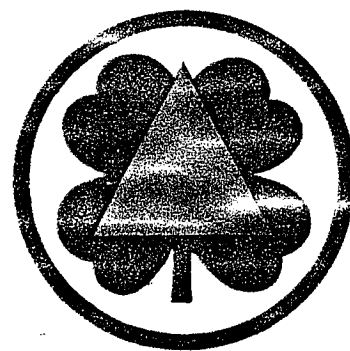


One  
Hundred  
and  
Eighty  
Days



X I I I  
CORPS

**T**O the XIII Corps, its officers and itsmen — its divisions, groups, battalions and companies of all branches, whose courage and sacrifices contributed so much, in so little time, to so great a cause.





HEADQUARTERS XIII CORPS  
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING GENERAL  
APO 463, U. S. Army

Men and Officers, XIII Corps:

June 1945.

Measured in history, 180 days is but a brief span, swift-spiced and of small account. Reckoned in hours of combat, of cold, rain, mud and sleepless darkness, 180 days can be a lifetime.

Too frequently, in the very nature of modern war, great investments of bravery, skill and personal sacrifice bring small returns in medals and battle honors. It is difficult, if not impossible, for commanders to reach all troops with a personal word of commendation and everlasting pride in their achievements.

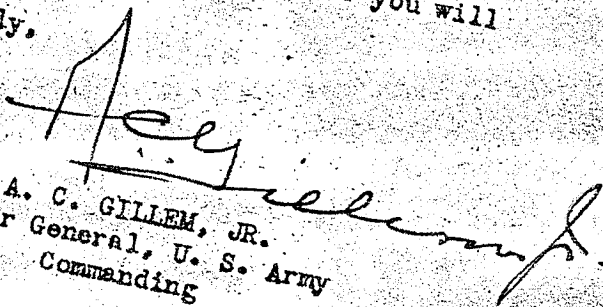
"180 Days" was written with all of you in mind. It is directed, in the main, to Corps troops -- the inarticulate battalions, groups, or separate companies seldom mentioned in the communiques.

It is the story of the XIII Corps, from Siegfried Line to Elbe -- a story of team-play, of inter-dependent units, of doughboys, tankers, engineers, cavalymen, wire crews, artillerymen, medics, and all the rest -- told in great measure through the eyes of the war correspondents.

It has been a privilege for me to have been your commander during these 180 days; as proud of you as I am, it is hard to find the proper words with which to express my thanks and appreciation for a job well done.

I can tell you only, in all sincerity, that I have never served with finer soldiers. Should this Corps be called upon for operations in another theater, I could ask for no more certain assurance of victory than to know that some, if not all, of you will be with me.

Sincerely,



A. C. GILLEM, JR.  
Major General, U. S. Army  
Commanding

## Foreword . . .

IN 180 days, the XIII Corps, its units and the divisions under its control, marched from Holland to the Elbe River deep in Germany. There it met the westward-surging Russians shortly before the close of the war in Europe.

In an attempt to present an honest, overall picture of this 300-odd mile drive, the Public Relations Section of XIII Corps has gathered together reports of the press in chronological order.

These records speak for themselves.

## 180 Days . . . .

Approximately 30 Dutch sisters in a convent in Hoensbroek, Netherlands, scrubbed away at the floors and walls of their school building in the typical sanitary Dutch manner lest the Americans find a speck of dust when they moved into their "CP." Having been told only a few days before that temporarily school was over, Dutch children in klompen, clattered around waiting impatiently for the Yanks to come, for they had already had a taste of "shocalatt" when an American division moved through the town a few days before driving the Germans before them and bringing peace to that region.

The Yanks who arrived in Hoensbroek, on November, 8, 1944, were Headquarters, XIII Corps, commencing operations under Ninth U. S. Army. Coming in on the left of XIX Corps, it found the British Army as its neighbor to the north.

Elbow room was a problem at first, but negotiations soon straightened that out, and corps was on the Western front with the 84th Infantry Division of Maj. Gen. Alexander R. Bolling and Maj. Gen. Frank A. Keating's 102nd Infantry Division on the line.

Between them and the Roer River (which was to prove a turbulent affair during the winter to come), were two German Divisions, with a total of 12 battalions committed, plus eight battalions in reserve, or an estimated total of 8300 troops.

The Corps mission was responsibility for control and protection of Ninth Army flank from Maeseyck to Immendorf. The enemy capability at the time was considered to be continued defense along the then existing line of contact and events later proved this to be justified. Six to ten battalions of field artillery were supporting him. Hostile troops at the time were situated on the high ground west of the Roer River and organized for defense in a portion of the Siegfried Line.

Throughout November, small-scale limited-objective attacks gained the Corps units possession of a new line, the northern salient of which was secured by the successful Geilenkirchen operation. The 84th Division, working under the British . . . but let's see what STARS & STRIPES had to say about it:

## Railsplitters in First Battle, Chalk Up 'Perfect Operation'

By Wes Gallagher  
Associated Press Staff Writer.

WITH NINTH ARMY, GERMANY, Dec. 1.—It was revealed today that the "Railsplitting" 84th Div. was the American unit which teamed with the British to capture the German stronghold of Geilenkirchen in a "perfect operation."

It was the first time the 84th has been in action during the war. The division is commanded by Brig. Gen. Alexander R. Bolling, who was wounded and won the DSC, during World War I. He was commissioned in 1917 from OCS and is one of the few brigadier generals in the American Army to command a division.

The 84th, a part of the Ninth Army, was loaned to the British for the Geilenkirchen operation.

On the first day of the attack one regimental combat team of the 84th smashed at the high ground east of Geilenkirchen dominating the city. The doughboys took every objective on schedule, capturing 400 prisoners and linking up north of Geilenkirchen with the British.

On the following morning another regimental combat team of Railsplitters struck north along the Wurm River.

One lieutenant colonel pushed his force through to Suggestath, two miles north of Geilenkirchen. Realizing that his unit was in a bad strategic position, he led a six-man patrol to high ground.

The patrol ran into ambush and four were killed and one wounded.

The enemy continued to defend on the west bank of the Roer, despite the fact that he was slowly being pushed back. The Corps mission at the time being to crack part of the Siegfried Line, an opportunity was thus given to study hostile tactics for "total mobilization" in defense of the Fatherland.

This particular section of the Line contained extensive fire trenches backed up with reinforced concrete pillboxes, anti-tank ditches, obstacles, minefields, dug-in and mobile tanks.

Pillboxes were usually well-manned. In addition, personnel were generally outside and adjacent to the fortifications manning AT guns, rifles and automatic weapons.

Much was written during the period concerning the low quality of the "Volksgrenadier" and the general deterioration of the German Army as a whole. Articles in various publications went to great length to describe and explain the lack of training, scarcity of equipment and supplies, and the poor morale. Troops found this not so true either individu-

### Mechanical Warfare

A German war prisoner has produced another item for the 'How's That Again Department'. One prisoner recently identified his unit as the 24th Light Uninsulated Wire Company (Mechanized). It might be added that the prisoner was taken by the 11th Cavalry-Group (also Mechanized).

ally or collectively. Emplaced in the Siegfried Line, the German soldiers put up a stiff fight. The resistance may have been due to fears of family reprisals back home, or of "being sent to Siberia" (each a currently popular form of Goebbel's propaganda against desertion or capture), or to actual threats by his own officers. Fact proved that every inch of terrain gained by Corps was the result of determined and vigorous effort and sacrifice by American troops.

Operations had produced a pronounced salient and exposed flank to the north (left) of Corps along the general line Maeseyck-Susteren-Gangelt-Linnich. For a while, the overall situation of the Western front demanded that Corps assume the defensive.

Preparation for crossing of the Roer was interrupted by the German penetration in the Ardennes to the South which caused the bulk of the Ninth Army forces to be assigned to the First Army. Turning to the defensive until a more favorable moment, Ninth Army shifted its remaining troops southward along the line and XIII Corps assumed responsibility of the entire former Ninth Army front.

The Lindern-Beeck area was cleared during December by the Corps. Said the press:

# FLAMES DESTROY DEFENSE

By Noel Monks

Daily Mail Special Correspondent

WITH XIII CORPS, Nov. 30. — THE Americans are to-night closing in on Linnich, and the fall of this River Roer town is imminent.

The drive to Linnich, which began yesterday, continued against lessening opposition, as the Germans began pulling back men and equipment across the river.

I saw some of the German defences overrun by the Americans in their initial drive to Beeck and Lindern yesterday, and it is a tribute to their fighting spirit that they got through so quickly.

Blockhouses were studded over the fields every hundred yards; dug-in Tiger tanks, with just their turrets visible, were in between the blockhouses, and scattered among these were dozens of small-arms defence posts and community-dug antitank ditches.

While the infantry closed in and isolated each blockhouse, chemical warfare units sprayed the area behind and at the sides with flames and white phosphorus.

The blockhouses were then attacked with gelignite on long poles, which were thrust through the gun apertures. More than 100 badly shaken Germans were captured in four of the blockhouses.

When our troops entered the first town along their advance line, Beeck, German dead littered the streets.

Beeck had received an artillery "serenade".

On December 4th, the 102nd Infantry Division resumed attack to complete an advance to the Roer River. The attacking regiment met heavy mortar and artillery fire from pillboxes and dug-in tanks on its front and could not advance during daylight hours. Resuming its attack at dusk by an envelopment from the right, and with another regiment attacking head-on, Linnich was three-quarters cleared of enemy by midnight, and fell early the next day.

Another regiment of the 102nd swung south during the same time and Rordorf and Flossdorf fell. As a result of these operations, the enemy was cleared from the west bank of the Roer River up to Linnich inclusive.



ROGERS' RANGERS get briefed . . . .

Preparation for the crossing of the Roer commenced immediately upon completion of the above offensive. A program of intensified reconnaissance and patrolling was instigated, and there were few nights when there were not XIII Corps men across the river sounding out the enemy's defensive positions.

Target date for the crossing being set for some time later, the delay allowed time for Operation "Dagger" to clear out the Brachelen-Hilfarth-Randerath triangle to the north in conjunction with British operations proposed to clear out the enemy west of the Roer in their sector.

The New York TIMES had this to say:

## Ninth Loses But 9 Men

### Americans Capture Brachelen, 6 Villages

By The Associated Press.

BRACHELEN, Germany, Jan. 26. — This badly battered old city, ten miles inside Germany, and six surrounding villages were in American hands tonight without an artillery shell being fired.

The last plug was knocked from the Siegfried Line in this sector at a cost up to noon of nine casualties. A hundred

Germans are prisoners and the rest have fled into the blue, tree-topped hills to the east along with the civilians.

Most of the casualties were wounded by the mine fields, as Brig. Gen. Frank A. Keating's 102d Infantry Division, whitecloaked against the snow, surged forward early this morning and overran ninety-seven pillboxes.

The division struck three regiments abreast against such light opposition that plans for an elaborate artillery barrage were canceled.

The 407th Infantry Regiment, commanded by Col. James Reed of Fort Smith, Ark., ran into some machine-gun fire, but otherwise little fighting was necessary.

The Germans had blown the bridge across the Roer River to Korrenzig, twenty-five miles southwest of Duesseldorf, the night before last and the Ozark Division's commander had sent patrols into Brachelen and a pillbox nest near here.

When patrols reported meeting no resistance, the veteran 102d Division jumped off several hours ahead of a scheduled attack, moving across the snow fields in moon light in their white capes and trousers.

The first regiment to enter this town was the 406th, in the center of the attack. A company commanded by Capt. Paul Estes of East Orange, N. J., moved in before daylight.

The captured sector, making up a bridgehead across the Roer, was triangular in shape. General Keating and Maj. Gen. Alvan C. Gillem Jr., commander of the XIII Corps, had planned a large-scale attack, believing the Germans would fight savagely to save their toehold across the Roer.



But all the news was not in the fighting:

# Yanks Use Strategy to Avoid Carnage

Henry Wales Reporting:

Chicago Tribune Foreign Service

WITH THE U. S. NINTH ARMY: —

The United States, with the loftiest living standards, automatically prices the value of American life at the highest quotation. Life is more worth living in a land where things that are luxuries elsewhere are commonplace necessities.

An illustration of the jealous frugality with which American lives are expended was Friday's rectification of the Ninth Army's northern sector in Holland.

It was achieved almost bloodlessly, instead of with perhaps 395 casualties, which a lesser appraisal of the value of those lives might cost.

The German positions already were outflanked by the advances made by British troops in the adjacent sector.

Instead of sending three battalions of infantry into a headlong attack, the American commander, Maj. Gen. Alvan C. Gillem, jr., spent two days saturating the German positions with artillery fire and aerial bombardment.

Then he sent patrols into the area. When the Yanks finally moved forward, the enemy had fled.

On the basis of the number of troops involved, 395 American families might have expected to receive casualty telegrams.

Gen Gillem's unspectacular feat spared the home front a lot of sorrow. He merely followed the American way.

And while the artillery was laying 'em right in the Jerries' back pockets, Robert Eunson of the Associated Press, was investigating the instigators of such accuracy of fire . . . . .

## Observation Outfit Hits Krauts With Geometry

By Robert Eunson

WITH THE AMERICAN NINTH ARMY — (AP) — Nobody ever heard of an artillery observation outfit until the Germans massacred that battery at Malmedy, they told me at the XIII Corps headquarters. In fact, they said, very few people know how artillery targets actually are located.

"That's easy," we said very smugly. "Airplane spotters."

"Airplanes!" shorted 1st Lt. William L. Adams of Shreveport, La. "That's what everybody thinks. The 12th Field Artillery Observation Battalion came on the beaches at D plus six and has never been relieved. It has located 2000 enemy guns and helped our artillery correct counter battery fire that knocked them out. It's all done with either sound or flash system and there isn't an airplane in the organization."

We could see Bill Adams was bent on letting folks know how an artillery observation outfit operates so we went tearing across icy roads in Germany with him in a command car driven by Pfc. William O. Galbraith of Huntingdon, Pa.

In a warm basement under an old German house whose upper stories were air conditioned by shell fire we found Lt. Col. Leslie L. Hittle of Lawton, Okla. and Major Ernest H. Johnston of Denver, Colo. They drew diagrams, displayed records stamped secret and did everything but roll on the floor before finally giving up and suggesting, "Bill, maybe you had better take him out in the field and show him."

In Church Steeple

Along the way we picked up 1st Lt. John Soso, science teacher from San Francisco.

The flash system he said, was really "flashiest" so we went there first. Since Normandy, GI spotters have hidden in more church steeples than dog has fleas. Other favorite perches are treetops and tails of gliders left behind by airborne troops.

Once at La Hays Du Puits, France, Cpl. Kenneth Patrick of Indianola, Okla., came down from his church steeple and fought with the 82nd Airborne Division.

We gathered that Patrick is a sort of legendary character, having been a sergeant three times during his career. Once he captured a German truck loaded with mines, cognac and champagne — you can see how a man like that would become popular.

S/Sgt. Clifford Hendrix, Evansville, Ind., showed us an instrument that looked like a cross between a surveyor's transit and a telescope, complete with quadrant. Hendrix said that with this gadget an observer can take a reading on the flash of an enemy gun and relay his figures back to men operating a plotting board which is a facsimile of the battlefield.

When all the observers give their readings, the plotters draw in lines and the point of intersection locates the enemy gun. When this information reaches American artillery only a few seconds pass before the Heinie gun is "kapoot".

#### Sight Enemy Convoy

While we were there the 287th gun was located by the plotting crew of M/Sgt. James Christian, Fort Lauderdale, Fla., and Sgt. August Modic, Cleveland. Their banner day was at Brest when they sighted an enemy convoy through trees on the coast and brought the German ships under fire of the Ninth army artillery.

The key to the sound system is a base containing microphones along the line for

some distance. An observer hearing enemy fire turns on a switch which starts the mikes, which in turn control



#### THE 265TH sounds off . . . .

what looks like a motion picture projector.

Capt. Ernest C. Parker of San Antonio, Texas, said each gun makes a little sound pattern all its own on film and by reproducing directions on the plotting board again the intersection of lines gives the position. Super charts and other little gadgets make corrections for wind and rain — and then someone gets hurt.

This work takes highly intelligent GI's who know their trigonometry and geometry. The crew we visited had used up 200,000 feet of film and about 75 dozen pencils in locating 1,050 guns.

Meanwhile some of the doughs got a chance to rest . . . .

## Control Rest Center Has Home-Like Flavor

HEERLEN, Jan. 31 — We walked into the place right in the midst of a super dance, and immediately saw one of the reasons why the Control Rest Center is such a favorite with the GI guys.

In looking around the area, we were met by Maj. Truman Alford, a Many, La., man, who is responsible for the remarkable CRC that has been set up for its troops.

As he explained, "This spot has been established to give the front line troops regular rest periods of 48 hours, free from war activities; to afford them all best conveniences possible, in billets, mess, lounges, and entertainment."

The theme of the center, to leave the men alone, on their own, is very sincerely carried out under Major Alford's system, the men having

responded in true, appreciative fashion, setting a clean record of no disciplinary action needed during the entire period of the center's existence, since mid-December.

Hitler has unknowingly contributed much to the success of this set-up, inasmuch as all equipment and furnishings have been "borrowed" from Germany, and put to good use. The Major's special pride is a new 26 man shower room, fixtures also donated by Nazis, which was started from "nothing at all on hand", and has blossomed out to one of the finest features of the living quarters.

Then, of course, there is the beer parlor, the reading-writing-lounge-around-in-rooms, the movies and USO shows, "donut dugout", swimming pool, free dental service, and other accommodations of A-1 variety.

The homey atmosphere of the whole area is increased greatly by the ever cheerful, ever welcome presence, at dances, "Cafe", and lounges, of Misses Hazel Worden and Ilse Schluter, of the ARC, two (sigh . . .) pretty pigeons who are deserving of loads of orchids. Ilse, better known as "Brooklyn", generously, patiently and with masterful talent, adds a special feature in sketching pencil

portraits of any GI desiring one for mailing home.

The CRC "chow" is a story in itself . . . best meals we have wrapped these aging chops around in this Army life, and served under top-order conditions . . . . . poked our noses into the kitchen and bumped into Lt. Richard Sullivan's first cook, Sgt. William Evans, who showed us the workings behind the swell meals and menus . . . all best of food, and most careful management goes into every meal set on the table.

We readily agreed that we had never seen anything like this rest establishment and wished we were proficient enough of speech to give some expression of gratitude to the Major and his efficient staff, but a letter from Pvt. Howard Wahlstrand, of the 17th Recon, gives an idea of the Joes' feelings about the privileges arranged for them here. Wahlstrand wrote, "The genuine hospitality and courtesies are of the highest. The food, accommodations, entertainment also are the same, despite conditions being as they are. It's the closest I've experienced to civilian life in the U. S., since I left the States a year ago." He closed with his thanks to the CRC CO, his staff, and the ARC girls, quite understandable, we believe.



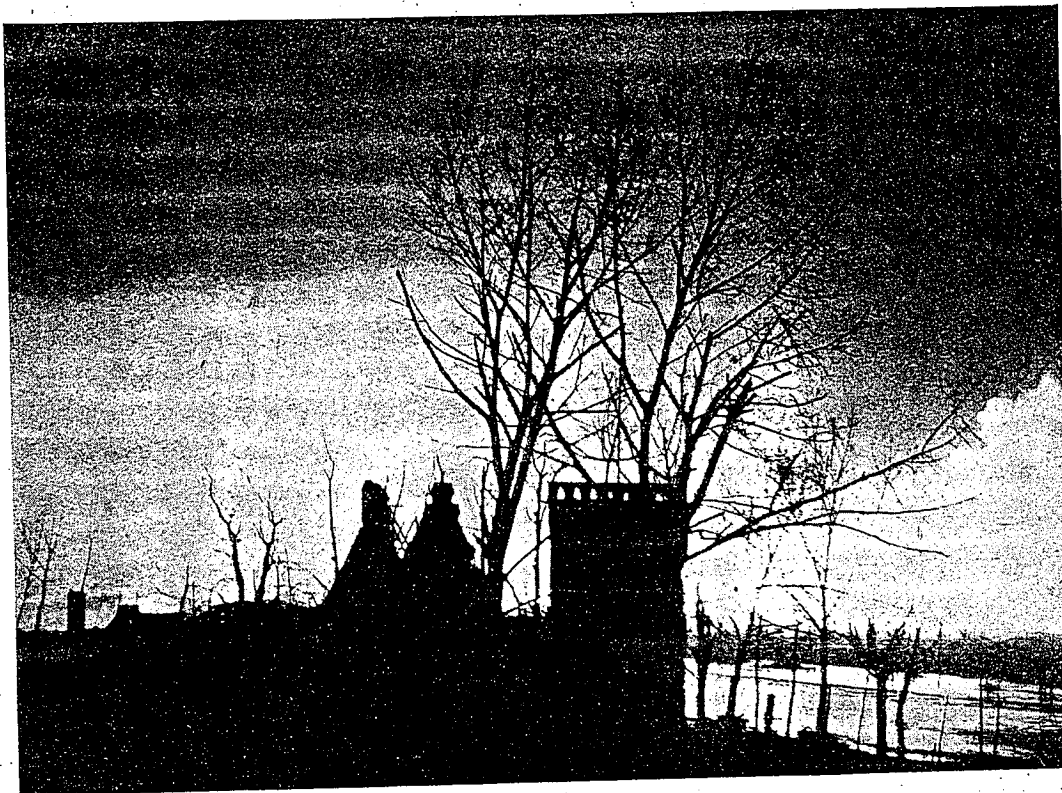
THE ROER at its worst . . . .

A defensive status was resumed by XIII Corps after the Brachelen operation to enable proper build-up, regrouping and planning for the crossing of the Roer River.

Originally scheduled for February 10th, the attack was delayed by floods caused by the

manipulation by the enemy of dams upstream. At places the width of the river changed from an normal of 25-30 yards to 400 to 2000 yards. But slowly the waters receded.

Then . . .



230245A FEB 45 . . . .

# 9th Crosses Roer

## Shoves Off After Barrage

By Ernest Leiser

Stars and Stripes Staff Writer

WITH NINTH ARMY, Feb. 23 — The Ninth Army crossed the River Roer today.

Following a thunderous, 45-minute saturation barrage by nearly 2,000 artillery pieces, the long-awaited attack shoved off at 0330. Assault boats carried the first waves of infantrymen across the surging river while vast concentrations of machine guns shot tracers at the Nazi front-line positions to cover their advance.

Most of the troops, especially in the central and southern sectors of the assault front, were forced to make the crossing in the paddle-operated assault boats, and upsets were frequent as the river flow forced the boats far downstream and against partly-submerged trees on the river's normal banks. Life preservers, issued before the attack, held drowning casualties down.

## By Bridge And Boat

At 2:45 a. m. the earth leaped to the thunder of thousands of guns. There were 240-mm. monsters, Long Toms, 105s, 75s. The guns of tanks and tank destroyers, flak artillery and captured German rockets joined the barrage. A quarter-million shells fell on the German positions. But some Germans lived to answer with mortars and artillery zeroed in on the river crossings.

At 3:30 the barrage lifted; the troops started across the dark, swirling water in rubber and wooden assault boats, ducks, alligators, amphibious tanks. Some boats were smashed by enemy fire, others by plastic mines floated downstream by the Germans, and still others were wrecked by iron spikes and barbed wire set under water. But many boats got safely across. The night before, engineer patrols had sneaked steel cables across the river, and these had remained slack, submerged and undetected during the day. Now they were pulled taut, out of the water, and swaying foot bridges were strung across in a matter of minutes. (TIME.)

# Juelich Won As 1st and 9th Span the Roer

## Bastion East of River Taken With 5 Other Towns

By Russell Hill

By Wireless to the Herald Tribune  
Copyright, 1945, New York Tribune Inc.

SUPREME HEADQUARTERS, Allied Expeditionary Force, Paris, Feb. 23. — The American 1st and 9th Armies crossed the flooded Roer River onto the Cologne plain just before dawn today to attack the modern and intricate belt of fortifications which the Germans have been building for the last four months to defend the approaches to the industrial Rhineland.

In the face of intense concentrations of German mortar fire the Americans swarmed across the swiftly flowing Roer in assault boats, ducks and alligators and on infantry bridges.

In a matter of hours 9th Army troops stormed the important city of Juelich, on the east bank of the Roer and twenty-eight miles by road due west of Cologne. The old walled citadel at the northern edge of Juelich was holding out, but the Germans were reported cleared from the rest of the city.

### Five Other Towns Taken

Five smaller places likewise were taken in the 9th Army's initial assault. One was Boslar, east of Linnich and 3,000 yards from the Roer. Its capture represented the longest advance beyond the Roer thus far reported. One-mile and two-mile gains were said to be general on the 9th Army front. The other four places taken were Glimbach and Gevenich, northeast of Linnich, Rurich, northeast of Linnich, and Seigersdorf, 4,000 yards southeast of Juelich.

American assault troops were reported well across the Juelich-Linnich road and were said to be "getting onto" a ridge that overlooks the Roer from the east.



EVERYBODY had praise for their Medics . . . .

# Engineers' Nightmare

(From Stars and Stripes)

"Circumstances similar to those we faced in the crossing of the Roer constituted probably the one problem they omitted during our assault crossing training at Ft Belvoir," said Col. William L. Rogers, commander of the 1141 Engr.

Combat Group. "It was an engineer's nightmare."

"And if, a year ago, anyone had said this Roer crossing was possible, I'd have considered him mad."

At H-hour, the rate of flow of the stream was nine feet per second,

approximately six miles per hour. All engineer bridging equipment needed in the crossing has no rated capacity faster than seven feet per second. In other words, Rogers said, the bridges supposedly will not carry a load in water faster than the seven feet per second maximum.

"Coincident with the assault boat jump-off," Rogers said, "engineers began construction of footbridges across the stream."

The first footbridge was completed in relatively quick time, but a lucky shell hit broke two cables that held it in place and it washed downstream. Another was started, but rushing waters uprooted a tree which fell and broke it in two.

"Other XIII Corps engineers with bulldozers started building approach roads for treadway bridges," Rogers said.

"When one of the bridges was well under way, enemy artillery opened up and annihilated the work already accomplished. It was started again and completed, but enemy aircraft scored a direct bomb hit. The entire bridge sank. Attempted for the third time, the bridge was completed."

Units attached to the 1141st Group for the operation included the 279th Engineer Combat Battalion, 1276th Engineer Battalion, 989th Engineer Treadway Bridge Company, 70th Engineer Light Ponton Company, and the 251st Engineer Combat Battalion.

The 171st Eng. Comb. Bn., under command of Lt. Col. Charles R. Keasey rebuilt bridges four times during the first two days of operation. Swift current

carried away the first; the second was demolished by a direct mortar hit; the third was destroyed by debris drifting downstream; another direct hit cut the anchor cable in the fourth attempt. Only the fifth time did the battalion succeed.

The support bridge was damaged by two separate air attacks, but the 171st kept traffic moving by constant repairs. Assisted by the first platoon of 989th Engr. Treadway Bridge Co., under 1/Lt. James B. Conyers, they constructed the treadway bridge despite small arms fire. It was completed by 1800 on the first day but just as the first tank was ready to roll across the bridge, an air attack smashed the whole project, so it had to be entirely reconstructed.

Bombing attacks on the second day by jet propelled planes damaged the foot and infantry bridges which were quickly repaired by Co. A., 171st Engr. Combat Bn., under command of Capt. Edward Pecteau of Houston. The treadway was under the combined command of Capt. Harvey Heine of Holbrook, N. Y., and Capt. Richard Seidel of Canton, Ohio.

"The most difficult order I ever had to give was to start immediate reconstruction of the destroyed treadway bridge because I knew the men were out on their feet due to the tremendous effort they had put into the initial construction," said Lt. Col. Albert Boehm, of Irvington, N. Y., 1149th Engr. Combat Group CO, who served as overall commander of the operation. The 1149th is composed of the 171st, 279th and 292nd Engr. Combat Bns., 73rd and 74th Engr. Light Ponton Cos. and the 989th Treadway Bridge Co.

## Orders Are Orders

With THE XIII CORPS . . . March 20. — Because they had to unload 57 cases of rations from one of their unit's trucks to allow it to be able to cross the Roer on a light bridge, five men of the 3222nd Quartermaster Service Company found themselves in on a three day stretch of guard duty crammed with plenty of action.

Cpl. George E. Jones, Stamford, Ky., and his detail were ordered to guard the rations until such time as the truck could return for the load. Jones and his men piled the cases in the cellar of a three story building right on the banks of the river, and took shelter there. No sooner had they settled down for their tour of watch, when the house received three direct hits from enemy artillery. The

men left the basement long enough for the house to burn down, and then went back to their ration guard post. An ammunition truck parked outside the building was also hit, and the men watched it burn from the basement.

Two and a half days later, Capt. Proctor, Service Co., 407th Infantry, returned to the basement, found no house, but discovered Cpl. Jones, with his detail of Pfc. Jesse Jackson and Pfc. Alfred Morgan, Newark, N. J., Pfc. Stanley R. Copes, Jr., New York City, and Pvt. Patrick Tinsley, Dallas, Tex., still guarding the rations.

"They obeyed the orders even after everyone went off and left them," he commented.

After the Roer crossing, the establishment of a bridgehead, and consolidation and exploitation as far north as Erkelenz, there remained the continuation of the push east and north.

In the States, the headlines said . . . .

## Gillem Breaks Loose

With the U. S. Ninth Army, Feb. 27 (Delayed). (AP) . . . Lt. Gen. William H. Simpson disclosed tonight that it was units of Maj. Gen. Alvan C. Gillem's XIII Corps which broke loose today in a dash for the Rhine.

Gillem was a pioneer in armoring the U. S. Army. He started out 10 years ago with Lt. Gen. George S. Patton Jr., and Maj. Gen. Ernest M. Harmon to convince the American Army it must concentrate on tanks. But when the actual fighting began, Gillem was kept at home to train men while other armored command generals were riding through Africa and France.

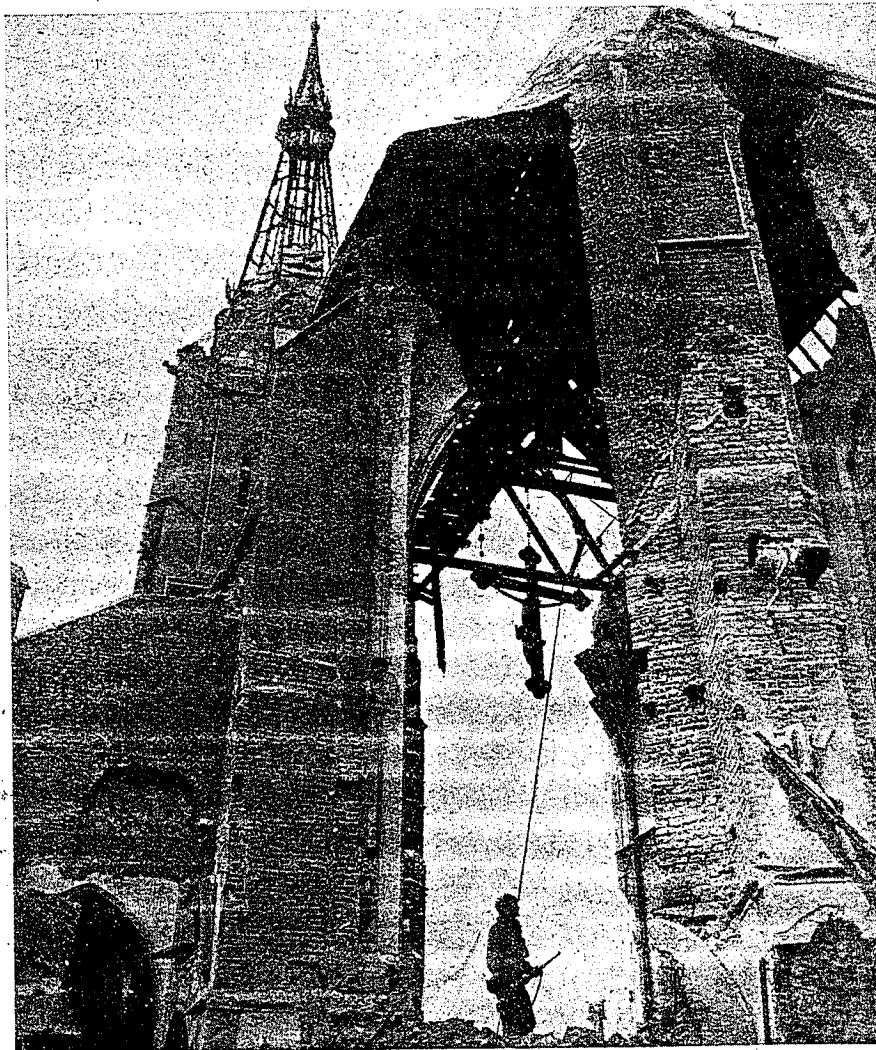
When Patton was given command of the 2nd Armored Division, Gillem got a brigade command within that unit.

Later he activated the 3rd Armored Division and still later, in February, 1942, the II Armored Corps.

He became the Chief of the Armored Force at Ft. Knox, Ky., in May 1943, and in December of that year he assumed command of the XIII Corps at Ft. Du Pont, Del.

He began training tank men for the African campaign on the deserts of Arizona and California, and 60,000 men who later fought in Africa learned from Gillem how to use their armor.

The small, hard-fisted, 56 year old general . . . brought the XIII Corps overseas in July 1944. The corps has been in operation in England, France, Belgium, Holland, and Germany, but this is its first really big show.



ERKELENZ . . . .



The STARS and STRIPES had this to say about the operations . . . .

# War Moving As Fast As...

WITH THE NINTH ARMY, Mar. 2—It's still a military secret on this front to say which division is where, but here's how fast this war is moving:

It's moving so fast that when American troops captured one town, they were happy to find that the electric power and telephone connections were still working by courtesy of a large German city nearby which was still in Nazi hands. By the time the telephone operators in the big city realized that the people in this town calling Berlin were American soldiers, the Americans were already walking into the big city.

It's moving so fast that a bewildered MP walked up to Capt. Horace Sutton, New York, of the 102nd Division, and said, "Look, Captain, my outfit just took this town a couple of hours ago and they put me in charge of a houseful of PW's and now my outfit's not here anymore and I'm all alone and I don't know where they went to and these PW's are getting hungry. What shall I to?"

It's moving so fast that a Quarter-master outfit, trying to keep up with the rest of the division which had been racing ahead all morning, pulled into one small town, far behind the war, to find some PW's still sitting in the cellar of their building, just waiting for somebody to stop long enough so that they could surrender.

## Cold Beer on Bar

It's moving so fast that doughfeet walking into a bar of a newly-taken town (just to see if there were any snipers) found three glasses of beer untouched, on the table, still cold.

It's moving so fast that some divisions often moved their CP's three times in a single day, and many regiments didn't even bother to take their equipment off their trucks. They just stayed mobile. And the guys with the most undesirable jobs were the liaison officers who could never be absolutely positively sure where in the hell their outfit was.

It's moving so fast that any town, whose capture is more than a day old, is considered rear echelon, a place fit only for horseback and bicycle riding, barbers, and soldiers wearing tophats sitting on luxurious sofas in front of rubbled buildings, looking at big German picture books of the 1936 Olympics in Berlin.

It's moving so fast that Red Cross girls are handing out doughnuts and chewing gum on a quiet dirty little street that used to be called Screaming Meemie Alley only a week ago. It's in a forgotten town called Linnich on the banks of peaceful looking river called the Roer.

It's moving so fast. . . .



6TH TD units saw many like this . . .

## Fifth's Tanks Race Through Nazi Defense

By a Stars and Stripes Staff Writer

WITH FIFTH ARMD. DIV., March 2—This is still the doughfoot's war, and it always will be, but these tanks have been doing a big job these past few days. They've been slicing the badly-confused Nazi defense into twisted, torn ribbons. The Nazis still sweating it out on the western banks of the Rhine must be wondering today if there will be any roads to Berlin tomorrow.

These tanks have been busting wide open on a narrow front, sweeping past entrenched gun positions, fortress towns, disorganized infantry and enemy tanks, and punching holes that spread so fast that they can't be plugged.

And, in this sector, it hasn't been simple. The Nazis have been waiting for a long time. On one field, 5,000 yards long and wide, partially encircled by thick forest, the Krauts have parked about two dozen AT guns plus a lot of



SP guns and 88s, all carefully dug in, all aimed across the flat field that our tanks would have to cross.

#### Race Across Open Field

But there was no detouring, no alternative, and Combat Command B, of the Fifth Armd. decided that it would be far more expensive in casualties to make it a slow, slugging fight, than it would be to race across the field full speed, all guns firing. And that's just what they did.

Some of the tanks didn't make it. The slippery-squashy mud bogged some of them down and they became dead ducks for the AT guns. Invariably,

though, even though a tank was hit, the crew stayed as long as the gun would shoot.

It was that way with the boys of Co. B. of the 81st. The first shot knocked out the treads of a tank commanded by Sgt. Thomas Brock. Brock and his gunner, Cpl. George Cummings, of Williamsport, N. Y., simply stayed put, kept firing at the Panther tank, finally got it just before their own tank was hit again and set afire.

The same thing happened to Cpl. John Castleman, whose accent is strictly Texas. Castleman also stayed put, shot it out with a Panther. He doesn't know whether or not he got him and he's frank about that. But the point is, he stayed.

From the Pittsburgh Press . . . . .

## Germany Reaps Whirlwind As Yanks Smash Cities Flat

By Gault McGowan

North American Newspaper Alliance.

WITH THE U. S. THIRTEENTH CORPS ON THE COLOGNE PLAIN... (Delayed) American troops were advancing too rapidly today to make the world safe for democracy. In several captured towns and villages there were still a few habitable houses.

Brig. Gen. Richard Nugent's Thunderbolts and Brig. Gen. Roland P. Shugg, commanding the Thirteenth Corps artillery, did their best to lay waste all buildings ahead of the advancing troops. But the advancing men and tanks of this hitherto anonymous corps swept up the thin carpet of miserable and perplexed defenders by overrunning the bomb lines and the barrage lines almost as quickly as the air force and gunners could move them forward.

In one place the American troops went in so fast that municipal policemen came out to help the Nazi troops making a frantic last stand as they hoped for reinforcements that never came.

#### Everything a Target Now

"The Krauts are getting out so fast we don't get a chance to hit them," complained Major Walter Olsen of Chicago, Gen. Shugg's counterbattery officer. "We were only able to give each town about 700 shells before the doughboys got in."

Officially this shelling and bombing is necessary because the Nazis, technically at least, defend each group of houses, since they have not declared any of these towns and villages open places.

#### 1918 Job Being Finished

The thousands of American and British veterans of the last war would like to be here. Every American Legion Post in the United States and every group of British war veterans would thrill with grim satisfaction. At



HABEN SIE pistole? . . . .

last we are finishing an unfinished business.

The results of the London blitz are as nothing compared with the going over we are giving the Germans here. It is a plague Hitler brought on his own people and only now do they realize it.

#### They Need the Lesson

They needed this lesson and those who want the war to end tomorrow should have their hopes deferred until all Germans in the east and west, the north and the south, have learned what war really means on their own soil and in the midst of their own homes.

The Germans believed this could never happen to them. It's a real kindness doing it this way. It has solved all doubts as to how to deal with Germany after the war. It has solved their economic problems for them already, because they have enough rebuilding to do to occupy them profitably for 100 years.

# Soviet Brass Impressed

## They Praise Our Tactics Of Breakthrough And Encirclement

By Max Lerner

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PM, Inc.)

WITH THE 9TH U. S. ARMY IN GERMANY, Mar. 3.— Two Soviet Major Generals came down to look us over on the Western Front.

They were greatly impressed by what they saw, especially the extent to which American forces are armored and motorized, and by our use of breakthrough and encirclement tactics.

They, in turn, were a treat for thousands of American soldiers who saw them pass. Many a GI stared unbelievably, thinking that advance units of the Red Army had come all the way through Germany and crossed the Rhine to meet the Americans on the Western Front.

The two Soviet Generals and their staffs were dressed in resplendent uniforms, with long field coats of a rich, purplish material, tight green trousers and long black boots, and gold stars glittered on their shoulder insignia. In clothes they outshone the neat but dull-colored uniforms of the high American officers, and also the racier appearance of the British members of the party.

The Soviets had a right to put on the dog. They were the first important Soviet military mission to tour the Western front lines. They were a sign of the resolve made at the Yalta Conference for closer military co-operation between the Anglo-American and Soviet military.

The mission is headed by Maj. Gen. V. Dragoun, charged with repatriating Soviet prisoners of war and civilians and formerly Commander of a Red Army Corps, and Maj. Gen. I. Suslaporov. Head of the Soviet Military Mission to SHAEF and formerly Military Attache in Paris in 1940. With them were Col. G. V. Maluga and Lt. I. Rogov. The latter acted as interpreter and on the side showed a command of rich American slang.

The British officers who came along, were headed by the chief liaison officer of the 21st Army Group. Col. Craig Alderman, Chief of Staff of the 13th Army Corps of the Ninth Army, headed the escorting group of American officers.

### 'Minor Crisis'

The Russians spent a ten-hour day, from nine to seven, observing how the

13th Army Corps, considered the most successful thus far in the offensive, goes about the business of driving the German Army back against the Rhine. The previous day they had similarly watched the Canadians in action and had lunched with Marshal Montgomery. Thursday evening Gen. Simpson was host at dinner.

Maj. Gen. A. C. Gillem, Jr., 13th Corps, made available to them all the plans and intentions of the present offensive and presented them with a full file of the 13th Corps operation orders, its cover decorated by crossed American and Russian flags and with the names of the Generals. A minor military crisis occurred among the Americans when it was discovered that Gen. Suslaporov's name was spelled wrong, using "t" instead of "p", but a draftsman task force was detailed to straighten out the line, and soon the situation was in hand.

Everyone was cordial throughout, even when Gen. Gillem, explaining how he happened to know several Russian words, mentioned that he had served in the American Army in Russia in 1918 and 1919. For a moment the silence was so complete you could hear a protocol drop, but the Russians never blinked, nor betrayed their knowledge that the Americans at that time were fighting the new Soviet Government. Everyone had the happy thought how far things had changed since then. Everyone was also pleased with the present military situation.

The generals were struck by the great technical achievement that our Army represents, particularly in such phases as engineering, bridging, supplies and traffic control. They were impressed by the organization of command posts and by the efficiency and simplicity with which they are run.

Their only further comment on this score was that the Russian divisional and regimental command posts are never more than a few kilometers behind the front line fighting, even at times of the most rapid advance; and that both divisional and regimental commanders must have observation posts on the very edge of the front.

They were pleased by our tactics of breakthrough and encirclement in this offensive. Most of all they were impressed by the armored strength and mobility of our forces.

## Nazis Defense North of Krefeld

By Ernest Leiser

Stars and Stripes Staff Writer.

WITH NINTH U. S. ARMY, Mar. 4—The Germans were rolling up what was left of their defense line west of the Rhine today, pulling it north of Krefeld, as new American elements swung eastward and punched their way near the river's edge.

Official reports, which a week ago were describing U. S. bridgeheads east of the Roer, now spoke of the dwindling Nazi "bridgeheads" west of the Rhine and told of Germans fleeing across the river in an effort to form new lines on its east bank.

The last major German "bridgehead" on the northern plain had been squeezed to a 20-mile strip about eight to ten miles deep, running from Duisburg to Wesel. Ninth Army and Canadian First Army Forces, newly linked, were jointly pushing the enemy back toward the Rhine.

### 84th Beyond Moers

The 84th Inf. Div., which had been slashing north, veered toward the Rhine. On the heels of yesterday's capture of Kempen and Huls after an eight-mile advance, the 84th pounded east today beyond Moers.

North of the 84th, tankers of the Fifth Armored Div., who had crossed nine miles of Rhineland yesterday, drove ahead today and were reported near the river's west bank.

## 9th Army Cuts Escape Route

By Ernest Leiser

Stars and Stripes Staff Writer

WITH NINTH U.S. ARMY, Mar. 5—The German bridgehead west of Wesel shriveled into an escape gap only ten miles wide today as the Ninth Army spread out on the Rhine River along a 30-mile front.

With all bridges from Neuss up to the still-standing railroad and highway spans at Wesel believed blown, the eastward-fleeing Nazis were crossing the Rhine by ferry in desperate efforts to withdraw to the far banks. The Fifth Armored Div., slashing through to the river at Orsoy, pounded at the rear of a bumper-to-bumper German convoy headed from Rheinberg to the Orsoy ferry, and reported considerable destruction.

The 84th Inf. Div., which entered Homberg last night, completed the capture of the town today. The 334th Regt. pushed into the town, aided by the

333rd in mopping up operations. The 335th Regt. shot through heavy enemy artillery to reach the Rhine beyond Homberg.

### Homberg Bridges Blown

At the river, it was discovered that the two bridges at Homberg had been blown. Reports said the bridges at Duisburg had been knocked out as well. The three bridges at Dusseldorf and the Adolf Hitler Bridge at Uerdingen had been destroyed earlier.

Today's destruction, it was believed, left no bridges standing in this area except those at Wesel.

## War Speeds Past Krefeld

By Bob Eunson

Associated Press War Correspondent

KREFELD, Germany, Mar. 4 — This Rhine city's 120,000 civilians, engulfed by the swift American attack this morning, were going about their usual business today.

XIII Corps doughboys were too busy rounding up German soldiers to pay much attention to the civilians.

Wide-eyed men and women stood on street corners, apparently surprised that they weren't all being massacred. Little children and some of their elders dared to wave to the Americans. If one of them was asked the way, he insisted on coming along as a guide.

When the American attack began, Krefeld still had telephone communication with Berlin—a matter which was swiftly taken care of. Electricity, food and water were abundant today.

Most of the stores that hadn't been wrecked by Allied air raids were open. Overcoated German women rode their bicycles and carried shopping bags. Business men carried brief cases and one old gent made it his business to go around with a can of whitewash, painting over all Heil Hitler signs that he could find.

### Photogs Honored

Three Army Signal photo men, the 122nd CAU of the 167th Signal Photo Co., were cited by Maj. Gen. A. C. Gillem, Jr. XIII Corps commander, for their coverage of corps activities. They are 1/Lt. Paul W. Calvert, of Alhambra, formerly of the Los Angeles Times; T/3 Charles E. Love, Los Angeles, former motion picture technician; and T/4 Warren King, also of Los Angeles and a former publicity photographer for Universal Studios.

## XIII CORPS TEAM FLANKS DRIVE TO THE RHINE

WITH XIII CORPS. — After rolling up the cities of Dulken and Viersen in a matter of hours, three divisions, one of them armored, executed a literal "right flank" confusing Jerry no end, and thus poised side-by-side on the Niers Canal, they bridged the same overnight and took off the next morning on the straight drive that took XIII Corps to the Rhine.

Ahead lay the large industrial cities of Krefeld, Moers and Homberg, but rather than acting as delay points, they merely proved added "plums" in the spearheading of the Ninth Army drive by the corps. Covering more than 50 miles in seven days, taking over 12,000 prisoners, overrunning hundreds of enemy guns and causing mass confusion in the German rear areas, the Fifth Armd. and the 84th and 102nd smashed the crumbling Nazi defenses.

Rolling across the bridges erected by combat engineers during the hours of darkness, the Fifth Armd., under Maj. Gen. Lunsford Oliver, was in Anrath one night and in Fischeln the next.

Running as centre, the Ozarkers, under Maj. Gen. Frank Keating, plunged through to Krefeld where they camped on the outskirts one night and took their part of the city the next morning.

Making a wide end run, the Railsplitters, under Maj. Gen. A. R. Bolling, crossed the canal, cleaned up Kempen and Huls and then swung in to coordinate with the 102nd the next morning in knocking out Krefeld. With a normal population of 171,000, the place still had 120,000 and more when the two divisions mopped it up.

Shortly, in line with the continued policy of keeping Jerry confused, Maj. Gen. A. C. Gillem, Jr., corps commander, sent the tankers of the Fifth dashing north and then northeast of Krefeld where they ultimately bottled up several hundred Krauts trying to cross the Rhine above Orsoy.

After cleaning up its part of Krefeld the 84th pushed on to Moers and Homberg and reached the Rhine.

## VAST NAZI STORES TAKEN IN DRIVE

WITH XIII CORPS. — Operation Grenade not only yielded more than 12,000 prisoners, but XIII Corps units, in their drive from the Roer to the Rhine overran, destroyed or captured tremendous amounts of military equipment that the Jerries must sorely miss.

Included in the bag were: 122 88 mm. guns, eight Mark IV, two Mark V, one



ORDNANCE refitted Nazi weapons . . . .

U. S. light tank (converted), 27 tanks and assault guns SP, 50 75 mm. AT, 35 AA, five 170 mm. guns, five 75 mm. howitzers, 61 miscellaneous artillery pieces.

Much of the artillery was promptly turned around after capture and used on the fleeing Jerries, as plenty of ammunition of all calibres was likewise seized.

In excellent shape, and ready for use were 58 locomotives and innumerable railroad cars.

The push proved so rapid that the Germans did not have time to destroy three warerooms packed with uniforms, nor three railroad cars loaded with explosives.

On reaching the Rhine goal, the doughboys took a breather while Corps Artillery outfits set up shop for a softening-up shower on the Nazis who had hoped to find security and safety on the eastern side of the Rhine.

The correspondents were making the rounds of the Gunners' demonstrations.

Vic Jones, Boston Globe, 11 March said:

Remember the 557th Field Artillery, which I discovered and dubbed "The Yankee Battalion" because it boasted so many New Englanders?

Well, now they're claiming they fired the first shot across the Rhine exactly a week ago—from Viersen to Mundelheim. Number one gun of C Battery yanked the first lanyard.

# Agitators Agitating Essen

By Ernest Leiser

Stars and Stripes Staff Writer

WITH NINTH U.S. ARMY ARTILLERY ON THE RHINE, Mar. 12—The ugly green snout of the eight-inch "Agitator" was pointed toward Essen across the Rhine some 15 miles away.

Pfc. Elta Juno, of Altamar, N.Y., yanked the lanyard. Shingles and plaster fell from nearby houses, and the ground shook for a mile around.

Thirty seconds later, that shell, and others like it came whistling down into Essen, site of the giant Krupp plant.

Back at XIII Corps Fire Direction Center, a colonel showed the arcs of target on the map, showed how the big eight-inch jobs would take care of Essen, where the 240 mm howitzers would hit and then the 155 Long Toms and the 155 and 105 howitzer. Near the river's edge the mortars plunked into the factories along the east bank.

Some 3,500 to 4,000 shells on an average day are being pumped into what was once the world's richest and most concentrated industrial area. On some days, it runs up to 10,000.

If a factory even looks as though it might want to be in operation, they target it. If a train heaves into sight, they plaster it. Anything that moves is considered as a potential fire mission.

"The other day," the colonel recalled, "one FA Bn. sent some 155s into an ammunition factory in Duisburg. They

started fireworks that looked like the Fourth of July. And there's a synthetic gas and oil plant we hit recently that's still burning."

At XIII Corps headquarters, Lt. Col. Claude F. Clayton, of Tupelo, Miss., one of the men coordinating the artillery assault, described the Ruhr, already badly beaten up from aerial attack. "What we're going to do now is to finish its reduction," he said.

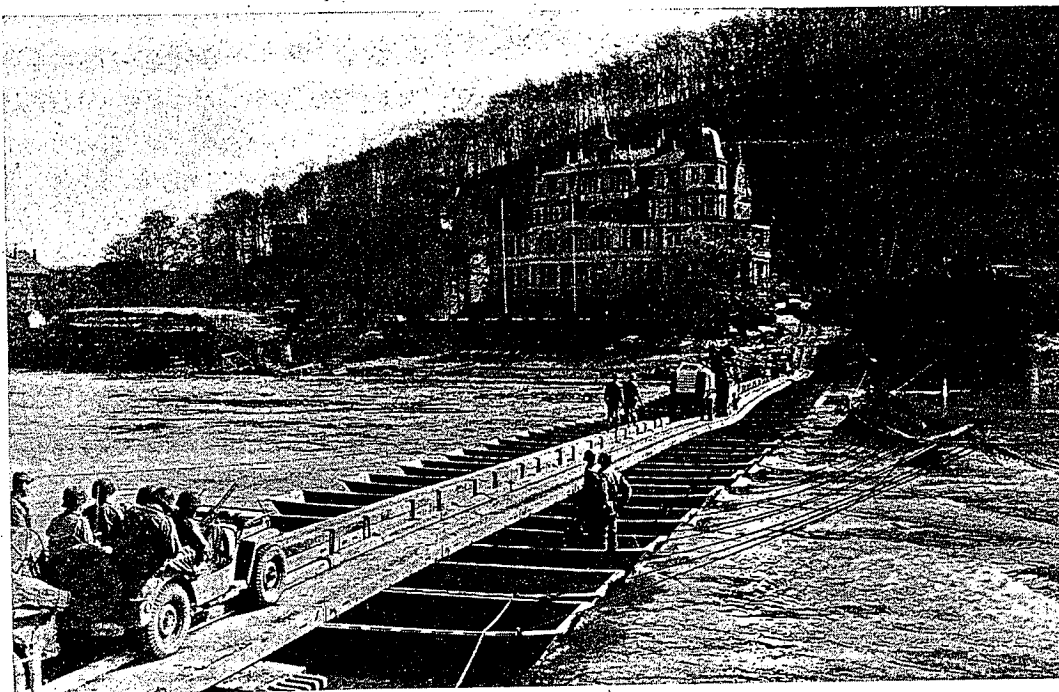
Over the Rhine opposite Duisburg in the Piper Cub piloted by Capt. John Lyder, of Paola, Kan., you could see what the artillery had condemned to death. For miles east of the river, until the view faded into haze, acre on acre of low-lying factories, topped by thousands of smokestacks, stretched out along the banks of the Ruhr River. They were already badly scarred, and smoke came from only a few chimneys, and those not for long. Occasionally you could hear a shell going over you and see it explode just in front of the haze, adding to it. There were almost no signs of life.

## Fires 150,000th Round

WITH XIII CORPS IN GERMANY—Maj. Gen. A.C. Gillem, Jr., corps commander, pulled the lanyard on the "Long Tom" for the 150,000th round of corps artillery. The 155mm gun was in the 561st FA Bn. (STARS and STRIPES)



THE GENERAL fires the 150,000th round . . . .



MINDEN BOUND on light pontons . . .

In their breather, the Infantry Divisions found time to explore the German installations east of the Rhine, by numerous water trips. Not all of the reconnaissance missions were easy ones. Of 16 men in one patrol only two returned. That was at Uerdingen, yet at Duisburg German civilians kissed the feet of Ninth Army doughboys. There was both humor and pathos in the many events that took place daily along the Rhine and yet all that the press had to say was:

Along the Ninth U.S. Army front the only activity involved artillery and mortar exchanges across the Rhine and patrols over the river.

The latter part of March, 1945 was spent by the Corps and its units in preparation for its part in exploiting the Rhine bridgehead at Wesel. The last days of March saw the 5th Armored cross the river as the first elements of the Corps, and on Easter Day, April 1, 1945, Headquarters XIII Corps followed.

It was predestined by Ninth Army to start its operations east of the Rhine in the form of a wedge, with its point in the vicinity of Wesel and with Munster as an axis. The 17th Airborne Division, which had made a most successful drop at Wesel and was now attached to Corps had already begun operations to the east with Munster as an objective.

Due to the fluidity of the situation, Corps was not to face the enemy on any well-defined line from here on. Numerous localized strong points were to develop, but from the Rhine to the Weser to the Elbe, a review of the enemy situation shows no major lines of

defense. The order of battle changed rapidly and but one tactical unit of divisional size opposed the Corps, namely the Von Clausewitz Division, which made an annoying counter-attack. More of Operation Kaput later.

Better-grade hostile units gave stiff resistance west of Munster, and the defenders of that city were finally driven in. After what appeared to be an uncoordinated defense, the place, badly wrecked from air and ground action, fell to the 17th Airborne Division by the 5th of April.

The 5th Armored Division was in the meantime making a rapid advance to the Weser River, pausing momentarily to cut lines of communications to Munster from the east. Some strong points and pockets of resistance were by-passed. Despite the speed of this move, the enemy apparently learned a lesson from Remagen as the 5th found all bridges over the Weser between Minden and Hess Olendorf destroyed.

Although the enemy thus temporarily slowed down the advance, he undoubtedly cut off considerable numbers of his own troops which subsequently were mopped up by the 84th Infantry Division. In numerous instances small groups of hostile forces resisted with determination in woods or in houses until surrounded and overcome. By April 6th the area west of the Weser in the Corps zone was cleared of all organized hostile forces.

The enemy opposed our establishment of a bridgehead over the Weser with time fire from artillery and shelling by heavy mortars. In-