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U.S. ARMY EXAMINER

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THIS SPACE IS FOR YOUR PERSONAL LETTER

WHEN COMPLETED FOLD ONCE AND STAPLE OR TAPE. NO ENVELOPE NECESSARY.

Dear Sis
Tell Joan that I recived her letter today & that I will answer it tomorrow as it is time to go to bed. Please put this in my picture album for me.
Love
Harold

Engineer bn. does superior job in Holland

Engineers of the 307th Engineer Battalion distinguished themselves in one of the most important and hazardous assaults in the Nijmegen sector—a thrust which put two battalions of infantry over the Waal, River west of the Nijmegen under artillery, mortar and small arms fire.

The engineers crossed the river under direct enemy observation in canvas boats; crossed and recrossed despite loss of more than half of their craft.

Twenty-six boats moved over the river in the first wave and only 11 were in condition for the return trip. Despite the small number of serviceable boats, the engineers paddled from bank to bank until the entire infantry force was committed.

In addition to assembling, launching and propelling the assault boats, those whose boats were disabled joined the assaulting forces in their successful battle for the highly important Nijmegen bridges.

The engineers have done a creditable job throughout the campaign, aiding in infantry fighting, establishing road blocks, removing mines and bridge demolitions and acting as security troops for the Division command post.

„The Gelderlander Press," having been forbidden by the enemy, rejoices to be free again by the glorious landing of the ALLIED LIBERATORS near Nijmegen. Praying God he may bless America's President FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT, the British Empire's King GEORGE VI, and the VALIANT PEOPLE they represent, we hope they may soon lead our common weapons to complete victory.

G. H. J. B. BODEWES
Director
„Gelderlander Press".

Division Artillery makes history in Holland on D-Day

Continued from pag. 1

shot out were repaired instantly, with wire-men going without relief to see that their beloved wires were kept operating. An outstanding feature of the capture of the Nijmegen bridge was the communications carried across the Waal river by 376th radio and telephone operaters in the face of terrific hostile fire, enabling the battalion to provide close direct support throughout the heroic engagement. The artillery air OP's, arriving on D plus 3, have been a thorn in the side of German operations since their arrival, cracking down accurate fire on mortars, Nebelwerfers, or batteries as they appear. With two of their cubs attacked by German fighters, the air pilots and observers jauntily continue their flights as if there was no opposition, keeping Jerry under cover throughout the day.

With the arrival of the British ground troops, our artillery was augmented by Field and Medium regiments, which permitted long awaited counter-battery action. Supporting our fire with a constant stream of different regiments as the action passed North across the Nijmegen Bridge, division artillery headquarters was confronted with a nice problem of coordinating the American and British fire. Their success has been acknowledged by the commendation of the Allied Airborne Commander, Lieutenant General F. A. M. Browning, CB, DSO.

In a more static position, the gunners have now dug themselves in, and have set up house-keeping — underground style. The experience of the 376th Parachute Battalion during its fifty-nine days on the Anzio beach head has been invaluable, some of the gunners having provided themselves with the luxury of rooms with six feet of solid earth over their heads, complete with lights and toilet facilities. The sergeant-major has even provided a visiting room for first-sergeants, suitable for any first-class mine. It will be very hard to break the composure of the artillerymen as they contentedly drop shells on any Jerry that shows his head. Assured by their supported infantry that they are doing a fine job, the gunners are very happy.

U. S. ARMY EXAMINER

„A Rookie's reception"

By Wm. F. Dawson

(September 30, Delayed—with the 82nd „All-American" Airborne Division, NIJMEGEN, HOLLAND.)

„The war is almost over". The Germans are all old men and young children. They haven't any gasoline — their ammunition is very scarce".

So reads, preaches and believes Mr. and Mrs. Optimistic America and, perhaps with some truth, but let's talk to anyone of these doughboys fighting on the Dutch-German border. They are rugged paratroopers, the same American Division that spearheaded assaults into Sicily, Italy, Normandy, and now the Netherlands. Every day some of them are being killed by the same Krauts who are „too old to fight," too low on morale to fight, too low on gasoline to fight, too scarce of ammunition to fight, etc.

One thing seems to be forgotten. If there is only one round of ammunition left and only one 65 year old German to fire it, the war is still very, very real to the American boy at the other end of that enemy's rifle barrel. Until the last shot is fired the war will be very much real to the boys doing the fighting.

Last night I slept with the men of the 82nd Airborne Division. They had been through Sicily, Italy [illegible] Holland. These men were veterans. What few were left from the Sicilian campaign had been through more than most of us would believe possible. War never was and never will be „old stuff" to these men. They are experienced, yes, but never bored; not in this business.

We were tired and slept soundly until 10:00 o'clock, 11:00 o'clock, 12:00 o'clock, then it came — a terrific explosion! We awoke with a start. All night the British had been firing their huge earth-quaking Long Toms from around us and we slept on, but this was different! Any man who had ever been under artillery fire knew it. That last shell was not going in the other direction. Maybe it was a stray? But, no, we were not destined to be so fortunate. The long sputtering whistle, the deafening crash and flying shrapnel, twigs, dirt, everything in the path of the plumeting steel segments begins to rain down on you.

Almost mechanically, the men were out of their sacks and into the nearest hole or depression available. I was a visitor, but hosts have no time for visitors during artillery bombardments. The fox-holes were full of GI flesh, so a quick dive brought me face to face with yesterday's lunch. I'd picked the garbage pit. Cringing, huddled amongst the rotting scrapings of the GI mess kits, I bent myself double against the sides of the broken-down hole and prayed like I've never prayed before.

For two hours I shivered with fright and cold as, one after another, the shells whistled and flashed in a crescendo of ear-shattering concussion and body-shattering steel.

They were coming in fours and fives. I began to know when I heard one that three or four more were certain to follow. And then, with the fifth one, the ever present hope and prayer, the „Oh Dear God, don't let them send another series".

After a minute's respite, a minute of hope, anxiety, fear, and tension they would start coming again. The plaintive wail of the huge missels plumeting through the air and then the characteristic rush of wind, and the horrible head-splitting explosion.

After two hours it stopped. I had cramps in my legs from the long crouching and huddling into the smallest possible target. My ears buzzed with the dulled senseless hearing from the constant explosion. Neither had mattered before, nor had the headache from the concussion of the earthshaking bursts.

Twenty minutes longer we shook in our holes. The bombardment had been so long, and the terro had struck so deep, that it was hard to believe the quiet was but a lull before another burst of horror.

Finally, the men started popping up again. „How are all your men, Sergeant?" „We lost two jeeps."

„The hell with the jeeps, check that other squad." „That was a close one, Joe." „You ain't kiddin' Bud. That was worse than Anzio and those nights there were no picnic either."

The men were themselves again. Not many felt like sleeping, but they could talk, and joke, and buck each other up as they inspected the area for damage. Finding your buddies safe after such an ordeal is a wonderful feeling. You've come through another together.

In my tent were fourteen shrapnel holes. Our newly acquired writing table had only three legs left, and the upholstered chair we had taken from the Ex-Gestapo Headquarters was nothing but splinters. Bud's mess kit had a big gaping hole in its side. The water can which stood beside my beloved garbage pit showed three yawning holes. One of Joe's tent poles had been cut in two, leaving his tent half colapsed. Nearly every vehicle had gashes or scars. One truck had burned up from the explosion of a direct hit. Others were demolished from shell fragments. Trees were all over the ground. Those still standing had splintery white gashes. Few were left unscarred. Concussion had covered the earth with fresh green leaves shaken from every branch in a premature fall.

A final check showed personnel intact. Not one casualty in the whole area that the Germans had so thoroughly raked and covered with fire.

„Good," you say, „then why write about it"?

I'll tell you why these Airborne soldiers of the 82nd have proven through four campaigns that they are as brave as any group of men in the world. They will face any foe alive with rifle or cold steel. They have killed more Germans, and lost more of their own men than any of us like to think about.

God had answered our prayers that night. None were killed in that particular barrage, but in other barrages, other areas, both in the 82nd and with American boys all over Europe, every one was not so fortunate. The same harrowing, horrifying, terrible explosions were taking lives of brave men huddled in the protection of the ground all over the war-torn world. We cannot begin to completely measure the horrors of war in the number of casualties. Each man must also fight his own private little war. They are still shooting at him. He needs your understanding, help and appreciation. The overall tide of battle has swung our way, but, for the individual, the squad, the Division, still fighting the tenacious German, the war is far from over.

For many, things have brightened and we at the front are glad, but until everyone of our men are safe we want the people to know and FACE the truth. This is no time to count our chickens.

Last night the German was not short on gasoline to haul his big guns to the front. Last night the German was not short on ammunition to kill our troops. Today, Tomorrow, and the next day, will be the same. Do not coast across the finish line. We, on the German border, cannot take it easy, and we need the faith, understanding and cooperation to help us finish the job faster so we too can plan our play for the future.

No matter how old or young the remaining German, he is still strong enough to pull the trigger on his rifle or yank the lanyard on his artillery.

The Luftwaft still flys over night and day to strafe and drop bombs on us. The enemy artillery still pounds us nightly. The machine guns still sputter and spit death. The German fights on.

The boys of the 82nd and the boys at every front want you to know they are winning as they always have, but the price is still great; the German still fights, tenaciously, doggedly, fanatically, and most are neither too young nor too old, but Grade A No. 1 fighters. Each soldier has learned love and respect for his buddies that have fought by his side so valiently for so long and he wants you to know that those who die now are just as heroic, just as dead, and just as worthy of the ideals they died to preserve as those who had life snuffed out farther back along the trail. Don't forget the boys now anymore than you did in Sicily, Italy, Normandy, and any other battle zone where men die that more shall live. They have a fight to finish and so do you. When it is finished is time to relax. Only then let's talk about Germans too old to fight, Germans without planes, trucks, guns, and ammunition. Our soldiers have a great faith in you at home. They'll fight harder and finish sooner if you do not let them get discouraged by your complacency. They are proud and happy that living is better and easier at home than in the countries they liberate. Don't hurt them by taking advantage of their pride. Recognize their fight ahead and help them win it.

WITH THE 82nd AIRBORNE BIJ GLIDER

(continued from pag. 3)

Soon we could see the fields bedecked with their silk mushrooms that spelled „our boys are there." (Unlike most invasions, the gliders and paratroop planes had taken off simultaneously, and it was a short ten minutes between the time the last silk collapsed and the first glider hit the deck.)

When we'd spotted our landing zone the „glider commander co-pilot" (nearly all our regular officers rode co-pilot this trip) from his co-pilot's seat showed the pilot the forest they'd talked so often about landing near.

„Get ready, we're cuttin' loose," shouted the pilot. The Nylon tow rope was released and we banked for an into the wind landing. Speed 140 . . . 120 . . . 90, down we came, 60 miles an hour and nosed into the soft dirt for an unexpectedly quick but perfect stop. „Let's go!" shouted the co-pilot amid a cloud of flying dirt, and simultaneously with the glider stop, we grabbed our rifles, unhooked our safety belts, and piled out the sides of the glider, running pell mell to flop in the nearest ditch. Finding things unbelievably quiet in our sector of the LZ, we returned to get our sleeping bags and haversacks. From other gliders, not so crowded with personnel (we had fourteen men in ours) came jeeps, trailers, and a small number of artillery pieces.

All gliders were not as lucky as ours, for no one expected to find the soft plowed ground which appeared as smooth green fields from above, but, on the whole, crashes were few, and casualties, both glider and parachute, on the first all daylight invasion in the E.T.O., were amazingly light. The 82nd had landed again. In their fourth German-held country, as in Sicily, Italy, and Normandy, they would go on to victory in Holland.