

John Hackney
P.O. Box 998
Wilson, N.C.

Friday
September 19,
2008

Dear John

Talking with you earlier was enjoyable. This conversation resulted in pleasant memories of my life and Times in Wilson while growing up there many years ago.

As far as World War II is concerned enclosed is a synopsis of the various activities I was involved in while in service.

When in combat, the most significant as far as the war was concerned was my participation in the dismantling of the Siegfried line and attached is what I've assimilated about this. Of course there were several other actions involving life-threatening danger.

Also, from my Mother's files are copies of news articles concerning activities relating to State College people leaving from Wilson to Ft. Bagg on April 14, 1943.

Again, I enjoyed talking with you - who knows I might get back to Wilson one of these days.

Randolph Uzzell

Randolph Uzzell World War II Service

Left Wilson on April 14, 1943 via Fort Bragg, N.C. To begin service at Ft. McChellan, AL - 17 weeks of Infantry Basic Training. Was assigned to ASTP (Army Specialized Training Program) and began school to become an engineer (in 18 months). Arrived at VPI-Blacksburg, VA. in October 1943. In April 1944 the entire program was terminated and all participants were transferred to the Infantry.

Was assigned to the 84th Infantry Division at Camp Claiborne, LA. from May thru October, 1944. Was transferred to the 63rd Infantry Division in November 1944 and shipped overseas from Camp Shanks, NY. in January, 1945.

Arrived in Marseilles, France. After two weeks in a staging area, we joined the 7th Army on the front lines in early February 1945. The 7th Army was responsible for South Germany including Bavaria. After participating
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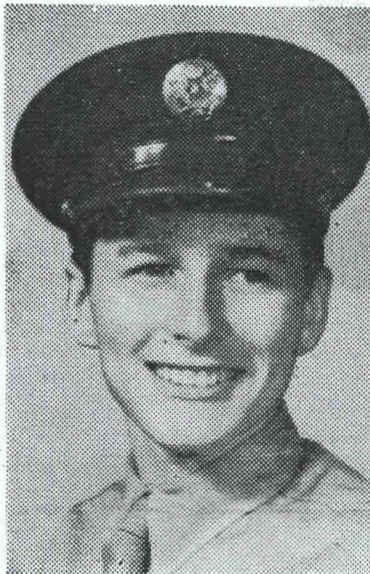
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In numerous military actions, The European War was over on May 8, 1945 and I remember in the last days we were close to Ulm Germany near the Austrian Border.

The 63rd Infantry Division was deployed to the Bad Mergentheim Germany area. Until August 1945 my company occupied two small German villages. The 63rd Division was disbanded and personnel were assigned to temporary organizations.

In early August, 1945 several truckloads of us were being sent to Marseilles to board a boat going to Japan. Luckily the war in Japan was over during the trip and we were reoriented to a Liberty Ship going to America (New York).

After a 45 day leave, I was notified that I was to report to Camp Bowie, Texas for discharge. I was discharged on November 28, 1945.

In January, 1946 I resumed my education at N.C. State.



Awarded Bronze Star Medal

Mr. and Mrs. Tom Uzzell received a letter from Major General Nibbs stating that the Bronze Star had been awarded their son, Pfc. Randolph Uzzell. He entered the service April, 1943 and trained at Ft. McLellan, Ala., Camp Claiborne, La., and Camp Van Dorn, Miss. He went overseas January, 1945.

The citation reads as follows: "By direction of the President, under the provisions of Army regulations 600-45, 22 Sept., 1943, as amended the Bronze Star Medal is awarded by the Commanding General to the following:

Thomas R. Uzzell, Jr., 14148031, Private First Class, Corps of Engineers, Company 'C', 263rd Engineer Combat Battalion, for heroic achievement in action on 19 March, 1945, in the vicinity of Ommersheim, Germany. Private First Class Uzzell, member of a detail assigned the task of demolishing the Dragon's Teeth in the Siegfried Line advanced with heavy loads of demolitions through intense enemy artillery, mortar and machine gun fire. The charges were placed and the Dragon's Teeth destroyed, providing a route for our vehicles to pass. The courage displayed by Private First Class Uzzell was an inspiration to all who witnesses his actions and contributed clearly to the success of the attack. Entered military service from Wilson, North Carolina.

By command of Major General Hibbs, Commander of 63rd Division.

WILSON DAILY TIMES
SATURDAY, JUNE 16, 1945

YOU ARE NOW
PASSING THROUGH
the SIEGFRIED LINE



courtesy
63^d INFANTRY DIVISION

HERE THE GERMANS
BROACHED THE
"THE FIGHTIN"
263rd ENGR. BN.
co. C

YOU ARE NOW
PASSING THROUGH
The SIEGFRIED LINE

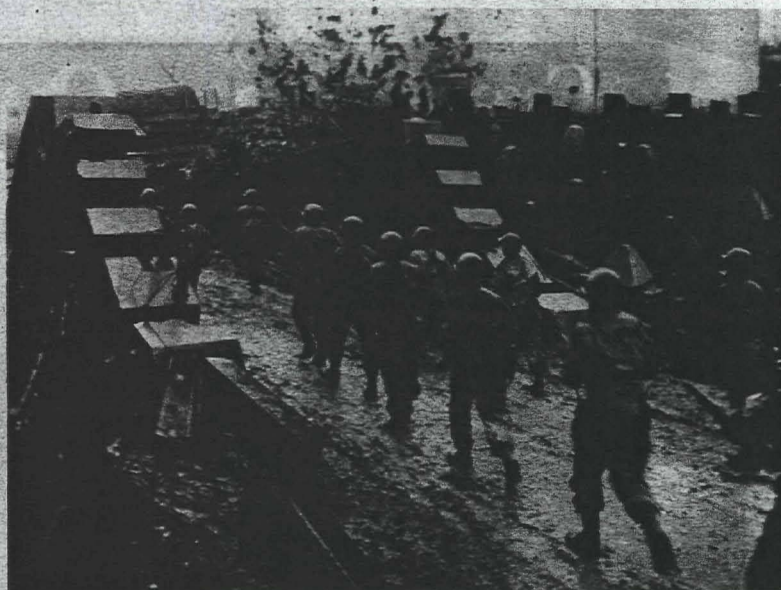


courtesy
63^d INFANTRY DIVISION

HERE TIS YANKS
BREACHED BY
"THE FIGHTIN"
263rd ENGR.(C) BN.
CO. C

1945

- 1-31 **France. Operation Northwind.** Final German offensive in the West, fought in Alsace.
- 23 **Belgium.** U.S. 7th Armored Div. takes St-Vith.
- 30 **Germany.** Three U.S. divisions attack West Wall.
- 9 **France. Colmar Pocket.** U.S. 21st Corps liquidates. Allied casualties: 18,000.
- 13 **Germany.** U.S. First Army crosses Rhine.
- 14 **Germany.** U.S. 8th Air Force B-17s (311) drop 771 tons of bombs on Dresden.
- 23-Mar 10 **Germany. Operation Grenade.** U.S. Ninth Army attacks across the Roer River and captures 300,000 Germans and kills 6,000 while suffering 7,300 casualties.
- r 1 **Germany. Operation Lumberjack.** Combined First/Third Army offensive to clear the west bank of the Rhine between Cologne and Koblenz.
- r 1-6 **Germany.** Americans take Muenchen-Gladbach, Krefeld, Treves and Cologne.
- r 7 **Germany. Remagen Crossing.** Co. A, 27th Armored Inf. Bn., CCB, 9th AD, crosses Rhine on Ludendorff Bridge.
- r 9 **Germany.** U.S. First and Third Armies meet up to encircle some 10 German divisions.
- r 10-13 **Germany.** U.S. Third and Seventh Armies maneuver to encircle Palatinate, trapping German armies.
- r 13-24 **Germany. Saar-Palatinate Campaign.** U.S. Third and Seventh Armies rupture West Wall; take 90,000 German POWs while sustaining 17,220 casualties.
- 19 **Germany. Operation Undertone.** U.S. Seventh Army breaks through West Wall.
- r 17-21 **Germany.** Americans take Koblenz, Worms, Saarbruecken and Ludwigshafen.
- r 22 **Germany.** Troops of U.S. Third Army cross Rhine at Oppenheim.
- r 22-May 11 **Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia. Central Europe Campaign.** U.S.: 15,009 KIA; 42,568 WIA.
- r 23-26 **Germany. Operation Plunder.** Northern crossing of the Rhine by the British includes U.S. 30th and 79th divisions.
- r 24 **Germany. Operation Varsity.** U.S. 17th and British 6th Airborne divisions parachute near Wesel in largest Allied airborne operation (21,680 men) of WWII. U.S.: 159 KIA; 522 WIA. IX TCC: 41 KIA.
- r 25 **Germany.** All organized resistance west of the Rhine ceases.
- r 29 **Germany.** U.S. takes Frankfurt and Mannheim.
- 1-18 **Germany. Battle of the Ruhr Pocket.** 18 divisions fight two-week battle, taking 317,000 POWs in largest surrender of war. U.S. Ninth Army—341 KIA; 2,000 WIA.
- 5-May 8 **Italy. Po Valley Campaign.** Allies begin major attack on Gothic Line. U.S.: 1,914 KIA; 6,160 WIA.
- 10-11 **Germany.** U.S. forces take Hanover and Essen; 7th Army enters Bavaria.
- 11-30 **Germany. Harz Mountains.** GIs root out 70,000 dug-in Germans in bitter fighting.
- 14-24 **Germany.** Battle for Dessau. V and VIII Corps take.
- 15-20 **Germany. Battle of Nuremberg.** U.S. XV Corps defeats 15,000 German diehards.
- 16-19 **Germany.** Battle of Halle. 104th ID fights house-to-house.
- 17-18 **Germany.** Battle of Magdeburg. 30th ID captures.
- 18 **Czechoslovakia.** A patrol of 358th Inf. Regt., 90th ID, crosses border.
- 18-19 **Germany.** U.S. 2nd and 69th IDs take Leipzig.
- 21 **Italy.** Allies take Bologna.
- 21 **Germany. Last Bomber Downed Over Germany.** Ten men of the Black Cat are killed.
- 22-24 **Germany.** 12th AD crosses the Danube River.
- 24 **North Atlantic.** USS F.C. Davis torpedoed: 119 KIA.
- 25 **Germany. U.S.-Soviet Link Up.** Co. G, 273rd Inf., 69th ID, patrol and Soviet forces meet near Torgau on Elbe River.
- 25 **Czechoslovakia and Austria. Last U.S. Bombers Downed Over Europe.** Pilsen (7 KIA) and Linz.
- 27 **Italy.** U.S. Fifth Army occupies Genoa.
- 29-30 **Germany. Battle of Munich.** U.S. 45th Div. engages in house-to-house fighting.



Breaching the Siegfried Line: Hailed as impregnable, the Siegfried Line on the western German frontier stalled the American advance despite numerous attacks on its heavily armed fortifications. Not until spring 1945 were troops able to walk right through the dreaded dragon's teeth concrete barriers.

Apr 29

Italy. War in Italy Ends. Germans surrender. Total U.S.: 36,169 KIA; 90,455 WIA.

May 1-4

Austria. U.S. divisions capture Fussen and cross into Austria. **Austria. Battle of Fern Pass.** 3rd Bn., 5th Inf., 71st ID clears Pass. U.S. 44th Div. takes Landeck.

May 4

Austria. U.S. Fifth and Seventh Armies link up at Brenner Pass. U.S. ground casualties in Austria: 118 KIA; 507 WIA.

May 5

Czechoslovakia. Firefight at Zhurt. Co. I, 3rd Bn., 357th Inf. Regt., 90th ID sustains 7 KIA.

May 6

Czechoslovakia. U.S. 16th AD captures Pilsen.

May 7

Czechoslovakia. Last Ground Combat in Europe. Recon Company of the 803rd Tank Destroyer Bn., 5th ID, is ambushed near Volary. Pfc. Charles Havlat of 2nd Plt. becomes last U.S. KIA in ETO at 8:20 a.m., after Reims surrender. U.S.: 1 KIA; 3 WIA.

May 7

Czechoslovakia. Last Shots in ETO. Pfc. Dominic Mozzetta, a member of Co. B, 1st Bn., 387th Inf. Regt., 97th Div., fires the last round at a German sniper near Klenovice that night.

May 7-8

France. V-E Day. German forces surrender unconditionally at Reims. Next day Truman proclaims V-E Day.

May 8

Germany. 9th Air Force loses one F-6; 9 German planes shot down. **Czechoslovakia.** 9th A.F.'s 12th TRS downs last German aircraft of WWII four hours before war's end over Danube River.

May 8

Czechoslovakia. Last Hostile U.S. Deaths in ETO: German ordnance kills 8 GIs of 101st Inf. Regt., 26th ID, in Pernek.

May 8

France. German garrisons in Lorient and St. Nazaire on Brittany coast surrender to U.S. 66th Division.

May 10

Czechoslovakia. Total U.S. ground casualties in Czechoslovakia: 116 KIA and 353 WIA.

May 10

Czechoslovakia. Last German resistance ceases, ending fighting in Europe.

May 11

May 15

U.S. Battle Casualties in Europe

SERVICE	KIA	WIA
U.S. Army/Air Forces	177,549	472,742
Navy	5,793	6,077
Total	183,342	478,819

Note: 151,920 GIs also were evacuated due to combat exhaustion.