

Dear Chad:

Picking up where I left off on board Troop Transport going overseas.

Tibby had gone home to Hyden where she planned staying with her mother. She had a job teaching school about 1 block from her house and would help her mother run the fine Grocery Store located on the east side of Courthouse square.

We left the states on Lincoln's birth day, Feb 12, and landed on the Clyde in Scotland Feb 23, Washington's birthday.

We loaded on a troop train which was waiting for us and had an introduction to the air war our first night ashore as our blocked out train was sidetracked and re-routed around London during a German air raid.

Our destination was BOGNOR REGIS a resort town on the Channel coast. The section along the beach had been evacuated. Some of the buildings had been bulldozed to clear a field of fire and we moved machine guns back of the barbed wire on the beach. Air raids were almost a nightly affair with enemy raiders flying across the English Channel towards London.

We were billeted in Private homes and businesses in the area evacuated. I was in a brick bank building with hot & cold running showers.

We had trained hard in the States. Now we trained harder. Along with Lt. Glenn Parsons from K Company, I was selected for special training.

We spent the mornings attending a Ranger school and the afternoons demonstrating HAND TO HAND fighting. I spent a week with one of our tank outfits near Exminster. Then a week with a Scottish Highlander outfit, at the end of the week we had a dress parade. I made at least one friend about my ring and he offered to loan me one of his uniforms. I told him no thanks, my kness were too nobly. That I would wear my own uniform.

As D-Day approached orders came that all Coastal towns must be evacuated. Our regiment moved to Woodland Park, Buckinghamshire, my company ended up in a factory town near London by the name of AYLESBURY. It was there that we learned that we not the Cock of the walk like we had been in Bognor Regis. Combat Veterans of Biggles one who had been fighting in Africa and Italy were there for the Invasion British Buffers Troop some of them survivors of the Dunkirk invasion, and many Canadian Soldiers were in town.

At that time American forces had 6.5 million tons of war stores in England to support D-Day. This amounted to 3.5 tons per man.

We did not know when D-Day would be or where the landings would take place. We felt it would be soon because as early as April we were told to get rid of all letters. They must be destroyed or sent to the States. In May we were visited by

General Eisenhower and Field Marshall ^{Montgomery} had visited ~~and~~ ^{who} gave us our prep. Talks, we were told that we would be making history out that the eyes of the world would be on us.

Two things were noticeable about June 6, 1944. The sun was shining and the sky was filled with more planes than I had ever seen before. All of them carried stripes on the undersides of the wings. The invasion was ~~over~~ ^{on} and we had not received our travel orders we knew we would not be in the first wave for which we were thankful.

The time and place of the Landings were such a great secret that ~~it~~ ^{it} was not scheduled for less than the 1st Day had men in town on leave so as not to arouse suspicion. The training scheduled for that day was cancelled and we were told to discard any unnecessary objects and pack ready for shipment in grade 4 uniforms.

I was called to the CP where I was furnished an MP Ambulance, a jeep with driver, and two men to go with me. I spent the first day of the war visiting towns in the area especially Putea and any places for soldiers to stay over night. Our message was "all leaves are cancelled, all military are to report to your unit at once."

The next day ^{we} moved to a marshalling area 10 miles north of the port of South Hampton.

In the staging area we received kits, ammunition and rations to last 2 days and 10 invasion French money.

We were isolated and cut off from everything, we had no news about how the war was going and rumors were running wild. We would be alerted for movement and then the alert would be cancelled. The weather was terrible, the wind was so strong it would almost blow you off your feet and the rain came down in sheets, you could not keep anything dry.

On the 12th of June we loaded on a Canadian Landing Craft Tank. Here we found out the reason for the delay, shortage of landing craft due to both D-Day losses and the bad storm.

When the Higgins boats which Americans used for Landing Craft Infantry could only carry 40 men this LCT could carry all of Company K. It still had a ramp to lower ~~it~~ at the edge of the beach.

It was a long slow voyage crossing the English Channel, as rough as it was. A lot of troops were seasick. In the area I was in on the lower deck there was a locker marked Emergency Rations. I had a few of my men act as look outs while I broke in and got us some food. Going ashore on a freight boat under enemy fire was enough of an emergency for me to decide that at least wounded men were entitled to a hot meal.

We were misguided during passage and the Ramp was lowered on UTAH Beach, I swam in water over waist high with my rifle held over my head. The Beach Master would not let us come ashore. In a conference with our Officers we were told to go to OMATHU which we did (The Beach Master is the absolute authority in landings regardless of Rank).

It was late in the day of June 13 or D+7 when we came ashore on Omaha Beach which was littered with abandoned landing craft, American Tanks motionless on the sand with the escape ports of its turrets flung open towards the sky. The crowded anchorage off shore was churning with the activity of other landing craft coming in. There were puffs of black smoke and sounds of explosions from scattered artillery fire near by. We could not imagine what it had been like on D Day and were glad that we missed that.

We climbed to the High ground and stopped to put on dry ^{socks} ~~socks~~. Non-coms were told to tear off their stripes, Officers to remove their bars. We were dressed in wool with impregnated Jodanines over them. We were too hot and carrying far too much equipment. We still had a lot to learn. We had qualified for the Combat Infantry Badge and the 15 increase in pay each month.

at the part of the beach where we came ashore, the treacherous shells, the Rockets & Bazookas had taken an even greater toll of men and materials than had previously been expected. The weak garrison there had

unexpectedly reinforced by the D-Day presence of the strong 352nd Infantry up from their reserve assembly area west of St. To for an anti-invasion drill.

There was the usual amount of confusion during our night march to the front. We were walking in a column of troops on each side of the road. Buildings were burning on each side and from time to time flames would light up the roadway. This was in a sector near Saizy where a tunnel link-up had been made between the 29th Division and the 101st Airborne Division. A German fighter plane made a strafing run over us, I remember diving into a ditch with my arm over John Caligary. His body was wrenching with pain. My greatest fear was that a bag of white phosphorus rifle grenades would ignite and burn me up. The plane made 2 passes. The sound of the bullets hitting the road and buildings near by was terrifying, a call for medical was passed down the line. Tomars were shot. I had a dispute with Richard Walnut ~~that~~ which almost led to blows. I can't remember what it was about.

Our mission was to relieve elements of the 501st Parachute Infantry (Part of 100th Airborne) which had dropped in the night before D-Day and was guarding roadways leading from both Omaha and Utah beaches. We accomplished this early morning of the 14th of June (D+8) We took over a 7500 yard sector of the front line. We were told to dig in. We had prepared many a fox hole in maneuvers but this was my first for real. I dug a good one. No sooner had I finished it than

a runner came out told me to report to the Company C.P. Capt. Smith sent me to help guard the Division C.P. in a orchard near Isigny. This meant more walking, I was tired and sleepy. All I had was cat maps crossing the channel. We had walked all night after landing and I had help prepare 2 fox holes.

About 10 o'clock a runner came with orders for me to join K company for a morning attack, I had disobeyed orders to destroy all letters or anything which might be helpful to the enemy in case we were captured, I had kept a letter from Tilly still in the envelope ^{with} ~~with~~ both of our addresses on it, I knew it was time to destroy it, I should have torn off the address but I didn't and tried to burn it. It was raining and it must have gone out after I left, with Intelligence officers at Division level that was a bad place to lose it. I heard about it later.

The 30th Division's attack was made the morning of June 15, 1944 while over half of the Division was still afloat or moving up to the assembly area. It was made by an improvised team assembled around my regiment, The 120th Infantry. That is why the award of the ~~French~~ ^{French} ~~of~~ ^{of} Croix ~~de Guerre~~ ^{de Guerre} went to only men who participated in the liberation of the first French soil, ~~not~~ not to 30th Division, as a whole.

at the start of the 1st attack The 120th regiment was on a line extending parallel to and north of the rail road which runs between Caumont and Aircel bounded by low flooded ground on each flank and directly South of St. Pellerin.

twice previously this area had been the scene of hard fighting. The Germans had removed their dead. Some of our paratroopers still littered the landscape, we had to secure the area before they could be removed.

The presence of enemy troops in our zone of action was well established; their strength and unit allegiances were matters for investigation.

The "Investigation" started at 6:30 AM with artillery fire from our own 280th and four other artillery battalions supported by battleships in the Channel. An hour later fighter bombers from England struck enemy positions in front of our advance. At 8:30 AM we jumped off. June 15th (D+9)

In that 1st attack, I was a staff Sgt. in charge of the 3rd platoon of K Company 120th Infantry. The platoon leader was Lt. Walby Koch, platoon sergeant was Sgt. Davis, sergeant's squad leader was Sgt. Helton.

Our mission was to secure the High ground north of the Vine-et-Tante Canal. When the Germans lost the bridge they retreated and formed a main line of resistance south of this canal.

In this attack our regiment took a T-shape with 2nd and 3rd Battalions leading and 1st Bn. in reserve. I was in the 3rd Battalion and we started with I Co. on the left and L Co. on the ~~left~~^{right}, K Co. in reserve.

My assignment was to protect the left flank. Difficult opposition was encountered as soon

as we crossed the rail road tracks after leaving the initial assembly areas. Most of it was machine gun and mortar fire which had been zeroed in and was deadly accurate. There was also artillery and rifle fire to contend with. Company was in trouble and K's company went out of reserve to help them.

In a fire fight that developed I had to move into a triangular field of hedge rows which had been a strong point for the Para Troopers. They had captured it from the enemy and then been overrun by the Germans in a counter attack. In order for me to get covering fire it was necessary for me to put a BAR gunner in a hole with some dead para troopers whose bodies were blasted and smelly. He was a tall thin young man named Enock Potter from Pike County Ky. When the fight was over and we were moving up he got sick. I gave him BAR to John Caligory to carry. After we had ~~traveled~~^{crossed} into another field Caligory not being familiar with the BAR and under the strain allowed it to discharge accidentally right behind me. A burst of 6 to 8 shots passed close enough to my body to shatter the wood handle of the entrenching tool fastened to my belt. That was a close call however some good came of it. Some German troops had set up an ambush for us. They fired before we were in range thinking they had been discovered and were able to put them out of action.

Sgt. Kahiff was our first man killed that day. He was one of the 3 men now buried in Boies Tring.

his squad had knocked out an enemy strong point and asked Capt. Smith for permission to search them for papers, In a letter Smith told me about this and how bad he felt when he passed Kaliff's body on the German he was searching.

We had the high ground under control but it was late in the day and Capt. Smith decided we should dig in and wait until the next day to clear the low ground on our side of the Canal.

As we went digging in some of our Tanks pulled into the field we were in and a heavy artillery bomb hit my area, Curley Panton was one of our men killed. He was about 15 feet from me. He was on his knees. I saw him swing his pick on the eye stroke. A shell fragment hit him and toppled him backward. He was dead when I got to him to give first aid.

We were using 2 men sleeping in the hole we had prepared and 1 on guard. I had been on my feet for two full days and one night and it was so tired I actually slept when my turn came.

This is where I will stop and mail this and in the next letter pick up with the morning of June 16, 1944.

Yours & Wolf's,

John M. Adams, Jr.

Hand out Lt. Person who went to Rogers with me, was wounded & evacuated early in our first day,