

# Countdown to Victory

**April 28, 1945**

The German High Command admitted that Russian siege forces had slashed to the Brandenburg gate and Alexander platz in the heart of Berlin. The suicide garrison of the ruined capital virtually had been wiped out with the killing or capture of 19,500 Nazi troops.

**April 29, 1945**

American and Russian troops effected a second juncture on the Elbe River below Berlin broadening to 50 miles the Allied wedge between Germany's collapsing northern and southern fronts.

Allied victory in Italy was announced by Gen. Mark W. Clark in a triumphant proclamation that 25 German divisions had been "torn to pieces" and no longer could resist effectively the U.S. Fifth and British Eighth Armies.

Allied troops liberated 32,000 persons at the notorious Dachau Death Camp, north of Munich.

**April 30, 1945**

A British spokesman said that there was no longer a western front as a result of the American-Russian junction in Germany and that henceforth military descriptions of the fighting will refer to "the northern and southern zones of operation."

German Army and Government collapse is as total as never before in the history of war.

**May 1, 1945**

Adolf Hitler died at his command post in Berlin and Admiral Karl Doenitz was declared to be his successor, Nazi radio broadcast.

**May 2, 1945**

The German armies of Northern Italy and Western Austria, affecting between 600,000 to 900,000 men, unconditionally surrendered to the Allies.

Two American armies drove into the last 40-mile stretch before Berchtesgaden from the north and west, meeting only sporadic opposition from an enemy shaken by the German announcement of Hitler's death.

Marshal Karl Von Rundstedt, former commander in chief of German armies on the Western Front, who masterminded the Battle of the Bulge, was captured by the 38th Division at Bad Toelz, 24 miles south of Berlin.

**May 3, 1945**

The unconditional surrender of all German forces in Holland, Denmark, Norway and Czechoslovakia was reportedly concluded.

Germans surrendered Hamburg, the Reich's largest port and second city, without a fight and began a mass flight by sea from the northern redoubt, presumably for a last stand in Norway.

The conquest of Italy cost the U.S. more than 100,000 combat casualties, U. S. Sec. of War Henry L. Stimson disclosed.

Victorious Red Army troops searched the ruins of captured Berlin for the bodies of Hitler and his crippled henchman Paul J. Goebbels, propaganda minister.

**May 4, 1945**

All German forces in northwestern Germany, Denmark and Holland have surrendered to Field Marshal Sir Bernard L. Montgomery's Allied Army. The surrender left Nazi resistance isolated in two doomed pockets of Norway and Czechoslovakia.

The first full newsreels of scenes of German

atrocities are being shown at Elyria's Capitol Theatre.

**May 5, 1945**

The remnants of the German army group in Austria surrendered, leaving Norway and Czechoslovakia the only large pockets of Nazi resistance in Europe.

German troops surrendered throughout Denmark and Danish police began rounding up Nazi collaborators.

**May 6, 1945**

Adolf Hitler's body has been hidden so well that it never will be found, Nazi propagandist Hans Fritsche told his Russian captors.

**May 7, 1945**

The German radio at Flensburg said that Fuehrer Karl Doenitz had unconditionally surrendered "all German fighting troops" to the Allies.

London prepared to welcome the victory it bought with six years of war's agony, hardship and death.

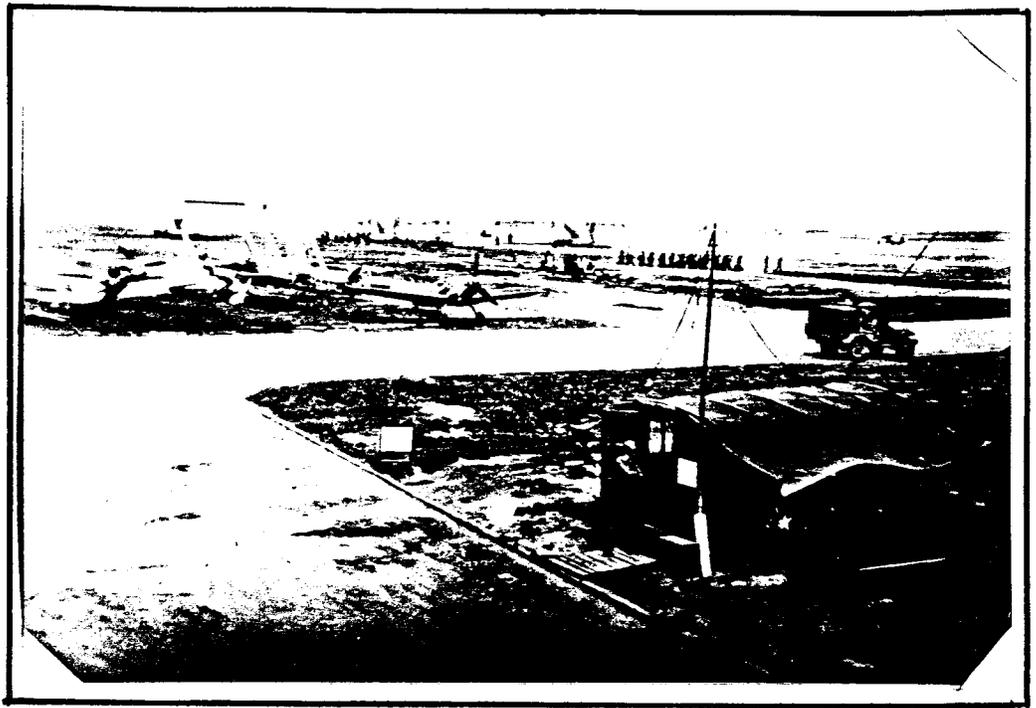
Doenitz ordered Germany's U-boat fleet, most potent weapon left the shattered Reich, to cease hostilities and return to port.

CBS correspondent Edward Murrow broadcast from London that Prime Minister Churchill and President Truman had been prepared to broadcast official surrender news but were delayed because Premier Stalin was not ready.

**May 8, 1945**

President Truman in announcing the "unconditional surrender" of Germany, told the country that the war was only half over and warned the Japanese they can expect nothing but complete destruction unless they too surrender.

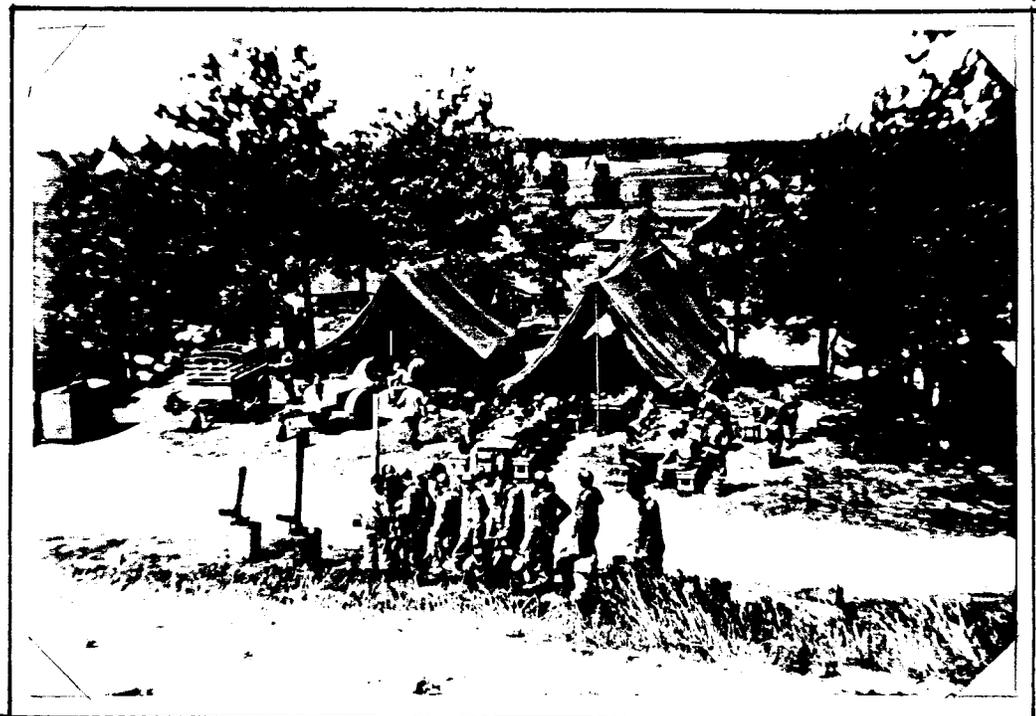
Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel, chief of the German High Command, officially acknowledged that Germany is beaten. It signified formal end of hostilities on a continent desolated by more than five years of conflict.



897th Ordnance Co. C.P. at the Pilsen, Czechoslovakia airport, May -- June 1945, showing abandoned German military aircraft in foreground . Background shows D.P.s & slave laborers loading on American C-47s awaiting transport to their country of origin. On the far horizon can be seen smoke stacks of the giant Skoda munition and armament works which supplied materials for the German war effort.

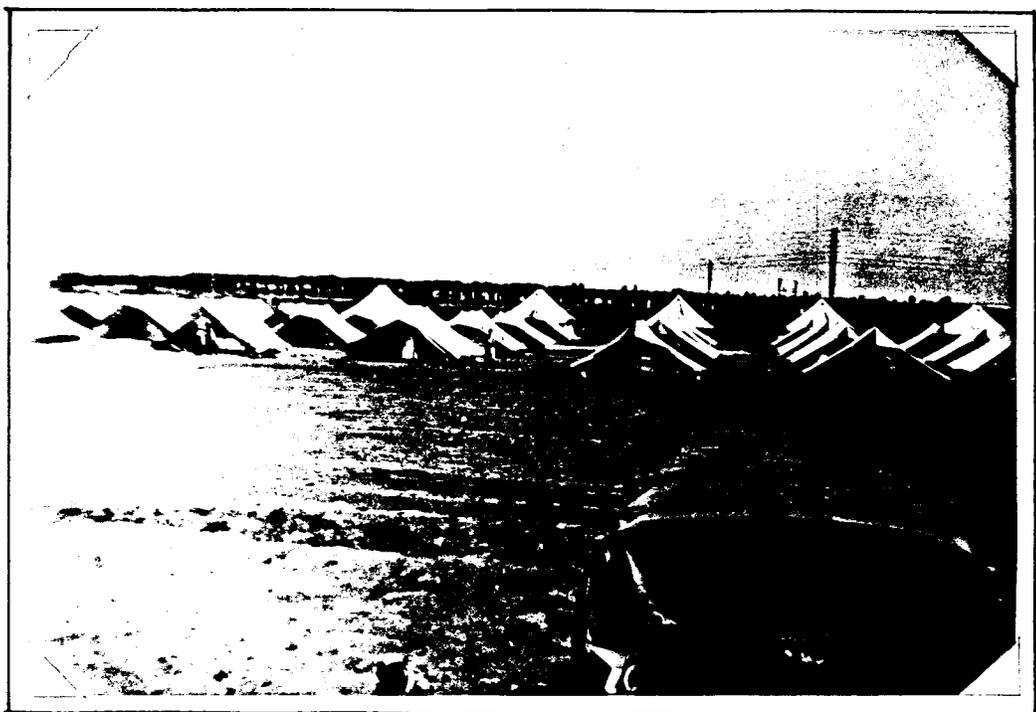


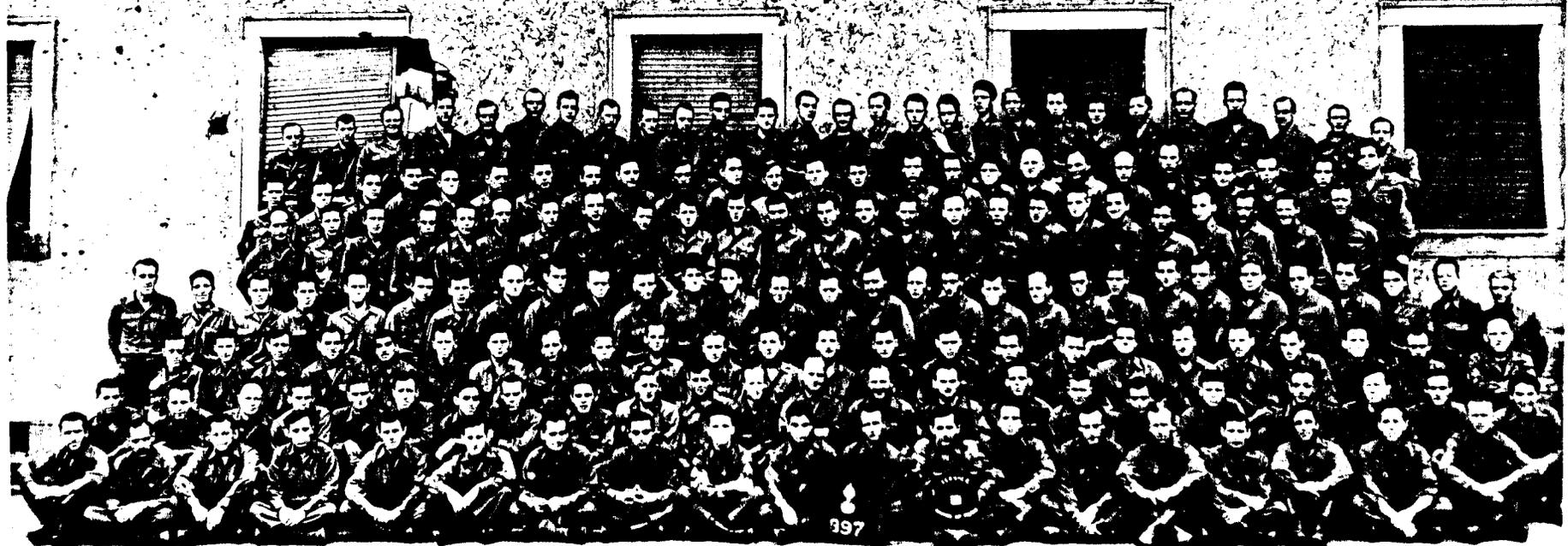
Close up photo of an abandoned Stuka dive bomber, left behind at the Pilsen airport by the Germans.



UPPER PHOTO --- "home" for the 897th in Erlangen (Lauf) Germany --- June 14 ---- June 24, 1945.

LOWER PHOTO --- British camp where the 897th stayed in Rome, Italy, July 26, 1945, on its way to Naples, Italy. The ancient Roman aqueduct was on the far side of the camp.





First Row  
(bottom)

Elmor Felton  
Elvin Box  
Ed Oesterle  
Wilmer Bechdol  
Harold Granger  
Harold Albright  
Henry Grygiel  
Al Carfora  
Julian Gocek  
Ed VanDerWal  
Robert Thompson  
John Chessler  
Milton Dornberg  
Victor Fresl  
Floyd Ensign  
Fred Miller  
Marco Civitello  
Ray Myers  
Tom Edwards

Second Row

John Metts  
Mike Mrosko  
John Bielusiak  
Shelby Kiper  
William Bacon  
Wm. Anderson  
James Hudson  
Wallace Taylor  
John Deusner  
Ray Chamberlain  
Charles Jonas  
Waldo Pietila  
Art Thienel  
Frank Grugnale  
Harry Suszko  
Stan Brown  
Herb Schultz  
Len Wilhelm  
Carl Crist  
Charles Kinney  
Howard Sears  
Wm. Craven  
S. Tabachnick

Third Row

Joe Grachek  
Elmer Wright  
James Kosup  
Ray DeCarlo  
Jose Moreno  
Walmer Thomas  
Clif Jensen  
Joshua Stockstill  
Dan Lenwell  
Nolan Jackson  
Wm. Klockow  
Art Grochowski  
Alex Ceyan  
Walt Snyder  
Wm. Kemnitz  
Wm. Lake  
Clay Huff  
George Price  
Joe Kloc  
Harold Erwin  
Harold Crandall  
Vernon Kincaid  
Arnold Donahue  
Cecil Craft

Fourth Row

George Killinger  
Angelo Ferrara  
Toivo Kuivila  
John Kovi  
Herman Wright  
Walt Limbacher  
Al Myszka  
Felix Balcerek  
John Brankin  
Dick Dietz  
Charles Ataras  
John Rolence  
Robert Wright  
James Ryan  
John Richardson  
Park Bumgarner  
Wm. Hanna  
Earl Leach  
Fred Eggleston  
Robertson  
J. Brown  
Oather Blevins  
Frank Durst  
Walt Goodner  
Howard Hammond  
Howard Moser  
Wm. Crytser  
Bliss Stevens

Fifth Row

Louis Pullen  
  
Lawrence Wynne  
Ned Lewis  
Alex Koester  
Wm. Heilman  
Carl Folk  
  
Bradley Creech  
Clint Midyett  
Carrol Manning  
Wade H. Moon  
Joe C. Davis  
Ed Zielinski  
Dallas Fetherolf  
Joe Valenick  
Nick Miller  
Tony Panarello  
Henry Ash  
Gus Painis  
  
Lou Plavec  
Lowell Elliot  
Axel Swanson

Sixth Row

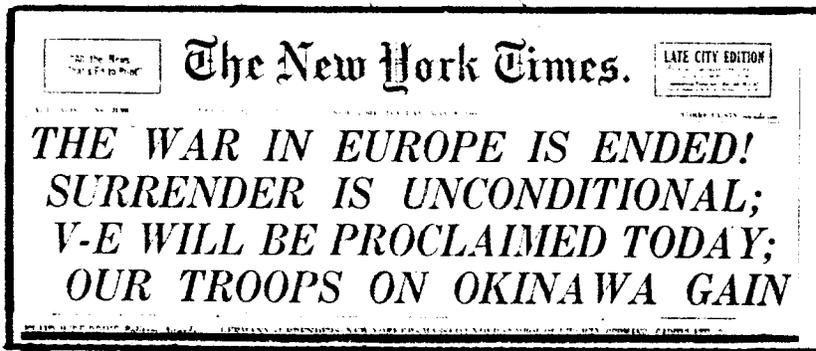
Morris Forman  
Theo. Fritz  
Archie Chenevey  
John Sabol  
G. W. Thomas  
Harry Kahabka  
Vic Lukasiewicz  
Charles Gaulke  
Miles Kesler  
Mel Millmaker  
Bob Jackson  
Ron Bennett  
Chas. Gray  
Geo. Price  
Silas Howerton  
Harold Bias  
David Lewis  
Tolefus Lowery  
  
Fred Lecrone  
Ben Petro  
Earl Winkler  
Chas. Moore  
Roy Carpenter

Seventh Row  
(top)

Ralph Neer  
Orra Kosier  
Thomas E. Thomas  
-----  
John Maska  
Anthony Bortko  
Ed Meyers  
Nick Appleman  
Chas. Trump  
Jim Mendias  
Wm. Leslie  
Lee Skelton  
John Eberhard  
Tom Enright  
Ben Noster  
Ken Comrie  
Troy Goss  
Paul Colter  
Len Gillies  
Jim Hollingshead  
Earl Schultz  
Kermit Kadke  
Norman Kron  
Harvey Wambold  
Charley East  
Mike Swirsky

897th ORDNANCE H. A. M. CO.  
NURNBERG, GERMANY --- JUNE 1945  
(not all Co. personnel are in picture)

Name list of identified  
personnel is thru the  
courtesy of Howard Hammond



**S**OME of our soldiers may now lay down their arms. For a long time the War Department has planned for this moment when the defeat of our European enemies would permit partial demobilization. It has come nearly 5 years since the first draftees were inducted into the Army in the autumn of 1940—nearly three and a half years since the Japanese attacked us at Pearl Harbor. Part of our mission is now completed. All who can be spared will be released.

The plan for release is based on what the men in the service believed should be the basis of discharge. You yourselves have decided who should be chosen. The needs of war have determined how many shall be chosen and when.

You may be assured that the demobilization plan does not interfere with the best strategy we can devise to finish the war with Japan in the shortest possible time and then to get everyone home.

If you are among those selected for discharge, you have my sincere congratulations and good wishes for a deserved return to the country you have served and saved. If you are among those who must continue the fight, you can count upon everything you need to finish the job as soon and with as few casualties as possible. The gratitude of the nation is with you all. May God bless you wherever you are.

HENRY L. STIMSON  
Secretary of War

## THE POINT VALUES AND THE CRITICAL SCORE

**POINTS.** The Army's plan for the readjustment of enlisted personnel calls for an Adjusted Service Rating Card to be issued to each enlisted man and woman. Point totals will be entered on this card covering each of the following four factors:

- 1) **Service Credit.** One point for each month of Army service between Sept. 16, 1940, and May 12, 1945.
- 2) **Overseas Credit.** One point for each month served overseas between Sept. 16, 1940, and May 12, 1945.
- 3) **Combat Service.** Five points for the first and each additional award of the following, for service performed between Sept. 16, 1940, and May 12, 1945:
  - a) Distinguished Service Cross, Legion of Merit, Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross, Soldier's Medal, Bronze Star Medal, Air Medal, Purple Heart and Bronze Service Stars (battle or campaign participation stars worn on theater ribbon).
  - b) Credit will also be given to Army enlisted personnel who have been awarded the following decorations by the Navy Department: Navy Cross, Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross, Navy and Marine Corps Medal, Air Medal and Purple Heart Medal.
  - c) Credit will also be given for those awards and decorations of a foreign country which may be accepted and worn under War Department regulations in effect when the readjustment regulations are placed in operation.
- 4) **Parenthood Credit.** 12 points for each child under 18 years of age born before May 12, 1945, up to a limit of three children.

**CRITICAL SCORE.** The total of the points earned by the individual enlisted man or woman in the above four categories will be considered a total-point score. The score that the individual must have in order to be eligible for separation from the Army will be known as the Critical Score. The War Department will be unable to announce an official Critical Score until approximately six weeks after the readjustment regulations go in operation. There will be one Critical Score for enlisted men in the Army Service Forces and the Army Ground Forces, another for enlisted men in the Army Air Forces and a third one for enlisted women in the WAC.

Until it computes and announces these official Critical Scores, the War Department has set for the purpose of aiding immediate demobilization a temporary, "interim" Critical Score of 85 points for enlisted men of the Service, Ground and Air Forces and 44 points for enlisted women of the WAC. These interim Critical Scores will be replaced by the official Critical Scores within the next two months.

## By YANK's Washington Bureau

**N**ow that the war in Europe is over, everybody is talking about what the War Department calls its Plan for the Readjustment of Personnel. This is the plan that will decide who will move from Europe and other inactive theaters to the war against Japan, who will stay behind for occupation and police duty and who will come home, either to stay for awhile in the Army in the U. S. or to get a discharge.

The bare outline of the Plan for the Readjustment of Personnel was announced last September and it hasn't changed much since then. It still calls for enlisted men and women who won't be needed in the war with Japan to be discharged on an individual basis rather than by organizations. It still calls for eligibility for discharge to be decided on a point score system, with the points taking in four factors: length of service in the Army, length of service overseas, the number of decorations or bronze service stars and the number of dependent children you have under 18—but you don't get credit for more than three children.

And it still makes everything in the plan heavily dependent on military necessity. In other words nobody in the Army, no matter how many points he has, will get out unless the Army says that he is not necessary.

As a matter of fact, the only enlisted men in the Army right now who are eligible to get discharged without their commanding officers deciding first whether or not they are essential are men who have been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor or who are over 42 years old.

The plan still gives no points for age.

Although it has made no fundamental changes in the Plan for the Readjustment of Personnel, the War Department in the past month has thrown a lot more light on some of its details and has revealed some previously secret information on how it is expected to work.

Here are some of the more important facts and figures about the plan that have been revealed:

It has been announced that approximately two million men will be released from the Army during these next 12 months. This two million will include men from the Pacific theaters as well as from Europe. Approximately 1,300,000 of them will be men with high point totals. The rest will be wounded or physically unfit for service or over-age.

Ninety-eight percent of the 1,300,000 men scheduled to be discharged on points during the coming year will have had overseas service.

Seventy-three percent of the 1,300,000 will be men with combat credit—decorations or bronze service stars on their theater ribbons.

The Army plans to take 3,100,000 men from Europe within the next year, if all goes well, leaving 400,000 behind as occupation forces. Major Gen. Charles P. Gross of the Transportation Corps says that the removal of soldiers from Europe may be done even faster if we can find some enemy passenger ships that are in good condition. The ATC plans to fly home 50,000 men each month.

Gen. Gross estimates that the U. S. Army will leave Europe at the rate of 280,000 men a month for the first quarter of the coming year, 395,000 a month for the second quarter and 269,000 for the third quarter. The rest will be brought home during the last quarter.

Nobody in the War Department has yet made an estimate about the number of men from these 3,100,000 scheduled to leave Europe who will go on to the Japanese war. That depends on a lot of things we don't know the answers to now, such as the progress of our own Pacific campaigns

in the next few months, the help we get from Allies and, most important of all, the amount of punishment Japan will take before she quits.

Here are some other details about the Plan for Readjustment of Personnel that you may have missed the last time you read or heard about it:

The War Department says that its point system requirements for eligibility for discharge will remain standard in every theater of operations and in every inactive theater. In other words, a theater cannot set up its own point system.

**T**HE Ground Forces men will have an easier time than Service Forces men in getting out of the Army during the coming year. The Service Forces include many highly skilled specialists who cannot be replaced easily, and the supply job in the Far East will be tough.

Under the new regulation Wacs are permitted to apply for discharges if they are married to discharged soldiers.

A lot of outfits in Europe, principally service units of the Service Forces and Air Forces, will have to shove off for the Pacific in a hurry. As a matter of fact, several of them are already on their way. Naturally these outfits will be unable to compute their point scores until after they have been redeployed. That means that men in these outfits with high scores won't know how they stand until they get settled in their new bases. After they get to their new bases, they will have to wait for qualified replacements.

In active theaters like those in Pacific and in China, Burma and India, the plan for returning surplus men won't work in such a wholesale fashion as it will in Europe during the next year. In active theaters there will be no breaking up of whole units. High-score men in the Far East and the Pacific will not be returned until a qualified replacement is available for their job.

The War Department says that officers will have a tougher time than enlisted men in getting released from the service because of their specialized training. They, too, will fill out Adjusted Service Rating Cards and will have point scores. Their point scores will be a secondary consideration, however. The real factor that will decide whether or not they will get out of the Army is military necessity. Officers with long overseas and combat service will get special breaks.

Enlisted men who are declared surplus may have to sweat out long delays before they get back to the States. First of all there will be plenty of slow paper work involved in transferring them to units composed of surplus men. After their transfer, they will have to wait again before the unit is filled with other surplus men.

Then there will be the shipping problem. They will take second place in shipping priority behind men who are going to the Pacific. The equipment in Europe will have to be gathered up and shipped ahead of them and they will have to await the building of special staging areas.

With the cutting down of the Army and the readjustment of its personnel, all physically fit GIs today in the service find themselves in one of four categories:

1) Those who will be retained in their present commands. This includes men on active duty in active theaters, men in troops in inactive theaters slated for occupation duty and men in the States permanently assigned or in training.

2) Those overseas who will be transferred to another theater.

3) Those in the States about to go overseas.

4) Those men overseas and in the States who will be declared surplus and will be screened to decide whether they are essential or eligible to get an honorable discharge.

# NOMENCLATURE OF WHISTLE, M1 FROM "YANK" THE ARMY WEEKLY

(Description of the simple air-cooled whistle, as done in GI handbook terms)

THE U. S. whistle, model M1, is a self-repeating, shoulder-strap model. It is lung-operated, air-cooled, reverberating-blast type. The whistle weighs an ounce and a half, and the chain another half ounce.

The whistle is divided into two parts—the whistle-cylinder blowing assembly, and the whistle-retaining chain assembly. At the blowing aperture there are two raised sections, one on each side, called the upper-teeth guard lug and the lower-teeth guard lug, respectively. The opening from the blowing end into the cylinder is known as the compressing-blow channel. The remainder of the whistle apparatus is known as the chamber-cylinder operating assembly. This consists of the opening-sound emission slot, the cylinder-butt lock onto which the whistle-retaining chain assembly is attached, and the cylinder-reverberating operating cork.

The whistle-retaining chain consists of the shoulder-strap button-hook catch which secures the whistle for carrying and operation. The shoulder-strap button-hook catch is locked by the upper-chain re-

taining ring. The chain is also fastened to the lower-chain retaining ring which is looped through the cylinder-butt lock of the whistle cylinder-blowing assembly.

The whistle is carried in the upper left pocket of the blouse or jacket. To use, unbutton or unsnap pocket with fingers of the right hand, remove whistle by raising directly up on retaining chain. When the whistle swings free of the pocket grasp the sides of the whistle-blowing assembly with the thumb and forefinger of the left hand and with the upper-teeth lug facing up and to the rear. Then place between the center of lips and clamp lips firmly so that no air can escape.

The sound is produced by taking a deep breath through the nostrils and exhaling it through the mouth into the air-compressing blow channel. After the blast return the whistle to the pocket by the reverse of the steps used for removal.

Disassembling of all parts, other than the shoulder-strap button-hook catch and the lower-chain retaining ring, is for ordnance only.

Modern Maturity April-May 1982

## WHEN WE GOT HOME FROM WORLD WAR II

By Raymond Schuessler

Coming home from World War II was like returning from a time machine to another generation, another era.

When we left, young women were wearing dresses to their knees; now they were on their way down to their ankles. The girls we used to know were innocents who stood with their hands clasped in front of them; now they had become wisecracking, cheeky sophisticates.

Women had worked in the factories, learning to cope with or accept wolves who stalked lonely hearts. Many had divorced servicemen to marry factory workers.

Women smoked now, gargled, used deodorant and who knows what else. Children and babies seemed to be everywhere.

My girl? We had been engaged, but she flew the coop to marry a petroleum engineer who made enough money to buy his own plane.

Juke boxes blared "Cement Mixer" and "Chickery Chick," "Till the End of Time." John Wayne, who had spent the war years portraying military men in one film or another, was a national hero.

It was good to see and feel some of the unity that had banded the people together in defense plant and ration line in a supreme effort to win the war. The soldiers couldn't have done it alone. Everyone who went overseas wasn't a hero, and everyone who stayed home wasn't a slacker.

It wasn't hard to see that luxuries only the wealthy could once afford were now available to everyone.

It was hard to recognize our own parents. Mom had worked in a factory and had a bigger wardrobe. She wore more cosmetics and dressed smarter.

Dad had made a bundle working overtime, lost weight, joined a few

civic clubs, learned to play golf, and had just bought one of the new cars that had begun to roll off assembly lines again. Suddenly you could buy all the tires and gasoline you wanted.

Two baseball diamonds we had played on as kids had been swallowed up: One, close by the huge Wonder Bread Bakery, had turned into a supermarket; the other, by the coal yards, was now a parking lot.

Other vacant lots and some lawns had been turned into victory gardens. Even the popular lovers' lanes had been converted to defense plant sites, airstrips or military camps. Gawd!

With wartime restrictions lifted, labor strikes spread like wildfire: steel, textiles, rubber, auto and farm equipment. How could I get a job?

Many of us had pockets full of cash we hadn't spent in service and bonuses we got at home. With the war over and the nation in a victory euphoria, a lot of leisure-time industries had sprung up. But most of us didn't want to play yet. We just wanted to pick up the bits and pieces of our lives.

I guess in time we did that, though it wasn't easy. □

Chronicle-Telegram Elyria, O., Weds., May 8, 1985

## V-E Day: 40 years later

# THE END OF A WAR

By the Associated Press

**I**t ended 40 years ago — on a day when the New York Giants led the National League, "Oklahoma!" and "Life With Father" were on Broadway, and John Hersey won a Pulitzer Prize for his World War II novel, "A Bell for Adano."

May 8, 1945.

President Harry Truman and Prime Minister Winston Churchill proclaimed it V-E Day — Victory in Europe.

The war in the Pacific would rage on nearly five more months. But to the delirious throngs in Times Square and every big and small town in America, V-E Day meant no more Hitler, Himmler, black shirts, brown shirts or goose-stepping.

WORLD WAR II had begun 5½ years earlier, on Sept. 1, 1939, when almost 2 million German troops swarmed across the Polish border. Russia attacked from the east. Two days later Britain and France declared war on Germany. But Poland fell in just 30 days.

"Blitzkrieg," German for lightning war, instantly entered the vocabularies of all the world's nations.

World War II — not just a war, but an epoch, really — produced some of the most heroic and most barbarous events in human history. The toll in lives has been estimated as high as 50 million. The Soviet Union alone lost 20 million, the Germans nearly 5 million, the Japanese 2 million. The British and French each had half a million dead, the United States about 300,000.

The passage of 40 years has scarcely diminished the names and images.

1939

November — Russia attacks Finland and is expelled from the League of Nations a month later. Britain and France seriously consider war against the Soviets to aid Finland.

For the next six months, a strange lull sets in — "The Phony War."

1940

May — With the invasion of Norway, Chamberlain and his policy of appeasement are replaced by Winston Churchill, who tells his British countrymen: "I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat."

Germans invade the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg. The Dutch fall in five days. On May 28, King Leopold of Belgium surrenders.

June 22 — In a railroad car at Compiègne, the site of Germany's surrender in World War I, French delegates accept German terms for peace.

In less than a year, nearly all of Western and Central Europe has fallen into Axis hands.

July — The Battle of Britain, dubbed "Operation Sea Lion" by Hitler, begins. Thousands of German warplanes blitz as far north as Scotland, and the Nazis try to blockade British waters.

1941

January — With America rapidly shedding its isolationism, Roosevelt makes his famous "Four Freedoms Speech" — freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want and freedom from fear. Congress responds by increasing economic aid to Britain.

June 22 — 3 million German troops open a 2,000-mile front against Russia. By July, Britain and Russia have signed a mutual aid treaty.

August — Roosevelt and Churchill meet at sea near Newfoundland and sign the Atlantic Charter, a joint declaration to end Nazi tyranny and a further sign of America's emergence from isolation.

By December, Nazi troops have advanced 600 miles into Russia. But the Russian winter halts the Germans, and the Soviets counterattack almost immediately.

December 7 — The Japanese launch a surprise attack on Hawaii, Malaya, Hong Kong and the Philippines. A day later, the United States and Britain declare war on Japan.

1942

British and U.S. warplanes begin saturation bombing of Cologne and other German industrial centers. Meanwhile, the Germans begin a summer offensive in Russia.

Oct. 23 — The tide in Africa turns decisively in Allied favor as British Gen. Bernard Montgomery drives the German forces commanded by Gen. Erwin Rommel, the "Desert Fox," from El Alamein and halt the Nazi drive across Egypt.

November — With the Nazis spread thin in the east, Russians begin a winter offensive.

1943

February — German troops in Stalingrad surrender in one of the epic allied victories of the war.

April 19-May 16 — The few thousand remaining Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto stage an armed uprising against Nazi oppressors. The skirmish ends when the SS troops blow up the Ghetto synagogue.

Summer — Soviet armies gradually drive back the Nazi invaders, helped by allied bombing of German factories and shipments of thousands of U.S. planes to Russia.

July 25 — With half of Sicily in Allied hands and Rome being bombed, Mussolini resigns, ending 21 years of Fascism.

November — The Germans are in full retreat in the east.

1944

January-February — Allies land more than 60,000 troops in Italy at Anzio but meet fierce German resistance.

June 6 — British and U.S. forces commanded by Gen. Dwight Eisenhower launch "D-Day," the greatest amphibious operation in history, landing 130,000 troops at Normandy, France.

By July, the Allies have an army of a million men in Europe.

Aug. 26 — German forces in Paris surrender. American forces parade up the Champs Elysees.

Dec. 16-25 — The Battle of the Bulge, the last great German tank offensive in the West, costs the Nazis 120,000 men, nearly 2,000 planes and more than 500 tanks. Only the Rhine River remains as an obstacle to the heart of Germany.

1945

Feb. 7 — An ailing Roosevelt meets Churchill and Stalin at Yalta to plan the defeat of Germany and draft the outlines of peace.

March 7 — Americans cross the Rhine. Shortly afterward, Russians reach Berlin.

April 12 — Roosevelt dies of a cerebral hemorrhage at age 63 in Warm Springs, Ga. Vice President Harry Truman succeeds him as president.

April 30 — Hitler and his bride, Eva Braun, commit suicide. No bodies are ever found. Nazi propagandist Josef Goebbels likewise kills himself.

May 7 — German army chiefs go to Eisenhower's headquarters at a red schoolhouse at Reims and sign a surrender.

May 8 — Truman proclaims the end of the war in Europe.

By STEWART TAGGART  
Associated Press Writer

HONOLULU (AP) — When President Reagan told the story of how a German woman and her young son sheltered American and German soldiers together in World War II, the son was listening.

Fritz Vincken, now 53, heard the story on the radio Sunday as he took a break from work at his bakery here. He left West Germany in 1959 and has lived in Hawaii since 1963.

"I was very moved," Vincken said. "I'm a great admirer of the president."

In a speech at the U.S. Air Force Base at Bitburg, West Germany, Reagan told how the young Vincken and his mother harbored three American and four German soldiers in a small country cabin on Christmas Eve, 1944 during the Battle of the Bulge.

Reagan got the story from an article written by Vincken in the January 1973 issue of Reader's Digest.

Vincken and his mother had fled to the cabin, near the Hurtgen forest, to escape the fighting, Reagan said, when three Americans, one wounded, asked for shelter. A few hours later, four German soldiers came to the door and also asked for shelter. She let them in only after insisting that they place all their weapons in a nearby shed.

"She didn't want any shooting," Vincken said. "There was some initial tension, but that was over very soon."

One of the Germans later provided medical aid to the wounded American. The next morning, Vincken said, the soldiers took their weapons and parted ways.

"The boys reconciled briefly in the midst of war," Reagan said. "Surely, we allies in peacetime should honor the reconciliation of the last 40 years."

Vincken, reached by telephone at Fritz's European Bakery, said he supported the president's decision to go ahead with the visit to Bitburg cemetery, where dozens of German SS soldiers are buried.

"The president is not trying to whitewash the SS," Vincken said. "The Holocaust existed, and Germany stands to it, they will never forget it."

"Forty years later, it is time for reconciliation," he said. "In some way, we must find each other for a better future together."

Vincken left Germany for Canada in 1959, and moved to Hawaii in December 1963 after two years in California. He has a wife, Erna, and a daughter, Elizabeth, 27.

SUNDAY, APRIL 28, 1985

THE PLAIN DEALER

# Waffen-SS role misinterpreted

With all the excitement about the Waffen-SS since President Reagan announced his plans to visit the Bitburg cemetery, a lot of incorrect information concerning this organization has been circulated.

An example is Steve Esrati's April 21 Perspective column.

Esrati claims that members of the Waffen-SS were not soldiers. They wore field-grey uniforms, they were organized in fighting formations, they were equipped in a like manner, they received the same type of training as the regular army, their rank system was comparable, they were awarded the same awards for bravery and leadership as the regular army and they served on every front except North Africa. They were soldiers with a political stigma.

Esrati claimed that veterans of the ordinary SS (which, he said, ran the concentration and extermination camps) and the Waffen-SS (which was combat) are not considered veterans of the German army in West Germany and are not entitled to military pensions. First, the ordinary SS did not run the camps, the Death's Head formations did. Second, the Waffen-SS was not part of the German army during the war. It was administered by the overall SS organization, but was under the tactical control of the army. The Waffen-SS veterans, in any case, do draw pensions for military service, since service in the Waffen-SS was considered the equal of the regular army.

Esrati refers to Jochen Peiper as a *standartenfuhrer* during the Battle of the Bulge. His rank then was *obersturmbannfuhrer*. (The ranks are the equivalent of colonel and lieutenant colonel.) Esrati says Peiper was 39 years old at the time; that is incorrect because his birthday was Jan. 30, 1915. He was nearly 30. Also, his 1.SS Panzer Regiment was part of the 1.SS Panzer Division, not the 6.SS Panzer Division.

The Waffen-SS, to be sure, was involved in many acts of wartime criminality, but to brand the whole SS as a criminal organization was a mistake, in my view, especially where the Waffen-SS is concerned. The issue of criminality should have been considered on an individual basis.

One did not have to be a Nazi to be in the Waffen-SS. Practically all of Europe was represented in the Waffen-SS, for whatever motivation. And finally, many thousands of regular members of the German armed forces were transferred into the Waffen-SS.

One more thing must be said. As a result of the Malmedy Massacre, American soldiers also killed unarmed, defenseless German soldiers, but not in the same quantities.

STEVEN H. SANDMAN  
Cleveland

*Sandman is with the German Military Research Center.*

CLEVELAND, SUNDAY, APRIL 21, 1985

THE PLAIN DEALER

## The graves at Bitburg hold shades of Malmedy

By STEPHEN G. ESRATI

When President Reagan announced that he would visit a German military cemetery at Bitburg, a West German embassy official said the cemetery contained the graves of 100 German soldiers from World War I and 1,800 from World War II.

Photos taken in the cemetery, however, have shown clearly that some of the World War II dead were not soldiers at all. The embassy official minimized their number, estimating that there are only 30 such graves. A later tally showed 47.

These graves belong to members of the criminal *Schutzstaffel* — literally, "protective rank," a quasi-military unit of the Nazi party. Even today, veterans of the SS — whether of the ordinary SS (which ran the concentration and extermination camps) or of the Waffen SS (which was in combat) — are not considered veterans of the German army in West Germany and are not entitled to military pensions.

The entire SS was ruled a criminal organization at the Nuremberg Tribunal on war crimes.

But the choice of Bitburg is even more appalling than that. Just before the last offensive of Nazi Germany against the western Allies, Bitburg was a staging area for panzer (armored) columns getting ready for what came to be known as the Battle of the Bulge.

The most infamous act of that battle occurred under the command of SS *Standartenfuhrer* (colonel) Jochen Peiper,

# Bitburg

then 39, commander of the 1st Waffen SS Panzer Regiment of the 6th SS Panzer division.

Peiper's regiment was known simply as Battle Group Peiper. The Americans nicknamed it "the Blowtorch Battalion."

Peiper had fought in Poland, Russia and Italy. He had already committed one major war crime before the Bulge. That happened Sept. 19, 1943, near Boves, Italy, a village of 4,700. Italian partisans had captured two of Peiper's men.

Peiper summoned two village elders and told them if his men were not returned at once, the village would be burned.

Forty minutes later, the men were freed, but Peiper ordered the village burned anyway, killing 34 civilians.

On Dec. 17, 1944, Battle Group Peiper assembled near Bitburg to

attack the First U.S. Army. Nearby, SS *Standartenfuhrer* Otto Skorzeny commanded SS Panzer Brigade 150, all dressed in American uniforms and driving captured U.S. vehicles.

Their mission, they claimed later, was to spread confusion among the Americans while some of their comrades were to go on to Paris to kill General Dwight D. Eisenhower.

In the confusion, Peiper's men caught a company of U.S. artillery observers near St. Vith in Malmédy. They rounded up the Americans in a field as their Tiger tanks encircled them. Thus began what has become known as the Malmédy Massacre.

Seventy-three men of Peiper's unit were arrested in Germany after V-E Day and tried by a U.S. court-martial. All were convicted. Death sentences were handed down to 43 of them. None was ever executed. Commutations and reviews lessened the sentences.

After he was released from prison, Peiper took advantage of his Common Market rights and moved to Traves,

France, where he bought a little house and settled down with his wife.

That was in 1972. He had the house guarded by two watchdogs. In 1976, Peiper went shopping for chicken wire to cage his dogs. He left his name and address with a clerk in a Vesoul hardware store.

The clerk, Paul Cacheu, was suspicious of Peiper's German accent and military bearing, so he looked up the name in a listing of all known Nazi war criminals. He found Peiper listed.

A few days later, Peiper's house was burned during the night. His remains and those of his dogs were found inside. The fire had been set.

On Bastille Day, a group of masked men held a news conference in Paris. They said: "We got Peiper."

On April 18, 1949, a little-known freshman senator from Wisconsin succeeded in getting a Senate subcommittee to investigate the Malmédy Massacre.

Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy had charged that the 73 men of Peiper's unit had been tortured to extract con-

fessions by American Jewish soldiers who had fled Hitler's Germany for haven in the United States.

McCarthy said these men, whom he called "Thirty-Niners," had purposely damaged the sexual organs of Peiper's men. The subcommittee ordered the U.S. Public Health Service to investigate. The doctors said most of the men did not even claim to have been tortured and none showed any lasting injury.

During the hearings, ex-Sgt. Kenneth F. Ahrens of Erie, Pa., was called on to testify. The following are his words, as recorded in the hearing transcript. His account is condensed, but not changed:

"My entire company of approximately 150 men were sent to a town by the name of St. Vith. That is in Belgium. We were traveling in convoy . . . 40 or 50 trucks and jeeps.

"Early in the afternoon of this particular day, we approached the crossroads. That was the first we knew of the (German) breakthrough. We were trapped right in the middle of it. Our

men and vehicles were pinned down."

The men surrendered. "They proceeded to get us all into some sort of file and told us to walk back the way we came. I seen numerous men that had already been killed. Some were being beat up."

"When the Americans got back to the crossroad, 'they pushed us all into a field. We had no idea what they were going to do with us, and I figured it was pretty close to Christmas and I was thinking of spending Christmas in some camp in Germany.

"We stood there for about half an hour and they told us to keep our hands up in the air."

A tank circled the field and straightened out, its gun aimed at the Americans. "One of their men stood up on it. He pulled out his pistol and waved his gun in the air a little and aimed down. He fired once, and I noticed one of the boys drop; and he fired again and one more of our fellows dropped right alongside of me.

"And about that time, all hell broke loose. They started opening up their

machine guns and sprayed us."

Ahrens was severely wounded, but played dead with another GI across his back. A German went around administering the *coup de grace*.

"I was trying to see if I could feel anything and see if I was alive, which I wasn't sure of."

He could hear the Germans talking up on the road when he heard someone yell, "Let's go"

Ahrens ran. The Germans opened fire again. Ahrens made it into the woods with the only other survivors, two men, both "shot up pretty bad."

Ahrens told the committee 150 men lay dead in the field.

McCarthy was furious. "Nobody has charged that the Malmédy Massacre did not take place. The testimony of Mr. Ahrens was an attempt by the subcommittee to win sympathy for the victims. I share that sympathy. But we got the wrong guys."

Nobody can be sure, but of those SS graves in Bitburg, some probably are those of men of Peiper's command. We got the right guys. ■

NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON — The White House chief of staff, Donald T. Regan, is trying to shift attention from President Reagan's planned visit to a German military cemetery next Sunday to a concentration camp site on the itinerary earlier that day.

Regan, who has taken over direct control of every detail of Reagan's visit to the German military cemetery at Bitburg, has decided to focus Reagan's day almost entirely on the visit to the Bergen-Belsen death camp site, White House officials said.

The plan to visit Bitburg has been criticized by Congress, Jewish groups, veterans' organizations and other ethnic groups.

"Have you forgotten?" asked Rep. David E. Bonior, D-Mich., in the Democrats' reply to Reagan's address. Citing the SS graves, Bonior said: "They served as executioners in those concentration camps where millions of Poles, Slovaks, Ukrainians, Scandinavians, people from every nation of Europe and — let the world never forget — 6 million Jews were sent to their death.

"They were elite divisions who massacred in cold blood over 70 American soldiers at the Battle of the Bulge, and then used their bodies for target practice," Bonior said.

## Massacre tied to SS dead at Bitburg

NEW YORK TIMES

BONN — Among those buried in the German cemetery that President Reagan plans to visit are soldiers from the 2nd Waffen SS Panzer Division that committed one of the worst massacres of World War II, according to information from a German group and from historical sources.

Although it is not known if any of those buried in the Bitburg cemetery took part in the massacre of 642 residents of the French village of Oradour-sur-Glane in 1944, the involvement of the division appears to have escaped the attention of West German and American officials who have been researching the graveyard since protests of Reagan's visit broke out in the United States.

Bitburg, which has a population of 12,500, lies in the Eifel hills on the Luxembourg border in what was the French-occupied zone of Germany after the war.

One of the worst massacres of the war occurred at the French town of Oradour-sur-Glane on June 10, 1944. A total of 642 village inhabitants, including women and children, were shot or burned to death by SS troopers from the 2nd Waffen SS Panzer Division.

The volunteer group that took the German soldiers' bodies to the Kolmeschohe Cemetery at Bitburg in the years immediately after World War II has said that most of the 47 SS troopers buried in the cemetery belonged to the 2nd Waffen SS Panzer Division "Das Reich" and the 10th Waffen SS Panzer Division "Fruindsberg."

Of the 47, one died before the massacre occurred, according to the dates on the tombstones.

The SS captain who led the assault on the French village wrote an after action report that one regiment of troops had been involved. Regiments contained about 3,000 men but, because of heavy casualties, had been severely reduced in size at the end of the war.

In a telephone interview, Adolf Barth, the executive director of the Popular Association for the Care of German War Graves, said that most of the SS soldiers were killed in the fighting near Germany's western frontier in late 1944 and 1945.

Barth said that the bodies had been gathered from scattered civilian and military graves and brought together at the Kolmeschohe Cemetery, which was opened in 1959. "Not all of them were capable of being identified," he said. "Some of the bodies had fallen apart, but others were intact."

The 2nd Waffen SS Panzer Division — bearing the resonant nickname "Das Reich" — spent the opening years of World War II in Poland and the Soviet Union. In September 1941 some of its members assisted an SS extermination squad in the killing of 920 Jews near Minsk, according to George H. Stein, an American historian and author of the book "The Waffen SS: Hitler's Elite Guard at War."

After the Allied landings in Normandy in June 1944, "Das Reich" was in southern France where it had been transferred after a hard winter of fighting on the Russian front. The division was summoned to help local German security forces in hunting French partisans in the Auvergne mountains and entered the village of Tulle.

There, on June 9, 2nd Division troops under the command of Gen. Heinz Lammerding hanged 99 men and women in a massacre that French partisans angrily called "the blood and ashes action."

A Nazi Party member promoted to general by the SS chief Heinrich Himmler, Lammerding was condemned to death in absentia by a Bordeaux court in 1951, but repeated French attempts to have him extradited from West Germany were unavailing. A successful building contractor in Dusseldorf, he died a natural death in 1971.

Continuing toward the Normandy front, the division was fired upon by snipers near Oradour-sur-Glane, a farming village of some 80 houses. Soldiers of the 2nd Division's 4th Regiment "Der Fuhrer" surrounded Oradour and, on Saturday, June 10, their comrades entered it and rounded up its population in the marketplace.

According to testimony at the International War Crimes Tribunal in Nuremberg, the SS soldiers informed the villagers that Oradour would be searched for explosives. The men were gathered in four or five groups and locked in barns; the women and children were confined in the village church.

The SS troopers set fire to the barns. They put a box containing bomb fuses next to the church's communion rail and lighted the fuses in an attempt to suffocate the women and children.

According to an inquiry by a Vichy government prefect, "Someone succeeded in pulling open the sacristy door so that it was possible to revive some of the choking women and children. The German soldiers then began to shoot through the church windows; they rushed into the church to finish off the last survivors with machine gun fire and poured an easily flammable liquid on the church floor."

Toward evening, German soldiers stopped a train approaching Oradour, ordered its passengers to disembark, then killed them with machine guns and threw the bodies into the smoldering buildings. The men of Oradour had died in the flames.

Later that day and the following morning, a Sunday, farmers from the vicinity who came to Oradour to collect their children — who had been at a school there — were also shot by soldiers of the "Das Reich" Division.

The entire population of the village, 642 French men, women and children, were killed by the 2nd Waffen SS Panzer Division at Oradour — which ranks among the worst massacres of civilians during World War II.

## "A Gigantic Death Camp"

It was called Provisional Camp Bergen-Belsen because, unlike other concentration camps, it was originally designed as a "holding pen" for Jews who were to be exchanged for German prisoners of war. Established in 1943, near Hanover in northwestern Germany, Bergen-Belsen was built to contain 10,000 prisoners and was run, like all the camps, by the SS. In 1944 the commandant, SS Major Josef Kramer, later known as the Beast of Belsen, began accepting inmates from other camps who were too frail to continue their slave labor. The population of 15,000 Jews was swollen by thousands of new prisoners, most of them starved and diseased after weeks of forced marches. By early 1945 Bergen-Belsen held 41,000 inmates. Rations were less than meager. Inmates were beaten and abused. There was virtually no medical attention, and epidemics broke out. In March 1945 nearly 20,000 people died either from starvation, typhus or maltreatment. One of the victims was a 15-year-old Dutch girl, Anne Frank.

Bergen-Belsen was liberated by British troops on April 15, 1945. Those sol-



Bergen-Belsen victims found by the British when they liberated the camp

diers included Brian Urquhart, now Under Secretary-General of the United Nations. "At first I saw what appeared to be a wall of logs, stacked like cordwood," Urquhart recalls. "But as I got closer, I saw it was actually unburied corpses." British soldiers discovered nearly 10,000 such corpses, as well as mass graves containing hundreds of bodies plowed under by bulldozers. But it was difficult to distinguish the living from the dead. According to an English reporter on the scene, "dead bodies, black-and-blue and bloated, and skeletons had been used as pillows by sick people," who were themselves living skeletons. It was, said Georg Diederichs, a postwar governor of the region, "a gigantic death camp of apocalyptic proportions." Despite attempts to save the living, 9,000 inmates died during the first two weeks after the British rescue, and 4,000 more succumbed thereafter. All told, about 50,000 perished at Bergen-Belsen.

Bergen-Belsen was one of some 100 camps created to effect Hitler's Final Solution, the extermination of the Jewish people. The terrible roster of major concentration camps includes Auschwitz in Poland, where 4 million people were murdered; Treblinka, also in Poland, which had the capacity to kill 25,000 people a day; Buchenwald, near Weimar in eastern Germany. The assembly-line exterminations of the Jews began by the summer of 1942; by the end of the war in May of 1945, 6 million Jews had died, nearly two-thirds of the entire European Jewish population. At least 4.5 million Gypsies, Poles, Czechs, Russians and others had also perished in the death factories.

Not much of Bergen-Belsen remains today. A 25-meter-high gray stone obelisk marks the site, rising above it like a baleful warning. Inscribed on its side is a singular commandment: EARTH CONCEAL NOT THE BLOOD SHED ON THEE! Fourteen long, low mounds of mass graves are marked simply, starkly: HERE LIE BURIED 1,000 BODIES; HERE LIE 2,500 BODIES. In 1975, then Israeli Premier Yitzhak Rabin walked among the neatly tended graves of Bergen-Belsen and remarked bitterly, "It is so green that it is making me angry."

# Creator of "Ike Jacket" sewed his way through war

By The Associated Press  
DELRAY BEACH, Fla. — Probably the most famous garment to come out of World War II was the "Eisenhower Jacket," worn by Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, who later became the 34th president.

However, if the snug, waist-length jacket had been named for its designer, it would have been called the "Morris" or "Pinter" jacket, after the army corporal from New York City who created it.

At 64, Morris Pinter has put on a few pounds and lost a little hair since he was a soldier, but he continues his profession as a tailor.

"I was a tailor before I was born," he joked in the custom shop he's operated since moving here from New York City in 1980.

Pinter relishes the four years he served in the Army and he's particularly proud of his service in the 30th Infantry Division, which took part in the 1944 invasion of Normandy.

Soon after joining the 30th in England in early 1942, he was appointed a tailor.

"I was the only regimental tailor in the U.S. Army," he said, showing a photo of his pup tent with its official tailor's sign in front. Pinter made uniforms for the officer corps, including Maj. Gen. L.S. Hobbs, division com-

mander.

"Gen. Hobbs introduced me to Gen. Eisenhower. I took his measurements because he wanted a different uniform," Pinter said.

That was when Pinter created the jacket Eisenhower wore for the rest of his military career. Pinter, however, won't take full credit for the garment that gained such popularity. He says he simply embellished the design of a short jacket worn by the British military.

Eisenhower was so pleased with the jacket that when he was re-elected president, he remembered the Polish immigrant tailor and invited him to his inauguration in 1957. The invitation remains prominently displayed at Pinter's shop.

Despite his success with the "Eisenhower" or "Ike" jacket, Pinter says another piece of clothing he designed later in the war means more to him.

When Allied troops fighting on European battlefields were crippled by frostbite, Hobbs asked Pinter to design something to protect the feet of fighting men at the front.

Using discarded army blankets, he sewed several thicknesses together and designed what became known as "Pinter's booties." The oversized sock-like item went

halfway to the knee and could be worn inside or over combat boots.

"They would carry them under their jackets and put them on before going into battle," Pinter said, adding that the British army saw the advantages of his creation and adopted it for their foot soldiers.

Pinter was discharged in 1945 and established Pinter's Tailors Inc. in New York City. After 34 years at the same location, high rent forced him out and he came here.

Over the years, he's maintained contact with wartime buddies and attended annual reunions of the 30th Infantry Division. This year, he returned to France, Holland and Belgium for the 40th anniversary of the Allied invasion of France.

He happily displays a wartime scrapbook filled with photos and mementos, but in the back room, there's a large photo of a small boy that customers don't see. It's a picture of his son, who died in a Nazi gas chamber along with his first wife and over three dozen members of his family.

Pinter was born in Lukow, Poland. He arrived alone in the United States in 1937 and was drafted in 1941.

He says he lives by a basic philosophy: "If you do the right thing, you can handle anything. The secret is patience."

897th ORDNANCE H.A.M. CO.  
U.S.A. (Stateside) OPERATIONS

\* \* \* \* \*

---- 1941 ----

After receiving the required three months basic military and technical automotive, and maintenance shop training, and indoctrination at Camp Lee, Virginia, as "C" Co. of the 8th Quartermaster Training Regiment, and receiving some transferees from "B" Co., the unit prepared to move to another encampment, per assignment.

June 16, 1941 ---- activated per Hq. Camp Shelby, Miss. as Co. "C" of the 57th Quartermaster Regiment (HM). On the activation date, Lt. Russell was assigned and assumed command of the Co., to which no enlisted personnel had as yet been assigned.

June 29, 1941 ---- 1st Lt. Bass, with 2 officers and 198 enlisted men from the 8th QM. Trng. Regt., Camp Lee, Va., was assigned to the Co., and assumed command.

August 4, 1941 ---- after a month in garrison, "C" Co. left Camp Shelby to participate in the 1941 Louisiana maneuvers. Shops were set up and operated at Baton Rouge, Lake Charles, Crawley, and Pitkin, Louisiana.

October 5, 1941 ---- maneuvers completed, the unit returned to Camp Shelby, its home station. (Weekend passes to Biloxi & Gulfport issued)

October 9, 1941 ---- Lt. Bass transferred and Capt. Guetschow was assigned and assumed command.

December 7, 1941 ---- (Pearl Harbor Day) found "C" Co. performing the usual garrison and maintenance duties at Camp Shelby, Miss.

December 20, 1941 ---- with 3 officers and 191 enlisted men, the Co. left Camp Shelby for a temporary change of station, by "private" train

December 25, 1941 ---- (Christmas Day) arrived at Camp Murray (Fort Lewis) Washington, after a very scenic, restful, and interesting trip across the country. (While at Camp Murray, tours were arranged to the skiing facilities on Mt. Rainier, for those interested.)

---- 1942 ---

April 9, 1942 ---- 1 Officer and 196 EM departed Camp Murray, Wash.

April 12, 1942 ---- arrived Indio, Calif, for 6 weeks Desert Warfare training at Camp Young. (Desert Training Center).

June 3, 1942 ---- Capt. Guetschow transferred to Beaumont General Hospital and 1st Lt. Emanuel assumed command.

---- During its stay at Camp Young, "C" Co. performed 4th Echelon maintenance, including engine and heavy unit rebuilding for units engaged in desert maneuvers.

---- With the reorganization of the Ordnance Dept., the Co. was redesignated from Quartermaster to Ordnance Maintenance Co. (Q).

October 5, 1942 ---- after transfer of other officers to other units 2nd Lts. Kemnitz, Lake, and Lewanthall joined the organization.

October 13, 1942 ---- the Co. was redesignated 897th Ordnance HM Company (Q)

----- 1943 -----

February 1, 1943 ----- 2nd Lts. Lafay and Klockow joined the 897th.

February 5, 1943 ----- Co. of six officers and 277 EM left Camp Young for Thousand Palms, Calif., arriving the same day. At this location the Co. was bivouacked, operating as a communication zone maintenance unit.

March 8, 1943 ----- moved to Palm Village (now Palm Desert) Calif. The move posed a problem in camouflage. As part of a maintenance Battalion, we were to operate shops and live under combat conditions. Digging in, disruptive painting, and camouflaging, plus numerous mock air raids, lent realism to the situation.

March 14, 1943 ----- 897th Ordnance HM Company (Q) permanent station changed from Camp Shelby, Miss. to Desert Training Center, Camp Young, Calif.

----- the middle of April found the Co. operating in field shops and living in pyramidal tents in the Palm Village area. Being that the camouflage training period was over, a normal Communication Zone Field Maintenance set-up was instituted.

May 7, 1943 ----- Co. still located at Palm Village, functioning as a Maint. unit of the Desert Trng. Ctr.

June 15, 1943 ----- The 897th Ordnance HM Co. was redesignated as 897th Ord. Heavy Automotive Maintenance Co.

June 18, 1943 ----- celebrated the second anniversary of the activation of the Co. with a Co. party. A chicken dinner, cigarettes, and "refreshments" were enjoyed by all.

July 1, 1943 ----- still at Palm Village, performing Maint. on vehicles of the DTC Vehicle Replacement Pool.

July 14, 1943 ----- 897th suffered its first casualty when Pvt. Clifford L. Moore lost his life in the overturning of a government truck while on an evacuation convoy.

July 24, 1943 ----- T/Sgt. Art Grochowski, with this Co. since its activation, was discharged to accept appointment as WO(jg) and was assigned to this unit for duty.

July 25, 1943 ----- 897th given permanent change of station, being assigned to the AAATC, Camp Haan, Calif., proceeding from Palm Village to Camp Haan by motor convoy. (near Riverside, Calif.)

July 26, 1943 ----- a Liberator bomber, from March Field, the Air Force Base across the highway from Camp Haan, and adjacent to our area, crashed on takeoff into our units truck pool, containing 52 vehicles and all of our units shop equipment. In a letter of commendation, the Commanding General cited the 897th for its "quick action and soldierly conduct ----- in saving thousands of dollars of valuable government equipment"! (the Liberator was also known as the B-24 bomber). The balance of the month was spent in setting up a 3rd echelon repair shop in an unused searchlight shed, and in settling the personnel in the new area.

August 6, 1943 --- 5 EM were transferred to the STAR unit at Arkansas State College for Army Specialized Training Program Training.

August 26, 1943 ----- Lts. Klockow and Lewenthal promoted to 1st Lts.

The climate of Riverside was regarded by Co. personnel as a welcome relief after the rigors of desert life in the Mojave. The 897th had again become garrison soldiers.

September 1943 ---- during the month, all Co. personnel were given refreshers in defense against chemical, mechanized and air attack, security of military information, camouflage, and small arms fire. The March Field and Camp Irwin ranges were used for qualification and transition firing. All Co. officers and 15 EM fired .50 Cal. machine guns (HB) on the AA towed target range at Camp Irwin. Except for time spent on the ranges, the usual garrison duties prevailed.

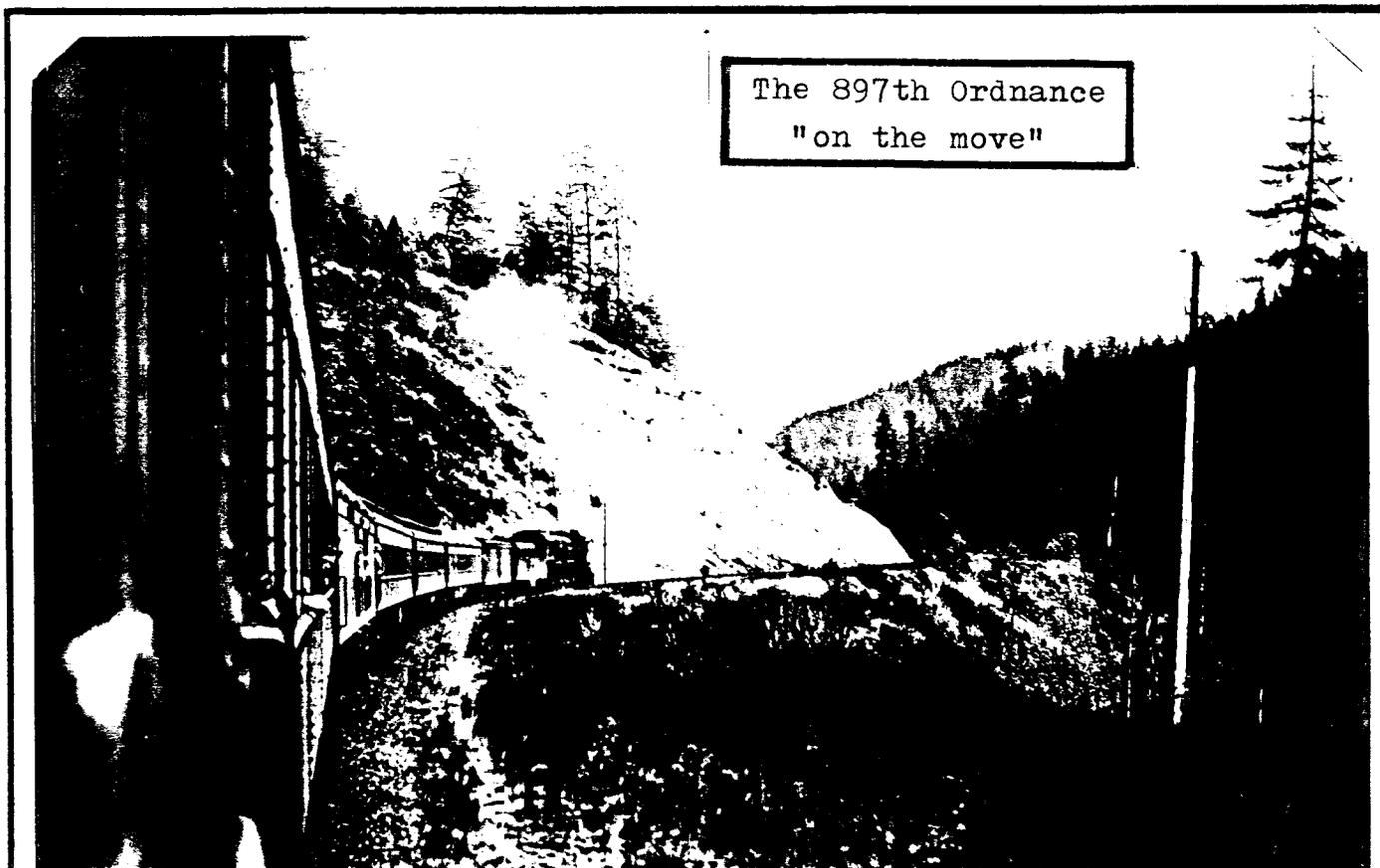
October 1, 1943 ---- found the Co. strength at 7 officers, 1 WO, and 206 EM. The unit was now alerted for overseas movement and the task of training in tools and equipment started early in the month. Personnel who had not had furloughs or leaves in the past year were given them.

October 16, 1943 ---- per orders from HQ., the personnel of the 897th were ordered to proceed to the New York Port of Embarkation. A Medical officer was attached for the movement

October 19, 1943 ---- 897th departed Camp Haan by rail at 1500 hrs. crossing the country from west to east on its own "private" train.

October 24, 1943 ---- arrived at Camp Shanks, N.Y. at 0730 hrs. After two days of processing, being inoculated, and indoctrinated, the personnel began a program of intensified training and "hardening-up" and awaited shipment to an unannounced destination. Passes were available for visits to New York City.

November 11, 1943 ---- after three weeks of rigorous training, the 897th departed Camp Shanks, New York, on Armistice Day, for the N.Y. P.O.E., and boarded the converted British cruise ship, the H.M.S. "Andes" at 2330 hrs. the same day, for overseas shipment to our as yet unknown objective, which turned out to be Liverpool, England!!!



November 12, 1943 --- early dawn -- passing the Statue of Liberty. Upon leaving the harbor and the port of New York, the "Andes" was escorted for a period of time by a anti-submarine blimp and later accompanied by patrol aircraft -- and then the "Andes" was on its own. The ship observed anti-sub security precautions by moving in a zig-zag course across the Atlantic. Two meals were served on board and snacks were available from the British equivalent of our P.X., onboard ship. Many were the meals lost overboard due to seasickness of the personnel. Special soap was available for taking baths in the salty sea water. Barracks bags were stored in the now empty swimming pool. Some of the more unfortunate EM had to sleep on deck and as a result one EM got pneumonia and was committed to the ships sick bay. Standing on the fantail at night and watching the moon shift from one side of the ship to the other as the ship zig-zagged was an interesting experience for all. No smoking was allowed on deck at night as a precaution against lurking subs. As the ship neared its objective, floating debris from a previously torpedoed ship, was observed, such as crates, clothing, mattresses, and various other objects. Lifeboat drill became standard procedure and the crew also practiced anti-aircraft gun firing, at rockets which were sent up as targets.

November 20, 1943 --- docked at Liverpool, England and stayed on board ship overnight.

November 21, 1943 --- 1230 hrs., debarked the "Andes" and entrained for Gloucester at 1300 hrs., going through Birmingham and arrived at the Gloucester railway station at 2100 hrs the same day, moving by motor convoy to Reservoir Camp, at the southeastern edge of Gloucester, reaching there at 2200. After a period of indoctrination, getting used to a total blackout at night, being accustomed to English currency, left hand driving, after having drawn organic vehicles and equipment, and after setting up general automotive maintenance shops, the Co. settled down to routine maintenance work. Passes to Gloucester and vicinity were then made available, for sight-seeing, pub-crawling, and fraternizing with the citizenry.

December 1, 1943 --- all members of the 897th were qualified to wear the ETO service ribbon. --- The sudden change from desert to a cold, damp climate gave rise to much respiratory infection. More than half the Co. being incapacitated at one time or another during the month of Dec. In spite of this, a fourth echelon automotive maintenance shop was kept in operation and contact parties sent to the 3rd Armored Div. and 101st Airborne Div.

December 25, 1943 --- a typical American Christmas dinner -- turkey with all the trimmings -- did much to maintain a high morale. To add to the occasion, a group of English orphan children were entertained at noon mess, later receiving cookies, candy, and gum, contributed from their rations by the personnel of the Co.

#### 1944

January 2, 1944 --- WO Grochowski and 2 EM attended the College of Military Science at Stoke-on-Trent, England, for a course in foreign weapons.

January 5, 1944 --- Lt. Kemnitz and 30 EM went on DS to Kingwell Hall to act as a reception party for a Medium Maint. Co. coming from the States.

January \_\_, 1944, --- Lt. Lake ordered to attend Special Service Officers School in London for a three day course.

January 28, 1944 --- a Co. party was held on the post, complete with dancing partners and refreshments. A good time was had by all.

January 30, 1944 --- Lt. Lake proceeded to FUSA Bomb Reconnaissance School, Overcourt Manor, Bristol, per orders Hq. 84th Ord. Bn.

February found Capt. Emanuel acting in the capacity of Reception Officer to another Ord. H.A.M. Co. arriving from the states.

February 7, 1944 --- Lt. Kemnitz and 24 EM proceeded Whitney to act as a reception party.

February 19, 1944 --- S/Sgt. Folk was detailed to Chemical Warfare School at Shrivenham, Berkshire.

During the month of February, special emphasis was placed on training in the camouflage of Ordnance material.

March 1944 opened with the 897th busily engaged in doing 4th echelon automotive repairs and constructing gadgets later to be used by combat units in invading Europe. The Machine Shop section joined with another Ordnance Co. Machine Shop, which came to Reservoir Camp for the occasion, in working three shifts around the clock, fabricating a special anti-aircraft gun sight for use by ground anti-aircraft units for the invasion and on the continent.

March 11, 1944 --- Lt. Klockow went on temporary duty to Southern Camouflage School in Old Sarum.

March 13, 1944 --- 897th was relieved of assignment to ETO/USA and assigned to FUSA.

March 22, 1944 --- Capt. Emanuel went on temporary duty Hq. 86th Ord Bn. and 1st Lt. Kemnitz assumed command of the 897th.

March \_\_, 1944 --- 1st Lt. Cegan assigned and joined the Co. Also 1st Lt. Snyder assigned and assumed command of the 897th.

Furloughs and leaves to London were given during the month of March.

April 1, 1944 --- Capt. Emanuel assigned to and joined 86th Ord. Bn.

April 14, 1944 --- 897th alerted for departure for overseas voyage. The balance of the month was devoted to intensive preparation and training for field operations and in mounting and constructing special equipment for combat units.

May 1944 --- found all Co. personnel busily engaged in preparing individual and organic equipment for the invasion. 126 additional vehicles were allocated to the Co. for waterproofing, and transporting to the far shore for use as replacement items. Long hours were spent in preparing camouflage nets, loading the basic load of parts and equipment, and instructing personnel in Amphibious operations.

May 23, 1944 --- 2nd Lt. Sweeny and 24 EM were assigned from FUSA Ord. Section for Detached Service as drivers.

May 28, 1944 --- additional 20 EM assigned to the Co. on Detached Service, also as drivers.

The end of the month of May found the Co. in high morale and ready for imminent departure.

June 1, 1944 --- found the Co. prepared for departure - spending all daylight hours rechecking equipment and engaging in hiking and hardening -up exercises.

June 2, 1944 --- 1st Lt. Snyder promoted to Captain.

June 6, 1944 --- "D-DAY" - the announcement of the invasion of Europe found the Co. still in Gloucester -- very much alerted.

During our stay in Gloucester, we were awakened in the dead of the night on two occasions by bombing -- the German airforce was trying to knock out the the Gloster aircraft factory on the far edge of town. It awakened many of our unit who rushed outside to find out what was going on.

June 13, 1944 --- @ 0705 hrs the 897th departed Reservoir Camp for Winchester, arriving @ 1620 hrs same day, a 85 mile trip with a lot of rain. Upon arrival, the second phase of waterproofing was complete

June 14, 1944 --- in the morning the Co. was briefed, given emergency rations and completed last minute checking of equipment, after which it left Winchester for the Southampton POE, arriving at 2030 hrs. Immediately on completion of the 12 mile trip, the task of loading vehicles and personnel was begun.

June 15, 1944 --- departure from Southampton POE was made in the following order --- LST #494 @ 0400 hrs with 3 officers, 90 EM, and 88 vehicles --- LST #5 @ 0545 hrs with 3 officers, 1 WO, 100 EM and 80 vehicles, --- and LST #543 at 1045 hrs with 1 officer, 14 EM and 5 vehicles. On reaching Omaha Beach, France, @ 2200 hrs the same day, the ships were beached and unloading began @ 2330 hrs, the tide having fallen. During the night the beach area was attacked by German bombers. Unloading was not completed during the night and those who remained on board until morning received their first baptism of fire.

June 16, 1944 --- upon driving the 173 vehicles off the LST ramps , some vehicles encountered 3-4 feet of water causing the loss of 1 truck-tractor 10 ton semi-trailer van loaded with "parts common".

June 16, 1944 --- found the Co. moving by convoy to a point 2 miles east of Treviers (Mandeville) arriving at 1900, in a apple orchard. Vehicles and equipment were placed in position, camouflaged, fox holes dug, and maintenance and operation begun before dark. Since no depots were yet in operation, the units task was both to support and assist in supplying all Medium and Light Ordnance Cos. already landed

In spite of regular appearance of hostile aircraft, and long working days, morale was high and efficiency excellent.

July 1, 1944 --- the Co. still bivouacked and operating field shops near Treviers, France. Unit and engine rebuilding, frame straightening, and unloading of vehicles from Liberty Ships kept the unit busy.

July 13, 1944 --- Co. relieved of assignment to 84th Ord. Bn. -- Co. moved this day to bivouac area in Cerisy Forest, a distance of 11 miles, arriving at 1030 hrs. to maintain vehicles of the 86th Ord. Bn

July 24, 1944 --- Co. suffered its first non-battle casualty. T/5 William F. Roberts was burned, resulting in evacuation to England.

While in Cerisy Forest the Co. was involved in priority production of tank gadgets for breaking through the hedgerows.

August 4, 1944 --- 897th departed Cerisy Forest for St. Lo, setting up in an area 4½ miles east of it.

August 10, 1944 --- Co. moved to Beausnil, in the vicinity of Vire.

August 21, 1944 --- unit moved 71 miles to Tannville, near Sees.

August 30, 1944 --- moved 110 miles to Saclay, within sight of the Eiffel Tower. The problem of being mobile was solved. It was now possible to strike camp, convoy, and set up shop in a new area in a matter of hours.

V  
September 2, 1944 --- departed Saclay, near Paris, and convoyed thru Paris to Chammont, a distance of 50 miles, setting up in a big field.

September 4, 1944 --- moved 60 miles to a forest 2½ miles SW of Laon. By this time the supply of parts was critical and repairs required much improvisation. Shop routine changed in that instead of unloading, bays operated from the trucks on which they moved, to save valuable time.

September 8, 1944 --- convoyed 62 miles east to a large meadow 5 miles NW of Chalesville

September 16, 1944 --- moved out of France, going 67 miles to a pine forest 5 miles SW of Bastogne, Belgium. Here the fall rains came and in a matter of hours the area was a quagmire and the movement of vehicles and equipment was an impossibility (Sibret)

September 27, 1944 --- to remedy the above situation, the unit left the field for hard standings at Bastogne Barracks, 5 miles further east. Here the unit enjoyed occupying their first buildings on the continent having roofed shops and permanent barracks.

October 3, 1944 --- moved to Malmedy, a distance of 40 miles, setting up in an abandoned German Barracks and enclosed courtyard, only to be moved the next morning to allow refugees shelter.

October 4, 1944 --- moved 5 miles NW to Stavelot, Belgium, to occupy the railway yards and the La Roserie hotel there. Here, unit rebuilding and reconditioning of damaged vehicles was intensified to help alleviate shortages caused by the battle thru France and the penetration of the Siegfried Line.

November was marked by the constant recurrence of two annoyances --- rain, and Robot (Buzz) Bombs. As a result, several Welsh military from the British Army occupied the attic of the hotel and used specialized tracking equipment to determine the flight path and destination of the Buzz Bombs. The nature of shop work changed from 4th echelon rebuild to the processing of pool vehicles and delivery to the using units. With the coming of cold weather, and to shelter the personnel and equipment against the elements, flat tops were constructed using canvas, and timber from the nearby forests. During the month, passes to Paris were made available and after a drawing, two fortunate EM were the first in the Co. to go to town in over five months. Buzz Bombs now became more frequent, and, unofficially it is believed that Silas Howerton shot down one of these V-1 robots while on guard duty one night.

November 29, 1944 --- Capt. Snyder went to the hospital and 1st Lt. Kemnitz assumed command of the Co.

December opened with a period of extremely cold weather, accompanied by snow which blanketed Stavelot and the surrounding Ardennes, giving the 897th a taste of winter field operations. Refitting of Field Artillery units from VII Corps was now added to our work load. Robot Bombs continued to pass over our area with growing intensity!!!

December 16, 1944 --- this afternoon, enemy shellfire was directed at the hills between Malmedy and Stavelot. The guard was doubled and all armored vehicles in our pool were dispersed, with personnel, for an all around defence. Shop work continued.

December 17, 1944 --- in the morning it became definitely known that enemy troops were converging on Malmedy -- only 5 miles away. In the afternoon, vehicles in the railway station shop area were prepared for departure on short notice, if required. Enemy artillery fire was becoming louder, coming closer, and also more frequent, to our ears.

During supper, word was received from 86th Ordnance Bn. Hq. to evacuate immediately to Stoumont Station, approximately 12 miles west. All day long the 7th Armored Div. had been moving thru Stavelot towards St. Vith but by evening the escape route thru Trois Ponts was open for the 897th. Our mechanized/armored outposts were recalled and an orderly evacuation of vehicles and equipment began. Thanks to our earlier preparation, we did manage to move most of our equipment by shuttle. All personnel went to the shop area to load trucks/equip.

December 18, 1944 --- the last Co. detail departed Stavelot @ 0400 hrs, with the entrance into Stavelot of German armor. During movement from Stavelot to Stoumont Station we picked up 56 men lost from their units as well as more than two dozen tanks and other armored vehicles which were added to our group of approximately 150 vehicles already in the Co. convoy. Later that morning (Dec. 18), leaving 2 armored vehicles and 10 Bazooka teams behind, the Co. convoyed to Bomal, per order 86th Ord. Bn. Hq., arriving @ 1300 hrs, same day. At 1630 hrs, per orders of the Army Commander, all armored vehicles, fully manned, departed from Bomal for use in the line. Upon arriving at the CP of the designated Tank Bn., the crews were relieved and returned to Bomal by truck.

December 19, 1944 --- Co. departed Bomal 0930 hrs for Ocquier, arriving @ 1200. Here outposts were established and a very welcome dinner served. Per orders Army Ord., the Co. resumed convoy @ 1500 to cross the Meuse R. at Huy with Eghezee as its destination, arriving there at 1700. The Co. bedded down in a granary and set up shops in an open court.

December 20, 1944, --- the 11 men picked up upon evacuating Stavelot were returned to their units. Maintenance was also resumed.

December 21, 1944 --- Capt. Snyder returned from hospital and resumed command of the Co.

December 22, 1944 --- per new T/O, 45 EM were promoted.

December 24, 1944 --- departed Eghezee and convoyed to Herstal, Belgium, leaving at 1300 and arriving at 1530., just outside of Liege. Shops were set up in the garage and factory buildings of Fabrique Nationale de Armes de Guerre (Browning Arms). Being Christmas Eve, the officers of the Co. distributed their own supply of "cheer" to the EM of the Co. Here in Herstal the V-1 Buzz Bombs fell quite frequently as Liege and Antwerp were prime targets. Many were the hours spent in the air raid shelter at night.

December 25, 1944 --- those who desired were allowed to attend church services in a nearby church. The other 45 men picked up earlier were transferred to the 3rd Replacement Depot. Despite the very cold and snowy weather, the Robot Bombs, and the uncertainty of the tactical situation, morale was superior. Maintenance records showed increased production even though we almost daily supplied up to 40 men to deliver vehicles and other equipment to combat units. Under its most trying test, the 897th had shown that it was a group of disciplined soldiers able to cope with any situation.

1945

January 1, 1945 --- New Years Day found the 897th still busily at work in Herstal, and, sweating out Buzz Bombs and an occasional hostile dive bomber.

Clothing and personal equipment to replace that lost in Stavelot was issued early in the month as well as new sleeping bags. To those who desired, a nightly movie in Liege was available, to help nullify the mental anguish created by the continued Buzz Bombing.

February 1945 --- found the 897th still in Herstal at the buildings of the Fabrique Nationale de Armes de Guerre.

February 1, 1945 --- Lt. Lafay promoted to 1st Lt.

February 8, 1945 --- Co. moved 25 miles east to Verviers. Here, in addition to operating a 4th echelon maintenance shop, we operated V Corps Forward Collecting Point. Here, we were billeted in a factory.

February 15, 1945 --- all EM were examined for possible reconversion to Infantry. 71 EM were found to be limited service.

February 22, 1945 --- 897th traveled across town by convoy to Dison, setting up shop in an abandoned German Air Depot. Some personnel were billeted in an adjacent school and others found quarters in homes of citizenry nearby.

February was marked by a break in the winter weather and continued high production.

March 1945 found the Co. still in Dison, Belgium. Passes were given to Paris and Brussels.

March 4, 1945 --- one EM went on furlough to England for 15 days.

March 15, 1945 --- two EM departed for a 30 day furlough to the United States, after nearly 3 years overseas.

March 17, 1945 --- 897th entered Germany, crossing the Siegfried Line on the way to Mechernich. Shops were set up in a car body factory.

March 28, 1945 --- unit departed for Wiebenthurm on the banks of the Rhine R. Shops and bivouac were situated in a cement plant next to a destroyed bridge.

March 31, 1945 --- Co. moved to Giessen. The trip involved crossing the Rhine on the Victor Pontoon Bridge, the longest of its type ever built. After a trip of approximately 90 miles, we set up in a badly bombed German Army Garrison and military installation.

April 3, 1945 --- Co. proceeded 38 miles to the site of a large German munitions plant in Forest Neustadt where we were surrounded by thousands of tons of high explosive and "88" artillery shells in various stages of manufacture. Security/guard of the area was shared with a Belgian Infantry Co. Shops were set up in a towering pine forest.

April 11, 1945 --- unit convoyed to Hann Munden, a distance of 78 miles. On departure of the Co. from Forest Neustadt, Lt. Lafay and 25 EM were left behind as security guards to replace the Belgians who had been withdrawn. (after 1 week the detail was replaced by a AAA Co. In Hann Munden, shops and quarters were set up in a large German military installation that had escaped damage.

April 16, 1945 --- 897th was awarded "The Meritorious Service Unit Plaque" for superior performance of duty in the accomplishment of exceptionally difficult tasks for the period 24 June 1944 to 23 Aug. 1944, per Hq. First United States Army.

April 24, 1945 --- moved 90 miles to Muhlhausen, to adequate shop buildings and good barracks, and, spring weather.

April 30, 1945 --- Battalion review in honor of the 897th having received the Unit Plaque. Col. Sams, 52nd Ordnance Group Commander was the reviewing officer.

May 5, 1945 --- to keep up with V Corp. advances, we moved 100 miles east to Coburg, to better support the advancing units.

May 7, 1945 --- moved 75 miles southeast to Weiden, near the German-Czech frontier, with shops set up in a bombed out German Railway Repair Facility.

May 8, 1945 --- while in Weiden, the unconditional surrender of Germany was officially announced .

May 13, 1945 --- unit again moved eastward a distance of 70 miles to Pilsen, Czechoslovakia, setting up shop in a huge Luftwaffe hangar at the Pilsen airport. With its large concrete apron and spacious covered work area , it was an ideal location. In front of the shop was a mile square airport on which the 897th built a ball diamond and played all comers, who bowed to the superb play of the 897th players.

After a year and a half of duty with the First Army, the 897th was assigned to Third Army --- First Army departing this theater for re-deployment to the CBI.

May 22, 1945 --- S/Sgt. Fleming and T/3 Cameron were given a hearty farewell--the 1st men of the unit to depart this theater for discharge under the point system.

Pilsen and surrounding area offered increased social activity since the non-fraternization policy was not in effect in that part of Czechoslovakia. The 897th Bar and Day Room were the best in the Co. history, with plenty of local Pilsen beer being available. Swimming in the local river was also available.

After a tour of inspection through the area, and shops, Maj. Gen. Heubner, V Corps. C.O. expressed himself as very pleased with the units activity.

The 897th closed its last month of combat in the ETO performing maintenance for the same corps units that it had supported through five campaigns since landing on Omaha Beach eleven months before.

June 12, 1945 --- 15 EM transferred to 557th Ord. HM Co. which was being redeployed to the CBI through the States.

June 14, 1945 --- being that we were in the Russian occupation zone, the 897th moved back into Germany to Buchenbuhl. Shops were set up in a woods and an open field. (Lauf)

June 24, 1945 --- moved to Nurnberg -- shops were set up on the street around the Bismarck School, the building itself being used for barracks. Here, a Co. group picture was taken by the Signal Corps.

June 27, 1945 --- the 897th received participation credit for the "Ardennes", "Rhineland", and "Central European" campaigns. These three added to our previous "Normandy" and "Northern France" campaign awards gave everyone additional points which resulted in 134EM and all 7 officers being eligible for discharge as having over 85 points -- 85 being the minimum to qualify for rotation back to the States. Right away, men and officers started to be transferred out to different units, and the Co. promised to be almost an entirely new unit when all over-point personnel were transferred to units being disbanded, and were replaced by individuals with low adjusted service scores.

At this time, the 3562nd Ord. HAM Co. enters into the picture. On April 29, 1945, the 3562nd moved to Wackersdorf, Germany and was here when Germany surrendered. When the point system was announced, only 1 man had as many as 35 points. On June 2, 1945, the 3562nd moved to a large aluminum factory near the village of Dachelhofen, just outside the city of Schwandorf. Here the Co. enjoyed good comfortable billets and an excellent shop building. The end of June found the Co. in Category IV which meant that all with less than 85 points would be transferred from the unit.

July found the 3562nd still operating 4th echelon shops and Lucky Ordnance Collecting Point No. 2 at the aluminum factory.

The shuffling in and out of personnel was getting under way. Every day new faces were appearing.

July 5, 1945 --- 121 EM from the 3562nd were transferred to the 897th and 125 EM from the 897th were transferred to the 3562nd.

July 9, 1945 --- Capt. Snyder, 1st Lt. Cegan, 1st Lt. Klockow, 1st Lt. Lake, and WO Grochowski were assigned to the 3562nd.

July 18, 1945 --- 3562nd was alerted for movement by motor convoy with all T/E equipment to Naples, Italy, for further movement by water to Casablanca, French Morocco, North Africa. The next few days were busy ones with packing and loading of equipment and getting vehicles in best possible shape for the long journey to Naples.

July 20, 1945 --- 38 EM were assigned, bringing the Co. to T/O size. All men and officers now had ASR scores of 85 or more. The unit at this time was over strength in many grades; having 2 M/Sgts., 2 1st Sgts., 9 T/Sgts., 10 S/Sgts., and 31 T/3s.

July 22, 1945 --- @ 0510 hrs, with 187 EM and 7 officers, the 3562nd departed Dachelhofen, heading southward on its first leg of its 1200 mile trip.

The Co. enjoyed many new sights, many of a historical nature --- the Alps, Brenner Pass, Leaning Tower of Pisa, the Coliseum and Roman Aqueduct in Rome, Mt. Vesuvius and Pompei near Naples.

July 28, 1945 --- after 7 days on the road, the unit arrived at staging area No. 5 in Naples at 1500 hrs. During the 7 days of convoying, 1 GMC engine was replaced; 2 truck-tractors required valve grinds. All of this was accomplished at bivouac stops, sometimes working far into the night with lights hooked up to the Hobart Welder. Passes were given to those wanting to see the sights of Naples. While in Naples, the Co. experienced very hot weather and khakis were issued.

July 31, 1945 --- all vehicles were taken to the port and loading on to MV (Liberty Ship) Cape Beale was begun in preparation for embarking the next day, and sailing through the Mediterranean .

August 1, 1945 --- All Co. personnel boarded the Cape Beale, vehicles and equipment having been loaded the previous night. All personnel slept on deck. The kitchen was also set up on deck and very good meals were enjoyed , with the weather being excellent all the time.

August 5, 1945 --- arrived Casablanca harbor @ noon, docked, and unloading accomplished; personnel and vehicles were taken to Ordnance Camp 107 in Casablanca. Unit was relieved from assignment ETO and assigned to African Middle East Theater, and further, to North African Service Command. (Rock of Gibraltar was seen enroute to Casablanca)

The 3562nd mission was to operate the Service Command's base depot and shop, doing 5th echelon rebuild. Hq. had not expected a Category IV unit as there was a 6 to 8 months job here, so action was taken to get the Co. replaced. Meanwhile, passes were available for sightseeing.

August 18, 1945 --- a telegram was received, ordering the unit to U.S. During the next 10 days, all T/E equipment and spare parts were turned in, shots taken, and preparations made to deactivate in U.S.A.

August 30, 1945 --- orders rec'd for 137 EM and Lts. Lake and Rawling and WO Grochowski to go to Camp Dushane to await movement by Air (ATC Green Project) to U.S.A. --- Capt. Snyder, Lts. Cegan, Klockow, Lazarevitch, and 47 EM remained behind, at Ordnance Camp 107 in Casablanca awaiting shipment orders.

\* \* \* \* \*

# Thoughts for a rainy day

## "A SENIOR CITIZEN'S LAMENT"

Thought I'd let my doctor check  
me

'Cause I didn't feel quite  
right.

All those aches and pains annoy-  
ed me,

And I couldn't sleep at night.

He could find no real disorder,  
but he wouldn't let it rest.

What with Medicare and Blue  
Cross

it wouldn't hurt to do some  
tests.

To the hospital he sent me,  
though I didn't feel that bad.  
He arranged for them to give  
me

every test that could be had.

I was fluoroscoped and cysto-  
scoped,  
my aging frame displayed,  
Stripped upon an ice-cold table  
while my gizzards were X-  
rayed.

I was checked for worms and  
parasites  
for fungus and the crud,  
While they pierced me with long  
needles  
taking samples of my blood.

Doctors came to check me over,  
probed and pushed and poked  
around,  
And to make sure I was living,  
they wired me for sound.

They have finally concluded;  
(their results have filled a  
page)

What I have will someday get  
me,

my affliction is OLD AGE. —  
(Author unknown)

## "A Little Mixed Up"

Just a line to say I'm living,  
That I'm not among the dead,  
Tho' I'm getting more  
forgetful  
And more mixed up in the  
head.

For sometimes I can't  
remember  
When I stand at the foot of  
the stair,  
If I must go up for something  
Or if I've just come down from  
there.

And before the fridge so often  
My poor mind is filled with  
doubt,  
Have I just put the food away  
Or have I come to take it out?

And then when it is dark out  
With my nightcap on my head,  
I don't know if I'm retiring  
Or just getting out of bed.

So if it is my turn to write  
you,  
There is no need of getting  
sore.  
I may think that I have  
written  
And don't want to be a bore.

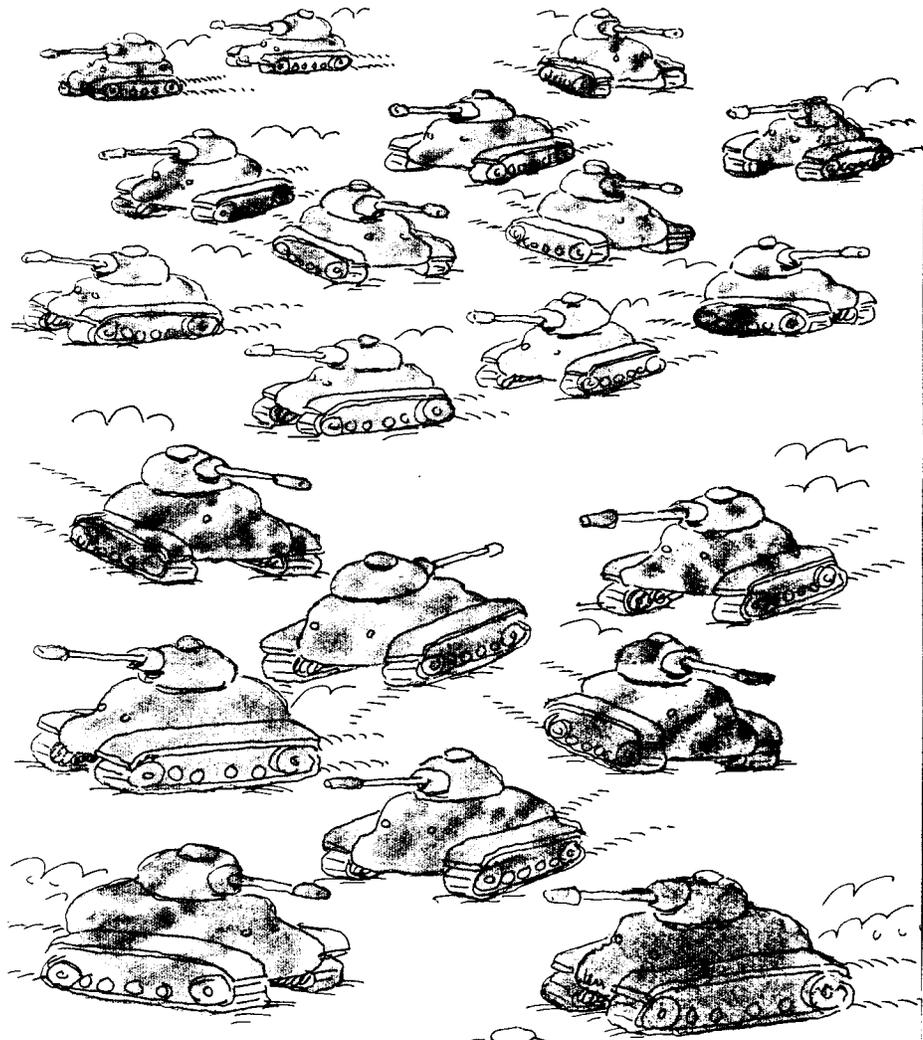
So remember that I love you,  
And wish that you were here.  
But now it's nearly mail time,  
So I'll say, "Goodby My  
Dear."

There I stood beside the  
mailbox  
With a face so very red,  
Instead of mailing you my  
letter,  
I had opened it instead.

— Anonymous

## Today's Chuckle

You know you're getting old  
when time flies whether  
you're having a good time  
or not.



MANY THANKS!!!

to all who attended and participated in the 11th reunion of the 897th Ordnance Assoc. held in Canton, Ohio. As hosts, we enjoyed the pleasure of your company once again.

THE 1985 OHIO REUNION COMMITTEE

