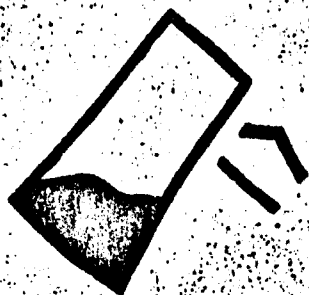


AN

ABLE

STORY...



90

This is the story of a job well done . . .

**It is the story of twelve months in the life of
Company "A" 276th Infantry Regiment**

**It is the story of laughter and comradeship
of training and sweat
of combat and blood.**

It is the story of war!

**The following pages tell the story of Able Company;
its men and its deeds. It will follow
Able Company from the training grounds
at Camp Adair and Fort Leonard Wood
to the battlegrounds of France and
Germany.**

**Dedicated to our fallen comrades
with hopes that their eternal
sacrifice will help to make a free
world . . . a peaceful world!**

Joel E. Friedman

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FIRST MONTH

JULY 1944

U. S. A.

...the news was all around Camp Adair, Oregon, in less than an hour. We were moving halfway across the continent to Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri... Captain Brooks was our CO at this time... bags were packed, barracks were scrubbed six times a day, details were working late into the night and, finally, on July 22nd, we moved to our trains... no more problems on Prune Ridge to struggle through and no more rough bivouacs either... the swell towns of Salem, Portland, Corvallis and Eugene were now to be only fond memories... we left Oregon with the feeling that everyone in the state wished us good luck... we felt that we needed it, too...

...the advance party arrived at Fort Wood and immediately started getting Able Company's area into shape... that meant more GI brushes and more GI soap and more GI scrubbing... Captain Olsen was now our CO... the main body arrived on the 27th of July after five days of travelling .. we did everything on those trains; played poker, whistled at the pretty girls and had outside calisthenics... also plenty of nightly bull sessions... upon arrival at Wood we were amazed at the size of the camp... we were glad to have arrived but a bit sorry that we left Adair ... we unpacked and settled down to regular army garrison life ... training schedules were put into effect and inspections were regular and strict... we were now ready for anything...

...the real work at Fort Wood began ... we started training under simulated combat conditions and ran through plenty of company problems, both day and night ... a large group of men went home on furloughs ... the last POR shipments left the company and we began getting new IRTC replacements ... Captain "Handlebar Hank" Fritz became the new CO ... we scouted the local towns and invaded St. James, in particular, by force ... a girl named Jewi became very popular with the men in Able company ... the NCO's had their own club for the first time, holding wild beer parties every Saturday night ... the weather was extremely hot ... Bundick "the terror" was mess sergeant ...

...training continued and the weather became cooler ... we began using tanks in our problems ... we specialized in squad problems ... Lt. Reardon became the new CO ... we acquired three new shavetails; Lis. Doenges, Jenkins and Schollander, and at last we had platoon leaders ... grass cutting details were SOP every Saturday afternoon before passes were issued ... we lost our valuable supply man, Dominick Solo ... more replacements came in ... we had some dandy scraps with SCU MP's at least once a weekend ... the PX girls became steady dates for some of the men in the company ... Palacio was first sergeant ...

... another CO, Captain Hendrickson, came to the company ... quite a few cadre went AWOL during October ... replacements kept coming in ... men went on what was to be their last furloughs for a while ... inspections became stricter ... Sgt. Pupinski was made mess sergeant and Scopp a cook ... chow definitely picked up ... Brewer, Galloway, Waggoner and Eltheridge were platoon sergeants of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and Weapons platoons ... all ratings were made T/O and the excess were weeded out ... Lt. Arnest was the company exec while the four platoon leaders were Lts. Doenges, Schollander, McClintock and Jenkins ... the company received all new "Army of Occupation" equipment ... crates were found to have contained machine guns and grease guns ... some of the men thought it was funny equipment for occupation ... they were right!

... the old moving rumors started again ... some guessed Pacific, others Europe ... by looking at the crates we found out we were headed for the Boston POE ... we received plenty of pep-talks from the CO also information on what to do if captured ... we laughed this off ... everyone who could went home on the last weekend ... some came back a little late but they all came back ...

... we were finally told about moving and marking our clothes and checking our equipment and staying in the area for hourly inspections ... nobody stayed ... we gave the barracks and surrounding area a final GI ... the company embarked on Pullman sleepers, November 21st, after saying goodbye to all our Missouri friends ... we regretted leaving them, too ... the pleasant train ride took three days and we passed through Cleveland, Pittsburgh and New York ... we arrived at Camp Myles Standish (a secret camp) on the 24th during a heavy downpour ... the loudspeaker blared forth with a British marching tune ... we went to sleep that night on double deck bunks, some sleeping and some thinking of what was ahead ...

... final preparations were underway for our sea voyage ... we received daily ship instructions at our Massachusetts staging area... some of the men who lived nearby were able to get home for a few days ... finally on the morning of December 6th, we packed our belongings hurriedly, boarded a train and took our last ride to the Boston Port of Embarkation ... after the usual last minute checks and count-offs, we drank our Red Cross coffee and boarded our ship, the USS West Point, formerly the luxury liner, America...

... the sea voyage was uneventful ... the weather was calm throughout and the ship proceeded smoothly at a rapid pace ... the usual number of men became violently ill with stomach trouble the first few days out and were seen hanging from the rails for dear life... the monotony was broken up by poker games, movies, band concerts and lifeboat drills ... everyone had a good rest aboard ... we disembarked at the port of Marseille in Southern France, on the evening of December 15th and were driven in huge trucks to CP number 2, a staging area 17 miles north of the port ... here we pitched our pup-tents and had our final equipment check ... the company boarded 40 and 8's on December 23rd and we headed for an unknown destination... Christmas Eve and Day was spent in these box-cars with 10 in 1 rations as our holiday dinner... we heard the news of the big German breakthrough but did not think too much of it then...

... the train arrived on the 26th near the town of Bischweiler, France... the company marched fifteen miles with full equipment to our billets in the town ... the billets turned out to be an old warehouse and quite cold... here last minute checks were made before the move up to the front ... a few men were sent out as replacements to other outfits... the company left Bischweiler on

the 29th to move up to a town near the Rhine River and occupy defensive positions ... 24 hours later the company moved again to a nearby town called Neuhausen and it was here, on New Year's Eve, that some of the men in the company received their first taste of combat... Able Company suffered its first casualty who was believed to have been wounded and taken prisoner by a German combat patrol... we realized then that we were in a war...

... the company arrived at the town of Oberhoffen, in the Alsace-Lorraine region, on New Year's Day after spending New Year's Eve in foxholes along the Rhine... In Oberhoffen we were billeted in battered, old German army barracks where we received hot meals, very welcome mail, and waterproof clothing. We stayed overnight and left the next afternoon in 6 x 6's bound for the woods on the outskirts of a town called Wingen... the company debarked from the trucks after dark and dug in on the high ground at the edge of the town... we were in corps reserve... the next day we dug positions around the edge of the town and retired for the night on a high hill 1000 yards behind these positions...

... we were sharply awakened the next morning by heavy automatic fire over our heads... In the confusion that followed, all our equipment was left on the hill and the company attempted to take the previously dug positions but the enemy had beaten us to them, had occupied them, and were firing at us... our orders were to hold the wood-line at all costs... no one knew exactly what the big picture was but we realized that we'd have to retake our captured positions... the food and water situation was trying on the men's stomachs...

... the next day, two squads of the first platoon were ordered to join in a general attack in coordination with the 274th... with help coming from a preparatory tank-artillery barrage, we entered the town and met no opposition... after moving to the center of the town, the Germans opened fire on us and pinned the two squads down in two houses... It was here that two of our medics were shot treating our wounded... our CO was also severely wounded... later in the day, three tanks and a squad from the second platoon entered the town to try and relieve the beleaguer-

ed two squads... all withdrew, taking many prisoners, when the 274th moved in and took over the sector...

... we went back to our positions looking down on Wingen and were under constant "burp" gun and sniper fire, losing many men... the freezing weather made conditions miserable for the men... we found out by German prisoner interrogation that we were facing the 6th German SS Division and the 12th SS Mountain Regiment, some of the fiercest fighting troops in the German army... the battalion aid station was only 100 yards behind the company CP which was about 200 yards behind the front lines... there was an acute shortage of hand grenades, food and water... trench foot casualties were high as most of the men had not had their shoes off in four days with hardly anyone getting any sleep...

... Wingen was finally taken by us and other elements of the regiment and Able Company was relieved... our toll of dead and wounded was high and our first battle was over...

... with Lt. Arnest as our CO, the company moved back twenty miles to Mulhausen for a few hours sleep, a chance to wash up, some hot meals and more welcome mail... the company was committed later that day to proceed to Obermunthal, in the Hagenau Forest, and clear an area of scattered, starving Germans who were hiding in the woods... we arrived near the town in the early hours of the morning and, after disembarking from the trucks, we walked about five miles in the bitter cold to our destination and jump-off point... the company started out on the mission at 0700 and climbed up and down mountains, meeting no opposition until early evening when we encountered a thirty man German patrol coming down from the top of Hill 1538... negotiations were held on the spot and the Germans agreed to surrender...

on the way back with the terms the German negotiator was fired upon by a trigger-happy GI and a fierce fire fight began ... we outmaneuvered them after an hour of bitter fighting, taking eight prisoners and killing or wounding the rest...

...after wiping out the patrol we dug in on the spot on a small plateau and formed a perimeter defense ... a hole under a large rock was the company CP ... again food was very scarce and the first time our cooks attempted to bring hot chow up, they were fired upon and pinned down in an open field by a German "burp" gunner ... it took more than five hours for the company to rescue the food ... artillery came in heavily on our positions during the night...

... before daylight the order came in to take Hill 1538 in the morning ... the men were exhausted, hungry, thirsty and with little ammunition. Under these conditions, the company started up the hill for the attack ... they went up in single file and all went well for the first half hour until we ran into the German MLR... we were heavily fired upon and enemy 88's zeroed in on the company killing or wounding half the men... orders came to withdraw with all the walking wounded ... 26 able bodied men came off the hill...

... back in Obermunthal, we joined Charley company and went back to Hill 403 for an uneventful two days before relief came ... our skeleton company was then sent to quiet defensive positions in old steel and concrete positions on the French Maginot Line... three days later we moved to Rosbruck, France as a mobile reserve force ... thus ended a trying month of combat...

...our stay at Rosbruck afforded the company a chance to rest up, eat good meals, see a few movies, write home, and dig some positions ... 1st Lt. Matthews was now our CO and two former platoon sergeants came back to the company with battlefield commissions, Lts. Brewer and Wagger...

...we pushed off again on the night of February 5th and took up positions overlooking the enemy held town of Otingen, alternating on the line with Baker and Charley companies...our rest town was Folklingen ... on February 17th, the regiment was given the task of taking Otingen and eventually the strongly-held town of Forbach on the German border ... the company started out on this mission and took Otingen in two days sustaining few casualties... we dug in on the high ground overlooking Forbach on February 20th and waited a day and a half for our artillery to soften up the German defenders... German artillery and mortar fire was heavy on this hill but the company had only one casualty...

...the second platoon was the first unit into the town, penetrating into the hospital during the night ... they were followed by the rest of the company the next morning ... mortars and 88's kept dropping in around the hospital and took a heavy casualty toll ... in bitter street to street fighting, the company broke out of the hospital and proceeded to fan out and clear the houses and streets of enemy resistance... sporadic sniper fire harassed us ... by the 24th of February, three quarters of Forbach, up to the railroad track was in our hands and we halted in town for eight days to reorganize and receive needed replacements...

...after a week of reorganization, the company again actively engaged the enemy in the last quarter of Forbach still in German hands ... on March 5th after heavy artillery preparation, the enemy was routed from the town and the company continued pursuit northwest of the city ... we then established an MLR overlooking the town of Petite Roselle ... heavy enemy mortars and "screaming meemies" kept coming in during our manning of this line ... active patrolling went on in this sector ... we took Petite Roselle and, soon after, in a "march into darkness" set up a new MLR beyond the town of Furstenhausen and overlooking the Saar River...

...a few days later the company advanced across the Saar with no enemy resistance... we went out of action about March 23rd and moved to billets in Volklingen where we lived in grand style...most of the men owned a bicycle or auto ...a few days later, the company moved to Eulens, ending the month in comparative peace on the hunting grounds of Hermann Goering...

...our first move in April was to the city of St. Goarshausen, where we relieved an engineer outfit in guarding the Main Supply Route...here the company spent many days watching the power behind our armies moving up to the front... the men had plenty of target practice, shooting at mines floating in the Rhine River ...we had our first real glimpse of DP's as St. Goarshausen was the central point for repatriation...at one time we were alerted to move to a nearby town as a protective force against suspected enemy raiders...none showed up and our only casualties were a couple of drunks ... new platoon leaders in the company were Lt. Gleason and Kern...

...we moved again on the 20th of April to towns in the area of Goldbach ... the platoons were situated thirty miles apart, each with its own kitchen and CP... we spent our time clearing towns, taking more than 100 prisoners ... a lot of deer hunting was also done...

...the early part of May was spent in the town of Strass-Bessenbach, continuing the same task we had at Goldbach...for the first time since the crossing of the Saar, wine was beginning to get scarce...we continued protecting the MSR...the company enjoyed a quiet V-E day celebration ... no one knows yet who shot out all the lights in town...

...the company moved to the small village of Lohrheim on the 12th of May... a training schedule was put into effect which reminded the men of garrison life at Fort Wood ... close order drill, firing problems, and three day bivouacs were typical activities...many of our old men in the company, who were wounded in earlier engagements, began coming back...passes were issued more freely and weekly trips to Wiesbaden were arranged... the small village left the men with little recreational activities save an occasional drunk ... an Enlisted Men's club was started by the company I & E non-coms and a company newspaper, the ABLE ALLEY GAZETTE, began publishing...

... the four platoon sergeants were Armstrong, Jury, Steiner and Harmon ...

...June was the most uneventful month of the year ... we continued our stay in Lohrheim and continued the dry training schedule... men began figuring their points and a few had over 85 ... the first men to leave for a Separation Center were the mess sergeant, Pupinski, Holland and "Stupe" Granger... Red Cross donutmobiles began making weekly appearances and the company had a gala party at the EM club one Saturday night... thirty men left the company on POR shipments...

...the company made its last move for the present to the town of Nauborn near the city of Wetzlar ... the usual training schedules were written and the men ran an Expert Infantry Course ... more POR shipments left and new men came in from the 78th and 3rd Divisions ... all were high pointers ... we were now in category IV and the company was beginning to be broken up... a GI movie theatre opened in Wetzlar as did a swimming pool... the I & E classes started and 25 men attended in the first quota .. thus ends our story for now...

COMPANY "A" 276th INF. REGT.

ROLL OF HONOR

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| KILLED IN ACTION | 2 Officers 32 Enlisted Men |
| DIED OF WOUNDS | 3 Enlisted Men |
| WOUNDED IN ACTION | 4 Officers 110 Enlisted Men |
| MISSING IN ACTION | 2 Enlisted Men |
| REPARIATED | 6 Enlisted Men |

