

WW 2 NOTES

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When the Japs., hit Pear Harbor, I was working in a gas station in Columbus. I was a junior in high school and the job was part time but ,paying twenty-five cents an hour. I was living then with the grand parents after spending the first two year in Portland , Oregon and attending Benson Polytechnic High School.

In the summer of 1942 I worked with the US Bureau of mines working with a core-drilling outfit (Oren Thatcher from Absorokee) employed me and I kept a log of the ore samples from the drilling. Bud Adams was my super visor and had just graduated from high school the year before. This was during the early life of the Mouat and Bimbo mine development. Both mines at this time were producing a good amount of chromium and other essential material. Through the fall and winter of 1942, I had other part time work, some for the Davey Motor Co. doing various jobs. One of these was to do service work on the trucks that were hauling the ore into Columbus to the railroad loading dock. Many of these trucks driven by high school guys and some of them were owned by Hugo Aronson, who later was elected governor of the state of Montana.. I speak of this because in my senior year many of those in high school were out doing war bond promotion , this I believe, was, in my case a part of public speaking class. We did one time go to the mines and have a dinner with the miners, there were chorus , band, and various speakers presenting and promoting the sale of war bonds.. I did some kind of a corny poem entitled "The kid in the Upper Four". It had to do with a kid going into service and in a bunk bed four high as I recall. I thought it was pretty bad., but it did help my grade in that class.

During the spring of 1943 some of the past graduates were back in High School boning up on various subjects preparing to take tests and hoping to be accepted to one of the military schools for officer training. At this time every one was trying to get into service and some started at the age of sixteen . Every one knew the draft board was doing their job and most of us were trying to make a choice before the draft notice arrived.. I had done some of the application work and test for the Air Force but the day after graduation the draft notice was delivered ..

The first stop was to Butte, and then our group was sent to Salt Lake City, Ft .Douglas , for shot and processing, we traveled by train. Several of us were then moved onto Camp Roberts, Ca. , for Infantry basic training. Leo Drain,. Jack Tipton and Louie Cesnick, some of the classmates with me. Basic training at Camp Roberts, CA., was seventeen weeks and it sounded like most all would be going to the Pacific. I remember some good leave time into Pas Robles and San Francisco -- we first heard of the challenge at the bars --the Zombe--it was a mix of liquor and various juices . Story was that if you could drink one and walk away you would not have to pay for it. I never met anyone who didn't pay for it.

Basic is probably the same in every camp but Camp Roberts has some giant hills to mix in with the twenty-five miles forced marches. This is where the separation started to show in condition and age. Many of those over thirty could not finish in the main body. As I look back on this, there is nothing quit as tough as the 18 and 19 year old. That is

why the Army's are made up of that young age. One of my friends ,Leo Minnehan ,was 39 and could do all the activities except finish the twenty-five mile forced march.

There were four of use from Columbus who use to gather after a field day and ate about a quart of ice cream each and were very ready then for the next day. Each barracks had about fifty men on each floor. One of the master Sgt. had a room on our main floor and would lay news papers from his room to the shower everyday and you had better not move any of these in his foot path. Now as I think about it and after a few weeks of combat dirt and sweat and no showers ,I now appreciate his efforts to prevent the foot problems.

Goof offs were treated to a day in the shower room wearing the fatigue clothes and a gas mask. His purpose was to hone the concrete floor down with a granite boulder , which would weigh about 200 pounds and hopefully this would change his gold brick attitude. The guy then would either shape up quick or go AWOL at the first chance.

Very soon after the training was complete everyone went to the headquarters building to check the notice as to where you were assigned , at this time it was mostly Pacific assignments. I did receive notice that I had been accepted for the Air Cadet training program at the Univ. of Denver , and that program would run about four months and if you completed all the courses you would start flight training. This was great duty but very strict and frequent inspections. I roomed with a James A Marshall and Frank C . McNutt. Frank was from Kalamazoo MI. , and came from the 10th Mountain Artillery. They were still using mules at that time . and later were used in the Italian campaign JAM came from Carthage, Texas, which is near Nicodossious, TX., home of Stephen F. Austin College. Through the computer I have found and talked with JAM. and McNutt. We would share the gigs from inspection so that neither ever had to do extra duty tours. Most of us got through the class work and we were to be issued fight gear the next Monday, but with the advent of the Belgian Bulge Dec.,16,1944, about 100,000 guys had their future occupation changed in a hurry. The War Dept., dissolved the ASTP and drastically reduced the aviation cadet program and nearly all were assigned to the Army Ground Forces. By the middle of Jan., the American units had suffered approximately 75,000 casualties but had regained most of the lost ground.

Every one was returned to their infantry status and I moved into the 97th Division which was just being reactivated. I have recently learned that JAM and McNutt, found each other in France, and that Frank was also assigned to the 97th Div. I was glade to have the infantry basic training behind me at this time. The 97th Div., had a WW1 history in Europe, and was reactivated at Camp Swift TX. date 25 Feb. 1943. This is when the new 97th Trident Division was put together under Major General Louis A Craig. They pulled cadre from many of the other active Divisions to get it going . Most of them came from the 95th Div., at Fort Sam Houston.. On Jan.23, 1944, Brigadier General Milton B. Bradly, assumed command, and he was in command through our combat time. This information is from later research. We maneuvered and trained in Louisiana and Missouri. We met natives in the Mark Twain Forest, who wore bib overalls and no shoes, men and women and kids. They would follow us and act like we were from outer space.

This is when I first met Tom Merris, as squads and platoons were put together. Tom made staff Sgt . and was our platoon guide , I had made Sgt and was a squad leader. We

were having some great experiences with the chiggers in the Mark Twain Forest and leave times to Rolla, St James, Springfield, MO., and Kansas City. from Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. While the Div., was at Fort Leonard Wood, there was a transfer of nearly five thousand troops sent to the China -Burma -India Theater. This then gave us a new bunch of rookies to train in a hurry.

On July 10, 1944, we moved on to the West Coast, Camp San Luis Obispo, near Santa Maria, Ca, for beach landing trials. I understand that Camp Cook is now part of Vandenburg Air Force Base. The next move was into Camp Cook , Oct 1944, Tom and I were lucky to be selected for a part of a swim and water survival instruction group this was good duty but a little demanding using ten man rubber rafts in the surf. Our charge was to get every guy in the Div., in the water and be able to swim. Eventually we all jumped off a transport ship with the rifle and light backpack. We did not lose anyone. Pizmo Beach, Morrow Bay, Coronado Strand, San Clemente Island, San Nicholas Is., and Camp Pendelton were some of the training locations. It was definitely looking like we were going Pacific. We next moved to Camp Callen, 31 ,Oct. 1944, which was next to Camp Pendelton . Here we climbed down the nets from big transport ships into rubber rafts and more beach surf landing workouts. We did have live artillery on these exercises and there were three casualties during these maneuvers on San Clemente Island. San Diego was a great leave town and Tom had some friends from back home that we visited here.

. Departure Jan 31 1945

What do you know ,about now we were loaded on a troop train headed for Texas and once there we did not slow down until arriving Camp Kilmer NJ., arrival 6 Feb 1945 about a week later. Now we are getting more shots and it does not seem like we are going to do beach landing any more . We eventually loaded on the USS America (a converted passenger liner), at pier 42., New York port. It took about three days to load, and I heard there were near eighteen thousand on board. We sailed on Feb.19 and formed up a very large convoy with plenty of escort of all description. I had a suite on F deck clear at the bottom ,bunks were four high and we spent most of our days in line going to and from chow twice a day . There was very limited time on deck and high security, the smoking lamp was out. A poker game continued that had started the day we left CA., on the train. The convoy did many zigzag moves at sea, we were told and we hit La Harve, France, 2, March 1945.

It looked like they were still working on the floating harbor docks and we elected to go down the nets into landing craft for the trip to the beach. The seasick guys just made it after the near fourteen days in crossing. They needed a lot of help with their gear getting down the nets.

Trucks arrived eventually and they moved us closer for a walk in to Camp Lucky Strike. The ground was so soft much of the road was made up of steel aircraft runway mats. and the ground would actually roll in front of each truck. This and other camps Chesterfield, Old Gold, etc., are all tent cities. Each tent was equipped with folding canvas cots and mummy bags. Tents were about thirty-man size with a little peat burning wood stove mid

way on one side. We would use it only if there was a late poker game . If the nights were cold forget the stove , it was only a token...

We started immediate guard duty and I was selected as Fire Marshall for our camp. The peet/ wood stoves were great for starting canvas fires and we needed long poles with a cloth swab to wet down the hot spot. I had been a Staff Sergeant and a squad leader for a few weeks now we did head for the woods to get the long poles. The local Frenchmen and Col. Pierce were waiting for us as we returned. The Col. worked me over pretty good, and that seemed to satisfy the Frenchmen. *No Cutting of the forest.* The Col., then ask me if we were sure we had enough and were they long enough. The invasion did do a number on some of the French homeland, where as the Germans just walked in and took over without a crater. The French generally were not friendly.

Life in the tents amounted to a few walks into a near by village for bread and wine to sustain the poker game--We were using cosmoline cans with a shoe string wick in the can for light at the poker area, worked O.K. but smelled real bad. Cosmoline was the grease like substance that equipment was packed in to prevent rust. I think we were here for about ten days pulling guard duty about every other day.

I fell and rolled down a steep bank in the dark while changing guards and sprained an ankle ---there wasn't any sympathy in any direction ---you just got better ASAP.

From Camp Kilmer to this date the C.O. must have an idea that we all needed a bath. We lined up the company and marched out over the hill through a well marked mine field and right unto an area with two tents. This is a full time field set shower unit. It is manned by all blacks and one white Captain. The order was given to strip down by platoon at a time and move out. You had one minute to wet down another to soap and about two to wash off , then move on through the tent and outside. I was not a warm day for a wet stroll and by the time you got back to your clothes you were ready for the your gear. It turns out that the Captain of this unit was standing near by as I got dressed and we looked each other over a few times and I walked over to him to thank him for the fun time and he turned out to be a buddy from Columbus. He had graduated about two years ahead of me and he is in charge of the shower unit. He invited me to his tent for a toast and good visit. The name is Ted Keating , I worked my way back alone through the minefield in near dark, but feeling no pain.

The situation changed in a hurry from here on. The next morning four of us were picked up and sent forward to secure a billet area for our company. Tom Merriss, was with me on this one. I never did know were we were but we were dropped off on the outskirts of a small town and spent the first night with a grave register unit. They were bringing in frozen bodies and doing the I.D. paper work . We located the burgermeister and communicated in two words, *schlafen and matratze* , meaning we hope there would be a place to sleep on a mattress. This was a little town with a circle drive in the center probably a well or pond in the center. I saw several bergs like this on our travels . Most of buildings were damaged so you picked out the ones that might keep the rain out and laid claim. Later I have learned that we were on the west bank of the Rhine just opposite Dusseldorf. The company moved in the next few days. About 2 Apr., 1945 we are in Kuckhoven- Buel- Bonn area. We were of the 303 combat team and did move on

Apr.,3 under command of the 78th Inf., Div., to the south bank of the Sieg River. Our company was to be held in reserve, but somehow we became the first to cross.

More guard duty and rotating the squad and trying to keep track of where they could be found is full time duty. I had fashioned a pocket notebook of thin cardboard a shoestring and some tissue paper and that was a real help. We soon learned about where we were headed. The word came down that we had a river crossing in a couple of days. On Apr., 7 the crossing of the Sieg River took place and the opposition was the German 3rd Paratroops Div. Just waiting for the engineers to slip the boats into the area were we could get to them. Artillery and rifle fire we evident occasionally now and somewhat distant. This is about when we saw a concentration of bombers and some pulling gliders.

Col. William B Force, was the Regiment Commander. Lt. Col. Alfred W Pierce 1st Battalion dates, 9 Apr. 1945 our platoon commander was Lt. Joslyn. We never saw much of him.

The company moved at night by truck for about one hour then we did a hike for another hour and settled into a dense wood area. Some one reported that they had found the boats and we did a carry forward through the woods to get them close to the water that night.

The artillery opened up from behind us and started pounding on the far bank and Seigburg. I guess this went on for thirty minutes, then we got the order to move. There was a dense smoke screen on the river and some automatic weapons in use also sounds of mortar rounds going in. As we got to the boats, four guys on a side did the carry on each side and we are slipping and sliding in the mud on a fairly gradual slope to the water edge. You cannot see the far shore for smoke and I think the river would be a little more than width of Clark Fork at the Higgins Ave Bridge. Maybe seventy yards across. As we enter the water there is a good amount of rifle fire it seems in both directions. After nearly our entire group falls down in the slick mud we finally get in the boats and some paddles are missing. One guy is hanging on to the boat and never did get inside. Our boat did not take any hits but we did dodge two bodies floating from up stream into us. The far bank was fairly steep but had a lot of rubble so the footing was not bad. Our landing was right up against a stone wall of a factory and we went both directions on the shoreline to get to a passage around the building. I did not see more than half my squad for about three days after the crossing.

Our platoon and most of the company got right into so called house to house fighting soon after climbing the bank. Another company got into a major scrape in the factory-----
----name?? they had to have reinforcements to get out of there. The houses and buildings are all stone of various types built side by side with common walls mostly two stories. As we started through these we did find a few civilians later in the day hidden mostly in the basements. It was common knowledge that they would assist the SS at all times so it was a caution and we just generally pushed them out of our direction and sent them to the rear.. There were about 350,000 Germans defending the Ruhr Pocket. Over 835,000 American and German soldiers fought in the Ruhr. This battle essentially was from Apr.,1 through Apr 19,1945.

Snipers from roof tops and high windows seem to be the SS operation. I learned for the first time that pounding the butt of the M1 against a door was a good way to hurt you partner...the rifle will fire. We took some prisoners the first day and spent the night

rotating guard duty and there was some overhead artillery fire most of the night. Tommy Merris, our squad leader spent a lot of his time with my squad in the house to house action. We were protecting each other's butt minute by minute. We spent that night on guard duty and very little sleep in one of the vacant buildings. At daylight we started to move around and I crossed the street and stepped into a doorway just as the sandstone explode in front of me. That one almost had my name on it. We took cover and tried to find the direction. It turned out to be fire coming from a low shed type building almost directly behind the building in which we spent the night. Several guys directed fire on the shed and soon a white flag appeared. I think there were about a dozen SS spending the night in there. The prisoners were searched and we remove all the weapons and helmets then they were sent onto the rear. Several of use picked up a good watch in that bunch. Moving them to the rear was always a problem because some one had to escort the Kauts until you could hand them off to a rear support group. I spent awhile washing the dust out of my eyes and felt real lucky.

Not far from this area we got into land mines and an early casualty was a good buddy Robert Richie, from California, he lost both heels. This really makes things go slow and does not a thing for you disposition. You get muddy -- grimy -- and about half mad the first day of action and the deposition never gets better.

The mine detector guys were soon there and cleared some of the area. I think we were in Seigburg for about four days, then moved into the country and on roads at night to make other move. Water and dry sock are your biggest concern.

This night while in open country and no trees we caught a heavy 88 show and took several casualties Earl Terry killed out right and Bradly took shrapnel across his neck and I think lived through it, we never saw him again. The disposition is bad. It seems it was not far from here that we were in a single column on a dirt road at night and without warning a row of our 155 's all fired and that is about all you can handle for real fright.

Some where about now we get into a fire fight at a road block. Two road come together and there is mortar fire, machine gun and rifle knocking out truck and tanks as they take a run at the crossing.. We are in behind hedge rows and it is very difficult to see where the fire is coming in from. Our artillery is set up in the near by wood and that shuts down the incoming mortar fire, but plenty of firing continued. We finally found the krauts were dug in on the other side of the hedgerow on both sides of the roads, and very close to us. A few grenades seem to quiet their fire but they would not come out until someone crawled over and showed a bayonet in their hole. There were about thirty prisoners rounded up and we searched them in behind some stone buildings. We had some casualties and our disposition is bad. This was a critical time. We had them lined up and then spread eagled on the ground for quit a while. Then we stood them up and were near to having an execution. Some of the cooler heads stepped in and luckily it didn't happen. Now we are wearing more nice watches and some nice swords about ten long. This I believe is where I was gifted with a dandy automatic pencil. It had actually four barrels and each with a different color lead, very modern. Now I had a really good pencil to keep track of the guard rotations.

I did read later that there were pens and pencils that were a booby traps.

Dusseldorf date 6-18 Apr. 1945

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The 303rd combat team moved on through Seigburg and up to the north bank of the Ager River northwest of Siegburg, under continuing sniper and artillery fire and this was about Apr. 11. One platoon got into the Bayer chemical works on the banks of this river and had to have a bunch of help getting in and out, they spent most of the day there, but eventually did capture the factory.. Then on to Levenkeuse, just outside of Dusseldorf. I think generally our total route so far was Strasbourg- Luxembourg – Leige , Belgium--Bonn/Beuel ,Siegburg (Sieg River flows into the Rhine.), then continuing in the direction of Dusseldorf

We must have jumped in the trucks some of this distance . I do recall very clearly walking the autobahn about dark when word was past back through the company that President Roosevelt had died. This was April 12, 1945 and this had to be in and around Dusseldorf. It was also about this time that tanks and armored equipment passed through our outfit. We were damn glad to see them and that meant that we now had bridges across the Sieg river and this was probably in the area of Drabenderhoe . Our “C” company was given credit for the capture of this town. About Apr., 14 we’re in the neighborhood of Leverkusen, and the I.G.Farben Industries chemical works. This got really beat up with earlier air strikes and current artillery and armored rigs. The Upper river was insight on Apr. 15 and now on the Leverkusen-Wirme-Skirchen Autobahn. Recent research gives me this location for we did not know where we were at the time.

Time in the city was more narrow streets and some house to house with some on fire and most had some damage . Dusseldorf’s population was about 500,000 and generally it was in good shape.. One incident I recall is the time a German civilian came running up to us and tried to tell us that there were a bunch of SS hiding not far away. We believed this guy to be part of the,”Free Movement and giving us support. What I understood was a distance of 3/4 kilometer.. It took a while for this group of high school guys to guess that to be about 1/2 mile so we said lets give it a look. We were convinced enough to follow the guy through the streets and he finally stopped and pointed around the corner at a isolated building and then he took off. We got into some protection and could see no activity in or around it. Our platoon Sgt . , Tom Merriss, directed a concentrated firing on the buildings into doors and windows and a couple grenades were tossed, then sure as hell a white flag was pushed out of a window. Then a shout “ Kaput All is Kaput) all is kaput “ (kapitulate-surrender),and out they came maybe twenty with one officer. We gave a search and started them (Rennen) to Run back down the road and onto the rear, with two of our guys following to hand them off. We relieved some of good watches and a couple of decorated swords. There were several Generals and many lesser officers captured in this sector. There were some where near 20.000 prisoners taken in Dusseldorf.

I read this story later about German civilians who came to the 303 Artillery and said there was a large group wanting to surrender. I understand that the artillery gathered up all the kitchen and supply trucks they could find and surrounded about a two block area, to show a major strength in numbers one of the officers demanded their surrender and it worked

One night in the city we were in a very modern two story house maybe six bedrooms still in good shape and it had all pocket sliding doors and a wine cellar. The problem was the wine and guard duty and the sliding doors. We set the guard in daylight and after dark we could not find the damn doors to rotate the guard and the outside guys could not find the door back into us that is total darkness. About the next day in our area, a GI, lost it and got into one of our tank in the street and used the machine gun to tattoo in a 360 degree shooting spree.

Everyone just took cover until I guess he evidently ran out of ammo.

Some areas had rather wide streets and looked O.K. The patrols and house action was constant. I have read where they estimate that there were maybe 400,000 German troops and eighteen allied divisions (maybe 300,000 troops) in a 4000 square mile area. This might give you an idea of the confusion. This could be about 50 by 80 miles so it was a wild time.

Prisoners were taken everyday some after a fire fight of some duration. We took one group after wounding a sniper in a tower. This guy decided to come down with a white flag and joined about ten others dug in near by that we were not aware of and that we might have walked into. Our standard with prisoners was the search and then command them to run (Rennin) and Bewegen- move) I pushed one with the rifle butt and he did not move, he then lifted his pant leg and showed an artificial limb. Another term used was (kommen ze herous- come out.)

Everyday you had some luck and a little more education. German General Model was in command of the troops in the Ruhr Pocket. I have read that the Allies had eighteen Div. in this action. It is recorded that the 97th Div accounted for about 49,000 prisoners in the program

Many of the German citizen and farmers were affraid of the liberated Russian, Polish and Czech. forced labor. The farmers were asking for protection as we moved through and captured prisoners. I think the farmers were on land taken from the Czech. Most times there were non military people with carts and some of their possessions moving in the opposite direction to the rear on the various road and you never knew if these were SS guys in plain clothes.

The big concern was that the Germans would break out of the pocket and blow up the supply bridges, theirs and ours.

Dry socks and a full canteen of water were the best things in life. Combat in this style is absolute confusion all the time. Most of the time it was just take care of your self. Spam--water and dry socks at all times. Nights were kind of a bad time for you never knew who was making a move and a caution just to change your guards.

We crossed the Wupper River on 16 Apr.

Waltzdon , Cz. And getting there. April 25, 1945

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We did have one absolute carnival day. Where I am not sure but, in one of the larger villages. Seemed no one was in charge of any G.I., and we were moving very fast . We came to what might have been a garage area and found a bus in good shape . Some of our guys figured it would run and it was fueled by burning charcoal. Sure enough they fired it up and we had wheels. Others found motor cycles and bicycles . The bus worked no more than a couple of miles and we are back on the earth again.

Not long after we are back on the march and when the column is held up and my guys are very near a farm house. We moved in on the place and there were civilians inside. They invited several of us in and soon they were frying eggs for us. I don't think they had much of anything else to offer. About dark and not far from the egg fry we caught some incoming artillery and one of the lieutenants jumped into what he thought was a ditch and good cover. He soon crawled out and seems he had found a slit trench and he was in bad shape. He headed for the rear and a change and it was about two days before he rejoined our company. We were in this area about to over lap the Russians. We were looking for red flares and it seems they were behind us when finally sighted .

This is a time of Gen. Patton and his run. Tanks were going every direction for a while and we seemed to be filling in the flanks . The general direction is Czechoslovakia, east, but, we did not know it at the time. Somehow we got to a farm area and the farms were not more than about a mile or two apart. Each squad was assigned a building and the civilians living there were moved to the down stairs quarters with the cows, if they had any. There were no cattle to be seen. I understood that the farms were occupied and confiscated by the loyal Germans and when the country was invaded they moved in and took the property from the Czechs. There was one Czech lady on the place we occupied and she was a forced labor, Czech. We saw no mechanized equipment and no tanks in this area which was mostly moderate mountains.

Each squad was doing its own guard duty and we were just staying in place for a few days and some patrols were put together. This was a good time to take care of our feet and get the gear dried out. Most days were some rain and mixed snow.

After a few days we moved together in platoon strength(four squads at about half strength). All of the squads were more than sixty to seventy percent replacements and you really did not know much about any of them --maybe their home state and the last name. The platoon moved out to the edge of a wooded area and evidently we were just doing usual patrol . The word came back from the lead scouts that German troops were sighted on the high ground above us. They were no doubt in the heavy woods and probably had scouted us much before we knew of their presence. The Lt. assigned my squad to lead a scouting movement down a tree lined road and try to locate their position. We had moved about two hundred yards and we drew plenty of automatic weapon fire. The lead guy and myself both had automatic rounds kicking the dirt on us and I think from the noise that is what others were getting. I had seven with me and every one hit the dirt quick but some had been hit.

Some of us were able to get behind trees along the edge of the road that were not big enough for good cover.

We all started firing in the general direction of the forest and brush above us but I don't think any one ever saw a target. They had the high ground and great cover. Very soon after this there seemed to be fire fight in the direction the platoon and for sure the Krauts had us in a real tight spot. After what seemed like about thirty minutes of taking fire we thought it would be better cover on the down hill side of road. Fire and move was tried as we made the dash one at a time and every one of my group were hit as they made the dash.

My hit was in the thigh and I lost the rifle while flying through the air. The impact seemed as it might have been with a sledge hammer. Impact seemed to cause a vibration that was endless. This date was April 25, 1945

Sometime before getting hit I called to the Lt. Roslyn, to move in behind them, and his reply was they could not move-- they were also pinned down. This action took place about two in the afternoon. The situation must have remained the same until about dark and then we heard some mortar fire. I think it was ours.

Shortly after dark two of the SS boys came by and picked up rifles and ammo. I was able to get my belt off and get to the canteen earlier, they took the belt along with the rifle and canteen. Not long after they went by me, I did hear two shots. I assumed that they had finished two of the patrol. I was mostly out of it when they went by and they probably thought I was dead.

Later on in the dark two more Krauts came by and these were evidently their corpsmen. They placed a compress on the leg and threw a jacket over me. I don't know where they came from or where they got the jacket.

Later there was more mortar and artillery and I think the Krauts faded back into the forest. This group was no doubt, some of the die hard SS bunch.

About midnight two jeep (cat eyes) appeared and the lead guy was my combat buddy Tom Merits, our platoon Sgt., They loaded two of us on stretchers and were tied to the jeep hood. I have never heard what happened to the other guys.

I really do not remember anything from there on except for a brief stop in a tent near the front and then waking up in England

My recall now is that a kid from Texas and a nurse was giving me a shave. The guy's last name was White he had been hit in the face and most of the teeth were gone and he was badly scarred. A great guy but would scare hell out of you now. The nurses and doctors were just the greatest. Time was spent between body cast and pin traction and changing dressings. I remember very little of England except one day there were two English comedians doing a show in the ward, I could not understand their clipped speech then and I still don't like the English delivery.