

718 Riverhill Dr.
Athens, GA 30606
October 11, 1990

Dear Mr. Wroblewski,

I just got my first copy of the 106th Division Cub magazine and I came across your letter to the editor there. I haven't seen previous Cub copies, so I don't know what you were referring to in the Oct. 1989 Cub, but from what you say afterwards, I was with you on the train in Koblenz during the bombing. You may be the fellow who climbed out the little window in the boxcar I was in and let the rest of us out. I remember that, as if it were yesterday.

I was in the 106th Signal Co., operating a radio up at the Seigfried line with the 422 or 423rd Regiment (I can't remember which, but I know we were right out on the point of the American position because I saw it on our lieutenant's map) keeping communication between Regimental and Division Headquarters. We were captured on the 19th of December near Prüm after the regiment we were with tried to break out of the trap and failed. After capture, we walked one whole day and part of another (without food or water, as I remember) to the railyards in Gerolstein and got on the cars. I thought there were about 40 men to a car, but I noticed that others writing in the Cub thought there were 60. Anyway, it was crowded as hell in there.

When the parachute flares started falling near the chemical plant (I saw the fractionating columns--I'm a chemist) in the Koblenz railyards, somebody said it was the Red Cross warning the bombers away; that's how dumb we were! When the bombs began to fall and you, or somebody, let us out of the car, I ran across the field right through a string of bombs, hitting the ground every time one screamed overhead. It was hell all right! I got hung up on a barbed wire fence in the middle of the field and fought to get loose for what seemed an eternity. Somebody shouted that there were bomb shelters in a hill straight ahead and everybody ran that way; then somebody coming from there said they were all full, so we ran along the bottom of the hill looking for another one. By this time, the raid was over, and I joined the other three guys in the radio team.

We sat around trying to decide what to do. We were loose, but, with the fire all around and being scared, cold and hungry, we decided to go back to the car. None of us had the nerve to take off, including the sergeant. I've thought about that decision a million times since then; I guess we made the right one: I'm still here. Returning to the car, we saw a lot of bodies of GIs around the bomb craters who weren't as lucky as we were. From what you said in your letter, I guess you were wounded during the bombing; perhaps you were sitting there hurting as I walked by. At that point, we were not worried about anyone but ourselves. I remember feeling very selfish during those times; I didn't want to mess with anybody; self preservation, I guess. Next day, some old Krauts came along with wooden horsedrawn wagons and carried the bodies away. It was a sad sight. None of the boxcars were hit, as I remember, but the train sat there for several days waiting for an engine, we thought, so we could move out to what I think was camp IV A or B. I'm not sure which one it was.

I wasn't aware of the other bombings at Gerolstein and Limburg mentioned by the editor of Cub. Some people think we were at Limburg, but I remember that it was Koblenz.

Well, I hope this is helpful. When you have time, write me with your memory of those days. I'd love to hear from you. Best regards!

Yours truly,

Chuck

Charles H. Stammer

Youngsville, Pa.
Nov. 26, 1990

Dear Mr. Stommer;

I received your letter some time ago and must apologize for the length of time that it has taken me to give you a reply.

After the air raid was over, you say, you went back to the cars. (That none of the men had nerve enough to take off, including the Sgt.) The reason for this was that the Army did not have the foresight to give each and every one of us a map of the area into which we were going into. Should it be that we had such a map we might of been able to take off, and at least made an attempt to get away.

Yes, I was hit by a piece of one of the bombs in this raid, but not very serious, and I had an easy time taking care of it.

You need not feel as though you were selfish at the time because, self preservation is usally high on the priority list, and some people more than others. The big thing is we made it home.

The train I was on left almost immediately, after the roundup job was completed. We were taken th Frankfort, then wakked up the hill to Bad Orb. Sta. 9B. However, I still don"t know for sure if I was the person to get out and open the doors or were there others. Should you run across any one that could possibly shed some light on this. Please let me know or forward the information to(The Cub) or John Kline.

Thank you ever so much.

Chester Wroblewski
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