

Ernest Wayne Warner

AUTOBIOGRAPHY



Life Story of Ernest Wayne Warner

Son of Wayne (Timbimboo) Warner and Zoie Essie Southworth

May 12, 1920 - June 26, 1972

Born May 12, 1920... at Parker, Idaho.

I do not remember too much of my earlier childhood, but one or two instances remain in my mind. I remember the folks place in Parker, whether by re-association of later visits or faint memory recollections, these few following come to light. One such recollection comes to light in my remembering of a big dog and my wanderings with him. I remember being dragged by him by the seat of my pants. Mom told me of my squalling and bawling and that I would be beating the poor old dog with my fists and scolding- but the faithful old dog would keep on with the performance of his duty of dragging me homeward by the seat of my pants.

One such instance was the time I fell in the canal which flowed in the front of the place and old Tip pulled me out and I rewarded him by beating him over the head and scolding him. Mom tells me that if she couldn't see me she would call old Tip and that he would bark and let her know where we were and if we were too far she would say "Bring him home boy!" and away we would be on our way, me by the seat of my pants and old Tip lugging me along like a sack or any old thing he would play with. I had a good old guardian in old Tip but never appreciated him till I was almost grown and realized the goodness of that old dog.

The Next part of my life was my beginning to go to school. I began school at Tyhee, Idaho and I had to catch the bus at the corner, I had to walk nearly one-half mile and the part that remains most prevalent in my mind was the trudging up and down that lane in the deep snow. Those drifts were as deep as I was tall and as I was just a little fellow the drifts were monstrous.

One thing I also remember about the bus was the exhaust pipe running the seat and the smell of burning shoes and boots as we wended our way to school. Sometimes the smell was pretty bad as some of the boys had manure on their shoes and boots. I also remember one time of going with Dad to a mans place by the name of Vern Briscoe and as the snow was quite deep we had to ride a horse and she plunged up and over the drifts and we upon reaching Vern's home had to rest the old mare as she was nearly tuckered out. My feet was so cold Mrs. Briscoe had me take my shoes off and put my feet in the oven to get a little more warmth in them. When we went home Dad and Vern wrapped my feet in gunny sacks to keep them warm. We had a half hog with us on our return and as Dad had to fight that weight before him I had to fend for myself and fell off a time or two before our house was reached. We lived on a Japs place by the name of Y. Tanabe and Dad worked for him and we lived quite close to school. Me and the rest of the kids had little trouble in getting to school.

We moved from one place to another—One year Dad would work for the Jap, the next he would be for the man named Milt Boam. We lived there till I had graduated from eighth grade at Tyhee, Idaho. The kids graduating from the eighth grade in those days had the same prestige as most of the high school graduates do now. I went to Irving Jr. High till I was through the ninth and then went to the high school in Pocatello. The High School was a lot smaller than it is now. I went through the tenth and in that year our family moved to Washakie, Utah. Dad had a chance to run his own farm there and so we went to try it out. I entered Bear River High School there and while there really enjoyed my tour in the school. I was on the swimming team and also on the tumbling team and as I seemed more happy school work was a lot easier and I got good grades. I won a free trip to Salt Lake City, Utah and there I and the rest were privileged to see the capitol building and to go through the federal reserve bank and to see the Deseret News go to press. We even went out to the Point of the Mountain Prison and went trough it. The prisoners tried to sell us some silver ornaments that they had made. All in all we had a very enjoyable time on our trip and I for one really had something to remember, as we in those days did not get to go as much as people do in

these latter days. I graduated from this school in 1939. Good old Bear River High as Garland and Tremonton, Utah. Those were memorable years now I look back on them.

We only stayed in Utah for one year. The place Dad had was sub marginal and as our family was a good sized one, we had to have enough to live on we had to give up our chance on this place. I had a chance to come up to Idaho with a fellow and help him for a while so I left Washakie, Utah and returned to good old Idaho and went to work for this man. I only worked for him for a little while then I returned to Pocatello, Idaho where I began to look for another job. I finally found one on a farm in Chubbuck, Ida. Working for Clyde Kinghorn- Where I worked for thirty a month and board.

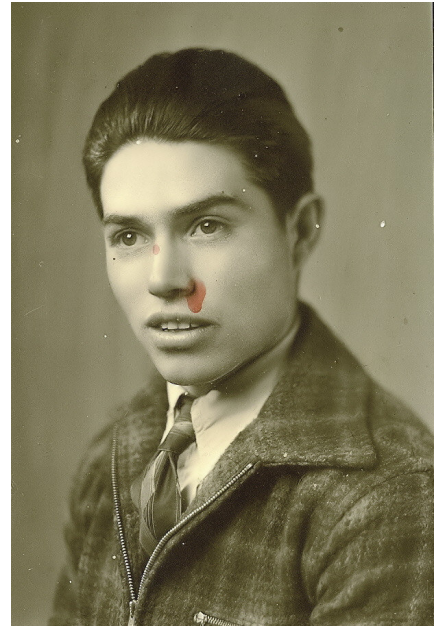
The folks moved up to Fort Hall, Idaho where Dad went to work for the Indian Service. The following Fall I moved up with them and went to work for the C.C.C. *I.D. where I worked on a survey crew. I worked there for about a year then in 1940 went to work for the Bureau of Reclamation at Fort Hall where I worked in the office as a water recorder for all the project.

I worked in there for quite a while—in all probability about six months the I was promoted to a reservoir attendant and received the sum of 85.00 per month or 1275.00 a year plus a house and heat. It wasn't a bad job but it was sure a lonely one. I was on that job till the fall of 1941 when the Army began to call boys into the service and as I was just the right age, having turned twenty one in May was prime draft bait.

We were working at Greys Lake, Idaho doing some survey work pertaining to Bureau work and I received a Draft Deferment for the duration of the job. The job soon wound up and as I only had the deferment for the job duration I was soon on my merry way to being a soldier for Uncle Sam.

I boarded a train in Pocatello, Idaho one night and the next morning upon awaking found myself in Salt Lake City, Utah. I was not alone as there were quite a few other fellows headed for the same place as I. We went into a large building where there were "umpteens" doctors who thumped us and poked us and asked us if we were healthy enough to be soldiers. We all told the examining personal that we were all 4F and should be sent back home to keep the things going on the home front but I don't believe they even heard our poor weak excuses. The Docs wrote on our naked selves in a scarlet red color a large "OK" and we went on our way to procure our uniforms of the U.S. Army. We were hustled into another room where we sworn into the army. The 1st "Looie" (Lieutenant) who swore us in at that time looked as big to me as a general did later days of service. In the following days we were interviewed and after aptitude tests a lot of the fellows were assigned to the various units. I asked for the Corps of Engineers and it was very disheartening to see all the fellows assigned to there various units and I sit on my self still waiting for my turn.

I was assigned to three officers as an orderly, later on I was to learn that I was just a "dog robber". A more technical name for my duties was aide to the chaplain and the two officers. At long last I received orders to report to Fort Leonard E. Wood were we were to receive our basic training. There I was assigned to Company "C" E.R.T.B. fifteen weeks of rigorous training was to follow. Follow it I did! Thirteen weeks of lectures and strenuous exercise and training, training that would mean our lives if we were to realize it.



We learned to know the difference between a sergeant and a corporal plus a few more such as 2nd Lt.s and 1st Lt.s., Majors, captains, colonels, (Lt. and chicken), and lastly the top Generals. Bayonet drills, rifle training, and various other soldier duties till we could do them in our sleep.

We began our day at 5:30 till 8:00 pm at night, and we were too exhausted to do more than “fallin” our sack and “crap out.” Then we would hear a shrill blast of a whistle... a loud bellow of “FALL OUT...FULL FIELD PACK...UNDER ARMS”... we would grope around in our dead way and finally we would be on our way to a night problem or hike of about ten or twelve miles or so.

We were put to the test and several times I was sure I would be separated with the boys from the men. WE finally succeeded in the completed course and were assigned to a unit. I and several of my fellow trainees were assigned to the 19th Engineer Reg’t. (combat), at Camp Hahn, California. The combat part did not worry me at this particular time--- a raw recruit just barley out of basic training. The Engineer part sounded pretty good however. I figured that we would build things and “stuff” and that the actual fighting would be done by the Infantry and armored units. How little I knew or even what the future would be or did hold for us. I surely lived the life of a martyr the first few weeks of my new assignment. A draftee in a regular army unit in the outfit but there were quite a few of the other kind too. Time went on and we eventually were beginning to be accepted and a few were even promoted to various ranks. I even received a stripe and was raised in pay from \$21.00 a month to \$30.00 a month and was that a help. The first month I was in the Army I received a total of \$7.50 for that month. I had a small PX bill and after that was taken out I received the balance which was the seven and a half.



19th Combat Engineer Battalion



I was assigned to the heavy weapon section in the 4th platoon, 4th squad C.O.F. 19th Engineers. I had the title of ass't. .30 cal. gunner. The guns were of world war vintage and were heavy and cumbersome. They had to be water cooled so we not only had the weight of the gun but of the water as well to carry. We learned that these guns were easy to spot because of the steam, which rose from the gun. We trained on these weapons because that was all we had and as we needed time to build up our war potential we used the old outmoded and obsolete weapons for our training.

Our outfit was assigned as west coast defense and we had a few thrills and chills. One particular instance was when the west coast was shelled by a Jap sub and started a fire at the Standard oils storage tanks. We were alerted and racked out in full battle array and was ready for the do or die try.

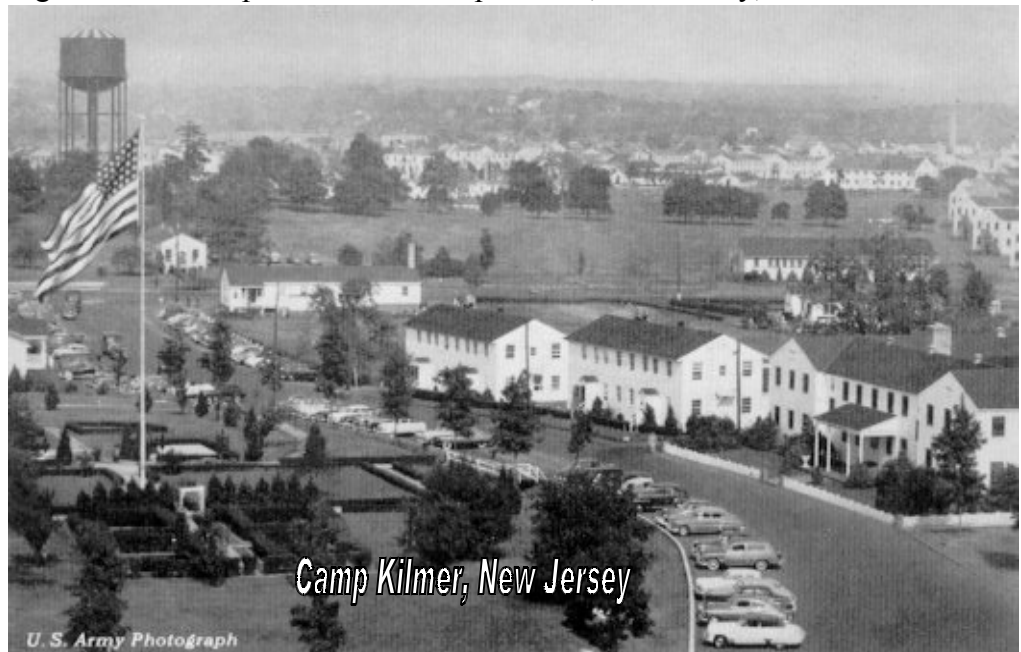
We were lucky the enemy did not try to really make a landing for we were still green troops and not very battle wise. The rumors flew hot and heavy as we were alerted for this excitement, we were being invaded and that the Japs were coming in to invade the U.S. Some of the troops even fired their weapons in the air. The populace began to get quite excited as the “snafu” occurred.

I was with my gun squad on a cliff by a big estate and we dug in under a big rose bush. The hired man brought us a big cart of donuts and coffee we sat under the rose bush and pointed our guns toward the ocean. Our strategic dispersal in this particular campaign was or would have been as effective as a snowball in _ell. We certainly were a bunch of eight balls. This proved to be our

undoing as we were really in for the training session of our life. We were taught judo and jujitsu by the Los Angeles Police department. We were also taught knife fighting too by the same personnel. Several broken arms and legs resulted from this training otherwise we did fairly good. We then moved to Oak Grove Park where we were billeted in tents to prepare us for our future eventuality's. There was a flood control dam there and we underwent further training in amphibious crossings and bridge building along with protective and defensive tactics while accomplishing our missions.

In (on) July 9th, we were alerted to be ready to be on our way overseas. A lot of us were a little worried—some were elated--- some were ready to be glory bound--- and me I guess I was just a little mediocre. I was with the crowd and hoping to be to be as honest with myself as any one could be in that time of strife and trouble. I hoped to when the going got tough that I would be able to hold my end up, fairly and in good faith. We proceeded to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, which was our

point of embarkation. We waited and waited—we hurried and had to wait for all our haste. The Army was known for its hurry up and wait technique. We were allowed passes at first but too many of the boys began to work the old sympathy line on people and the security people thought is a good idea to suspend all



passes and let no personnel off the base. I was one of the lucky ones for I was allowed to go to New York City on a pass for eight hours. I saw the Empire State Building and even got a chance to go up to the top. It was too foggy to see very much, but it was worth it to have a chance to do something that very few people get to do in a lifetime. I imagine I was like any “hick” country boy as I craned my neck to see those tall buildings. I craned my neck to see them and they really something to see. The biggest buildings I had ever seen were in Salt Lake City and they weren’t too tall in accordance to those towering man-made mountains of steel and concrete. When you stand at the base of one of those bigger and looming structures, you would swear that the building was going to tip over on you.

At last the big day come and we were hauled to the docks, where we waited in line to embark on a ship. A ship; so immense as to fill the imagination for a lifetime. It was huge. I had never seen a ship very large before and to see the behemoth of the seas. In fact she was one of the queens of the seas. Her name was Queen Elizabeth. She was over 1200 ft long and a full six stories high. When I was aboard the ship I was further flabbergasted to find out that there were over 12,000 troops on her. WE made the crossing in three days, and two nights.



Our first port of call was at Glasgow, Scotland. We were met by a small ship which went around and around the Queen Elizabeth. The smaller ship had a number of Scottish pipers on and they were playing Yankee Doodle Dandy on the bagpipes. It was something to long remember. The regiment had to embark on a smaller ship in the which we were to wend our way to Belfast, N. Ireland. The city of Belfast was finally reached and we piled into trucks where we again was on the move to another small village by the name of Antrim, N. Ireland.

We were allowed a few passes to go to the nearby towns and villages. The people were very friendly and all had a fair to middling “shindig” was had by all even me. The camp where we were staying at had been a training camp for the British Commandos. The same fellows who had made such a name for themselves on the French Coast. I wrote home and told the folks that I had me an Irish rose. I didn’t, but I thought that I would do that to let them know that I wasn’t a “stick in the Mud”. I had met a girl and had been invited to her home a time or two but I had no intentions of any thing serious. Her folks were quite nice and as I was a long way from home it seemed good to just visit in a home. A family type home.

While we were at this particular camp we had a lot of trouble with a Negro quartermaster unit which was stationed nearby. Some of the fellows had their girls taken away by negros and they started a big “donnybrook” with them. Several of the boys in our outfit were knifed and one or two



were shot. I figured if any of those Irish gals wanted to go with the colored boys they were not fit to go with in any respect at all. The whole company went after the colored boys and I was with them tough and ready to do my share of mayhem. I didn't get a chance to do any thing as we were all alerted and every one of us in the outfit was placed on some detail to keep us busy. I was placed on guard and told if any colored boys showed to challenge in the proper manner and not look for any trouble with them. They were on our side too and as I was not prejudiced to the colored race I was placed on the main gate.

The same night we were alerted and we again embarked on a ship. This one was no Queen Elizabeth but an old cattle boat by the name of "LETITIA" (pronounced Lateesha); she was a faithful old ship for she eventually got us to our destination after 21 days, on the briny deep. There was an uncountable number of ships in this convoy, ships as far as you could see and beyond. We had several skirmishes with submarines but we were fortunate in the which we were not in too much danger, at least danger that we knew about. On board the ship we had British merchant men and they were shorthanded we had to gun guards and some of those old Lewis and Oerlikens were really hard to get used too. We finally talked them into mounting our .50 cal. in a place or two. We were very fortunate in not having any air attacks or even any close engagements at that time. We saw a corvette make a run on a sub and also a destroyer run at a tangent from us and drop some depth charges. I don know if they got anything, we were not told of it. I asked a British seaman if they ever knew if they got any thing and he told me to watch and see if there was a flag being flown a half-mast on the flagship, and if so then that was in memoriam of the sunken subs. I borrowed a pair of field glasses and there was a flag being flown at half-mast on the destroyer – but whether it was for a sub or that someone had died enroute in our convoy. There was several times this happened but I still do not know about the subs.



We proceeded past the Azore Islands and then we were accompanied by a British patrol bomber, which we were to learn come from Gibraltar. We learn a lot from the merchant seaman on that old tub, the Latitia, they told us of the bombers approximate arrival and we were watching for it.

Late that night we went through the straits of Gibraltar and we could see lights from a town which we were told was a Spanish Morocco - but we never did hear any name of the town in any form. The next morning at 04:00 we were at the invasion P.E..(Point of Embarkation) We began the

operation that was to lead us to the Festung Europa (Fortress Europe) in the distant future. The outfit landed at a port by name of Arzew, Algeria. This was on the morning of November 8th, 1942.

We climbed down the side of the ship on a rope net, which hung over the side and clamber down we did. I remember climbing down and down and when I figured I was about there I looked down and the Higgins Boat was still a good piece down and so all there was for me to do was to clamber some more. I proceeded to do that particular thing and down I went and next thing I knew the “dad-blamed” thing came up and hit me in the backside. I turned loose the rope net and fell into the boat in about six inches of bilge water which was sloshing around in the bottom of the craft. I rose to my feet and proceeded to secure the guns which were being passed down to me. I did very well for a while then I succumbed to that sickness which all the landlubbers acquired while we were on that little wallowing tub. I had not been sea sick in all this time and we had been on the water for over 21 days and some of the water was pretty rough and still had not been seasick.

I don't remember the trip shoreward but we were fired upon, I was so sick I don't think I would have even noticed that we were sunk if we had been. We wallowed to shore and tried to land but there was so much confusion on the beach that we could not land because the coxswain was afraid we would be swamped in the heavy swells, so we tried a new place to get ashore. The Lt. told the navy personnel to get us ashore any old place and hang the consequences. We were taken right to the docks and there we were disembarked and the seasickness that I had acquired disappeared and I felt fine.

We later learned that we had come right through a mine field and were in a lot of good luck for we had not a hit any of the mines. I and my gun squad were assigned to an area in the dark and we sat there all night guarding a huge concrete warehouse. The next morning we were told to pack up and get ready to move out. When we went through the town we were shot at by a few snipers, luckily none of us were hit. We were to learn later that the snipers were a few fanatical Arabs and a small group of Fascist Italians. The main body of the opposing military were French Forces who later capitulated. We wended our way toward a range of hills about five miles inland and there we met our first resistance. The Enemy happened to be Italian troops with German officers in command. The “Eyeties” would fight like crazy till we were within a hundred yds. or so then would surrender.

We gathered the prisoners together and commandeered a large warehouse, which had been a winery warehouse, and it was filled with a lot of baskets and had a few huge wine kegs which were as large as the average house. While we were at this particular place we were strafed by enemy aircraft. We were also bombed by the same planes with fragmentary bombs. (the Germans even shot their own allies in this melee.) The bombing over, we again began our trek inland.

The outfit never saw too much more combat till later- but we were sure worked plenty. Then came the battle of Kasserine. Our outfit had the privilege of manning the outpost and reporting on the enemy troop movements. We sat in that old hot and broiling sun till we felt as if we were cooked to a turn and then we were cooked some more, for we were not relieved and had to continue our duty. While we were sitting out in this valley we saw a light tank come churning up and come to a screeching halt and told us to “GET THE HELL out of there” as the whole German Army was coming up the road. We didn't know it at the time but we had lost a lot of tanks in a battle, which had occurred up the valley. The light tank that had warned us was a remnant of this force. We got: The outfit moved back and proceeded to dig in.

We were at a place called Wadi something or other, I could never say those Arab or French words, and were to defend this Wadi I was certainly glad when we were told to pack up and move to the mountains. There we were to fortify a pass and we planted mines for several thousand feet

before our positions. Wire concertine and booby-traps were also used to a good advantage. I know the digging was mighty hard for I had to dig about six or seven gun emplacements for our two M.G.'s, the .30 cal. and the .50. The worst thing about all this digging was that we never got the opportunity to use one of the emplacements.



The platoon seargents kept moving us too much. I finally had a chance to settle down when I heard a loud crack and then peering around to see what had made all the noise I saw my first German tank. That tank was the most fearsome thing to me at that time, I expected it any moment to fire its guns and blow us all to kingdom come. While looking over this behemoth it did as we expected it to do. The long snout-like gun barrel gave a huge belch of fire and smoke and we heard the banshee-like wail and shriek of that leaden and iron missile of death and destruction hit the earth and gave vent to an ear splitting roar, rocks and earth debris flew about us in no friendly terms for us this was our second baptism of fire. I guess the enemy was out to test his guns for there was no more rounds fired that evening, at least not our way. The next A.M I received word that the C.O. wanted to see me and on the double. I reported as ordered as was told that I and my gun squad was to report to a Lt. Shirley over in "E" company. I returned to the area and gathered up the squad and guns and proceeded to do as ordered. I and my gun squad was to report to Lt. Shirley but he was not to be found. We finally found a platoon Sgt. And I reported to him, but he did not know where we were to set up our weapons. The old sun was getting to be mighty high by this time and I was very desirous to get our guns in position before the daylight gave the position away.

We never succeeded in digging in till after the sun was at high and I bet old Jerry knew we were green troops as he watched us dig in, in plain sight. The Sgt. of "E" co. told us that the guns of his platoon were wiped out the night before and that we were to take their place. I tell you that we felt mighty low after hearing that little bit of news. Sarge told us that we may or may not be hit again right soon and to expect the worst at any time. We sat in our foxholes and looked down upon the enemy waiting for him to come gobble us up. We saw a lot of troop movements and finally we saw several of the enemy begin their climb of the protecting hills in our general direction and our hearts were in our throats as we watched them crawl their tortuous way toward us.

The first enemy I saw close I took them to be G.I.'s just out pooping around. I watched them come up the hill on my left and then what woke me up was a rifleman began to fire at them and what was the biggest shock of all was to see him upon emptying his rifle throw it down and hold his hands up in surrender. I couldn't believe my eyes about such a thing. I turned my .30 toward him and figured that they would come and get him as a prisoner and when they did I would be waiting for

them. They came and I cut loose with a dozen or so rounds. I do not know if I hit any of them or not as they upon my firing plunged to the ground for cover and I wasn't going over there and see if I had done any damage to them. The soldier that had offered himself in surrender- upon seeing the enemy disperse ran toward the rear areas in high gear.

A pretty gee star shell burst in the air directly before our position the next thing we knew we were really in the soup. Daisy cutters burst in the air and shrapnel hit the ground like a shotgun erupting directly before our feet. Mortars whoomped and crashed around us but they certainly were not ours and as we were on the receiving end of things we felt as if it was the blinking end. Then came the respite and I warned the squad to be ready to meet the enemy for they were soon to appear. They did not disappoint us for they came charging up the hill like they were going to run a race. We gave them what for for a little while and they withdrew. They made several sorties and it was during one of these that I nearly had mine. I was firing at the enemy in short bursts and saw out of the corner of my eye a spattering of dust as rain makes upon hitting dust. I ducked down in my foxhole and as did the ammo box blew up and began to smoke and burn, I grabbed the tripod leg and with one mighty heave flipped the M.G. out of the emplacement. I reached for my M1 and was glad we had to carry a rifle instead of a .45 as the infantry had to do. I peered around and saw nothing to shoot at as the enemy must have figured that we had a strong point where we were at and gave it up. All my squad had come through without a scratch and I was indeed thankful. We sit there for about three or four more hours and then we were told to hold our position for 36 hours more till they could get the armor into position. We held our places and then after that time had expired we were again told to hold another 36 hrs. Our rations had been gone for two meals by this time and we were a little on the P.O.'ed side when we were told to cover "E" co.'s withdrawal. We were to stay for a minimum of 4 hrs. We had no choice but to do as we were told. I had to take over the .50 cal. M.G. as Sandretto had been hit by a piece of shrapnel as was being evacuated. He was hit in the right shoulder and the piece had gone in and turned completely over and had come out his right side. He was in so much pain that they had to give up trying to get him back to an aid station. He was placed in a shady side of a big rock and as I had two canteens of water I gave him one though I knew that he probably would never be able to drink it. He was a good "Joe". I hated to see him get it in that way. I had to get back to my squad and see how they were making out and upon my return we were again plastered and as we had plenty of ammo, we gathered all we could carry and piled the lot in our holes and waited. In the meantime we had acquired a few grenade launchers which we placed on our rifles and we became a mortar squad. We sure had a time lobbing those grenades at old Jerry.

Our time being nearly up we prepared to advance rearward. I said I would go first to cover the rest of the squad from the advantage point of rocks directly behind our position. I had a hassle with some of the fellows as they wanted to go through a big canyon which was on our right rear flank. I said the shortest line between two points was a straight line. We went directly up the hill as I suggested and outside of getting knocked down by a mortar shell and believing I had been wounded we eventually got to the top of the hill. I fired 20 or 30 rounds at a M.G. nest and they quit firing. We were on our way to Tebessa, which was about thirty to thirty-five miles from our present location. We trudged along and we were mighty weary after 72 hrs without much sleep or grub but we still had ammo. I had a belt full and two bandoliers plus my over coat and my faithful old M1.

We walked about two miles when we came to see T.D.'s (Tank Destroyers) and were we glad to see them. The reason we were so glad to see them was that old Jerry had the habit of driving their tanks up and machingunning their victims from the tanks, and seeing those T.D.'s we felt a lot better let me tell you.

We kept on plugging along and we soon saw a lot of troops in a big Wadi and fearing they may be enemy we reconnoitered them and to our surprise found them to be some of our outfit. I reported to the commanding officer who was Capt. Browning. I had always admired this Capt. As he was a West Point man. He was a real soldier. As we were still with quite a lot of ammo and arms we were told to fall in the rear and were to act as rearguard. I have no Idea how far we walked but soon we were slogging along like a bunch of sleepwalkers. Eventually after so much plugging along we come to quite a few trucks and were given rides to a restaging area. I kept asking around and finally found my company and reported. I learned that I had been reported as K.I.A. and the C.O. said that he was certainly happy to take my name off the record. I was handed a hot cup of chocolate and it was the ambrosia of the Gods. One thing I forgot to mention about was while I was enroute to the restaging area we were strafed by a Jerry plane and quite a few of the boys were wounded by the planes gunfire. I was asleep when the guys began to bail out of the truck and the plane missed me and the truck whether the pilot did it intentional or missed the roadway and trucks; its bullets mostly hit the fields adjoining the road. The Medics were nearby and they gathered up all the victims. I will go back to my getting the wonderful cup of chocolate and then I was told if I wanted to get a good night sleep to go camouflage net and went to sleep for 15 hrs. I awoke and was so ravenously hungry that even the "K" rations, which were handed to me, were tasty for a change.



We were reissued new equipment and were again put in the lines. The next stop, Faïd Pass. One morning about 04:00 we were called out to clear the roadway of mines, for Gen. George Patton, (old blood and guts) was going to come through at 1200 on the dot. We went on our way to play with those little but very touchy playthings. Down the roadway we went and we did not go too hurriedly as those babies were not to be trifled with. We kept getting closer and closer to the pass and we expected to be shot at any moment.

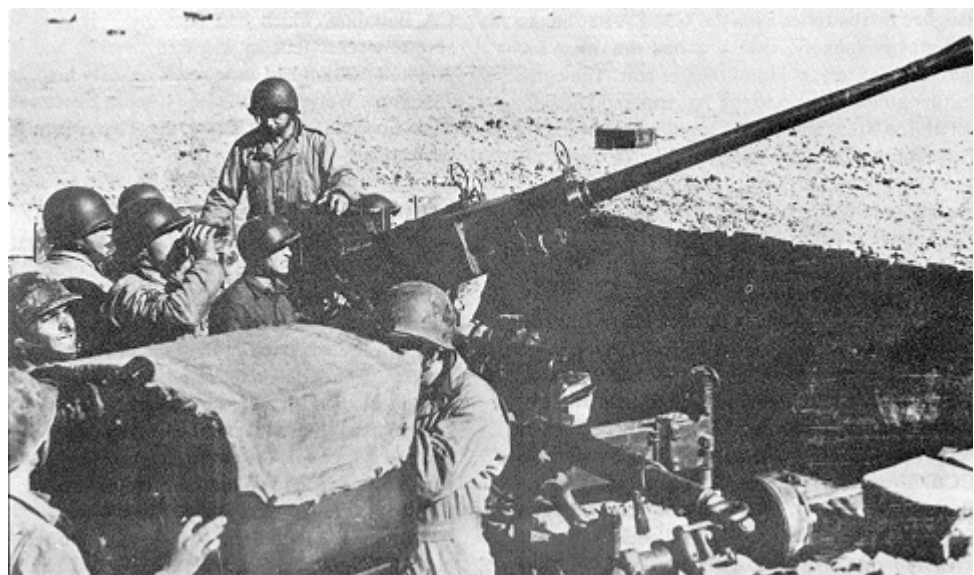
The pass kept creeping nearer and nearer still no fire was put on us. I figured that they were waiting to get us in real close and get us with a lot of small arms fire, our guts were really tight and we so tense that if a fiddle bow had been drawn across any part of our anatomy we would have give a screech that would rival the "E" string on any old fiddle. Still we kept our monotonous advance on toward the Faïd Pass.

At last we entered the pass itself and into the very notch and still no Jerry. We were too busy working on mines to go gallivanting around and see if there was any enemy left in the pass. We did see a few dead ones however but gave them no more than a passing glance as we went about our assigned tasks.

We cleared the pass and were disarming several booby-traps that we had found and at 0700 we looked out across the desert and there we saw a division of infantry advancing across the flats. I tell you we were a bit worried to think that maybe they would take us for the enemy and open fire, but someone must have been on the ball for they regrouped on the road and come "tromping" through the pass. We fooled around in the pass for four or five more hours working on more mines and booby traps. One halftrack hit a mine and the guys in the vehicle bailed out and were caught in a field of anti-personnel mines.

These mines were particularly mean because they were so hard to see. The mechanism that armed the mine was only three little prongs that protruded above the ground about 2 ½ inches and only took about three lbs of pressure to set the mine off. The mine upon being thus armed then gave a little plop and then a much stronger explosion took place and the main body rose into the air to the height of four feet and then the main charge detonated and 200 steel ballbearings were hurled to a distance of two hundred yards or so and the results to personnel were devastating to the physical as well as the moral.

The first tank through the pass was a light tank and in the turret was Gen. George Patton in person. He was sure after old Jerry and was going to get them if he had his way. Gen. Rommell (the Desert Fox) was trying to get his armor and troops back to Tunis, Tunisia where he could if the going got too tough evacuate them to Italy. The British Eighth Army was putting on pressure on one side and we came plugging along on our side after a few minor skirmishes we wended our way through Algeria and into Tunisia. The towns we went through were too numerous to remember and too unpronounceable to try. I will try to mention a few of the towns we went through tho.



*Above: General Erwin
Rommel (the Desert Fox)*

*Above Right: General
George S. Patton*

*Right: American Field
Artillery in Tunisia*

I remember, Bilida, Algeirs, Tizi-Ougou and into Constantine. There was a skirmish at this place but we were not in it; at least not our company. Thence to the Tunisian border and into and around Matuer and the Cape Bon where Jerry was concentrated into a very small area. This was the beginning of the end, for Jerry couldn't get a ship for we now controlled the seas and air. When they surrendered it was quite a sight to see the G.I.'s herding those Panzer boys. They were all nearly six feet tall and all were excellent specimens of manhood and were all bronzed and there were a few who were not clean-shaven and the looked every inch the soldier. Our boys looked a little on the seedy side. It was rather funny to see short ones, tall ones, fat ones all kinds marching along by 6' tall Aryans-supposed to be the cream of the world. They had given us a tolerable bad time at any rate. The worst thing of all was our boys trying to drink all the vino in Tunis. A group of German troops would try to surrender and those inebriates would say Go away I am getting stinking from drinking. They the Jerry would still have their weapons but they had no place to go so they had no alternative but to find their way to the nearest P.W. camp. Thus ended the African campaign. I had not been wounded or had any really bad times or any such thing to cause me to mentally be bothered about the war thus far.

We were to be around Bizertr, Tunisia for awhile as we were training for another amphibious landing. We all had our suspicions as to where we would be heading for. We soon found out for

sure as we embarked on as L.S.T. (Landing Ship Tank) and headed for a small island called Pan Telleria—but we never even had the opportunity to do so for we received word that they had capitulated upon seeing the invasion force. The journey continued and we went on our way to Sicily.

Our outfit hit the beach at Gabes, Sicily and there we were again met by Italian troops and they again surrendered. They had a German officer over them and when they the Italians figured they had a chance to get away from them they evidently got out from under as soon as they could. The outfit moved inland and we headed for Palermo, which was the capital of Sicily - most of the Germans were around the town of Catania, which was by the Volcano M. Etna. The troops who took the most of the fighting were the British and they did a “bang up” job of putting pressure on old Jerry and keeping him off balance so to speak.

Our outfit in the meantime was moving down the backbone of the island and as there was no road way had to build one as we went. We went along a fairly good clip for we eventually came out behind the enemy and with the pressure from the British and of our cutting off their supplies they again were in an unattainable position. The next session of our operation was to finally hit the European continent proper by crossing the straits of Messina and going up the Italian peninsula toward Naples and Rome – but it was to be a long time before we were to hit Rome. We were assigned to accompany the Armor up the backbone of Italy and some of our regiment had the task of going in to the Salerno beachhead in an amphibious landing. I for one was glad that we were the ones!

Magazine Clip from Ernie's book of Remembrance



Up and up the boot we went and after a few engagements on the way we finally come to a river by the name of Garigiliano. There we again met Hitler's elite troops. This river crossing was no cinch but after a few tries we established a couple bridges and we went across and Jerry pulled back to another river called the Volturno and there we were forced to again marshal our forces for another river crossing. These river crossings sound easy as I now put them down on paper but only a G.I. who has made a river crossing knows the trouble and the coldness of the water. The tightness of the guts as you work under the enemies guns and not just small arms stuff but the big ones which sounded as a runaway freight train coming in to hit only you. The crossing was accomplished and we again went a little way and were again stopped

by Jerry at a place called Mt. Camino. We tried several times to take the mount but were hurled back and then the big brass decided to try something which was something to see. The allied forces moved all their artillery up and then after getting a good supply of ammo up began to fire on the mount. The Navies big guns also got in the show. They kept this up for three days and nights and we walked up the mount and took over. There were Jerries on the hill that were dear but had no visible wounds only a nosebleed or just a trace of blood in their ears. A lot of the troops yet alive were so shell-shocked that I imagine that they were glad that the war was over for them. They were only getting their own in kind back. I heard later that there were over 750 pieces of artillery being fired at the mount. The Navy was firing from 18 to 22 miles and they really put the shells into the air. The Mt Camino was ours and we earned it by firing a lot of artillery at the Mt.. Our outfit moved up the valley along the Volurno River and we were again stopped at another river by the name Rapido (rapid). The battle along the Rapido was a mess. We helped put 3000 infantrymen across the Rapido and after three days of battle they were ordered back and only 500 of them came back. The rest were M.I.A. (Missing In Action) or wounded or captured.



Picture of Rapido River Valley. Crossing took place here

I

helped to put several platoons over and one particular platoon was sunk in the middle of the river and I heard the boys gurgle and gasp as they hit that cold water, and to help matters out the water was awful swift and not a little deep in spots. I helped this one young infantryman out of the water and had just clambered out of that freezing water and had moved to the top of a dike when old Jerry again gave us a few rounds of M.G. fire and we went over the bank and yelled at that young fellow to not go clear over as the mines had not been cleared. I was too late. He rolled over one and I figured he was done for – but as I went closer I found he had not been wounded but he was really shook up and his clothes were in rags and I tried to help him to his feet he kept on trying to crawl on his hands and knees, I finally succeeded in getting him to his feet and well on the way back to the aid station and upon reaching the aid station I turned him over to the medics in charge and as I was about to leave the officer in charge came out and wanted to talk to me. I really got a dressing down for letting that young soldier keep his weapons. The Doc. Told me he was shell-shocked and that a person near that victim should take all lethal tools of any kind away immediately because the shell-shocked G.I. had no control over their passions or emotions. I guess I was lucky he didn't try to kill me. I hadn't been feeling too well during this phase of operations but figured that it was only

the smoke that was bothering me. The chemical warfare boys kept the valley full so old Jerry could not see us so readily. Early the next a.m. I could hardly get out of bed; I went over and asked the medic for some aspirin. The medic took one look at me and hiked me over to the Doc. And as he examined me, he kept telling the aid men who were there to get the ambulance ready for a trip to the field hospital. He asked me if I had ever had malaria, and I told him no. The next words were that of..."well you got it now." I rode to the station hospital in the front seat and outside of feeling a bit groggy and aching in every bone and muscle in my body I felt fine. Upon arriving at the hospital I stood in line with the rest of the G.I.'s. The nurse asked me what was wrong with me and I told her I had Malaria and she told another nurse and medic to get me a wheel chair and take me to a certain ward. The nurse was taking my temperature and she really put the hurry on them. I told her that I could walk and started to walk to the ward and I must have passed out for I woke up in a bed soaking wet with sweat and my pajamas were wringing wet also. I suppose that nurse dressed me or rather undressed me and put me to bed. I found out that I had a fever of over 103 degrees. I sure felt weak and wrung out.

I had two pieces of red-hot sandpaper in place of a stomach and they were working to a friction stage. I was told to drink a lot of juices which was grapefruit juice and to this day I do not care too much for the stuff; After two weeks I was again declared fit for duty and I went back to the line. While I was in the hospital we were privileged to see some U.S.O. people, but I was so sick that as they talked to me I thought they were some more hospital personal and didn't pay too much attention to them. Some of the fellows those that were too sick or confined to bed had the opportunity to go out and watch them in their show.

The outfit had not done too much while I was away and upon my return they were ordered to the line again on a mission. I was an intelligence N.C.O. and I and Pfc. Edwin Reames was ordered to go up to the lines and find out about a certain bridge and the surrounding territory. The bridge was supposed to be a stone one and we had to find out if the enemy had destroyed it as yet. We rode up to the lines and hopped out of the jeep and proceeded on our way. Pfc. Reames and I were at the lines toward evening and as it got dark we jumped off on our mission. We kept moving along not too fast as we had to go through minefields and all manner of booby-traps. We eventually reached the general area where we were to do our recon work and as it was now getting day light we had to hide out till the next night when we could go down and do our little job. We stayed hid in the brush all day and watched old Jerry running around below us. We had a map and picked out locations of their guns and vehicles along with the troop movements. At last it got dark and we again began our trek to the objective. We slipped by a combat patrol and nearly stumbled into an armored units camp. We slithered out of there quick and again we went "bumbling" along. We came to the creek or small river where the bridge was and began our reconnoitering. The moon was up by this time and coordinates and then we got out of there. Our luck was bad for we never got to our lines that night for the enemy had made a big push and we were nearly twice the distance behind our own lines. Daylight seemed to come awfully fast that night and I'll swear we walked in circles all night. We hid out in a big brush pile and stayed put all day. Our rations were depleted and we were mighty gaunt – but we were more afraid of old Jerry than an empty gut. At long last it grew dark and we were again on our way to more friendlier territory. I swear we walked all night but it was about midnight when we were challenged by the infantry outpost. We had a very tight moment for the password had been changed since we were overdue 12 hrs. we did not have the new one. We asked them to let us advance singly and as we got where they might see us in the moonlight they finally gave us the O.K. to head for the barn. We let no grass grow under our feet as we headed for the barn. We reported to our G.2 officer and we "crapped out". The G2 officer received a silver star for

his work of getting that information to headquarters. It must have been very vital for the next morning we were again on a big push. The artillery really cut loose and I found out later from some artillery guys that they were firing at some co-ordinates that were mighty familiar. In fact they were the same ones I and Reames had turned in to the Major, in battalion. We went to our C.O. as we still had a copy of one of our primary map we showed it to him and he went to bat for us. We didn't get no medals but we did get an honorable mention on a piece of paper. I didn't think much of it but I guess it was better than nothing.

The next A.M. we were again called into the line on a mine detail. We were lucky that first night or rather that morning early for we met no opposition and returned to camp till the next night for another foray. The next night as soon as it was dark we again began our detail of clearing mines.

One of the fellows tripped a booby-trap and as he did the enemy fired a star shell and we were caught out in the open. I froze and the others began to run. The M.G.'s opened up and the guys running were hit like ducks in a shooting gallery. I never heard so much misery in some of those boys' voices as they cried for God's help or else their cries for *-Medic-medic*. I was lying flat on my face and when the star shell went out I got up and ran to a ditch for an hour before venturing out to see if I could help some of my buddies. I helped two or three who were not hit too badly into the ditch and then went back to help some of the worst hit boys. There were only two who needed any help at all, besides the three who were walking wounded there two more who had any chance at all. I talked one of the least hurt fellows to help me with the two wounded boys. We got one out of the mine field and returned to help the last when this other guy blacked out and I had to go back in alone. I got him over my shoulders and began to inch my way back when another star shell went off and I again tumbled into that icy ditch and began crawling toward safety. Every time I would move the ice would break and the enemy M.G.'s would fire at me. I would freeze and again would inch along. Finally I got clear enough to stand up but found I could not I was so played out. I rested for a while and went in search of help. I run into some infantry medics and got them to go back and help my buddies. They were eventually brought out and I went back to the C.O. and reported the results. He was very shook up about the sordid mess but as we were to clear the area for an assault on the Abby at Cassino he had to order more guys into the hotspot and as I knew what was done and where we were at I was again asked to accompany the new detail into the minefield. The Capt. Told me that as soon as the new detail had been orientated to the new area I was to return to camp as was relieved of duty for that particular detail.



I returned to camp after I had shown the fellows the job and location. I hit the sack and woke up to see a sight that I never got to see again. The bombing of the Cassino Abby. Some say that there were no enemy in the Abbey but as I had been up there twice and been shot at the same number of times, I knew better, so was glad to see it blown to kingdom come.

Abby at Monte' Cassino during siege

Time went on till the 23rd of Dec. I was “pooping” around with nothing to do when the company orderly told me that the old man wanted to see me and I went to see him wondering what I had done now? The C.O. , Capt. Edgar F. Pohlman told me that he had some bad news for me. I was beginning to feel mighty low when he told me I was to return to the U.S.A. as an instructor in auto-matic weapons. I told him “ah, your kidding me?” No, he said read the order yourself. I did and it was gospel truth. I figured that when he said he had bad news that someone at home was sick or else worse. Boy was I glad to hear that I was to go home. The C.O. went on to tell me that he wished he had a whole company of soldiers just like me. I asked him why? He told me that he had his eye on me ever since I had entered the company and that I was a good example of good clean living. He had never seen me smoke or knew me to drink. He especially knew that I was no guy to chase the camp followers. He again told me that he was proud to have me serve under him. I went back to where I was where I was billeted and never said a word to anyone; I just lie on my sack and thought about going HOME. I had to stay around two or three more months but they were just doing training to keep us out of mischief and to keep our hand in the top notch condition for the coming battles. One day we were out practicing with the new bazooka we had received and the platoon commander came up to me and said very formally, Cpl. Warner you are now relieved of all active duty and you are to go to the supply Sgt. and turn all your arms in and only keep one set of fatigues and your O.D.s. . I sure felt good but later I felt a little naked as I watched all the others fall out for formations and I wasn't one of them. The following Monday I was on my way. I surly missed my buddies and had a hard time saying good-bye to them. The C.O. again talked to me and told me that he admired me tremendously for my temperance toward tobacco and all the vices that follow an army. This to come from a man who had 300 men under his command. I thought that was quite an honor and was proud that I had lived up to the word of wisdom and had done my best to obey the Lord's commandments. I began to gain my testimony then and there. I went to Naples, Where I went to a replacement depot where I was to await transportation home.

At Last we were to board a ship and we were on our way to the states. I and the rest of the fellows sure did feel good to think that we were finally on our way. We sailed on very nicely and we figured that we would keep on this old tub all the way to the states. Oh how wrong we were. I had not been feeling to well and wouldn't say a word of my aches and pains for I felt that it might keep me from returning to the states and so I kept mopping around trying to hide my ills. I finally could not take it any longer and had to turn in sick call; I again had malaria and as we were docking anyhow I was sent to the Base hospital in Oran. It had been quite some time since I had been in Oran and thee had been a lot of territory covered since then. I wound up in the hospital with a bout of the bug and every day I asked the Doc. To send me home on the hospital ship. He would grin and said he would see. Two weeks went by and I had my tests to see if I still had the bug and as my tests were negative I was released and sent to a “Repple Depple”, and imagine my surprise when I saw all the increment that I had started with still sitting on their “hunkers”. I had just received my duffle bag back from the supply tent when we got the word that we were really shipping out for HOME.

We boarded the U.S.S. General Mann and it was no tub like the former ship we had been on last. We sure ate good on that ship and often too. The galleys were kept open continually because there were so many troops to feed and when we were hungry we went to chow line and got our

skillets filled. The grub was certainly wonderful after all the “C” rations we had consumed in our sojourn in the past months of combat. We even had fresh donuts and cakes every meal.

I was going to keep my eyes peeled for the first glimpse of the good old U.S.A.. The crew told us that on the morning of the seventh day we would see the shore. I was up early that morning too get my first look at a place I had no idea that I would return to so soon. I kept my eye peeled but I saw nothing but FOG and we were tied up at the docks before I ever saw land. The fog lifted and we saw our homeland once more. It was a real treat to see all those American gals tripping along to their work or where-ever the were going. We all were so glad to see something of good old U.S.A. we did not care that we were looking at just so we were looking.



The troops disembarked and we were sent to Camp Patrick Henry, Virginia, to sit out our three days of quarantine. There we had fresh ice cold milk – the first we had tasted since going overseas. The best thing I remember was the piece of beefsteak, that was a treat for all the beef we had ever eaten in the front was canned “Willie”. The comparison of the two was no where alike. That steak was a bit of ambrosia. Time passed

and we were released and sent on our way homeward. I was sent to Camp White, Oregon and had a 21-day delay enroute to my new assignment. That trip across the country was very interesting but I don’t think I saw all I could for I was thinking too much of getting home. I finally arrived in Pocatello, Idaho and got a cab and was on my way to the folk’s house. They then lived at 1028 N. 9th. I got out of the cab and was standing there paying the driver when Mom saw me and let a loud screech out of her and said “ERNIES HOME.” Dad was out back in the old chick sales and he came running out and was still doing up his breeches and grabbed me like to have squeezed the breath clear out of me. The first thing they both said was why are you so yellow looking? I had to tell them about Malaria and atabrine. They had quite a time teasing me and calling me china-man. I was really glad to get back home and at that time didn’t talk too much about the war, though I knew Dad and Mom were both curious about my experiences. I just enjoyed my stay at home. I visited a few relations and friends but didn’t run around too much.

My time was up at last and I had to report to my new camp. I boarded the train and was on my way again. I arrived at camp finally and was not assigned immediately so had to sit around for quite some time. I was broke so I got a pass and went into a little town nearby by the name of Medford. I got a job digging a ditch and made me twenty bucks, which was sure a big help till I was paid. I was told to look up some people in Medford and I did and they had me over several times to dinner and once I was told to bring a buddy along. They run an ice cream plant and we sure had our fill of ice cream.

I was eventually assigned to Dugway, Utah, where I was assigned to a Chemical Warfare unit. I was placed first with a poison gas unit but as my olfactory senses were not right I was again

reassigned to the Incendiary Section. I was to be second in command of the unit. I was reclassified as a Bomb Salvage Technician. My duties were to plot the bombs in the target area when they were dropped from the planes. The plotting wasn't so bad but the defusing of the bombs that failed to go off wasn't so pleasant an assignment. We also pioneered the Napalm drop tank and they were really quite the mean things. The little firebombs were also very devilish in their results. We had a Jap village and also a German village which we had to repair after the bombs were dropped on it. We also where the fireman and we had our own fire department. The planes would fly down from Wendover, Utah, and drop their loads and we did the plotting and recovering of the bombs. Our target area was located in the salt flats beyond Dugway Mts. And we had quite a trip when we had to go out on a shoot. I was assigned a W.A.C. to keep my records and as I was too busy defusing and plotting I hardly ever talked to her except by walk-talkie (radio). We had to stay a good distance away as we played with the bombs for safety reasons. One day while we were after a 32lb bomb, which had lit in a soft place. We had a hole dug and was going to pull it out with the jeep when the Lt. told me to get out of the hole for I was to become a civilian. I was to go to Fort Douglas, Utah, to be discharged. I had nearly 100 points and you only needed 85 points to get out. I later found out that the Major had froze me to keep me in till after the series of shoots were over. The bomb. We were digging was one of the last of these shoots. I went to Fort Douglas where I was discharged and become a "Civvie." I had been in the Army 3 yrs and 8 months and 12 days. I wended my way home and then began a new section of my life...

There were several instances and experiences while I was in the service that I forgot to mention so will make a note of it now. One such experience was when we were in Constatine, Algeria. While there we met the Foreign Legionnaires and they were quite the fellows. There were some of them that would scare you to death if you met the unexpectedly. They were wonderful fighters though and I was glad they were on our side. They only received \$7.00 per month wages.

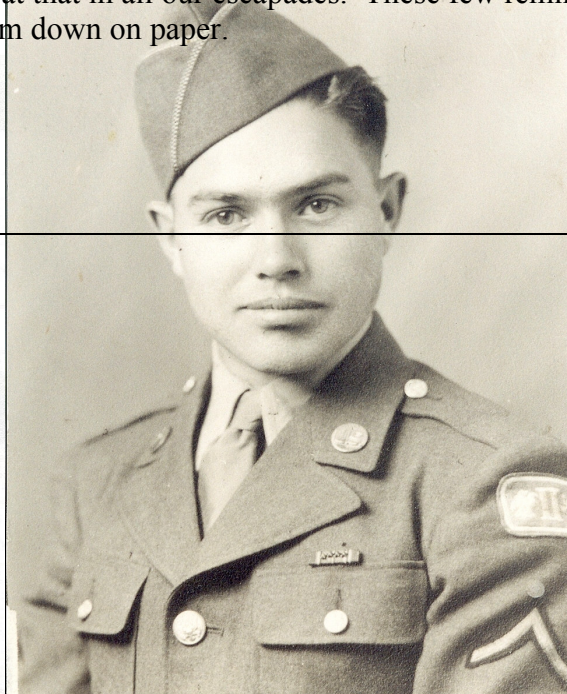
Another time I must mention this for it was the only thing that I brought out of the war with me that would remain indefinitely with me. While we were going in on the beach as Gela, Sicily I run up on the beach with the rest of the guys and through the surf and up the sloping beach and finally to flop down in some rocks and there found I had a shoe full of blood. I figured that I must have stepped on or near to some poor unfortunate G.I. who had been hit, and that the blood was someone else's for I had not felt me get hit. One of the fellows told me that my shoe was all bloody and that I had better see the medics. I began to remove my shoe and as I was wearing combat boots I had to unbuckle the straps and then I had seen a piece of shrapnel sticking out of my shoe. I pulled it out and then my leg right on the shinbone really begin to bleed and hurt. I called the medic over and he gave me a shot and then some sulfa powders on my leg and tied me up and I was again on my way. I told him if he turned me in for a purple heart for that little scratch I would give him a real reason for one of his own.

I had another experience similar but I never really was hurt in reality. While we were in Kasserine I was knocked flat by a mortar shell and as the ground was frozen, chunks of earth flew and one of these hit me in the back and numbed my right arm and I thought I was hit in the back. I asked my buddy to look and see if it was very bad and he looked and then told me I would have a big bruise but there was no wound. It was several hours before I regained the feeling back in my arm. I was very happy to be wrong in my own diagnosing of my wound. I had several close calls

with mines but it was only someone's carelessness that caused the trouble. I had a buddy who was hit in the back and later on was paralyzed through his back and eventually was over half immobile. They were working on a German Teller mine and after pulling the mine stood right up and the mine had a delayed action fuse and it went BLOOIE. Wounding my buddy. I learned one thing from that experience and that was to pull your mine and wait for a good 5 minutes before looking.

I should mention the booby trap we found in a house one time. We were on a recon patrol one time and as we were about to enter this particular doorway I felt a warning flash and told everyone to freeze. I told the fellows to look around them cautiously and watch for any strange looking objects. One of the guys was about to go in the door and as I was quite a way from him could see under the door sill and there was a shiny object directly under the threshold. We looked closer and saw the trip mechanism and after an hour or so of cautious reconnoitering and more carefully working we disarmed the thing and found about 500 pounds of Tolite which was German explosive, the building was one regiment would have picked for the command post. I guess we saved a few lives by disarming that booby trap.

Another time I and a seargent from another company went out to disarm a big bomb. The bomb had failed to detonate and was lying in the middle of the road and trucks were whizzing by and the big brass was afraid the vibrations would set it off. We were in two teams and we worked in twenty-minute intervals. We had to dig around the bomb to get to the detonator and begin the ticklish job of disarming the big bruiser. The detonator was jammed and we really had to pry the locking nuts apart by brute force. The self-winding mechanism had stopped a goodly time before the bomb had been fully armed so it wasn't as bad as it may have been. The bomb was disarmed and the dead thing was hauled off like a lump of earth, and was safe if there was no detonation nearby. I guess we were pretty lucky at that in all our escapades. These few reminiscences were prevalent in my mind so I had to put them down on paper.



I... Ernest W. Warner had been in the front lines 555 days and overseas well over two years. Was in six major campaigns and entitled to wear the silver star on my combat and theater ribbons, five invasions. Three by the amphibious type landings and two invasions by land, one in Africa and one in Italy in and around the Naples-Foggia area.

The two units of service I was in was the 19th Engineer regiment (combat) and the 9770 Chemical Warfare Service- to which I was attached upon my return to the U.S.A. and the unit from which I was discharged.



Ernest Wayne Warner passed away of a heart attack on June 26th 1972.

(Jason Brent Lichfield, June 25-27th, 2006, typed these pages into the computer for posterity sake. Jason is married to Sherri Kay Warner Lichfield, daughter of Jon D. Warner. All page format, spelling and punctuation was left as Ernie wrote it unless it was obvious that it was suppose to be the way it is shown here from the original. I did this so to keep the manner of speech and feeling he had while writing it. Ernie strived to be a great example his entire life and continues to be. I hope these words of his life story will help us all be better people in this life.)

Ernie's Autobiography was compiled and finished on Dec.2nd,2006. By Jason Brent Lichfield. Pictures used in the Autobiography are not always from Ernie's point of view. They were found from various sources such as the Internet, Books about the battle of Kasserine Pass and Monte' Cassino, as well as some clippings from Ernie's book of Remembrance. These pictures were used to give the reader a fuller understanding of the places and events that occurred during this historic past. We can be honored by Ernie, as well as many others of his generation, who served their country valiantly and without expectation of any reward except to have freedom throughout the world without tyranny and live peaceful lives. We thank our veterans and those who went before us for giving us the life that we now live.