

## Patrols in Germany

You know when you're in the army, in the outfits I was in, you do some strange things and you forget a lot. And, you remember too much. When I was in the Ardennes we came to a little town. There was a factory at one end of that town. They sent me out as a scout. Between that factory and the town there was a corn field with tall corn stalks. I was walking through the field and a machine gun began shooting at me. So I ran between the corn stalks. I could see the bullets shooting through the top of the corn stalks. I prayed, "Lord, you better turn this thing into some kind of metal because I'm in danger here." I ran this way and that way, over here and there, then sneak along, until I got back to where I entered the corn field. When I got back to give my report, the guys said, "How are we going to clean out that machine gun nest?" The nest was in a tall chimney in the factory. I happened to see a 37 anti-tank gun nearby. I said, "I know how to work that gun, I learned that in basic training." They said, "Can you use that?" I said, "Yeah, I can do that." There was a box of shells lying there among some empty shells. I put one of the shells into the gun and I aimed it at the tower. And I hit that dog-gone chimney. I put another shell in the gun and aimed a little lower and I hit the chimney again. And the machine gun never went off again. Then we went in and cleaned out the building. It was like a little factory. I saw one German running. He was running and I ran after him. Honest to God, we were in the building, a mill of some sort, and he ran up a pair of steps. And I ran after him. He went out a big metal door and slammed it shut. I went up to the door and tried to open it, and I couldn't get it open. I took my M-1 and shot at the door, "bang-bang-bang." I blew the lock off, opened the door and it opened up right outside into nothing. Where he went I'll never know! So I got rid of him. I lot of little things like that happened.

We went through village to village, some were hard, some were easy. After the town was taken then we would send out scouts around the right and left sides of the village. One time I had three guys with me. We were going around the outside perimeter of the village. I went around the left side and the other guys went around the right. I was walking through a grassy field, grass above my ankles. When out jumped a jack rabbit. I pulled my M-1 off my shoulder and with

one shot I hit that jack rabbit. It's intestines went flying through the air. The guts must of got caught on the bullet, because it flew out of the rabbit. I picked up that rabbit. I saw curtains move in the window of a nearby farmhouse. I didn't know who they were, probably German people. I walked over to the house and kicked at the door. The door opened a crack and out reached a hand, in went the rabbit, and the door shut. That quick. I never saw who the person was. That's what happened there. I thought about that. I wasn't that good of a shot. I think the Lord guided that bullet because he was answering someone's prayers, someone who was hungry. They were hungry and the Lord gave them that rabbit. A lot of things happened that you could never understand.

It was a big fight when we crossed the Rhein River. When we were staying in that beautiful house by the Rhein River I woke up one morning and the engineers had built a pontoon bridge. They told me to go over to the other side to guard the bridge. So I walked across the Rhein on a bridge. My job was to shoot at anything that floats in the river, to blow it out of the water. That was an easy job. The whole company finally crossed the Rhein over the bridge. The war was coming to an end and we knew it. There were a whole bunch of replacements. They said, "Hey Goss, take those kids out there and give them some practice with the rifles." So I stuck obstacles in the river bank and we practiced shooting. A jeep came around the bend. Two lieutenants were in it. Another "ninety-day wonder." He said, "What are you doing?" I said, "I'm giving these guys lessons on how to shoot." He said, "You're wasting government money. You're wasting the ammunition." He was showing his authority. I didn't care much for authority. Not some of them. I said, "You come with me the next couple of days and you'll find out why I want to teach them." He got back in his jeep and drove away.