

GREAT BRITISH PRESSIVE AT RHINE SURRENDER TOUGHTS TASKS FACED BY ENGINEERS GENERAL HOBBS LAUDS TROOPS IN 21ST ARMY GROUP HEADS ALL ADVANCES

BY HOBBES

By SEMOUR FREIDIN
The Rhine, Germany, Feb. 23-24. The United States First Ninth Armies surged across the Roer River in the darkness before dawn today in a "rush-style" attack more concentrated than any since the MG barbary diving fire from his comrades.

Congress Medal Given 30th Man
WITH 30TH INF. Div.-The Congressional Medal of Honor has been awarded posthumously to Sgt. Jack J. Fendleton, of Yakima, Wash., who sacrificed his life to assist his comrades to cross the river.

JUGGERNAUT—JUST A LINE OF TIRED MEN
By ERNEST LEISER
Stars and Stripes Staff Writer
WITH 30TH INF. DIV. EAST OF RHINE, Mar. 27.—The headlines—big black ones—said: "Ninth Army East." Correspondents back at SHAEP wrote about the "Ninth Army juggernaut" plowing irresistibly through the Westwall.

Hobs Meets Germans
The main topic of conversation outside the farmhouse was the relative merits of the Russian and Belgian women, was the negotiator who, at the time of the Rhine crossing, was the German garrison commander. General Hobbs and his staff met the German officer in the lockhouse of the canal at 7 o'clock.

At the meeting, which lasted twenty minutes, the German commander agreed to surrender if his troops were to be withdrawn. General Hobbs said no, only under certain conditions would he do so. Whereupon the German replied that the responsibility for the civilian population rested with General Hobbs. The general returned to his lines and the first battalion, which spearheaded the attack across the Rhine and was to land at Brunswick, groused about the subject.

Soldiers on Alert
For the second time when having been ordered to his gun, the soldier covered with mud. This face ready, the soldiers opened their eyes and through the farmhouse windows. Scrambling across the fields across a wall of German fire was going was tortuous. He was unable to run because if he stood upright he would be cut down by the enemy's returning fire, lest the soldier suddenly rise and make a dash for the gun.

For what appeared an interminable minute, we watched the GI either crawling or being dragged across the hundred yards. Then he got up and bolted for a fence. He made it, and was singing and whistling and was lifted over the fence by a dozen helping hands.

Indian Takes Shoes Off
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BY WES GALLAGHER

Major General L. S. Hobbs, commanding general of the 30th Infantry Division, commended all soldiers of his division and of all attached units in a message delivered May 10. The victory message: "Our campaigning in Europe is finished. In every phase of your fighting you have beaten any and all German units that opposed you, and you have been vitally instrumental in bringing about the unconditional surrender of the German Army and the German nation."

"No finer thing can be retained in your hearts than the knowledge that you, as American soldiers, have fought the good fight. You can look back on your exploits with both individual and collective pride, and cherish all that you have to faithfully won."

"We salute, in this hour of triumph, our departed comrades. We must now pledge ourselves to the unfinished work still ahead."

"With a pride, with admiration, and with a deep conviction, we salute you in complete and final victory."

No Hilarity In 30th Camp At War's End

By KENNETH L. DIXON
WITH THE AEF IN GERMANY, May 8 (AP)—This is one of the most futile days I've spent in two years of war reporting.

I've been hunting for reaction to V-E Day. There isn't any on this Ninth Army front. Our radios have been blaring out news of celebrations in London, New York, and elsewhere. Surely it seemed there should be some signs of such a celebration here—on the front itself.

But a lone soldier lying lazily in the sun described it all. "It doesn't mean a damn thing," he said when assured I would not be quoted by name. He said he wanted anonymity "because my wife would kill me—after all, it's a big day back home."

He then enlarged upon his sentiments in slow, sleepy sentences. "We've known it was coming. We've known it wouldn't be a surprise. Hell, we celebrated it in our own way long ago, because we knew it was over; so far as we were concerned, then. Man, we've left too many guys behind us to feel like hell-raising today."

But still, Sgt. Robert K. Harrison, former Knoxville, Tenn., Journal police reporter, and now of the 30th Infantry Division and I kept looking for reaction. Even the military police were puzzled by it all. Pic. Harold Roberts, a 30th Division M. P., from Ft. Thomas, Ky., scratched his head and slowly pondered the utter lack of hilarity.

"As a matter of fact, it seems like everybody's just a little more sober than usual today. Maybe they're like us—just glad it's over and trying to figure out what it means."

BY WES GALLAGHER AND ROBERT EUNSON

With the United States Ninth Army, March 25.—The famous "Old Hickory" Thirtieth Division broke clear through Hitler's Rhine defense into open country north of the Ruhr today in one of the most brilliant infantry successes of the war. The Thirtieth troops found German resistance apparently completely disintegrated at a point eight miles from the Rhine, and jumped on tanks shortly after noon and "took off."

Every element of a break-through such as characterized the armored-infantry gallops after the Roer River crossing and in dashes through France was indicated. Field officers of the Thirtieth said the division had gone clear through the engaged German defense lines and "broken into the open." The Thirtieth's surge carried it to the head of all other advances in the Twenty-first Army Group.

The United States Seventy-ninth Division on the Thirtieth's flank made almost as good progress, but encountered some spotty German armored pockets which held it up. The Thirtieth's tanks carried it to a bridge over the historic river just 14 hours and 45 minutes after it launched its attack. Distinguished Record The Thirtieth, which kicked off an hour ahead of the Seventy-ninth, had a bridge completed at 4:15 p. m. Saturday. It One Hundred and Twenty-ninth quickly smashed six miles across the Rhine, the One Hundred and Seventeenth Regiment went three miles beyond the river and the One Hundred and Nineteenth was ordered to attack at 11:30 a. m. morning progressed and cooks, bakers and all sorts of odds and ends which characterize rear areas flowed into the prisoner cages.

Believe Nazi Unit Destroyed

With more than 2,000 prisoners taken up to noon, officers of the 30th reckoned the German 180th Division, which faced them, was destroyed. The forward surge carried the Thirtieth into the Ruhr valley over the Elhne in record time, out of artillery range. The engineers were so little bothered today that some set up a post office in the Rhine valley. Fighters circled over barrage balloons on the lookout for German planes which never showed up.

Regimental command posts were moving at 10 miles per hour. "There is no doubt about it, we have a breakthrough," declared Major Robert Howitt, of New York. "We achieved surprise in that the Germans did not expect a large concentration of 'Weasels'."

Hit 50th Spot, says Officer
At the regimental command post of the 120th Regiment, the assistant operations officer, Lieut. Ralph Simon, of Vincennes, Ind., said the division's spot and was right on target. The division's operation, though, was something more than that. It was a breakthrough in war colleges in the future.

Attacking three regiments advanced a terrific artillery barrage the 30th hit everywhere at once along 6 to 7 miles of the river. First one spot gave way, then another, and the division was rough in the center during the early hours.

The 17th, under its regimental commander, Col. George C. Cat, Walter Johnson, of Missouri, Mont., who was a 45 stunts on his leg and a 30th Infantry Division with the flank regiments and spurs ahead about 7 miles from the river all artillery and mortar fire almost ceased. There was no organized line and the infantry hopped on and over the river to exploit the breakthrough.

Along the river every town was captured and the weight of hundreds of artillery and mortar was scattering of German dead in some towns. Few Makehift Trenches Two to 3 miles inland, houses here and there were intact and farther on they were more numerous. Along the river there were a few makeshift trenches, but nothing which could be described as a formidable defense. The only sign of a front was from a hidden tank which took pot shots here and there but to which the troops bringing forward paid no attention. The tank had "rear echelons" to deal with.

"WORK HORSE" TAG GIVEN OLD HICKORY

By WES GALLAGHER
Associated Press Staff Writer
On the Rhine With the 30th Infantry Division, March 24-25 (AP)—The American Army's work horse division, which the Germans nicknamed "Roosevelt's SS" more than made up for missing the Normandy landing by spearheading the Ninth Army's drive across the Rhine.

One of the finest divisions in the American army, the 30th has taken more than its share of tough fighting on the Western Front but always sort of fell put out that the First Division and the 29th Division. The 30th, crossing so now it's all over.

In months of fighting the 30th has proven to be a commanding "work horse" division. The 30th met the last German offensive on the Rhine in a mauling knock on their heels.

Freed Prisoner And Brother In 30th Are United

WITH U.S. 30TH DIVISION ON THE ELBE, Germany—(UP)—Pic. John E. Sturgeon was riding along a German road in a jeep crowded with soldiers when a column of newly liberated Americans approached. "Anybody there from Pennsylvania?" Sturgeon asked.

"Yeah, I'm from there," one said. "Hey, Johnny!" The liberated prisoner was Elmer Sturgeon, just released, from five months of German captivity. It was the brothers' first meeting in four years.

The 29th Tactical Air Command swarmed all over the area with Thunderbolts and reported German falling around in great confusion about the 29th and 30th divisions. The pilots claimed the destruction or damaging of 99 German tanks and armored cars in the battle area.

Not A Tank Lost
Major J. J. Eberhardt, of San Antonio, 19th's supply officer, said the 30th had not yet lost a single tank. He said the 30th had the Germans been able to launch a single counterstroke against the 30th, which they always do if organized.

One of the finest American divisions, the Thirtieth was the first to break through the German defenses in the West. It spearheaded the push through the Siegfried line near Metz. But perhaps the Thirtieth's finest performance came in the Ardennes at Stavelot when the division under Major General L. S. Hobbs was ordered to break through the German front and collided head-on with Hitler's personal First SS Division. The Thirtieth ripped the Nazi division to pieces and helped hold the gap at the most critical period. The Thirtieth was hailed back later and made the Roer river crossing across the worst piece of river, but led other attacking divisions to the objective. It had earned the reputation of "crosser" even before entering battle because its One Hundred and Seventeenth Regiment used to strike model crossings at Fort Benning, Ga.