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AWARD OF THE SILVER STAR (GO No 42, Hq First Airborne Task Force, 21 Nov 44)

MITSUGI NAKAHARA, 30103923, Private, Infantry, United States Army, for gallantry in action near Baraquements, France, on 30 August 1944. Private Nakahara was driving a vehicle occupied by four other soldiers, whose mission was to patrol a forward area. While proceeding on the mission, their vehicle was suddenly ambushed by the enemy. The intense fire from enemy machine guns and twenty millimeter guns wounded all occupants of the vehicle. During the action, one of the wounded soldiers succeeded in escaping and crawled to the rear, where he reported the ambush to the occupants of another vehicle. For a moment the enemy ceased firing, and Private Nakahara, who had received a leg wound, got back in the vehicle and turned it around to attempt to evacuate his wounded comrades. Seeing this, the enemy again opened fire, wounding Private Nakahara for the second time, and puncturing the tires of the vehicle. The fire continued for about ten minutes and again ceased. Private Nakahara assisted by another soldier, loaded the wounded and again tried to drive the vehicle to a point of safety. Again the enemy opened fire, hitting Private Nakahara in the back, causing the third wound. During the action the wounded managed to find cover, and when all firing ceased, two soldiers from the rear vehicle crawled forward to aid the wounded. The rescuers reached Private Nakahara, who refused aid and insisted that the other wounded soldiers be cared for first. Realizing the seriousness of Private Nakahara's wounds, the rescue party, despite his protests, succeeded in sliding him on a blanket and removing him to the rear. Private Nakahara's courage under enemy fire, and his consideration for the welfare of his wounded comrades, reflect great credit upon him as a soldier. Entered the military service from Hilo, Hawaii, Territory of Hawaii.

AWARD OF THE SILVER STAR (GO No 134, Hq 7th Army, 26 Dec 44)

MASAO KOMODA, 19080044, Private, Infantry, Company C, 2d Battalion, 442d Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action on 20 October 1944, in the vicinity of Bruyeres, France. Ambushed by the enemy, one platoon of Company C was pinned down by enemy fire. From the surrounding woods, two enemy Tiger tanks supported by fifty riflemen, suddenly appeared. When his squad leader seized a bazooka and commenced firing at the tanks, Private Komoda unhesitatingly exposed himself to direct tank and rifle fire in order to load the weapon. He thus enabled his squad leader to fire three rounds at the advancing enemy, disabling the leading tank and causing the enemy force to withdraw. Private Komoda's utter disregard for personal safety in the face of intense tank and rifle fire contributed immeasurably in repulsing a strong enemy force. Entered military service from Los Angeles, California.

AWARD OF THE OAK LEAF CLUSTER TO THE BRONZE STAR MEDAL (GO No 4, Hq 6th Army Gp, 22 Jan 45)

MASATO W. KUTAKA, 30106230, Private First Class, Co A, 100th Bn, 442d Infantry Regiment, for heroic achievement on 22 October 1944. Directed to establish contact with elements of their battalion entrapped in the vicinity of Biffontaine, France, Private First Class Kutaka and his comrades started for their objective mounted on five light tanks. Encountering a hail of fire from well dug-in enemy positions on the road, Private First Class Kutaka and the rest of the platoon fearlessly resisted with their individual weapons and the machine guns emplaced on the tanks, neutralized a considerable portion of the concentrated fire and enabled the tanks to reach friendly forces. By his heroic disregard for personal safety, Private First Class Kutaka contributed immeasurably to the subsequent attainment of the objective and reflects honor upon the United States Army. Entered the service from Waimea, Kauai, Territory of Hawaii.

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AWARD OF THE BRONZE STAR MEDAL (CO No 8, Hq 7th Army, 14 Jan 45)

TAKAO HEDANI, 30104519, Staff Sergeant, Infantry, Company H, 442d Infantry Regiment. For heroic achievement in action on 20 October 1944, near Bruyeres, France. During an enemy attack, Sergeant Hedani and his squad of men were ordered to go to the aid of a carrying party who were pinned down by heavy hostile machine gun and machine pistol fire. Leading his men forward, he carefully worked them to within close range of an enemy held ridge where they dug in and held off repeated enemy counterattacks. Then, displaying outstanding leadership, Sergeant Hedani successfully detained the enemy until reinforcements arrived, then led an assault which effectively routed the hostile force. Entered military service from Honolulu, Oahu, Territory of Hawaii.

AWARD OF THE BRONZE STAR MEDAL (CO No 138, Hq 7th Army, 27 Dec 44)

AKIYOSHI KURIYAMA, 30100333, Staff Sergeant, Infantry, Headquarters Co, 100th Bn, 442d Infantry Regiment, for meritorious service from 22 September 1943 to 6 September 1944, in Italy. Entered military service from Waianae, Oahu, Territory of Hawaii.

AWARD OF THE BRONZE STAR MEDAL (CO No 134, Hq 7th Army, 26 Dec 44)

JOSEPH W. STEVENSON, 01302901, Captain, Infantry, Headquarters Co, 442d Infantry Regiment, for heroic achievement in action on 4 November 1944, near La Croisette, France. While Captain Stevenson and his crew of wiremen were installing communication lines between a new regimental observation post and the command post, they were subjected to an intense mortar barrage as a result of which six of his men were injured. Despite the intermittent shelling in the immediate area, Captain Stevenson, without regard for his own safety, successfully rendered first aid to the injured men and effected their evacuation with a minimum loss of time. Entered military service from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

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442D INFANTRY
NARRATIVE OF EVENTS
1 - 31 January 1945

MAP REF: Eastern France,
1/50,000 Sheet XXXVII-42 Menton;
Italy, 1/50,000 Sheet 102A-1,
Sospel; Italy 1/50,000 Sheet
102-IV, Breil.

MARITIME-ALPS SECTOR

1 Jan The year 1945 began with the regiment maintaining its defenses on a 10 mile front along the French-Italian Border. The 100th Battalion was in position from Menton on the Mediterranean coast to Castillon; the 2d Battalion defended the left of the regimental sector from Castillon to Mount Grosso, Northeast of Sospel.

All battalions conducted reconnaissance preparatory to reorganizing the defense of the sector in greater depth. The 2d Battalion began occupation of Mount Barbonnet (730965) with one platoon of Co E and elements of Co H.

Patrol activity and artillery exchanges continued. A patrol left Co G, entered the town of Bessare (794960) where they found 20 civilians who informed them that the remaining civilians had evacuated the town two months ago. The patrol continued on to Serre Barbarante, finding no signs of enemy activity.

The 522d F. A. Bn (442d RCT) in direct support of the 2d Battalion fired on one mule shed and five harassing missions. The 602d F. A. Bn (75mm Pack) supporting the 100th Battalion, fired on enemy personnel, one mission on an enemy supply train, two on suspected enemy OP's.

One man in the 1st platoon, Co H, was killed and two wounded by shell fragments which penetrated the aperture of their pillbox position. The enemy threw 62 rounds into the area. Co H fired 170 rounds 81mm along the 2d Battalion front.

The 232d Engineer (C) Co (442d RCT) laid mines along the beach and on Mount Grosso in the 2d Battalion area. The 1269th Engineer Battalion, attached to the 442d Infantry for operations, worked on roadblocks in the 100th Battalion sector.

Every two hours between 1800 and 0600 motorized and roving foot patrols from Co H investigated Sospel and vicinity, reporting no incidents.

Weather was below freezing, with ice on the trails.

2 Jan Patrols made no enemy contact. The regiment continued its alert against possible counterattack.

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At 0830 the 3d Battalion left L'Escarene by motor and moved into regimental reserve line positions behind the 100th and 2d Battalions. The platoons were widely separated. Co L occupied the high ground West of Sospel on Col de Braus; Co K took up positions near Castellon; the 1st and 2d platoons of Co I were located in the fort on Mount Agel, and the 3d platoon near Sainte Agnes. The 3d Battalion CP was established in Peille.

The 3d platoon of Co E and elements of Co H closed in on Mount Barionnet.

3 Jan 94 civilian line-crossers (Italian refugees) were apprehended and turned over to the CIC at the police station in Nice for investigation.

Co F patrol investigated the hotel area and pillboxes on Col de Brouis, found no evidence of enemy activity. A patrol from Co A reconnoitered from Hill 1047 to Hill 636, observed the towns of Torri, Peiri and Hill 509, and returned with a negative report.

The 3d Battalion organized its reserve line from Roquebrune to Col de Braus. The 100th and 2d Battalions continued work on alternate defensive positions.

Antitank Co continued to guard roads and installations. The 1st platoon was attached to the 100th Battalion near Menton; 2d platoon acted as bridge guards at Luceram; 3d platoon guarded roads and bridges at L'Escarene and the 4th platoon was attached to the 2d Battalion near Sospel.

New type cold-climate sleeping bags were received and distributed to the companies.

4 Jan The 522d F. A. Bn fired 7 missions in support of the 2d Battalion, then changed over to direct support of the 100th Battalion; at the same time the 602d F. A. Bn (75mm Pack) changed from support of the 100th Battalion to the 2d Battalion.

Work continued on secondary defenses. Strong points were constructed at 775875 and 790880. The 2d Battalion made usual contact with the 65th Infantry at Moulinet.

34 additional line-crossers from Piena were intercepted and turned over to MP Headquarters in Beaulieu.

5 Jan Lt Colonel Virgil R. Miller, O-15847, Inf, Regimental Executive Officer, left on TD to assume command of the 65th Infantry.

Reconnaissance patrols from Co B and Co C encountered snow 5" to 8" deep, reported visibility limited, observed no enemy activity.

53 rounds of enemy artillery was recorded in the regimental area, no damage or casualty resulting.

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One EM in 1st platoon, Co G, was injured and subsequently died from an accidental grenade explosion. The mountainous terrain made necessary a three hour trip by nine litter-bearers, in order to evacuate the injured man.

Former Technical Sergeant Kenneth T. Masamitsu, Hq Co 2d Bn, received a battle-field commission as 2d Lieutenant, effective date of rank 28 December 1944, per Special Orders No. 5, Hq Seventh Army, 5 January 1945.

6 Jan The regiment continued to organize its sector against a possible enemy attack. Work was progressed on secondary defenses and alternate gun positions. All unprotected emplacements were sandbagged and avenues of approach mined, booby-trapped and protected with barbed wire. Bridges were prepared for demolition and mortar and artillery fire plans prepared. A special mobile force for emergency use was organized, consisting of elements of Antitank Co, Service Co, 206th AGF Band, and the 232d Engineer (C) Co.

A patrol from Co A, consisting of one officer and three EM, left 0945 from Hill 1114 (788917) and patrolled to 802916. They observed three enemy digging on Hill 444 (833918). No enemy activity was noted in Calvo and San Antonio. Knee-deep snow was encountered en route.

The daily motorized patrol from Hq Co operated behind the lines, reconnoitering the road net of Le Vignal, Contes, La Trinite Victor, La Turbie, Peille, Grave, L'Escarene and Berre les Alpes. No incidents were reported.

Enemy artillery increased, approximately 150 rounds being recorded, most of which fell in Sospel.

Seventeen Italian civilians coming from Breil were apprehended and turned over to the CIC.

Carbines, Cal .30, in the regiment were modified by the addition of the new type improved carbine sight. A detachment from the Ordnance Dept made the necessary changes. A tire school was held for drivers.

7 Jan A group of enemy was seen in buildings at 83528941, and hits were registered by our artillery. An enemy vehicle was observed and destroyed by artillery fire at 86418748.

A reconnaissance patrol from Co B went to Hill 487 (803892) checked houses at 805885, found both our own and enemy propaganda leaflets on the way, but no other evidence of enemy activity.

The enemy continued to shell Menton and Sospel.

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13 Jan A reconnaissance patrol from Co A went from Hill 1114 (788921) to Hill 636 (804915), observed Villatella (808921), Seno (819918), Calvo (825920), Hill 509 (810915) and Hill 538 (807915). The road to Calvo was seen to be blocked by a landslide at 825920. Snow from 6" to 24" deep was encountered by the patrol.

A reconnaissance patrol from Co F left Col du Perus, crossed the border at 780010. No enemy was observed. Two of the patrol members were slightly wounded by mines at 775006.

Both friendly and hostile artillery continued very active. Two men in Hq Co 100th Bn were wounded by shell fragments. Because of the incessant shelling, the 100th Battalion changed its CP location in Menton.

After an inspection of French forts in the battalion area, the 3d Battalion made arrangements with French personnel to move some mortars and guns from emplacements facing West to emplacements facing East, thereby making the forts more usable and increasing the fire power of the regimental reserve line.

The Reserve Force (platoons from Hq Co, Sv Co, 232d Engineer Co) continued work on defensive positions near Luceram.

14 Jan All battalions continued improvement of their positions and reorganization of defense in depth. Position of units and tactical situation remained unchanged. Contact was maintained with the 65th Infantry (Puerto Rican) on the left flank.

15 Jan 44th AAA Brigade Headquarters expressed a need for prisoners for intelligence purposes. Accordingly a combat patrol from G Co departed at 1700 15 January, with the intention of remaining in Olivetta for three days, in order to capture prisoners. The patrol reached the outskirts of Olivetta at 2000, and S Sgt Matayoshi went forward in the darkness to reconnoiter. He went to the bridge on the Bevera River (792977) and saw no sign of the enemy. The rest of the patrol came up, to a point within 100 yards of the river bank. At this point a German command was heard, and the enemy opened up with three machine guns, a machine pistol and an estimated seven rifles. Lt Sloane, patrol leader, was hit in the leg on the first burst. The patrol's radio was hit and rendered useless.

The patrol withdrew to reorganize, and S Sgt Matayoshi went for his wounded platoon leader and carried him back for a distance of 300 yards under fire. Thereupon the patrol, under the command of Sgt Matayoshi, attempted to cross the river at a point further south, but the bank on the far end was steep and the rocks and pebbles on the river bed made sound, bringing a burst of automatic fire and potato-masher grenades. The patrol then attempted to move Northwest along the river bank, but discovered a mined and booby-trapped area. Although they did not enter the minefield, several concussion grenades exploded, which led the patrol to believe that the enemy across the river was detonating the grenades by means of wires. After a further unsuccessful attempt to cross the river, the patrol withdrew to a point at 796962 and spent the night there. Four men were dispatched for a litter to carry the wounded patrol leader. One enemy was believed wounded, as the patrol

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heard moaning after a tommy-gun burst.

On the next morning, 16 January, five men who were being sent to evacuate Lt Sloane with a litter, ran into a friendly minefield. Two were killed, 2d Lt Minoru Kurata, a combat-commissioned officer, and Pfc Herbert Kondo. The remaining three EM were wounded. Details indicated that the dead lieutenant preceded the four other men, presumably bent down to disarm the booby traps, and in the interim the explosions of the mines in series took effect.

Evacuation of the wounded was completed at 1615 16 January, after difficulty because of the snow, ice and mountainous terrain. A memorial service was held in Co G for the two men killed.

Another patrol from Co B left Hill 487 (807887) at 1500 16 January, observing no enemy activity. At the base of Mt Bellenda they heard a "bird whistle" followed by seven more at intervals of five seconds. Apparently the whistles were enemy OP signals. On the return trip the patrol hit Schu mines near the town of Ciotti (806880) and three men were wounded, one seriously.

On the 16th, Co I relieved the 100th Battalion bridge guard at 711848, near Beausoleil, and relieved the Co M roadblock near Sainte Agnes.

17 Jan At 0400 a combat patrol from B Co left Mine Gap #1 for the spot where the whistling had been heard the night previous. The patrol searched houses in the vicinity, and found one Italian rifle, bayonet, hand grenades and an officer's swagger stick. The presence of mines and lack of cover made Ciotti unsuitable for an ambush. The patrol remained overnight in Ciotti and returned to our lines at 0700 18 January.

18 Jan During the early hours of the 18th, a 20-man German patrol attacked the outpost positions of the 2d platoon, Co F, on Colla Bensa (778006).

The attack was preceded by an artillery and mortar preparation. Prior to the attack (while the enemy was moving up on our position) our positions on Mount Grosso were smoked, so there was no observation from that point. The route used by the German patrol was a trail leading from Cime du Bose along a gradual descent to Colle Bensa. The trail had good concealment.

Shortly after midnight the attack was launched. The enemy had two machine guns mounted to the rear and flanks of their group, allowing a crossfire pattern into our position. After a 45 minute firefight our outposts repulsed the attack, preventing the enemy from infiltrating and forcing them to withdraw. As they retreated, the Germans fired a green flare which brought down more artillery.

Our casualties were one killed and two wounded. The enemy had at least one KIA, as his body was found by our troops on the following day.

Co H 81mm mortars fired 354 rounds between 1130-0230 to support Co F 2d platoon in its firefight, and to interdict approaches into the Co E and Co F positions.

At 1510, Co E OP at 76250210 received small arms fire from Col du Brouis (768030). BAR fire was returned.

2d Battalion in regimental reserve line fired its carbines to zero the new-type sights.

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21 Jan All personnel were put on a gas alert. Gas masks and protective equipment were checked and ordered to be carried at all times. Gas officers and non-commissioned officers were reinstructed in their duties.

Lt Colonel V. R. Miller, O-15847, Inf, returned from TD as Commanding Officer of the 65th Infantry (Puerto Rican) and resumed duties as Regimental Executive Officer.

Co F ^{patrol} spent the night of the 20th-21st in an ambush in the cemetery of Piena, 794003. No enemy was observed and the patrol returned at 1600.

Two German prisoners of war, who had escaped from a Quartermaster work unit in Nice, dressed in American fatigue uniforms, were recaptured by two Co M road guards at 2000 on Col de Braus. The Germans were making their way back across the lines and had passed through Contes and L'Escarene and were near Sospel when retaken. The two guards, Sgt S. Morita and Pfc D. Ishimoto received three-day passes to Nice.

The 522d F. A. Bn (442d NCT) supporting the 100th Battalion, fired nine missions; four on enemy personnel (41 rds), two on enemy gun positions (50 rds), three harassing missions. Co D mortars fired 50 rounds on trails, draws and trail junctions, and one mission on an enemy OP.

The 602d F. A. Bn (75mm Pack How) supporting the 2d Battalion, fired six missions; two on enemy mortar positions (39 rds), one on an enemy supply point (7 rds), three harassing. The 68th AAA Gun Bn and the 937th F. A. Bn (155mm How) fired missions in general support.

The daily contact patrols and road net reconnaissance were made without incident.

22 Jan A reconnaissance patrol from Co C left Hill 1117 (790912) at 0830 and went to the house on Hill 791, which was the scene of the patrol action on the 20th. They searched the bodies of the two dead Germans, collected enemy weapons left in the house, and destroyed enemy hand grenades. The patrol returned at 1145.

Co E reconnaissance patrol went from Mount Grosse to within 150 yards of the hotel at Col de Brouis (763028). They found booby traps and a trip wire, observed an enemy guard behind the house, and one enemy soldier in the doorway.

2d Battalion motorized patrol contacted the 65th Infantry in Moulinet without incident.

Two Frenchmen from Breil and 157 goats came across our lines vic 775989 at 1630. They had little to report. They had been stopped at Piena by a nine-man German patrol and ordered to return to Breil, but had waited until dark and continued to our lines. They reported Breil free of enemy personnel except for patrols. The line crossers were turned over to the CIC.

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- 23 Jan A heavy snowfall in the mountains reduced visibility.
- Work continued on emplacements. A detachment of French engineers repaired mortar positions in Fort Roquebrune and Ste Agnes in the Co I sector.
- Two Special Service motion pictures "Holiday Inn" and "Our Hearts Were Young and Gay" were shown to the troops, rotating among the companies on different nights.
- 24 Jan A reconnaissance patrol from Co B started from 797883 and patrolled to 798887. At 797887 they observed three enemy dugouts with fresh footprints leading to the house from these dugouts. There were communication wires leading from the dugouts to the house. The patrol checked the house, finding a German messkit, an Italian hand grenade, wires and cigarettes.
- Another reconnaissance patrol from Co G went to Mount Grosso (798950) and observed for 1 hour. The patrol heard small arms fire coming from the vicinity of San Michele (812977), believed to be target practice. No activity was observed in Bessare and the Bevera River Valley (8095).
- 25 Jan Situation remained unchanged. Weather was cold and cloudy, with intermittent rain and very poor visibility.
- An ambush patrol from B Co spent the night of the 24th-25th in a house at 798887. No contact was made with the enemy, and the patrol returned at 0700 25 January.
- Twelve civilian refugees (8 women and 4 men) who crossed into our lines from Breil were turned over to the CIC.
- Antitank Co continued security of bridges at Luceram and L'Escarene and the road junction at Col de Nice.
- 26 Jan 200 Japanese-American reinforcements from the U. S. arrived and were assigned to the companies, bringing the regiment up to T/O strength.
- Co F left Sospel 0800 by truck and arrived at Mt Barbonnet 0900, where it relieved E Co. E Co moved back near Sospel, closing into the former Co F area at 1700.
- Rainy weather and poor visibility limited the effectiveness of patrols. Four line crossers (3 men, 1 woman) from Breil were turned over to MP Headquarters.
- Co I personnel familiarized themselves with the machinery in the French forts at Sainte Agnes and Cap Martin.
- 27 Jan A reconnaissance patrol from Co F left Mount Grosso at 1000 and went toward the hotel on Col de Brouis (763025). They observed smoke rising from the house behind the hotel, and also from the fort in the vicinity. Patrol in at 1300.

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A reconnaissance patrol from Co G went to Bessare (801960) and questioned twenty civilians found living in the town. They received information that there were several Germans in Airole and Collabassa, that Olivetta was clear, and that minefields of the wooden and pull-type existed between Bessare and Olivetta, and on the ridge beyond Bessare at 808964.

Lt Massengale, Information and Education Officer, was attending an eight-day I&E course in Paris.

31 Jan Tactical situation remained unchanged. Patrols made no enemy contact.

A Presidential Unit Citation was awarded to Co F and Co L of the 442d Infantry for outstanding performance of duty in action, near Bruyeres, France. These two companies had comprised a Task Force which on 21 October 1944 turned the flank of a German MLR, assaulted from the rear and disorganized the enemy resistance, killing eighty and capturing fifty six prisoners during the day and advancing the divisional front 2,000 meters. The citation was awarded by Section II, General Orders 13, Headquarters Seventh Army, 21 January 1945.

A company dance was held at La Trinite Victoire by Service Company, with music being furnished by the 206th ACF Band.

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