the ship. At 6:00 PM, we were headed out to sea. Went under the Golden Gate Bridge. We watched the city of San Francisco fade away. The Pacific Ocean was very choppy and within the hour I was sick as a dog. Couldn't hold anything down. If I got up from the bunk, I would heave up nothing. So, I decided to just lie down and maybe in another day I'd have my sea legs. My crew brought me crackers, dry bread, and some milk to drink. I didn't get up for a couple of days. After that I could go to the dining room and sit down with the other guys.

Some destroyers guarded us. I believe there must have been about 6 of them, and they were situated in such a manner that they covered our ship from any attack. The ship docked in the harbor of Honolulu Dec. 21, 1941. The troops disembarked and went to various Army Posts on the Island of Oahu. I remained on the ship to make sure all the 34<sup>th</sup> Infantry equipment, was unloaded and shipped to Schofield Barracks.

Morning of Dec. 24, 1941, I received orders to report to Schofield Barracks. My crew and I had a small army truck to transport us. As we passed Hickham Field (Marine and Navy airbase) we saw the heavy damage. Planes destroyed. Hangers demolished. As we traveled and passed Pearl Harbor, it was a gut wrenching view. The Arizona sunk exactly where she was docked. Many sailors went down with that ship. (Mark, that's the ship you were on when we went to Honolulu to view the memorial to the sailors.) Two other big battle ships were lying on their side. After about another half-hour, we arrived at Schofield Barracks, It was about suppertime. My crew and I were the only army personnel at Schofield Barracks. The other troops had not arrived from the various army posts scattered on the Island of Oahu. These barracks were constructed from cement, and were 3 stories high. They were arranged in a quadrangle, four building in a square. The middle of the square was all grass where the troops marched and had other drills. But, now the grass area was filled with our supplies and equipment. The building apparently were strafed by the Japanese airplanes. You could see some of the damages.

We searched the building in the quadrangle for a sign of some activity, or someone we could talk to. After about a half-hour, we found a cook in one of the barracks. We asked if he could tell us where we could get something to eat. The cook was left to feed anyone in his unit who returned from duty in other parts of the island. He was gracious enough to make us hot Spam sandwiches on a hot lid of the kitchen stove. We also had some rice pudding for desert.

Our 34<sup>th</sup> Infantrymen returned late in the afternoon with all their equipment. They wee sent to their specific barracks. Since the next day was Christmas December 25, 1941, I though I play a trick on some of my good buddies. All the barracks were on black out

alert. This meant that no light would shine from any window or door. I had some junk stuff. So, put the items in the socks or shoes of these friends. They had a good laugh the very next day when it was discovered. The Army was very strict about that rule. It was safety precaution for any possible enemy planes flying in the vicinity. The population of the islands was very nervous, and didn't want to brace for another attack. We didn't have much food supply left. Because no cargo ships would come to the islands for about three months our Christmas Day dinner was very sparse. A lot of Spam, rice pudding, some fruits, and coffee were all we had for that day. There wouldn't be any supply coming to the Islands from the USA for about three months. My folks didn't know where I was. The Japanese broadcast the sinking of a troop ship. But that was not our ship. The next day we had to open the cargo crates and put everything in place in order for military operations.

The most immediate thing for us, after one night in the barracks, was to kill the bed bugs that were in the mattresses and mosquito netting that hung over the cots. Had to soak the mosquito netting in buckets of gasoline. What a mess! The army also fumigated all the rooms to clean up any other bug infestation.

During our three months of no mail and only radio communication from the mainland, the 34<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment practiced shooting at targets on the range. The ammunition we were using came from World War 1 Dumps. This ammunition was stored in cave like structures dug into the coral. The interior of these dumps was cemented. This kept the ammunition dry. Hawaii has a very heavy moisture atmosphere. An incident occurred on the range one day that made the Army stop using the ammunition. The bullets were used in the Springfield rifle. The ammunition in the bullets was so strong that it blew some of the stock of the rifle apart. This ammunition was never used again. Also, the Springfield rifle was out of date. A few months later, we were issued the M1 rifle. We also underwent heavy combat training using mock up building, etc. Then we went into Ranger Training. It was a little tough. We had to climb the high mountains on the Island of Oahu. The coral on these trails would tear down the soles of your shoes in one day. The trails were narrow and we had to watch where we stepped. Sheer cliffs were on some of the trail, and if one lost his balance, he would fall and be killed. Since the mountains were so high, the clouds covered them, and we had to walk in the clouds, and we couldn't see the surrounding areas. Only the immediate path was visible.

Supply ships began to arrive after the two or three months passed. Some of our drivers were assigned to the task of hauling the supplies to the storage sheds hidden in the heavy wooded area. One of the trucks had a lot of beer crates. Well, some of the drivers and their helpers decided to steal some of the beer and hide it in the surrounding brush. Well, other guys in the surrounding barracks witness some of this activity. So, the guys that were watching removed the beer packages from the first hidden place to a place that they selected. When the drivers and their helpers returned to the barracks, they went to their hiding places, but found no beer. You can bet they were stunned.

[REDACTED]

Our regiment continues to fortify the island. They used barbwire on the beaches that could be accessible to the Japanese if they would attempt to land. Also, the government was issuing more battle equipment and clothing.

In another four months, our 34<sup>th</sup> Infantry moves from the Schofield Barracks to the quarters that were held by the Hawaiian Guard. In this new area there a lot of wooden buildings, one story high, and had drawn up wooded covers to close the building from storms or in our case stop the light from shining out to help the enemy.

One day an alert was sounded due to an unidentified aircraft in the vicinity of Oahu. Well, everybody rushed out of the buildings and jumped into culverts. Well, there were some injuries caused by jumping into the culverts.

In this area I was amazed at the large bugs flying around. I was told that they were cockroaches. Ugh!

Our regiment began to let some of us go to Honolulu for the weekend. My first impression was that some of it was clean and some of it was not so clean. We saw lines of sailors and some soldiers standing in line. We thought that they were waiting in line to see a movie or stage play. But after we turned the corner and saw where the entrance was it was a laugh. Honolulu is a sailor's town. What they were in line for was a house of prostitution. Hawaii allowed this. No law against it. [REDACTED]

Other things going on in the city, were plenty of beaches, theaters, and restaurants. On Saturdays the local radio would broad cast music and news from the Banyan Tree Court in the Mauna Hotel. The Banyan tree grows shoots from its branches to the ground. So, it can become a jungle from just one tree. The military personnel took a lot of tours around the island. When we were there, a small train system ran around the Island of Oahu. Many tours were taken to go through the Pineapple Factory.

One day two of my buddies and I decided to call Hickham Field to see if we could get a ride, in a small fighter and bomber plane. They approved our request. So we journeyed to the airfield, and were greeted by the pilot and his co-pilot. Cannot remember the name of the bomber, but I was told to sit in the front bubble. No one had parachutes. Being in the front bubble was a sight to behold. It felt as if I was suspended in mid air. Couldn't

believe that a man had to sit there and man a machine gun. The pilot and co-pilot were testing the plane. They soon told us that they had to land at another field due to some possible malfunction. Well, they put us down on the other side of Oahu. We didn't mind we were able to get transportation back to Honolulu.

I had another interesting experience while in Oahu. Captain Adams was now a major, and he called me to his office. He asked me if I would like to be an army observer on a destroyer, who would be engaged in maneuvers outside of the Hawaiian Islands. Well, I thought it would be a great experience. The next day I was driven to Pearl Harbor. Was met by an officer who took me to a small motor boat. This took us to the destroyer that was anchored in the harbor. I boarded just like the sailors did. You salute the flag and are welcomed aboard by the assistant to the captain of the ship. We weighted anchor, and sailed out of Pearl Harbor followed by other ships. Aboard these ships were recruits who have not had experience shooting at enemy ships.

When we arrived at the shooting range. There was a boat that pulled targets that looked like ships. The sailors on board the other ships would then shoot their cannons to the target. One thing that I discovered about destroyers is that being small, they could go over waves, and sometimes I thought we went through the waves. The Pacific Ocean was a bit rough on those days. I couldn't venture below deck to eat, because everytime I did go below and smell the oil and grease of the ship, I would throw up. So, I asked the captain for permission to sleep on deck. The captain told me to sleep in the repair shop, which was no bigger, that a large closet. I had to sleep almost doubled up. Also, some of the crew would bring me sandwiches and coffee. All this activity lasted three days. When we returned to the harbor, anchored, and was ready to go ashore. The Caption asked me if I would join the navy after the army days were over. I said, "No way."

Whenever my buddies and I went into Honolulu, we would go to the Royal Hawaiian Hotel. It was taken over by the Navy for recreation purposes. Great place to go. There was a better beach at that location. And we would swim in the ocean and horse around

While we stayed in Oahu, our supply group of guys, from New Jersey and New York decided we needed a house of our own. So, George Stengle, a Polish butcher, from New Jersey and a group from New York City brought back a portable shack that we assembled near the base of mountain. This was to be our clubhouse. Six of us took our bunks and belongings and stayed there to protect it from being stolen. We had a lot of good times there.

One day an announcement was published asking for soldiers to take tests for pilot training. I and several of my buddies decided to apply for the tests. It was just a basic test to determine if a man could go states side for further testing. The tests were for perception, blood pressure and other conditions after being spun very rapidly in something like a barber chair. Well, I passed, and some of my buddies did. Some of my buddies left for the states within a week. I didn't get called, but was told that they were still considering my application. I was a staff Sergeant at that time still working in supplies for the regiment.

Soon after the announcement for pilots, an announcement was published for taking tests to become a Warrant Officer. I applied for this. And so did the First Sergeant and my immediate supply boss, Master Sergeant, Janecek, There was a very long mental test, Involving Math, Grammar, etc. After a man passed this test, he was ordered to appear for a board of officers for further review. This board asked several questions about your ability and health. Well, the First Sergeant Kirby and Master Sergeant Janecek made the grade, I did not. I know that I did not flunk the mental test. I probably was considered too young by the board. I was only 24 at that time. However, several events occurred that caused Master Sergeant Janecek to be rejected due to his age. Kirby and Janecek were old soldiers. They joined the army in their teens. Janecek, was an old Polish guy, who often muttered statement in Polish so that no one could understand him, But I did. The Serge did this whenever he was angry. And he was very angry about losing the warrant due to his age. He told Major Adams that he did not want any other Warrant Officer directing him in his duties. That is when Major Adams asked me if I would take the test again. I told him that I wouldn't get by the board. He told me to take the test and he would talk to the board. I did what he wanted. On February 4, 1943, I was honorably discharged from the US Army as a Staff Sergeant. On the same day, I had to enlist in the US Army as a Warrant Officer, junior class. Sergeant Janecek was satisfied with this arrangement and told Major Adams.

My duties, as a Warrant Officer, Jr. Class was, to supervisor all the activity of the food, supply, clothing, ammunition, etc for the regiment. This is why Sargent Janecek did not want any one to boss him. We had a good working repro

Whenever our buddies and I would get permission to leave the post, we usually went sight seeing to different parts of the island. We never went to any of the other islands. Our duty was to protect the Island of Oahu. We did plenty of training for the South Pacific Theater. Also there was always something to do. Some of my buddies met their brothers in Honolulu. They were civilians going to the South Pacific to do some construction.

Whenever we had maneuvers on the island, we would make sure we did not set up our tents under any coconut tree. One time we had no choice, because it was overgrown. On a day such as that you avoided the falling coconuts as much as possible. But when you went to bed in the evening, the falling coconuts sounded like bombs hitting the tents.

May 1943, the 24<sup>th</sup> Infantry ~~Regiment~~<sup>Division</sup> was alerted for shipment to Australia.. The Division would arrive in Australia some time in September 1943. On or about July 3<sup>rd</sup>, the 34<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment was assigned to the 24<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. This Division with its complement of personal and only the necessary items for the trip to Australia was dispatched on three ships. Some of our men went on a large troop ship that would bring them to Brisbane, Australia. Another contingent of men went on another troop ship that would bring them to Sydney, Australia. The third ship was a small Liberty Ship that was built during the war for expediting troops and equipment.

Part of the 34<sup>th</sup> Infantry was on the Liberty Ship. Some of the 34<sup>th</sup> Infantry was also on the troop ship that docked in Brisbane, Australia.

I was sick as a dog the first few days at sea. This small troop carrier was rocked about by the waves. After three days I felt great. What I hated most about this trip was the fact that the Navy gave you beans for breakfast. What a breakfast! We crossed the Equator on August 10, 1943. The Navy has a tradition when crossing this area in the Pacific and maybe the Atlantic, an initiation of some sort takes place. Everyone received a card that stated we sailed aboard the USAT Sea Pike. We became the loyal Shellback citizens of King Neptune's domain.

From the Hawaiian Islands we were escorted by three USA destroyers. With our convoy, was an old Philippine freighter. All of the ships had to go her speed because she was old and needed refueling. We stopped for the Philippines ship's refueling in the harbor of Pago Pago, on the Island of Tutuila, in the Smoa Island chain. What a beautiful place! The natives came out in their canoes that were full of fresh fruit in exchange for money or some gifts. The native men wore only a bright red wrap a round at their waist. Their upper body was bare. The women wore fancy sarongs. No one was allowed to disembark. Only the Philippine Freighter was refueled, and we soon departed towards Australia.

As we approached Australia, our destroyers left, and we were escorted by the ships of the Australian Navy. Their ships were much smaller than ours. Since two of the troop ships were too large for a small harbor, they were assigned different harbors in which to dock. One went to the Harbor of Sydney. Another went to the Harbor of Brisbane. About three quarters of the 34<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment landed there. We were on a small Liberty Ship, and were able to land at the small Harbor of Gladstone. This town is located near the corral reef. Even as small as our ship was, we could see that we did stir up some of the bottom of the harbor. We disembarked and were take to a train that would take us to our campsite. The train was very much like the old fashioned kind that Great Britain had in the early years of railroads.

We arrived at a campsite that was just being built. There were no wooden building at all. We were going to continue to build a tent city. Since our other troops wouldn't be there for another two weeks, we did a lot of putting up tents, and other things needed for a tent campsite.

Here's a funny incident that occurred at the campsite about a couple of days after our arrival. The men who cleaned the latrines usually dump the dirty creosote in the trench of the toilet. Well, one of our guys needed to have a BM. He liked to smoke. After he was through with the cigarette, he threw it in the trench of the latrine. Well, their was a mighty roar of fire and flame. He jump out of there very fast. You have heard of the hot foot trick. Well, this was the hot ass trick. We all had a good laugh.

Around this campsite were a lot of strange animals not seen anywhere in the world but



Australia. We had Kangaroos, Kola bears and Lizards. An order was put into effect in the campsite not to have any pets. The area of our campsite was in the Queensland State. That's on the north side of the country near the city of Darwin.

After the other troops arrived, jungle training took place.. Whenever we were free on the weekend, we would go: fishing, into the small town of Gladstone shopping and meeting the people. Australians are wonderful. They are as rugged as our pioneers were. Naturally they talked different than we do. For example: a girl was a twirl, etc. I don't remember most of them now. During this time, I was told that one of Michael Modla's brother was located near our campsite. So I arranged with the Red Cross to meet him, Frank. He was older than Michael. We had a nice visit.

A few days later an order came through from the US Army for me to report to San Ana Air Base for further examination for pilot training. The 34<sup>th</sup> Regiment had to arrange for my transportation to the states. When traveling on government orders, a person usually goes the fastest means possible. In this case I packed all my belongings, said good-byes to some of my best buddies in the service. Went my jeep to Brisbane. I arrived at the air field on which stood many transport planes. These were converted B24 bombers. I boarded one, and was on my way. The B24 carried a lot of mail and smaller packages. There were benches on each side of the plane. No parachutes were visible. I didn't sit on the bench, because most of the center of the plane was loaded with large canvas bags of mail. We slept on the mailbags. We landed on an air base on the Fiji Islands. There we disembarked because the pilot had to refuel, and get a new flight log. Some more military men boarded the plane. From there we flew to Christmas Island. I cannot believe that a navigator could find this tiny island in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. And it was very small. We landed in the dark of night. I think it was about 1:00 am. We were told not to make any noise because Mrs. Roosevelt, the president's wife, was sleeping. Our coffee tasted like some thick pudding. Ugh. After refueling, we took off again towards the Hawaiian Islands. That was about an 8<sup>th</sup> hour flight. We didn't linger in the Hawaiian Islands. Our next goal was San Francisco. When we arrived there, we decided to see the city. However, I had a tooth problem, and had to report to a civilian doctor to correct the situation. Met some nice people in the dentist office. They showed me quite a bit of San Francisco. Boarded a bus to take me to Santa Ana Air Base. The date was Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup>. I lasted about one month for pilot training. Some of the tests were very hard for me. I cannot remember what one I failed. I never got to be a pilot. And I know that my folks were glad that I failed.

The US Army would not let me return to the Pacific area to join my old regiment. Instead I was assigned to the 304<sup>th</sup> Combat Engineer Unit, and traveled to Salinas, Kansas, where the 80<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division was located. What a windy place!. There's more wind there than Chicago. That wind whistled through those barracks something awful.

Stayed there about a month, and then the 80<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division went to Yuma, AZ. for maneuvers. The division used all the desert area in Arizona, and California. It was a very tiring exercise.. One day after 48 hours of maneuvering, I came back to camp, sat on

the cot and fell over into a sleep of exhaustion. Awoke three hours later. Most of the troops wondered about where we would be sent overseas. Since we were doing desert maneuvers, the troops thought that we would go to fight in the African Campaign, which was throughout the Sahara Dessert, After the desert maneuvers, we went to Fort Dix, NJ

While I was in Fort Dix, the 80<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division Commander ordered every member of the service a few days to visit his family. Because Capt. Queen, my immediate superior went on a cadre to England, I was to handle all the engineering logistic for the Division. Well, I didn't get much help, because my people were going on leave also. I asked our commander, The Colonel, for help. He gave me 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenants that just put their feet on the desk, and did nothing else. I told the colonel that if he didn't get me a good man, he could forget about my getting the work accomplished. He finally assigned Lt. Bussin to assist me. You see, I was doing work as a line officer and then they would also give me staff officer work. Also, some of these officers pulled rank. I had to do guard duty, while they went to town having a good time with the women they would pick up. So I got pissed off. And told the Colonel was I thought of those lazy officers. At that time, I sent all my clothes to the dry cleaner. The Colonel wanted me to take a picture with the staff. I told him I had no uniform. So he sent a Lt. Henke, who was a friend of mine, with his clothes. So, I put on the Lt. clothes for the staff picture. That satisfied the Colonel. The next day I became a Warrant Officer, Sr. Class. Maybe that was because I threatened the Colonel with a request for transfer if he didn't give me good help. After most of the work was done, I went to Wilkes-Barre, Pa. to visit my parents and the rest of the family. The Colonel's name was McCullem.

After three months in the deserts of Arizona and California, we were told to pack and go to Fort Dix, N.J. From there we packed all our gear, equipment and other miscellaneous items We stayed about a week in Fort Dix. Then we traveled to the Brooklyn Navy Yards to board a large troop ship. Believe,ship was under the control of the British Navy. And guess what they served for breakfast. Fish! Ugh! I ate everything but the fish. Since it was a very large (Was informed the ship was called the Queen Mary after the Older queen of England) ship I never became sick. Of course, we had the protection of both English and American Navies. Left Brooklyn Navy Yards on July 1944. Arrived in Liverpool, Great Britain on July 7, 1944. From Liverpool we were scattered through the country. Our304<sup>th</sup> Combat Engr. was sent to the countryside near Manchester. There we did the usual combat exercises awaiting the invasion of the European countryside. While there, we discovered that instead of digging Latrines in the ground, we had to do our business in Large Metal Buckets. We nicknamed them "Honey Buckets." The farmers would come and take these buckets to their farms and spread them on the grounds. When I thought of that, I wasn't too happy to eat potatoes or other vegetables that matured under soil.

While in Manchester, we visited pubs, and Army Centers where a soldier could relax and do things such as ping pong, read, listen to the radio, and even dance whenever they held them.

There is a map of the 304<sup>th</sup> Combat Engr path throughout the war that is in my photo book. I'm printing the dates and places here even though it should be included as an attachment:

#### PATH OF THE 304<sup>TH</sup> COMBAT ENGINEERS THROUGH THE EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATION

1. Departed Fort Dix, NJ, June 22, 1944
2. Arrived at Camp Kilmer, NJ June 22, 1944
3. Departed Camp Kilmer, NJ, June 30, 1944
4. Sailed from NY, July 1, 1944
5. Arrived Firth of Clyde, UK, July 7, 1944
6. Departed " " " " " "
7. Arrived Newton, Lancashire, 7 July 1944
8. Departed " " 2 Aug. 1944
9. Arrived Marshalling Area 2 Aug. 1944
10. Departed " " 4 Aug 1944
11. Arrived vicinity of Southampton 4 Aug 1944
12. Departed " " " 4, Aug 1944
13. Arrived Utah Beachhead, France, 6 Aug 1944
14. Departed " " " 6 Aug 1944
15. Arrived St. Jores, France, 6 Aug 1944
16. Departed " " : 8 Aug 1944
17. Arrived 11 miles E of Avranches, France 8 Aug 1944
18. Departed " " " " " "
19. Arrived 8 Miles S. of Monitors, France, 9 Aug 1944
20. Arrived 7 miles S of Conlie, France, 11 Aug 1944
21. Arrived 1 and ½ miles E. of St. Mars, France, 13 Aug 1944
22. Arrived 2 miles S of Jublains, France, 15 Aug. 1944
23. Arrived 5 miles S of Montree, France 17 Aug 1944
24. Arrived 1 mile N of Almeneches, France, 18 Aug 1944
25. Arrived 1 mile E. of St Flavy, France, 27 Aug 1944
26. Arrived 1 and ½ miles NE of Villeseneux, France, 28 Aug 1944
27. Arrived 3 miles NW of Chalons, France, 30 Aug 1944
28. Arrived ¼ mile SW of Laheycourt, France, 1 Sept 1944
29. Arrived 1 and ½ miles NW of Commercy, France, 2 Sept 1944
30. Arrived 1 mile NE of Vignot, France, 4 Sept. 1944
31. Arrived 1 and ½ miles NE of Beaumont, France, 6 Sept. 1944
32. Arrived 2 miles SE of Mamey, France 13 Sept 1944
33. Arrived Dieulourd, France 18 Sept 1944
34. Arrived Mailly, France 10 Nov. 1944
35. Arrived Alaincourt, France 12 Nov. 1944
36. Arrived Morville Sur Nied, France 18 Nov 1944
37. Arrived Crehange, France, 24 Nov 1944
38. Arrived Cites Des Charbonnages, France, 25 Nov 1944
39. Arrived Teting, France 26 Nov 1944

40. Arrived St. Avold, France 28 Nov 1944
41. Arrived Bining, France 18 Dec. 1944
42. Arrived Luxembourg, Lux 20 Dec. 1944
43. Arrived Schoenfels, Lux, 23 Dec. 1944
44. Arrived Bissen, Lux, 9 Jan 1945
45. Arrived Dellen, Lux 22 Jan 1945
46. Arrived Eschweiler, Lux.,24 Jan 1945
47. Arrived Wiltz, Lux, 25 Jan 1945
48. Arrived Angelsberg, Lux 28 Jan 1945
49. Arrived Diekirch, Lux 17 Feb. 1945
50. Arrived Mfettendorf, Germany, 26 Feb. 1945
51. Arrived Ritteradell, Germany, 6 Mar 1945
52. Arrived Nattenheim, Germany 7 Mar 1945
53. Arrived Altwies Lux, 11 Mar 1945
54. Arrived Beurig, Germany, 12 Mar 1945
55. Arrived Frommerbach, Germany, 16 Mar 1945
56. Arrived Losheim, Germany 17 Mar 1945
57. Arrived St. Wendel, Germany, 19 Mar 1945
58. Arrived Kaiserlautern, Germany, 20 Mar 1945
59. Arrived Bad Durkheim, Germany 22 Mar 1945
60. Arrived Rockhausen, Germany 24 Mar 1945
61. Arrived Partenheim, Germany 26 Mar 1945
62. Arrived Mainz, Germany, 27 Mar 1945
63. Arrived Liche, Germany 30 Mar 1945
64. Arrived Neukirchen, Germany, 31 Mar 1945
65. Arrived Homburg, Germany 2 April 1945
66. Arrived Oberzwehren, Germany 7 April 1945
67. Arrived Gotha, Germany 7 April 1945
68. Arrived Dietendorf, Germany, 12 April 1945
69. Arrived Weimar, Germany, 13 April 1945
70. Arrived Gera, Germany, 14 April 1945
71. Arrived Kandler, Germany 16 April 1945
72. Arrived Schesslitz, Germany 19 April 1945
73. Arrived Nurnberg, Germany 23 April 1945
74. Arrived Regensburg, Germany 29 April 1945
75. Arrived Ergoldsbach, Germany 30 April 1945
76. Arrived Markl Koffen, Germany 2 May 1945
77. Arrived Simbach, Germany, 3 May 1945
78. Arrived Vocklabruck, Austria 6 May 1945

A month or so after "D." Day, our troops were dispatched to Southampton. There we boarded small troop carriers, which would take us to our French beachhead. When we neared the coast of France, small landing crafts pulled up to our ships. The troops boarded these landing crafts, commanded by the navy, and were deposited on shore. I believe our division landed at the Utah beachhead. The other beachhead was Omaha.

We were told to follow and stay within the white tape due to the mines that were not removed by our troops. We marched a few miles and bivouacked in a deployment area waiting for further orders.

We saw many destroyed homes and buildings. In the morning we were awakened, had a meager breakfast and were on the march again.

At Avranches, our 80 Inf. Division was assigned to the 1<sup>st</sup> Army under the command of General Omar Bradley. In this vicinity was a fierce battle between the German elite infantry. I visited the battlefield after we won, and it was a mess. Many German soldiers dead and rotting. What a stink! If you run over the battlefield with a jeep, the tires catch the odor of death and it takes weeks for that smell to disappear. Also, some of our own soldiers were taking items of some value off the dead German soldiers. Our air force was also able to mow down horse drawn cannons with their animals and men. Since it was getting dark another soldier and I became lost on the battlefield. Seems we were going around in circles. Ran across a German Red Cross shelter, which was filled with dead German soldiers. Finally, we spotted our jeep heading away from the battlefield. We were able to shout and signal it to stop. Got back to our area before the dark of night.

At this time we were held back from advancing because the British Army needed supplies. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Armies stayed in place until the British reach their objective. The British Commander was Montgomery.

After that big battle our 80<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division was assigned to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Army Division, which was under the command of General Patton. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Army's route was to take us considerably South of Paris. The 1<sup>st</sup> Army Division was sweeping the middle of the country. And the British were taking the North flank to advance towards the French Maginot Fortified Line. This fortified line was on the border of France and Germany. September 18, 1944 we were at Dieulouard, France. At the Meuse River we stopped because there were Germans in the next town. We bivouacked in the heavy forest. It was a terrible night. Rain poured down on us. I decided to sleep under a tarpaulin with the phone by my side. Under another tarpaulin was Sgt. Beckmyer, from York, Pa. I guess I was pretty tired because I fell asleep quickly. Then I heard a sentry shouting "Corporal of the Guard, Post 5." I thought this was crazy for a soldier to do that. So, I awakened the Sgt. Then I asked him to listen to the voice I heard. But there was no voice. Only voice was an owl crying "Who, Who, Who." We had a good laugh, and after that if they called me "Mr. Who, Who," I just laughed it off.

While we were at Dieulouard, France, a couple of incidents occurred. We were quartered in an abandoned factory.

Marlene Dietrich and another woman, who played an accordion, came to entertain the troops. I didn't see the show because I had other duties. However, I could hear the soldiers shouting, laughing and clapping. They were enjoying the show.

The second incident involved one of our truck drivers, who just returned from a supply run. He was so drunk from some French moonshine that he began to wave his rifle and let out a few shots. I came and talked calmly to him while Sgt. Beckmyer approached him from behind and disarmed him. I don't remember if anyone reported this. We didn't want to get the kid in any more trouble.

Also, while at this location, my superior officer, Cap. Queen, was killed. He and another officer always went into enemy territory to look for ancient guns. Queen collected these guns from homes, etc. They ran into a squad of Germans. Queen was killed, but his buddy, the other officer, escaped. So, the confiscation began to take place. A number of the soldiers wanted the ancient guns. I didn't care for them. I choose the trunk full of booze, wine and other liquors. That came in handy during the awful cold winter days.

The Allies pushed on towards the German Sigfried Lines, which were heavy fortified and stood between the French and German borders. These were trying days. The 80<sup>th</sup> Infantry division was attacking the very southern part of that fortification. However, that was Dec. 18, 1944. We were informed to swing North towards Luxembourg. The Battle of the Bulge had begun. It was a very cold winter day. Heavy snow storms as we made our way towards Luxembourg. Stopped on the road to make some hot coffee. While parked there, our chaplain, a Catholic, offered us altar wine to warm up our bodies.

Since the Germans captured many American soldiers, our secret codes for recognition were changed hourly. In this manner we were able to catch some of the German soldiers who infiltrated the Allies lines. Those were trying days.

While in Luxembourg, we were quartered in a Chateau. There was a young woman and her mother and brother living at the place. The young lady was certainly disturbed by the war, because she would constantly tell of some terrible things that happened to her and her family. Her father was missing. On Christmas day some of our troops became drunk and were disturbing her. So, I told her to stay in my office until I was able to talk to my crew. After that, she returned to her folks.

During the war, I did not wear any bars to distinguish myself from an ordinary soldier. So, no one knew who I was. One day a sergeant came for some supplies. He told me his officer said that W.O. Dominick was a tough guy to deal with. Well, I felt sorry for the sergeant, and gave him all the supplies he wanted. Then I told him, I was WO Dominick. Nothing more was said.

After the snowstorms had ceased, the Allies bombers and fighter planes destroyed the German Army fighting in the Battle of the Bulge. Then the Allies advanced into German territory Feb. 26, 1945

This battle broke the German Army's back. The Allies advanced more rapidly through the German countryside.

When the 304<sup>th</sup> Combat Engineers arrived at Gotha, Germany, we were able to capture a large German Generator. We changed the color and insignia to the USA forms. This generator supplied us with electricity whenever we moved into an empty house along our route. The Allies continue to force the Germans back, and even captured many prisoners of war.

Near Weimar, Germany, some of our Kentucky and Tennessee men took their guns and shot a couple of deer. So, we were able to have some venison for our meals.

As we traveled deeper into the German countryside, we saw factories destroyed, churches bombed, and animals killed in cross fires between the Allies and Germans.

Ran across our first concentration camp at Ohrdurf, Germany. What a mess! Bodies were lain on top of railroad ties to be burned. Deep holes filled with rain water dyed blood red from the victims thrown into the holes.

Saw the beautiful Zeppelin Weise Stadium in Neurnburg, Germany. This was were the Olympics were held before World War 11 began. At these events an African American ran track events of the USA and won several of them. Hitler didn't like this. Believe the man's name was Jesse Ownes

Our Combat Engineers entered Austria on May 6, 1945. We passed by a trout fishery near Braneau, Austria. There we made a deal with the caretaker for a dozen of fish. That night I gutted the fish, and everyone in our immediate unit had a good fish dinner.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Army under General Patton continued to drive back the Germans until we reached the Austrian Alps. What a beautiful place! But built into those mountains were huge caverns in which there was equipment to create gasoline and other things of war.

The Allies would never be able to bomb that place because it was underground at the base of the mountains

Here near Ebensee, Austria we found another Concentration Camp. The poor people almost starved to death. There were people helping them. These prisoners were being washed, clothed and feed. We did not see any dead people at the site.

The 304<sup>th</sup> Combat Engineers were in Voocklabruck, Austria when the war with Germany ended. So we just sat around doing the usual army routines. Often we went up to the top of the mountains on a Gondola. What a great view from the top of those mountains! The lakes were so cold a person could not stay in there for more than ten minutes. Most of the melting snow flowed into rivers that entered the lake.

It was there that a ruling came from the US government to return any soldiers to the states who has a lot of overseas duty. These would be returned to the states for

processing. Most of these soldiers would be discharged stateside. At this time I had spent one and a half years in the Pacific, and one and a half years in the European Campaign. So, I was one of the foremost to leave our combat engineers and travel to the clearing area somewhere in German.

I was transferred to Landsburg, Germany to a clearing center for all GI's returning to the states. Here I had some problems seeking housing quarters. It seemed as if there was no good control for Warrant Officers, only for enlisted men and other officers of a higher rank

I did find an outdoor porch with a bed that I could bunk on, but the southern officers said I couldn't bunk there. Perhaps, they didn't want me to interfere with their love life at that place. There were plenty of women accessible in that area.

So, I began to wonder where I would bunk for the night. Well, when I was in the chow line, an Austrian, who spoke English very well, told me he would be able to find me a room in an apartment near by. I signed some official papers for the USA to pay for my room. Well, it turned out to be a German woman about 40 years old who invited me to sleep in one of her bedrooms. No hanky panky by me. She didn't know if her husband who was a German soldier was living or dead. She spoke little English. The woman was very good to me. She pressed my clothes, and shined my shoes, and did my laundry daily. In return I brought back food and other things from the mess hall to help her. In this apartment complex were mostly women, among them some who could speak Polish. I met these Polish women, and also brought them some food from the mess hall. We wasted so much food. There were even other people searching our garbage containers for food.

From there all the troops left for Le Harve, France to board a troop ship which would take us back to the USA. That was Sept. 10, 1945. Landed at Brooklyn Navy Yard and went by train to Fort Dix, N. J. for further processing. I was processed to get discharged at Indiantown Gap Military Reservation, near Gettysburg, Pa. The date was Nov. 2, 1945. I was asked if I wanted to enlist in the Reserve, but I declined. I was given transportation vouchers to take a train or bus back to Wilkes-Barre, Pa.



PATH OF THE ENGINEERS THROUGH THE ETO

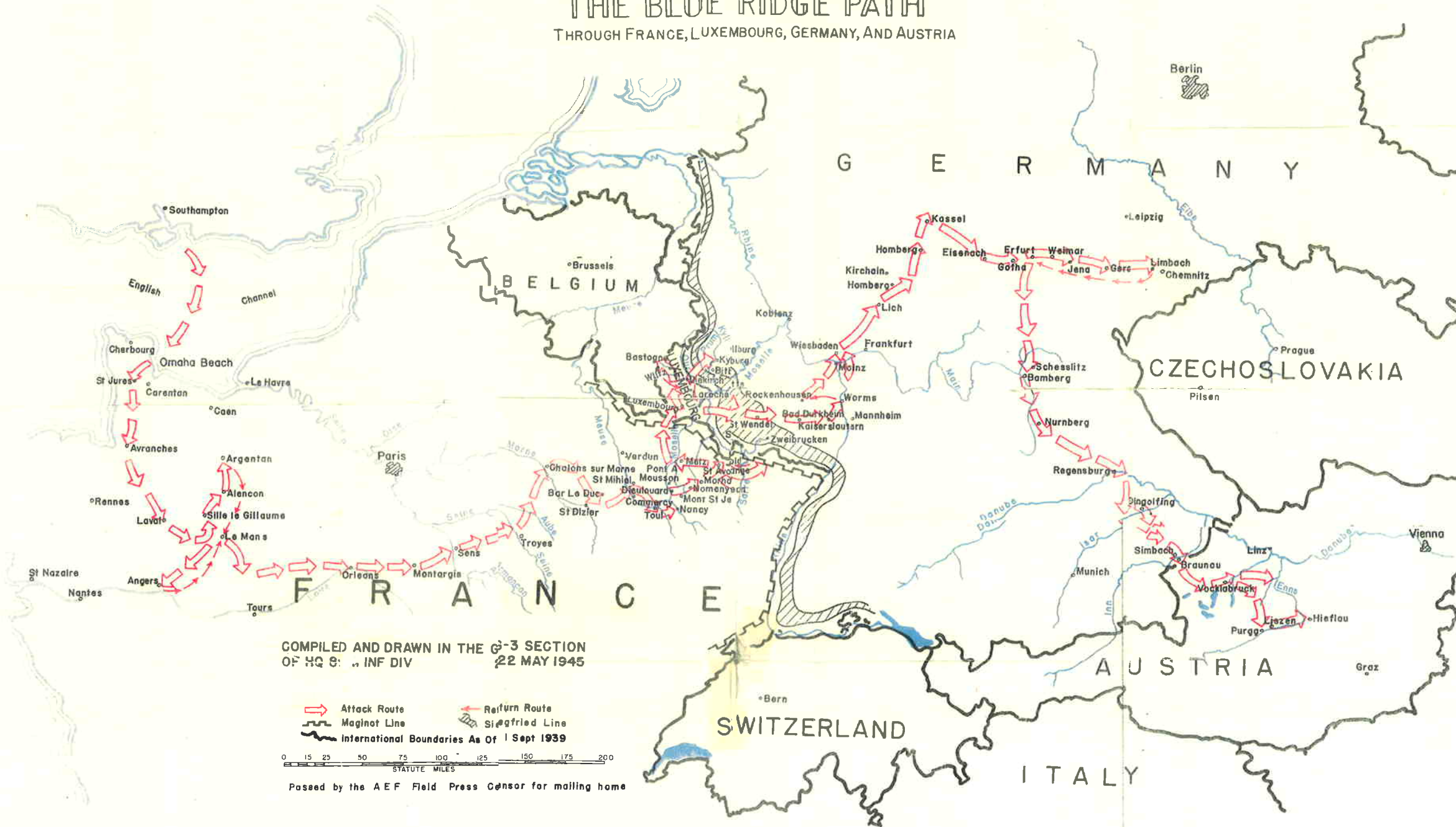
- 1 Departed Fort Dix, N.J. 22 June 1944
- 2 Arrived Camp Kilmer, N.J. 22 June 1944
- 3 Departed Camp Kilmer, N.J. 30 June 1944
- 4 Sailed from New York 1 July 1944
- 5 Arrived Firth Of Clyde, UK 7 July 1944
- 6 Departed " " " " " " " "
- 7 Arrived Newton Lancashire 7 July 1944
- 8 Departed " " 2 Aug. 1944
- 9 Arrived Marshalling Area 2 Aug. 1944
- 10 Departed " " 4 Aug. 1944
- 11 Arrived Vicinity Of Southampton 4 Aug. 1944
- 12 Departed " " " " " " " "
- 13 Arrived Utah Beachhead, France 6 Aug. 1944
- 14 Departed " " " " " " " "
- 15 Arrived St. Jores, France " " " "
- 16 Departed St. Jores, France 8 Aug. 1944
- 17 Arrived 11 mi. E. of Avanches, France 8 Aug. 1944
- 18 Departed " " " " " " " "
- 19 Arrived 8 mi. S. of Montsurs, France 9 Aug. 1944
- 20 Arrived 7 mi. S. of Conlie, France 11 Aug. 1944
- 21 Arrived 1 1/2 mi. E. of St. Mars, France 13 Aug. 1944
- 22 Arrived 2 mi. S. of Jublains, France 15 Aug. 1944
- 23 Arrived 5 mi. S. of Montree, France 17 Aug. 1944
- 24 Arrived 1 mi. N. of Almeneches, France 18 Aug. 1944
- 25 Arrived 1 mi. E. of St. Flavy, France 27 Aug. 1944
- 26 Arrived 1 1/2 mi. NE of Villeseneux, France 28 Aug. 1944
- 27 Arrived 3 mi. NW of Chalons, France 30 Aug. 1944
- 28 Arrived 1/4 mi. SW of Laheycourt, France 1 Sept. 1944
- 29 Arrived 1 1/2 mi. NW of Commercy, France 2 Sept. 1944
- 30 Arrived 1 mi. NE of Vignot, France 4 Sept. 1944
- 31 Arrived 1 1/2 mi. NE of Beaumont, France 5 Sept. 1944
- 32 Arrived 2 mi. SE of Mamey, France 13 Sept. 1944
- 33 Arrived Dieulourd, France 18 Sept. 1944
- 34 Arrived Mailly, France 10 Nov. 1944
- 35 Arrived Alaincourt, France 12 Nov. 1944
- 36 Arrived Morville Sur Nied, France 18 Nov. 1944
- 37 Arrived Crehange, France 24 Nov. 1944
- 38 Arrived Cites Des Charbonnages, France 25 Nov. 1944
- 39 Arrived Teting, France 26 Nov. 1944
- 40 Arrived St. Avoild, France 28 Nov. 1944
- 41 Arrived Bining, France 18 Dec. 1944
- 42 Arrived Luxembourg, Lux. 20 Dec. 1944
- 43 Arrived Schoenfels, Lux. 23 Dec. 1944
- 44 Arrived Bissen, Lux. 9 Jan. 1945
- 45 Arrived Dellen, Lux. 22 Jan. 1945
- 46 Arrived Eschweiler, Lux. 24 Jan. 1945
- 47 Arrived Wiltz, Lux. 25 Jan. 1945
- 48 Arrived Angelsberg, Lux. 28 Jan. 1945
- 49 Arrived Diekirch, Lux. 17 Feb. 1945
- 50 Arrived Mettendorf, Germany 26 Feb. 1945
- 51 Arrived Rittersdell, Germany 6 Mar. 1945
- 52 Arrived Nattenheim, Germany 7 Mar. 1945
- 53 Arrived Altwies, Lux. 11 Mar. 1945
- 54 Arrived Bourig, Germany 12 Mar. 1945
- 55 Arrived Frommerbach, Germany 16 Mar. 1945
- 56 Arrived Losheim, Germany 17 Mar. 1945
- 57 Arrived St. Wendel, Germany 19 Mar. 1945
- 58 Arrived Kaiserlautern, Germany 20 Mar. 1945

59 Arrived Bad Durkheim, Germany 2 Mar. 1945  
60 Arrived Rockhausen, Germany 24 Mar. 1945  
61 Arrived Partenheim, Germany 2 Mar. 1945  
62 Arrived Mainz, Germany 27 Mar. 1945  
63 Arrived Liche, Germany 30 Mar. 1945  
64 Arrived Neukirchen, Germany 31 Mar. 1945  
65 Arrived Homburg, Germany 2 April 1945  
66 Arrived Oberzwehren, Germany 4 April 1945  
67 Arrived Gotha, Germany 7 April 1945  
68 Arrived Dietendorf, Germany 12 April 1945  
69 Arrived Weimar, Germany 13 April 1945  
70 Arrived Gera, Germany 14 April 1945  
71 Arrived Kandler, Germany 16 April 1945  
72 Arrived Schesslitz, Germany 19 April 1945  
73 Arrived Nurnberg, Germany 23 April 1945  
74 Arrived Regensburg, Germany 29 April 1945  
75 Arrived Ergoldsbach, Germany 30 April 1945  
76 Arrived Markl Koffen, Germany 2 May 1945  
77 Arrived Simbach, Germany 3 May 1945  
78 Arrived Vocklabruck, ~~XXXXXX~~ Austria 6 May 1945



# THE BLUE RIDGE PATH

THROUGH FRANCE, LUXEMBOURG, GERMANY, AND AUSTRIA



COMPILED AND DRAWN IN THE G-3 SECTION  
OF HQ 8th INF DIV 22 MAY 1945

Attack Route  
 Return Route  
 Maginot Line  
 Siegfried Line  
 International Boundaries As Of 1 Sept 1939

0 15 25 50 75 100 125 150 175 200  
STATUTE MILES

Passed by the AEF Field Press Censor for mailing home



# Argentan, France



Bulldozer Clearing Wreckage



K.O. Tiger Tank



Mine Detector at Work



Engineers Cleaning Streets



Cathedral

# France



Ferrying Equipment across  
the Moselle River



Pontoon Bridge Across Moselle



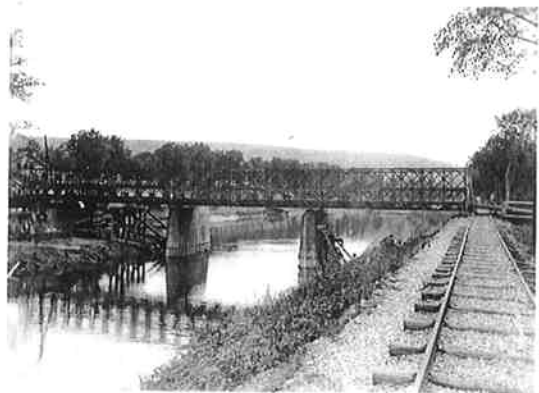
Blown Bridge at Toul



Repairing Bridge Across Moselle



Blown Bridge at Diulard



Bailey Bridge Across  
Pont a Moussen

# France



Blown Bridge at Pont a Moussen



Maginot Line  
Inside Entrance



Fixed Bridge at Pont a Moussen



Maginot Line  
Outside Entrance



Air Shot of Nomeny  
(Captain Queen killed there)



Fort Durian  
Maginot Line  
Metz



# France



K.O. Tiger Tank



View of Moussen Hill



Bridge Blown, Nomeny



RUINS OF HOUSE DESTROYED BY



Recn. Jeep pierced by German 88 shell;  
Bussen cheated death



GERMAN TIME BOMB, ST AVOIRD, FRANCE,  
(AMERICANS KILLED)



ADE Section



S-3 Section



S-4 and S-6 Section



Personnel Section





Map Section



S-2 Section

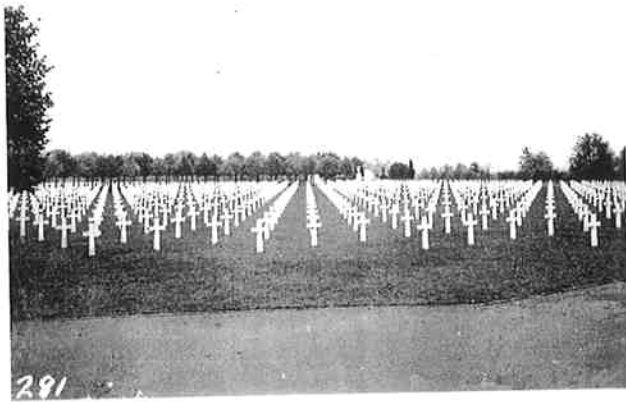
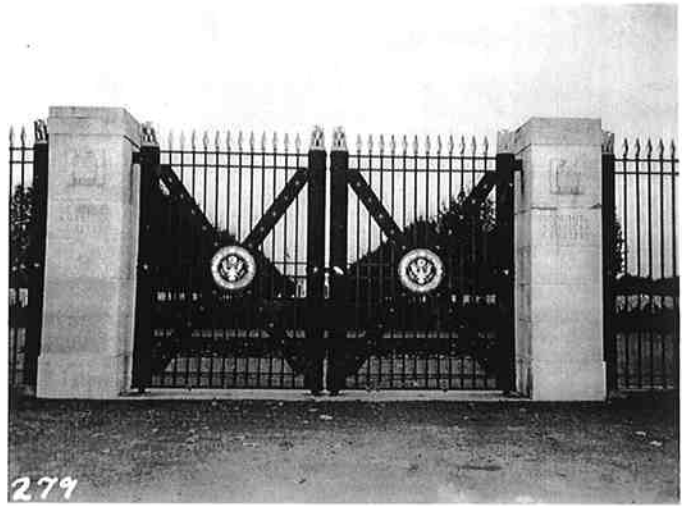


S-4 Section: Al, Queen, Stewart



Radio Crew

# American WWI Cemetery, St. Mihiel





Cathedral at Metz, France



Engineers Dance at Merlabach,, France

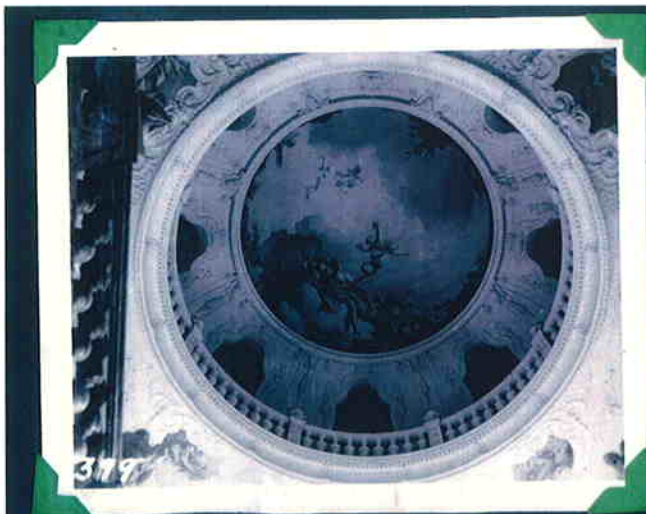
## Duchess of Luxembourg's Summer House



Fireplace in Duchess's Bedroom



Garden



DONE ABOVE STAIRWAY IN DUTCHESS OF LUXEMBOURG'S SUMMER HOME.



CEILING OF RECEPTION ROOM, DUTCHESS OF LUXEMBOURG'S SUMMER HOME.



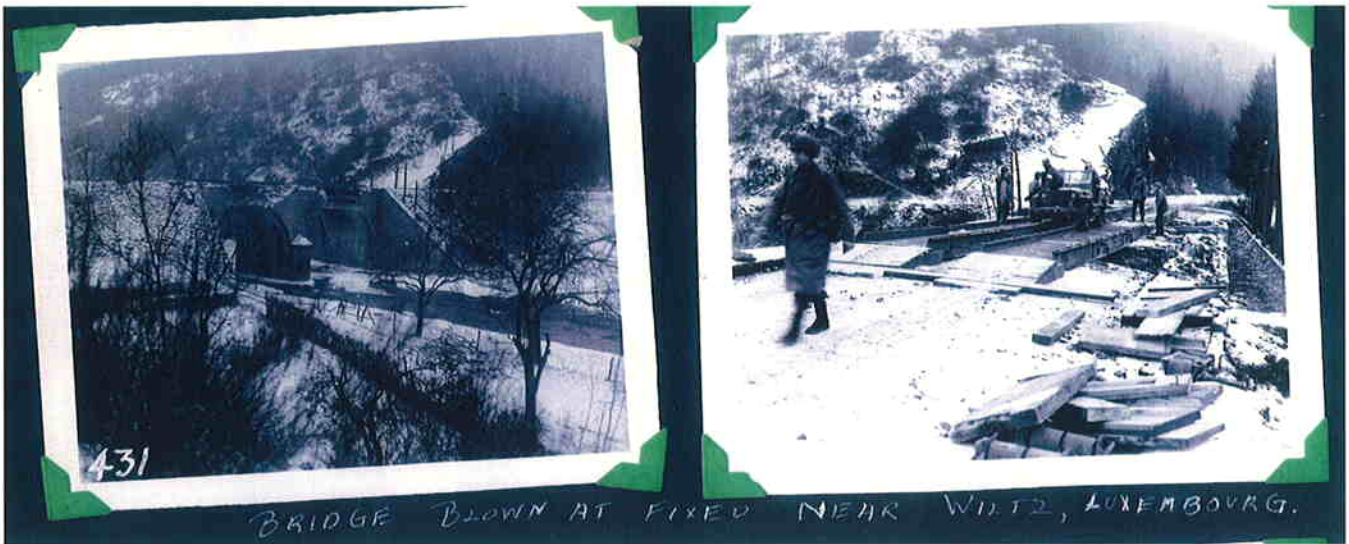
# Luxembourg



Bridge Blown at Ettlebruck



Bridge in Luxembourg



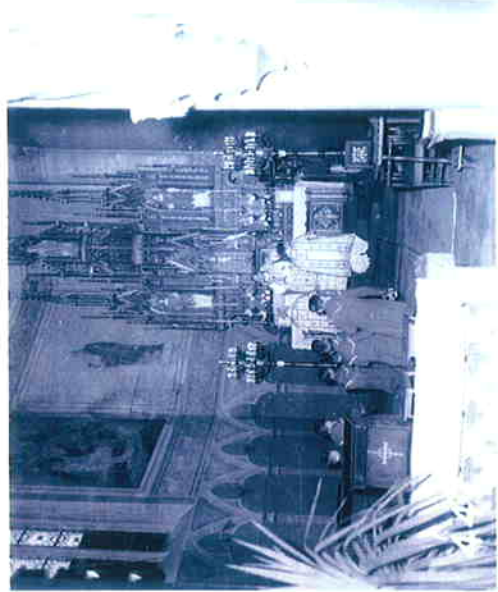
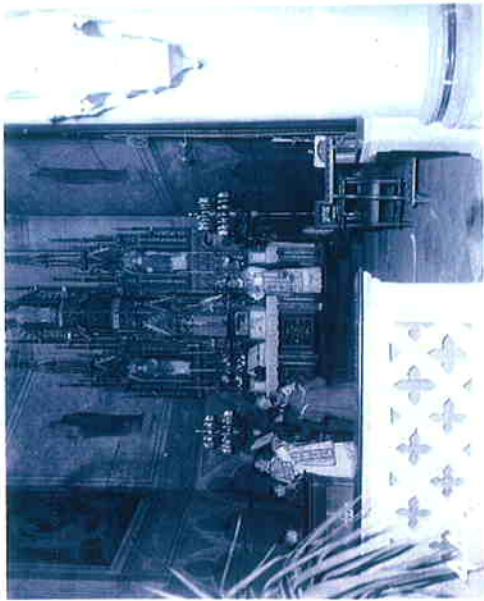
Clearing Snowbound Road



Mine uncovered near Dahl

# Luxembourg

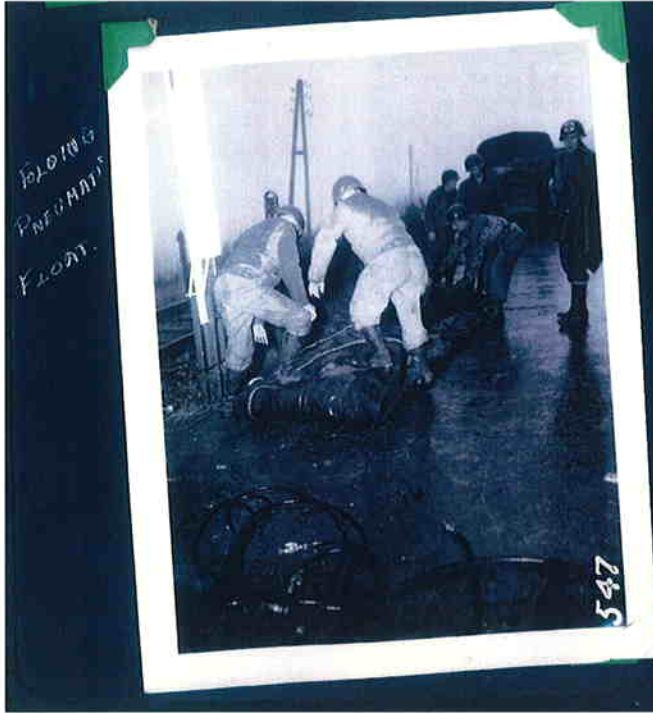
Church Service at Bissen



Mail Call, Christmas, 1944  
Dommeldange



# Luxembourg



RECOVERING FLOATS AFTER  
CROSSING SURE RIVER



Removing Booby Trap on Dead German



Recovering



Dragging dead cows for burial, Waldbilling,

# Luxembourg



Rolling Bailey Bridge Over Crater



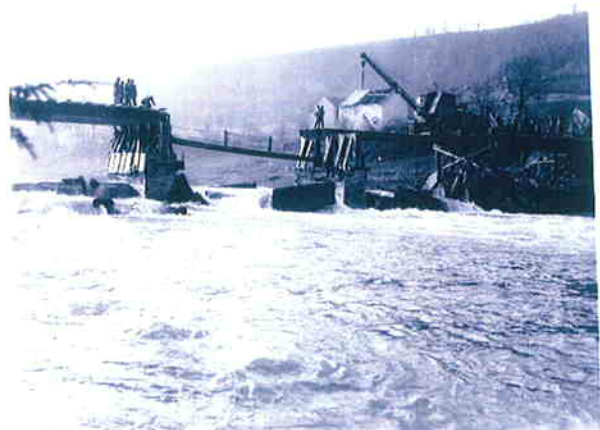
Pontoon Bridge Across Sure River



Fixed Bridge, Diekirch



Bridge Blown at Wiltz, Luxembourg



Constructing Fixed Bridge at Reisdorf





Approach to Bridge  
Wallendorf, Germany



Blown up pillbox of Siegfried Line



Blown out Embrasure



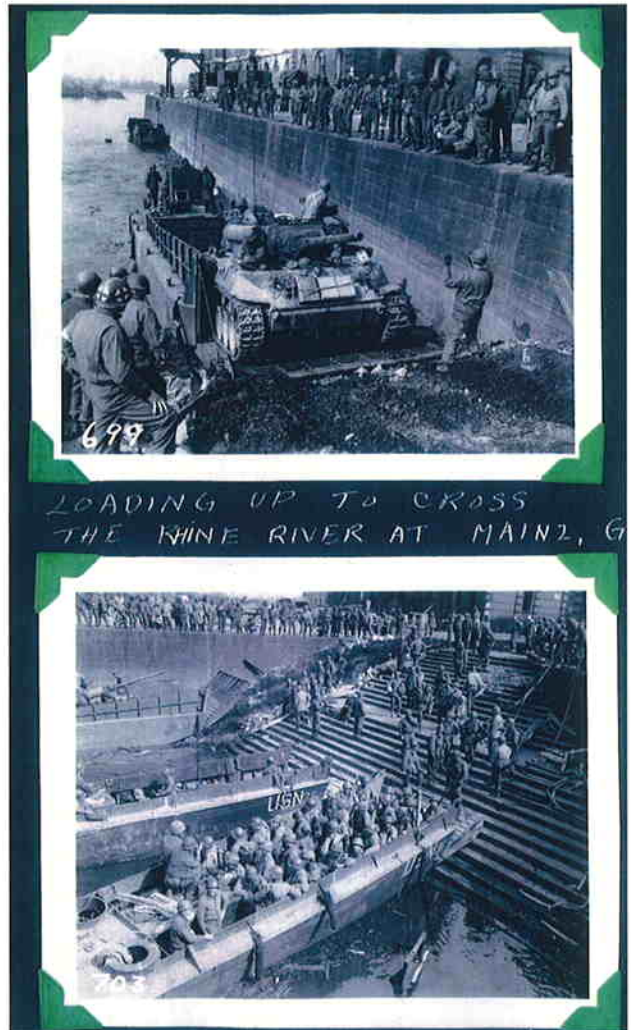
# Mainz, Germany



Engineers working on approaches for LCMs



Bringing in PWs



# Germany



Checking captured German generator at  
Gotha



Repairing German truck



Prisoners marching to  
stockade at Weimar



Captured German truck being converted  
to carry supplies for US



# Germany



Al



Bagged a Deer



Glass of kickapoot juice

# Bamburg, Germany

36 HOUR RIDE FROM CHEMENIZ TO BAMBERG, GERMANY.



BRFAST



CATCHING 30 WINKS

ALL TIRED OUT



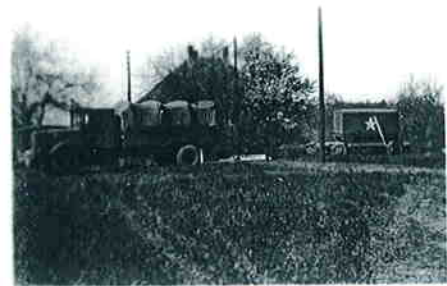
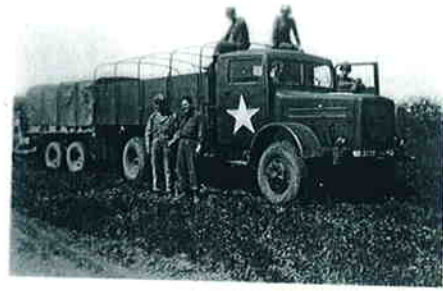
BEFORE NEXT MOVE



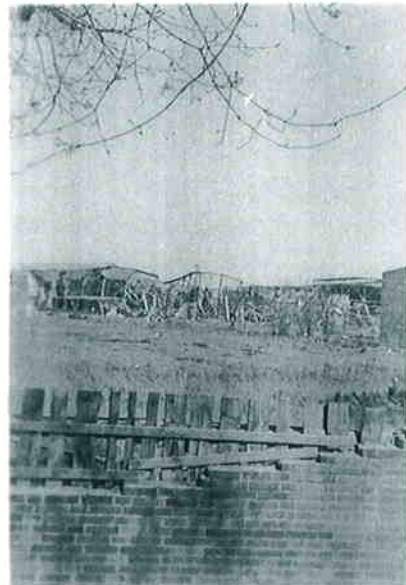
# Germany



Repairing Trucks,  
Bamburg



Eating Breakfast, Bamburg

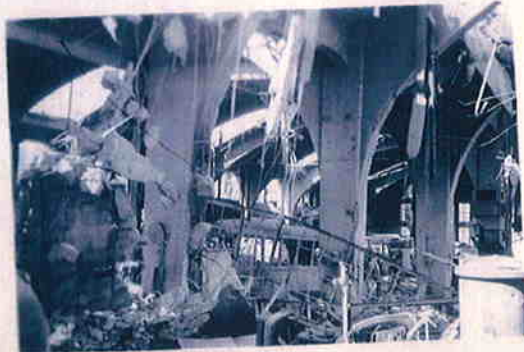
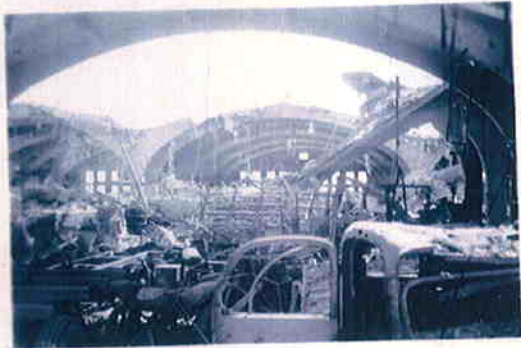


Bombed Air Factory  
Regensburg





BOMBED  
TRUCK  
FACTORY  
NEAR  
BAMBERG,  
GERMANY.



# Concentration Camp, Ohrdurf



Slave laborers murdered by SS Troupers



Burial pits at prison



Partially cremated bodies at prison



Partially submerged body in pit

Neurnburg, Germany

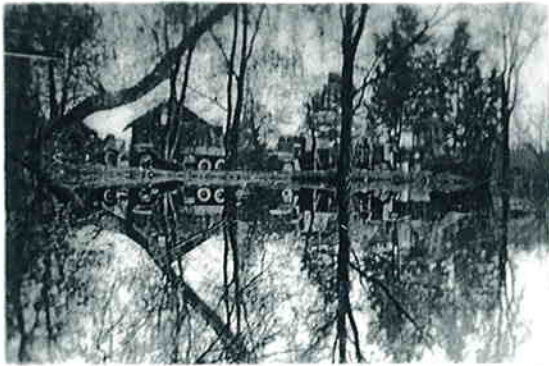




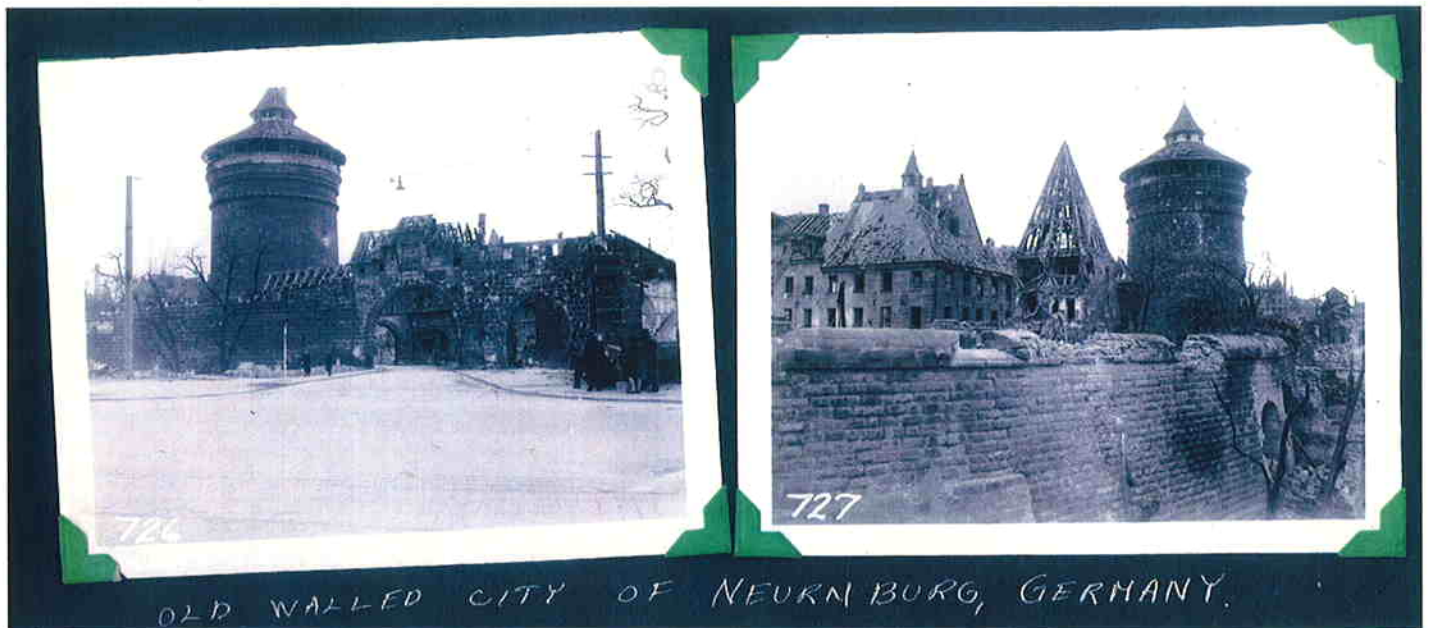
# Neurnburg, Germany



Bombed railroad depot



Water point



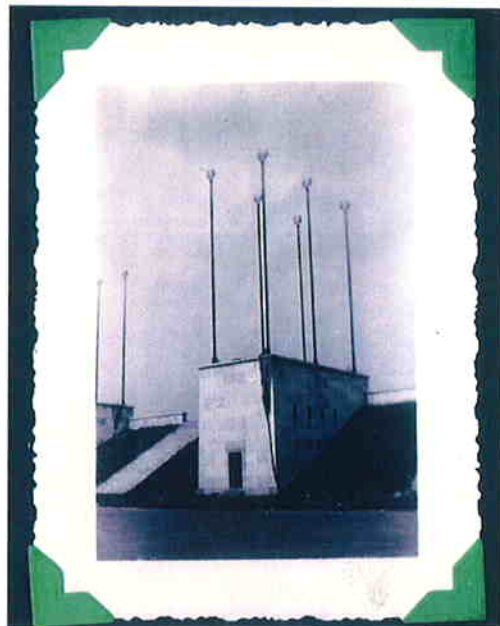
# Zeppelin Wiese Stadium, Neurnburg

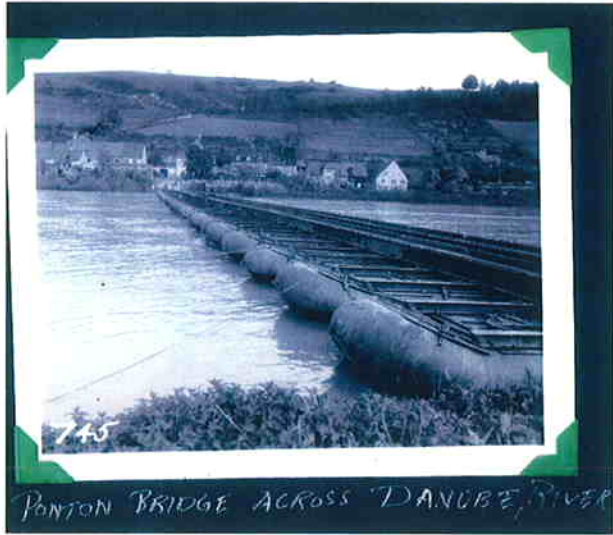


VIEW OF "RASTRUM ZEPPELIN WIESE STADIUM" AT NEURNBERG, GERMANY.

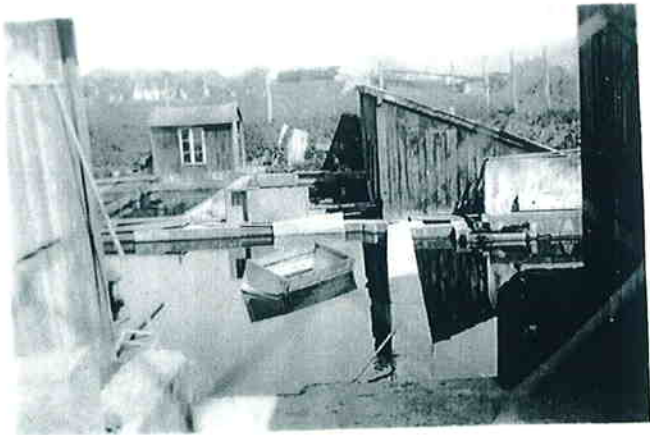


ZEPPELIN WIESE STADIUM.





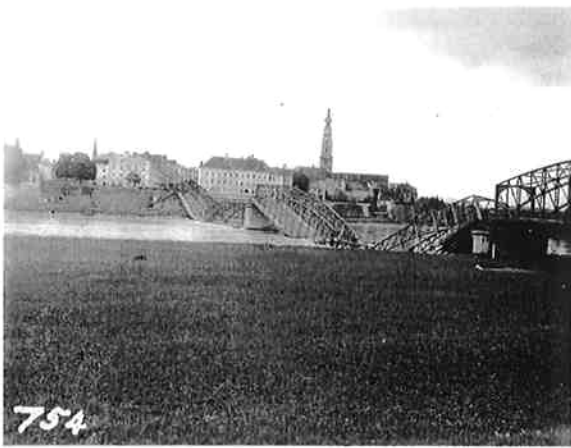
Blown bridge at Braneau, Austria



Fish Hatchery at Braneau, Austria



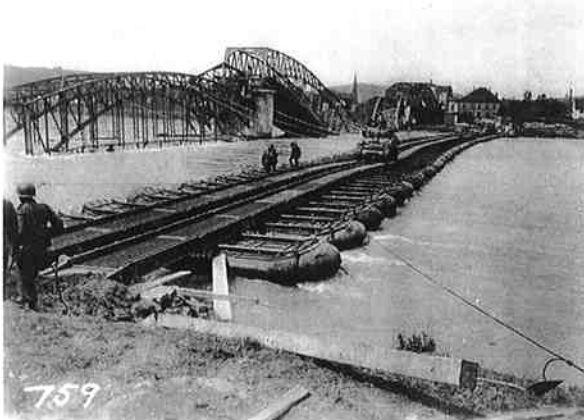
# Germany



German PWs crossing bridge



Blown bridge made passable



Blown Bridge and pontoon bridge over Inn



IA

NA PAMIÓTKĘ JEDNEMU Z  
OSWOBODZICIELY OFIAROWAŁ  
MŁY POLAK Z WARSZAWY  
JUREK  
WISNIEWSKI

dn. 27. may

Polish Refugee



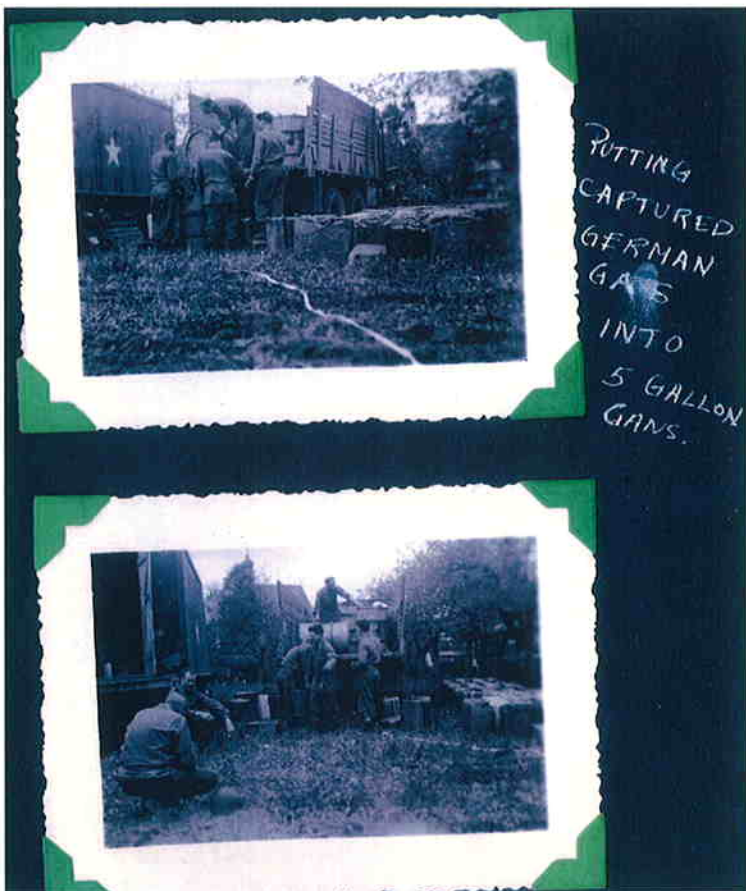
Bus and Al



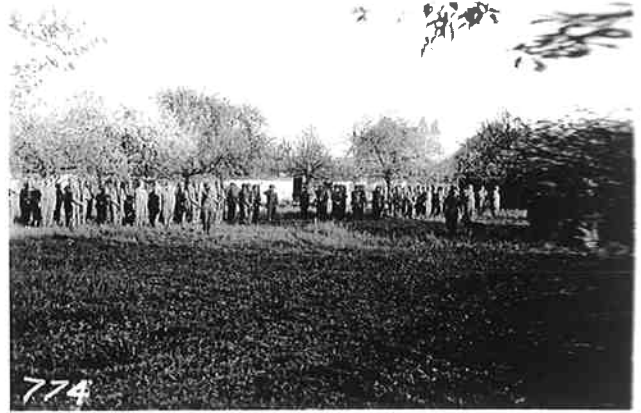
German women taken to stockade  
Volckabruck, Austria



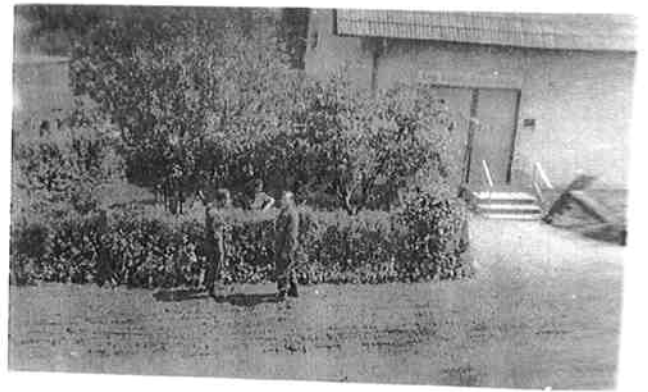
German officer PWs  
loading into boxcar for stockade



# Austria



To Colors  
Volckabruck



Fraternizing  
Volckabruck



"A Mess of Trout"



# Grumenden Lake



SCENES  
AROUND  
THE  
GRUMENDEN  
LAKE



# Grumenden Lake



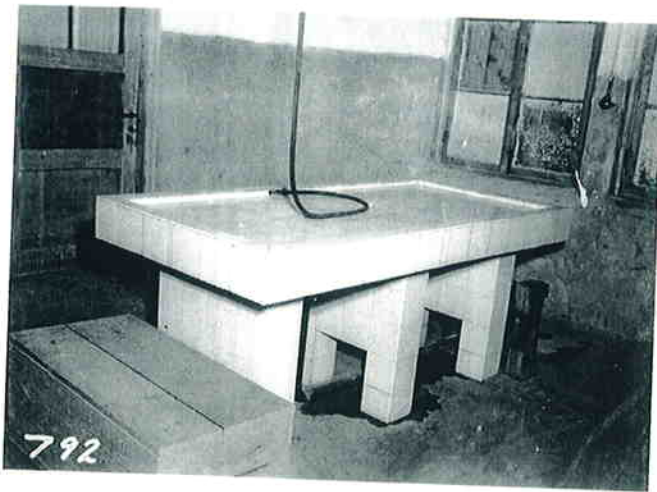
# Concentration Camp near Ebensee, Austria



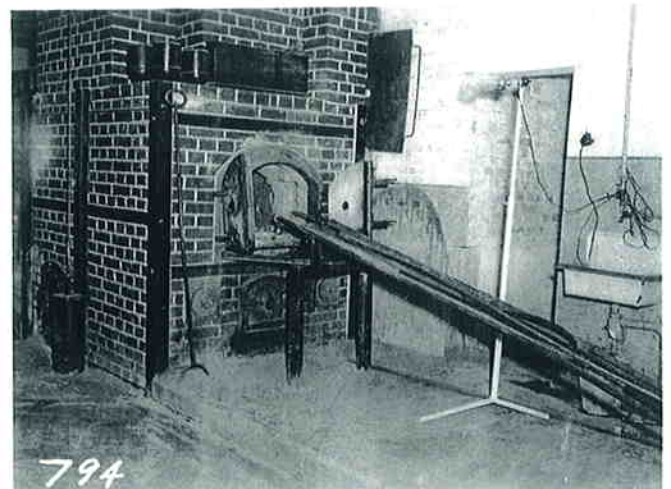
Prisoner



Dead before cremation



Dissecting table



Crematory

# Concentration Camp near Ebensee, Austria



Washing slaves to prevent disease



Freed Slaves





# Austrian Alps



Off for the top of the  
Ebensee Mountains





TOP OF THE MOUNTAINS



ON A PICNIC, FUSSEN, GERMANY



GERMAN PLANE WHICH TRIED TO MAKE  
A GUT-A-WAY.



ME

Austrian Alps





BUS AND I ↗



Lake near Markt Oberdorf, Germany



Relaxing in a sun parlor  
of a German house



BUS



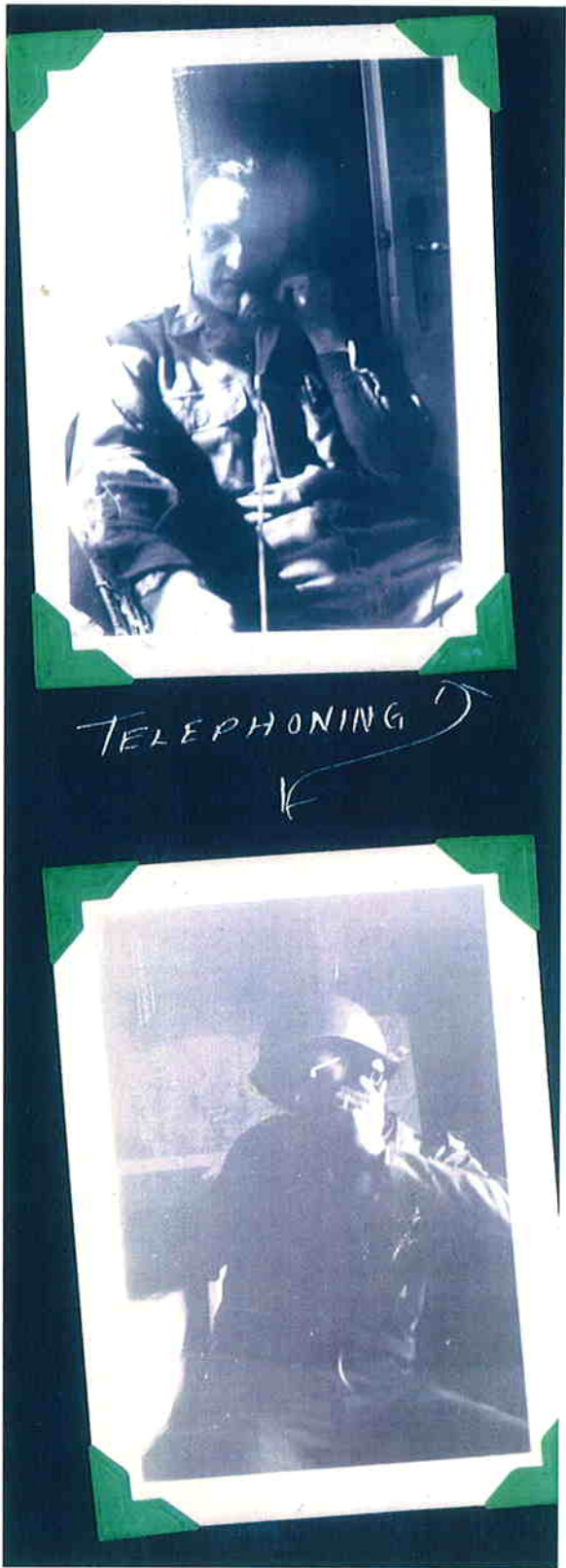
BERMAN



RUSSELL



BECKMYER



TELEPHONING





BUS & I



KNAUPER



STEWART



J

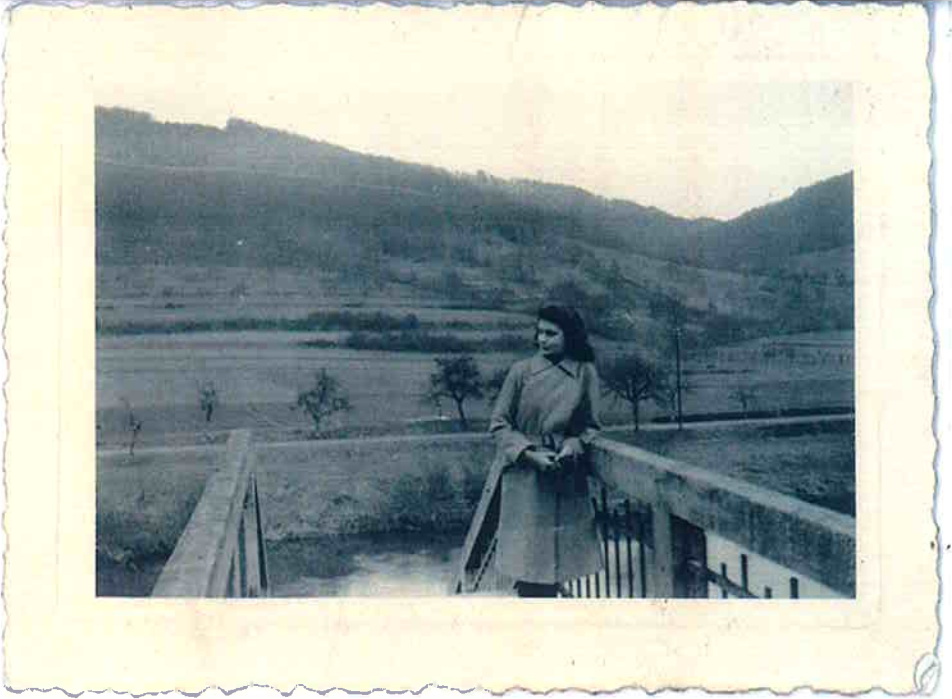


GANDY



WHITESIDE





Polish Refugees

Polish Refugees





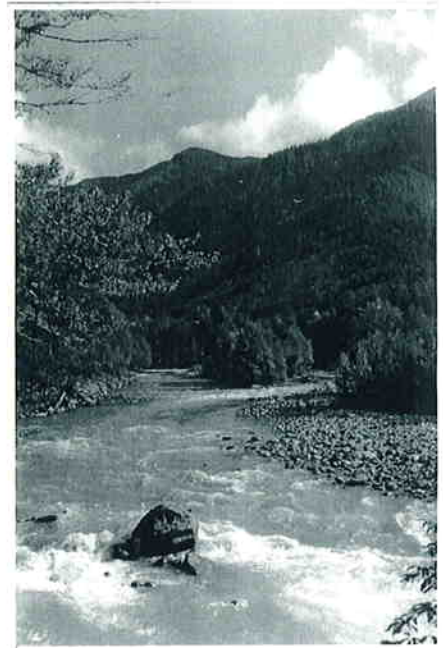
GERMAN FIRING MORTAR







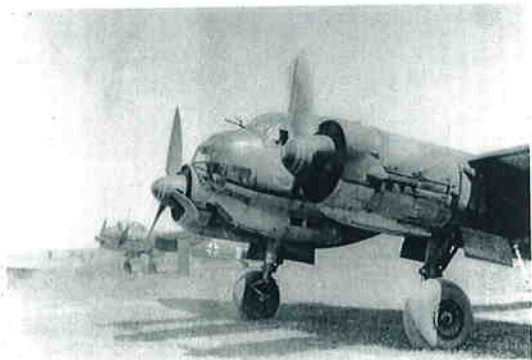
Kaukasus Front



Stream in Caucasian Mountains



Black Sea (Novorosysk)



German Plane (Taganrog)



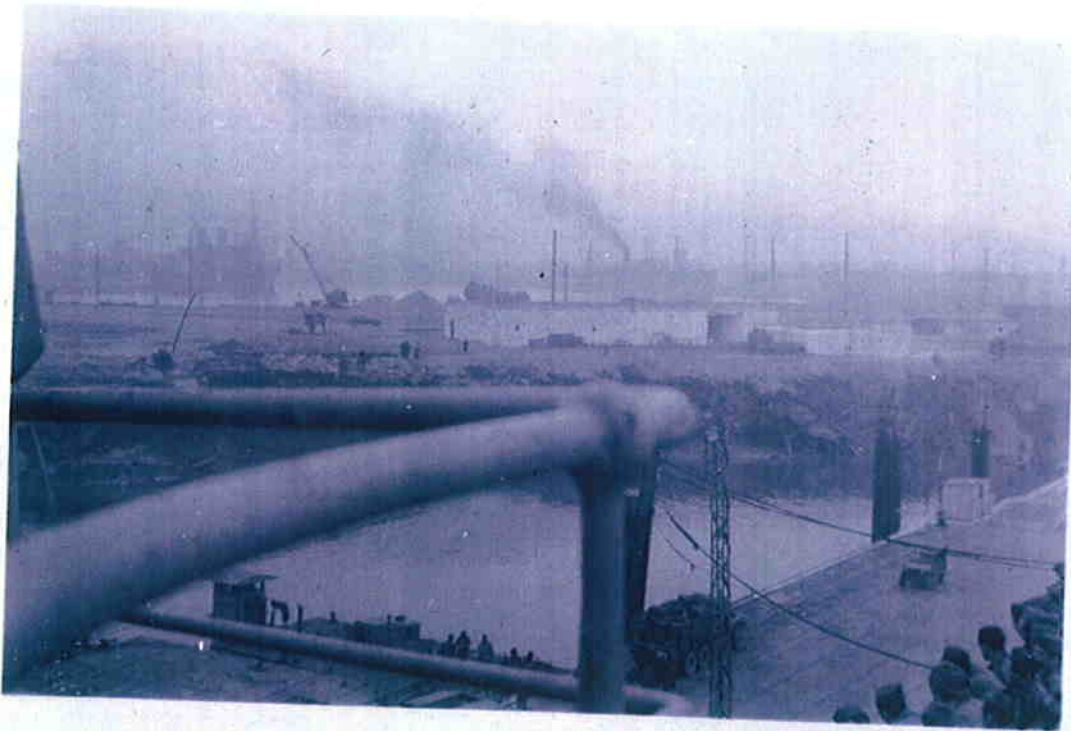
Russian Scenes



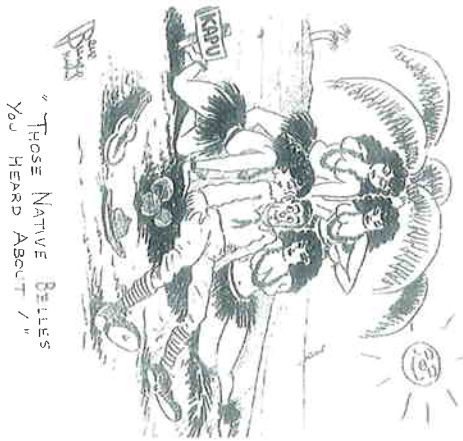


Landsburg, Germany

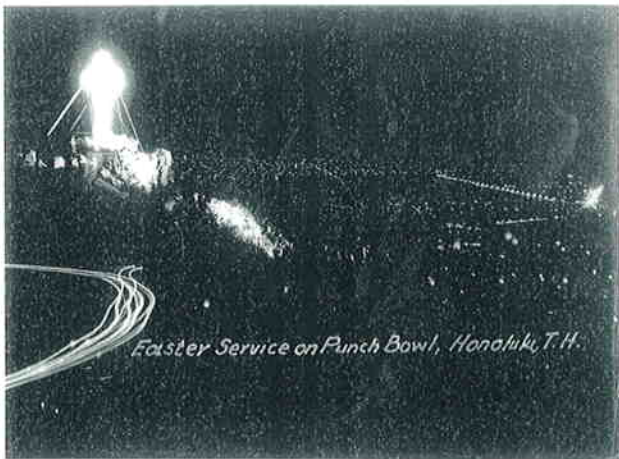
Leaving LaHavre, France  
September 10, 1945



*What Aloha Means*  
 Aloha means good morning,  
 Aloha means good-bye,  
 It means until we meet again,  
 Beneath a tropic sky,  
 Aloha means farewell to this,  
 And also to be true,  
 But the best thing that Aloha means,  
 Is, I LOVE YOU.



"THOSE NATIVE BELLES  
 YOU HEARD ABOUT!"



Faster Service on Punch Bowl, Honolulu, T.H.

AIR MAIL

Edward  
 1214 H. H. H. H. H.  
 1/10/42



Dearest Parents:  
 I spotted this  
 card & I thought  
 you'd know the  
 feeling is still  
 the same.

Mr. + Mrs.  
 Florian Dominick  
 70 E. Chestnut St.  
 Wilkes-Barre, Pa.  
 U. S. A.

Your youngest,  
Al.

High Partners!  
 I ain't seen nothing  
 like the card says  
 yet. Maybe they're  
 hiding? Or maybe  
 they use camouflage  
 stuff. Kid Bro.  
 Mr. Whitty & Dimply Wally  
 70 E. Chestnut St.  
 Wilkes-Barre, Pa.  
 U. S. A.



AIR MAIL  
 Edward  
 1214 H. H. H. H. H.  
 1/10/42

AIR MAIL

Edward  
 1214 H. H. H. H. H.  
 1/10/42



Dearest Sis:  
 No more do the  
 lights twinkle as  
 bright as this card  
 indicates. Life here  
 is now toned to a  
 wartime tempo.

Miss  
 Helen Dominick  
 10 E. Chestnut St  
 Wilkes-Barre, Pa.  
 U. S. A.

Kid Bro.  
Al.

Print the complete address to which this letter is to be sent below, and your return address in the space provided.  
Use typewriter, dark ink, or pencil. Write plainly. Very small writing is not suitable.

1062



Emma Dominick  
108 Chestnut St.  
Wilkes Barre, Pa.

Post. F. A. Mod. 36106925

Regel. Ho. 6 163 2/4  
U. S. Post Office  
60 Postoffice  
(Sender's address)

San Francisco, Calif.

March 6-43  
(Date)

Give the family  
my regards.  
Cousin Frank





No. 357

POSTED BY  
1952  
S

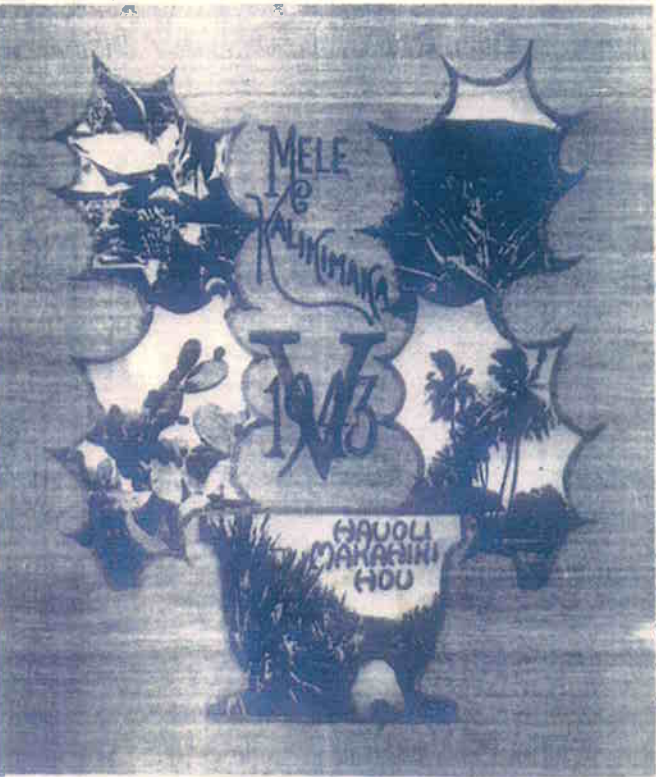
(CENSOR'S STAMP)

MR. & MRS. FLOREAN DOMINICK, SR.,  
70 EAST CHESTNUT STREET  
WILKES-BARRE, PENNSYLVANIA.

Sgt. Al Dominick, 13007046  
(Sender's name)  
Service Co., 34th Infantry,  
(Sender's address)  
c/o Postmaster, A.P.O., #957  
San Francisco, California.  
Monday - December 14th,  
(Date)

Happy Christmas 'n A Happy New Year, Folks!

That's exactly what the greeting on this V-Mail, Christmas Card says. Only, of course, it is written in the Hawaiian language. Quite a novel way of sending Christmas and New Year greetings.



I imagine our Ma will probably keep this as a souvenir. I don't blame her if she does. This is something unusual and rare. Here's hoping that everyone at home will be well and very, very happy. Well, I guess that

is about all, except that I'll be dreaming of a white Xmas!

V-MAIL

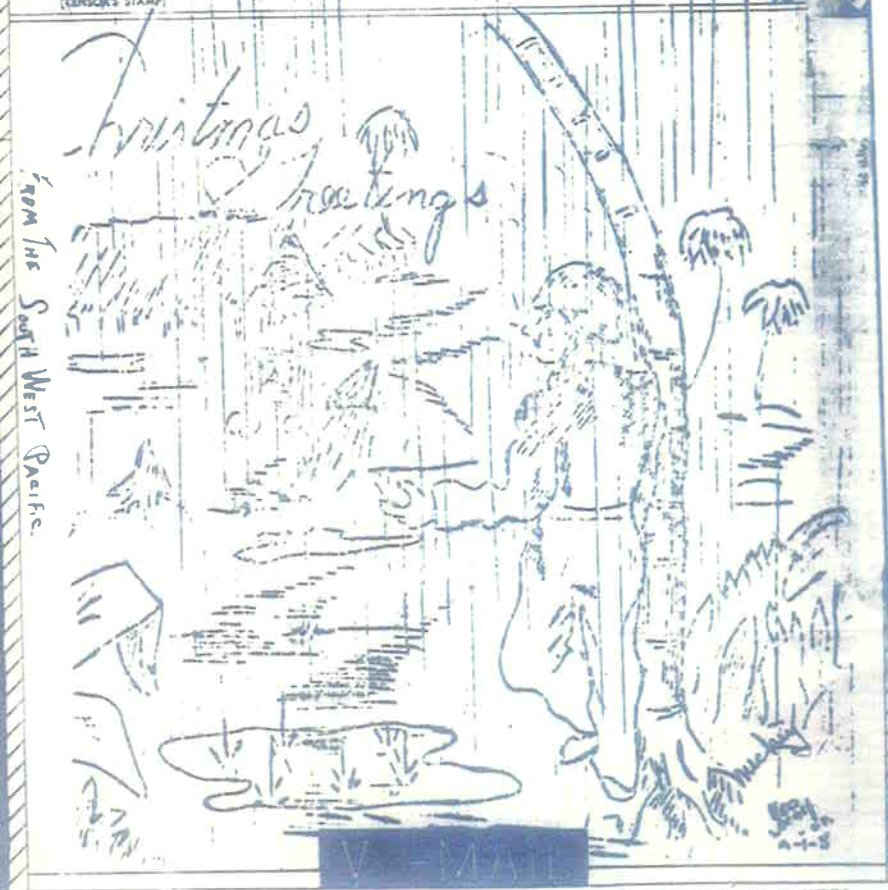
Al

No.

(CENSOR'S STAMP)

To: Sgt. Al Dominick  
70 E. Chestnut St  
Wilkes Barre  
Pa

From:  
PFC [Name]  
[Address]  
San Francisco Ca  
(Date) [Date]



V-MAIL

4-3





*Al. Donumek slept  
here. In the back room  
next to the kitchen bottom  
floor*

**Niles  
Public Library District**

**DEC 29 2006**

**Niles, Illinois 60714**