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9 May
Sunrise 0539
Sunset 2059

"WE WILL"

9 May
Moonrise 0505
Moonset 1739

DIAMOND DUST

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BOOGHE KAPUT!

VICTORY
EUROPE
DAY



8
MAY
1945

Peace broke out today in Europe as the Allies declared 8 May 1945 as Victory-Europe Day and the entire German Army surrendered unconditionally to the "overwhelming strength" of the United States, Great Britain, and Russia.

The end of the war and the beginning of peace and consequent occupation of greater Germany found the 5th Infantry Division in the Bohemian hills of western Czechoslovakia - the first division to go overseas and the last division to fight against organized German resistance. (Continued on reverse side)

Members of the 5th Division seemed to be accepting the news of the end of the war with restrained enthusiasm. It was a fact to be expected and an end toward which the 5th worked and trained overseas for two years and ten months - in Iceland, England, and North Ireland, and on end toward which the 5th fought for ten months in France, Luxemburg, Germany, Austria, and Czechoslovakia. While the home front and places like London, Belfast and Paris were reported breaking all records for celebration, the combat veterans of the 5th occupied, temporarily, the western Czech hill country small towns, watched the streams of displaced persons and refugees along the roadside, gathered prisoners, waited orders and wondered what was coming next. To a man, what everyone wanted was to get back home, but what he expected and what was most likely, was an indefinite period of occupation of some part of Germany.

The signature of the surrender was achieved in a schoolhouse in Rheims, a city which was liberated by the 5th Infantry Division on 25 August, 1944. Field Marshal Model signed the surrender terms for the Germans, representing Admiral Doenitz. Lt. Gen. Walter Bedell Smith, Chief of Staff of SHAEF for General Eisenhower, signed the surrender terms for the U.S., along with representatives for Russia, Great Britain and France. The signing occurred at 0241 hours, 7 May, 1945. Prime Minister Winston Churchill will broadcast the official announcement at 1500 hours today, 8 May, and it is expected that simultaneous announcements will be made by President Truman and Marshal Stalin.

The new German foreign minister broadcast the news of the unconditional surrender to the German people over the Flensburg radio. He said that Germany had been overwhelmed by vastly superior strength and that, for better or for worse, her fate was now in the hands of the victors. After the signing, General Eisenhower asked the German signers if they fully realized Germany's position and the conditions of the truce and if they intended to fulfill conditions. Model said the conditions were perfectly clear and understood and that Germany would comply with all the terms.

In spite of the German High Command's announcement of unconditional surrender, German troops in Prague are still fighting and still committing atrocities against the civilian population. A Czech broadcast from London warned these troops that they would be treated as Franks-Tirours, in other words, their actions have placed them outside the pale of international law. The Seventh Army captured an order from Himmler saying that none of the political prisoners at Dachau should be allowed to fall into Allied hands alive. He signed it 14 April, but the Americans overran Dachau shortly afterwards and liberated 33,000 Allied PW's.

The bodies of Goebbels and his family were found in Berlin by the Russians. They had died of poisoning. The body of Field Marshal Von Bock was found on the battlefield, Moscow radio said. The U.S. Department of Agriculture says that the Allies will have to feed every liberated country in Europe for the next 15 months.

The Swedish radio reports that an Allied fleet is steaming into Oslo Fjord.

An order of the day to Marshal Konev and his Chief of Staff, General Petrov announced that Breslau which was surrounded last February has been captured. 40,000 prisoners were taken.

Correspondent Frank Gillard of BBC said that the delay in the official announcement of unconditional surrender was necessary because it might take days for the German High Command to communicate the news to all the scattered German forces. The Nazi's communications have been badly mauled.

The Japanese Government denounced Germany's action in seeking a separate peace as a "shameless betrayal" of "International confidence."

The Recon Platoon of the 803rd Tank Destroyer Bn. is officially credited with engaging in the last clash with enemy troops before the "cease-fire" orders became effective at 0830 hours on 7 May. The Recon. Platoon, running a spearhead for the 2nd Inf. Regt., was ambushed by an estimated 30-man German patrol at approximately 0820 hours - ten minutes before peace was declared - about four miles ahead of the town of Volary. One T.D. man was killed and three men were injured. The Germans later apologized for the incident, saying they knew nothing of the order until thirty minutes later.