

In Memory of Eddie Evin
TEC 5 526TH AIB COMPANY B, WWII

Our Hero

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Warren, MN. USA

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Preface

This book is being written for the benefit of the children of Eddie Evin, his grandchildren, great grandchildren and all generations to come so that all will know and remember his service to our country and some of what he experienced during those years of World War II.

The information included was compiled from entries in Dad's journal, (a gift from his sister Ruth) that he faithfully wrote in most every day while enlisted, interviews with Mom, articles from *the Pekan* Newsletter, Tom Hanchett's thesis on the 526th Armored Infantry Battalion and many other books and internet articles. Every attempt has been made to be as accurate as possible, cross referencing what was written in Dad's journal with other sources, and from Mom's memories of that time.

My initial intent was to chronical Dad's war years from enlistment to discharge but decided to start at the beginning with a little history about Dad, where he grew up, his early years and conclude with a bit of history about Mom and Dad up until when they married.

When I first read Dad's journal, I was a bit disappointed as he was pretty vague about his life in the service, battle's he was in, and how he felt about what was happening around him, although, when cross referencing his journal entries with other sources, I found so much more information and, actually discovered a possible reason why he was vague in his writing. As it turns out the battalion he was in was a unique battalion. From the time they were trained at Fort Knox Kentucky they became a group of men that were sworn to secrecy to the point that if they broke this secrecy it would be a considered a treasonous act.

To future generations who may read this, know that somewhere, someone in the family has the original journal. It is quite interesting reading, especially now, knowing some of the things he writes about. The journal may be tattered and torn but just know that it was written by a man who I now consider and know to be a hero. His service lasted for 2 ½ years but in that short time he seen and experienced things that we can only imagine and those memories came back to haunt him for the rest of his life.

Dad, this book is for you.

Introduction

In the spring of 2011 I started reading Dad's journal written during his service years in WWII, actually for the second time, but for whatever reason, this time I was intrigued by what I was reading. It was not detailed and actually quite vague but there were a few details that piqued my interest and made me want to know more.

Jan 3, 1945
Got orders to leave a few miles from here. An attack is to come on a big hill where the tanks are. Went out with the first platoon. The anti tank didn't go out so there was just our platoon. Everything was bad. Eighteen or twenty men out of about 60 came back. Several of the boys I knew were among the missing.

This page is really what started it all. From his previous entries I knew **where** he was at (near Malmedy, Belgium) and I had a **date**, and knew that there was a battle about to happen **on a hill**. So, I turned to the internet and typed into the search engine, 526th AIB Jan. 3 1945, WWII battle on a hill, near Malmedy and pressed enter. Several links came up with information about the 526 AIB and this battle on a hill called Houyire Hill. I glanced through them and then just clicked on one to see what it had to say.

While reading about this battle, I recognized some of the names of soldiers Dad mentioned in his journal. The dates and details lined up exactly and I wanted to know more. The article I was reading had been taken from a master thesis written by a man named Tom Hanchett from San Diego, California and there was a link to email him, so I did. What follows are the first 4 emails between him and I.

To: tomcon76@att.net
Sent: Thu, March 24, 2011 3:12:23 PM
Subject: 526th Armored infantry battalion Company B

jud2 from 30th Infantry Forum has sent you a message. You can reply to jud2 by replying to this e-mail.

The message reads as follows:

Hi,
I have been reading the journal that my father (deceased) kept while a soldier in WWII and he was a member of the 526th infantry Company B. He was in the Battle of the Bulge and specifically mentions the Houyire Hill battle. I read that you did a masters thesis on the topic and was wondering if it would be possible to read it? Or can you share any more information with me about the men in that Company? Do you have pictures? In his journal he mentions several of the men he served with and where they were from also if they were killed in action or missing in action. It is all so very interesting to me. I so wish I would have talked to him more about it all when he was living. I would appreciate hearing back from you with any information. Thank you in advance!! Judy jflaten@amfam.com

Judy A
Sherrie Morrison
Subject: Re: 526th Armored infantry battalion Company B

Judy,
Thank you for writing. I met veterans of the battle at Houyire Hill when I attended several battalion reunions. Before speaking to the veterans I had not heard of the battle at Houyire Hill. It is not described in mainstream books on the Battle of the Bulge. I wish I had known about your father's diary! What is your father's name? Would it be possible to send me a copy? I will be happy to pay for the copy and the postage.

I had copies of the thesis printed, but they are all gone now. I have an electronic copy of the thesis. It is 8 chapters with an Appendix. Houyire Hill is covered in Chapter 7. I included pictures of some of the men of Company B as well as others in the thesis. Sherrie Morrison, the Editor of the battalion association 'Pekan Newsletter' was kind enough to supply me with many of the photos.

Would you like an electronic copy of the thesis? My wife is very good with computers. We could send you one or two chapters at a time in PDF format.

Thanks again for writing.
Sincerely, Tom

From: "Flaten, Judy A" <JFLATEN@amfam.com>
To: Connie Wilbur <tomcon76@att.net>
Sent: Sun, March 27, 2011 9:21:53 AM
Subject: RE: 526th Armored infantry battalion Company B

Hi Tom,
I failed to answer your question in the last email. My father's name was Edward G Evin, Pvt. In Co. B 526th Armored Infantry Battalion. He enlisted at Fort Lewis in Portland Oregon and had basic training at Fort Knox Kentucky. From there went to camp Bouse in Arizona for additional training. Then on to Fort Hamilton where he was 28 days before leaving the USA. He served as a private from 3-13-1943 to May 23 1944 and was promoted to Corporal May 23 1944. On 11-26-1945 he was transferred to 6800 Hdgs. (?) Company special Troops. I'm not sure what that was or if the Hdgs is correct as it was hard to make out in his diary. Also his Separation was Dec 18th 1945, a month later. In his diary he states that he was awarded the combat infantry badge, good conduct medal, ETO ribbon and 4 battle stars. I wish I understood what all that meant. Do you know what the battle stars mean? Anyways, let me know if you want a copy of the diary and I will print it out and send it. It's pretty interesting reading although maybe more so to me. If you didn't get my last email I would love to get a copy of your thesis by email. Thank you for writing back. Judy (Evin) Flaten

From: Connie Wilbur [<mailto:tomcon76@att.net>]
Sent: Friday, March 25, 2011 2:33 PM

From: Connie Wilbur [tomcon76@att.net]
Sent: Sunday, March 27, 2011 2:54 PM
To: Flaten, Judy A
Cc: Sherrie Morrison
Subject: Re: 526th Armored infantry battalion Company B

Dear Judy,
I have a picture of your father in my thesis! He was a half-track driver. Half-track drivers were usually Corporals. Two men he served with, Richard Ferris and Errol Parish told me how your father drove his half-track on a road with land mines to pick up a wounded man named Ellis Simensky on Jan 3, 1945. This was at Houyire Hill. At some point he was captured by the Germans. There were a number of Company B soldiers who were captured on Jan 3. Your father's rescue of Simensky is covered on page 118, Chapter 7 of the thesis. The thesis is on a zip drive that my wife has a work. She will begin to send the thesis to you. Our address is 1781 Callisia Court Carlsbad, CA 92011. The phone number is (760) 930-9631.

The combat infantryman's badge is awarded to infantrymen engaged in combat with an enemy. The Good Conduct Medal and the ETO medal were awarded for honorable service. The 4 battle stars represent the campaigns your father served in during the war. I do not know for sure in his case, but I think the battle stars are for Normandy, northern France, the Battle of the Bulge and Germany.

I look forward to speaking with you and seeing your father's journal.
Thanks for contacting me.
Sincerely,

You can imagine how excited I was to read that this man from California, who was a complete stranger, had a picture of Dad in his thesis!! What are the odds that out of all the links on the internet I would happen to find this one? I have since tried to duplicate the search and have been unable to find the same site.

Tom did send his thesis and it was a treasure trove of information as was the 526th AIB quarterly newsletter "The Pekan", that Tom told me about.

The Pekan newsletter for the 526th AIB was started in March of 1945. The newsletter was named after the 526th boxing team at camp Boise (pronounced like house) in Arizona. Lt. Colonel Irwin of the 526th had given the boxing team the name Pekan as it was a fierce and fearless animal, often attacking larger animals. The Pekan was about the size of a fox and has brownish, black fur and hunts both on the land and in trees.

The newsletter, with articles written by men of the 526th, has been an invaluable source of information for this project. It has since printed its last and final issue. Sadly, most of the veterans of WWII are gone now and if still living at this date would be 94 years old. It's sad to think of the many stories that are buried with these men.

And so it began, it has been an interesting and very informative journey to track Dad's steps while he was enlisted and beyond and on my bucket list is to one day be able to go to Wales, Belgium, Germany and England and re-trace those steps and actually see where he was.

The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; My God, is my rock, in whom I take refuge; my shield and the horn of my salvation. He is my stronghold, my refuge and my savior- From violent men you save me. I call to the LORD, who is worthy of praise; and I am saved from my enemies." II Samuel 22:2-4

Chapter One – The Early Years

HERO-A person, who in the face of danger combats adversity through impressive feats of ingenuity, bravery or strength, often sacrificing their own personal concerns for a greater good. (*Wikipedia*)

Edward George Evin was born on Wednesday March 19th, 1924 in Warrenton Township, Minnesota. He was the youngest of 5 children born to Anna and John Evin.

Eddie's siblings were Ben, born in 1916, Henry, born in 1918, (twin brother died at childbirth), Ruth, born in 1919, and Clarence, born in 1922. Dad was baptized in Warren, MN August 3rd 1924 at 5 months old. He was confirmed in the Christian faith on May 5th 1941 at 17 years old.



Clarence (Casey) Paul died in 2002

Dad, Edward George died in 1989

Ruth Ann died in 1993

Henry (Hank) died in 1969

Bennie John died in 2011

In the year 1924, the year Dad was born, you could buy a bed frame and mattress for 26.95, a Ford Model T Runabout was \$265.00, and gas was 18 cents a gallon. A few of the popular movies of that year were The Thief of Bagdad, The Iron Horse, and Girl Shy, all silent pictures. The first talking movie wasn't made until 1927. Calvin Coolidge was president, Ellis Island closed and the music of the time was Al Jolson, Irvine Berlin and George and Ira Gershwin. "The 1920's were called the 'Roaring Twenties' because of the free-natured pop culture of the decade. People defied prohibition, indulged in new and controversial styles of dancing (flappers) and dress (shorter skirts) and rejected many traditional moral standards." But this wasn't the case in the rural areas, which were still much more conservative.

While the depression didn't start until 1929, the 1920's was considered the great depression for rural areas as farm prices went down significantly. In the 20's, 90% of rural farms didn't have electricity or running water and there were very few cars. Most transportation was done by wagons pulled by horses. In rural America life was hard and money short.

Not much is known about Dad in those early years. As mentioned, the great depression started in 1929 and lasted until the early 40's so making ends meet was a struggle for all families. We know that Dad's family moved a lot and rented farmland, which was common at the time as not many owned their own land. Mom mentioned them living in rural Argyle, Tabor, East Grand Forks, Alvarado and Warren. Not necessarily in that order.

Dad attended his early school years at Boxville Township School, a country school located west and south of Warren very near the Art Howard farm. I searched for a picture of that school but after checking with Bob Howard and the Historical society was unable to find one. We know for certain that he went to Boxville in early elementary as we have the perfect attendance certificate he received while there at 8 years old on June 7th, 1932. He was probably about a 2nd or 3rd grader at the time. The Boxville School closed in 1937. In an obituary I found for one of Grandma Evin's relatives in October of 1936, it listed her as living near Argyle Minnesota so we know he attended school in Argyle then at 12 years old probably as about a 6th grader and after that up through 10th grade.

Central City of Birth Register, 1915-1925
Warren, Minn., Warren, Minn.

State of Minnesota, County of Marshall, WARREN TOWNSHIP
Birth Register, Page 33, Line No. 33

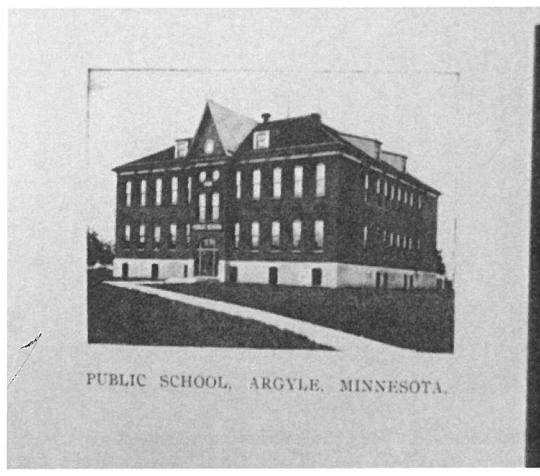
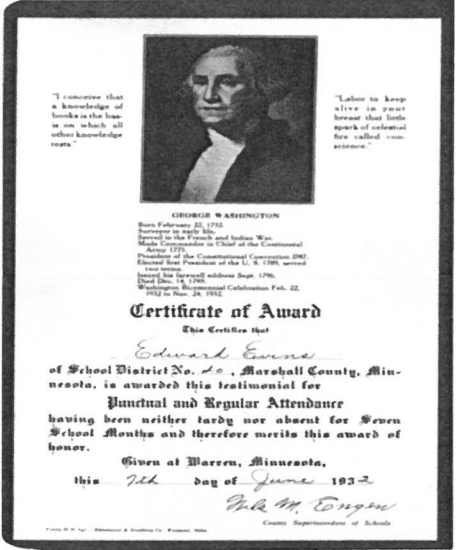
NAME OF CHILD	SEX	DATE OF BIRTH	TIME OF BIRTH	WEIGHT	HAIR	EYES
EDWIN EDWARD	M	June 7, 1932	10:00 A.M.	10 lbs.	Blue	Blue

FATHER: EDWIN JOHN
MOTHER: RITA ANN
PHYSICIAN, MIDWIFE OR OTHER REPORTER: A. H. BEPAD
REGISTRAR: JOHN L. DALQUIST

State of Minnesota, IN DISTRICT COURT
County of Marshall
I, A. H. BEPAD, Clerk of the District Court in and for said County and State, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a full and complete transcript of the entries appearing of record in the Register of Births now remaining in my said office relating to the birth of said EDWIN EDWARD.

Witness my hand and the seal of said Court hereat affixed at Warren, Minn., this 23rd day of July, A. D. 1932.

A. H. Bepad
Clerk



Dad was a good student and according to what Mom was told he was 2nd in his class and that his teacher was disappointed when he had to quit school to help support the family. What's been passed down is that Dad loved school but his family could not afford the transportation to get him to school and he was forced to quit. There were no buses at that time so it was probably a carriage or wagon of some sort. Not sure about all that, but they did live in the country and the school was in town. That would have made Dad about 16 or 17 years old when he quit school probably around 1940.

We don't know much about the years 1940-1941. In Mom's genealogy book she wrote that from 1939 to 1941 he worked various farm jobs. We know that at some point, in 1941, Dad left home and traveled west by hitchhiking and then hopping freight trains.



Written on back of photo: "Me and 4 other guys sitting on depot platform June 14th, 1941."

I'm not sure where this was taken, maybe in Argyle or Warren? Maybe on his way west?



Written on back of photo..."Me getting fed up with hitchhiking.

Sitting on highway someplace between here and Fargo."

I'm not sure who was with him to take this photo.

According to Dad's journal he went through Fargo, North Dakota and mentions stopping in Forsyth, Montana in 1941, Great Falls, Montana where he worked for a rancher for about 6 months, and Conrad, Montana where in his journal he states that he worked for a bit, but doesn't mention what he did.



From Montana to Oregon we don't know his route but he eventually arrived in Portland and lived with his sister Ruth and her husband Richard Kimball. He worked for a time in the kitchen of a Chinese restaurant and then later in the shipyard there, as a welders helper, building liberty ships that were used during the war.

In 1943 Frank Sinatra topped the charts, along with the Glen Miller orchestra, the great depression ended; popular films were Lassie Come Home, For Whom the Bell Tolls and Heaven Can Wait. World leaders and players in the war were Franklin D Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, Joseph Stalin, Hideki Tojo, Benito Mussolini, and of course, Adolph Hitler.

1943 COST OF LIVING	
LIVING	
New House	\$3,600.00
Average Income	\$2,041.00 per year
New Car	\$900.00
Average Rent	\$40.00 per month
Tuition to Harvard University	\$420.00 per year
Movie Ticket	35¢ each
Gasoline	15¢ per gallon
First-Class Postage Stamp	3¢ each
FOOD	
Granulated Sugar	75¢ for 10 pounds
Vitamin D Milk	62¢ per gallon
Ground Coffee	46¢ per pound
Bacon	45¢ per pound
Eggs	21¢ per dozen
Fresh Ground Hamburger	30¢ per pound
Fresh Baked Bread	10¢ per loaf

According to *Wikipedia*, World War II began September 1, 1939 when Germany attacked Poland without a formal declaration of war, in an effort to establish an empire through forcible conquest. In support of their mutual defense treaty obligations with Poland, France and Great Britain issued ultimatums to Hitler for the immediate withdrawal of German forces from Poland. When the deadlines expired, Great Britain and France declared war on Germany on September 2, 1939. Germany had Italy and Japan on its side, and were known as the Axis powers. While the war had started in 1939 the United States didn't get involved until after the Pearl Harbor attack on December 7th, 1941. Before Pearl Harbor the US armed forces had 180,000 men and by the end of May 1945 when the war ended the active duty Army soldiers were 8.3 million strong. The first American troops landed in Ireland Jan 26th 1942.



In the spring of 1942 war rationing had begun in the US as supplies were in short supply and needed for the war effort. Some of the things rationed were rubber, gasoline, nylon, many foods including sugar, canned goods, coffee, butter, dried fruit, jams and jellies, lard, shortening and tin cans had to be turned in to make munitions for the soldiers. Mom actually had several ration coupon books with stamps still unused in them.

HOW TO SHOP WITH WAR RATION BOOK TWO

... to Buy Canned, Bottled and Frozen Fruits and Vegetables; Dried Fruits, Juices and all Canned Soups



1. USE THIS RATION BOOK. You may use one or all of your family's ration books when you shop. You may not shop with loose ration stamps.



2. USE BLUE STAMPS ONLY. All blue point stamps marked A, B, and C are good in the first ration period. They add up to 40 points for each member of the family.



3. THE NUMBERS SHOW POINTS. You will not be able to get "change" in point stamps, so use your low-value stamps for buying low-point foods.



4. LOOK AT THE POINT VALUES before you buy. Points have nothing to do with prices or quality. Point values will be the same in all stores.



5. GIVE THE STAMPS TO YOUR GROCER. Tear out stamps in the presence of your grocer—or tear them out in the presence of the delivery boy.



6. FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES are not rationed. Use them instead of rationed foods whenever possible. Try out recipes that make your rations go farther.

YOUR POINT ALLOWANCE MUST LAST FOR THE FULL RATION PERIOD

Plan How Many Points You Will Use Each Time Before You Shop

BUY EARLY IN THE WEEK

Food is going to our fighting men. They come first! Your ration gives you your fair share of the foods that are left.

BUY EARLY IN THE DAY

720518 EN UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
OFFICE OF PRICE ADMINISTRATION
WAR RATION BOOK TWO
IDENTIFICATION

Name of person to whom book is issued: Anderson, Betty
(Street number or rural route): Boagster Apt.
(City or post office): Wadena (State): Minn. (Age): 13 (Sex): F.
ISSUED BY LOCAL BOARD NO. 6443 (County): Marshall (State): Minn.
By: Johnson, A. (Street address of local board): Harvey (City): Wadena
(Signature of issuing office): [Signature]

SIGNATURE
(To be signed by the person to whom this book is issued. If such person is unable to sign because of age or incapacity, another may sign in his behalf.)

WARNING

- This book is the property of the United States Government. It is unlawful to sell or give it to any other person or to use it or permit anyone else to use it, except to obtain rationed goods for the person to whom it was issued.
- This book must be returned to the War Price and Rationing Board which issued it, if the person to whom it was issued is inducted into the armed services of the United States, or leaves the country for more than 30 days, or dies. The address of the Board appears above.
- A person who finds a lost War Ration Book must return it to the War Price and Rationing Board which issued it.
- PERSONS WHO VIOLATE RATIONING REGULATIONS ARE SUBJECT TO \$10,000 FINE OR IMPRISONMENT, OR BOTH.

OPA FORM NO. R-121 16-32900-1

INSTRUCTIONS

- This book is valuable. Do not lose it.
- Each stamp authorizes you to purchase rationed goods in the quantities and at the times designated by the Office of Price Administration. Without the stamps you will be unable to purchase those goods.
- Detailed instructions concerning the use of the book and the stamps will be issued. Watch for those instructions so that you will know how to use your book and stamps. Your Local War Price and Rationing Board can give you full information.
- Do not throw this book away when all of the stamps have been used, or when the time for their use has expired. You may be required to present this book when you apply for subsequent books.

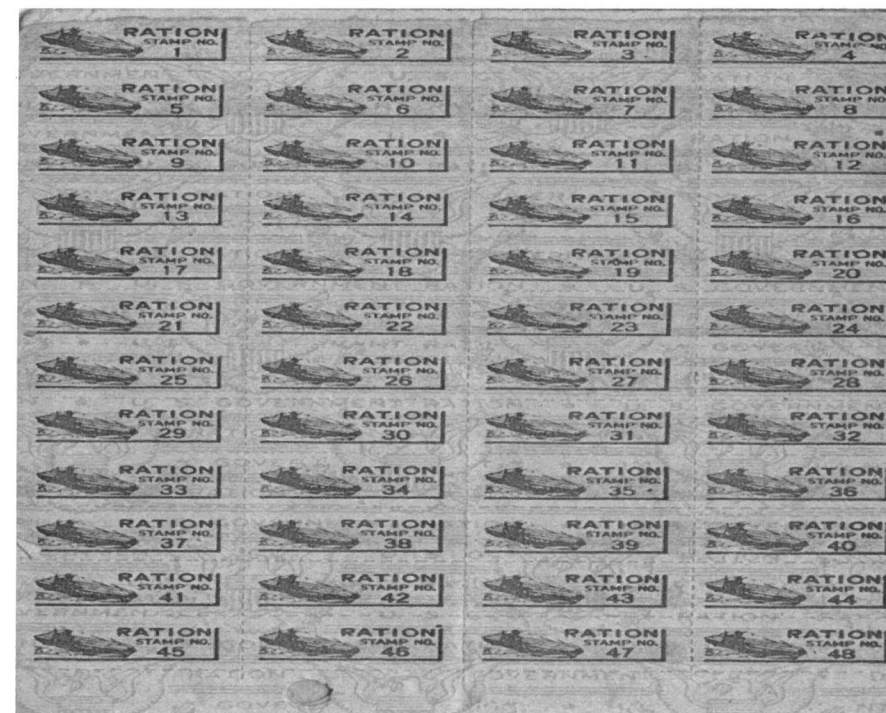
Rationing is a vital part of your country's war effort. Any attempt to violate the rules is an effort to deny someone his share and will create hardship and help the enemy.

This book is your Government's assurance of your right to buy your fair share of certain goods made scarce by war. Price ceilings have also been established for your protection. Dealers must post these prices conspicuously. Don't pay more.

Give your whole support to rationing and thereby conserve our vital goods. Be guided by the rule:

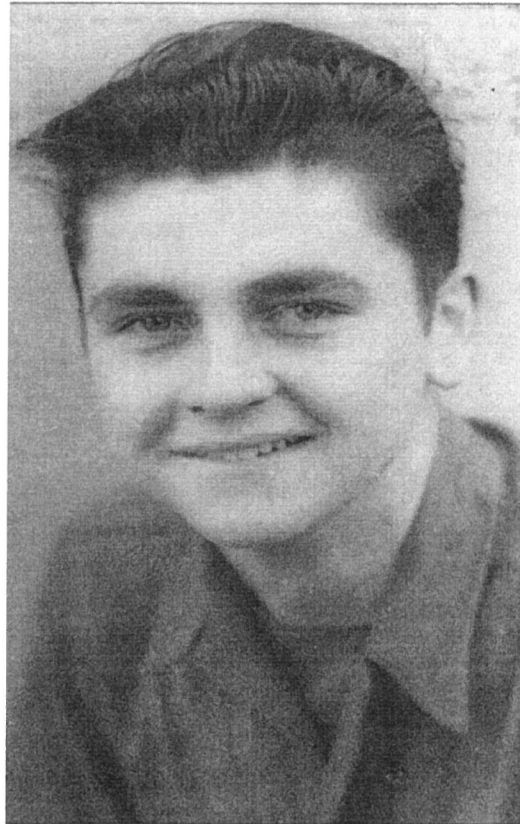
"If you don't need it, DON'T BUY IT."

16-32900-1 ☆ U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1943



Chapter Two - Training

Dad enlisted in the army on March 13th 1943, in Portland, Oregon, just before his 18th birthday. His sister Ruth had to sign a permission form for him to enlist as he wasn't yet 18.



After signing the induction papers each man was issued a serial number. Dad's serial number was 39329120. They were then administered this oath. In unison they repeated this promise.

"I _____ do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the constitution of the united states, against all her enemies whomsoever; that I bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the orders of the president of the united states and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the uniform code of military justice. So help me God." According to page 25 of *"Where Heroes Trained"* by Roger Baty and Eddie Maddox Jr. they were then given this paper to be filled out, prior to departure to the Enlisted Reserve Corps.

To be given to each inducted man and filled in by him prior to departure to the Enlisted Reserve Corps.

I am a soldier in the United States Army. I raised my hand today and swore that, "I would defend my country against all her enemies whomsoever." I now have new and different responsibilities. Today the Articles of War, the soldiers' law, were read and explained to me by an officer. I am subject to this soldier's law. I must obey, I must not bring discredit upon the military service because that isn't fair to the rest of the soldiers with whom I shall soon live. Even though I do not have my uniform, I am a soldier.

I, _____, have been sent to the Enlisted Reserve Corps and will be sent to the town of my local board. At the end of seven days I will report to my local board at 1440 Detroit Avenue at 11 AM on Jan. 29, 1943 for shipment to an Army Reception transferring me. My fare will be paid by the Army. I know that I must report to the local board at the hour and on the date specified. If I am sick or meet with an accident, I will notify my local board so the Army will know why I have not reported for duty. As soon as I am well I will report to my local board and my fare will be furnished.

One of the fellows has been placed in charge of the group. He didn't particularly want the job, but when he was appointed he took it. I am going to co-operate with him and that will make his job easy, and mine too. While I am at home I am going to protect my health. I will guard against disease, that might ruin my career and which I can avoid. When I report to my local board for shipment to the Reception Center, I will bring with me only a small traveling bag with a suit of underwear, and extra pair of socks and necessary toilet articles (razor, shaving cream, toothbrush, toothpaste, towel, face and bath.) The only civilian clothes I will bring will be the clothes that I wear, because when I arrive at the Reception Center I will have to send my traveling bag and civilian clothes home when my uniform is issued to me. When I am at home I will have my hair cut because the Army wants you to have your hair cut short. The Reception Centers are kept busy cutting hair of the soldiers who are stationed there permanently. I want to make a good impression. Having my hair cut, fingernails trimmed, presenting a neat appearance gives a good impression. I am going to do these things because first impressions are lasting. I am a soldier in the United States Army, as a reservist I will be strictly accountable, both personally and financially, for any damage to public property such as railroad, bus, hotel or restaurant, this includes all public or private property on the trip either from the induction station to the local board, or from the local board to the reception center.

**** I WILL REPORT IN A SOBER CONDITION AT THE RECEPTION CENTER ****

Fort Lewis Washington was the reception center where he reported for service. Camp Lewis as it was called in 1917, when it was built, is located 9.1 miles Southwest of Tacoma, Washington. During the second world war for a period, it was used as an "enemy alien" internment camp, housing Japanese, German and Italian Americans. Today Fort Lewis is used as a personal transfer and training center.



Fort Lewis

Being totally unfamiliar with the lingo of the army and the different divisions, units and ranks, I am including a little info about it taken from www.fatherswar.com

Army-50,000 + soldiers

Corps – 20,000 to 45,000 soldiers. The corps provides the framework for multi-national operations.

Division -10,000 to 15,000 soldiers. Usually consisting of three brigade sized elements and commanded by a major general. Divisions are numbered and assigned missions based on their structures. The division performs major tactical operations for the corps and can conduct sustained battles and engagements.

Brigade – 3,000 to 5,000 soldiers. A brigade headquarters commands the tactical operations of two to five organic or attached combat battalions. Brigades are employed on independent or semi-independent operations. Armored, cavalry, ranger and Special Forces units this size are categorized as regiments or groups.

Battalion – 300 to 1,000 soldiers. Four to six companies make up a battalion. A battalion is capable of independent operations of limited duration and scope. An armored or air cavalry unit of equivalent size is called a squadron.

Company – 62 to 190 soldiers. Three to five platoons form a company.

Platoon – 16 to 44 soldiers and consists of two to four squads or sections.

Squad – 9 to 10 soldiers. A squad is the smallest element in Army structure, and its size is dependent on its function.

Army Ranks –Not including Officers

Private-Pvt

Private 1st Class –Pfc

Corporal – Cpl /TEC 5

Sergeant-Sgt

Staff Sergeant-S/Sg

Technical Sergeant - T/Sgt

Master Sergeant-M/Sgt

On March 20th 1943, 3 infantry Battalions were formed to create the 1st Armored Infantry Group, The 526th, 527th, and 528th. Dad was a private in the 526th Armored Infantry Battalion, Company B. There was a company A and C as well. He was a halftrack driver.



halftrack



According to Tom Hanchett's thesis, The 526th Armored Infantry Battalion played a unique role in the United States army during WWII. First, this battalion was the only separate armored infantry battalion. All other armored infantry battalions were attached to armored divisions. Second, the 526th was the only AIB to train with the top secret canal defense lights, or "Gizmos", at Fort Knox, Kentucky, at Camp Bouse in the Arizona Desert, and later in Wales. And because of their secrecy the 526th was the only AIB that did not have a historian in their battalion and much of their activities took place by design, away from the limelight. The 526th was composed of 3 rifle companies, A, B, and C, a headquarters company, and maintenance or Service Company with a total of 1,031 soldiers. The battalion had 72 halftracks, personal carrier vehicles, 56 other vehicles and a variety of anti-tank weapons, mortars and machine guns. Most of the men in the 526th were from California, Idaho and Washington and many were born in 1924. The 526th Armored Infantry Battalion was the only AIB to serve in the European Theatre.

Five days later, on March 25th 1943, the men left Fort Lewis, Washington on their way to Fort Knox, Kentucky to start their basic training.

Fort Knox, Kentucky is located South of Louisville and North of Elizabethtown, Kentucky. Built in 1918 and named after Henry Knox the first US Secretary of War. It is now used to house the Army of Human Resource Center and is also the home of the depository where a large portion of the US official gold reserves is stored.

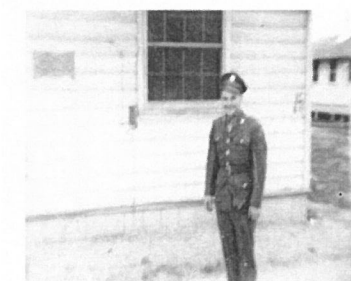


Main gate at Fort Knox

When Dad arrived on April 1st, 1943 he was moved into the 1st platoon barracks and started training April 2nd under Lt. Paruch. Basic training went from April 2nd until July 12, 1943, which included fundamentals of army life, including care of clothing, military discipline, rifle firing, machine gun firing, doing exercises and several long hikes. They also had radio school training and were formed into various platoons.



Some of the boys saluting when the retreat gun goes off at 5:45 every morn. Hate when the flag is lowered.



Dad at Fort Knox, Kentucky



Taken May
1943 at
Fort Knox
Ky.

Me and the
M1 automatic
rifle

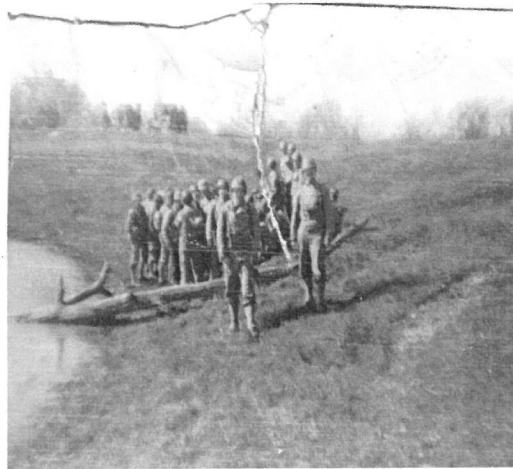
Some of the guys from
my barracks and me.
Lin right behind Barstad
the guy without much hair
on his dome. He worked
up by Kennedy before he
went to California.

2367

Dad →
Barstad →



Here is a picture of two of the
guys in my platoon. They sure can
make the music with the instrumen
they are holding.



...the first ...
...the long range
...the pipe in the
background.



These 2 aren't so
old, but some of
these WAFCS are
as old as you
are almost.
You should see
them march. They
make us guys look
silly.

On July 12th 1943 in his journal, Dad writes, "Remember this day quite well. It was hot as hell that day and we were out in the field on a problem. At 4:30 when we got back into camp Sgt. Kellett asked for 2 volunteers for an ice box experiment. Well about that time an ice box looked pretty good to me, so Roy and I took it."



This was taken last December in Belgium, just a few weeks later we went to the front and my buddy the one in the photo was taken prisoner by the Germans. I have heard from him now he is back home in California on a sixty day furlough. I'm sure glad to hear that as he was the best friend I had.

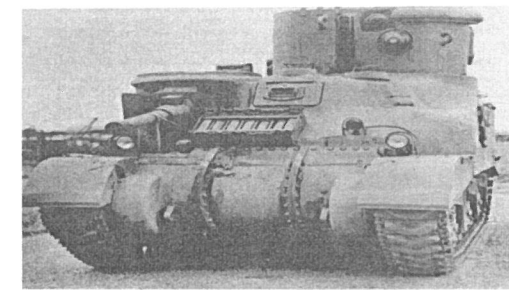
6556

According to the book, *Where Heroes Trained* by Dr. Roger Baty and Eddie Maddox Jr. On July 13th 1943, 14 soldiers from the 526th and 527th AIB were relieved from duty and started training for the "Ice Box." As part of the Ice Box training they had to walk 6 hours every day with 20 lb. sand bags with only time out to take their pulse and temperatures. Then they spent 9 days in cold room temperatures which went down to 35 degrees below zero. They came out for 6 days and went back in for a longer period of time. This time the experiment was to test clothing and the temp dropped to 63 below. Dad stated in his journal that "we froze our asses off." The Ice Box experiment was completed August 21st 1943 and the soldiers were sent back to company duty.

While on a map reading course, some battalion intelligence and reconnaissance platoon soldiers from the 526th got lost and stumbled into a top secret area of Fort Knox known as Area X, the training ground for the top secret Canal Defense Lights. Area X was also known as the Special training Group and was located in the hills at the eastern end of Fort Knox.

After the 526th discovered the secret weapon program by accident they were forced to become part of that secret group, and because of this the first armored infantry group was split up. Some men from the 526th were transferred to the 527th and 528th battalions in a trade-off for others to be transferred to the 526th. After that the 526th became a separate battalion assigned to the 9th armored group. Both the 527th and 528th eventually did disband and many of those men were transferred to the Pacific area as infantry replacements.

The 9th armored infantry group consisted of several tank battalions, an ordnance company, a communications company, a hospital unit, investigative and security personnel and the 526th Armored Infantry Battalion. The purpose of this command was to train and become an assault force which would take and occupy designated military objectives at night using the CDLs (Canal Defense Lights). The men named the weapon "the Gizmo"



The Gizmo
(Photo courtesy of David Fletcher, Bovington Tank Museum)



Because of the security and special training the soldiers had special rules at Fort Knox.

1. No enlisted man leaves the organization area without a companion who remains with him at all times.
2. Informal censorship of outgoing mail has been established
3. No individual furloughs are granted. Any man leaving on furlough must have another enlisted man of this battalion with him.
4. All members of the organization are under careful surveillance.

Mom says that when Dad was at Fort Knox he was able to go to the Kentucky Derby. The day he went was a rainy day and he, not knowing much about horses or how to pick a winning one, asked a lady how to pick a horse to bet on. Her answer was to pick one with big feet because it was raining and wet so that's what he did but he didn't win anything.

On September 11th, 1943 the 9th armored infantry group including Dad's battalion boarded a troop train and headed west, going through Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas, New Mexico and finally reached their destination of Bouse, Az. on September 15th, 1943. In his journal Dad states that "when they arrived in Bouse the men's morale took a big jump, straight down as far as it could go." Trucks picked up the men and equipment and started for camp 28 miles east across the desert. Camp Bouse was a top secret base that not even the citizens in the town of Bouse knew was there.



Paranoia and deep secrecy were the orders in Bouse. Troop movement was extremely restricted once in Camp Bouse, and there was no chance of transferring out. Gold miners working active claims in the mountains around camp Bouse were encouraged to evacuate, usually a little over-their-heads target practice encouraged their departure. Even all the dogs in Bouse, 25 miles away, were rounded up and relocated. Taken from *Where Heroes Trained*.

"Once we hit Arizona our mail was censored. We could tell them we were somewhere in Arizona but we couldn't tell them where. When we went overseas we were not allowed to tell them we were going, but after we finally got there we could tell them we were overseas but could not tell them where." *Dick Stone, The Pekan*

"Camp Bouse was located in Arizona's Butler Valley. The Center was made up of 16,200 square miles of arid desert in eastern California and Arizona. General Patton himself had picked the area for the Center and called it "little Libya" as it mimicked the conditions troops would face in the North African desert. To prepare them for coming conditions Patton ordered that only 1 canteen of water was to be consumed while on maneuvers. Patton ordered that within a month of arrival a soldier had to run a mile in ten minutes with a rifle and a full field pack. For the men of the 526th Armored Infantry it was to be the beginning of 5 months of intensive training. When the men arrived they were greeted by a rainstorm and scorpion bites. One soldier commented that the only green thing in site was their tents." *Where Heroes Trained*

We know that Dad was in tent #8 and a couple of the guys in his tent were Jim Henricks and Erroll Parish.

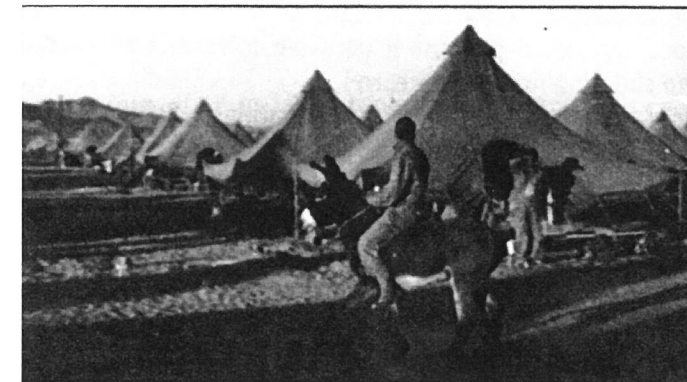


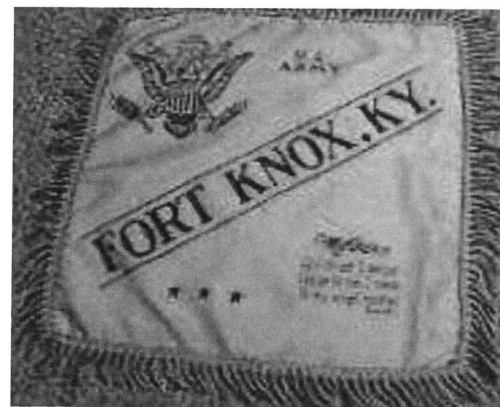
Table 1. Units arriving at Camp Bouse by mid-September

Tank Battalion Medium (Special)	Commanding Officer	Authorized Strength	Departure to Camp Bouse	Arrival at Camp Bouse
736th	Lt. Col. William H. Dodge	669	4 Sept. from Ft Knox, KY	8 September
748th	Lt. Col. Robert R. Glass	669	15 July, from Ft Knox, KY	1 September
Other Units				
526th Armored Infantry Battalion	Lt. Col. Carlisle B. Irwin	998	From Ft. Knox, KY	13 Sept.
538th Ordnance Co. (HM Tk)		201		13 Sept.
150th Station Hospital (50 bed)	Maj. Camillo F. Mueller	41	Camp Wheeler, Georgia	31 August
Hq & Hq Co, 9th Tank Group	Lt. Col. Joseph H. Gilbreth	83	16 August	20 August



On the back of this photograph states, "The only 'official' photo of Camp Bouse. This is the Station Hospital (the Old Hospital), later to be moved west to a new location." Some say they think the first location was flooded out.

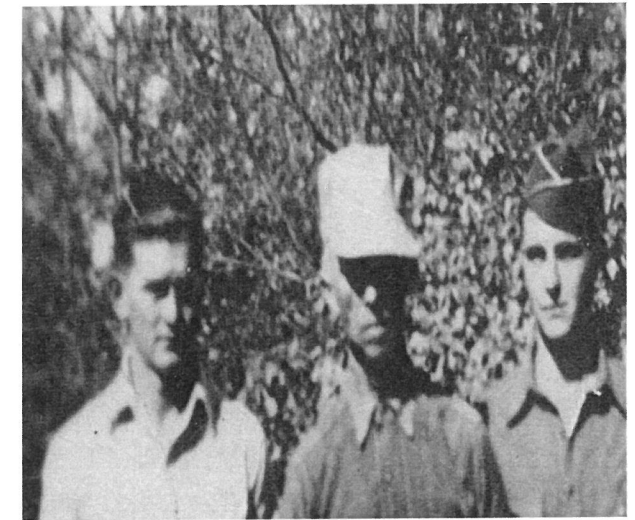
Before the very strict training started in Arizona the soldiers were granted furloughs. On September 21, 1943 Dad wrote in his journal, "very happy to find \$25.00 from home, however still was \$25.00 short. Managed to get most of it and by good luck bought a ticket from a sailor for \$10.00 which took me from Wickenburg to Kansas City." He traveled by train for the next 3 days and arrived home in Warren on the 24th of September 1943. He writes, "Walked into my home and found Momma sitting up waiting for me. After all these years."



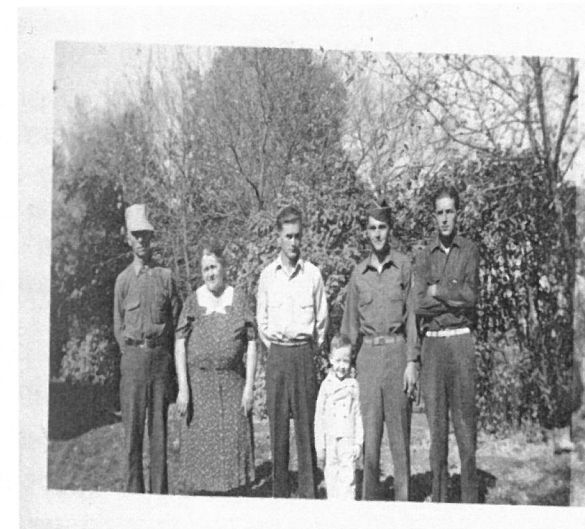
Pillow cover souvenir that Dad brought for Grandma Evin, it reads;
Mother, all that I am or hope to be, I owe to my Angel Mother. Lincoln



Grandpa and Grandma Evin with Dad



Casey, Grandpa Evin and Dad



Grandpa and Grandma, Casey, Neighbor boy, Joe Lundberg, Dad and Hank



Dad with Joe Lundberg

Dad was on his way back to camp Bouse by October 7th 1943 and wrote, "Reached Wickenburg, Arizona and started thinking of the dog's life ahead of me."

By early in October the CDL tanks started to arrive at camp and the men were censored and not allowed to leave camp except in small groups led by a noncommissioned officer or an officer.

Soldiers were sworn to secrecy and threatened with death if they disclosed anything about the Gizmos.

From *Where Heroes Trained*, "The group trained in absolute secrecy at night. The ultra-secret weapon, the Canal Defense Lights were a 13 million candlepower search light mounted on a special tank for the purpose of illuminating the area at night to temporarily blind the enemy with its flickering light. The role of the 526th was to defend the operations of the CDL tanks and attack if security of the tanks was being threatened."

On November 11th 1943 the 526th were to give their first tactical demonstration, where they would shoot at an oncoming CDL at night. The demonstration was given to Major General Alvin C. Gillem Jr. and other visiting officers and it was the first experience the men had working as part of an infantry-tank-artillery team.

According to accounts in Tom Hanchett's thesis the visiting officers were all situated on the top of the mountain and a red flare was shot into the sky and an "objective" was bombarded by live tank fire, and behind the rolling barrage came the CDL tanks followed by "fighter" tanks and infantry riding in their half-tracks. In the blinding dust storm created, the neat line quickly disappeared as the half-track drivers quickly lost sight of the red lights on the rear of the tanks they were to follow. In the dark of the desert, the CDLS lose their spacing and alignment and when the lights were turned on, there was more confusion and collisions as all the vehicles kept advancing and firing their weapons. Some of the gunfire came too close to the visitors and there was a "mass exodus". The vehicles moved on to their objective and the infantrymen leapt from their half-tracks to seize the "enemy position". Dad's journal entry November 9th, 1943 reads "Tuesday out rehearsing or better known as dry running for the big demonstration." November 10th, 1943 entry-"Same as yesterday only we're really getting on the ball." It was our first wet run." Then on November 11th 1943 he writes, "Today the demonstration came off and it sure was a screwed up mess. The tanks and leaflets got screwed up and hit together and almost killed some of the spectators. General Gillem himself was out here."

While at camp Bouse dad mentions that they had bayonet drills, formation driving, hand grenade pitching, mortar firing, night defense training, combat firing, laying of mines, machine gun firing, and physical fitness tests which included a lot of hiking and running. Like a 75 yard dash with a man on their back, and guard duty. Some of the soldiers were experts with an M-1 rifle/carbine and side arms. These soldiers formed a rifle team and challenged others in the camp and the 526th always came out on top.

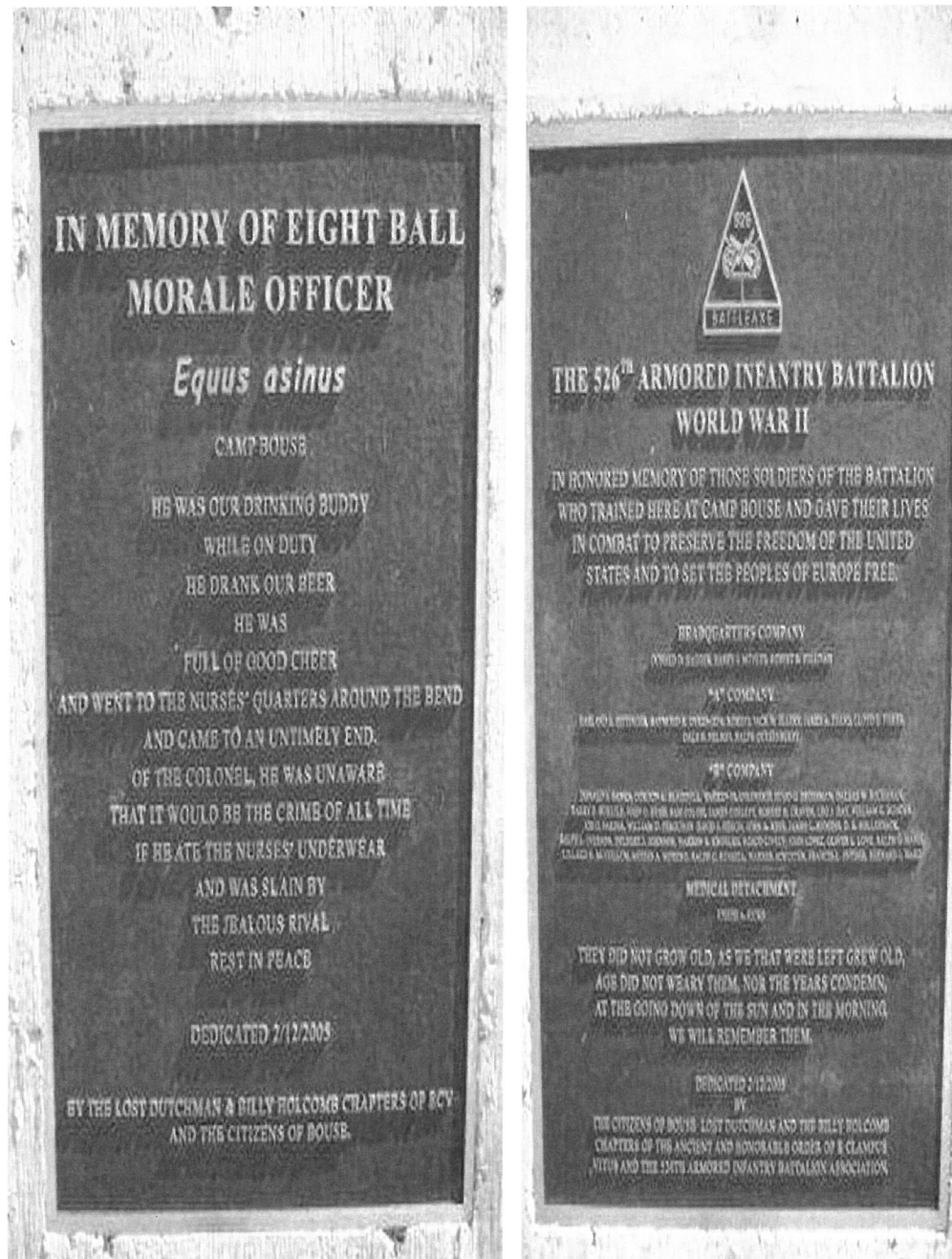
One of the more mischievous activities of the soldiers in camp was to pay a "social call" on a buddy in another tent. Each tent had a stove for heat so to break up the monotony of camp life, the soldiers would take a handful of live ammunition and

put it in the stove, and then leave the tent to wait for the first explosions and watch their buddies run out of the tent. This was an ongoing activity, and probably no tent escaped it.

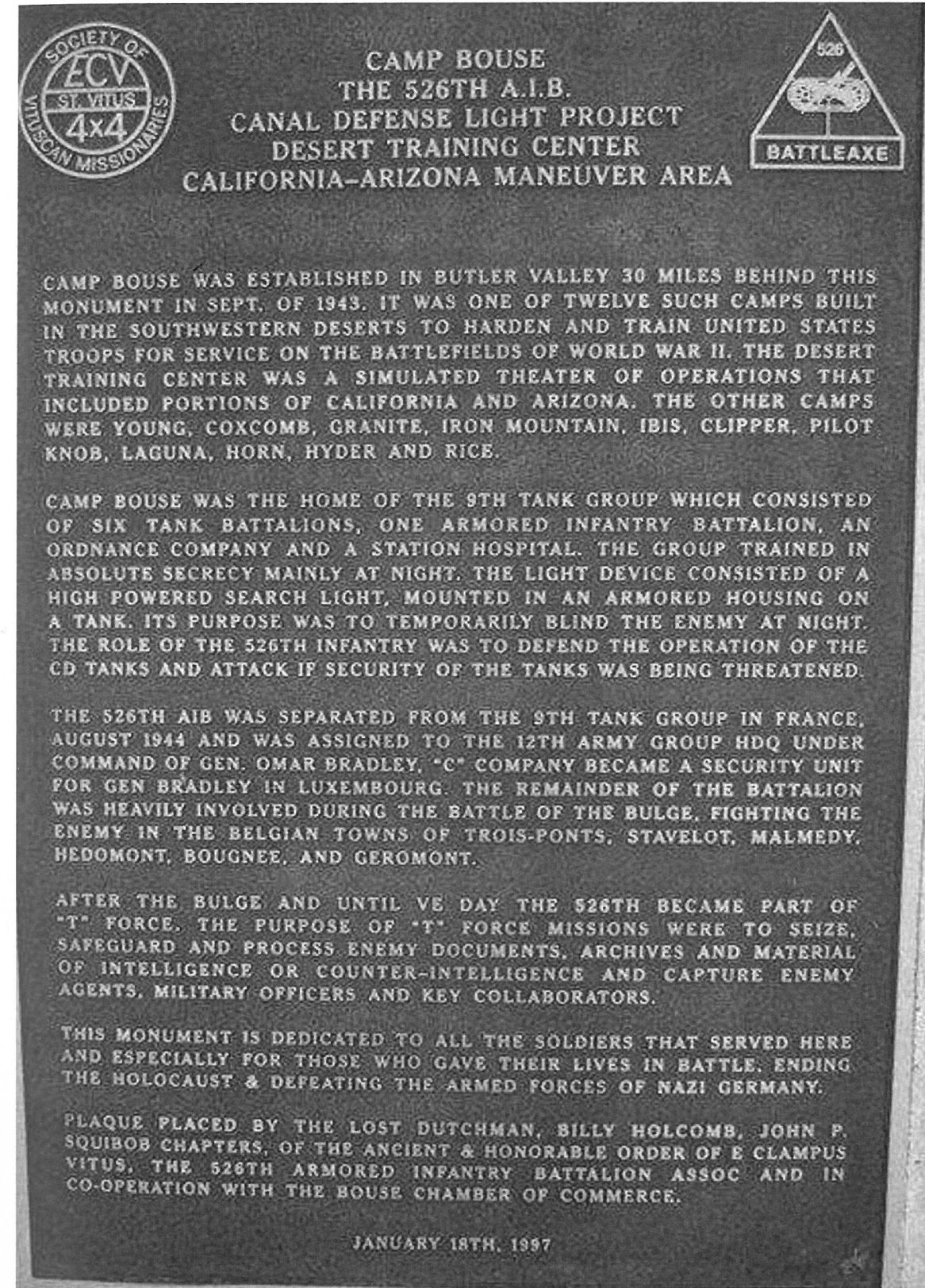
According to the *Historical Marker Data Base*, "The men at Camp Bouse inherited a pet male burro, about 3 years old, who wandered into camp and soon became the mascot of the camp and soldiers. They named him "8 Ball". He was very tame and friendly and the troops were very fond of him. He would always seem to know when one of the troops was feeling a bit down and homesick. 8 Ball had freedom of the camp and 8 Ball liked beer. The soldiers would fill up a helmet and 8 Ball would drink, get the staggers and list to one side. His brae was hilarious when he was drunk. When the men went on leave to Phoenix or Tucson they would bring a bale or 2 of alfalfa for him."

"There were about 20 nurses at the station hospital in a separate compound within the camp. One day 8 Ball wandered into the nurse's compound through a gate left open in error. He went to the laundry area and ate the nurse's underwear hanging on the clothesline. One of the nurses caught him and she went out of the compound and unfortunately the 1st Officer she came across was a Lt. Col. Nicknamed, "Wild Bill". He was a heavy drinker who fancied himself quite the ladies' man and was not respected by the soldiers. The nurse explained what 8 Ball was doing and the officer pulled out his 45 automatic and gut shot 8 Ball and left him to die. When the GI's heard what had happened a near riot ensued. A Sergeant went to the armory without orders and obtained an M-1 rifle and put 8 Ball out of his misery. He then obtained a halftrack and the GI's buried him east of the camp."





Monuments in Bouse, Arizona for the 526th AIB and 8 Ball



On January 28th, 1944 the men of the 526th AIB left camp Bouse by train headed for Fort Hamilton, New York. It would be their last stop before shipping out to go overseas.

In his journal Dad writes that they boarded the train at 2:30 in the morning and the men were not happy as there were no sleepers but all were glad to be leaving that "lousy desert". Their trip to New York took them through Arizona and New Mexico, Kansas, Illinois and Indiana, Pennsylvania and finally arriving at Fort Hamilton in Brooklyn, New York on Feb. 2nd, 1944. Here the men were housed in nice clean barracks as opposed to tents in the desert. Dad writes, "Seems like Heaven to be in a nice clean barracks and the chow here sure is OK." There was no regular training program, real food, and there was a regular Post Exchange store, movies, and the USO.

The USO is the United Service Organization and provides entertainment like comedians and musicians to the armed forces. The 526th soldiers were dark and sun-tanned in contrast to the others at the fort. The soldiers were not given passes often and many times they would just jump over the fence behind the barracks and head into town. Dad mentions doing this many times in his journal.



Fort Hamilton, Brooklyn, New York

Chapter Three - Battle

On Feb. 10th Dad wrote that the first group of men were called out (left for overseas) and writes that it was tough for him and his buddies to be split up after being together for so long but he hadn't been called yet. On Feb. 27th he wrote that "we went aboard the ship, supposed to leave today or tomorrow." The ship he boarded was a Liberty ship called the "Seatrain Texas".



The Liberty Ship Seatrain Texas

Their first day out at sea was Feb 28th 1944. While aboard the ship they watched a movie called, "Ball of Fire", a comedy starring Gary Cooper and Barbara Stanwyck.

After being out on the ship for about a week he wrote, "I don't think I would like the Navy."

Eight days later on March 8th, 1944 they were in the Irish Sea and Dad writes "sighted the tip of Ireland." On March 9th they came into port and on March 10th, around noon went ashore at Sully Wales, close to Barry Wales. Sully is located 1/2 way between Barry and Penarth.



He mentions going to Cardiff several times. They were still there on St. Patrick's Day, March 17th 1944 and attended a dance at Barry. He celebrated his birthday on the 19th in Cardiff. On March 28th Dad was able to meet Ben, (his brother who was stationed in England), in Cardiff. They were able to see each other on the 29th and 30th as well and Ben left on the 30th for London.



Uncle Ben



Ben and Dad

While there, waiting for their orders, the soldiers had calisthenics and hikes every day. Dad mentioned in his journal that he would have to "goldbrick more." Not knowing what that meant, I had to look it up. Turns out it means to fake illness to get out of work. They also had night time maneuvers with the CDLs, and guard duty. He also mentioned working on his halftrack and cleaning the tools that it is equipped with. He didn't seem to mind the time there but wrote "it was cold and rainy a lot of the time."

On April 5th 1944 Dad left with a motor pool to travel to Liverpool to get halftracks. He wrote, "Sure is a lot of equipment stacked up near Salisbury." The next few weeks he spent working on his new halftrack and cleaning the equipment, and going out on road marches. He wrote in his journal on April 20th that he was "feeling a little down in the dumps as no mail for a long time and the weather sure is lousy."

On April 27th, 1944 he wrote, "Out in tracks again today. Went about 40 miles up to Swansea. Only thing happened with any excitement, Acuff ran over a cat. Everybody over here is expecting the big push to start soon." On May 23rd, 1944, Dad made Corporal, (Tec/5) which is the rank above private, earning him a bit more pay. Because Congress and the Department of the Army recognized the harsh and hazardous conditions of infantry service, and impaired infantry morale they thought it justified special recognition so increased pay was given for each advancement in rank.

Only the infantry could receive badge pay which ended in 1949. It was approximately \$60 a month for privates and \$66 a month for corporals.

Grade note 1	Enlisted pay for less than 3 to over 9 years of service.			
	Years of Service			
	Less than 3	Over 3	Over 6	Over 9
1st note 2	138.00	144.90	151.80	158.70
2nd	114.00	119.70	131.10	131.10
3rd	96.00	100.80	105.60	110.40
4th	78.00	81.90	85.80	89.70
5th	66.00	69.30	72.60	75.90
6th	54.00	56.70	59.40	62.10
7th	50.00	52.50	55.00	57.50

May 30th 1944 Dad's entry said, "Today we are getting ready to leave this place."

Entry from June 1st, 1944 "We are restricted tonight. Tried to sneak out of camp and got caught three times. Finally went back to bed."

On June 3, 1944, Dad wrote "We left Sully today and had bad luck. One of the halftracks was hit by a prime mover and one of the staff Sergeants, Alden Allen was killed. Got to Rosebush about 5:00 in the afternoon."



Prime Mover



Rosebush Wales is a suburb of Pembrokeshire.

On June 6th, 1944 Dad wrote, "Today we got the good news. The invasion is under way. Well, here's hoping we make those Jerri's (slang for Germans) crawl."

June 17th, 1944 he writes, "Had a battalion test on several different things and B Company won by far."

On June 21, 1944 Dad wrote "have to go out tonight for a problem. Don't leave until 10:00 pm." And the next day writes, "Today we came back off another problem at 4:30am." Not sure what was meant by "problem". Since it was at night it probably had to do with the CDLs. July 25th 1944 his entry says "ran a few problems and some training." For the next month they just do drills, clothes checks, and hikes and wait to hear word of leaving.



Some guys from the 526th. I think it is company B as there are a few familiar faces.



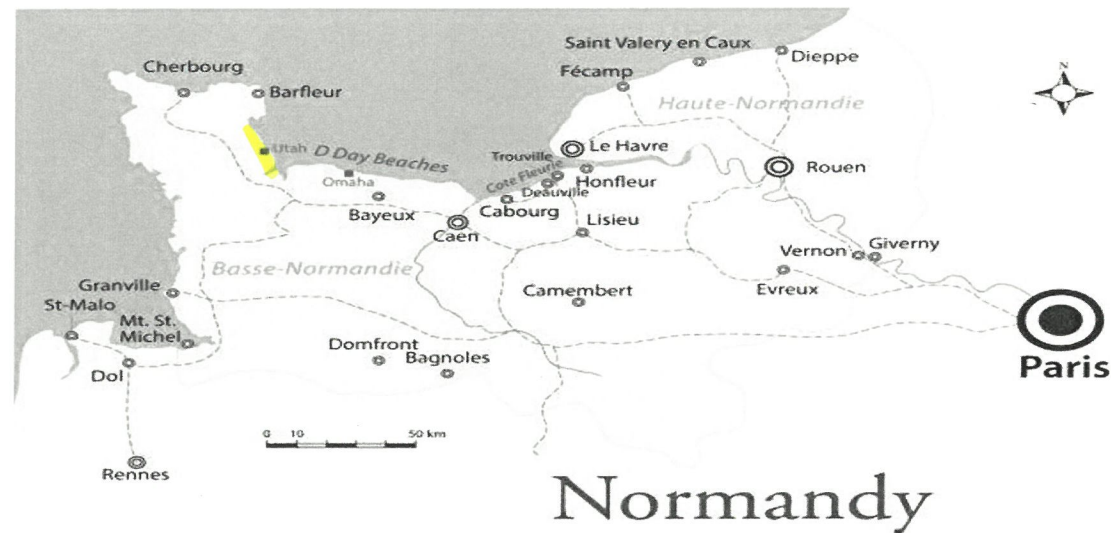
There were no names on these 2 pictures



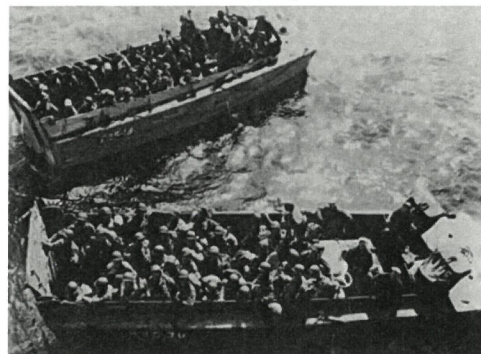
Left-James Plotzke, Right-Joe Ferguson

Sometime in 1944, The 9th Armored Group was disbanded and the 526th was ordered to go to France.

On August 18th 1944 Dad's entry from the journal read, "What a day, didn't know we were pulling out till noon and had to be ready to leave by 4:00pm. Threw my junk in a duffle bag and loaded my track with ammunition and grenades. Just got the wheels greased on the 57mm and hooked on to it. Left Rosebush the same day at 4:00, headed for Swansea, 60 miles away where we are to get a ship. Arrived at Swansea and stayed in a park at night. Lt Chapman was killed today in a jeep wreck." See map on page 29.



On August 20th, 1944 the 526th left Swansea, Wales on a LST (landing ship tank) and sailed to Normandy, France (map) On August 22nd he writes that "France is in sight and there must be a million ships out here around the Normandy coast." They landed on Utah Beach, and were transported in barges like these (pic) to the shore. The tanks, trucks and other equipment were unloaded from the Landing ship tank.



The 526th A.I.B. lands on Utah Beach, France

August 24, 1944 - Headquarters Company, Command Half-track of the Mortar Platoon
Lt. Harry Moyles is sitting on the left side, atop the windshield frame. He was later killed in action. Pfc Joseph (Cherokee) Robertson is manning the 30 CAL machine gun; S/Sgt Venable Sparkman is on the right side with his right foot resting on top of the jerry can; Pfc Vernon Snyder is directly behind Sparkman. S/Sgt Lawrence Brabant is directly behind Snyder. The two men standing on the left at the top of the hill are identified as

On August 24th 1944 they finally stepped onto French soil. While in Normandy, the 526th was assigned to the 12th Army Group.

When they landed artillery could be heard in the distance and the men had to follow a path of yellow tape on the beach. Beyond the tape were mines and booby traps. They set up camp in a Normandy apple orchard near the coast on the Gulf of St. Malo near the towns of Granville and Avranches. Double pup tents were set up which slept four soldiers. Dad said of the French soil. "It looks the same as any other dirt to me". Plenty of buildings blown apart around here." On August 28th they left at 7 am and drove almost directly south and stopped at a place 4 miles from Sartilly. Dad wrote "these towns sure did catch hell in this war; some of the big towns are flat."





St Lo France, 1944

Shortly before the battalion arrived in Normandy, the first CDL tanks had landed in Northern France. In October the supreme commander decided that the CDLS were not going to be a good fit for the rugged terrain and wouldn't be used in combat. Many of the CDLS, then parked near Cherbourg, were destroyed in a fire. So, that aspect of the war ended for the 526th but another mission equally as secret started for the 526th.

"The focus of the 526th AIB now was to shift from the top secret CDL's to T-Force. (The T stands for target.) Unsure of what weapons Hitler had at his disposal the T- force was to locate material of potential Allied use, and special highly mobile units were established to rush in immediately after French and German towns were captured and take control of them. The armored halftracks of the 526th were suited to this kind of mission. They had to prevent any looting or sabotaging in the plants and were responsible for making sure that key people did not escape and no documents were removed. Their mission was to take control of factories, government offices, or other buildings that might have weapons, technology or anything with intelligence value and capture enemy agents, military officers and key collaborators. What couldn't be carried off was destroyed." From Tom Hanchett's thesis

Dad wrote on September 6th, 1944 "had an eight mile road march and got issued combat suits. Picked apples off the company grounds at night."

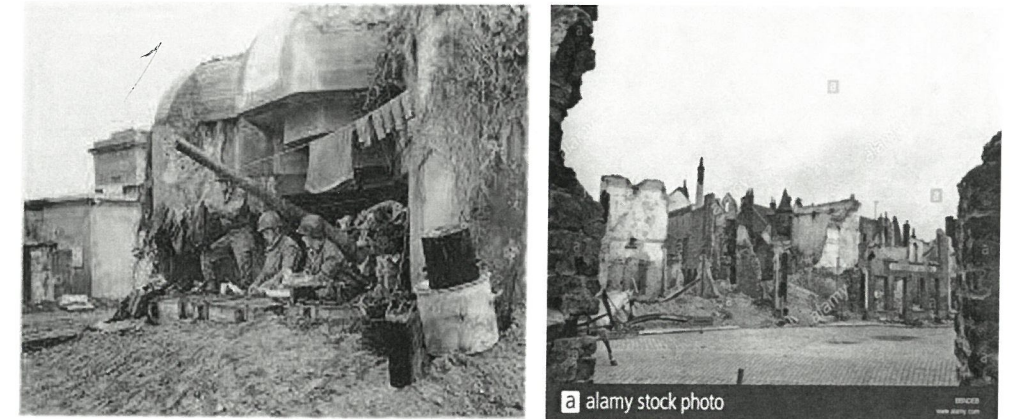
Excerpt from September 9th, 1944, "sure hear some awful rumors nowadays."

Excerpt from September 15th 1944, "somebody sure can start some hot rumors, according to the latest we'll be on our way back to Knox in 2 months."

On September 16th 1944 the men were treated to the movie "Mark Twain" which was shown to them behind a farmers place in a little field and in the afternoon they were taken on a 10 mile road march.

On October 16th 1944 they left the apple orchard camp and moved to a hotel, near St Pair, France.

By looking at the pictures you can see some of the things they seen so when he writes that they moved to a hotel, it more than likely was a bombed out one. This whole area had been hit pretty hard previously.

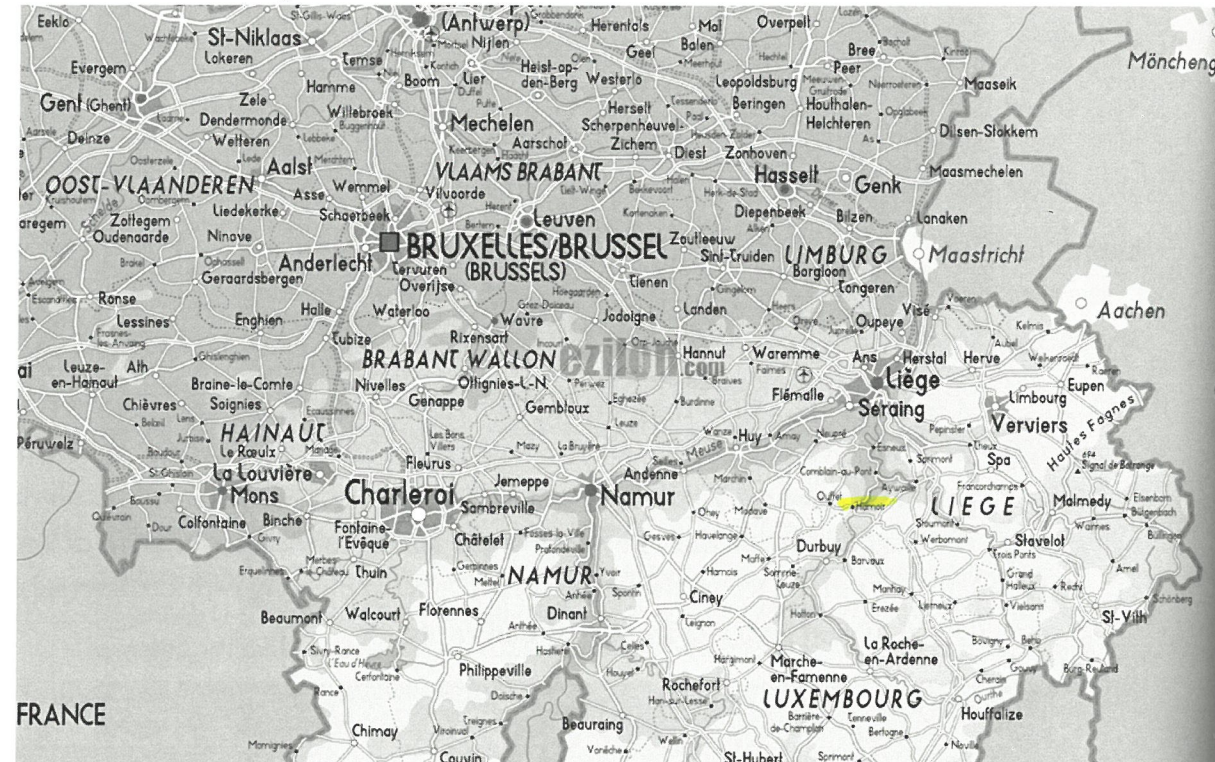


On October 26th, 1944 they left St Pair, France and headed east toward Paris with the destination being Verdun France which was about 40 miles from the front lines. They stopped at Beauvais for the night and Dad wrote that they had to sleep on the ground. The next day on October 27th they drove all day to their destination of Verdun, about 40 miles from the front. Here they stayed in a big building with cemeteries all over the place. "Filled with dead soldiers" dad wrote.



On October 30th 1944 they moved from Verdun to a little town called Filot (pronounced Fillod) Belgium, a small town 1.9 miles from Hamoir, Belgium, (pronounced Hamware) where they were housed in the Chateau De-Insegotte. (Pronounced Inseget) Dad writes in his journal on October 30th, "Left Verdun at 9:00 this morning and have 120 miles to go. First thing we get screwed up on the roads and as a result have only two short rest periods all day. Finally got here to our destination. We moved into a big place called a chateau. Sure is a pretty place only everyone didn't get beds. I didn't."

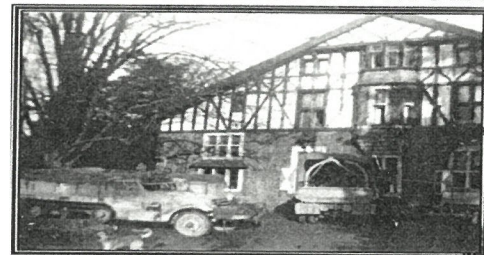
Filot is a suburb of Hamoir Belgium



CHATEAU DE INSEGOTTE ~ FILOT, BELGIUM

Home to 526th A.I.B., Service Company, prior to the Battle of the Bulge

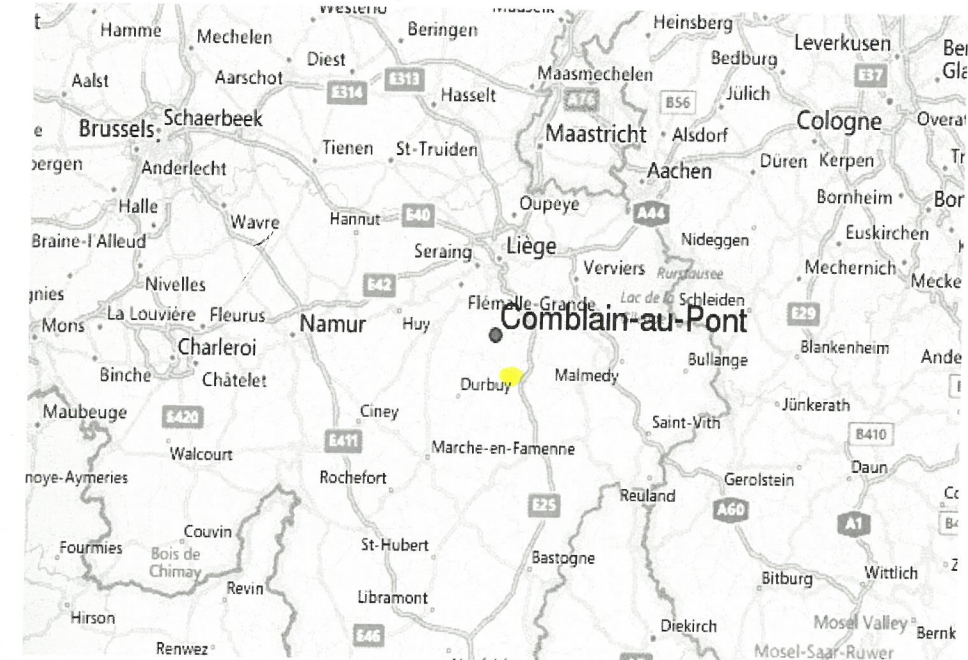
Left photo was taken in 1944 with U.S. Army vehicles parked in the driveway. Photo below is modern day Chateau De Insegotte.



Luc Lecrenier, a resident of Hamoir, spent many childhood days with our soldiers at the Chateau. He submitted this book cover and page 79, of a recent book published by the Parish of Hamoir (Filot), to share with us how our 526th men are remembered as an unforgettable part of their regional history. Mr. Lecrenier honors his memories with the 526th.



On November 1st 1944 they moved to Comblain La Tour, (Comblon La Tour) just a few miles from where they were.



Comblain- La-Tour is just southwest of Comblain- Au- Pont, and about 12 miles from Liège.

Here they stayed at the Red Cross Building. In his journal he writes about a Madame Bodey that lived there with her husband and one little boy. She did all their laundry and Dad would use her kitchen as a library to write letters and spend time. He wrote that after the war ended he had been back there several times to visit them.

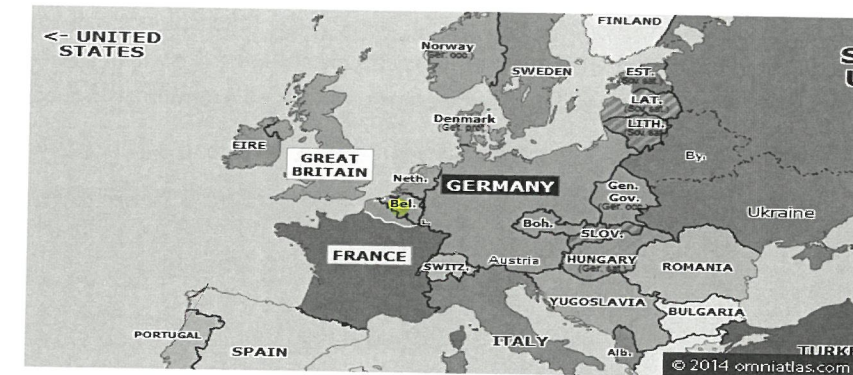
He is quiet in his journal writing from November 4th to the 23rd. Hamoir Belgium is close by and they go there often for entertainment. He mentions that Liège was sure being bombed a lot and they heard them all the time and in fact one had gone off just a few miles from where they were. They could see the flashes of the bombs and artillery hitting Cologne and Duren. He wrote that "we hear there is a problem at Liège and we might have to go there." On December 1st 1944 he heads to Liège in his halftrack. While there they sleep in an old school house and hear the buzzy bombs going off, about 1 every 7 or 8 minutes, several of them hitting pretty close to them. He had to stand guard every 2 hours.



Typical scenes in Liege, 1944

Up until this point the 526th was still being trained and groomed to carry out T-force missions after cities had been taken by the allied forces but that was all about to be cut short by the Battle of the Bulge.

Cole Hugh writes in his book, *The Ardennes; Battle of the Bulge*, The Battle of the Bulge ended up being the largest battle of the entire Western Front. Counting both sides, over a million soldiers fought in the wintery Ardennes forest from mid-December 1944 through January 1945. It was probably the fiercest combat that Americans would face in Europe and stands as the greatest Allied intelligence failure of the war. There were serious miscalculations of the German's capabilities and a huge amount of confusion within Allied ranks. For Adolph Hitler the Ardennes Offensive was the absolute last chance for his Third Reich to push the allied troops back, divide the American and British armies and take control of Antwerp, Belgium. The assembly of German forces was concealed from the Allies by an almost complete radio blackout. Communications had to be made by land line or messenger. There were rumors of an attack but the Allied Intelligence didn't take them as serious threats, thinking that after the battering of the previous six months the Germans were not capable of an offensive. They were wrong, because on December 16th, the Germans did attack. Thick fog and an almost white out condition added to the US confusion, and limited the threat of Allied air supremacy. The Germans used diverse sabotage missions, like confusing the Allied troops by having German soldiers dressed as American soldiers, driving American jeeps and trucks, and giving the American soldiers false information. They would also change signs on the roadways making getting from place to place confusing. On December 18th after advancing 60 miles in 2 days, the Germans reached a point of stalemate. The weather cleared, allowing the Allies to be resupplied. Vicious fighting followed, ending in mid-January when the German tank units began to run out of fuel. The battle ended with the Germans in full retreat. 19,000 United States soldiers lost their lives in the Battle of the Bulge but the Germans did not achieve their goal and underestimated the resolve of the allied troops.



If you look at a map of this area in Europe you can see how small Belgium is (About the size of Maryland), but the majority of the battles that Dad was in took place in Belgium, with some fighting taking in place after they entered Germany.

The battle of the bulge which took place in the forests of the Ardennes is in Belgium. "The Ardennes is a region of extensive forests, rough terrain, rolling hills and ridges formed by the geological features of the Ardennes Mountain range and Moselle and Meuse river basins." *Wikipedia*. It is located primarily in Belgium but goes into France and Luxemburg as well.

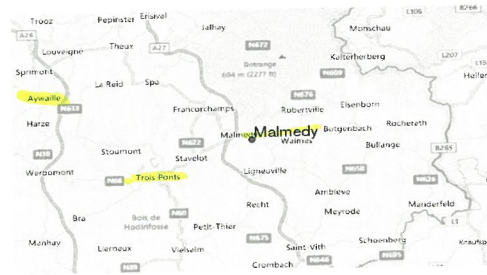
On December 18th 1944 the 526th finally got word that they were leaving. They left at 6:30 pm from Comblain La Tour and headed for Malmedy Belgium, where the Germans had broken through the first Army lines. This was to be the 526th's first combat mission.

On the way, Dad's halftrack was hit by a command car with five guys who were all shot up by the Germans. Reading in Tom Hachett's thesis on the 526th, it reads "the men in the other vehicle were survivors of the Malmedy massacre." Everyone in Dad's halftrack had to go back to service Co. in Comblain La Tour with Dad and the track. They got it fixed and by 6:00 a.m. the morning of the 19th and started out again.

At that time these soldiers were unaware of the "Malmedy Massacre" as it had just happened the day before, Dec 17th.

Cole Hugh in Chapter 11 of *The Ardennes: Battle of the Bulge* explains The Malmedy Massacre: On December 17th troops from the 285th Feld Artillery Battalion, about 140 men were sent to Malmedy to try to defend the city. The battalion drove to the east edge of Malmedy to set up a roadblock defense and ran into a column of German tanks which overwhelmed the US soldiers and they surrendered. The prisoners were moved into a field by the side of the road. The Germans opened fire, and in the end, 86 U.S. prisoners were shot and killed.

Others were wounded and faked death as the SS soldiers walked through the field and shot anyone who was wounded but still alive. Some of the soldiers were able to run into the woods to avoid being shot. This incident undoubtedly stiffened the will of the American soldiers. The incident would be featured in the war crimes trials as an example of Nazi contempt for the accepted rules of war.



At some point coming back from Comblain La Tour on their way to Malmedy, with bad weather, a congestion of vehicles and the unreliability of the signs they took a wrong turn at Aywaille (pronounced Eyewale) and ended up in Trois Ponts, (pronounced Twa Ponts) Belgium where they were stopped by the 1111th Engineer Combat Battalion led by Captain Robert Jewett. Here they were told to set up the 57 that Dad's half-track was pulling, for a German armored column heading towards them. Dad writes "At 11:30 we heard them coming and got the mines out to stop them and the gun ready. At about 12:00 all hell broke loose and the German let us have it with 88's on their tanks. Our boys fired 10 or 12 rounds and knocked out one for sure and disabled another. Then a shell hit us and killed four of the squad. Bieker and Frazier up ahead, I think they were killed by machine gun fire. We took off and had to leave Settlemyer, Frazier, and Bieker. Have a captain from the Engineers with us. When on the road we picked up a load of guys who were split up from their outfits. As it turned out Frazier and Bieker both got back alive."

According to Dad's journal and the after action reports these are the guys that we know were in that halftrack with Dad, Ralph Bieker, Francis Frazier, Edward Burdine, Isaac Doyle, John Surdo, Pvt. Settlemyer, and the gun crew, Dallas Buchanan, James Higgins, Donald Hollenbeck, Lillard McCollum, and Albert Smith.

Trois Ponts Belgium; means 3 points and gets its name from 3 highway bridges, 2 over the Salm river and the other over the Ambleve river. Company C of the 51st Engineer Combat Battalion, about 135 men, and 1111th Engineer Group, about 120 men had been ordered to defend Trois Ponts by preparing 2 of the bridges for demolition to stop the SS soldiers and defending the 3rd bridge. Together they had 8 bazookas, 4x.50 caliber machine guns, 4x.30 caliber guns and each soldier had M1 rifles.

When Dad's halftrack ended up in Trois Ponts by mistake, Captain Jewitt of the 1111th Engineer Group commandeered them and added that 57mm antitank gun to the defense of the town.

Here is the account of that day taken from Tom Hanchett's thesis and written from interviews of the men who were there.

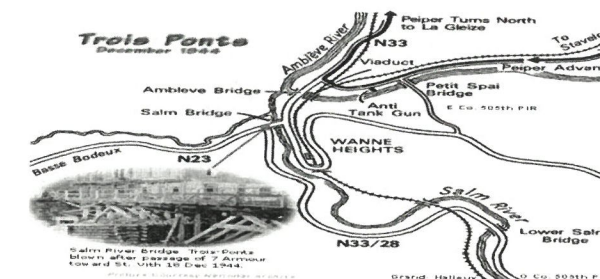
"Captain Jewitt sent Frazier and Bieker to go up the road towards Stavelot to lay a daisy chain of mines across the road. The gun crew with the 57mm anti-tank gun was set up in the area to the east of the 2 railroad bridges in the ditch and there were soldiers across the road on the other side as well."

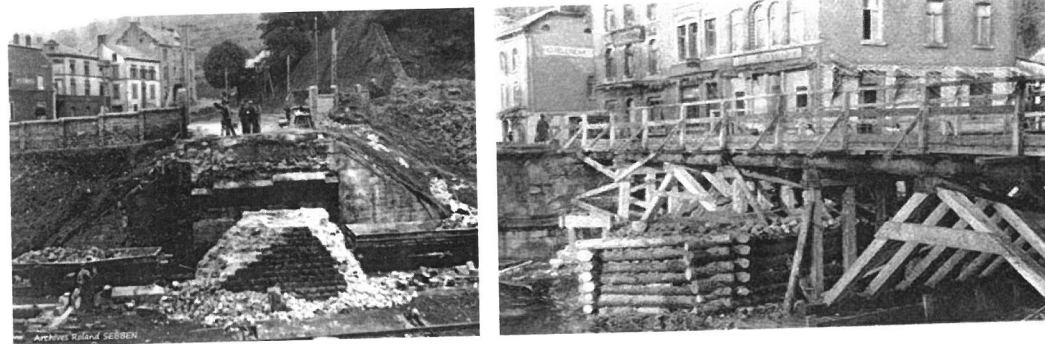
"Captain Jewitt states "an enemy armored column of about 8 or 9 tanks approached along highway N33 from Stavelot and were able to get across the mines but a shot from the 57mm gun broke the tread on the lead tank of the column, disabling it and possibly the second, halting the other vehicles. In the ensuing fire fight the gun crew took a direct hit and four of them were killed. Hearing the shots the 51st Engineers blew the 2 bridges over the Salm and Ambleve rivers cutting off the soldiers from Trois Ponts." The remainder of the soldiers realizing that it was futile to resist the enemy piled in the halftrack and joined elements of the unit assisting in operations against the enemy for the next few days. The Germans were discouraged from further advancing and they eventually turned back to Stavelot, 3.6 miles away. There was a big battle that took place at Stavelot as well that involved the US soldiers dumping a lot of fuel that the Germans needed to continue on.

Writing about Captain Jewitt is his journal Dad writes, "This officer is really a good guy. Got to know him in Trois Ponts where we were shot up by Jerris. He took us back to his outfit. Went on several recon trips with him and I know he is O.K. Calls us by our first names just like a brick private would. "

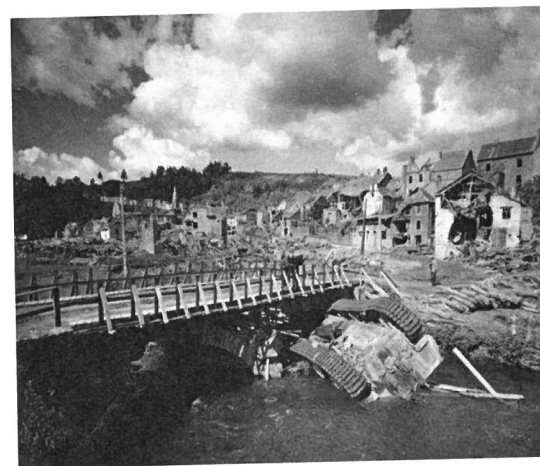
It is unclear where the 1111th went from Trois Ponts but that whole area was in the midst of the battle of the bulge."

According to Dad's journal buddies of his killed that day at Trois Ponts were Dallas Buchanan, James Higgins, Donald Hollenbeck, and Lillard McCullum. Frazier and Bieker were listed as missing in action but eventually returned.





Bridges demolished in Trois Pons December 19th, 1944



Overtuned US tank in Trois Pons, Belgium 12-18-44

From December 18th 1944 to December 29th 1944 is the period of time that Dad was supposedly missing in action as he was separated from his battalion. Grandma Evin received a telegram stating that he was missing in Action in Belgium. He was eventually able to get back to the 526th on December 29th 1944.

**T-5 Edward Evin
Missing In Action
On Belgium Front**

A telegram was received from the War Department, Washington, D. C., stating that Technician Fifth Grade Edward Evin, son of Mr. and Mrs. John Evin of Warren, has been reported missing in action in Belgium since the 18th of December.

Clip taken from the Warren Sheaf December 1944

It is hard to even imagine getting a telegram or letter like that. It must have been so heartbreaking for Grandma and Grandpa and hard to have a positive attitude and hang on to hope when the stories from the war were so awful.

Following is the after action report from Captain Robert Jewett of the 1111th Engineers Group for the 526th AIB., submitted on January 2nd, 1945.

HEADQUARTERS
1111th ENGINEER COMBAT GROUP
APO 230

2 January 1945

SUBJECT: Certificate of Circumstances Involving EM of the 526th A.I.B.
TO : Commanding Officers, 526th A. I. B., APO-655.

1. This is to certify that the following named enlisted men of Co "E", 526 A.I.B., did engage the enemy, who far outnumbered them, on the 18/20 Dec, 1944, under the circumstances narrated here:

a. Name	Rank	ASN	Present Status
Settlmeyer	1/Sgt		Returned to organization
Smith, Albert	3/Sgt	34062797	" " "
Evin, E. G.	T/S	39329120	" " "
Burline, E. R.	Pfc	35339106	" " "
Isaacs, Boyle	Pvt	35798443	" " "
Surdo, J. H.	Pvt	39288375	" " "
McCollum			Killed in action
Hollenbeck			" " "
Buchanan			" " "
Higgins			" " "
Frazier			Missing in action
Bicker			" " "

b. On 18 Dec. 1944, the above named enlisted men did establish a road block consisting of a string of mines and one (1) 57 mm gun in the vicinity of TROIS PONS, BELGIUM. An enemy armored column was reported as approaching on B-23 from STAVESLOT. [At approximately 1230 the first tanks approached and were stopped by Frazier and Bicker pulling a string of mines in front of the lead tank. Although there were eight (8) tanks visible, the above named enlisted men showed no panic and manned the 57 mm with the result of the lead tank being disabled and possibly the second one. A direct hit on the gun manned by McCollum, Hollenbeck, Buchanan and Higgins resulted in the gun being disabled and the gun crew killed. The remainder of these enlisted men escaped and joined elements of this unit assisting in operations against the enemy for the next few days.]

ROBERT N. JEWETT,
Captain, CE.

*A true copy:
J. Ferris,
Capt., AUS*

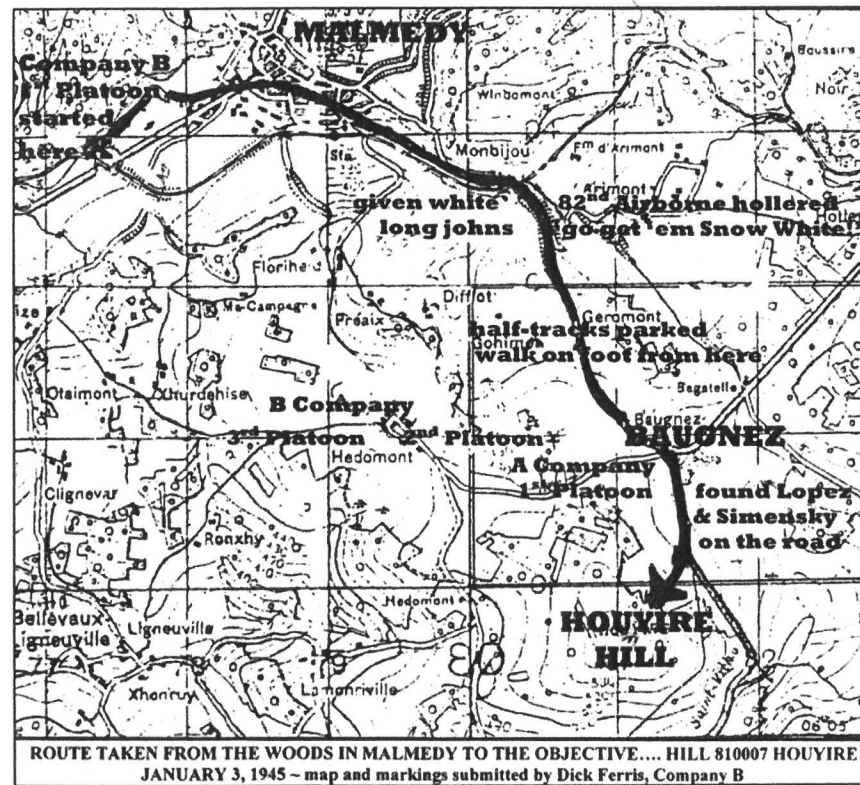
On December 29th 1944 Dad and the rest of the 526th with him, were reunited with the others from their battalion and on the 30th of December they head back to the front.

From December 30th 1944 on into the middle of January 1945, according to after action reports the 526th engaged in several battles, with many casualties. Because of the vagueness in Dad's journal we don't know exactly what they all went through but from reading accounts of experiences that others had during this time we can assume it was a horrific time for all of them. The weather was cold and snowy and they slept wherever they could find shelter.

One particular battle that Dad does mention is the one that took place on January 3rd 1945.

January 1st 1945 to the 3rd they were staying in a farmhouse and on the 3rd were given orders to leave. He writes on January 3rd, 1945 "an attack is to come off on a big hill where the Krauts are. Went out with the 1st platoon. Everything was bad. Eighteen or twenty men out of about 60 came back. Several of the boys I knew were among the missing."

On January 3rd the battalion was ordered to make a limited objective attack on a hill southeast of Malmedy Belgium. The hill was called Houyire Hill (pronounced how I ear). Little did these soldiers know that they were just yards from the snow covered bodies of the soldiers from the Malmedy Massacre. The troops assigned to the attack were the I company of the 120th Regiment and Company B of the 526th AIB.



The following is what was written from first-hand experience from some of the soldiers who were there. This excerpt is taken directly from Tom Hanchett's thesis. It is a bit confusing trying to sort out the officers and platoons but you will get a good picture of what that day was like for these brave soldiers.

"January 3rd was bitterly cold, Snow and low-laying fog covered the ground and visibility was poor, with snow flurries. Some of the men remarked how their olive drab uniforms made excellent aiming points for whatever Germans were on the high ground of Houyire Hill.

The men were given white G.I. underwear and put white towels on their helmets.

The Germans had reversible uniforms and could wear white on the outside. They were also well armed.

Before getting in the half-tracks, the men milled around, stamping their feet and slapping their sides to keep warm. They eventually rode in their half-tracks to the assembly area. Private First Class John Hess (who was also from Warren/Argyle area) tapped his friend Richard Stone on the shoulder. "I hope you make it today Stone, I know I'm going to."

The wait to mount up went on and on, but they finally got into the half-tracks. The ride to the attack position was described as very slow. The cold air burned their faces and their hands were numb. A light snow was falling, and the men who had K rations (cracker biscuit, canned chopped ham and eggs) for breakfast, sat as low as possible in the frozen seats of the half-tracks. There were complaints about "their cold butt, (sic) the lousy weather and the SOB who dreamed up this mission. The pockets of fog and the first beginnings of light, along with the snow making for an eerie unreal surrounding.

One medical half-track, or ambulance, was positioned at the command post to treat and evacuated casualties. A second ambulance was stationed at Geromont to evacuate any casualties in that area.

Captain Wessel told Lieutenant James Plotzke that his platoon of three anti-tank guns was to be held in reserve and he was to stand by if needed. Captain Wessel was with the tank platoon leader riding in a tank that served as the forward command post. Wessel would communicate with his rear command post that in turn, would keep battalion informed.

Lieutenant Milton Bernstein's First Platoon led off the attack at 8:45 am. According to Lieutenant Robert Batt's report, Bernstein's platoon proceeded down the Geromont road to Baugez and headed across open ground up the hill that was the objective.

The second Lieutenant Robert Batt and third Platoons Lieutenant John Halbin of B Company were to attack towards Hedomont and then head up the hill.

Beardslee's First Platoon of Co. A advanced along the left flank and took up defensive positions near Geromont, where enemy fire was received. Beardslee's men had a radio with which to communicate with Mitchell at his command post. An artillery forward observer also accompanied Beardslee, and an observation post was set up in a house in Baugez. Two civilians were picked up and sent to battalion headquarters for interrogation.

After the war Lieutenant Bernstein wrote a letter to Colonel Irwin that was published in the December 1999 issue of *The Pekan*. Bernstein said that he and his men were fired on almost immediately as they began their move towards the objective. Bernstein said there was very heavy enemy fire coming from woods as they advanced towards the hill. During the move forward Private First Class Stone informed Bernstein that his bazooka was broken. Bernstein told him to "throw it away." Stone started that he did so and moved on with the others. One of those killed was Private Delbert Johnson, Stone's bazooka loader.

Johnson, who had just received a "Dear John" letter, fell near some of the snow covered victims of the Malmedy Massacre. William Duncan, the squad comedian, and Ralph Iverson were also killed in the advance.

Writing in 1988 Stone stated "Art Allen comes along side of me with his light M.G. He is almost out of ammo. He has already lost two loaders he tells me. John Bush is trying to work his way forward in front of us. He flops over in the snow dead. Parish saw Sergeant Bush get killed too.

According to Stone, "Allen goes down the hill to pick up more ammunition. You are naked, exposed and soon dead if you stay here, so a decision is to be made, forward or back, you may die either way...you get as far as a body, and you fling yourself beside it in the snow. It is Johnny. Stone was describing his friend John Jess, aspiring farmer with five acres of land and a fiancé in Minnesota.

The battle on Houyire Hill went on until 5:15 in the afternoon with continued fire, tree limbs, snow and metal coming down followed by hand grenades and burp guns. Finally at 5:15 they were told to retreat and went back to the original line of departure."

The battle at Houyire Hill was supposed to be a diversionary tactic meant to draw the attention of the enemy from the main attack farther west. In that respect it was successful as it did draw the enemies' reserves away from the main effort and the U.S. soldiers did eventually take the hill, however, the cost to the battalions was high and out of approximately 250 men, who participated, 65 were casualties, 19 were killed, and 18 were missing in action.

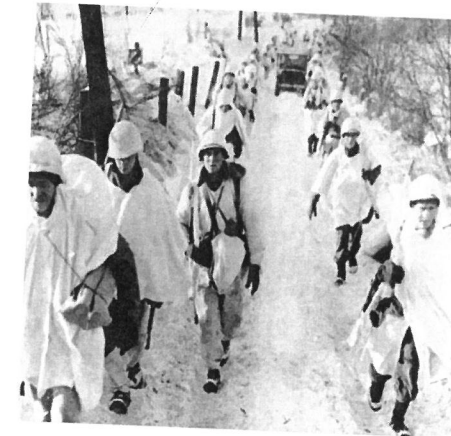
The American soldiers took 4 prisoners and approximately 25 enemy soldiers were killed.

In an after action report by Major Battson he mentions several things that attributed to the Battle on Houyire Hill being such a devastating loss to the soldiers of the 526th.

1. It was put together fast without time to properly plan or test communications
2. There was a real problem with communication
3. The tanks that were supposed to cover them didn't have the right cleats on their tracks, so they Couldn't run in the snow so, no tank support
4. The weather, Poor visibility, and the Germans were not open and exposed and they were better prepared with appropriate clothing.
5. The 526th was inexperienced

Quote from Tom Hanchett, Jan 3, 2003 in *the Pekan* newsletter:

"Today is a sad fateful day. I was thinking about those young men advancing through the snow into German fire with no supporting armor/artillery fire, encumbered with weapons and equipment, trying to keep their long john pants from slipping down. To quote Robert Redford in a movie, "Someone really came up with a nightmare."



In the sequence/chronology from the 526th, Captain Richard Wessel shows that from December 31st, 1944 to January 16th 1945 the 526th AIB was engaged in battle.

In his journal Dad wrote from Jan 4th to the 7th "we're back at the farmhouse and waiting for orders to move back to T-force." This is the first time in his journal that he mentions T-force.

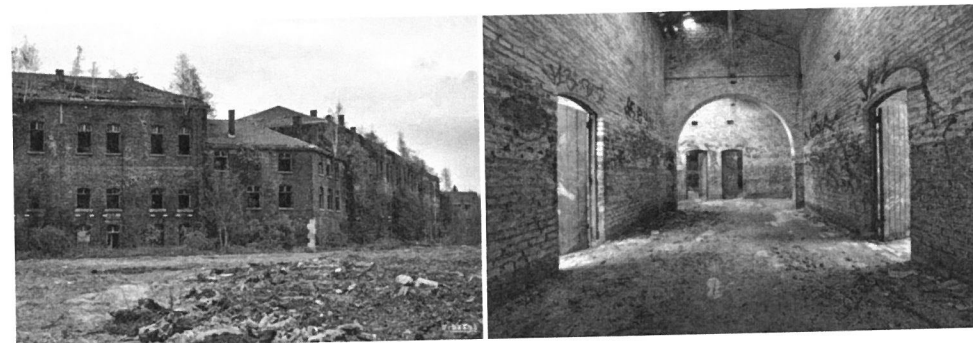
On January 8th 1945 they moved to Burenville and are right up on the front lines. He writes, "Artillery is thick as hell around here." On the 9th 10th and 11th of January there is more of the same, engaging the enemy, standing guard and patrolling.

On January 9th 1945, Dad wrote, "Resting up for what I know is bound to come. Have a platoon of men on the line all the time."

On January 13th 1945 he wrote that the second platoon made an attack with very good results. There were no casualties and several Kraut prisoners. As it turned out, the prisoners were the very men they fought against on Houyire Hill on January 3rd.



January 17th 1945 his entry reads, "From what they say we go back to T-force" and on the 18th of January they headed back towards Liege and met up with the whole battalion at a big chateau. The place they were at was called Fort De La Chartreuse and there were many prisoners living there.



Fort De La Chartreuse in Liege Belgium

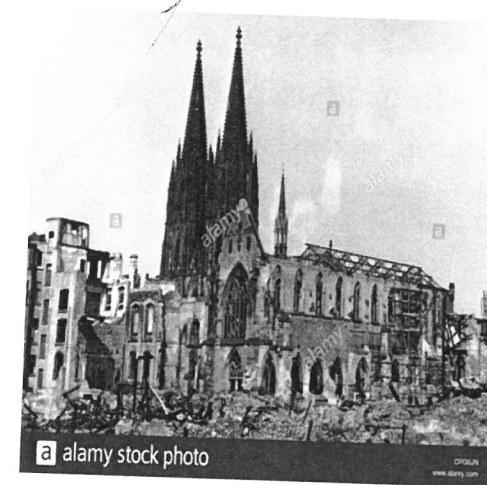
Inside of De La Chartreuse years after the war

For the next month his entries' are again pretty vague. Possibly because of the secrecy of the T-force and what they did, he just couldn't or didn't write much about their daily activities. He writes about going here or there but doesn't get specific. He mostly writes about getting mail, working on his half-track, and that kind of stuff.

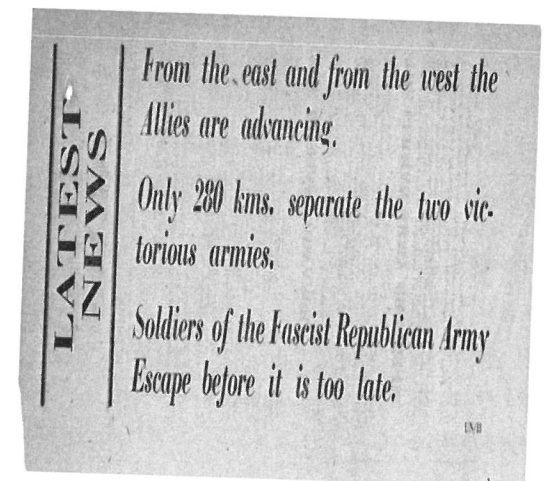
By the end of January 1945 the German lines had been pushed back to where they first started and Hitler's last attempt to gain the west had ended in failure and the Battle of the Bulge ended on January 25th 1945 but the war was not over.

On Feb 26th 1945 Dad writes that "the big offensive to Cologne is going well."

In an effort to occupy Cologne Germany the Allies dropped several bombs on the city and dropped leaflets for the German Soldiers in an attempt to convince them that their efforts were in vain and to save themselves. By the beginning of March the outskirts of Cologne was reached by the US troops and on March 6th the inner city was reached with only minor resistance.



Cologne Germany, 1945



Dad's March 1st 1945 entry states "we leave tomorrow for Germany so that means we better celebrate tonight. Hubbard and I went to Huey and hung one on. Hubbard got so sick on cognac that the medics had to give him morphine and he came close to kicking in."

March 2nd 1945 finds them on the move, going through Liege, up to Aachen and then to Eschweiler, Germany. He writes that "there were no Kraut civilians there at all."

On March 5th 1945 they left Eschweiler at 2:30 pm and headed for Cologne, Germany, staying wherever they could along the way and finally arriving on March 7, 1945. They stayed in the suburbs at a nice house where the civilians gave them a place to wash. He writes, "They act alright towards us but I know they'd sure like to cut our throats."

On March 8th, 1945 they go into Cologne to hit their target. He writes that "this place is sure beat to hell." He states that he had to pull a few hours guard and go loot the bombed out houses.

By loot I'm assuming he meant for T-force. For the T-force to achieve their objective they needed to go into these occupied cities as soon as possible to find and collect enemy material. The city of Cologne had been hit hard during the war and one of the only things still standing in the town was a cathedral tower which the soldiers used as their point of reference to get around the area.

On March 10th 1945 they left and headed south of Cologne and while on the road they were able to see the Siegfried line. He also wrote that the roads were very bad.



"The Siegfried line, (called the west wall by the Germans) were fortifications on the Western border of Germany running from the Netherlands in the north to the border of Switzerland on the south. It was built by the Germans from 1938 to 1940 and had tunnels, 18,000 tank traps and bunkers as a line of defense to protect the home country." *Wikipedia*



The Siegfried Line

On March 11th 1945 they stayed in a little town called Monschau, (pronounced Monchow) Germany and left there the next morning, driving all day to a place on a hill with a few little buildings, where 38 of them slept in a room approximately 25x25.

On March 15th 1945, they moved just a few miles to a place that once was a hospital; and stay there overnight and the next day move on to Koblenz, Germany southeast of Monschau. He say's "they are ready for some targets." At this point they were back in T-force and the target mentioned was more than likely a place they needed to search. They stayed here until the 28th of March doing T force missions. While there, Dad mentions washing his halftack down in a creek, some of the guys catching fish by using dynamite and him and another guy named Parker getting a radio, that they lifted in Cologne, working and being able to hear news and American music.

On March 28th 1945 they move to a little town near the Rhine and at 11:00 that night they cross the Rhine and stay at a big place on the edge of Frankfurt where there is still fighting going on. From reading other accounts I am pretty sure they crossed the Rhine at a town called St. Goar. I remember Dad saying that the night they crossed the Rhine he seen Alton Jorgenson from Warren crossing at the same time in another truck.

April 1st 1945, his entry reads. "Moved again and we are two miles north of Frankfurt at a little town called Oberursel. We have 3 hospitals here with more than 200 Kraut soldiers here. They sleep in our building and feed us. Sure is a funny war. Have talked to several poles and Russians." He writes the next day, "Don't like this place very well, too many Krauts running loose. Seen 6, SS men today in the woods but the bastards got away."



One of the three Hospitals in Oberursel, Germany

On April 3rd, 1945, Dad wrote, "still here, catch a few Krauts every day."

April 5th, 1945, "Went deer hunting in the woods never got shit. But one more Kraut in the cage."

April 9th, 1945, "This morning while standing guard 3 Krauts came up and surrendered. Got me a new Lugar off one of them."

On April 12th, 1945 the 526th left the hospital and headed northeast, 85 miles to Dillenburg where he wrote that "the railroads here sure are bombed out." From Dillenburg they went to Solingen which was northwest of Dillenburg. While there, they searched a knife factory and he states that he "got some good loot." April 12th 1945 was also the day that President Roosevelt died, sadly, not seeing the end of the war.



WÜSTHOF in Solingen, ca. 1900.

Solingen Knife Factory

On April 19th 1945 they moved up to Dusseldorf, where the armies' invasion had started 2 days earlier. They stayed at a telephone exchange where there were several hundred Germans working. He writes on April 21st 1945 that he "got an US Army 45 off a Kraut." He also finds himself a little convertible coupe to run around in.

His April 25th entry states, "We had another rough night." There still must be some resistance in the area.

On April 30th 1945 he writes in his journal, "I heard some bullshit about Germany surrendering." A week later on May 7th 1945 Hitler did just that.

On May 2nd 1945 they moved to Remscheid, Germany and were there for a day and the next day traveled 140 miles south to 20 miles south of Frankfurt where they had been a month before.

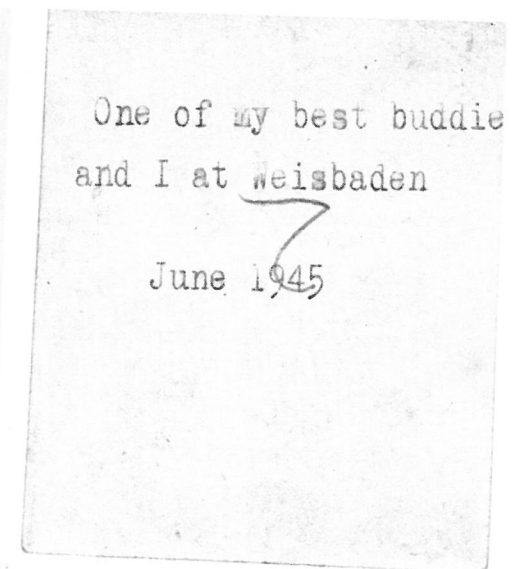
On May 7th 1945 there were two simple words in Dad's journal- "War ended."

May 8th is considered VE (Victory in Europe) day as that is when the formal surrender came from the Germans.

Hitler, Germany's fearless leader, committed suicide on April 30th, 1945 knowing his reign and quest to conquer the world and eliminate those he deemed unworthy of existing had come to an abrupt halt.

VJ (Victory from Japan) day came a bit later. Japan surrendered on August 14th, 1945 after the US dropped atomic bombs on the city of Hiroshima on August 6th, 1945, killing 80,000 people and on the city of Nagasaki, August 9th killing 40,000 people. On the calendar, VJ day is September 2nd as that is when the formal surrender came.

After May 7th the 526th AIB moved to Wiesbaden, Germany and they served as occupational troops. Their jobs were to maintain law and order, establish allied military presence in the defeated nation, and also man border patrol stations. The 526th AIB also guarded Nazi military and civilian officials in Wiesbaden.



On June 15th Dad ended up back in Frankfurt in the hospital with a problem with his right ear. In his journal he writes on June 26th 1945 that he "got out and back in Wiesbaden and it was good to be back."

Journal entry - July 1st to the 31st, "Didn't do much all month except some guard duty."



Journal entry - August 1st to the 15th, 1945 he writes, "Some of the guys have started home but I don't think I will be going for a long time."

Journal entry - September 1st, 1945 "Have a circus in town and it wasn't bad."

Journal entry - October 1st, 1945, "Captain Wessel says we will all be going back soon but didn't say when."

Sometime between October 1st and November 1st 1945 he had made the decision to stay in Germany and join UNRRA, United Nations Relief and Restoration Administration. He wrote in his journal on November 1st 1945 that he was "going to sign on for the RRA work."

November 13th 1945 his journal stated that "tomorrow all the B Co. guys leave here."

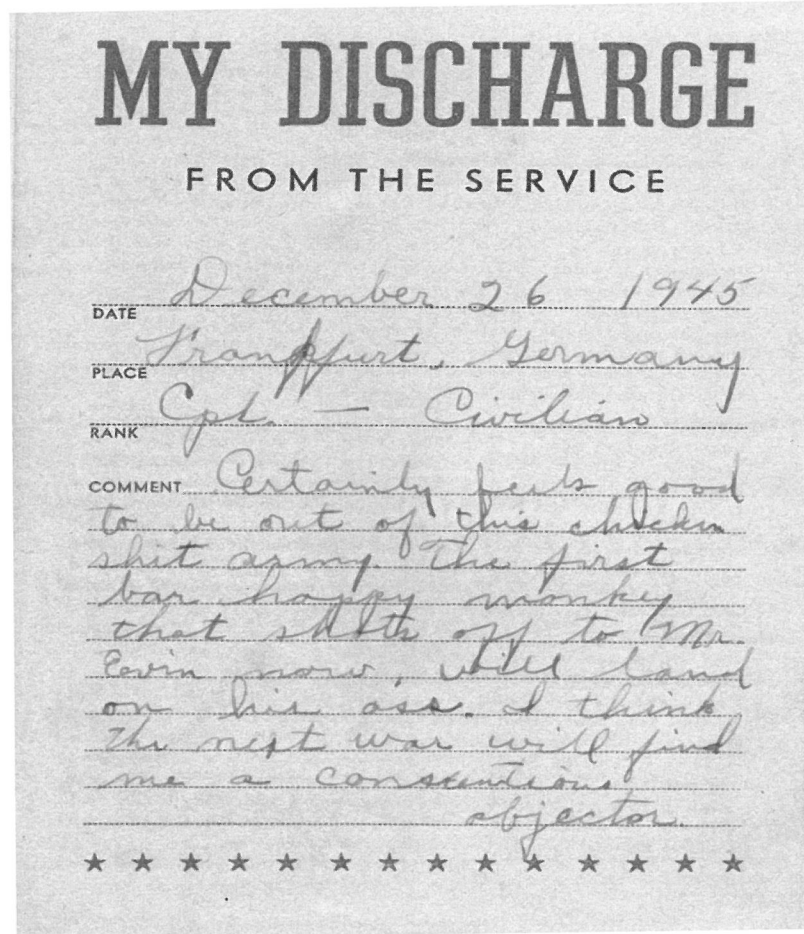
As the war ended and the 526th was sent home and disbanded Dad is transferred to 6800 Headquarters. Co. special troops on November 26, 1945.

There are several weeks of no entry's and then on December 10th he writes "Here we are in Marsburg and supposed to go home but not me."

Journal entry December 18th 1945 "went to Frankfurt and handed in our service records for discharge." and then on the 26th of December he wrote, "We went to Frankfurt and came back civilians."

ENLISTED RECORD AND REPORT OF SEPARATION HONORABLE DISCHARGE									
1. LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL Evin Edward G		2. ARMY SERIAL NO. 39829120		3. GRADE Toc 5		4. ARM OR SERVICE Infantry		5. COMPONENT AUS	
6. ORGANIZATION 6800th Hq Co Sp. Trps APO 757 US Army			7. DATE OF SEPARATION 26 Dec 1945		8. PLACE OF SEPARATION Frankfurt on Main Germany				
9. PERMANENT ADDRESS FOR MAILING PURPOSES 622 Burlum St Warren Minn				10. DATE OF BIRTH 19 Mar 1924		11. PLACE OF BIRTH Warren Minn			
12. ADDRESS FROM WHICH EMPLOYMENT WILL BE SOUGHT UNRRA Hq Wiesbaden APO 757			13. COLOR EYES Grey		14. COLOR HAIR Black		15. HEIGHT 5' 7 1/2"		16. WEIGHT 166 lbs
17. NO. DEPEND.		18. MARITAL STATUS		19. U.S. CITIZEN		20. CIVILIAN OCCUPATION AND NO. Truck & Tractor Driver			
MILITARY HISTORY									
22. DATE OF INDUCTION 13 Mar 1943		23. DATE OF ENLISTMENT -		24. DATE OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE 20 Mar 1943		25. PLACE OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE Portland Oregon			
26. SELECTIVE SERVICE DATA X		27. LOCAL S.S. BOARD NO. 2		28. COUNTY AND STATE		29. HOME ADDRESS AT TIME OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE 1319 SE 18th St Portland Oregon			
30. MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY AND NO. Half Track Driver 734				31. MILITARY QUALIFICATION AND RATE (i.e., Infantry, aviation and marksmanship badges, etc.) Combat Infantry Badge 12 Jan 45					
32. BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS Bz Sv Str Northern France Bz Sv Str Rhineland				33. DEPARTMENTAL AWARD AND NO. Bz Sv Str Ardennes Bz Sv Str Central Europe					
34. DECORATIONS AND CITATIONS Good Conduct Medal 4 Jun 45				35. HONORARY RIBBON AND NO. HONORARY RIBBON WD Cir 62 1944					
36. WOUNDS RECEIVED IN ACTION None				37. SERVICE OUTSIDE CONTINENTAL U.S. AND RETURN 159409					
38. LATEST IMMUNIZATION DATES		39. OTHER (Specify)		40. DATE OF DEPARTURE		41. DESTINATION		42. DATE OF ARRIVAL	
38a. SMALLPOX		38b. TYPHOID		38c. TETANUS		38d. OTHER (Specify)		38e. DATE OF DEPARTURE	
30 Mar 44		17 Jul 45		20 Aug 44		29 Aug 1945		26 Feb 1944	
39. TOTAL LENGTH OF SERVICE		40. HIGHEST GRADE HELD		41. DATE OF DEPARTURE		42. DESTINATION		43. DATE OF ARRIVAL	
40a. CONTINENTAL SERVICE		40b. FOREIGN SERVICE		40c. HIGHEST GRADE HELD		40d. DATE OF DEPARTURE		40e. DATE OF ARRIVAL	
0		11 13 1 10 0		Technician Fifth Grade		26 Feb 1944		10 Mar 1944	
44. PRIOR SERVICE None				45. EDUCATION (Years) 8 2 0					
46. REASON AND AUTHORITY FOR SEPARATION AR 615-365 (Conv of Govt) & Ltr Hq USFMT 210.8 X 220.8 ACP 3 October 1945				47. SERVICE SCHOOLS ATTENDED None					
48. LONGEVITY FOR PAY PURPOSES				49. MUSTERING OUT PAY		50. SOLDIER DEPOSIT		51. TRAVEL PAY	
2 9 13				\$300.00		None		\$59.30	
INSURANCE NOTICE									
IMPORTANT: IF PREMIUM IS NOT PAID WHEN DUE OR WITHIN THIRTY DAYS THEREAFTER, INSURANCE WILL Lapse. BENEFIT THEREON WILL BE PAID TO THE TREASURER OF THE U.S. AND FORWARDED TO COLLECTORS IN THE DIVISION, VETERANS ADMINISTRATION, WASHINGTON 25, D.C.									
48. KIND OF INSURANCE		49. HOW PAID		50. EFFECTIVE DATE OF ATTACHMENT DISCONTINUANCE		51. DATE OF NEXT PREMIUM DUE		52. PREMIUM DUE EACH MONTH	
X		X		31 Dec 1945		31 Jan 1946		\$6.50	
53. REMARKS (This space for completion of above items or entry of other items specified in W. D. Directives)				54. INTENTION OF VETERAN TO					
Discharged to accept Federal employment in European Theater Lapel button issued No time lost AW 107 Inactive service ERC 18 March 1943 to 20 March 1943				54a. Condition Only 54b. Discharge Only 54c. Indemnity Only					
55. SIGNATURE OF PERSON BEING SEPARATED Edward G. Evin				56. PERSONNEL OFFICER (Type name, grade and organization - signature) James M. Connell, 1st Lt. Inf, Asst Pers Officer					

Chapter Four – The End and the Beginning



The very last page in Dad's journal

This is where Dad's journaling ends but we do know that he did indeed stay and work with the UNRRA, helping with displaced people and as a mail carrier as he was able to speak some German. He lived and worked out of Wiesbaden Germany.

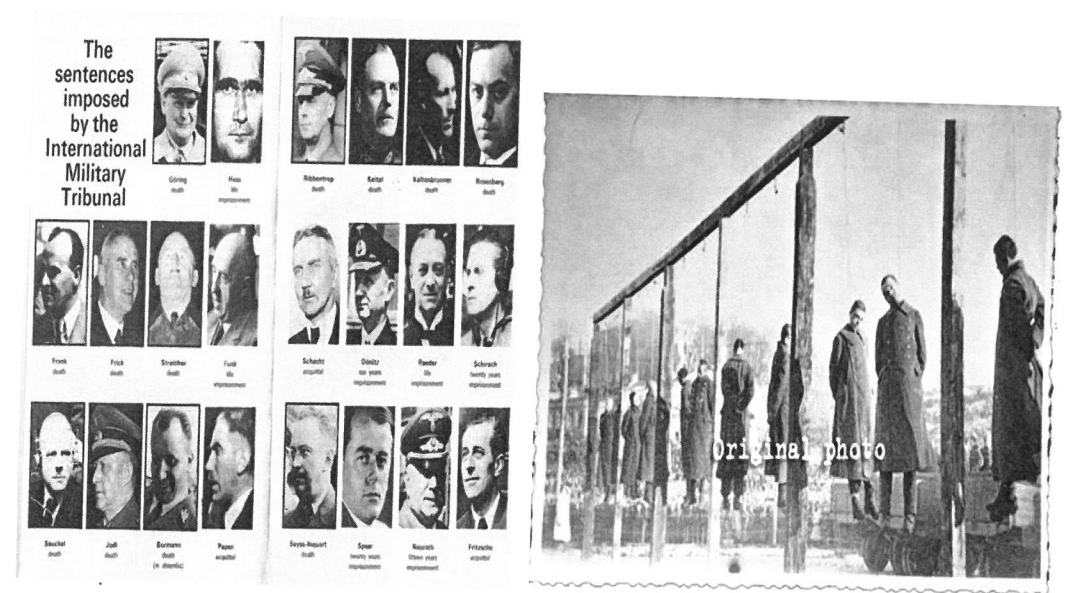
"UNRRA, The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration was created at a 44 nation conference at the white house on November 9th 1943. Its mission was to provide economic assistance to European nations after WWII and to repatriate and assist the refugees who would come under Allied control. They supplied food, fuel, clothing, shelter and other basic necessities and medical and other essential services." *Wikipedia*

One of the things that Dad did while still in Germany was attend some of the Nuremberg Trials.

The Nuremberg Trials had started November 20th, 1945 and concluded on October 1, 1946. The Nuremberg Trials were held by the main victorious Allied forces of WWII to prosecute the important members, and leadership of the defeated Nazis. The trials were held in the city of Nuremberg, Germany at the Palace of Justice. Twenty four of the most important captured leaders of Nazi Germany were prosecuted although many others had committed suicide before the trials began.

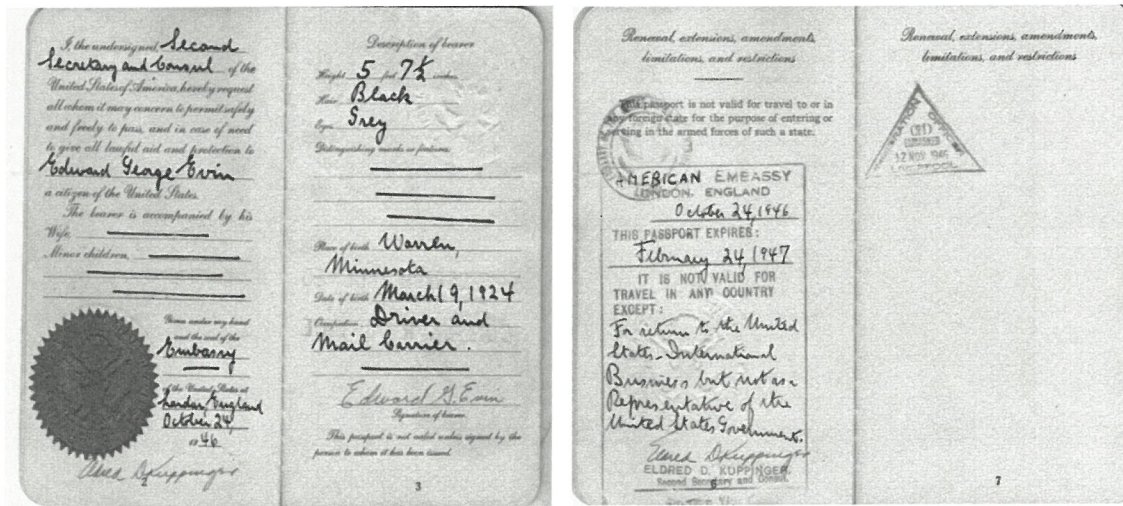


Palace of Justice, Nuremberg, Germany



Dad attained a passport on October 24th 1946 after working for UNRRA in Germany for almost a year. On November 12th, 1946 he boarded the ship "Samaria" in Liverpool, London to go home.

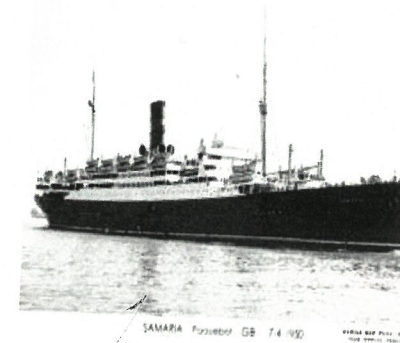
The ship Samaria was a ship carrying several war brides and after 6 days at sea brought him to Halifax, Nova Scotia on November 18th 1946. Mom remembers Dad telling her that the voyage home was "the worst time ever, we were all sick."



Dad's passport

B. NON-TRANSMIGRANTS.									
Name of Ship		Date of Departure		Where Bound		Names and Descriptions of ALIEN PASSENGERS EMBARKED AT THE PORT OF			
CUNARD WHITE STAR LIMITED.		12 November 1946		Halifax N.S.		B. NON-TRANSMIGRANTS, that is, alien passengers other than those included under A.			
Passenger No.	Name of Passenger	Class	Age	Sex	Last Address in United Kingdom	Profession, Occupation or Calling	Country of Birth	Country of Residence	Country of Origin
1	RADWIN, James P.	1st	37	M	207 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
2	DUNN, Charles	1st	24	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
3	GRAY, Leonard	1st	22	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
4	FISHER, Richard	1st	38	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
5	FLORIDA, James	1st	25	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
6	NICOLETTI, Luigi	1st	29	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
7	O'GRADY, James	1st	25	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
8	ASLMEYER, John	1st	49	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
9	FRANCO, George W.	1st	33	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
10	LURE, Walter	1st	25	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
11	MARSHALL, William	1st	22	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
12	SEAR, James	1st	26	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
13	BUCK, William	1st	23	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
14	CARDOSO, William	1st	13	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
15	DEBOSTER, John	1st	18	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
16	DENBOSTER, John	1st	22	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
17	ELLIMANSON, James	1st	39	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
18	EVINE, Edward	1st	22	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
19	FLANAGAN, Joseph	1st	30	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
20	HEDDERLEY, James	1st	23	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
21	MULFORD, Charles	1st	27	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
22	NEEDS, Martin	1st	23	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
23	NEEDS, Martin	1st	23	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
24	WOOD, Harold E.	1st	18	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
25	BROWN, Arthur	1st	25	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
26	BODDICE, John	1st	44	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
27	JOHN, John	1st	23	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
28	KORTLAND, Robert	1st	22	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
29	STANLEY, Robert	1st	41	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
30	BIRCH, George	1st	46	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA
31	BIRCH, George	1st	46	M	100 St. Paul St. London E.C. 4	DRIVER	USA	USA	USA

One page of the passenger transport list for the Samaria



We don't know how he traveled from Halifax to America but Mom said he told her that he had to go to Washington DC to get his final discharge papers.

Dad was awarded the European Theater of Operations ribbon and 4 battle stars for the battles in Northern France, Rhineland, Ardennes, and Central Europe. He was also awarded the Good Conduct Medal, and the Combat Infantry Badge.

The Good Conduct medal was a service award and required certification by a commanding officer.

The Combat Infantry Badge was awarded to infantrymen in the rank of Colonel and below, who personally fought in active ground combat. It was created during WWII to enhance the morale and prestige of service in the infantry. Specifically, it recognizes the supreme sacrifices of all infantrymen, and that, in comparison to all other military specialties, infantrymen face the greatest risk of being wounded or killed in action. It required a commander's recommendation.



ETO Ribbon with 4 battle stars



Good Conduct Medal

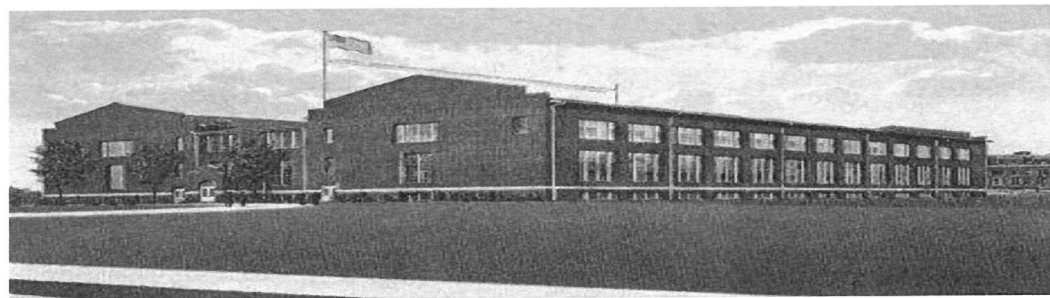


Combat Infantryman Badge

War rationing in the United States ended in 1946, and in the years 1945 and 1946 American soldiers came home by the thousands causing a shortage of housing and supplies. The country still had not recovered from the shortages caused by the war and food was in short supply as well. The baby boom started as soldiers came home, married, and started families.

In 1946: A new home cost – 5,600, Average wages per year was 2,500, A gallon of gas cost .15, and, a 2 lb. can of coffee was .85. Popular artists in 1946 were Dean Martin, Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby, Perry Como, and the Andrew Sisters. The first micro-wave oven was invented and Harry Truman was President.

Once Dad returned to America he moved to Minneapolis and lived at 2109 Garfield Ave S. and enrolled in the Dunwoody Industrial Institute, on the G.I. bill to take welding classes. He attended there from January 13, 1947 until April 2nd, 1947. On his school records from Dunwoody the reason he left was to gain employment.



Dunwoody in 1946

Mom graduated from high school in the spring of 1947 and her and her friend, Lou Kilfoyle moved to the cities and got jobs as Nannies. She told me that at this time she had been going with Ogden Hjelle from Thief River Falls, MN and at some point in the summer of 1947 they were engaged.



Mom's graduation picture



Ogden Hjelle

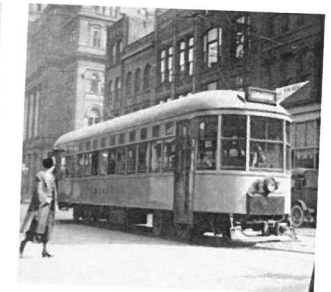
Mom remembers that there were many kids from Warren, Argyle and Stephen in Minneapolis and that a popular place for them to gather was at the Augie's Theatre and Lounge on Hennepin Avenue in Minneapolis. They used the street cars to get around Minneapolis. Augie's Theater and Lounge opened on or before November 1943, owned by Augie Ratner until 1964. The *Republican Register* of December 1943 actually ran an article about the new bar, calling it "one of the city's most popular fun spots."



Picture of Augies years later



Hazel Scott



Streetcar in Minneapolis in the 40's

At the time, Augie's was an upscale theater and lounge. It had attendants in the bathrooms to help the women by handing them hand towels and brushing the hair off their shoulders after they combed their hair. Mom remembers the attendee being a very nice black woman. Augie's also had different entertainers come in to perform. Mom remembered that one time a popular singer of that era named Hazel Scott walked in and went to the bar to order a drink and was asked to leave because she was a colored woman. An interesting read; *Augie's Secrets; The Minneapolis Mob and the King of the Hennepin Strip*.

In the summer of 1947 Mom went with friends from back home to Augies to celebrate with Dad as he had decided to re-enlist. Her and Dad talked that night and then met again at a café a couple weeks later. Dad never did re-enlist. They kept in contact and seen each other several more times in the cities.

Mom remembers going to Thief River Falls that November to spend Thanksgiving with the Hjelle family. Before Christmas she had quit her Nanny job to work at Sears in Minneapolis.

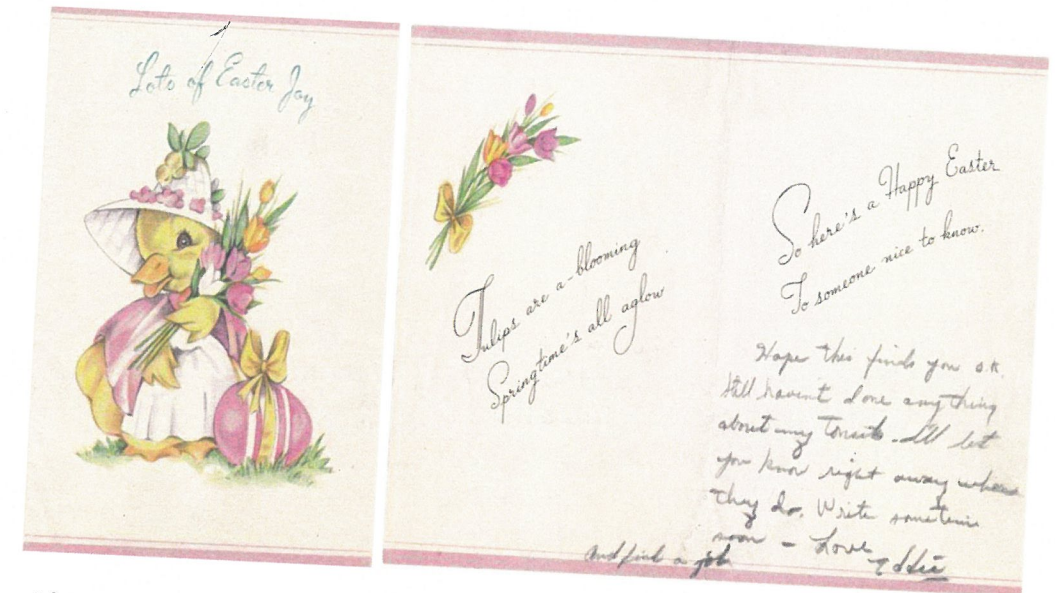


Sears Store in Minneapolis 1947

On December 8th, 1947 Grandpa Evin passed away and Ben, Dad's brother called Mom as he knew she could probably get word to Dad. Mom called a friend of Dad's, Johnny Macnamara from the Stephen area, who lived down there as well, and asked if he could reach Dad and tell him the news of Grandpa's passing. After that, when Dad returned to the cities, he and Mom seen each other again and during Christmas vacation when they were both home, they met at the Voss Café in Warren. It was located right next to where the Corner Tap used to be, on the Northeast side of Johnson Avenue. They were sitting together in a booth and Ogden came in and took a seat at the end of the counter. Mom said she went over to him and returned the ring and called off the engagement. From that point on her and Dad dated.



After Christmas 1947 Dad moved back to Warren, and was working as a mechanic for a time in Middle River, then at the Dargus Garage in Warren. Mom had bought herself a fur coat at Sears during the Christmas sale and was working there to make payments for the coat. Dad promised her that if she moved back to Warren he would pay for the coat, so she did. At Easter time Dad was in the Veterans Hospital in Fargo getting his tonsils out and he sent her this Easter card.



After dating for a year, Mom and Dad were married on December 30th, 1948.



Wedding Picture December 30th, 1948

Pictures

BATTLE OF THE BULGE FACTS

December 16, 1944 – January 25, 1945

- * The coldest, snowiest weather "in memory" in the Ardennes Forest on the German/Belgian border
- * Over a million men, 500,000 Germans, 600,000 Americans (more than fought at Gettysburg) and 55,000 British fought during the Battle of the Bulge.
- * 100,000 Germans casualties, killed, wounded, or captured
- * 81,000 American casualties, including 23,554 captured and 19,000 killed
- * 1,400 British casualties, 200 killed
- * 3,000 civilians killed
- * 800 tanks lost on each side, 1,000 German aircraft
- * The Malmedy Massacre, where 86 American soldiers were murdered, was the worst atrocity committed against American troops during the course of the war in Europe.
- * In its entirety, the Battle of the Bulge was the worst battle- in terms of losses – to the American forces in WWII.



Above photo:
"A" Co. halftrack

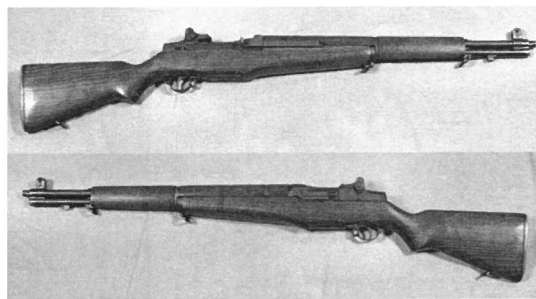
Left photo:
"B" Co. in Malmedy

Below left:
526th A.I.B. 57mm,
buried in snow
somewhere in
Belgium

Below right:
Halftrack "Sweet
Lucille" near
Malmedy,
Service Company



57 mm anti- tank gun



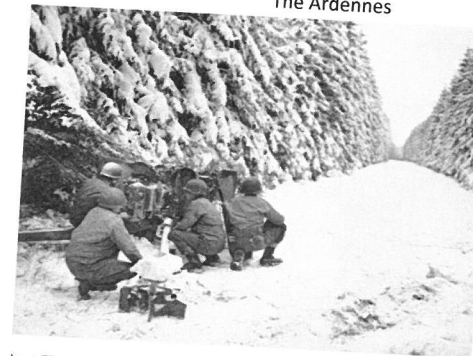
Standard issue M1 rifle issued to Infantrymen in WWII



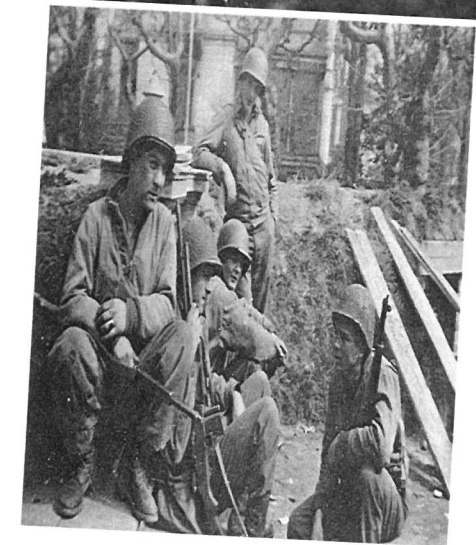
The Ardennes



The Bulge



Entering a town East of Aachen, Germany



Some soldiers from the 526th



Crossing the Rhine at St Goar, Germany



The German Buzzy Bombs



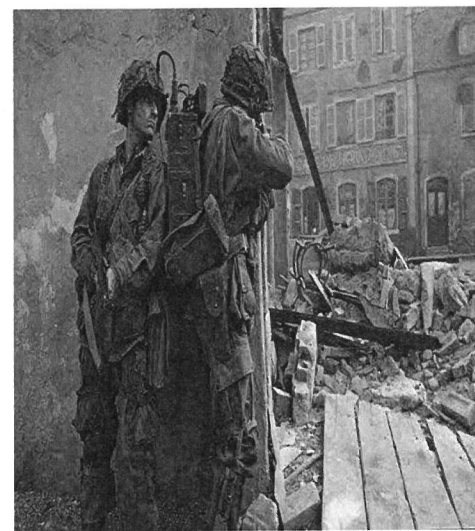
Merry Christmas Adolph!



Using the 57MM



War



French towns



German Towns



Burying the dead



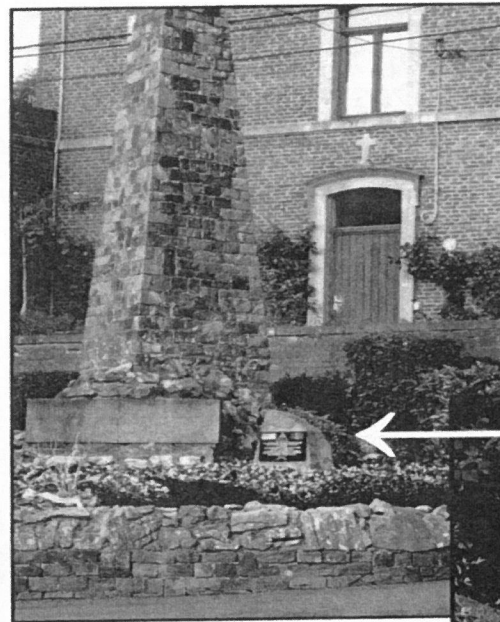
No one exempt

November 2014

THE PEKAN NEWSLETTER

Page 5

Newly Dedicated Memorial to the 526th A.I.B. in Comblain-la-Tour, Belgium

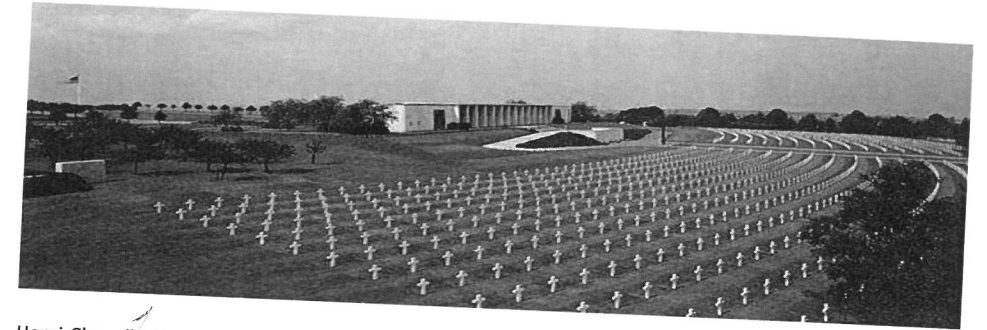


In March of this year I wrote to my burgmaster (mayor) reminding him that soon it will be the 70th anniversary of the arrival of the 526th AIB/B Company in Comblain-la-Tour, and their welcomed stay for six weeks prior to the Battle of the Bulge. I suggested that a plaque should be erected close to the War Memorial in the village – not only to memorialize those who lived the event, but also to remind their children and grandchildren. My hope is that the children would ask their parents why American soldiers came, what they did, why they fought, and why thirty-two of them were killed (why one of them, Joe Farina, is buried in our cemetery). At the end of May 2014, that plaque was erected during a ceremony with a speech by the mayor and the assistance of the children of the two schools in Comblain-la-Tour.

Bob DeRidder
(Lt. Col. Belgian Air Force, retired)



In memory of the American soldiers of the 526th Armored Infantry Battalion B Company who stayed in Comblain-la-Tour during autumn 1944. 32 of them died in combat for our liberty during the Offensive in the Ardennes in winter 1944-45.



Henri-Chapelle Cemetery in Belgium. The final resting place of 7,992 American Soldiers, including many of the men from the 526th Armored Infantry Battalion.



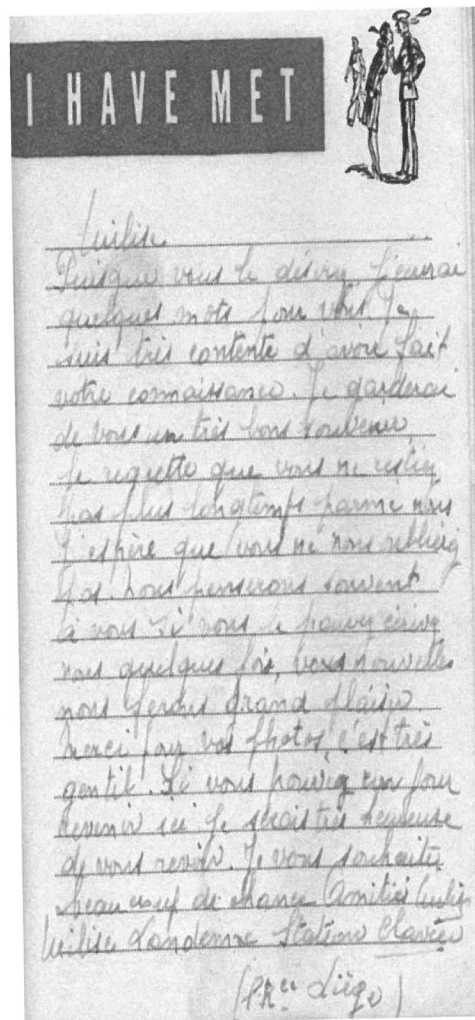
A Coin that Dad always carried in his wallet.



Dad was a member the Forty and Eight. It was founded in 1920 and named after the Box cars that carried WWI soldiers to the front. Each box car could carry 40 soldiers and 8 horses. Veterans who belonged to the American Legion could join the 40 & 8. The organization worked to improve veterans benefits, provided nursing scholarships to veterans and their families, helped with child welfare and contributed to fighting many childhood diseases.



*The United States of America
honors the memory of
Edward George Esau
This certificate is awarded by a grateful
nation in recognition of devoted and
selfless consecration to the service
of our country in the Armed Forces
of the United States*
Agus B...



This was from an area in Dad's journal titled "People I've met". It is a letter written by a french girl to Dad In October of 1944. In 2011 we had an exchange student in Warren and we asked her if she would translate it for us. I have to admit I was little apprehensive to find out what she had written to Dad but I am glad now that we did.

After Corresponding with Tom Hanchett he asked if I could send the pages of Dad's diary to him, which I did and he ended up putting a couple pages in *the Pekan* Newsletter. What follows are those articles.

Lucille,

As you wanted it, I will write some letters to you. I'm really happy to have met you. I will keep a really good memory of you. I wish you were staying longer with us. I hope that you won't forget us. We will be thinking of you often. If you could, so please write to us sometimes, hearing of you will be lovely. Thank you for your pictures, it is very nice. If one day you could come back here, I will be so happy to see you again. I wish you many luck.

Edward G. Evin, 'B' Company



Mr. & Mrs. Edward G. Evin
Their Wedding Day ~ December 30, 1948

Eddie Evin became a Prisoner of War on Houyire Hill, January 3, 1945. Edward, like so many other WWII veterans, quietly came home, found a job, married, and raised a family. His children knew very little about their father's military experience during World War II.

"Every Christmas was really hard for Dad. It was almost as if he resented us for being happy and cheerful during the holidays. He would always tell a story about being in a foxhole around Christmas with a friend who had been shot and killed. I wish I had more stories to share. Unfortunately, I don't know much other than what Dad wrote in his diary. My mother told me that Dad stayed in Germany for about a year working for the government delivering mail and helping to find housing for displaced persons." - *Judy Flaten, daughter of Edward G. Evin.*

According to Edward's diary, he was promoted to Corporal on May 23, 1944, and was a half track driver for Company A. Tom Hanchett, 526th historian, recalls, "Two men he served with, **Richard Ferris** and **Errol Parish**, told me how Eddie Evin drove his half track on a road with land mines to pick up a wounded man named **Ellis Simensky** on January 3, 1945. At some point that day he was captured by the Germans." Edward's daughter also says her father mentions in his diary that one of his

best friends was **Errol Parish**.

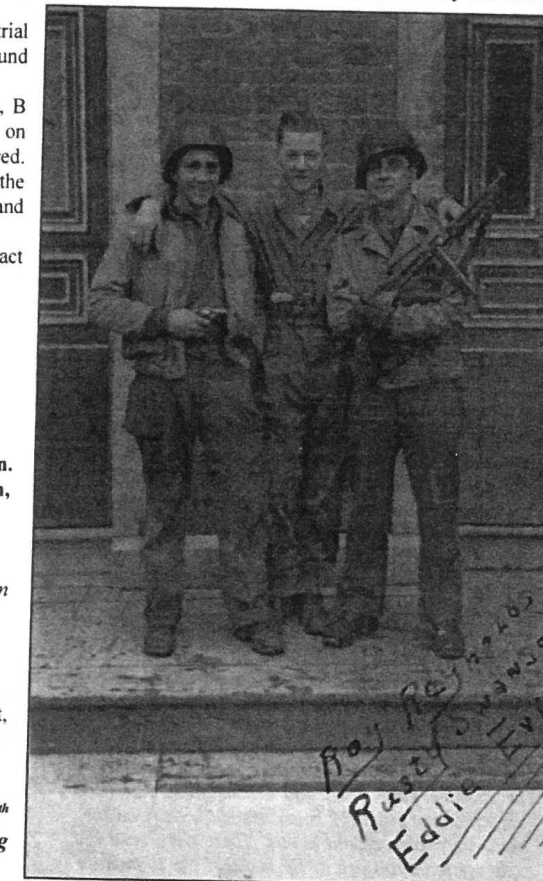
Sadly, Eddie Evin was killed in an industrial accident in 1989. After his death, his children found his journal.

Edward Evin grew up with **Johnny Hess**, B Company, in Minnesota. Johnny Hess was killed on Houyire Hill the same day Edward was captured. Coincidentally, members of the Evin family and the Hess family are still nearby each other and communicate frequently.

If anyone recalls Eddie Evin, please contact his daughter to share your stories:

Judy Flaten
253 E. Pleasant Ave.
Warren, Minnesota 56762
jflaten@amfam.com

Pictured at right: **Roy Reynolds** (captured on Jan. 3, 1945, present status unknown); **Rusty Swanson**, deceased; and **Eddie Evin**



The following names were mentioned in Edward's journal. If they are familiar, please contact the *Pekan* Editor with information:

Donald M. Cox, Elmer Reaves, Donald Ody, Jim Henricks, Ray and Roy Osborne (Big and Little Beaver were their nicknames), Burchett, Bill Summers, Lelland Price, Jerry Haman, Staff Sgt West, LT Kasner.

Future *Pekan* Newsletter: Tom Hanchett, our 526th historian, is working on a future story regarding more information inside Edward Evin's diary.



A few weeks later we went to the front and my buddy the one in the photo was taken prisoner by the Germans. I have heard from him now as he back home in California on a sixty day furlough. I'm sure glad to hear that he was the best friend I had.
Best friends, Roy Reynolds (left) and Edward G. Evin (right) together just before the Battle of the Bulge. The words below are on the back of the photo.

Edward G. Evin Saved Ellis Simensky

On that fateful day of January 3, 1945, Edward Evin, along with the other 'B' Company men, was in the thick of battle on Houyire Hill. He disobeyed orders and drove a halftrack through a mined field to pick up a severely wounded buddy, **Ellis Simensky**. Without a doubt, Simensky most likely would have died on Houyire Hill if not for Eddie Evin's bravery.

Editor's note: Edward Evin has been listed in the Pekan Newsletter as one of our 526th P.O.W.s. Recently, several veterans have recalled seeing Edward Evin after the battle on Houyire Hill, specifically in Wiesbaden. After reviewing Mr. Evin's personal WWII diary, he does not mention ever becoming a P.O.W. Also, the After Action Report dated December 24th lists Edward as Missing in Action; a week later, the After Action Report dated December 30th lists Edward as RTD (return to duty). Also, Mr. Evin is listed among "B" Company men as receiving the Good Conduct Medal on June 4th, 1945.

Unfortunately, Mr. Evin passed away in 1989, and Mr. Simensky passed away many years ago (after enduring over 30 surgeries to correct his injuries).

Photo provided by Mr. Evin's daughter, Judy Flaten

We were all confused by this at first as Dad never once mentioned in his journal being a Prisoner of war, and now we know that he never was a POW. It has been determined by looking at the after action reports from that time frame, that the dates he was listed as a POW was right after the Trois Ponts battle on December 18th, 1944 when he was with the 1111th Engineers Group and unable to get back to his battalion. He was later reunited with them on December 30th, 1944 and listed as returned to duty.

17 May 2011

Dear Judy Flaten,

While I knew Eddie only very casually, as he was in a different squad, I was very good friends with Johnny Hess. He was in my squad and was my best friend. When he was killed I should have been with him. I was also the bazooka man in our squad and when we jumped off for the attack, my bazooka would not work and I yelled at Lt. Bernstein that it was broken, he said "throw it away and come on," which I did and unloaded the ammunition for it. That made me a few minutes behind the line. I was half way up the hill when the machine guns started and the front line went down. I hit the snow and a few minutes later ran up and flopped down in the snow next to Johnny, he was dead and I said a little prayer. I had a decision to make, go on to the woods or try to get back, either way I might get killed. I decided to try for the woods where part of the platoon was already. I made the woods and since the Germans had retreated thought we were safe. We had a firefight off and on during the day but about 4 they opened up with a barrage on us. The snow, limbs and shrapnel showered down and some of the fellows were hit by pieces of it. After that they counter attacked with their machine pistols, we called them "burp guns," and I was hit. The fight didn't last too long as it was obvious we could not win. Fortunately Sgt. Magnuson called out Comrade and in a bit it was all over and we were prisoners.

Jimmy Coslett, who was near me, was badly wounded and had to be carried back to where they put us in a semi-circle and a German medic came to look at our wounds. He looked at my foot and said "footsa kapoot" or that's what it sounded like, and made a cutting motion with his hand but did nothing to fix it. They took us back to a Belgium farm house where an officer interrogated us. He knew more about the situation than we did. Anyway Jimmy and I were put in a room with straw on the floor and the rest of the prisoners were separated from us and I never saw them again. Jimmy and I were loaded on a truck about 10:30 that night, along with the German wounded, and taken to different places. I ended up for the night in a small milking parlor alone, except for a medic, that came once to look and said the same thing the first one said. He did get a morphine shot in to my leg for which I was very grateful.

Jimmy later died in a German hospital and after 15 days of travel with little food, I ended up in a prison hospital that had British doctors and medics that had been captured. They were able to save my foot. After I was released from the military, I went to visit some of the parents of those from my squad that were killed. I went to Warren and met Johnny's parents and his fiancée. I guess I put the final end on her feeling that somehow Johnny could not have died. Johnny told me they had bought a 5-acre place and had plans for building their home. Sgt. Day was married and had 2 children. I met his wife and parents. It was a sad meeting as it was for all that I met. My squad of 12 that day lost 7 killed, 2 of us captured and wounded plus one other wounded that got back to the company. Our half-track driver and one other were not hurt and with the company. I didn't know any of the drivers had left their vehicles.

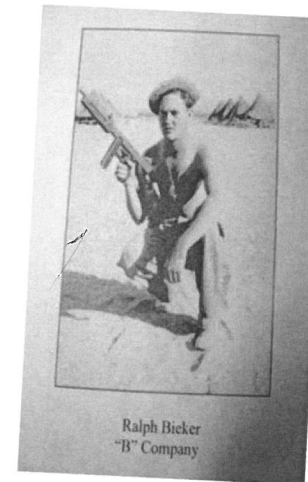
I have been in communication with Pat Craven that lost his uncle that day. Richard Swanstrum was also captured that day and I remember he told me that several of them were put in a shed or barn and made to do some work. He is still alive and lives in Idaho but I don't have his address, but I am sure Sherrie does. She is a fabulous lady that keeps the outfit informed, arranges reunions, does the Pekan and meets all kind of requests by the people.

I am sorry I can't be of personal news about Eddie but if I can be of any further help, let me know.

*Sincerely,
Dick Stone*

This is a letter received in response to a letter written to Dick Stone, who was also a member of the 526th AIB, to see if he could tell us anything about Dad or his time in the 526th.

Some of the men Dad mentions in his journal



Ralph Bieker
"B" Company

S/Sgt. Harold Magnuson



While there were no names to this picture of the 526th I am convince that Dad is just behind the little girl in the center of the picture. Looking down. Dick Stone is kneeling just to the left of the little girl. Erroll Parish is second from left in second from top row and just to the left of him is Hugh Monahan.



Top, L to R: Errol Parish, Leroy Surry, Warren Ellstrom, Earl Touffort, Arthur Allen, George Tate, Richard Ferris. Sitting, L to R: Richard Swanstrum, Ellis Simensky, unknown, Lt. Milton Bernstein, John Lopez, Stephen Frank - 1944.



Top, L to R: Leo Day, Dick Stone, Delbert Johnson, John Hess, W.L. Clutter. Kneeling: R.L. Iverson, W.C. Duncan, and H.A. Donaworth



Headquarters Squad, 2nd Platoon, B Company - Comblain La Tour, Belgium - October 1944 L to R front row: Tom Henderson, Joe Lemon, Bob Fitzgerald, and Foster. Back Row: Lt. Bob Batt, George Manning, Bob Fabris, A.B. Clark, and Francis "Spider" Boyle.

In Memoriam

These are the soldiers that Dad mentions in his diary. Many of them wrote in his diary under "My Buddies in the Service" area or in the back of the journal under the "Autographs" section. Others were mentioned in his writing throughout the journal.

Durwood (Jack) Acuff - Porterville, CA- Dad spent Christmas 1943 at his place in CA

Staff Sergeant Alden Allen-**Killed in road accident**

George Arnold - WA

Milton Bernstein - **Missing in Action**-1-11-45

Ralph Bieker - Pocatello, Idaho - **Missing in Action**

Hugo G Brossman - **Killed in Action**

Dallas Buchanan - Collette, WA **Killed in Action**, Trois Ponts, Belgium. 12-18-44

Gail Burchett - Spokane, WA

JC Catham

Lt. Chapman - **Killed in road accident**

Alvin Clark - CA

Edgar Collette

Gust Contos

Donald Cox - Monroe, WA Got a CDD (certificate of disability discharge) in July 1943

Leo Day - In Ice Box Experiment with Dad, **Killed in Action**

Robert N Deforge - Spokane, WA

William Duncan - **Killed in Action**- 12-21-44

Zige Eversole

Richard Ferris

Wesley Fitzgerald

Perfecto Flores - **Wounded in Action** 1-3-45

Francis (Bruce) Frazier – **MIA**

Melvin Garg

James Gatham

Arnold O George – WA

Jerry Grant

Jerry Haman - Filer, Idaho

Frank Hanna

Jim Henricks – (Uncle Jim), TX- shared tent #8 with Dad in AZ Desert. **Injured, sent home**

Jack Hess – Argyle, MN. **Killed in Action** on Houyire Hill - 1-3-1945

James Higgins-**Killed in Action**-at Trois Ponts, Belgium 12-18-44

Frank Himent – San Francisco, CA

Donald Hollenbeck – Fresno, CA – **Killed in Action** at Trois Ponts, Belgium 12-18-44

Ralph Iverson-Idaho, **Killed in Action** on Houyire Hill 1-3-45

Rosco Lively – **Killed in Action** on Houyire Hill 1-3-45

Harold Magnusson (Maggie) – MN-**MIA**

Ralph Manis – TX – **Killed in Action**

Lillard McCollum – **Killed in Action** at Trois Ponts, 12-18-44

Hugh Monahan

Orland D Myers – Idaho-**Killed in Action** in Aachen, Germany

Donald Ody – Ohio, **Wounded in action** and sent to USA

Ray (little beaver) Osborne-Fresno, CA-**Wounded in action** 1-11-45

Roy (big beaver) Osborne-Fresno, CA

Norman Owens

Erroll Parish –Galt, CA, in same tent in AZ, he and Dad were 1st and 2nd gunners

Elmer Parkhurst-(Parker)

Lelland Price – (Cognac) from CA

Donald A Raab - **POW**

Elmer Reeves – (Missouri) from Phillipsburg, Missouri

Roy Reynolds – Sacramento, CA – **MIA**

Leonard Richardson-Portland, OR

Settlemyer – **Drowned in the Rhine**, 8-21-1945

Charlie Simmons

Albert Smith – (Smithy)-from Georgia

Richard Stone (Dick) from WA- **POW**

Bill Summers – Idaho

Russell Swanson – (Rusty) from Moose Lake, WA, made corporal same day as Dad

George Tate

James Van Ardsdal, KY

These men are mentioned as well but only by last names, with no details. Adams, Baker, Fritz, Halderman, Hubbard, Leach, Martin, Norman.

Blessed be their memory.

Each one of these men, along with anyone else who willingly or unwillingly put on the American uniform and served our country during this war were heroes by any definition. Some gave their physical lives and the others lost their lives, as they knew it, in other ways. They came back changed men. The memories and pictures in their minds eye continued to reappear throughout their life time. Those memories and pictures being triggered by a smell, or a sound, fireworks, gunshots or a plane flying overhead or maybe just the sound of their boots crunching through newly fallen snow. Or maybe in the pain they felt from old battle wounds, or maybe something as simple as the season of Christmas. Whatever it was, we know that many of those men did not talk about their experiences, perhaps because it was too hard to go back there. It's been said that "you can take the soldier out of the war but you can't take the war out of the soldier."

This was never truer than it was for our Dad. Many of the men who came home from WWII came home with what was called "battle fatigue." What is now known as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. At that time it was believed that the effects of war would heal in time. It didn't. So, in a futile attempt to dull the painful memories many of these men sadly turned to alcohol as was the case with Dad. He physically survived war, and he survived the results of too much alcohol but on July 19th, 1989 he was suddenly and tragically taken from us in a construction accident. His life wasn't always easy and he was clearly haunted by the memories of those 2 ½ years of his life as were so many others.

So to the men who landed in Normandy to fight in the European theater, to the brave soldiers who fought on the islands of Japan, those who fought their battles in the air and on the seas, to those who lost their lives on foreign soil and those that came home and lived with that constant memory of war we say Thank You and May God Bless You and Keep you in his arms.

Greater love hath no man, than he should lay down his life for his friends. John 15:13

Day is done, gone the sun,
from the hills, from the lake,
from the skies.
all is well, safely rest,
God is nigh.

Edward George Evin was born on March 19, 1924, at Warren, Minnesota. He passed away at Warren, Minnesota, on July 19, 1989, at the age of 65. Mr. Evin was a lifelong resident of the Warren community.

On Dec. 30, 1948, at Warren, Minnesota, he was united in marriage to Betty Anderson. Mr. Evin was a welder by trade. He was a member of the Warren American Legion, East Grand Forks VFW and a member of Local 338 of Fargo, North Dakota.

He was preceded in death by his parents, John and Anna Evin, and two brothers.

Left to mourn his passing is his wife, Betty, and two daughters and two sons: Judy, Mrs. Mark Flaten, of Warren, Minnesota; Nancy, Mrs. Mark Christman, of Concord, California; Gerald of Vancouver, Washington; and Jeff of Fargo, North Dakota.

Also surviving are nine grandchildren and one sister and two brothers: Ruth, Mrs. Cecil Fugitt of Milwaukie, Oregon; Bennie of Warren, Minnesota; and Clarence of Deer River, Minnesota.

Services For
Edward George Evin

Date of Birth: March 19, 1924 Date of Death: July 19, 1989

Services At
Our Savior's Lutheran Church
Saturday, July 22, 1989 — 10:00 A.M.
Warren, Minnesota
Clergyman Officiating
Rev. Richard Luedtke
Organist
Mrs. O.M. Thompson
Soloist
Miss Laurel Johnson
Bearers

Selmer Engelstad Marvin Bodell
Carl Johnson Floyd Gulseth
Hal Stone Cecil Fugitt

Frank, Tulibaski
Interment — Greenwood Cemetery
Warren, Minnesota

Conclusion

There is just so much we don't know about Dad's time in the service. The more I read about it, the more details I want. Unfortunately, this is what we have. And while this is just a tiny little glimpse into what Dad experienced during his service, it makes me so proud. And I hope it will make you proud too.

Men from that generation put God and country first. Whether they agreed with the reason we went to war or not, they put their lives on hold and did the honorable thing and defended our country, many at great cost.

To them patriotism was important, our flag was to be honored and our country defended at all cost, and politics aside, our leaders were respected. Country was always first. Politics didn't dictate their willingness to serve. They stepped up and served willingly and eagerly because they were men of honor and integrity.

Protector, guardian, defender and victor are all synonyms of that word "Hero" and that described our Dad and every one of those brave selfless men who fought in WWII.

They really were the greatest generation that ever lived.



What is a Veteran?

A "Veteran" – whether active duty,
discharged, retired or reserve-is
someone who, at one point in his life
wrote a blank check made payable to
"The United States of America," for an
amount of "up to, and including his life."
That is honor. And there are way too many
people in this country today, who no longer
understand that fact.

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PLACES I HAVE BEEN



DATE, DESCRIPTION, AND MY IMPRESSIONS OF
PLACES I WANT TO REMEMBER HAVING VISITED

Started from Argyle
Minnesota, the best
place in the world as far
as I'm concerned, for the
single reason it's home.

Portland, Oregon sure
is a beautiful country.
Worked in shipyards while
in civilian life.
Inducted into the Army
March 13 1943 at Portland.

PLACES I HAVE BEEN



Fort Lewis, Washington
Another very pretty
place. Fort Lewis was
one reception center.

Bozeman, Montana
Stayed there two
days when on troop
train from Fort Lewis to
Bozeman. Went through
Bozeman 2 years previous
with hitchhiking back in
the good old days.

Great Falls, Montana
Worked there about
six months when in
civilian life. Surely
place, lot of good
things, such as - Bacon!

PLACES I HAVE BEEN



Minneapolis, Minn.
Had a layover there
waiting for a train.
Nice place, small town
and everything.

Chicago, Ill.
Stayed there in March
of 1943. Good town for
Americans.

Lawrence City was there
while in the Army. Had
a pretty good time.

Brooklyn New York.
Probably the best spot in
the country. I got a
really good time
there. Stayed in.

PLACES I HAVE BEEN



in Europe. Liege - Belgium
Duisenberg - Germany
Cologne - Germany
Aachen - Germany

Fort Hamilton 28 days
before leaving the U.S.A.

Cardiff, Wales.

A big city with a
lot of jinks in it. A few
nice girls but these bastards
sure charge for drinks and
movie (etc).

Bury - sleep to cross
in Wells.
Change very, one good
thing was in the American
Red Cross.

St. Lo - France went through
see or what's left of it. Really
knocked to hell!

Chronological list of places Dad was at in Europe

Sully, Barry and Penarth Wales	Bauonez Belgium
Cardiff Wales	Burrenville Belgium
Liverpool England	Liege Belgium
Rosebush Wales	Aachen Belgium
Haverfordwest Wales	Eschweiler Germany
Tenby Wales	Cologne Germany
Swansea Wales	Monschau Germany
Normandy France	Koblenz Germany
Utah Beach	St Goar Germany
St Malo France	Oberursel Germany
Sartilly France	Frankfurt Germany
Granville France	Dillenburg Germany
Avranches France	Solingen Germany
Champery France	Dusseldorf Germany
St Pair France	Remscheid Germany
Beauvais France	Wiesbaden Germany
Verdun Belgium	Frankfurt Germany
Filot Belgium	Nuremberg Germany
Hamoir Belgium	Liverpool England
Comblain La Tour Belgium	Halifax Nova Scotia
Modave Belgium	
Aywaille Belgium	
Holten Holland	
Trois Ponts, Malmedy and Houyire Hill Belgium	

“When you go home,
tell them of us and say:
For your tomorrow,
we gave our today.”

