

The 504th sent its 1st Bn. toward Cheneux Dec. 20 against an SS battalion equipped with flak wagons, half-tracks, self-propelled artillery and tanks. All-Americans battled this formidable force with rifles, grenades, bazookas and knives. The 82nd organized a "cannon company" with captured equipment after gaining a clear-cut victory.

During the fierce battle, S/Sgt. William P. (Knobby) Walsh, Waunakee, Wis., Co. B, 504th, crept within 15 feet of a flak wagon largely responsible for a high casualty toll. Before he could pull his grenade pin, shrapnel from a tree burst pierced his left arm and lodged in his side. His left arm useless, Walsh crawled back to a buddy and had him pull the pin. With the grenade fuse sputtering, the sergeant raced to the flak wagon and dropped the grenade into the cockpit, wiping out the crew. "Let's go!" he shouted as he started for the next flak wagon. Walsh carried on until he collapsed.

Germans continued to peck away at the eastern and southern boundaries of the rectangle. Failing with each thrust, they would recoil and try further west. Each attack increased in intensity. With All-Americans holding the L'Ambleve River line, the 30th Inf. Div. spun a web around the entire SS regiment. The Hitler unit was trapped.

Contact with the surrounded American units was made Dec. 21 and their withdrawal through the All-Americans was completed three days later. The 82nd now shifted westward with the Germans until its lines were tight. Dec. 23, Germans took the crossroad south of Manhay. Higher headquarters ordered the division to shorten its front, to withdraw to a line running generally from Trois Ponts to Manhay. Even though the wreck of the 1st SS had eliminated the north boundary, All-Americans still had a 10-mile front.

**T**HE 82nd withdrew that night, contacting 800 survivors of the SS regiment and wiping them out completely. Von Rundstedt's drive was petering out. The Allies struck from the north Jan. 3. With a shortened front, the 82nd moved out in a thick snowstorm.

Bone-weary and chilled, troopers pushed ahead to break the German "crust" of defense in two days of fighting. Typical was the heroism displayed by Sgt. Kenneth H. Tait, Miami Beach, Fla., 505th, who advanced over open ground to wipe out a German machine gun nest single-handed to open the way for others.

Before a week passed, All-Americans regained nearly all the ground they had relinquished, virtually destroying the 62nd Volksgrenadier Div. Six battalion commanders were among 2571 prisoners taken.

Relieved Jan. 10, the 82nd spent more than two weeks refitting. Coming up to the line again was one of the division's toughest assignments. Troopers beat their way over snow-clogged trails. There were highways on both sides of the area, northeast of flattened St. Vith, but the 82nd could use them only for supply. All-Americans bored through snow, fought as they went.

The jump-off came Jan. 28, with the 325th on the left and the 504th on the right. At dusk, more than 7000 yards from their line of departure, 504th troopers foxed the enemy by striking Herresbach both from the northeast and the southwest. Without losing a man, they killed 138 Germans and captured 180.

Next afternoon, the 508th took Holzheim, 4000 yards northwest of Herresbach. Like the 504th, the 508th suffered no casualties while killing nearly 50 Germans and taking 150 prisoners.

Then occurred an incident only possible in snow warfare. Eighty prisoners had been collected in the western part of Holzheim when four English-speaking "paratroopers" approached and fooled guards by their "snow suit" attire. The "paratroopers" had armed the prisoners with abandoned weapons and were plotting a counter-attack when 1st Sgt. Funk, of Holland fame, stepped into the picture.

A German officer shoved the muzzle of his machine pistol in Funk's ribs, demanding surrender. The sergeant's sub-machine gun was slung, barrel up, on his shoulder. Taking a

backward step and a 1000-to-1 chance, Funk shouted, "Surrender, hell!" catching his tommygun by the trigger in mid-air and ripping the German with a 20-round clip.

**T**HE 82nd hit the Siegfried Line Jan. 31 with the 325th and 504th drawing the job of cracking it three days later. They were successful, but it took courage -- courage like that of Lt. Warren R. Williams, Jr., Dallas, 325th. The lieutenant took over when his company commander was killed. Although wounded, he refused to be evacuated and led his men through murderous crossfire of machine guns supporting concrete pillboxes.

Moving north in early February, the 82nd battled to the Roer near Hurtgen before returning to its base at Sissone, France, for reorganization and training.

On the move again, All-Americans guarded the west bank of the Rhine in the Cologne area in early April; Co. A, 504th, was awarded the Presidential Citation for a daring raid across the river.

While most of the division still was entrained, the 505th stormed across the Elbe River, April 30. Other outfits hurled themselves into the battle as fast as they arrived. The German Twenty-first Army, with an estimated strength of 144,000, surrendered to the 82nd at Ludwigslust, about 25 miles east of the Elbe, May 3. Next day, 25 miles further east, patrol contact was made with Soviet troops.

That's the story of a team.

Some of the men aren't here to read this story, but those who thumb these pages know the story can end only one way -- in Victory, the All-American way!

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