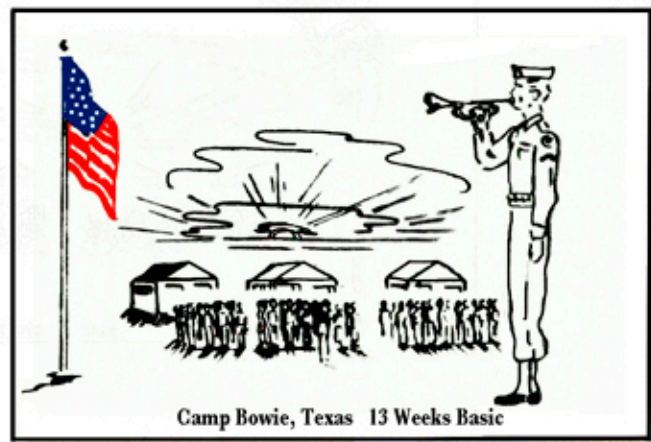
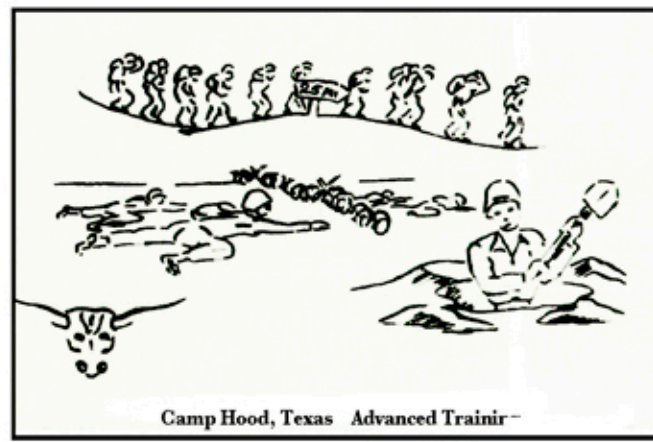


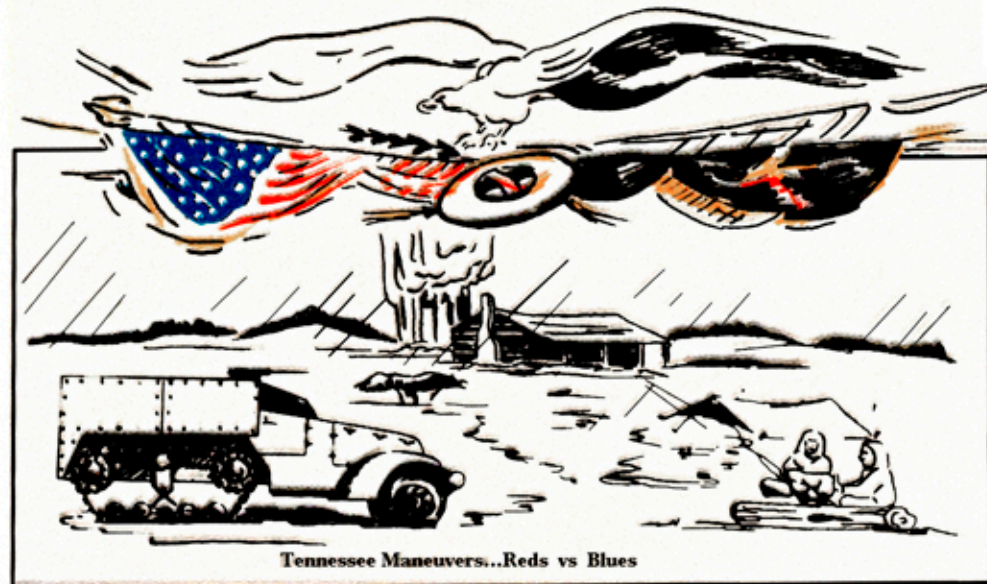
Camp Carson, Colo., Activated July 2, 1942



Camp Bowie, Texas 13 Weeks Basic



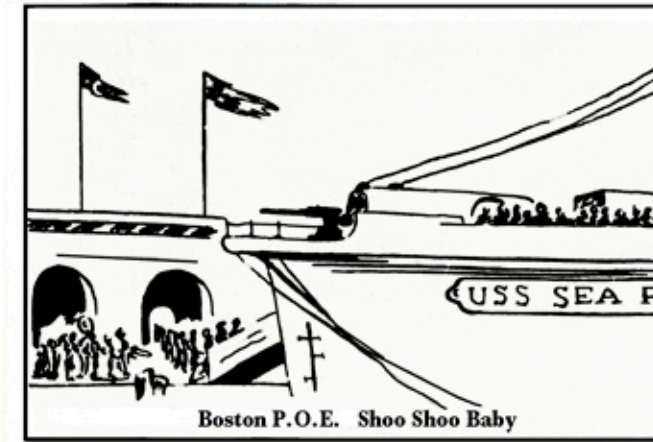
Camp Hood, Texas Advanced Trainin



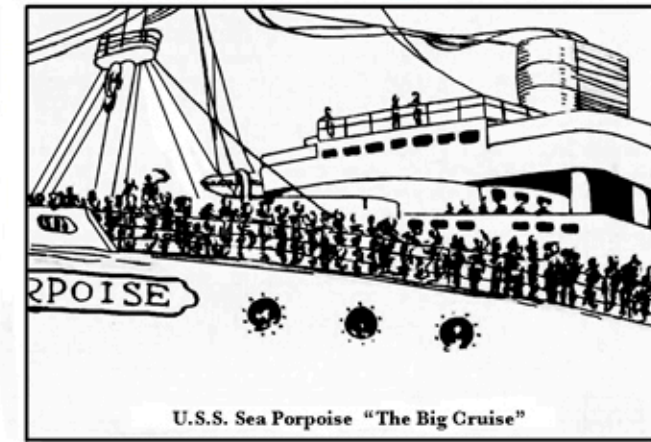
Tennessee Maneuvers...Reds vs Blues



Camp Breckinridge, Ky. "Getting Ready"



Boston P.O.E. Shoo Shoo Baby



U.S.S. Sea Porpoise "The Big Cruise"

ENGLISH CHANNEL

GERMAN'Y

THE 821st TANK DESTROYER BATTALION

LT. COL. HOWARD H. ARBURY COMMANDING

No one has ever been able to put down in black and white or on celluloid just what war, on the whole or in any particular, is like. Even Ernie Pyle's, "GI Joe" failed to portray anything but a few highlights and details of the life of the doughboy. But then perhaps the men of the 821st don't want any such reminder. God knows they know what war is like, and most of them have enough remembrances and souvenirs of their to make unnecessary anything else than a summary of places and happenings. The 821st was just a small, separate batta-lion in a war of Army Groups. It was one of several dozen similar TD outfits. But it has developed and maintained a character all its own—a character compounded of high standards, technical skill and guts. The battalion landed among the first and drew an assignment with the hard-fighting, fast-moving, many-battled, split-and-polish 29th—a relationship which it kept clear to the Elbe, a partnership which demanded the most in skill, conscientiousness, guts and polish; an attachment which General Gerhardt saluted as magnificent and exemplary. For the men of the 821st, the war was a lot of things: Camp Carson in July with 5 officers and 77 men; 2nd Army Tennessee Maneuver Area, Spencer Range, Breckinridge, Myles Standish POE, the Sea Porpoise and the smell of fish. Grittleton, Wilts, and the honeypots; Southampton and the moonlight waterproofing. It was Omaha Beach on 26 June and Moon sullie Couvains, St. Germain, St. Sauveur, St. Renan and the flying halftracks, Holland and the Luftwaffe 10-14-7s. Utzsch and the siege of Stenndorf, the battles of St. Lo, Vire, Brest and Julich; the Able Company fight at Villebaudon, Baker at Vailis, Flde Delleic and Bourheim, Charlie at Hill 103. There were aiming stakes out at Brest, with 13,000 rounds fired, sometimes to break up actual counterattacks by the Heleie paratroopers, and there were aiming stakes out along the Roer river, where in bitter cold weather the men fired 6500 rounds to harass the enemy at night and blasted and chopped secondary positions during the day in harass themselves and managed to set up a Renaissance Company and change over smoothly from towed to self propelled destroyers so effectively that with little practice they went careening up the eastern bank of the Roer shooting hell out of the Jerry defenses to enlarge a bridgehead they had help make possible with their all-night artillery prepaton. Then there were Stettinrich and Titz Durselen and Armein and Jackeran, and finally on March 1, Munchen-Gladbach. On 31 March the outfit was on the other side of the Rhine where Baker helped with the Ruhr pocket and the battalion got its first workout at Heiden and Coestfeld in military government and rear area security, with roadblocks and patrols and house-searching the huge DP problem. Then there was a 250 mile march to the Elbe for the mopping there of all the stuff left behind around Wittenberg by the 5th Armored. Then more military government near Lachow and VE Day in Oelde, and Ellsteth by 13 May for inclusion in Task Force Bremen. And finally we broke away from the Blue and Gray and went to Reims, France, for temporary duty as a provisional truck company, helping to unsmarr the mass of vehicles left behind by CBI-bound units. Our record was not impressive stacked beside that of bulgebattered outfits, for our tank-bag didn't total a dozen, and our prisoner-take didn't reach 500. But we traveled over 2500 miles from one end of Europe to the other and we were the spine in the 25th's back whenever the tanks came. That they didn't come in great numbers is a matter of luck. If they had we had them screwed up. It is well they didn't, for 25 died were too many for our cautious leaders who wanted to do the job, but without useless casualties. We kept our noses cleaned and chin strap back and our jeeps washed and the SOP's in our pockets. We had the feeling all the way that we were being well and carefully led, but that we were doing the job expected of us. And when Major General Gerhardt whose set of high standards we could meet as easily as the next man's, said to Colonel Arbury and all of us, "good luck and God speed," that was enough for us. Praise or scolding, pushing around or gravy, we could take it.

England Trained at Whitby Anti-Aircraft and Minehead Artillery Rangers; tented at Grittleton Summer Camp and enjoyed passes to London and other places of interest.

London — Debarred D plus 20, on June 26, 1944

Paris — Just a glimpse of a beautiful city whose heart remained warm and gay for those who returned on three day sprees.

Chartres — the worlds most painted cathedral was seen through the blue haze of early morn.

St. Lo — Task Force Charlie entered July 18 finding destruction and desecration wrought by 3000 bombers and a new monument to those who made the supreme sacrifice.

Norman Hedgerow Military obstacles that became home and refuge in the thick of battle.

Vire fell the 6th of August after a long and bitter struggle with an enemy that was in its prime.

Unleashing furious Destroyers in a mad push that sent disheveled jetties spilling and reeling back across their own impregnable Rhine. TD's cleared the way for the final round in what now seemed nothing but a game.

Finale — The ensuing victories between the Rhine and Elbe Rivers will go down in history as sealing the fate of Nazism and bringing the peace for which all had fought so hard.

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