

“Repo-Depo” Camp

When we were in Cherbourg, there was a third bunker we were told to take. That bunker could shoot from there to England and all the way up the beach. It was the biggest bunker I had ever seen in my life. We had to take that bunker. We were all talking about it. I didn't have to do that, they picked out another squad. The squad went up there and cleaned out that bunker. Then they came back and said that the only trouble they had were some machine gun nests in the hillside. They wiped them out. When the G.I.s got to the bunker the Germans were hungry, they had no food, and no ammunition. Their supplies were cut off. They just quit. So that bunker was a good thing to by-pass while we took Cherbourg. From there we went back to the beach. We got tangled up a bit in St. Lo but I didn't have much to do with that because we came late after most of the fighting was over. German airplanes were flying over shooting at the American planes. So what we put up with mostly were all the copper shells falling down from the 50 caliber guns in the planes. It was just raining.

When I got back to the Beach, they did away with our 531st Brigade. They said, “We don't need you anymore, you did your job.” They gave a little speech and told us how good it was, and all that bull crap. Then they put us in a truck and took us to a “Repo-Depo” camp. This camp is where they bring in all the replacements from the states. I'll tell you what happened in that camp. I was in there, and they had my name on a bulletin board for K.P. duty. That's the “Kitchen Police.” They want you to cook and do the dishes. I ran into this guy, Tony Flossi, and we became pretty close friends. He told me, “Hey buddy, your name is on the roster for K.P.” I said, “I ain't goin'.” He said, “You have to.” I said, “I ain't goin'.” So we were sleeping in our tents and a guy came out looking for me about four o'clock in the morning around the tents to wake you up saying, “Where's Goss? Where's Goss?” I said, “He ain't here, he's over in that other tent.” So, he went over there to that tent looking for me, and the next tent, and the next and I wasn't there either. And I never did serve K.P. I told Tony, “I didn't come over here to do dishes!” So it was time to go to breakfast. Tony said, “You can't go in there, you're going to get caught.” I said, “Look around Tony, who's different? Everybody's the same. They will never know.” So I went in and ate.

At the Repo-Depo camp they put us in a truck and took us a little more into France, and they put us in a home. One of the French homes. There were no lights, only candles burning. There were about ten or fifteen guys in my room. We were sitting around the table and in comes a Sargent. He comes walking in and he said, "I need three men. Has anybody here been in combat?" Nobody answered him. Then Tony pointed to me and said, "He has, he's seen combat. He was in Normandy." The Sargent said, "I'll take him." Tony said, "I'll go with you." So we went with Sargent Bennett in his truck and he took us back to the 70th Division. And that is how I got into the 70th Division. That outfit was called "Bennett's Bastards." And I fought with Bennett all the way to the end of the war, in the 70th Division.

When we were in the truck going up the guys could hear the shelling as we got closer. And I said, "Don't worry, you're not even close yet, you'll learn to read them. Which ones are going further and which ones are falling short. And which ones are coming right to where you're at. You'll know exactly how to figure it out. You can tell by the sound." And that's the way it was over there. Bennett's Buddies, it was a good outfit.