

Our planes dropped flares)
near Cassino night before
last. We were to shoot with
direct fire, any night movements
The flares were misplaced)
The range is a bit far for
direct firing, & the town
was evacuated. Aside
from that the affair)
was a success. Our
people have "smoked" the
valley behind us. The o.p.'s
the Germans have one
murder. Ours are as bad for
them. Our 155 rifles & 8"
must bother their communications.)
I know the 105's, 155's,
4.5's & all the others really
bother the German infantry.
Yesterday saw German air)
& artillery active in our area.

) Today there has been nothing.
Tonight? The German (in English.)
news says we have "shelled" the
Monte Cassino Monastery, causing
"great damage" to the Catholic
shrine. Though I suspect a German
OP there, it has not been
harmed by us unless the long-
range boys hit it before we
got here. Since orders are to
leave it alone, I am certain
the Germans also lie. BBC
seems to have the best
news. The U.S. ^{news} is too full of
Glory & Optimism. The
Germans, naturally, are
dispensing propaganda. (NOTE:
I think this was meant to
be humor. 3-9-61. Cole)
Binoculars, compass, map,
warm clothing, small bed-
roll, pistol belt.

20th January, 1944.

Moved after dusk down "Hollywood Blvd" back south & thence west. We cleared each point timely, shells falling just behind Jess here and there. The movement went ~~more~~ nicely for a change. At 2100 we were on the road between the 36th Inf., and their artillery. The latter opened up on that hour. From then on we drove by the constant light of their flashes. Getting out and loading the destroyers into position right in the middle of a "war" was quite a thrill. We dug in by 0130, and slept in "starts" until 0645. The smoke hid the sun all

*Note: Named by Lou Wattle in my hand.

day today, The 21st of Jan.

) It is quite cold. The Germans have at least two of their 6 tube rocket mortars across the Rapido from us.

) They make a gosh-awful noise. I understand that the Germans are even scared by them, and get well away before firing them. An M-10 sustained a direct hit with a 170 m/m H.E. The concussion

hurt the men badly, but no fragmentation got to them. The Germans have

put down barrages here as they have never put them down before. A battalion of infantry apparently got across the Rapido on each side of S. Angelo.

These people are having

a pretty bad time. The bridges got shelled out, & the bridge-heads were greatly imperilled. In fact, it was feared for some time that the people who got across were lost.

22 January, 1944.

Last night artillery & automatic weapons remained quite active. We are continuing to push the bridges.

Resistance is very heavy. Some of our infantry organizations retired in disorder, leaving their equipment behind.

The Germans are now pushing patrols back onto our side of the river.

BBC & II Corps furnished

us with the great information that an amphibious landing was made at 0400 this morning. Anzio is in our

hands, the Germans report.

The force is sufficient to do a good beach-head job, but Rome is still further

away than the 28 miles on the map would indicate.

BBC says, "The Fifth Army is

pushing ahead all along the line, having made a crossing of the Rapido R. in the Liri Valley, where

we are facing the Gustav Line".

Sounds pretty easy back there in the press rooms.) The banks are littered

with the dead here. The landing up north had

gained its first objective,
the high ground behind
the port, by 0900. On the
20th I was a bit concerned
about the affair ahead, but
have steadied down in quite a
good shape. We are to go with
Col. Simmerman's crew
(Major Tim). We saw
Col. Gardner, Calahan,
Major Johnson, and all
our old friends. Gardner
was the man who had
four tanks shot out from
under him in Tunisia.
Johnson, a Capt. then, got
wounded near the end
there. He was not able
to stand the jarring of a
tank, so he rode
right along in a "peep".
Said he didn't want to

miss anything. Artillery &
"Screaming Meemies", as well
as many automatic weapons
are active opposite us. The
nebelwerfers certainly
sound awful. A pack of
coyotes is the nearest
description I can think of;
all howling on different
itches. Rumor, always
a bad thing, carries some
pretty rough stories about
what goes on on the
other side of the river.
Received orders to fire
1400 rds. at a neb., but
they were canceled. The
guide (John Smith) stood on
the road until 0300 awaiting
the ammunition. HQ failed
to tell us that they caught
the train before it left.

23 January, 1944

Fixed 180 rds. last night.)
lost bridge-heads. Beach-
head going great. Jess &
I sang duet;
"My Melancholy Baby". Lou)
just shook his head. Terry
pushed a bit of a force
across toward us, but
didn't make it stick. mgs)
very nervous all up &
down the line. Morton very
heavy & near. Was a bit)
concerned over the security
of our organization. However
after setting 2, .50 cal. mgs. &
& .30 on our flank & getting)
new countersigns, we said, "to
hell with it all.", and slept.
I told Haywood, "Some night
we are going to find ourselves)
right in the thick of a German

) infantry division". Haywood said,
"Yeah, and this is probably it".
Dark night, with light rain.

24 January, 1944.

) United Nations radio finally
quit saying we were "enlarging
the Rapido bridge-head," and
said we were forced to with-
draw back ~~again~~ across the
river. It has been enemy fire-
power that stopped the 36th.
I can't help but believe
that the 34th would have
made it. However, they can't
fight every battle. I wonder
why we don't have more
divisions here? It looks
like our little "jaunt" is
off. After the first winces,
the boys stripped down,
and were all set to take
Piedimonte (S. Germano)

Now they are ready to go ^{on} ~~and~~
waiting for a bridge-head.
Fired 436 rds. last night
between 2200 & 0200.

25 Jan, 1944

Lou says, "Poor ol' Lou is on
his last legs," and "I should
be back in Corps". At 1030
everyone quit firing in
order that our medics
could cross the Rapido and
try to help the wounded. The
river banks are a pitiful
sight. The beach-head up
north is now reported as being
15 miles long and 12 miles
deep. Rained all night.

26 January, 1944.

Up late. Raining. For some
time I have been curious
about the drawings on the
wall. There are holly wreaths

and a Christmas tree,
() with the inscription,
"Frohe Weihnachten!" I must
get a precise translation. The
3 hour truce yesterday to pick
() up wounded was a big
success. Now everyone is
busy making more casualties.
Our dough-boys have 3 carloads
() of sheep they are going to
try to penetrate a mine-
field with. There is a mine field
30 feet deep from Cassino to
() the barracks made up of
3000 S-mines. (PW report, deified
("The Paths of Glory", Humphrey
(Cobb.) German artillery very
active. Killed some men in
with us, but only two of our
own men were scratched.
() The old luck seems to be
with us. Was taking a
photo of an M-10 in

position when an air burst appeared in the view finder. I hope I got it just as it burst. Also took a picture of an ammunition pile (636) hit, and of Trocchio. Day very clear after noon. Received a package from home. Am in a bad mood for some reason. Was told of an impending move.

27 January

Shaved. Took some photos. 804th advance party joined us. "B" caught a Bomlm in a half-track. Four casualties, one bad. Corps pigeon loft got a bird back. Note said, "we are not hungry," so we return your bird.

[signed] German Soldiers.

Nice humor. Enemy artillery active. We were on the "pin" a couple of times.

28 January, 1944.

Up at 0600. Went to forward slope of Trocchio & checked for positions. Went well beyond "Cassino 3 Km" sign. Working on olive-wood pistol grips. Received letters (from Carol & Gloria). Hoffer, Hieb, Crutcher; slightly wounded, Applequist; seriously hit by 170mm. Haywood, Eller, & I really dug in. We foolishly had been sleeping without cover. Not tonight.

29 Jan.

Bet Jack Rothschild \$1000 that the invasion would take

place before 15 April,
1944; midnight.

29th January, 1944.

- 1) Lou called me back to C.P.
Told me to check with Jack
Rothschild about 4 days at
Caserta. Told me not to
- 2) return between 3 & 5 P.M.
(enemy fire - sun behind them)
Saw Jack, ate lunch, discussed
Ferguson's & Welch's appoint-
- 3) ments. (The bn. to the
last officer feels the latter
to be an error.) Decided
to sleep with "Pear." Went
- 4) up at 1400 & got my
gear together; namely, camera,
toilet articles, and money.
- 5) Took our 5 men, Crow,
John Smith, Danburger,
Riddle, & Spears, back
also at 1800. Talk with
- 6) Mish. & Rothschild. Prospects
of our movement are good.

No matter what we go into later, every day out of combat is a day more to the good. For us, even the channel invasion will be no worse than this rough-country fighting, with so many good AT positions for the other fellow. Rumor has us invading at every possible point, going to India, & of course, going home. This is the 47th time, by rumor, that we are going home. Orders apparently are being drawn up for us to turn our equipment over to the 804th, leave Italy by Feb. 15 (according to Casey),

(1) proceed to Africa, draw new equip. (804th?) and be ready for a "special mission". The order

(1) wanted "the most experienced" T.D. outfit. Apparently it was Casey who picked us. The 804th has been out of the States longer than us, and never fought a battle; never seen the enemy but once. That time they were prisoner guards taking Germans to America, & got 30 days leave. There is no justice! Slept in the C.P. truck.

30 January, 1944.

Up at 0615 & started eating with one hand & rounding up the 25 men

with the other "B" Company)
was 40 minutes late. Got
to Corps convoy assemble point.
Still had to wait an hour
(more) for certain units)
Sitting here wishing I could
write up the eventful days
in as detailed a manner
as I do the dull ones. The)
very nature of an eventful day
usually means that it must
be written up at a later
date, therefore the account)
suffers. It is reported that
the U.S. forces had
3000 casualties on the
Rapido River crossing that failed.
Total Allied more deaths estimated
in December to be 7,500,000.
Last war 5,400,000 approx.)
total for allies.

(1) War looks long each day.
31 January, 1944.

Up and did a tour of M.P.
duty from 0930 to 1230. Im
(1) no M.P., and made no
attempt to be one. Saw two
shows; "Taxe to Life", & "The
Sky's the limit". Both were
(2) good. (Saw "This Is The Army"
last night.)

1 Feb February
Tour of M.P. spent
(1) loafing. Purchased a Philippe
#2532 chronometer at the Caserta
officers PX for \$90.00. Saw
(2) two shows,
and "The leopard Man".
The latter "stunk". Food
good.

(2) 2 Feb.
Same stuff. Am in good

shape mentally. Quite happy.
Sent the chess set to Dewey)
& wrote him. Saw two movies
& a U.S.O. show. The
movies were "The Meanest
Man in the World", & "Cabin)
in the Sky". I walked out
on the latter. The "live
show" was good. On the
main street oranges are)
4 lire; on the back streets
they are 1 lira. "This Will
Be My Shining Hour." (read)
Capt. Davis 133, Lt. Hunt
135 - Good men.

3 February, 1944.

Up for breakfast for a)
change. Had long hot
shower. Bid farewell to
the bunch. We gathered
up our men & started)
back to the units at

1300. My truck driver
() ducked out to get some
liquor, and was 20 minutes
late returning. He was scared
but I didn't say anything
() to him. New rumor: The
reason we are going into this
armored battle is because
there isn't enough shipping
() space, and they want us
to lose men & equipment.
Isn't that a lulu? What a
rumor-factory the front
() is! Received a lot of mail.
(letters from Carol (2), Dewey (2),
the folks, ^{& Gloria} the Frances & Jim.)
() Also a package from home.
Capt. Clements & his the
other observers from the 804
sent us tonight. Slept at C.P.
4 February, 1944.
() Got back in time for the

show. At 2400, how awakened)
me and told me to move to
88.9-19.9 with my platoon only;
to be there at 0600. Though
the guard was to get me)
up at 0345, I had the
time on my mind, and woke
up every few minutes to
look at my watch. Got up)
& started the ball rolling. Night
very dark. Met the guide from
the 753, Co. "C", just about)
night. Pulled into their
area & dispensed. Reported
to Lt. ^{Rombo} Rothbo, and turned in.
Slept in an irrigation ditch.)
Artillery is falling everywhere,
but none is on us at the
present. Speaking of "balls of
fire", the Nebelwerfer is an)
odd sight at night. Cassino

) should fall today. Generally
Kept under cover. One pk.
tanks went up to fire on
the S. part of Cassino.
) Monte Cassino & the Monastery
are intact. The French report
Mgt. Coiro as being under their
control. How came down.
) Roberts became ill. I had
Gilbert sent up to take his
place. Read "The Rubber Band",
and turned in. Rain made
) us sleep in the M-10.
(Mouldin should draw us.)
Slept poorly. Had one guard
) posted. Possible enemy
patrol in our area. Both
sides shelling Cassino. It
won't be much good. (I hope
) no one hits the photo
shop!)

5 February, 1944.

Up about 0900. Very stiff.)

Read "The Reader's Digest")
condensation of "Behind
the Steel Wall", a story
of Germany by Arvid)

Fredborg, a Swedish correspondent,
Berlin, 1941-43. His tale is
interesting, and points to
an allied victory. One)
point he has that I have
given a lot of thought is,
why demand unconditional)
surrender? On the surface
that sounds bad, & drives
Germans to fight. However,
our terms to Italy have)
been very liberal. Why
not make up our minds
and inform the Germans
of our terms instead)
of just blindly "bashing"

() our way through to the
end. (Contrary to public
opinion, I think it will be
to Joe Stalin's advantage

() to have a peaceful, but
strong and prosperous Germany
to trade with. It will help
balance out the strength of

() Great Britain. I feel)
Stalin shrewd enough to
work this out.) It will

be interesting to watch.
() And perhaps Smuts will
have his way this time.)

A fair peace - fair to
() Germany as well as
the rest - is the only
way to insure a lasting
peace, in my mind.)

() War is foolishness,
particularly when most

of the people on both sides do not know what started the war, or what results victory will bring.

Cassino battle still raging. I wonder how Hunt is? Rein is going to hinder us. German planes bombed just N. of Cassino. I counted 17. later 24 B-26's came by. This is the first air activity in several days. The "Shingle" has been getting most of the air.

Today is very clear. Sent Watke back with temperature. Am waiting for another driver.

Last night the ration truck came up &

threw the stuff off, immediately leaving. I must speak to them.

There is no need for people to go dashing around in a panic like that.

On the evening of the 3rd, Lou was telling me,

"I received a message from the 'Old Man', 'Friends are coming', ~~So I had Mo' make a~~ have coffee ready'.

So I had Mo' make a couple gallons of coffee & waited for visitors. Pretty

soon there comes a knock on the door, & who walks in, but 2 Red Cross girls. Well, here

we are, one says, 'Where is the coffee? We've brought

for the men,"
doughnuts." Lou shakes
his head a couple of times
and then continues, "I
was dumbfounded. 'Who
told you that you
could come up here?
Don't you have any helmets?
Come on inside under
cover.' One pops right
back, 'Sure we have helmets,
don't you?' A crowd was
beginning to form. Large
numbers of Italians
as well as our men
gathered. It had only
been a short while
since the last shelling.
So I told the girls
we couldn't group the
men; to leave the
doughnuts and we would

give them out in the
evening break down of
rations. I thanked them,
asked them to leave, and
please not come up
here again. Anything
could happen. Had we
been punched up like
this the other day
we would have had
many killed instead of
one. ... [Applequist died.]
He had 14 or 15 pieces of
fragmentation in him. ...
Later one of the men comes
in and tells me, 'Capt,
you should have been
there. The girls stopped
on the way out and
said, 'My, isn't he a
crabby old man!'
I give up."

Another big German air
action just came off.
Our side really put
up the flock. Shortly
before, 8 A-36's
worked over the
area near Piedemonte.
We could see them
release the bombs, but
they fell on the far
side of Montecassino.
I gathered some straw,
intending to sleep
out, but I fear it
is starting to rain.
Hananberg says he is
ready to go home
anytime. - Wants to
make his own
excitement and
change

6 Feb, 1944.

) Night clear. Lots of enemy
artillery bouncing around.

Three particularly close ones
were Judo (A.P.s). The 4th was

) not. Bomb! - Whaannrrr! Fxxx!

Shwshwshwshwssssm. That!

Got some fragmentation in bed
with me, but did not earn a

) Purple Heart. Was awakened

by German planes unloading
on the north edge of Cassino.

Since then they have had

) two more raids, & we have

returned one. It is only noon,

so we may even hit up yet.

) Jensen came up last night to
take Wuttke's place. Since,

in any case, he will not drive for
me when I return to the half-

) tracks. I gave him \$20. &

told him he had done a good job, &
which he has.

Seeing the "Lub" reminds me of the fellow I met in Caserta. He has flown 76 missions; and his life is no picnic. Had he done $\frac{1}{3}$ as much in the air-corps he would be much benemedated. No him though. As an artillery observer - he gets what the infantry gets, - nothing. Lou came up this morning. I received (5) letters from (Carol, one from) Mrs. M., & one from Dewey last night. A Description of the surrounding panorama is worth while:- Starting to the south is Mt. Troscchio with its ancient castle located on the highest point of its barren, rocky mile-and-a-half length rising so abruptly from the floor of the valley. Looking in a clock-

wise direction to the west
we see the Hiri Valley spreading
beyond the Rapido River toward
the coastal mountains. All in
this direction is held by
the enemy. Looking westward
- it seems to be north-west to
me but I am wrong - is Montecitorio
with its huge 1400 year-old monastery.
In spite of German propaganda, I
can see no damage on it, and
we are about 2 miles off with
10 power glasses, and a beautifully
clear day. Unfortunately the
Germans still hold this ridge, &
I feel that the summit
here is very much exposed.
About 600 yds left is snow covered
Mt. Cairo, 5500 ft. tall, standing
alone. Around to the
north are taller mountains,

covered with brilliant snow,
and with soft fluffy-white
clouds overhead. These mountains
appear to be lower than Cervo
because of their greater range.
Looking on around to the
east past Cervo is mt.

Chiaia marking S. Vittore. The
latter is a shambles, a
ruined village, reduced to so
much dust and stone. I intended
to photograph S. Vittore on
the first clear day, but here
I am, unable to leave for
we are constantly alerted. Cassino
is large, but with both sides
shelling & bombing it, it will
be pretty much of a ruin
also. There is a hole in the
monastery. It may have been
either side's shell from the
location. It does not really

) matter. War has its accidents.
I know that had either side
wanted to shell it, it would be
reduced to ruins, by now. Our

) 8" & 240mm pieces can
reduce anything in this sector.
The old castle above Cassino
has been pounded & greatly

) damaged by us. It is a
shame, but who knows, history
is fickle. The historic value may
be enhanced!

) 7 Feb., 1944.

Cold! Still clear, but misty up
north. No artillery in last night.

) Battle for Cassino still raging.
Awakened at 0730 by enemy

air. Our air returned the honor.
(Wrote Carol last night.) Intended to

) write home, Dewey, & Mrs. M., but
was interrupted. Got some

artillery on us today. Also, I hear the other platoons caught it rough (way back where they are. Someone got careless. As A-36^s dove NW of Cassino, one's bombs released prematurely & landed very near us. Far enough away, though.

Jensen, Pederson, Hansen, ~~and~~ Edoukie, & I sang quite a while tonight. Artillery very active. We are sitting in our "little steel home". There are 22 fires on the hills behind Cassino.

8 February, 1944.

They tell me some only came in last night, but I never heard it. Got up @ 0730. No German planes over today.

A goodly haul. (Carol) ^{One} says,
"Be careful", Ha! Would
she be upset if she could
see where we are! Sang a
bit again tonight. It has
warmed up a bit, and is raining.
Looks like another night in the
M-10.

9 February, 1944.

Up early. Had the usual
prepared "Ham & Eggs, chopped".
This 5 in 1 ration is better
than 10 in 1 or "C". "D" & "K"
need not be mentioned because
they rank as awful in any comparison.
"B" is the best, of course. From
approximately 1030 until now we
have had air missions against the
Montecassino & behind. There
have been 4 so far at about
10 minute intervals. The first

) was as boldly executed as any I have seen. Instead of going into a line high up and diving, these 8 A-36's

) came in all at once like a swarm of bees, angry bees. The next raid was criticism,

and seemed to have better results. The next two went to the line west of Piedmonte (picked up on air photos.) There is another coming in now; 1105.

) The air boys are working hard this morning. There are 8 planes to each raid. All our boys are sitting on the turrets enjoying the show. There is apparently no flak. Two weeks ago this area was thick with

) German flak, and very accurate it was. I saw four ^{of our} planes get shot down.