

103rd DIVISION OF W.W.11
ALBUM OF REMEMBRANCE

As a result of the notice in the Spring 1996 Newsletter from Betty Ellsworth we received 8 remembrances for the Album. Two copies were on display at Columbus and several persons were most interested in reading them. However, of the 8 submitted the breakdown was somewhat skewed., The 411th submitted four, 410th none, 409th one, 103rd Signal Co. one, Division Surgeon, one, and from a surviving relative one.

Since the Columbus reunion we have received a second 409th. Did the 411th have more experiences? Several 410th veterans told of unique experiences, particulary Co. M, also I & R members of 3rd. Bn., 409th and there were others all quite different and most interesting and for posterity it would be worth while to save them. Just write it however you wish send to: Luke Martin, 75 Salty Way East, Selbyville, De. 19975 or phine (302) 436-4928.

We will put it in the Album which will be at the 1997 Omaha reunion. Alfet Omaha a copy will be sent to the U.S.,. Army Militar History Institute, Carlisle, Pa. for their permanent collection. Your grandchildren and their children should know.

*Dear Luke -
Walter had cardiac arrest on 8/3/97.
He has had a hard time recovering.
Has been in hospital 3 weeks. It
would be extremely uplifting to him
to hear from any of his colleagues.*

*Our address
2017 Sauglewood Hwy NE.
St. Petersburg, Fla. 33702
Tel 813 - 525-6066*

|| He wanted enclosed article to be included. Thanks!

*Annua Rice
My husband passed away today
8/26/97 at 4:05 AM.*

**Post-V-E Day, May 1945
Bavaria, near Czech Border**

Maj. Frank Novitzky, AUS (Ret.), of Walnut Creek, Calif., was with the 688th Field Artillery Battalion (105 H), which moved up in Bavaria near the Czech border soon after the 8 May 1945 cease-fire in Europe.

"There were camps of many displaced persons near the area and a serious shortage of food to feed them. The US decision was to see, somehow, what could be provided from the German farms," Major Novitzky recalls. He was told to "take a jeep and a certain German 'civilian' to a specified village farming area" to determine where and how much food was available. "The civilian was said to be a Nazi of some standing, but he was 'all we have to work with!'"

"From the start, the Nazi tried to take charge, telling me in German what to do—turn right, left, go slower, stop, et cetera. I told him to speak in English and finally, when he did not stop.... I when possible did the opposite...." the major notes.

"The jeep was performing very well and I decided to convert this Nazi with some fast country-driving, there being no other vehicles on the road. With the gas pedal nearly floored, the Nazi hung on with both hands and I did not listen to him.

"We came around a sharp left turn—a sharp knoll on the left, a sharp drop-off on the right, and immediately in front, a hole (tank trap), probably ten-feet deep and the width of the road. It appeared there was no way we could stop or jump the trap and we would end up nose-down in the hole.... My passenger and I, at the same time, saw that the right shoulder of the road was still there—possibly a foot wide. My passenger put his body weight out the right side of the jeep, just hanging on with two hands. I threw my body weight over to his seat and at the same time hit the gas for all the power I could get. The steering wheel was in my hands. We passed over the

trap with the two wheels on the shoulder. My passenger shut up; I slowed down.

"We arrived in the village of clap-board houses with no one in sight, but with a nice view of Czechoslovakia. I parked the jeep in a building. The Nazi went inside the town meeting hall.... Then I heard protest shouting from inside the hall. In combat gear, I entered through the rear. I am 6' 2" plus.... well above the women, children, and old men that may have been standing. I saw 'welcome' in the eyes of many. My passenger was on the stage podium. About six or eight elderly men were advancing on him, shaking their fists and saying they would not give any food because they hadn't seen an American, and the Russians would be there in a few days and take everything. The Nazi said, 'You say you haven't seen an American. Turn around.' They did and then went quietly back to their seats.

"The survey was taken: chickens, rabbits, ducks, sheep, hogs, cattle, grain, et cetera, hidden under the houses. No more trouble from the Nazi. A peaceful ride home," a satisfied Major Novitzky announces.

**4 & 5 May 1945
Vörgel, Austria**

Cpl. Walter D. Rice, AUS (Ret.), of Mayo, Fla., was a sergeant with 3rd Platoon, Company I, 409th Infantry, 103rd Infantry Division, when it was involved in its last combat action, after having captured the towns of Oberammergau and Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany, and Innsbruck, Austria.

On 4 May, under the command of 1st Lt. Willard W. Hebert of Lake Charles, La., we mounted



■ Then-Capt. Fred E. Bamberger, USAF, poses atop a captured FW-190 at Balzano Airport, Italy, late April 1945, when he was assigned to 12th Air Force. Captain Bamberger had been sent to Balzano in April to work out preliminary arrangements when the commander of Luftwaffe South indicated his wish to surrender to the commanding general of the 12th Air Force.

the tanks and headed out....

"At about 1930 hours, we came to the town of Vörgel, finding it to be occupied by infantry and tanks from the XXI Corps. Lieutenant Hebert, being the senior officer, assumed command of the town and organized security for the night....

Later, a sentry brought to me "....a corporal in the Wehrmacht who spoke fairly good English. After questioning him, I went in and awakened Lieutenant Hebert, [who] instructed me to bring the German to him...."

"The German Corporal saluted Lieutenant Hebert and told him that

his Oberleutnant had sent him to talk to the American commander. The message was that a 30-man SS detachment in the surrounding mountains had called, demanding to know how many

Panzerwaggens we had in town, and that the SS would attack the next morning. He went on to say that his Oberleutnant did not give the information to the SS. Further, his instructions were to tell us that they knew that our men were tired, so the Wehrmacht would guard our tanks that night, and that if the SS attacked in the morning, the Wehrmacht would help to fight them. He then saluted again and departed.

"Sure enough, Wehrmacht soldiers 'walked post,' guarding our armor all night. Of course, our people maintained security as well from covered positions nearby.

"When morning came, the SS attack did not materialize....

"On 5 May 1945, the following message was received from Headquarters, 7th US Army: 'To be broadcast by the 7th Army radio every 15 minutes until 2000; thereafter, every half hour: All troops of German Army Group G which opposes the 7th US Army have been ordered by their commander to surrender by 1200 tomorrow, 6 May. Forward units of the 7th Army are directed to remain in place and cease further

combat at once. By command of Lieutenant General Patch.'

"Great was the rejoicing among our group of 'dogfaces,' though it was tempered with the memory of our comrades who were not there to enjoy it with us," Colonel Rice observes.

Spring 1945
Mission to Linz, Austria

Lt. Col. Norman L. Stevens Jr., USAF (Ret.), of Roswell, N.M., enlisted in the Army Air Force with his buddy in December 1942 rather than write their senior book reports. By 1944, he was with the 8th Air Force in England.

"As the war was winding down in Europe, Patton was screaming eastward. He overran a German prison camp that was full of French soldiers. Patton radioed back to England to get these French officers out of his hair, and that came down to Colonel Stann, my squadron commander, and two other pilots, myself and I forget the other guy. Each plane took skeleton crews and flew for Linz, Austria..." Colonel Stevens writes.

"We hadn't been on the ground 30 seconds before this horde of French officers came in at a trot toward the three B-17s.... The take-off was a little long but very successful. We gained altitude and headed west as quickly as possible.

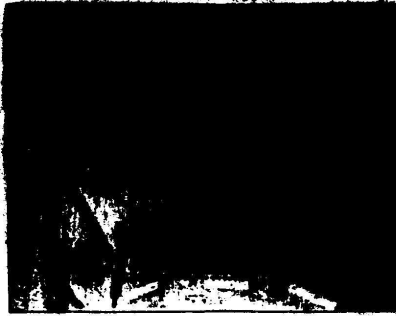
"I became verbally acquainted with a Colonel Le Spirit. We talked in French and English off and on, and he said that he had been a prisoner for five years. When we came to the Rhine, I told Colonel Le Spirit to tell the rest of his officers that we were now crossing the Rhine and we were in France. All of the Frenchmen began to have tears in their eyes.

"I asked Colonel Le Spirit what he would like to see in France, and he said, 'What every Frenchman would like to see, the Eiffel Tower.'

"I said, 'Colonel, you will see the Eiffel Tower like you have never seen the Eiffel Tower'....

"When I got to Paris, I dropped

W. Facing by their poop (armored Division's jeep) at Roswell, 8 April 1945, for three soldiers—Sgt. J.L. Rice (left), Sgt. J. [unclear], and driver [unclear]. The storage tank projection, left, is a cable cutter, mounted on the vehicle's bumper. "The Germans were notorious for strapping wire or cable between trees across a road," recalled Lieutenant Colonel Rice after. In one instance when Sgt. J.L. Rice failed to notice the cable between the trees, "the cable cutter caught the cable on the tank and brought the jeep to a quick stop. The cable on the bumper held but the jeep's bumper was bent completely out of shape," and Rice's life was spared. After the motor pool "bent the frame and straightened it out," the distorted and lumpy-looking vehicle "was returned to service."



down to about 500 feet and approached the Eiffel Tower and then did three complete 360-degree turns around the Eiffel Tower. There was not a dry-eyed Frenchman in the bunch, and it made the trip well worth it," Colonel Stevens exclaims.

3 May 1945
Sorrento, Italy

Lt. Col. Raymond E. Cookston, USAF (Ret.), of Cleveland, Ohio, was a captain serving with the Corps of Engineers in Italy during WWII.

In what may possibly have been a war-time innovation, the round-robin letter was a way to get news home to one family member who would then quickly send copies of the letter to relatives and friends. Mrs. Cookston minces no words, 3 May 1945, on behalf of her husband in her communiqué as she reviews the ground rules: "Dear People, Have you all written Ray this week? The basis of your getting copies of his letters, à la this fast-getting-worn-out typewriter, is entirely on the assumption (mine) that you will write him once a week in return for 'em!" She then lives up to her part of the bargain by transcribing two letters, one of which begins: "I know you will turn green with envy when I tell you about my trip to Sorrento which is opposite the Isle of Capri."

In that letter of 26 April 1945, Captain Cookston continues: "I... went to the beach and rented a sailboat, a 15-footer, gaff-rigged,

and went out for a sail by myself. I did so well that in the afternoon I went back again.... Cost me eight dollars for the day...."

With their WWII remembrance, the Cookstons include a poem written 27 June 1942 by "the neighborhood kids" as they sent their neighbor into battle:

"So long now,

Captain Cookston, / As you march off to war, / Us kids are going to miss you / But we know what you're fighting for.

"To help make this a better world, / Where right prevails, not might, / Where kids can grow, be really free, / For this, you go to fight.

"We'll still run paths across your lawn, / We'll still shake down your cherries. / But as we do, we'll think of you / 'Cause we think you're the 'berries."

21 April–15 May 1945
Mount Pacawagen, P.I.

Capt. Bernard L. Patterson, AUS (Ret.), of Louisburg, N.C., was serving as 2nd Battalion ammunition officer, 145th Infantry Regiment, 37th Division, guarding Manila, P.I., when the 145th Regimental Combat Team was attached to the 6th Division on 15 April to help in an attack against the Kobayashi Force holding the mountains about 15 miles east of Manila.

"At 0200 hours on 21 April, the 1st and 3rd Battalions of the 145th attacked the Japanese positions on the west slope of Mount Pacawagen, a horseshoe-shaped mountain, attacking to the east. After the west leg of the horseshoe was taken, the attack would continue across the top and down the east leg of the shoe," Captain Patterson writes.

"The Japanese had more artillery and mortars here than any place our regiment had been before.... The artillery piece