

# **Personal Narrative of Robert Venoy Reed**

**April 6, 1944 - January 16, 1945**

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**For ENGL 618: Research Methods in English**

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## Introduction to the Series

This transcription and its attendant annotations, explanatory material, and bibliography were prepared by students in ENGL 618: Research Methods in English, the required gateway class for the MA in English at Western Carolina University. The learning outcomes for this class include the following:

1. Conduct appropriate, effective, and ethical scholarship
  - a. Effectively find and use advanced research tools (handbooks, databases, guides, bibliographies, etc.) appropriate to a subject.
    - Students will be able to use a wide variety of such tools and evaluate those tools.
  - b. Find appropriate advanced research (print and electronic scholarship) and apply that research to specific disciplinary questions or issues.
    - Students will be able to find a variety of scholarship, evaluate both the appropriateness and rigor of that scholarship, and incorporate that scholarship correctly and effectively.
  - c. Develop accurate bibliographies and reference citations.
    - Students will be able to annotate, abstract, and cite materials following standard MLA format.
2. Understand the process by which the texts we use are made available.
  - Students will be able to conduct basic editorial work and evaluate the editorial work of others.

All work is presented as submitted by the students. While these students take great care with their transcriptions and annotations, errors are always possible. As these students learn throughout this class, good scholarship requires checking of sources and corroboration by authoritative sources.

It is hoped that the transcription and annotation of WCU Special Collections materials will be useful to the institution, students, scholars, and other patrons and users of WCU's Special Collections materials.

## **Introduction**

Michelle Greener

Robert Venoy Reed (1915-1984), a native of Jackson County, North Carolina, enlisted as a private in the United States Army October 13th, 1942 at Camp Croft, South Carolina. His personal narrative begins in April of 1944, before he left the United States, and concludes in January of 1945, approximately three days before his capture by German forces near Alsace, France. Reed's Prisoner of War documents indicate he served within the 314th Infantry Regiment, which, in turn, functioned as part of the 79th Infantry Division. The 79th followed the commands of the U.S. Third Army under General Patton during the summer months and shifted in the fall and winter to the command of General Patch and the U.S. Seventh Army. At the time of his separation and honorable discharge from the U.S. Army on October 12th, 1945, Reed was a Technician, 4th grade, Medical Aidman, and he served in that capacity throughout the months included in his narrative.

Reed's narrative gives a record of the day-to-day experiences of a soldier and aidman in a war nearing its bitter end. He writes brief notes and reflections describing his duties, the weather and living conditions, numbers of casualties and wounded, and the locations and people he encountered. His accounts align with other records of the activities of the 79th Division, which often saw some of the heaviest fighting on the Western Front. Reed's narrative brings the war to life as he writes about the good and the bad: the challenges ranging from the expected struggles of avoiding artillery fire to the misery of passing a night in a flooded foxhole, and the joy in the simple things civilians may take for granted, like a hot bath and fresh meat. The narrative invites

the reader into the gritty reality of war and brings the tremendous scale of World War II down to the level of the individual.

The first page of Reed's entries begin as he travels from Camp Myles Standish in Massachusetts across the Atlantic to England where his division received additional training and waited for orders. The 314th was not engaged in the D-Day battle for the beaches of Normandy, but rather, they landed at Utah Beach ten days later. Reed devotes a great deal of his first page to reflecting on the aftermath of that bloody conquest. The second page of the narrative picks up in mid June and follows the regiment up the Cherbourg Peninsula to the taking of their first fort. The third page continues with the regiments eastward movements in the month of July including several fierce battles around La Salière and St. Lo. On the fourth page, Reed begins a trend of tracking the company's frequent movements that continues into the final pages of his narrative. From late July to mid September, the regiment pushed across broad distances in France aiming to join the campaign in the Alsace-Lorraine region. As they traveled, Reed notes experiences as varied as seeing the Eiffel Tower and a second encounter with General Patton. On the fifth page, Reed and the 314th have joined the fighting in the Lorraine Campaign in the regions of France bordering Germany. The Allied armies are working to clear the French towns and forests to drive back the German front lines. On this page, the regiment sees their first real break since their landing in France. The final page sees Reed entering the winter months of the campaign and driving North to invade Germany for the first time, moments that coincide with what we now recognize as The Battle of the Bulge. His narrative concludes with the company having withdrawn back into France to regroup.

After the conclusion of his narrative, Reed was captured by German forces and became a prisoner of war until May of 1945. His experiences during those months were written many years

later and are documented in “Summary of Prisoner of War Experiences of Robert Venoy Reed.” Reed also received several awards for his time in service including the European African Middle Eastern Theater Medal, the Good Conduct Medal Silver Star, and a Purple Heart. Following his return to civilian life, Reed returned to Jackson County and married Mary Elizabeth Hope in 1946.

### **Editorial Practice**

The following transcription of the personal narrative of Robert Venoy Reed strives to be a diplomatic edition maintaining the style and appearance of Reed’s original journal. The transcribed text follows Reed’s original pagination including the text organization on each page. Reed’s earlier pages are written in a prose-like style while later pages are organized by date of entry; the transcription maintains this shift in organizational style. The original text was written in cursive on legal paper, accordingly the line lengths in the original document are relatively short; the transcription has not sought to maintain original line lengths, but instead chooses to prioritize natural breaks in the text. For increased readability, additional lines of text connected to the same date have been indented.

Reed’s spelling and punctuation is retained from the original document as well. Reed’s journal is not written in complete sentences; instead, he often utilizes periods at the ends of thoughts, but his use of punctuation is inconsistent. His punctuation does not impact readability and has been left as originally written. Reed frequently uses phonetic spellings when dealing with words and names he heard but did not encounter in print. For significant words and place names that are mentioned infrequently, a footnote is provided with the correct spelling. Other spelling errors that do not interfere with the reader’s comprehension, as when double letters are

added or removed (for example, moove for move), have been left as originally written. A few common misspellings that could be misconstrued are provided with their correct spelling below.

- German - Gearman. Also abbreviated as Gear. or G.
- Germany - Gearmaney
- Nazi - notsie
- Flare - flair

Reed's cursive penmanship includes several unique features. These features are included in a list below to aid in future study of documents in Reed's hand, such as his wartime correspondence with Elizabeth Hope:

- The lowercase letter *i* is consistently dotted
- The letter *t* is consistently crossed
- There are marked similarities between mid-word, lowercase letters *b*, *k*, *f*, and *p*. The lowercase *k* consistently includes a forward-facing loop above the baseline. The lowercase *b* is similar to the lowercase *f*, but for a more clearly defined loop on the descender below the baseline on the *b*. The *p* is most readily identifiable through its context as it shares many similarities with the *f*.
- The lowercase *w* has a small extra loop as he moves to the next letter.
- The lowercase *o* is comparable to the lowercase *a*, but the *o* has a loop through the top of the letter that the *a* lacks.
- The capital *I* could be confused for a number 9; however, Reed's number 9 has a much straighter downstroke and the capital *I* is more stylized.

The transcription of the text has attempted to take all of these elements into consideration when determining the correct choice of word, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation in the transcribed document by careful and close examination on a case-by-case basis. The overall document is edited and formatted for accessibility and comprehension with footnotes on each page to allow the reader easier access to references, clarified spellings, and background information.

## **Manuscript Description**

Reed's narrative is handwritten on the front and back of lined legal sized paper measuring 14.25 inches in height by 9 inches in width. The pages are slightly yellowed with age and wear, and there are creases that indicate the paper was folded in quarters and other crinkles are present, likely from how Reed was able to store the pages during his service. It appears that Reed used different writing instruments or different surfaces for writing as the weight of the writing differs, darker in places and lighter in others. The pages have original numbering in Reed's own hand in the upper right-hand corner though the style of the numbering varies from section to section. There are several points at which writing is slightly smudged, crossed out, or in which small images are drawn and these were annotated in the transcription as necessary. The digital images that accompany the transcription are made possible by the efforts of Western Carolina University's Hunter Library Special Collections.

Left camp miles Standish<sup>1</sup>, 16 miles from Providence Rho. 60 miles from Boston Mass, on the morning of April 6<sup>th</sup>. Arrived in Boston and immediately boarded the ship. Sailed out of Boston Harbor on the 7<sup>th</sup> at 4pm. Landed in Glasgo Scotland<sup>2</sup> April 16<sup>th</sup> The scenery was beautiful. We stayed on board boat until April 19<sup>th</sup> Then boarded train and went to Gold Burn Park Eng.<sup>3</sup> 18 miles from Liver Pool. Stayed at the Park for a month ½. Went Park<sup>4</sup> we were there on D day<sup>5</sup>. Then on the 8<sup>th</sup> we went to South Hampton Eng<sup>6</sup> to the marsheling area<sup>7</sup>. There we received all the equipment needed. While there we saw many ambulances trans. patients to hosp. in Eng. On June 15<sup>th</sup> we were alerted to move at 2AM. We mooved out June 16<sup>th</sup> landed on Utah<sup>8</sup> from LCI to Higgens<sup>9</sup> to steel rank. The boats were heavily loaded. There was a solid layer of barrage balloons<sup>10</sup> over head. Sinking ships and old ship shells could be seen thick in the channel. Many Ducks<sup>11</sup> were busy loading supplies to the beach from the ships. The Beach was littered with ruins from the result of D Day battle. The fighting had ceased along the beach except attacks by flaires The roads were made from mesh wire. There was aid stations still operating along the beach and hosp. ships were being loaded. We had only marches about 100 yards inland when we began to see signs along the road not cleared of mines<sup>12</sup>. Worked most all night June 17<sup>th</sup> at 2 a.m. St. Mere-Eglise<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> According to Danny M. Johnson, “Camp Myles Standish was built in 1942 in the vicinity of Taunton [MA]... the camp served as a staging area for the Boston Port of Embarkation, a redeployment installation for troops becoming inactive or being transferred to the Pacific theater of operations, and as a prisoner-of-war facility” (25). This camp was likely named after Myles (or Miles) Standish, an American colonist who “defended the colony from the Native Americans several times” (“Miles Standish”).

<sup>2</sup> As Reed has a tendency to write phonetically, this is presumed to be Glasgow, Scotland.

<sup>3</sup> This is likely Golborne Park, located in Northwest England (“Golborne”).

<sup>4</sup> The word between “Went” and “Park” is indistinguishable.

<sup>5</sup> The goal of the D-Day attack was to “win a beachhead in France in order to open a second front against Hitler’s armies...small groups of airborne troops destroyed bridges and fun emplacements, and captured crossroads and routes inland from Utah beach” (Ambrose).

<sup>6</sup> Southampton is an industrial seaport and was bombed during this war Troops used the port as a main point of commencement for D-Day plans (“Southampton”).

<sup>7</sup> This area would be used to organize forces and equipment to prepare for action together (Dupuy 164).

<sup>8</sup> Utah beach, “one of the five beaches targeted for landing in the D-Day operation” (“Utah Beach”)

<sup>9</sup> LCI is an abbreviation for landing craft, which is a boat used for “putting troops and military equipment ashore on a beach” (“landing craft”), and a Higgens boat is a landing craft “used in amphibious landings in WWII” (Dupuy 127).

<sup>10</sup> Barrage balloons are used to protect vulnerable targets from air attacks. Their mooring lines are dangerous to aircrafts that fly low (Dupuy 27).

<sup>11</sup> According to *A Dictionary of Soldier Talk*, Ducks are “various amphibian vehicles...in WWII and later, the DUKW, a 2.5 ton amphibian truck, used in landing operations and river crossings” (92).

<sup>12</sup> Following this sentence is a small drawing of a death symbol.

<sup>13</sup> This refers to the St. Mere-Eglise-Montebourge highway, located in northern France. It was “the first town captured by the 82<sup>nd</sup> and 101<sup>st</sup> Airborn Divisions on June 6...[it] was secured only after the 70<sup>th</sup> Battalion tanks reached the road from Utah Beach to combine forces with the paratroopers” (“Ste. Mere-Eglise-Montebourg highway”).



turn to bits. Blood stains on most every thing where the Para Troopers<sup>1</sup> had landed. There was a large field along side where we were that was being used as a cemetery for the 82 air borned troop and other soldiers on line at the time of our arrival. They were bringing in bodies by the truck loads. June 19<sup>th</sup> mooved to apple orchard. There we got rid of our gas masks and axcess equiptment. June 19<sup>th</sup> mooved to another orchard. There we talked to boys from front lines 90<sup>th</sup> division

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<sup>1</sup> Also known as paratroops, these carry troops via aircraft into battle. The troops are dropped by parachute (Dupuy 188).

Just at night we moved into battle. 2 casualties in the co. Both self inflicted wounds. Created much excitement among men and they fired at all trees in the area. As we moved out saw several dead Gearmans and recked equipment. June 20<sup>th</sup> marched over Cider Hill. There we were introduced to 88-0<sup>1</sup>. Had one man killed and several wounded. Moved back right at night and 88 followed us down the road. Had 2 casualties. We moved in a field not more than 200 yards back. June 21 our air scraffed<sup>2</sup> us there. Jim White<sup>3</sup> was killed that p.m. and I was only a few feet away. Had helment painted<sup>4</sup> that day. 1<sup>st</sup> man was hit hard. June 22 we advanced on up cherbou peninsula<sup>5</sup> and took our first hill fort<sup>6</sup>. There was much small arm fire and bullets played all around me. I was very busy for at least 1 hour spent night on hill and it was very hot.

June 23. Kelley<sup>7</sup> took hill fort. I was fired down along side of dead bodies for at least 3 hrs. am after noon. 8 men were wounded from the burst.

June 24. Was still in some area dodgin shells. at this time mcGowan<sup>8</sup> showed up.

June 25: Pushed off early a.m. and pushed almost up to fort DeRhul<sup>9</sup>. Dug in for the night with snipers in the area. June 26. Advanced on the fort took many prisoners and both our men and prisoners were fired down. I took a sniper that day we were forced to fall back right at night and later returned and occupied the hill fort. I slept with co. Hq. in one and for days we ate food that we found there. We lived like kings but our looses were heavy and I was all whipped from work. June 27. Cherbourg fell. Many prisoners was taken. Many dead. Germans were in the area.

June 28. I lost mcGowan as aid man. Moved back got clean clothes (Badly needed). No bath<sup>10</sup>. Then moved 15 miles in truck supposed to rest but Relieved the 90<sup>th</sup> again on the 29<sup>th</sup> of June.

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<sup>1</sup> An 88-0 is a gun (88mm) often used by the Germans during the war (Dupuy 90).

<sup>2</sup> Scraffed, or to scrafe, is “an attack on ground troops by low-flying airplanes using machine guns and light bombs” (*A Dictionary of Soldier Talk* 306).

<sup>3</sup> Likely, this is Jim White from New Bern, NC who served in the U.S. Army during WWII (“World War II Honoree”).

<sup>4</sup> The most common helmet of the time was the M1, which the U.S. military used until roughly 1985 (“Ask Wwii”).

<sup>5</sup> Cherbourg is in Normandy on the English Channel, located on the Cotentin peninsula. It holds a naval base, a port, and manufacturing industry (“Cherbourg”).

<sup>6</sup> A hill fort often has a ditch and ramparts and is a secured site on a hilltop (Mayhew).

<sup>7</sup> John D. Kelly was in the 314<sup>th</sup> Infantry with Reed. He received a medal of honor for “conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty” (“Kelly, John D.”).

<sup>8</sup> Unknown

<sup>9</sup> Fort du Roule, a coastal fort that held a harbor area (“Fort du Roule”).

<sup>10</sup> Conditions were typically harsh for the soldiers. They endured “filth and squalor...[saw] dismembered bodies, fearful deaths...Many distanced themselves emotionally from their own actions and those of both their comrades and enemies” (Tucker, Roberts, Greene).

June 29 Walked to trucks very wet and<sup>1</sup> cold and had had very little rest. unloaded in field and started to dig in fast mooved up and relieved some engineers<sup>2</sup> still on line. Had several casualties<sup>3</sup> and shells were coming in thick and fast. Mooved in house there with co. Hg.<sup>4</sup>

4<sup>th</sup> July stated an attack<sup>5</sup> took first town with out any trouble. Mooved on hill Capt Parker<sup>6</sup> was killed and two other boys from co. E.<sup>7</sup> that day left hill went to DR Road<sup>8</sup> Col Huff<sup>9</sup> shot in foot.

5 July. lost many men in attack. lost one aid man.<sup>10</sup>

July 6<sup>th</sup> we mooved onto La Salierie<sup>11</sup> under much small aim fire. Had our hottest battles in that area. several killed. I set up aid station in house up till then it was hard to contact aid station.

July 7<sup>th</sup> Battle still ragin. 112 casualties that day in Bn.<sup>12</sup> I took care of most of them in my set up in house. two aid men cracked, went out that night with a petrole<sup>13</sup> of machiene gunners<sup>14</sup> to pick up wounded back of our lines.

July 8<sup>th</sup> Relieved early A.M. Had several wounded on the way out. the 8<sup>th</sup> dev.<sup>15</sup> boys were very ancious<sup>16</sup> to see their first Gearman.<sup>17</sup> Miller<sup>18</sup> was killed here. Reorganised<sup>19</sup> and went back in action that night

July 9<sup>th</sup> many casualties on hill lost seven on one hedg row.<sup>20</sup> I set up in house and evac. by ammo. Trucks.<sup>21</sup>

July. 10<sup>th</sup> mooved up on hill and had some wounded from 315<sup>th</sup> reg.<sup>22</sup>

July 11. mooved to nice field on hill. Austin<sup>23</sup> hit.

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<sup>1</sup> Original document had a symbol for “and” that looked similar to a “+”.

<sup>2</sup> Engineers

<sup>3</sup> Casualties

<sup>4</sup> Company Headquarters

<sup>5</sup> attack

<sup>6</sup> Unable to find

<sup>7</sup> Company E- part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the 314<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division (*Through Combat*, 121).

<sup>8</sup> DR road or Deutsche Reichsbahn was the German railroad was called (Hilberg, 162)

<sup>9</sup> Lt. Col Huff was accidentally wounded on a reconnaissance and commanded the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion (*Through Combat*, 18).

<sup>10</sup> “Aid man-a medical corpsman who serves with a combat unit, usually of company size” (Dupuy, 6).

<sup>11</sup> Believed to be La Surellerie, France, which is near to where the 314<sup>th</sup> would have been at the time (*Through Combat*, 18-20)

<sup>12</sup> Battalion

<sup>13</sup> patrol

<sup>14</sup> machine gunners

<sup>15</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> Division

<sup>16</sup> anxious

<sup>17</sup> German

<sup>18</sup> Unable to find

<sup>19</sup> Reorganized

<sup>20</sup> hedgerow- In France there were hedgerows that were used for cover.

<sup>21</sup> ammo trucks

<sup>22</sup> 315<sup>th</sup> Regiment

<sup>23</sup> Unable to find

July 12. Hit mine field in our advance men were wounded.

July 13. rested and done very little work.<sup>1</sup>

July 19 moved to river<sup>2</sup>. Here men from Co E. went out on Patrol. Hit mine field several wounded aid man got bullet in kit.<sup>3</sup> St. Lo break through.<sup>4</sup> held a defensive pos.<sup>5</sup> until 26 or 27.

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<sup>1</sup> work

<sup>2</sup> Ay River (*Through Combat*, 23).

<sup>3</sup> kit

<sup>4</sup> Saint Lô, France. Battle went from July 9<sup>th</sup> through 24<sup>th</sup> (History: July 1944, par. 8-14).

<sup>5</sup> position

July 28<sup>th</sup> made long moove to St. James<sup>1</sup> by foot.

July. 29. Col hit by girneade<sup>2</sup> set off by Frenchman picked up wounded and one girl dead.

July – 30 a day of rest.

July 31. To Alvaroncher<sup>3</sup>. fire woarks at night scraffing<sup>4</sup> of Troups<sup>5</sup> 315<sup>th</sup> . shot tracers<sup>6</sup> at us.

Aug. 1 Alvaroncher. break through women with hair shaved. orders changed instead of Brest<sup>7</sup> on Tword<sup>8</sup> Parais.<sup>9</sup> Happey.<sup>10</sup> Mooved to Falaise gap.<sup>11</sup> our Planes caught Panzer<sup>12</sup> outfit and demolishes it. –we were scraffed again Rough.

Aug 2-7 rested in open field little excitement

Aug 8 Nice warm bath in Hotel in Le mons<sup>13</sup>. 1<sup>st</sup> big city. Visited family in front of lines was shakey at time

Aug. 9 on our way Tword Paris again Stopped 18 Mi. Chortne.<sup>14</sup> Shot down Plain.

10 aug. mooved to edg of Seine<sup>15</sup> near Monts.<sup>16</sup> Then co. held town while Bn. crossed. set un<sup>17</sup> in nice Hotel and felt very much at home. crossed river on pontoon found French man tied and beaten to death by gearmans in Foloville.<sup>18</sup>

aug. 11. held up here lots of fun Took bath in river

aug. 20 went to aid station to woark.

24. mooved to big chateou.<sup>19</sup> Many big shells in area

25 mooved to church under fire Mottie killed<sup>20</sup> could see Eiffel tower. Many wounded jerries.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> St. James, France.

<sup>2</sup> grenade

<sup>3</sup> Avranches, France.

<sup>4</sup> Strafing: “strafe, to (World War I to Modern) Originally, an attack on ground troops by low-flying airplanes using machine guns and light bombs. Later, any sort of sudden and violent attack, including a verbal one y a superior. From German strafen ‘to punish’. The word became widely known through the German motto of World War I, Gotto strafe England ‘May God punish England’.” (Elting, 306).

<sup>5</sup> Troops

<sup>6</sup> “Tracer- (20<sup>th</sup> century) ammunition containing a chemical composition that burns in flight and shows the path of the projectile” (Elting, 324).

<sup>7</sup> Brest, France, located close to the coast.

<sup>8</sup> toward

<sup>9</sup> Paris

<sup>10</sup> Happy

<sup>11</sup> place

<sup>12</sup> Panzer tanks

<sup>13</sup> Le Manz, France.

<sup>14</sup> Believed to be the name of a place, but unsure.

<sup>15</sup> river in France

<sup>16</sup> Mentz, France.

<sup>17</sup> up

<sup>18</sup> Follainville, France.

<sup>19</sup> chateau

<sup>20</sup> Unable to find

<sup>21</sup> Gerry-slang for Germans

aug 26 mooved through woods to G.C.P.<sup>1</sup> Lt. Reedeey<sup>2</sup> shot through abdomen. Mooved on through mud battered jerry equip also screaming Memmies.<sup>3</sup>

aug 27 to Sept. 15 Riding across France a pleasure trip scraffed by RAF<sup>4</sup> once.

Sept. 15 Belgium border Sameon.<sup>5</sup> Latreans<sup>6</sup> in Streets.

Sept. 22. Started moove to Southern France saw Patton<sup>7</sup> for the second time. Reims<sup>8</sup> spent night in argonne forest<sup>9</sup> war trenches barb wire fences. slept in trenches Duds all around. I drove part of the way up.

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<sup>1</sup> General Control Point

<sup>2</sup> Unable to find

<sup>3</sup> Screaming Meemies (Mimis) A type of artillery/missile that whistled as it went through the air (OED).

<sup>4</sup> Royal Air Force

<sup>5</sup> Believed to be a town in France near the Belgium border, Somain.

<sup>6</sup> This word is difficult to read because of the similarities of some of Reed's letters. This could potentially be "Luteors" meaning "Looters". However, I spelled the word with the letters that looked the most consistent with his handwriting.

<sup>7</sup> General George Patton (1885-1945) Led the 3<sup>rd</sup> Army in Normandy. He was killed while in command of the 15<sup>th</sup> Army in a road accident (George Smith Patton, par. 1).

<sup>8</sup> Reims, France.

<sup>9</sup> Forest of Argonne.

- Sept. 23. cold wet long hard trek slept in field.<sup>1</sup> To tired to dig F. hole.<sup>2</sup>
- Sept. 24. In field side of hill overlooking Moselle River.
- Sept. 25. was on the moove lots of bombers that day<sup>3</sup>
- Sept. 26. Mooved into Charms fighting fearce.<sup>4</sup>
- Sept. 27. Bing Crosby.<sup>5</sup> left in middle of show to make an attack.
- Sept. 28. Crossed Moselle. Went Frambois.<sup>6</sup> Hot. This was at night & I turned over one jeep & tracter.
- Sept. 29. aid station in house by woods. Hot.
- Oct. 2. Croimere.<sup>7</sup> School house. went through Louinville.<sup>8</sup> This started the battle of Forest De Parroy.  
Rough.<sup>9</sup>
- Oct. 3. lot of casulties. wet cold. Muddy roads for evac.
- Oct. 4. Mooved out in the forrest with adv. aid sta.
- Oct. 5. Mooved to forrest used black out tent for aid
- Oct. 15. Mooved out of forrest. went to Manonviller<sup>10</sup> lot of casulties arrived late at night. cold dark & miserable.
- Oct. 16-20. Mooved into a fort (Manonviller)
- Oct. 20-23. Ebermiller - RR Crossing. Heavy artillery barages casulties reasonable low. Men well dug in<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Through Combat*, a history of the 314th infantry regiment originally made available to all members of the division after the war, discusses the need for speedy travel in order to “slam the door in the face of the German retreat” in the region of Charmes (34).

<sup>2</sup> Foxhole - a hole in the ground used by troops as a shelter or as a firing point (*Oxford Essential Dictionary*).

<sup>3</sup> News from September 25, 1944 indicates Allied planes made extensive bombing runs in the Netherlands and France between the 24th and 25th including blasting German ground forces in the Nancy sector near Reed’s location (“Air Strength Aids”).

<sup>4</sup>Charmes, France - *Through Combat* chronicles several days of battle for Charmes and also states that previously injured Col. Huff rejoins the regiment here (35).

<sup>5</sup> Bing Crosby (May 3, 1903-Oct. 14, 1977) an American popular music singer (Klebanoff), was performing in an abandoned factory in Alsace-Lorraine, France two miles from German positions. He was in his second song when the troops received word of a German attack and were ordered to leave (Associated Press).

<sup>6</sup> Fraimbois, France

<sup>7</sup> Croismare, France

<sup>8</sup> Laneuveville-aux-Bois, France

<sup>9</sup> News records and the combat record of the 314th both suggest the U.S. Third Army began to engage with German forces in la forêt de Parroy (the forest of Parroy) as early as September 25. However, on the night of October 1st, the 314th saw heavy German artillery and mortar fire before the regiment attacked again on the morning of the 2nd. Footnotes in *The Lorraine Campaign* indicate “that the three-day battle in this sector cost the enemy 700 dead” (242). See: *Through Combat*, 39-41; Daniel; “Navy Planes Blast”, 1; Cole, 241-243.

<sup>10</sup> Manonviller, France

<sup>11</sup> From *The Army Almanac: A Book of Facts Concerning the Army of the United States* as reproduced by the U.S. Army Center of Military History, The 79th Infantry Division was working to gain the high ground east of Emberménil, France during this time.

Oct. 23. Relieved by 44<sup>th</sup> Div. first real break. Happy. went to Luneville<sup>12</sup> in factory. Showers - good food shows etc.<sup>13</sup>

Nov. 13. Break was over. Loaded on trucks & was off to the races again. Self inflicted wound.

Nov. 14. Snow. Ogediviller.<sup>14</sup> Night march snow froze my fanney off. Slept with co. Fox hole filled with water.<sup>15</sup>

Nov. 15. attacked at early dawn several wounded two killed. went on to ancerviller.<sup>16</sup> Rain snow fox holes filled with water. lost both aid men. Dud dropped just over my head. Rough.

Nov. 16-18. Horborville.<sup>17</sup> was pinned down on hill with all Bn.<sup>18</sup> Staff. mooved across river on Nove 19 P.M. woarked till 2:30 A.M. Had many casulties. T.D.<sup>19</sup> put round through house into room

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<sup>12</sup> Lunéville, France

<sup>13</sup> *Through Combat* states that the 79th had seen 127 days of combat without a rest period when they received word of their relief by the 44th division. Lunéville's factories made for more comfortable sleeping and allowed for USO shows to occur in the evenings (46-48). In *The Lorraine Campaign*, Cole states that "General Eisenhower...had set forth a policy of a continuing rotation...in order to rest the tired divisions" (291).

<sup>14</sup> Ogéviller, France

<sup>15</sup> The Vosges Area was experiencing "the worst storms in 10 years," and the snow made for especially dangerous conditions for troops (Korman "1918 Warfare").

<sup>16</sup> Ancerviller, France

<sup>17</sup> Herbéviller, France

<sup>18</sup> Bn is an abbreviation for battalion, or a large body of troops ready for battle (*Oxford Essential Dictionary*).

<sup>19</sup> Likely a reference to a Tank Destroyer, or an M36 antitank weapon (*Oxford Essential Dictionary*).



burned down by enemy fire. over run by C.P. group

Nov. 20. took care of 3 Bn. casualties in the A.M. also gearman wounded. Freamonviller<sup>1</sup>

Nov. 21. Moved out with out much resistant. The area had all ben plastered with artillery.

Nov. 22. Seavern<sup>2</sup> path much gearman defense but guns un maned. Put up in house with co. men in factory. had a nice rest for a day. In civilian kitchen<sup>3</sup>

23. Moved out to Hourt.<sup>4</sup> Set up in Hotel. Made a hit with famley. Eat like a king. stayed up late at night. old man afraid of artillery. took many prisoners.

26 Nov. pulled back. Tried to fire at Gear. flair wouldn't work. Set up in a notsie house made the civilians cook french fries for co. Hq.

Went back to aid station<sup>5</sup>

27 Nov. Moved out to School House a G. Hq. many steel helmets found.

28-29. Moved to Niadershaffheim under heavy barages of artillery.<sup>6</sup> Dead G Had a wonderfull house for aid station. Corkey.<sup>7</sup> ate apples & drank some cider.

30 Moved to Hagunal Forrest. Heavy casualties. set up adv. aid station. Many wounded. fox holes were sandy. caved in. Lost one med. others were wounded. stayed hid till Dec. 7<sup>8</sup>

Dec. 7th Moved into Hagunal aid station catholic convent.

Dec. 8th Moved farther in town. set up aid sta. in G. officers house. Took three prisoners.

Dec. 9 Moved to Schebenhardt.<sup>9</sup> G sign adv. aid sta. in afternoon. Entered Gearmaney for the first time. killed hog. eat like kings had fresh beef, a bath clean clothes etc.

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<sup>1</sup> Frémonville, France

<sup>2</sup> Saverne, France - The Saverne Gap through the Vosges Mountains was one of three preferred routes for an invasion of Germany (*Through Combat 49*).

<sup>3</sup> Prior to the 22nd, the men in the 79th division had been pushing across France to aid in securing this pass before winter. On the 22nd they were able to halt for most of the day and noted numerous unmanned 88s along the road (*Through Combat 55*).

<sup>4</sup> Hœrdt, France

<sup>5</sup> This phrase is inserted between the lines on the page. It is unclear whether it is intended as an insertion for November 26 or 27.

<sup>6</sup> Niederschaeffolsheim, France. This was one of several locations surrounding Haguenau where American forces were fighting against "recently reinforced German units" to move toward and clear a railroad center in Haguenau (Middleton, "Roer Grip Widened" 2).

<sup>7</sup> Unknown.

<sup>8</sup> Forêt de Haguenau, France. War news from this time indicates that Americans and Germans were involved in some of the bloodiest fighting of the war in this region ("War News Summarized").

<sup>9</sup> Scheibenhardt, Germany

Dec. 14-31.<sup>1</sup> To Loterburg & Berg Gearmaney.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Reed's brief mention of entering Germany for the first time and moving to Lauterbourg refers to a significant coordinated drive by the U.S. Third and Seventh Armies across German lines. Multiple news articles between December 15, 1944 and December 18, 1944 chronicle the American forces smashing into Germany along multiple fronts. See: "Americans Smash into Germany;" Middleton; "Midoro Town Captured;" "Patch Sends 3 Spearheads into Reich;" and "U.S. 7th Army Drives into Reich" ). During this onslaught, the 79th division forged across the Lautern River border and saw some of the heaviest fighting ("Midoro Town Captured" 2). These events later became known as the Battle of the Bulge (Tucker 1363).

<sup>2</sup> Lauterbourg, France across the border from Berg, Germany.

Jan. 1 Back to Hatten.<sup>1</sup>

Jan. 2 Bishwillow.<sup>2</sup> Glass cutter.

Jan. 3 Drusselheim. Very heavy art. fire many wounded.<sup>3</sup>

Jan. 16 mooved to church for safety.

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<sup>1</sup> Hatten, France. According to *Through Combat*, this withdrawal was a first for the company (67-68), and news reports from the time period indicate that an intensification of German artillery and assaults ended a two week lull in this region driving back 7th Army groups (Korman "Germans make 5 Assaults on 7th Army Line").

<sup>2</sup> Bischwiller, France

<sup>3</sup> Drusenheim, France. "Texts of the Day's Communiques" for January 3rd, 1945 states that "enemy artillery harassed towns in the Alsace Plain" (2) where Drusenheim is located.

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