

I would like to take this opportunity to express some of the things that I recall from my days in service and especially the 592nd field artillery battalion. My memory has been dimmed somewhat by time but this is what I remember.

My days of service in the army began March 11, 1943. I was inducted into the army at Peoria, Illinois. I was ordered to report to Scott Field (since has been named Scott Air Force Base) on March 18. I spent a few days there and then was shipped out. I had no idea where I was going but wound up at Ft. Jackson, South Carolina where the 106th had just been activated. I was put into service battery of the 592nd. There also was a headquarters battery and the firing batteries--A-B-and C. The 592nd battalion was under the command of Colonel Weber.

I went under the same training as the rest of the division during our basic training. They told me how lucky I was to be in the artillery as I would ride in trucks while the rest must walk. I doubted that and for the next few months about all I did was walk.

I trained all through the summer and fall and into the winter, spending lots of time on bivouac. Sometime in December there was a three or four inch snow while on bivouac which was a disagreeable situation. Little did I know this was just a prelude as to what we were going to experience in combat.

Sometime in January 1944 I left Ft. Jackson and headed for Tennessee maneuvers. This turned out to be a bone chilling experience as it was quite cold, lots of rain and nothing but mud. I went through this until around the first week in April. I then left Tennessee and moved to Camp Atterbury, Indiana.

While at Ft. Jackson just prior to going on maneuvers quite a few men volunteered for the airborne divisions. After getting to Atterbury it was decided to take all privates and PFC's and send them out as replacements. This left only officers and non-coms. After the men left all new replacements were brought in to bring the battalion up to its original strength. The summer sort of drug on as our division was getting back in good shape.

Around the last of September and beginning of October I left Camp Atterbury and wound up in Camp Miles Standish which was located close to Taunton, Massachusetts. This was a staging area for troops heading over seas. All that remains now is a bronze plaque set in stone denoting this was the past site of Camp Miles Standish through which several million soldiers passed on their way over seas.

I well remember the day I left Miles Standish. It was Nov. 11, 1944, raining very hard, standing in the rain with all my gear on my back waiting to board the ship. This only added to my misery as I was less than enchanted by the thought of going up that gangplank. A short time later I boarded the ship and was on my way. The next day almost everyone got sick after running into a storm. I won't go into details on that but I found I had picked the wrong bunk when I reached my compartment. The bunks were five high and I had the center. I should have been on top.

The ship I was on was an old luxury liner called the "Wakefield". Needless to say it was overloaded and space was at a premium. The ship went over without an escort--thus every seven minutes it changed course. This was to keep a submarine from zeroing in on it. It also added to the de-stabilization of the ship.

After 7 days we landed in Liverpool, England. The next morning we got off the ship and boarded a train that took us (I can't remember where) somewhere close to the center of England. I don't remember too much what happened while I was in this area.

On Dec. 1, 1944 we boarded LST's at I believe South Hampton. Our battery plus all equipment were loaded and we proceeded across the English Channel and then up the Seine to Rouen, France. It took ten days to cross the Channel. We immediately got off the LST and began motoring across France and Belgium pulling into position in the St. Vith area, taking over the position of the 2nd division. On the 16th of December all hell broke loose.

I was part of the ammunition train in service battery. I was a radio operator and assistant driver for the ammunition train commander who was Lt. James Malesky. Our duties were to lead the train to the ammunition dump and then lead them to our firing batteries which were A, B, and C. One of the duties of headquarters battery was to set up communications by laying wire for the phones. I really don't know too much about the other batteries as everything pertaining to me occurred in service battery. I went on almost all the runs driving the 3/4 ton weapons carrier. (Through the bulge all radios were on radio silence and weren't used much.)

There were some very bad times during the bulge as everyone there can attest to. I will never forget when the bulge started. After all this was not supposed to happen. We left that morning to get a load of ammunition for our guns. We never got back to our position as it had been over run by Germans. The situation at this time was unbelievable. We were trying to go down this road and so was everybody else. I had never seen such confusion. Everyone was going somewhere and no one knew where. We finally got our convoy off the road and a meeting of non-coms and Lt. Malesky tried to figure out which course to take next. We knew we couldn't get back to our unit and had no idea where they were. We finally decided to go back to the ammunition dump and see if we could find out where our outfit was. The next morning we joined our outfit in St. Vith. The next couple of weeks was pure hell. In about two days time we lost 2 out of 3 infantry battallions. Some of the men had only seen a day or two of combat and then were captured.

There were a couple of very frustrating occasions during this time as far as we were concerned. One bad situation was to go to the ammunition dump for very badly needed shells to find there were none. The 592nd guns were 155 mm howitzers and each projectile weighed about 100 pounds. No one expected this offensive to happen and everyone was caught short. Even the infantry was denied sufficient ammunition. Another thing that was a nightmare was to know where the firing batteries were and leave for ammunition and find when you returned that they had moved. This was extremely tough at night when you didn't really know where you were or had been or where you were going to next.

I'm sure everyone remembers the snow, mud, fog, rain and Hitler's buzz bombs. I think the proper name was V2 rockets. You could hear them and see them coming and as long as the trail of flame was burning you ignored them, but if the noise and flame stopped around where you were you had better take cover.

After we lost over 2/3 of our division we still stayed on the front lines in support of any unit that needed help and they all needed support. I don't remember a lot of the places we were but Stavelot, Tres Ponts, Dinant, Ververies, Houffalize, Malmedy and of course St. Vith come to mind. The

592nd stayed pretty well in the lines until the final days of the war. We, of course were in support of the 424th infantry in all the battles they were in.

Just prior to the end of the war the 592nd was sent to the bombed out city of Heilbronn to set up a prisoner of war camp. At one time we had over 250,000 German prisoners. I stayed in Heilbronn until the middle of July at which time I and five other men were transferred out of the 106th. We were sent to a 155 mm self propelled gun group and were to go directly to the Pacific. (Tough break? No!) We left Marseilles France destination unknown and were out about five days when the war ended in the Pacific and the course of our ship was changed to--New York.

Then came the day I was looking for--the day I would be discharged. (It happened Nov. 10, 1945.

Glenn O. Hartlieb

John -

This is what I come up with. There are a lot of other guys that probably could have done better than I, but this is what I remember. Feel free to delete any part you think is unsatisfactory.

Keep up the good work. I appreciate the Cub very much.
See you in Huntsville

Glenn