6.12 TD Bp

It was rather raw and cold on the morning of the thirty-first of March and the men of the Second Platoon, Reconnaissance Company, were mad. Their officer was mad. They'd been up all night marking the route for the combat team to move to the line of departure and chow was late.

Okay, we'll eat a ~~Kat~~ K ration.

No, chow is here. Okay, we'll eat hot chow.

As it finally developed half ate hot chow and the other half ate at a K ration on the route.

We were to spearhead the advance of a combat team consisting of tanks, tank destrozers, doughs and engineers with Warburg as the objective. Seven o'clock rolled around and we left the I.P.

We had been warned by P.W. reports and through interrogation of some ~~xxxx~~ civilians that there were Panzerfaust emplacements aloung the route we expected to follow. Were we nervous? What do you think? There was no trouble until the head of the reconnaissance column hit the road junction just outside ~~town~~. Warburg

Ther4 the dug in outpost was taken completelz by surprise and we had a little trouble convincing them that we were really there. One enterprising soldier made the mistake of opening fire with an automatic weapon and our 50s from the armored cars convinced him that his propaganda machine had a cog missing. There seemed to be only slight resistance so the platoon moved on, dropping off Sgt. Jim Wiley with two quarter-ton crews to mop up the boys.

Wilco. Out. The boys started skirmishing down the hillside. Tactically in error, but under the circumsta ces effective since the outpost was taken in it's entirety. One man gave some trouble. He started to make like a farmer with a manure fork when the sergeant motioned for him to come on over and join the rest of his playmates. A burst from a Tommy gunshowed him the error of his ways and he joined the rest of the boys in line back toward the main body of the ~~taskxforce~~ combat team.

We moved on, crossing the bridge into the town. Now here is where old man Ripley bows out to us. Ansmall staff car comes tooling down the road with two officers out to enjoy the soothing air of the country. They took one look at the star on the front of the M-8 and bailed out with their hands in the air dragging not the usual part of the anatomy, but their chins.

Fine. Two more P-38s for our collection and off they went trucking to our rear.

Move out. On the bank to the right of the road a machine gun opened up questioningly. Pvt. Garfield James a swered the question with the .50, but our big question was when is all hell going to break loose? There seemed to be only one way to find the answer so we kept on rolling.

Past the tracks and on in to the first of the built up area. Ah, it is a holiday. Mr. and Mrs. Kraut and all the little Krauts are out enjoying the sun, which by now had managed to stagger drunkenly into position. What is this? Americans? No, it can't be. They are not across the Rhine yet. Some froze in their tracks and watched with unbelieving eyes as the platoon, in perfect column for once, roared on down the road. Others ran for trees, houses or any type of cover.

One very dignified officer was leaning against the fence of the flower garden in front of his house smoking an after-breakfast cigar when we passed. Ah, armored cars. Hitler is wonderful. They look just like the vehicles of those swinish Yanks. I shall smile at our fighting men. I shall nod and wave to them. We officers must show we

are not haughty. After all a penny invested in good feeling might compound into a whole hide. Migawd! They are Yanks.

Have you ever seen the perfect double-take? This was it. Beaming good cheer for the German army replaced in a flash with dumbfounded surprise. Kraut officer one way. Cigar the other.

On toward the center of town to the main road leading to the railroad station and yards the other leading on to the other side of town. Here the platoon split. The first section moving toward the station the second section on toward the western outskirts.

From there events occured with too great spead to be placed in coherent order. However there was in one courtyard the local spit-and-polish boys lined up for guard mount and a very correct officer inspecting the very devil out of them. By this time there was spasmodic firing here and there as the armored cars of the sections and the quarter-tons fanned out along the direction of movement, so any attempt to resist was fired upon. A few of the guards made motions to raise their rifles and a burst of .5o sent the guard and the officer into the dirt. At the last report they were still upset.

Farther on down the road we met the Officer of the Day, or the Kraut equivalent, breezing along in a sidecar of a motorcycle very stuffily inspecting the city garrison. He was probably a stinker anyway.

The second section had by this time run into a hot spot in the center of town by the church and was having it's hands full. Word had trickled down that somebody had sold somebody the wrong feature story and the Yanks were really there. Machine gun, automatic weapons fire, bazooka and rifle fire was being thrown at them.

A Panzerfaust is an item not to be argued with in a light armored recon car so S/Sgt. Short ordered his section to pull back and in so doing made a U turn right in front of a S.P. gun, the crew being too surprised to fire.

In the meantime the quarter-tons and their crews had been having a field day. Sgt. Farmon walked into a machine shop and closed it down. The next recommendation to the German General Staff will probablz carry a request that shops be equipped with bigger doors.

Cpl. Locke was flying low and straight down the street when he received the order to withdraw from that sector of town when some misguided Jerry let fly at him with a bazooka round. Missed, but a piece of shrapnel cut the microphone out of his hand just as he was Rogering on the order. The picture he made going down the street with a fistful of loose wire in his right hand, holding down the trigger of the .30 with his left will remain long in our memories.

Sgt. Wiley, and Todd, Meadows, Burnett, Thorne and Peterson were playing happy fun games with a group of officers who chose not to give up and were being hard to get in and out of doorways and alleys. Most of them finally gave them the slip around a building where two very stiff and formal guards were standing at parade rest with bayonetted rifles. They told the two guards to come on, but they refused to leave their posts. Good soldiers. A burst from a Tommy gun around their feet in true Dan McGrew style changed their little minds.

So we pulled back, calling for the tanks and T.Ds. to come in and lay fire on the town to support the doughs as they moved in.

As we rolled across the bridge going out a largeish frau came pedallig along into town with a basket to do the daily marketing. Ach. Those

Yanks can't be trusted. They are not supposed to be here for eight days yet, but here they are. Better I should hide. And hide she did. The bicycle went crazily to the right and she scuttled crazily to the left to hide in the drainage ditch. Picture if you can a very stout woman, a perfect 36 (feet) hiding in a four inch ditch. At least her head was in defilade and ostrich-like the posterior was putting Hill 192 to shame. Somehow Kennedy, the .50 gunner on S/Sgt. Short's armored car, resisted making a reconnaissance by fire of her military crest. Such restraint. A woman her age should wear more clothes in this weather.

We rallied in a defiladed spot to the southeast of town and gave the tankers the information we had gathered as to strong-points and they moved in, dismounted the doughs and proceeded to thoroughly mop up the place.

We counted noses. Burnett, Thorne and Peterson were missing. We had seen them on the bridge as we came out. They were, shall ~~xxxx~~ we say searching, the crew who had been posted to blow the bridge. By this time the town was under fire and it was impossible to go back in. The tankers were informed and we tried to direct them to an area on which fire was not being placed by radio, but our calls received no Roger.

Then a small procession came filing up the hill. The missing men marching a small army of prisoners, thoroughly searched, up the hill in the face of tank fire. Nothing seems to phase the G.I.

None of us were ~~xxxx~~ wounded to speak of. Cunningham received a slight cut across the bridge of his nose and the Lieutenant some cuts on his right hand.

Total score for the home team ~~xxx~~ on that operation: 80 prisoners, some twenty of the visiting team killed or wounded, a light command car destroyed, two cargo trucks will never run the same, a ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ gas dump ignited, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~, four motorcycles reduced to salvage, one machine shop out for the duration, one Chic Sale building (we couldn't resist it) splattered over the yard, and we had all increased our stock of souvenirs.

Give the T.Ds. a job to do and they'll get it done. However much ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ Attached to the platoon were three armored cars from the gun company and without the assistance of ~~Johnny~~ Gazell, Herscht and Duncan with their crews we'd have had a much hotter time.

The Panther screamed that day and the marks of his claws will long show in Warburg.