

83rd Thunderbolt

NORMANDY. BRITTANY. LOIRE VALLEY. LUXEMBOURG. HURTGEN FOREST. ARDENNES. FIRST TO RHINE. ELBE BRIDGEHEAD.

VOL 1, No. 2

EAST OF THE ELBE

MAY 5, 1945

83rd Meets Russians West of Berlin



Nothing was too good for the 'Americanski' when Colonel Alexis Ivanov, Commander of the elite Sixth Red Guards Division, entertained Major General Robert C. Macon, 83rd Commander, and staff at Sixth Division Headquarters on May Day to celebrate the first formal link-up of the two great Allies on the Ninth Army front. Along with the roast chicken and vodka, the American General received a bouquet of tulips from a pretty Russian 'Wac' during the three-hour fete, while the Red Colonel smiled his approval. (Other party photos, Page 4, all by M/Sgt Harry Brouhard, staff photographer)

Germans Turn Over 19,000 Allied PWs To 83rd, Including 1200 GIs, Some From Elbe Bridgehead

More than 1,200 Americans, including a large number of 83rd men, were liberated from a prisoner of war camp at Altengrabow by the Thunderbolt Division this week. Negotiations for the mass liberation were conducted by General Macon and a Colonel from the German Army, who came through the 83rd lines under a white flag to request the removal of the Americans and 17,000 other Allied PWs.

The German colonel was accompanied by 2nd Lt Richard E. Drury, of the 83rd who was captured at Badetz during the enemy counter attack on the Elbe bridgehead. Drury was a mortar observer with Co. H of the 331st Infantry when his position was overrun and he was taken prisoner. He volunteered to accompany the German prison camp commandant to the American headquarters and help arrange the liberation. Drury came overseas with the Division and won a battlefield commission last March. He holds the DSC which he won at El Guettar in the same battle as his regimental commander Colonel Robert H. York. He did not divulge to the German colonel that he was a member of the 83rd but when he heard that an attempt was being made to contact the Americans near Zerst he volunteered knowing that his outfit was in that immediate area.

ARRANGEMENTS MADE

Arrangements were completed Wednesday and at eight o'clock Thursday morning the first 83rd convoy consisting of four ambulances, a radio car and six 2 1/2 ton trucks left Zerst to travel 20 miles behind German lines to enter the camp. Each vehicle was accompanied by German soldiers to insure safe conduct through the area and guide the American convoy over the pre-arranged route.

When the first few vehicles rolled into the barbed wire enclosure, Yanks stared at one another in disbelief and then, on realizing they were seeing GIs again, shouted greetings that could be heard almost as far back as the American lines. They hastily got together their

few possessions, mounted the trucks and set out for the return trip.

Wounded Americans were returned in the first convoy of ambulances and after their arrival at Zerst a second convoy of 35 trucks and 22 ambulances returned to pick up the rest of the men. This group of vehicles completed the liberation and began evacuation of interned soldiers of other Allied nations.

Included in the liberation were men who had fought in North Africa, Italy, France and almost every major American operation of this war. The men from the 83rd who were liberated were captured during the German counter-attacks at the Elbe bridgehead last month. A complete roster of the men was not obtainable at press time, but a partial list includes the following: From the 329th Infantry, Pvt Lee A. Moore, Pfc Donald I. Krumm, Pfc Jacinto Moreno and Pfc Robert A. LeCount. From the 331st: S/Sgt Ralph L. McDonald, Pfc Steve M. Maliozzi, Pfc Horace J. Palmer, Pfc Vincent P. Caranhan, Pfc Joseph I. Granko, Pfc Mayes O. Key, Pfc Lawrence F. Killo, Pfc Gordon A. Bennett, Pvt Ralph E. Hamilton and Pfc Hebert A. Reno.

GIs munched on K rations during the return trip and reported their treatment at Altengrabow to be "fairly good" considering the scarcity of food in Germany.

"The fact that we could hear good old American artillery in the distance also discouraged the Germans from treating us harshly," said a bearded Ranger who had been captured at Anzio. He stated that the Germans told PWs that the Americans were now fighting the Russians, that President

Roosevelt had been assassinated and that the Japanese had invaded California. "Naturally we didn't believe any of it," he concluded, "but the Germans repeated it so many times that after a while they believed it themselves and even offered to set us free to fight the Russians."

Most Yanks from Altengrabow were enlisted men and only a few officers were included in the group. All of the evacuees were returned to Army headquarters where those who have been captives for more than 60 days will be flown to Paris. In Paris they will be outfitted in new uniforms and then board C-54s for a non-stop flight to the United States.

Help Wanted...

If there's an old newspaperman down on the line somewhere who'd like to sling his M-1 and pick up a pad and pencil again, we have a reporter's run ready for him.

Our man must be willing to work hectic hours at present ceiling wages with no promise of advancement. We offer only the inducement of the literary life, the company of combat correspondents and an occasional case of cognac — for publicity purposes only.

All applications should be sent by MC to the Thunderbolt City Desk, PRO, Blackstone Fwd.

Division Commanders Celebrate First Formal Ninth Army Link-Up East Of Elbe With May Day Fete

The much-heralded and long-awaited link-up of the Thunderbolt Division with the Russians took place officially Tuesday morning when the 83rd's Major General Robert C. Macon stepped briskly from his jeep in the tiny town of Cobbelsdorf to meet Colonel Alexis Ivanov, commander of the elite Sixth Guards Division.

As General Macon strode toward Colonel Ivanov, a band struck up a military tune. Russian officers and men were lined up on the side of the road watching eagerly. The two commanders shook hands and Colonel Ivanov said, "My Division has waited a long time to contact yours."

The hand shake seemed to be the signal for the Russians to break ranks and they ran forward to mill around the two commanders while 83rd officers and GIs struggled to get closer to see what was going on. Army photographers were almost crushed in the rush as they tried to get vantage points from which to snap the historic meeting.

Rank was of no significance as Russian majors and captains warmly welcomed American officers and GIs alike, pounding them on the back and clapping each other's hand as a sign of their common cause.

CAVALRY MAKES CONTACT

While this was not the first contact with the Russians, it was the first formal meeting of Ninth Army leaders with the leaders of the Russian forces opposite the 83rd. Less than 24 hours before, the 125th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron under Lt. Col. A. F. Kleitz of Denver, Col., met the Russian outposts following a two-day reconnaissance in force from the 83rd's Elbe River bridgehead.

The 125th Cavalry, a part of the 113th Cavalry Reconnaissance Group commanded by Colonel William S. Biddle of Portland, Ore, who was responsible for making all arrangements for the meeting between the American and Russian commanders, left Gr. Rosenberg early Monday morning, April 29th, crossed the Elbe over Roosevelt Bridge and passed eastward through Zerst where it fanned out into two columns.

Troop A, on the north, commanded by Capt Sam Lindsay, and Troop C, on the south, commanded by Capt Adolph Ploehn, both of Battle Creek, Mich, pushed ahead rapidly against scattered small arms and machine gun fire. By nightfall, Troop C had taken Rossau and had passed beyond Coswig. At 1330 the next day, contact was made by the 3rd Platoon of Troop C under Lt. Charles Barrett of Big Fork Mountain, Mont.

The convoy carrying General Macon and his Staff officers to the meeting Tuesday morning was made up of jeeps and M20 armored cars. It left the Division CP promptly at 0800, trailed by two Army Photographers' jeeps.

After picking up guides from the 113th Cavalry in Zerst, the convoy moved rapidly on to Rossau where more armored escorts were picked up. Later, near the Russian lines, a Russian liaison officer guide was met. The column had by this time trebled in size and resembled a large task force.

ENTER RUSSIAN LINES

The first indication of the closeness of the Russians was when the convoy passed a battery of German artillery pieces facing to the east. Their barrels had been blown. They were already gathering rust.

Shortly after 0930, the American column reached the first Russian outpost. There stood two Red soldiers wearing red arm bands, and carrying tommy guns. Stopping momentarily, the column was identified and continued eastward.

Women tank drivers and Russian soldiers stood by houses in small groups.

Some shouted wildly and waved. Others just watched in happy silence, their faces all smiles and shining. Russian soldiers rode by on bicycles and motorbikes, looking very much like ordinary American GIs.

One group of Russian soldiers was seen looking curiously under the hood of a badly steaming civilian sedan. Small convoys of horses and wagons drawing hay and supplies passed by.

German civilians passed quietly and soberly along streets of towns. Some were amazed at the sight of Americans in the Russian lines, others looked poker-faced. Both Russian and Americans ignored them in their interest in each other.

After winding through silent forests, over hard-paved roads and dirt trails, the convoy arrived at Cobbelsdorf at 1130. After introductions, the official party adjourned to a small restaurant where Russian and American officers were seated at two long tables covered with white linen, silver and glassware. Two comely waitresses brought in heaping plates of roast chicken, ham,

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Nazi Attacks On Bridgehead Thrown Back

Successful in his destruction of the armored attempt at a bridgehead across the Elbe, the enemy tried every desperate measure at his disposal to dislodge the Thunderbolt Division from its positions east of the river in the days following the establishment of its bridgehead.

Bombing and strafing of the bridgehead area by a dying Luftwaffe, tank and infantry counter-attacks, with sometimes as many as 25 tanks, floating mines, even marching fire and underwater demolition men were employed in a series of vain efforts to liquidate the bridgehead won after the 83rd's record-breaking dash from the Rhine to the Elbe.

All elements of the Division combined to establish and hold the bridgehead against everything the Germans could throw against it. The speed with which tanks, tank destroyers and artillery pieces streamed across the river, first on rafts, then over the Truman and Roosevelt Bridges, gave the doughboys the necessary armor and artillery support to fight off enemy tanks and enemy artillery.

Engineers of Lt Col Roy Dodge's 308th Combat Engineer Bn worked overtime carrying over their loads of men and equipment. Even before the Truman Bridge was completed on the morning of April 14th, less than 18 hours after the first 329th Infantryman stepped onto the east bank of the Elbe, 1,000 vehicles of all descriptions had been ferried across.

Enemy assaults, light at first, mounted in fury until on the morning of April 16th, following an intensive artillery preparation, a major counter-attack was

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83rd Thunderbolt

Official Weekly Newspaper of the
83rd Infantry Division

The Thunderbolt is written by and for the men of the 83rd under the supervision of Capt John C. Neff, Information-Education Officer, and Capt Thomas G. Roberts, Public Relations Officer. All material is censored by AC of S, G-2. Member Camp Newspaper Service, 205 East 42nd St., NYC.

STAFF: Managing Editor, Sgt Al Gladding; News Editor, Pfc John Matoney; Art Editor, Sgt Nick Firfires; Photographer, M/Sgt Harry Brouhard; Reporters, Pfc Carl Weber and Pfc Lee Goldhof; Combat Correspondents, Sgt Ray Goguen, 329th Inf, Sgt Grover Crawford, 330th Inf, Sgt Jack Straus, 331st Inf, and Sgt Bill Schumann, 83rd Arty.

VOL. 1, No. 2.

May 5, 1945.

Master Race



These are three of the supermen who ran the forced labor racket at the Nazi underground factory overrun by the 83rd at Eschershausen. All three spent many years in American industry before returning to the fatherland to become the face of the master race. The first is Hans Riedel, 42, who went to work in America in 1924, became an American citizen in 1931 and later left Detroit to manage the Eschershausen plant for Hitler.



The second is Theodore Kock, 41, who jumped ship in the United States and went to work in Detroit. He returned to Germany in 1937 to work for Nazi industry.



The last is Adolph Stephan, 45, who worked from 1927-'37 in Detroit as a mechanical engineer. On returning to the Reich, he became assistant director of the infamous Eschershausen factory.

All three are now being held as war criminals. Each had a rare opportunity to learn the American way. One had the privilege of being an American citizen. But they preferred to work for Hitler.

330th Receives Surrender Of Nazi Regiment

A dramatic midnight excursion behind German lines in the neighborhood of Schora by Major Bedford Foster of Kenmore, N. Y., and three enlisted men from the 330th Infantry resulted in the mass surrender of a Wehrmacht regiment numbering 41 officers and 896 enlisted men from Latvia.

First indication of the large scale capitulation came when S/Sgt Stanley J. Kiel of Hamtramck, Mich. and S/Sgt Cort C. Braught, Des Moines, Iowa reported to Lt. Warren W. Witt of Tonca City, Okla. that a German captain had driven up to their K Co outpost under a flag of truce and told them that his commanding officer wanted to surrender his regiment to the Americans.

Witt established contact with regimental headquarters and Foster hastened to the outpost to investigate the capitulation offer. Several minutes conversation with the German convinced him that the offer was bona fide. The signal suggested by the Latvian captain to advise his commander to come to the rendezvous point was a green and a white flare fired every even hour. Advising Witt to shoot the flare as prescribed, Foster, accompanied by Sgt Grover Crawford of San Antonio, Texas, and two German speaking non-coms, Sgt Kurt Rittner of Buffalo, N. Y., and Sgt Fred Kramer of New York City, went out to meet the German commandant.

"It looked bad when we ran into a German road block after we had gone a couple of miles," said Crawford, "but the Nazi captain succeeded in making the 30 men manning it hold their fire."

The white and green flare was fired at midnight. About an hour later the Nazi colonel and his regiment approached the appointed meeting place. Negotiations took but a few minutes with Kramer acting as interpreter.

The Wehrmacht regiment was permitted to keep its weapons until it reached the American lines because there was some danger that other German troops in the vicinity might contest the mass surrender.

According to the Latvian colonel, his regiment had been ordered on line east of Berlin, but he had had no desire to continue the fight so he had proceeded to fake orders and move his men toward the Elbe. According to his story he had, at one point, been stopped by German troops and had admitted to his desire to surrender.

"I threatened to fight them if they did not let me pass through," he said. "They let us pass."

The mass surrender was completed without hitch, and the colonel and his regiment were soon safely out of the war in the Division PW cage.

...Hail The Conquering Heroes



At times the path of the Thunderbolt from the Rhine to the Elbe took on a French tinge as villagers scurried to get out their best white flags and Sunday smiles to welcome the conquering heroes. Here's a group crowding around men of the 115th Cavalry Reconnaissance Sqdn, attached to the 85rd, who seem to have arrived as a pleasant surprise to the Fuhrer's folk. (Signal Corps Photo)

Russians Entertain Yanks At Gay May Day Meeting

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sauces, chops and other delicacies. Bottles of wine and pitchers of vodka were passed around.

RUSSIAN WELCOME

The room was small. In one corner were the Russian and American flags entwined with garlands of flowers. A portrait of Stalin in color hung on the wall and a red banner bearing Russian characters proclaiming the occasion of the meeting was on another wall.

General Macon and Colonel Ivanov took their place at the head of the table where they chatted amiably with the aid of an interpreter while a small orchestra played folk tunes.

Colonel Ivanov welcomed General Macon and his Staff in behalf of the Red Army which "had been fighting since Stalingrad for this momentous occasion." General Macon replied that it was only fitting that such a meeting should take place on this May Day, which in the Soviet Union is a National Holiday.

Toasts were drunk to Marshal Stalin, the late President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill who, said Colonel Ivanov, "promised to work together to crush Nazi Germany. What they promised has come true as evidenced by this meeting today."

Later toasts were proposed to "our two great leaders, Truman and Stalin." The Colonel stated, "The alliance founded in war between our armies will be carried on in peace between our peoples. Without the aid of America and Britain, it would have been impossible to defeat Germany." The Russian commander then said, "I wish good luck to America from the bottom of my heart."

FAMOUS DIVISION

General Macon was made an honorary member of the Russian Sixth Guards Division and was presented with the distinctive badge of the Division. The badge commemorates the Sixth's heroic stand at Moscow during the winter of 1941, when it hurled back the Germans. The badge was presented to the Guards Division by Marshal Stalin.

The Colonel said it was with considerable pride that he made General Macon an honorary member of the Guards Division. "It is only fitting," he said, "that your division and mine should meet for they are always out in front."

Later the Colonel presented General Macon with his pistol which he had carried since 1941 and with a scroll commemorating the meeting of the two divisions. General Macon reciprocated by giving the Colonel an American 45 calibre pistol with the Thunderbolt insignia engraved on both grips.

As the toasting and speeches were going on inside, drivers and guards of jeeps and armored cars mixed with Russian officers and GIs who started an impromptu party of their own. A couple of accordion players played folk music. GIs were startled to hear the

"Beer Barrel Polka". Soldiers danced with each other and with the few Russian girls present.

GIs and officers alike of both armies swapped fur hats, insignia and souvenirs. The language barrier melted away. The Russians seemed to be as avid camera fans as the Americans and they were constantly snapping pictures.

War correspondents arriving late were treated with the same fervent spirit as those who had arrived early. The official party broke up and adjourned to the Colonel's quarters while the correspondents and others remained in the dining room munching chicken legs and chops which they washed down with Russian wine and vodka. There was more than enough for everyone.

A young Russian girl soldier brought the General a huge bouquet of flowers which she had spent the morning in picking. Posing outside the Colonel's quarters for the cameramen, the young lady formally presented the flowers to General Macon. The American party then left for their own lines.

The meeting climaxed a drive that started on the beaches of Normandy last June 18th, and ended with meeting the Russians less than 30 miles from Berlin. For both it was an occasion to remember.

Truman Bridge Built At Night

The story of the Truman Bridge belongs in part to the men of the 295th Engineer Combat Bn and the 992nd Engineer Treadway Bridge Co who built it in a night after 308th Engineers had gotten the first waves of 83rd doughs across to the Elbe in assault boats.

Construction of the vital bridge started at 1630 the day of the crossing when assembled floats were moved by power boats to the bridge site and, under the direction of Capt Olin H. Davis, the bridge commander, the 24-foot long sections of treadway bridge were moved into place and secured.

Upstream, meanwhile, work by Co B, under Lt Walter J. Sanders, Jr., was progressing on a log boom across the river as protection against floating mines. Some 60 section of unfinished logs were floated into position and anchored separately across the stream, forming one continuous barrier. The strength of the current made anchorage of a continuous boom unusually difficult, but the boom saved the bridge the following day when it destroyed two mines intended for the span.

Throughout the night work continued in blackout. With the failure of one of the inboard power boats, operations were further slowed. Additional anchors were necessary and a trip of 80 miles had to be made to obtain them. But at 0730 the 624-foot span was open to traffic, and waiting support elements moved over the Elbe into the Thunderbolt bridgehead.

GILBERT BY SGT. N.S. FIRFIRES



... Tilton Time



Still singing sweeter and looking better than ever is filtin' Martha Tilton, Benny Goodman's girl of long ago. Currently, Martha's starring in the Milton Berle opus, "Let Yourself Go". (CBS Photo)

331st Held Hamm Bridgehead Despite Fierce Nazi Resistance

Establishing the bridgehead at Hamm on the Dortmund-Ems Canal was one of the toughest knots of resistance to untie during the Yank's sweep to the Elbe. But Maj. William Sellar's battalion undertook the job, punched their way into the north side of the city, dealt a severe blow across the canal and held the bridgehead for two days until the 95th Division pushed through to take the town.

It was 0525 on the morning after Easter when K Co, under Lt. Daniel Halliday from San Juan, Cal. mounted the table-like right of approach to the Hamm R. R. bridge. The men moved out quickly and perilously close behind their own artillery and mortar barrage. Creeping, crawling and short dashes were the only means of making the crossing over the five-span trestle that bridged the twin canals which made a bastion out of the Hamm pocket.

Speed was essential and Lt. Daniel Little of Decalab, Ill. led his platoon across first. L Co was to cross the foot and vehicle bridge on the left of K but Jerry blew it with prepared charges, almost under the very noses of the leading elements. This action left Co. K high and all alone on the murderous tracks of the marshalling yards. With sniper, machine gun fire and panzerfaust rockets pouring down from upper stories of neighboring buildings, the doughs moved forward towards the station. Once inside the cavernous hub of the yard, the short "on objective and preparing to hold" was radioed back to higher command.

With supply lines covered for over a thousand yards by snipers who could see anything that moved, Cpls. Robert Walsh of Jersey City and Frederick Fegley of Allentown, Pa. with their 300 radios were the only communication with the outside.

Later a call for ammunition was sent. To this S/Sgt. Harold Merrill of California responded with a carrying party of one platoon from Co. L. They arrived at the bridgehead none too soon. For as they prepared to head back, the first counter-attack let loose. Everyone manned a station and maintained a constant output of fire so terrific that the enemy was forced to withdraw.

Lt. Vernon Fever of Detroit said his weapons platoon fired at the range of 300 yards at one time. But

in this action S/Sgt. Robert Trego of Columbus, Ohio brought fire to within 50 yards by firing through an aperture in the roof of the station.

Co. L was soon across bringing as much ammunition as they could carry - armloads of bandoleers, rounds of bazookas, and cases of machine gun ammo. For two days, the men repelled a continuous series of counterattacks. Co. M fired 4000 rounds of 81 mm. mortar in support.

Lt. Adolph Sharkey of Roxbury, Mass., Co. L, said, "We had Hamm for Easter and it was plenty tough. We cleared out a one block factory area and took the police station and large railroad station where we made our observation post and CP. The Nazis shot a lot of panzerfausts at the roof but most of them failed to penetrate.

"The Yanks were forced to guard many tunnels, ramps and other exits such as are found in railroad stations. The Germans were anxious to retake the strategic station and protect the military installations known to be located in Hamm. But the strong concentrations of mortar and artillery into Nazi positions around the small American held sector prevented large scale counterattacks and started many fires."

329th Gets Key To Zerbst From Cheering Krauts

In an attack marked by a mass demonstration of real or assumed joy by German civilians at the sight of American soldiers, the city of Zerbst, with a peacetime population of 20,000, fell to Thunderbolt doughs of the 329th Infantry Saturday.

Zerbst, an important road center, had been subjected to intense artillery and air bombardment for 15 days prior to its surrender. Peculiarly not a single shot was fired by either side during the assault. Despite the "token" appearance of the battle, over 800 prisoners, including a number of "Wacs", were taken, bringing the regiment's PW figures to over 40,000 for the war to date.

Instead of the usual deserted streets, 2nd and 3rd Bn Infantrymen found crowds of civilians who tossed flowers and cheered them wildly as they entered the city. But the 329th doughboys were not taken in by the reception accorded them by Germans trying to curry favor now that the Hitler bubble had burst. Instead, they went about their business just as though the stiffest resistance was being encountered.

For several days preceding the attack a colonel in charge of the defending garrison had procrastinated over surrendering to Col. Edwin B. Crabill's men. Finally the German commander announced that he would not surrender and that he would go down with his men. But he was not among the prisoners. A major, second in command, was discovered in a hospital bed posing as one of the wounded, hoping he would be overlooked.

Record Round...



With this shell, Btry C of the 86th Armored Field Artillery Bn, attached to the 85rd, fires its 150,000th round since its first shot at El Guettar in March of '45. Receiving the historic shell from Sgt. Harold I. Furuheim of E. Stanwood, Wash., chief of section, is Brigadier General Robert M. Montague, 85rd Artillery Commander. (Signal Corps Photo)



Loses Wing

The Liaison pilot lost a wing, but the Kraut pilot lost his his plane and his life.

It all happened in a matter of minutes near Bad Lippspringe when a ME109 came over the 83rd Artillery airfield to stoff and caught Lt. William Law just after his take-off.

When Law saw the ME109 coming at him shooting, he made a sharp dive toward an AA position, and as the enemy fire went through his wing, 453rd AAA gunners let loose. The plane fell in a death dive. Law landed his damaged plane safely and put in a requisition for a new wing.

Quick Action

During one of the enemy's desperate counter-attacks against the Thunderbolt bridgehead over the Elbe, it took one 643rd tank destroyer and crew just 15 minutes to take care of three Mark IV tanks and a SP gun.

The action took place when the Nazis attacked with large numbers of infantry, supported by six tanks and six SPs.

"They were coming from every direction," said T/5 Joseph M. Knybel, driver from Co. C. "The credit belongs to our gunner, Pfc Gilbert C. Kershaw."

Other members of the ace crew, led by T/4 Floyd W. Sollenberger of Chambersburg, Pa. included Pvt. John N. Clark, Jr. of Tulsa, Okla. and Pvt. Richard L. Monroe of M. Morris, Mich.

Eagle Eye

Ever find a needle in a haystack? Ever catch up with the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow? Cpl. O'Neil McKinsey of Fresno, Cal. combined the eye of an eagle with the luck of the Irish to pick off a panzerfaust rocket in mid-air with a single shot from his machine gun.

McKinsey, gunner with Co. B, 736th Tank Bn, found himself nursing an ailing machine gun, capable of firing only one-shot bursts. At the same time, his

tank was being menaced by a Nazi armed with a panzerfaust. He fired one shot at the panzerfaust man and missed. The Heinie fired his weapon. With the rocket in mid-air, McKinsey took a chance and directed his second shot at it. He hit it, and the rocket exploded harmlessly a few yards from the tank.

It was a simple matter to finish off the amazed bazookaman and two other Germans after the sharpshooting exhibition.

Plane Service

A two-man quartering party from the 2nd Bn, 331st can claim the capture of a German airfield. Capt. James Patterson from Fresno, Cal. and his driver Tec 5 John Burns of Bainbridge, Ga. returning to the battalion from a reconnaissance, noted what seemed to be planes camouflaged among trees off the road.

Parking their jeep, they started through the trees, and bumped into three Jerries, one of them a Lt. Colonel. Checking further, they counted 62 German planes parked around the edge of a field among the trees. The field proper was cleverly camouflaged - grass growing between small paving blocks.

Further investigation revealed a barn housing a complete repair shop. The gasolineless planes had been rendered completely unserviceable by the retreating enemy.

All Wet

Pfc. Duke Highland, Co. F 331st rifleman, Dayton, Ohio, was feeling pretty miserable right after an engagement with the enemy. It was during the attack on Kameritz. And he had been forced to take cover for awhile in a roadside creek with water up to his hips.

He was thinking of this while marching some Jerries back to the PW cage. He suddenly had an idea. He marched the prisoners off the road into the creek. After a few minutes, he motioned them out.

"Now", he smiled in better spirits, "you've got an idea how I felt."

Veteran 320th Infantry Over Elbe With 83rd

Veteran infantrymen of the 320th Regiment, 35th (Santa Fe) Division, President Truman's World War I outfit, contributed greatly to the success of the Thunderbolt Division's drive across the Elbe.

The Regiment, under the command of Col. B. A. Byrne of Bradenton, Fla., made two river crossings during the short time it was attached to the 83rd. 320th doughs first made an assault crossing of the Saale River and cleared its south bank for a distance of six miles to where it joins the Elbe. During the operation seven towns fell to them.

Following the fighting across the Saale, the Regiment crossed the Truman Bridge into the Elbe bridgehead to join Thunderbolt infantrymen fighting on the east side of the river. Lt. Thomas M. Leier of Bernie, Mo. was the first 320th soldier from the President's home state to cross the bridge named in his honor.

Being attached to another division was not a new experience for Byrne's doughboys. Since entering combat in Normandy, they have been assigned to four divisions outside their own. They have participated in most of the important campaigns and battles on the Western Front, including St. Lo, the Vire River, Mortain, the Moselle River, the drive across Alsace-Lorraine, the Saar River, the Battle of the Bulge at Bastogne, the Vosge Mountains, the Roer River, the push to the Rhine, the Battle of the Ruhr and this latest lightning thrust with the Thunderbolt.

An interesting sidelight on this present attachment was the capture of three Nazi demolition men garbed in underwater swim suits by doughs of Co. A. The suicide swimmers were caught as they were trying to reach the Truman bridge with their dynamite charges. Thus it fell to men from the President's own division to stop one of the attempts to destroy the bridge named after him.

Convoy Gets Food To Allied PWs

A convoy of mercy consisting of ten trucks and a jeep, specially painted all white with huge red crosses and the words "Canti Internationale de la Croix Rouge" conspicuously lettered on each, went through Thunderbolt lines recently in the area held by the 3rd Bn of the 330th Infantry.

With the exception of Lt. Joseph A. W. St Onge of Holyoke, Mass. and his driver, Pfc. Larry Key of Neptune, Tenn., both from the 3rd Bn, 330th, the rest of the men were white-clad Swiss. The trucks were loaded with more than 55 tons of medical supplies, food and clothing for Allied PWs held by the Germans.

After arriving at the take-off point, it was only a matter of minutes before the convoy was on its way across No Man's Land. The American officer led the way through a specially charted lane in a protective mine field.

"It felt funny to be passing all those civilians beyond our outposts," said Key, "and they looked as if they couldn't figure it out, either."

At a pre-arranged point near the town of Flatz, the American part of the mission was completed and St Onge and Key turned back toward 83rd lines as the trucks disappeared into a thick woods held by the Jerries.

"We felt pretty helpless out there all alone," smiled St Onge, "but we got back safely -- didn't even see a Kraut."

Male Call

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



Ruski -- Americanski -- Victory

