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Century Sentinel

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BITTER STREET FIGHTING IN HEILBRONN

Artillery Duels Mark Battle At Neckar Bridge

100th Guns Pound Heilbronn Targets With Great Effect

The fiercest artillery duels East of the Rhine raged throughout the first week of the intense struggle for Heilbronn as Century doughboys and engineers valiantly strove to span the Neckar.

Stubbornly-resisting Nazis in the key city felt the full power of the Division's medium and big guns, which blasted tanks, buildings and communications lines in the greatest concentration of fire power thrown at one place since the 100th went into combat.

In spite of the effectiveness of our artillery, German guns firing from commanding positions in the hills in back of the city constantly raked the west bank of the river where the bridge had been thrown across, making it without doubt the hottest spot in the entire ETO last week.

In a single hour last Sunday morning, 194 rounds of light and medium artillery shells fell in the bridgehead area.

Even the powerful M-12s, which helped crack the Maginot Line forts near Bitche, were brought back into play to pound away at some of the tough-nuts-to-crack at Heilbronn. The self-propelled, direct fire gun mounted on a tank

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LOOKS ARE DECEIVING. Neckar River looks mighty tranquil in this shot taken from west bank shortly after Battle of Heilbronn got underway. Fiercest fighting in ETO last week raged near here.

Sniper Fire Stops When Co. I Gets Old Ringleader

Only a few hours after the 3rd Bn. of the 397th Inf. had set up its CP in Neckargartach, the headquarters was subjected to concentrated sniper fire by civilians from houses scarcely 200 yards away. The sniping died down as quickely as it started when doughs of Co. I routed out a middle-aged Kraut who proved to be the ringleader.

The Cow Didn't Know The Password

Pfc Robert A. Gasser, of the M P Platoon, and St Albans, L.I., was on guard last Saturday night at the Forward CP motor pool.

It was a pitch-black night and Gasser snapped to attention when the sound of footsteps were heard approaching at 2:30 a.m.

"Halt!" he shouted. "What's the password!"

There was no answer and Gasser, sweating blood, took careful aim and fired. Next morning, they found a dead cow—hit squarely through the heart, lying in the road 30 paces away.

Zehner's Boys Dash Across During Height of Shelling

During the height of the fiercest enemy artillery shelling encountred in the first week of the Battle for Heilbronn, riflemen of Lt. Col. Ellery Zehner's battalion of the 399th Inf. dashed across the Neckar River before the Nazis knocked the ponton bridge out.

Two companies made the crossing on Sunday morning shortly after 11:30 a.m. During that hour, 194 rounds of enemy artillery shells poured in on the bridgehead area.

Nazis Make Stand Behind River Line; Battle Fanatically

For five years, the bustling railroad and industrial center of Heilbronn and the peaceful Neckar River had played an obscure, almost overlooked part, in the Nazis' overall plan for the conduct of World War II.

Suddenly last week, both were catapulted into the limelight by the swift advance of the 100th Division and the German War Lords' decision that the big push must be stopped at all cost. Gateway to Bavaria and the mountain stronghold where it is believed the Nazis had hoped to make their last ditch stand, Heilbronn offered a great natural defensive barrier to the Allied offensive.

The Germans, strongly dug in behind their river line and with their artillery strategically located in the hills behind the city, held all the trump cards as infantrymen of the 397th and 398th, continuing the division's attack to the East, closed in early on the morning of April 4th.

The Battle for Heilbronn, which was destined to become the "Little Stalingrad" of the Western front, actually opened on April 4th at 3:35 a.m., when elements of the 398th's 3rd Bn crossed the Neckar in assault boats in the vicinity north of the key railroad town and repulsed all enemy counter-attacks. At 8 a.m., of the same day, the 397th Inf attacked and seized its portion of Heilbronn. The 2nd Bn., whose motor movement had been impeded by abatis, arrived at

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Engineers Build Ponton Span In Spite of Enemy Artillery

INFANTRY LANDS. Doughs of Co L, 397th Inf., charge up east bank of Neckar to secure foothold in Heibronn.

After several unsuccessful attempts to construct a bridge at sites up and down the Neckar river, Engineers last week finaly set up a steel treadway bridge that remained intact long enough to send a company of tanks and TDs to battling doughs on the other side.

The operation is known as "Little Anzio" among the men who took part in it. One Captain from Corps engineers, a veteran of African and Italian beach landings and river crossings, said it was the first time in his experience that so large a bridge was constructed at so small a bridgehead. At the time the 240-foot span went in, the bridgehead extended only 100 yards inland to the south and east, according to Capt. M. J. Bejcek, of Cicero, Ill.

Enemy artillery pounded at the bridge site almost throughout the operation. In mid-afternoon several direct hits knocked out four floats, allowing passage of only the lighter TDs. One hour later another hit knocked out five more floats, and by nightfall the bridge was three feet under water.

Nor was the work of Engineers limited to bridge building. Assault boat crossings were maintained at three points along the river, and two platoons of Co. B, commanded by Capt. John J. Upchurch III, were once deployed as infantry.

A covering smoke screen, laid down by chemical units directed by Lt. Col. Ward E. Betz, aided operations. Infantrymen using the span as a foot bridge looked surprised that it could have been constructed under continual enemy fire from artillery and snipers.

'Baby Battalions' Put In Appearance at Neckar

"Baby Battalions", reported at other sectors of the Seventh Army front, have been contacted by the 100th Division in the Neckar river area. More than half of the 364 prisoners taken in the first 48 hours following the breaching of the river were kids from 15 to 17 years of age.

Further indication that Germany was scraping the bottom of the barrel in a desperate attempt to organize manpower to stem the allied advance, came from officials at the Division PW cage. It was reported some prisoners were on their way home from Reich Arbeits Dienst (German Labor Service) when they were hauled off trains by Nazi officials and mobilized to defend towns in the path of the Allied steamroller.

One German major was sent to the Neckar sector a few days before capture to look over terrain with the idea of assuming command of a force there. The major had a wooden leg.

Forty-two Kraut kids were taken by elements of the 398th Inf. and 10th Armd from one company of a "special purpose" battalion. They were 17-year-olds with seven or eight weeks in the Army. Committed at Grossgartach, four kilometers west of the Neckar, with little or no training, the kids were scar-

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Aidmen and Engineers Get Wounded Across River Fast

One of Century Casualties Comes Back.

It was a curious picture the Neckar river afforded last week. While doughboys were pouring into boats on the west bank, aidmen could be seen on the other side carrying or helping wounded or waiting for a boat to evacuate the men to aid stations and collecting companies.

Men of the Engineers' Co. A, commanded by Capt. R. J. Baxter, of Cleveland, Ohio, were doing a marvelous job of getting doughs across and wounded back.

On several occasions they operated the first amphibious ambulance service in the division. Company aidmen would bring their wounded to the banks of the river and signal to come and get them.

Four of the Engineers—Sgt. August Reitz, of Brooklyn, Tec 5 John Livingston, of Columbia, S. C., Pfc. C. J. Simmons, of Harrisburg, Pa., and Pfc. H. A. Mooneyham, of Spartanburg, S. C.—were becoming proficient at the amphibious evacuation. They would pick up the wounded and start back. Halfway across they'd yell for litter bearers, and by the time the boat docked everything was ready for a speedy evacuation.

One of the Engineers said the crossing of the Neckar was the most exciting thing he's been in since landing in France. Capt. Baxter said one of the orders to cross caught him half way through a shave; so he conducted the crossing half shaved, and nobody seemed to mind.

Courtesy of the Men of the Century Preservation Group
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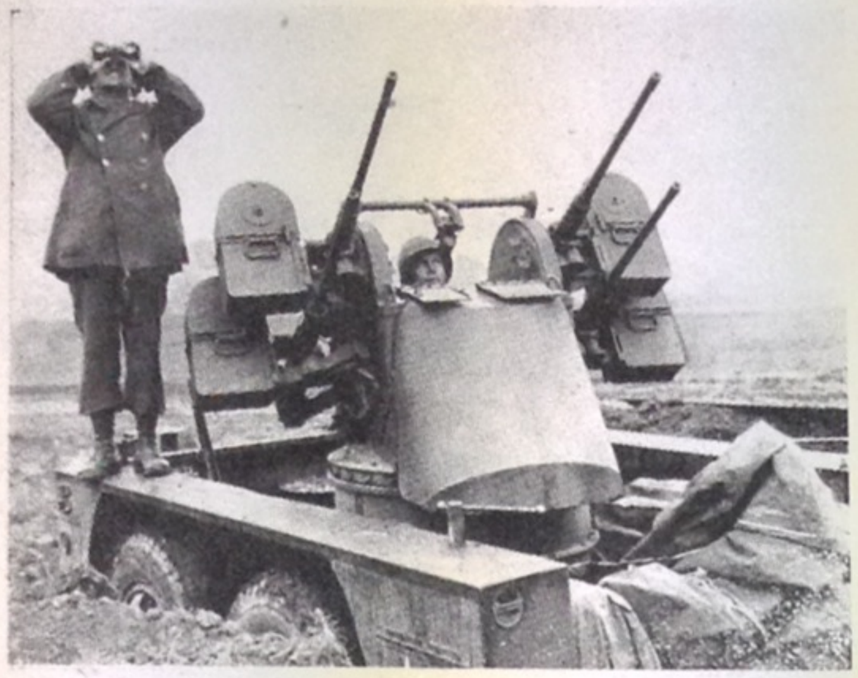

WATCH OUT ABOVE! Men of 898th AAA on lookout for enemy planes. Observer is Cpl Benjamin Roland; Gunner, Pvt Sylvan A. Jeppesen.

898th Ack-Ack Once Fought In Lines As Infantrymen

The 898th Anti-Aircraft Battalion attached to the 100th Division is an unusual ack-ack outfit. The Battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. Cyril G. Kress, of Rochester, N. Y., fought as infantrymen for 19 days in the lines near Pisa, Italy.

Overseas for almost three years the outfit has been with Centurymen ever since the Division went into combat.

The unit landed in Ireland as the 2nd Bn. of the 209th CA Regt, trained with British equipment and instruments, and took over the defenses of Londonderry, guarding the Lough Foyle Naval Base and the Lough Erne Seaplane Base at Castearchadall.

Moving to Africa the unit defended the Constantine valley until termination of the Tunisian campaign, then moved to Algiers, defending Algiers harbor and Maison Blanche airport. Italy was the next stop for the ack-ackers.

Withdrawn for reorganization at Montesarcchio in March 1944, the unit became the 898th AAA and moved to the east coast sector, through the Pontine marshes, and participated in the battle for Rome.

Withdrawn and ordered to bivouac, the unit reached its bivouac area in the afternoon of July 24. That night men were told they were to become a provisional infantry battalion. The next day, July 25, they drew equipment, got lectures, fired weapons, and went into the lines at midnight relieving the 168th Regt. of the 34th Division. They were in the lines for 19 days and drew within sight of the Leaning Tower of Pisa near the Arno river.

After the line experience they were ordered to Naples to relieve an ack-ack outfit being deactivated. They took over the outfit's equipment, sailed for Marseille, and arrived in France, Oct. 27. They have been with the division since.

Most of the men were originally from a national guard outfit, the 121st Cav. Regt. of Rochester, N. Y. They were federalized Feb 10, 1941.

Seventy percent of the personnel who sailed from the states in 1941 are still with the organization, Capt. Raymond W. Hayden, S-1, of New Orleans, said. Even during the 19 days in the lines casualties were very light despite the fact that their position was very inferior to that of the Krauts dug in on the high ground across the Arno river.

Artillery Duels Mark Fighting

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chassis was used on special targets, and concrete-busting shells had a devastating effet on all its objectives.

One of the most effective bits of artillery shelling was done by the 373rd F A Bn and an 8-inch gun outfit on the evening of April 6th. Staff Sgt Hemmerly, a Div Arty liasion pilot, spotted four Nazi tanks in the southern part of Heilbronn. They evidently were forming to lead an infantry attack on the right flank of 100th Div. units already battling in the city.

Sgt. Hemmerly called in, requesting a fire mission on the tanks. He was assigned the two battalions to adjust simultaneously on the targets, an extremely difficult assignment. However, Sgt Hemmerly was "calling his shots" perfectly that day.

Sgt Hemmerly directed fire on one tank which had attempted to take cover behind a building. Direct hits were scored on the building, completely burying the tank. The other three turned tail and tried to make open ground near the river. To get there, they had to move together through the streets in the southern part of town.

Hemmerly adjusted the two battalions on the moving tanks. An 8-incher scored a direct hit on one of the three tanks, blowing it to bits. Dust clouds thrown up by remaining tanks temporarily obscured them from view but after another volley, the tanks and dust both disappeared. It was assumed that all four had been destroyed.

Smoking out snipers was another big job for the artillery. On April 8th, the 374th F A Bn fired 137 rounds of smoke into Heilbronn. Before long, snipers were spotted coming out of buildings to surrender.

The same day, the 375th opened up on a building northeast of Jagstfeld. After several rounds, a white flag went up. Two Krauts came out, hands over their heads. The 375th's guns boomed again. Once more the flag of surrender was hoisted but only three more came out.

Dead certain there were more Germans in the building, the artillerymen lobbed in a few more. Eventually, 13 PWs were fushed out of the building by the artillery.

Shortly after the battle for Heilbronn began, a Liasion plane observing behind enemy lines spotted 15 Nazi vehicles near Neckarsulm. The 374th registered in and scored hits on 8 of the 15.

Cpl. Gerlock, another air OP observer, called in for fire on an object near Horkheim, southwest of Heilbronn just across the Neckar.

"I've spotted a well-camouflaged object; possibly a tank," he called. The 8-inchers were brought in and scored three direct hits on the tank, completely demolishing it.

Many machine gun netss operating against hard-pressed doughs were knocked out by the accurate artillery fire on buildings housing them.

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INQUIRING REPORTER

Questions: What would you like to do most when you get home?

Sgt. Gerald Kearney, anti-tank Co, 397th Inf. of Melrose, Mass. "I'd like to get back in the saddle again at the Melrose Riding School. Riding is my main hobby. And I'll go riding unless my gal Gracie grabs me and wants to get married. I have every intention of getting married. I'm kind of getting too old to be running around loose and single."

Pvt. Vito Sala, Co A, 398th Inf., of Brooklyn, N. Y. "I'm aiming on getting married right away and get two healthy looking kids in a hurry. I want to have a good time for three months, just lying around, no work, no business, no nothing. Just hanging around for three months and catching up on my lost sleep, spending time with my parents, two sisters and brother."

T/5 Myron M. Richards, Div. Hq Co, of Garland, Utah. "I want to take a two-week tour and rest. Rest, that's what I want to do. And then I want to borrow some of that money that the government promised us in the GI Bill of Rights and set myself up in business. I'm a mechanic and I want to own my own shop and be my own boss for a change and tinker around with civilian property instead of Government Issue."

Pfc. Albert E. Holm, Co D, 399th Inf., of Louisville, Ky. "How many times have I thought about that? I want to take a month's honeymoon and vacation with Betty—that's my girl—and then go back to General Motors Institute of Technology in Michigan and study industrial engineering. I ought to make a pretty good engineer, after all look at all the experience I've gotten digging fox holes."

Bernie by Gill Fox

(Courtesy Blood and Fire, 63rd Inf. Div. newspaper.)

"I Know I said you could find your own billet.. but you coulda used a little discretion!"

GI GRAPEVINE

NAZI MERRY-GO-ROUND. In the trip through western Germany, the boys in Div. Hq have run into some mighty interesting and unusual objects in the towns taken over for the Forward CP. Probably the most interesting was the miniature carousel the boys in G-4 fell heir to temporarily during the Battle for Heilbronn. Replete with gayly colored lights, music and prancing horses (with names like Pritz, Adolph and Hermann painted on the horses' derrieres), the Merry-Go-Round looked for all the world like something on the Bowery at Coney Island.

Except for one brief period, 19 year old twins Donald and Ronald Brown, anti-tankmen of the 397th Inf., who can't be told apart, have never been separated. Born Nov. 27, 1925. Thanksgiving Day that year, in Sadorus, Ill., both attended Illinois Univ. entered ASTP together and came to the 100th, where for a short but critical time Donald became a rifleman in the 399th Inf., and Ronald an anti-tankman in the 397th. But the powers that be soon recognized the error of their ways and reunited the brothers.

Their favorite pastime, according to their buddies, is taking advantage of their striking resemblance to buck the chow line three and four times on Spam and C-ration days. What lads!

Cpl. Julius Litfin of Co D, 398th Inf., who comes from Brooklyn, N.Y., will long remember the day when a Heinie smoke bomb landed five feet from his foxhole and showered him and his buddy, Pfc. Artie Cusano, who hails from Bridgeport, Conn, with powder increments, giving each the impression the other was burning. Miraculously, neither was hurt.

Talking about headaches, Lt. George Harris of Carroltown, Ky, who is with the Military Government Section of the 100th, had his hands full while clearing a block to make room for the Division Forward CP.

At the first house, he came across the only baker in town who had been given a pass by the CIC to continue operating to supply bread. At the second, he came across the only M.D. in town, who had likewise been okayed. At the third, he found the town Burgomeister himself, and in the fourth, he was greeted by a dead Jerry.

But orders were orders, and all had to be ousted, including the corpse, which required the services of the Graves Registration and Burial squad. When the block was finally emptied, the CP moved on to another town, and the poor, harassed Lieutenant had to start in all over again.

Mail Bag

This letter is written on request of my associates and buddies of Easy Company. We're all one large family seething with indignation and demanding an apology as to the wrong you have served our one and only, Pfc Milton Trilinsky, who, as the lead scout on the sixteenth day of March, was the first American soldier to enter the "Fortress city of Bitche." This I know to be definitely true and exact.

Anyway, who in the hell ever heard tell of a Medic leading the forward echelon of an Infantry Platoon in the attack ? I will admit, with great pride, that the Medics are doing a great bang-up job, but they still do not lead an Infantry Platoon in the attack.

To prove my above statement is sound and basically true I'm submitting the signatures of two of my company officers.

Very indignantly yours
S/Sgt Robert V. Sneed
and the fighting boys of
Easy Co. 's second
platoon.

(Also signed by Lt. James K. Truitt and Lt. J. W. Pittman.)

Courtesy of the Men of the Century Preservation Group
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WHAT'S IN A NAME DEPT. We'll just call this lovely pin-up "Beauty and the Ball." Or didn't you get that far yet? Tres jolie, oui?

Doughs of 397th's Co. I Take 1st River Crossing in Stride

They stood around in doorways or sat resting on steps. They were men of the 3rd Bn., 397th Inf., waiting to go across the Neckar river. Elements of the 398th Inf. went across the day before, but the operation was still dangerous and for most of the doughs it was the first time they were going to cross a river in assault boats.

Co. I, commanded by Capt. Ulysses S. Grant, of Rosedale, Okla., was the lead company. T/Sgt. Joseph Schonarth, of Boston, whose weapons platoon would go over in the first wave, said, "I hope we make it." Others were less serious. Sgt. Paul Mosher, of Delaware, Ohio, said "if I see a Navy man down there I'll go over the hill."

Grayish white smoke began to settle in the town of Neckargartach as a chemical outfit started to lay a smoke screen. It seemed like a heavy fog. Visability at some places was five yards, at others anywhere from five to 25. Looking at the sun through the man-made fog was like looking at it through smoked glass. Doughs just began to move through town in single files along both sides of the street when the roar of American planes was heard overhead.

Some doughboys seemed unconcerned with it all. Pfc. Joseph Sullivan, of Philadelphia, was eating K-ration caramels as he walked along. S/Sgt. Omar Lester, last Co. I man in the march, kicked about the vehicles in the streets. "They're nothing but 88-bait," he said.

Near the river's edge they crowded, single file, between two buildings and waited for their turn to board the boats. At the river were Engineers of Co. A, 325th Engr. Com. Bn., ready with the small assault boats. Capt. R. J. Baxter, of Cleveland, Ohio, was in charge of the crossing.

Giant, rubber pontons with which Engineers attempted to lay a bridge the night before, lay knocked-out along the bank. Some were partially deflated. One had a shrapnel hole right where it said, "Goodyear—Akron, Ohio."

The Neckar looked to be about 80 or 90 yards wide at this point. The Air Corps could be heard strafing on the other side.

Doughboys loaded down like walking arsenals took to the boats on the double. There were nine doughs and three Engineers to a boat. Doughs took the stroke from the lead Engineers and dipped their oars as evenly as possible. The engineer at the rear of the boat would direct the course. "Easy on the left, dig deep on the right." he would bark.

One of the engineers in our boat said, "I hope they build these damn things with motors for the next war."

On the other side doughs disembarked and ran up the inclined bank to a rallying point. Engineers turned their boats around and went back for another load.

Ten minutes after the company landed on the other side, Cpl. Joseph Tarantino, of Brooklyn, 3rd Bn. wireman with Co. I, went back across the river unrolling wire to repair a break that had developed since he took the wire over in the first wave.

Then the rest of the 3rd Bn. companies came over, and the battle of the Century for Heilbronn began on the east banks of the Neckar.

SHOVING OFF. But it was no picnic for doughs of Co. I, 397th, pictured boarding assault boat just before crossing.

It's Volkswind, Now!

One of the Volksturm (People's Thunder) captured by the 397th Inf. in the battle for Heilbronn told Cpl Frederik Brumwald, of New York City, there was no more Volksturm. Said the PW: "The thunder has ebbed; now only the Volkswind is left.

Even Nazis Applaud Now Right in Fuhrer's Face

Poor Hitler! Even his own people are jeering him now.

The Division Band recently played an open-air concert for doughs of the 397th Inf. inside Germany. German civilians stuck their heads out of windows and doors to listen. One of the final numbers was "Right In The Fuhrer's Face"—the song that put the "razzberries" in music. The song ended with a long, tremendous razzberry by all the instruments.

The timely comedy of the situation inspired the doughs to the greatest round of applause of the concert. Caught in the magnitude of the ovation, German civilians applauded, too.

9 Yanks in German Hospital Freed at Wiesloch by 397th

During the 100th Division's drive from the Rhine to the Neckar river below Heidelberg, troops of the 2nd Bn., 397th Inf. entered the town of Wiesloch, taking the German military hospital there and liberating nine American and 120 Allies.

Six of the liberated Americans were wounded men, three of whom were amputation cases. They were evacuated to American hospitals as soon as possible. The other three were 4th Armored Div. medics captured eight days before and given their choice of German PW cages or working in the hospital.

Capt. John R. Wabee, one of the captured medics, said treatment of American patients was as good as treatment received by the Germans. "The German nurses seemed to enjoy talking to the wounded Americans more than others," he said.

Eight hundred wounded Krauts, most of them serious cases, were still in the hospital. About 700 who might have been returned to duty in time were evacuated the night before.

The four-story building, chief medical center for the area including Wiesloch, Neusloch, Lieman, Sandhousen, and Wieblingen, was untouched by air or artillery bombardment.

Capt. John W. Downie, of Washington, D. C., a Division Staff officer who accompanied Lt. Col. Horace Whiteley, Division Surgeon, and Maj. David Klickstein, Division Dental Officer, on an inspection tour the following morning, said the hospital was modern looking and up to date. There were about 175 nurses and 80 Medical Corps men in the main hospital and reserve **Lazaretten** scattered about the town.

Capt. Wabee and the two 4th Armored Div. medics who worked at the hospital for six days before Americans came said surgical equipment was good but Germans had no plasma, no sulfa drugs, and nothing for intravenous injections.

"Food wasn't bad if you liked potatos," Capt. Wabee said. "It certainly wasn't a well balanced diet. The carbohydrate content was too high. All patients were losing weight."

There were three German doctors at the hospital. A major, former professor of neuro-surgery at Heidelberg Univ., was in charge of the establishment. The day before the 397th drove into Wiesloch, the major called Capt. Wabee into his office and asked how one goes about "making a formal surrender."

The 120 Allied wounded, Col. Whiteley said, were broken down to include Hindus, Belgians, Italians, Russians, Serbs, Poles, and French. A Polish doctor administered to the needs of the 23 Poles. One of the two French doctors there assisted at all operations. The French doctors, according to Capt. Wabee, enjoyed pass privileges into nearby towns.

Col. Whiteley said that all hospitals including two reserve stations in school houses of Wiesloch and one at Sandhousen were left with an eight-day supply of food and equipment. Bandages were scarce. After a first layer of bandage was applied, white crepe paper was used to finish the job.

Just before the Americans came the French got a shipment of Red Cross packets that were distributed among the Allies. Capt. Wabee said the closer the Americans came the better became the treatment of the Allies. "The Germans," Capt. Wabee said, "prayed every night that the Americans would come before the Russians."

Capt. Carl F. Cusanelli, of New York City, whose A-T Co. was in support of the 2nd Bn., said he never saw so many privates and PFCs saluted before as liberating Yanks of the 397th Inf. were saluted by Allies and Germans al ike.

'Baby Battalions' Appear

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ed to death when tanks rolled up spitting lead. It was reported that many cried.

But the fight isn't over. In one forward town a sign painted on a building used to read, "Victory or Siberia." Now the last word has been painted out and the German stubborness is carried in the two words: "Victory or..."

Wireman's Hunch Saves Pals Who Preferred Soft Beds

Two wiremen from the 398th Inf.—Tec 5 Freddy Finn, of Chelsea, Mass., and Pfc. Loren "Trigger" Cup, of Shirley, Ind.—owe their lives to the hunch of a third wireman, Pfc. Frank Eisinger, of Bronx, N. Y.

Cup and Finn had been laying wire to the companies on the other side of the Neckar all day. At dusk they were pretty tired and decided to bed down for the night. They went into a second floor bedroom of a house in Neckargartach and found a nice soft double bed. That was good enough for them, so they proceeded to hit the hay.

Eisinger, who had returned to town for more wire, didn't like the idea of the boys staying on a top floor. "Come on down," he said "Jerries are liable to throw some stuff in here."

Indignant at having their naps interrupted, Cup and Finn gently told Eisinger where he could go. But Eisinger was an obstinate guy and finally dragged them out of their bed rolls and led them to a bedroom downstairs.

In less than two minutes after leaving the upstairs bed, or the time it took to walk down one flight of steps and into the first floor bedroom, an 88 came through the top of the flimsy roof, struck the now empty bed in the middle, and blew pieces of it all over the room.

Cup and Finn apologized to Eisinger.

Nazis Use Youngsters As Forward Observers

"The Nazis are using anyone and everyone in their desperate efforts to hold us back," said Lt William White of Co B, 54th Bn, 10th Armored Division, whose unit has been cooperating closely with the 100th Div.

"Just look at those two innocent-looking kids. You'd never think they could be capable of doing anything like that," he exclaimed, as he pointed to a young girl and boy whom he had just brought up to the CP of the 3rd Bn, 397th Inf. They weren't more than 13 or 14 years old.

"I spotted them on the other side of the Neckar River observing our movements through binoculars. I sent two civilians over in a boat to get them, but they started to take off like scared rabbits, so I winged the girl in the leg. Two of my men went over then and got them. Can you imagine the yellow Nazi dogs trying to get away with using kids as observers."

Bn. Aid Station Set Up In Factory During fight

Within 20 minutes after first elements of the 3rd Bn., 397th Inf., crossed the beautiful Neckar river which swings southeast from Heidelberg, personnel of the 3rd Bn Aid Station, led by Lt. Leonard Coplen, of Newton, Mass., loaded an assault boat and made the crossing to set up on the other side.

The smoke had lifted, and the weaponless medics made the crossing without benefit of a covering smoke screen. The little unprotected assault boat loomed as large as the German river freighters laying at anchor along the banks.

They carried a minimum of equipment. Lt. Coplen carried a large case of medical supplies, while each of the medics grabbed a litter.

The crossing was made safely, and a Battalion Aid Station was temporarily set up in the factory on the other side while other troops of the battalion were still coming over.

Caught With His Pants Down; Pfc Still Gets Drop on Krauts

While relieving himself outside his dug-in mortar position, Pfc. Morris B. Shiechel, first gunner of Co D, 399th Inf., spotted two Jerries about 30 yards away coming out of the woods near Schwaigen. He grabbed for his pistol, his pants fell to his ankles, and with his unmentionables flapping in the cool German breezes, covered the two, and thereby became the first Dough to capture Krauts in that exposed position.

Courtesy of the Men of the Century Preservation Group
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Riviera Holiday Makes 'Em Forget They're in the Army

"Fellows: Nice is yours. Go where you please, do what you like. There are no restrictions at all. Just keep your britches up and your shirts on." Those were the opening remarks of Col. Warren E. Pugh, director of the U.S. Riviera Recreational Area, as he welcomed 5 officers and 54 EMs from the 100 Div. to the Riviera, leading playground area on the continent for the fabuously wealthy before the war.

The lucky doughs were the first group from the Seventh Army to win seven days of rest and recreation at this garden spot of the world in Southern France bordering on the Mediterranean Sea. Amongst scenery as lavish and picturesque as a Hollywood set, in a climate, mild and curative, the weary Centurymen found an abundance of facilities for pleasure and entertainment that kept them busy every second of their brief but thrilling stay.

"From the time you get there, you forget you're in the Army," said S/Sgt. Robert L. Staton of Scotland Neck, N.C., member of 800 Ord. Co. "It's the dreamland of France. You live in a hotel, sleep between two clean white sheets and have valet and maid service. You're treated like a decent human being."

Nice, capital of the Riviera, founded in 350B.C. by the Greeks and known as the city of luxury, pleasure and entertainment, has been set aside exclusively for enlisted men, and Cannes, which dates back to 400 B.C. and boasts a beautiful harbor and white sandy beach, for officers.

Meals are of the best, with GI food excellently prepared by French cooks. Amazed doughboys found that breakfast was served from 7 to 11 am, dinner from 12 to 4 pm, and supper from 6 to 10 pm. In addition, the ARC runs a Snack Bar at the Casino Club, which before the war was the most luxurious of all gambling casinos.

For the gay-minded, there are a series of night clubs with floor shows, plenty of drinks, and lovely French lassies. The internationally famous Raynaud's Club, nos GI supervised, is one of the finest and you can dance to the smoothest swing band in the area.

For the athletically inclined, at the Stade Municipal and elsewhere, can be found facilities for football, baseball, softball, basketball, swimming, tennis, bicycling, horseshoes and lost more. For the music lovers, there are regular opera performances. For the sightseer, there are numerous excursions, with the most interesting, a visit to Grasse, perfume industry center, where you can see how many flowers it takes to make a drop of perfume for the girl back home.

KEEN OBSERVER. Lt Col Robert Williams, Regimental Commander of 398th Inf, keeps close eye on action during battle from observation tower

Repairs In A Jiffy

Headquarters Co, 397th Inf. is the only unit in the division that can make spot repairs and give 24 hour service at the worst, on all signal and maintenance equipment, according to T/Sgt Leocadiar V. Diaz of Boston, Mass.

This Was Once Beautiful Mannheim

Only Skeletons Remain in Ghost Town that was Mannheim.

Another View of Destruction Air Corps Wrought in Rhine City.

HONOR ROLL

SILVER STARS

Sgt John J. Riey, 397th Inf, of Seattle, Wash. Assigned the mission of creating a diversion to screen the main attack of his company, Sgt Riley led a patrol into enemy territory and engaged the Krauts in a fire fight. The mission successfully accomplished, Sgt Riley ordered his men to retire but remained behind himself to deliver covering fire. He was mortally wounded while thus engaged.

Capt. Altus E. Prince 399th Inf, of Philadelphia. Hor eight hours Capt. Prince's company remained under enemy surveillance from front and flanks, and were subjected to intense mortar, 20mm, machine gun, and rifle fire. Oblivious to the fire which inflicted many casualties upon exposed personnel, Capt. Prince continually moved about the area maintaining contact and control and inspiring his men, and directing the ultimate final withdrawal.

T/Sgt Stephen J. Dutko, 398th Inf, of Bessemer Pa. A strong counter-attack on the flank of Sgt Dutko's platoon threatened to overrun his positions. Aware that a break-through would endanger the entire battalion, Sgt Dutko immediately relayed the situation to kis CO, and then advanced to assist his men in repulsing the attack. As a result of the alertness and immediate action, the enemy assault was stopped.

2nd Lt. Marcel W. Novotny, 399th Inf, of Yankton S. D. When his platoon was halted by mortar and small arms fire, Lt Novotny advanced alone and with a grenade neutralized the enemy mortar position and killed three of the opposing troops. He then led his men through continuing fire in a charge which overran the enemy, killing ten and capturing fifteen, andl scuring the objective against subsequent counterattack.

S/Sgt Cecil F. Huckaby, 398th Inf, of Spartanburg, S. C. Although subjected to heavy enemy fire during his battalion's advance, Sgt Huckaby continued to man his mortar inflicting heavy casualties and helping repel a strong counterattack. Later he voluntarily accompanied his platoon sergeant through a mine-infested field located a break in the wire line, and restored communication. Both were wounded by a tree burst then, but in spite of the pain, Sgt Huckaby rendered first aid to his buddy.

Sgt Claude Currier, Jr. 399th Inf, of Flint, Mich. When machine gun fire halted out forces, Sgt Currier led his squad in a frontal attack upon the enemy. Although all but three men of his squad were hit, he continued his advance, firing a pistol with his left hand and throwing grenades with his right. He succeeded in killing three Krauts and silencing the hostile weapons. On another occasion, he silenced two weapons with rocket fire, killing three Krauts and securing two prisoners.

Sgt Donald J. Gebhardt, 397th Inf of East Warren, Pa. When the first and second gunners of his squad were wounded during an enemy attack, Sgt Gebhardt left his position and removed the less seriously wounded men to the rear where medical attention was obtained. Returning with an aid man, he manned the machine gun from an exposed position while his companion entered the two-man foxhole and administered aid to the severly wounded gunner. Gebhardt was wounded in this action.

Bitter Street Fighting Rages in City of Heilbronn

(Continued from Page 1)

Frankenbach in trucks and advanced on foot as far Neckargartach.

Crossing the Neckar in assault boats, me n of the 2nd Bn. cleared the West side of town by 5:30 p.m., encountering heavy sniper, automatic weapons and artillery fire on both east and west banks of the river.

Meanwhile, the 399th's 1st Bn. cleared Schwaigern and the 2nd Bn. occupied Schlucktern and Grossgartach.

All day April 5th, the fiercest street-fighting o nthe entire front took place in the Western part of the city. The Nazis, fighting desperately to keep their hold in the factory district, had to be routed out, building by building, street by street.

One company of the 397th was forced to withdraw when the enemy launched a powerful counter attack at 1:15 a.m., with percussion grenades and bazookas. At 6 a.m., G Co. counter-attacked, retaking two of three buildings formerly held by the battalion.

It was 10 a.m. before the west bank had been cleared, permitting another battalion, to cross the Neckar and strengthen the 100th's hold on the east bank.

Early in the afternoon, the two battalions on the east bank consolidated their lines and launched an attack to the south, clearing out the factory area. One 397th battalion captured an estimated 250 PWs from the factory buildings during this advance. During the day, three Nazi tank were put out of action.

April 7th was another tough one for hard fighting doughs of the 397th and 398th, as operations to enlarge the bridgeheads continued. Two battalions, attacking to the south, gained approximately 1000 yards against heavy enemy resistance in industrial areas.

Three counter-attacks were thrown at the 397th during the day, but all were repulsed.

Meanwhile, another battalion on Sunday crossed the Neckar and Jagst River and continued the attack to the southeast, while still another battalion cleared the enemy from half of Jagstfeld.

Stubborn resistance still existed across the entire front on April 8th, as the engineers strove to complete. a ponton bridge under almost continuous enemy artillery fire. The bridge was completed at 6:12 a.m., and tanks and tank destroyers rolled across the span to join dougboys in the big battle.

Five more blocks of the town were cleared by two battalions of the 397th.

Near Odheim, elements of the 398th pushed under heavy fire to gain about 1,000 yards-largest advance of the day, while Lt Col Zehner's 399th Inf men, pushing south to widen the bridgehead approximately 500 yards.

Just before 6 p.m., another Nazi counter attack was repulsed, with one company knocking out a Nazi tank.

Although the enemy fought stubbornly, approximately 1000 PWs were taken by the division in the first five days of the battle. They varied from Hitler Youths to civilians.

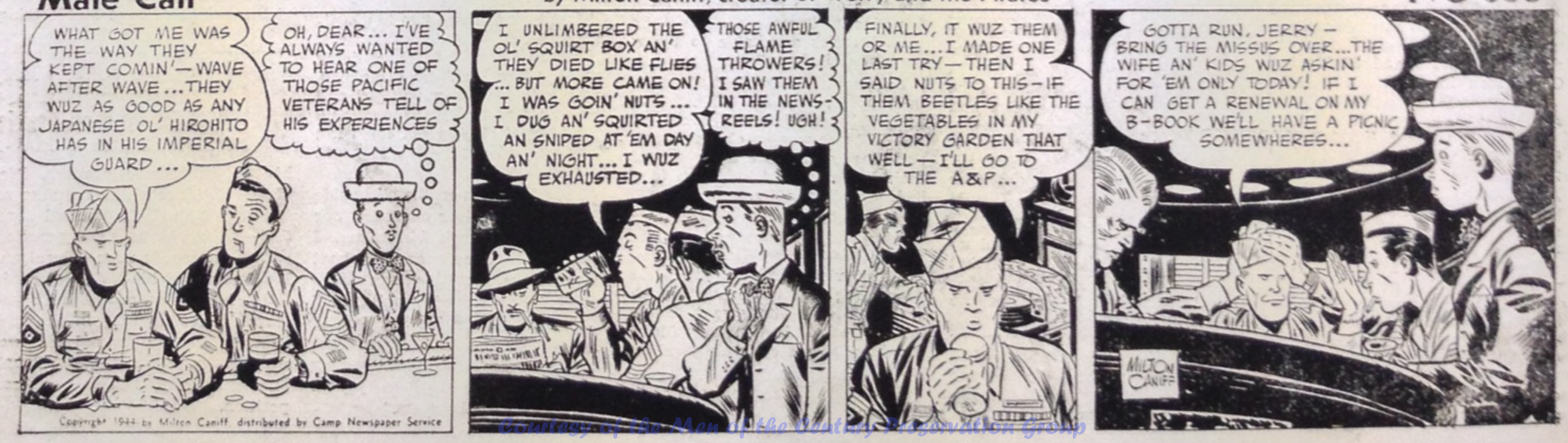
Throughout Monday and Tuesday, the two main bodies which had established bridgeheads on the north around Neckargartach and farther south in the city, were battling valiantly to link up before driving eastward. It was Wednesday before they managed to make the junction, however.

Early in the week, engineers managed to ferry some tanks, tank destroyers, half-tracks, a tank-dozer and armored trucks across the river, and by Tuesday they were joining in the bitter street-fighting.

Male Call

by Milton Caniff, creator of "Terry and the Pirates"

P/O Joe



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