

### Incidents around Metz - November 7, 1944

"It was heavily defended by huge tank traps, and a number of forts that were almost as large as cities. There were underground railroads that were self-contained and designed to last a long time, if attacked. We worked with the 7th Armored Division but couldn't make a dent in trying to capture Fort Durant(Driant) (that was the biggest one). The Air Force bombed it, and we sent combat teams, who dropped grenades and dynamite charges down their ventilating system (that didn't work either). Meanwhile, you could hear the trains leaving and arriving with supplies, and I was suppose, more men. All the while, my platoon was on a ridge overlooking the Moselle River. From where we were positioned, we were able to monitor what was going on across the river. I saw a truck come down the road facing the river. It stopped by a big tree and unloaded five men with machine guns. What got me was that the truck had medical signs painted across the sides. At that point, I called the Platoon Sergeant and said, "Get me a fifty caliber machine gun (M.G.) and a tripod!" I set my field glasses atop the machine gun and said, "Here Goes!" I fired tracer bullets at the target and my bullets were hitting the bottom of the tree. With my binoculars I was able to walk my M.G. fire up the tree knocking the M.G. nest out of the tree and killing all five. At that point, the truck took off. I followed the truck as it left and inflicted damage to the so-called "ambulance." The vehicle caught fire and a gang of men jumped out the back. There were far from being wounded. We had a heyday knocking out vehicles, until they found our position and laid some heavy artillery fire on us. We backed down with our tanks until our Field Artillery picked up the flash of their guns and fired artillery on their position. Then there was silence, so we cooled it. We had a good spot for observing the other side of the river. During the night our Infantry was crossing the river upstream, trying to make a stronghold on that side of the river. At about 5a.m., the Germans sent a platoon of tanks down the riverside toward the Infantry position. They fired point blank at the Infantry. The Infantry hadn't gotten their anti-tank guns across the river as yet, so I could hear tank fire going on. I alerted my platoon, and we moved our tanks back to the ridge position overlooking the river. I alerted my gunners to zero in on a

spot on the road so that they'd be ready when the German tanks came back on the road. I told the tank on the left to fire on the lead tank until he knocked it out. That would block the other tanks from moving past. Then I ordered the tank on the right to fire on the last tank. The other tanks were to fire on the inside tanks. My guys were ready, and when I thought the time was right I yelled, "Fire!" They did a superb job of gunnery. We knocked out all five and finished off anyone trying to escape. At that time my radio was on, and I received a call from my Company Commander telling me there were enemy tanks on my front. Before he could finish his message, I yelled back, "Mission Accomplished. We got all the tanks!" About five minutes later, the Commander arrived and was so excited he couldn't talk. I think I said, "Can I go home now?" It was during that period that I was awarded the Bronze Star, along with my Platoon Sergeant and the gunners who knocked out the German tanks with their accurate fire."