

Flag taken from the headquarters of Lher Panzer Division
in Chartres, France



I WANT THAT FLAG

15 September 1944, finally orders came to move out and go to the Continent. Headquarters Squadron of the 43rd were to go by air and Repair Squadron was to cross the Channel by ship.

I was assigned the rations truck and trailer that carried all our food, namely 'C' rations and 'K' rations. Ahead of me were the tractor-trailers including the C-2 or Crash Truck pulling a 40 foot trailer loaded with four crated aircraft engines. We passed through Newbury and headed South to Whitchurch. Shortly after leaving Whitchurch we arrived at this small group of houses or village whose name I do not recall and the convoy ground to a halt. After a few minutes I could hear shouting up front so I climbed out of the cab and walked up to see what the problem was. Rybcinski (John) was driving the C-2 and it was firmly wedged in a Zig Zag in the street. John was pulling a trailer loaded with crated aircraft engines. There was no way he could get through. As I stood there a Major came back in a jeep and after some discussion asked Ribby what he needed to do to get moving again. "Take the corner off that building, sir." He replied. "Then do it soldier, you're holding up the war", the Major replied. Ribby engaged all ten wheel drive, put it in low and proceeded to drive through the corner of the brick building. As the bricks came crashing down the windows all shattered and some furniture came tumbling out of this gapping hole. Bricks smashed down the hood, broke the headlights and windshield but we were on the move again.

I couldn't help but feel sorry for those poor people living in this quiet little group of houses. We had again done more damage to them than all the Germans put together.

Our POE was Southampton. We arrived late in the day and went straight to the docks. Before we left Grove we all had been issued 60 rounds of ammunition for our M2 carbines and we drivers were told to leave our weapons in the gun racks in each truck. When the crane picked up my truck and put it in the ships hold my rifle went with it.

As darkness closed in our ship began to move. The crossing was to be at night. Stories still abounded of mines in the Channel, both theirs and ours and of sneak raids on shipping by the Germans. While most went below I stayed on deck ---just in case. I was standing on the Port side just about mid-ships in total darkness when out of the night came the bow of another ship coming straight at us at a 45 degree angle. Suddenly our ship heeled over hard to Starboard and almost at the same instant the other ship did the same. All I could do was to clutch the ships rail with both hands and watch the ships sliding sideways in the water as they came at each other.

As we started to slide by each other I saw two men on the other deck clutching their ships rail with mouths wide open and then oblivion as this giant wall of water shot up between us tearing me loose from the rail and sending me sliding down the deck grabbing widely at anything. Then it was all over.

I lay there choking and gasping for breath and soaked to the skin. Below decks things were a mess as well. Fortuitously no one was seriously injured although

many had bumps and bruises and some equipment was banged up. The rest of the crossing was peaceful.

At dawn we lay off Omaha Beach and LST's were coming along side.

First the deck cranes off loaded our equipment into the LST's then rope netting was flung over the side. We scrambled down the netting into the LST's and they moved off and began the run to the beach. I climbed up on my truck to see over the ramp. As I watched Omaha Beach come toward me all I could do was wonder how many of our guys had watched the same sight on D-Day. And for how many it was the last thing they saw.

The LST headed for the end of a pontoon dock that ran around 150 yards or so out into the sea. It was made up of large rectangular metal floats tied together, two wide and bouncing up and down with every wave. The trick was to stay exactly in the center with the weight distributed evenly or suffer the consequences of sliding off sideways into deep water. One 6 X 6 belonging to someone who had preceded us lay on its side in the water with its cargo still on board. Hard rubber tires on wet metal that rose and fell with every wave was like driving on ice but we all made it safely to the beach.

We crossed the beach and continued till we hit a small road behind the beach where we turned right. We all stopped so as to form up our convoy before proceeding.

We had only gone a short ways when we came to a tiny hamlet named Grandcam where we turned inland. When we reached St. Lo I thought I had seen destroyed cities like Coventry but this place did not have a pile of stones any higher than my head. It simply did not exist. A road had been bulldozed thru the piles of stones that had once been a village. We continued inland. Suddenly I realized something else—my rifle and ammunition were missing. I had just invaded Europe without a pot or a window let alone a gun.

At our next break I reported it to a Lieutenant who promptly gave me hell for not taking better care of it. I was advised that if I didn't find it it would be taken out of my next pay. The first rifle I saw without its owner holding it turned out to be my lost weapon. Later I found out I was not alone. Other drivers had the same thing happen. The best thing we could figure out was that when we left our rifles in our trucks the English sailors acquired them as souvenirs. So much for following orders. My bad day wasn't done with me yet. The road we were on had been pounded to pieces and some efforts had been made to fill in the bomb and shell holes but not very effectively. I managed to drop a trailer wheel into one as we zig zaged down the road. Over it went. Rations were scattered for half a mile and the trailer lay on its side. Again I caught hell for doing a lousy job of driving and costing the convoy time. The latter part of the day we stopped at Argentan and were told we would bivouac there for the night.

A little later Johansen (Edmund E.) our motor pool Corporal came to me and said an officer had told him to send someone to check out a report that one of our aircraft was down up toward Falaise. For the life of me I couldn't understand what the difference was, we were in no condition to do much about it.

I took a jeep and took the road that was pointed out to me as going to Falaise. As I neared Falaise I could see that one hell of a battle had taken place. A little further

on I did see, off to my right, what was left of one of our C-47's. I decided to walk over to it. Part way over the smell of putrefying flesh became real strong so I followed my nose to a small brush filled ravine. Down in there was the body of a dead German soldier. He had taken a large caliber bullet right thru the head. It looked like a .50 caliber round and he had been overlooked in the clean up after the fighting. I took his helmet off what was left after the round had exploded his head in pieces, shook out the mess and still have it as part of my WW2 memorabilia. I reported back what I had found. It was 'ok, just forget it.' I have often wondered if that man's bones still lie at the bottom of the ravine. I have since read newspaper articles that French farmers still turn up skeletons of soldiers killed in World War One.

Our first night in France was spent at Argentan.

Our second night on the Continent was spent in Chartres, France. It was getting dark and raining hard. We were at the western edge of town and the word came down "find shelter for the night".

There was this big beautiful old home off to my left with a wide verandah that looked undamaged so I headed for it. The front door was a double door with another set just inside the vestibule. A spacious main hall and a large living room or parlor with a magnificent fireplace were on the left. Also a sign stating in big bold letters 'ROOM BOOBY TRAPPED STAY OUT'.

There over the fireplace hung a large Nazi flag. A small room with a spiral staircase to the second floor was across the hall from it. There were GI's from a number of different outfits already there seeking shelter for the night. In fact, the house was crowded.

I kept staring at that flag and saying to myself 'you just completed a course in booby trap neutralization, if you can't handle this---.' So, after carefully examining the door way and floor for "replaced" flooring I went in. I immediately had guys hollering at me to get the hell out of there---couldn't I read? I brazenly told them I was a 'specialist' and was there to clear the room. The first thing I cleared was everybody from any where near that room, when I turned around I was ALONE. Carefully checking the floor as I went I approached the fireplace. Not a board was marked or damaged. Stopping just short of the stone hearth I looked carefully for signs of removal and replacement. No loose stones, no new mortar, nothing freshly disturbed, no new anything. The thought went through my mind---'I wonder if the guy that set this all up is trying to make me think there is nothing here and I will get careless. That flag has got to be bait and I have yet to find the 'hook.' I stepped forward and walked up and down on the stone hearth. Nothing.

Next came the mantel.

No evidence of removal and replacement. Damn, that guy was good. He's got to have made a mistake somewhere or I'm going to.

Now I'm up to the flag itself. It was held in place by four fasteners, one in each corner. Each of the fasteners disappeared in the cracks between the beautiful sheets of paneling over the fireplace. THAT WAS IT. It had to be. The two lower wires I could reach so with the knife I carried in my combat boot I worked carefully at first

one wire and then the other. **NOTHING !!** They were attached to nothing and just fell out. Only by wedging them in there were they doing anything constructive. Oh my God! That means one of those top two wires have got to be the trigger and I can't reach either of them. Only one thing to do. I dragged my duffle bag over to the one on the right as I faced it and by standing on the bag I could just reach the wire holding up the flag's corner. With the tip of my knife I could just reach where the wire went in between the pieces of paneling. Suddenly the corner of the flag curled over and sagged toward me. I stopped breathing---I'm dead---no I'm not but if I let the flag fall forward it will trigger pull the upper left corner and that will be it.

By hanging on to the wooden mantel with my left hand and holding up the loosened corner of the flag with the tip of my knife with my right I 'hitched' with my feet the duffle bag over so as to be under the last remaining fastener keeping the flag on the wall. Left hand holding the full weight of the flag against the wall, I began to pry away at the remaining wire that disappeared into the crack between the paneling sheets. Suddenly everything crumpled and the flag fell forward and free of all restraints. I was dead. No, nothing happened. Damn, I got me a flag and I was now sure I could handle this Mine and Booby-trap assignment I had volunteered for. **OH OH**

What if that SOB that set this all up was now thinking that anyone having gotten the flag would feel his job was now done and maybe build a fire in the fireplace. Why not bundle a charge with a fuse and put it just up inside so when a fire was built guess what would happen. After crawling up into the fireplace and using my flashlight I determined this had not been done and in fact everything relative to the flag and fireplace was now neutralized.

I did take time to check the rest of the empty room. Windows, flooring, trip wires what ever I could think of.

THE WHOLE DAMED ROOM WAS NEVER BOOBY TRAPPED. ONLY LEAVING THAT BEAUTIFUL SWASTIKA FLAG OVER THE FIREPLACE CONVINCED THE REST OF THE WORLD IT WAS. AND BOY, DID IT WORK.

I left the sign on the door and proceeded to settle down with a room all to myself. One problem. A lot of guys, I have no idea who they were or what outfits, were getting pretty well drunk and yelling and arguing over everything from who had what spot to the card games that were going on. As the stairs were right across the hall I could hear this one guy on the second floor ranting about the war, his officers, going home and wanting out, period. A few guys (I assumed from his outfit) stood at the foot of the spiral staircase and discussed what to do about him. Finally a buck sergeant in the group said he was going up and get him before he hurt himself or someone else as he did have a gun. He hollered up to the guy and told him it was an order to put down his gun and come down stairs. The response was "I'll kill you if you come up." The sergeant started up and was met with a burst of fire from this guy's machine gun. The burst hit the steps in front of the sergeant who cleared all the steps to the first floor in one jump.

I never saw a bunch of drunks sober up so fast in all my life. Now this guy is screaming he is going to kill himself---then he is going to come down and kill everybody and then kill himself. By now everybody has a round in the chamber of their weapon and pointed at the staircase. The sergeant is trying to keep order as some of the guys want to open fire on him. Again the sergeant called to him that he was coming up and to put his gun down. It was greeted by another burst of fire from this jerk and more threats to kill everybody. His voice this time sounded as if he had about had it and was ready to pass out. The sergeant would call to him from time to time. I propped myself up next to the fireplace and parallel to the door of the room I was in with a round in the chamber and the safety on and dozed. Toward dawn I heard a ruckus on the stairs and slipped off the safety but it was only the sergeant dragging this jerk down the stairs. I had to hand it to that sergeant he not only kept a bunch of drunks from going on a shooting spree but kept risking his own life to bring this guy down without anyone getting killed or wounded. Somebody's beautiful staircase now needed work done on it. The most important thing to me, however, was that I now knew I could handle this mine and booby trap assignment. It did wonders for my own self esteem and self confidence. A little after eight o'clock we formed up our convoy and began day three in France.

Day three ended with us arriving at our next base of operations, Melun, France. But that is another story.

THROUGH ONE OF THE LARGE WINDOWS ON OUR RIGHT, AS WE SAT THERE, WAS A FAIRLY LARGE PIECE OF RATHER UNKEMPT GROUND. AS OUR INSTRUCTORS POINTED OUT ---OUT THERE ARE A NUMBER OF MINES, SOME OF THEM BOOBY TRAPPED. THE AREA WAS LARGE ENOUGH FOR SEVERAL OF US AT A TIME TO GO INTO THE MINE FIELD AND NEUTRALIZE ANY ENEMY DEVICE WE FOUND. WHEN WE FOUND ONE AND DISABLED IT WE COULD COME BACK AND LET ANOTHER 'STUDENT' TAKE OUR PLACE AND CONTINUE ON UNTIL THEY, IN TURN, FOUND AND DISABLED ANOTHER DEVICE.

OH BY THE WAY, THE MAIN CHARGE HAD BEEN REMOVED BUT THE DETINATOR CHARGE HAD NOT AND IF YOU MADE A MISTAKE YOU WOULD PROBABLY LOOSE SOME FINGERS OR YOUR HAND. I (WE) HONESTLY THOUGHT THIS WAS A SCARE TACTIC TO SEE HOW WE ALL WOULD HANDLE IT. IT WASN'T. ON THE FIRST PASS A MAN FROM A TRUCKING COMPANY LOST FOUR FINGERS OFF HIS RIGHT HAND WHEN HE FAILED TO FIND A 'SECOND' TRIP WIRE ON THE MINE HE HAD LOCATED. I LATER LEARNED IT BOUGHT HIM A TICKET HOME, BACK TO THE STATES.

NOW IT WAS MY TURN. WE DID NOT HAVE MINE DETECTING EQUIPMENT---WE HAD LONG KNIVES OR PIECES OF ROD TO PROBE THE GROUND AND 'FEEL' IF IT WAS A STONE OR A MINE. NOT TOO HARD---ONE DID NOT KNOW WHERE THE DETONATER OR TRIP WIRES WERE AT THIS POINT IN TIME. IF I HADN'T BEEN A CHRISTIAN BEFORE I WOULD HAVE CONVERTED TO ONE THEN.

"MY" MINE TURNED OUT TO BE A 'TELLER.' A PIECE OF LUCK. I HAD JUST LOOKED AT THREE DIFFERENT TELLER MINES ON THE TABLE AND COULD THEREFORE PICK OUT THE ONE I HAD UNCOVERED. IT TURNED OUT TO BE A 'TELLER 42'. IT WAS NICE TO BE YOUNG AND STILL HAVE A GOOD MEMORY. A TELLER 42 HAD TWO DETONATORS. ONE ON THE SIDE AND ONE ON THE BOTTOM. ALL I HAD TO DO WAS TO CAREFULLY UNSCREW THE FUSES, CHECK FOR BOOBY TRAPS AND REMOVE THE MINE. SOMETIME LATER I SUDDENLY REALIZED I HAD BEGUN BREATHING AGAIN. WHAT A NICE FEELING.

THE DAY HAD FINALLY ENDED. WE ALL HAD AGED A LOT AND WERE MUCH WISER THAN WE HAD BEEN THAT MORNING. WE HAD ONLY LOST ONE MAN. I GATHERED FROM POST CLASS CONVERSATIONS THAT WASN'T TOO BAD. SOME OF THE MEN LEFT IMMEDIATELY. I STAYED AND SAT DOWN AT THE TABLE WITH THE MINES, ETC. AND PROCEEDED TO FILL IN MY LITTLE BROWN PERMANENT REORD BOOK WITH DIAGRAMS OF THE VARIOUS TYPES OF ENEMY MINES, ETC. I FELT MUCH MORE COMFORTABLE AFTER I HAD DONE THAT. IT WAS ONLY GOING TO TAKE ONE MISTAKE UNDER STRESS TO NEGATE

16 APRIL 1944

WENT TO BRITISH MINE AND BOOBYTRAP NEUTRALIZATION SCHOOL ABOUT ONE HOUR FROM GROVE, STATION 519 BY JEEP. LOCATION CLASSIFIED. THE SCHOOL WAS LOCATED ON AN ENGLISH ESTATE AWAY FROM THE NUMEROUS SMALL VILLAGES THAT DOTTED THE COUNTRYSIDE AND RAN FROM 6AM TO 9PM THAT DAY.

AS I RECALL THERE WERE SOME 12 TO 15 OF US FROM ALL DIFFERENT OUTFITS AND THE SCHOOL WAS PUT ON BY THE BRITISH IN ORDER TO PASS ALONG WHAT THEY HAD LEARNED, THE HARD WAY, ABOUT THE VARIOUS TYPES OF MINES AND BOOBY TRAPS MADE BY THE GERMANS, RUMANIANS, ITALIANS, FRENCH PLUS THEIR OWN BRITISH TYPES. THEY OMITTED ONE GERMAN ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE, WHETHER BY ACCIDENT OR INTENTIONALLY I DO NOT KNOW BUT I WILL COVER THAT LATER.

WE WERE ALL ASSEMBLED BY THE SIX AM TIME AS REQUIRED. IT WAS A FAIRLY LARGE ROOM WITH WINDOWS ON THREE SIDES AND LONG TABLES LOADED WITH MINES, ETC. WE SAT IN CHAIRS, TWO TO A TABLE AND LISTENED TO OUR INSTRUCTORS WHO STOOD AND EXPLAINED ONE DEVICE AND THEN ANOTHER. IT WAS LEFT UP TO US IF WE MADE NOTES OR NOT. SURPRISINGLY SEVERAL DID NOT. I DID MY BEST TO WRITE DOWN EVERY THING I COULD.

WHEN ALL THE LECTURES AND DIAGRAMS WERE DONE WE COULD ASK QUESTIONS. THERE WERE MANY. WE THOUGHT WE WERE DONE. WRONG !!

NEXT OUR INSTRUCTORS BEGAN TO COCK OR ACTIVATE THE NEUTRALIZED MINES AND HAD US DE-ACTIVATE THEM. WE DID THIS FOR SEVERAL HOURS UNTIL MOST OF US HAD A PRETTY GOOD IDEA OF WHAT TO EXPECT AND HOW TO APPROACH EACH PROBLEM. WE WERE CROWDING AN AWFULLY LOT INTO A VERY FEW HOURS. THIS DID NOT SEEM TO FAZE THE BRITS HOWEVER. THEY WOULD JUST SAY, 'ANY QUESTIONS?' AND THEN MOVE ON TO THE NEXT DEVICE. SO FAR NONE OF THE DEVICES HAD ANY EXPLOSIVES IN THEM. THAT WAS ABOUT TO CHANGE.

IT WAS NOW LATE AFTERNOON. WE HAD TAKEN A SHORT BREAK FOR LUNCH AND HAD THEN JUMPED RIGHT BACK INTO DOING WHAT WE HAD COME FOR.

A QUICK REVIEW TOOK PLACE AND THEN THE USUAL " ANY QUESTIONS BEFORE WE MOVE ON?" THIS TOOK MAYBE AN HOUR. THEN CAME THE SHOCKER!

IT WAS TO THE EFFECT THAT "OK, ALL YOU MEN FEEL YOU KNOW WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT DEACTIVATING ANY MINES OR BOOBY TRAPS." LET'S SEE IF YOU CAN NOW DO IT!!!

I'M NOT MUCH OF A DRINKING MAN BUT I DID BEGIN TO FEEL LIKE I COULD USE ONE.

18 JUNE 1944 WATERPROOFING SCHOOL

WENT TO THE MOTOR POOL TO WAIT FOR ORDERS ABOUT 7 AM. GOT A MESSAGE TO REPORT TO THE ORDERLY ROOM ON THE DOUBLE. WHAT THE HELL DID I DO NOW??

ORDERS HAD BEEN CUT FOR ME TO LEAVE IMMEDIATELY TO ATTEND WATERPROOFING SCHOOL FOR ALL OF OUR SQUADRON'S LAND VEHICLES.

DEPARTED 9AM WITH ORDERS TO PROCEED TO STERNBROOK HOUSE ONE MILE OUTSIDE OF CHIPPENHAM ON THE SWINDON ROAD. ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, QUITE A DRIVE IN ONE DAY.

19 AND 20 JUNE

AGAIN, SOMBODY'S NICE ESTATE HAD BEEN SACRIFICUED TO THE NEEDS OF WAR. AFTER WE WERE BILLETED DOWN FOR THE NEXT TWO DAYS WE WENT TO CLASS TO LEARN WHAT IT WAS ALL ABOUT. THIS WAS AN AMERICAN SCHOOL WITH AMERICAN INSTRUCTORS AND AMERICAN EQUIPMENT. THERE WERE ABOUT 15 OF US.

AS ONE MIGHT EXPECT THE FIRST DAY WAS DEVOTED TO LECTURES OF WHAT WE WOULD SHORTLY BE DOING IN THE WAY OF MAKING OUR VEHICLES READY TO LEAVE AN LCT AND DRIVE THROUGH SOME FIVE TO SIX FEET OF SURF TO REACH THE BEACH. THERE WERE SOME BLACKBOARD SKETCHES (PRE-DRAWN) OF JEEPS, 6 X 6'S, AUTOCARS, FEDERALS AND REO'S AS WELL AS OF A COMMAND CAR.

WE LISTENED TO A LIEUTENANT TELL US WE HAD 48 HOURS TO LEARN EVERYTHING AND WERE MADE TO FEEL THAT THE WAR DEPENDED ON US TO GET ALL OUR EQUIPMENT ASHORE IN GOOD SHAPE. RIGHT !!!! BELIEVE THAT AND THEY WILL TELL YOU ANOTHER ONE.

ANYHOW——THE WHOLE IDEA, OF COURSE, WAS TO KEEP THE DAMNED THING RUNNING UNTIL WE GOT ASHORE AND THEN KNOW HOW FAR WE COULD GO BEFORE WE HAD TO REMOVE ALL THE WATERPROOFING FROM THE ENGINE ETC. SO AS NOT TO BURN THE EQUIPMENT UP.

FOR THE NEXT TWO DAYS (JUNE 19 & 20) WE PRACTICED ON JUST ABOUT EVERY TYPE OF EQUIPMENT THEY HAD THERE, INCLUDING THE VEHICLES WE ARRIVED IN. IT WAS SUGGESTED THAT IF WE GOT BACK TO OUR OUTFITS WITH A RUNINED VEHICLE BECAUSE WE SCREWED UP OUR COMMANDING OFFICERS WOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO TAKE THE COST OF THE EQUIPMENT WE HAD RUINED OUT OF OUR PAY FOR THE REST OF THE WAR.

21 JUNE

TAKEN FROM MY DIARY:

“WADED TODAY. MOMENT OF TRUTH TIME. IF YOUR VEHICLE DOESN'T MAKE IT YOU FAIL THE COURSE. I DREW A JEEP TO WATERPROOF AND DRIVE. DROVE OFF A SIMULATED LANDING BARGE INTO THIS HALF MILE LONG TRENCH. WATER RAN FROM FOUR TO SIX FEET DEEP. HAD TO STAND UP IN THE JEEP AND KEEP ONE TOE ON THE GAS PÉDAL TO KEEP MY HEAD ABOVE WATER. I NEVER KNEW A HALF MILE COULD BE SO LONG. ALL WENT WELL, MADE IT WITHOUT ANY PROBLEMS. MUST REMEMBER TO CLEAR AIR VENTS ASAP AFTER LANDING. DO NOT DRIVE MORE THAN 100 MILES BEFORE CLEARING OFF ALL WATERPROOFING MATERIAL.”

I'M GLAD THAT IS OVER. I AM SOAKED TO THE SKIN WITH ALL MY CLOTHES ON. WE DID GET TO EMPTY OUR POCKETS BEFORE TAKING THE BATH. WASN'T THAT NICE OF THEM???

SOAKED WE WERE ALL THE REST OF THE DAY. NOBODY TOLD US TO BRING EXTRA CLOTHES ETC.

WELL, THANK GOD THAT IS OVER WITH. WE CAN GET DRYED OFF NOW AND TOMORROW WE GET TO 'GRADUATE' AND GO BACK TO OUR OUTFITS.

WRONG WRONG WRONG WRONG !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

22-23 JUNE

OVER ALL PERFORMANCE WAS NOT SATISFACTORY WE WERE TOLD. THEREFORE WE WILL DO IT ALL OVER AGAIN BEGINNING RIGHT NOW.

THIS TIME I DREW A 6 X 6 TO WATERPROOF AND DRIVE. IT WENT LIKE CLOCK WORK AND I WAS ONE OF THE FIRST TO GET TO DRIVE THROUGH THAT LONG TRENCH FULL OF WATER AGAIN. THIS TIME IT WAS NOT SO BAD, AS IN A 6 X 6 ONLY MY FEET GOT WET.

I WAS TOLD MY PERFORMANCE WAS GOOD AND TO GO PACK UP AND GO HOME.

I LEFT FOR HOME LATE IN THE DAY AND DECIDED TO JUST TAKE MY SWEET TIME SO I DROVE BY WAY OF BATH, BRISTOL, WINCANTON AND STAYED OVER IN SALISBURY.

I DIDN'T GET BACK TO BASE UNTIL AROUND 4 PM THE NEXT DAY, THE 24TH OF JUNE.

HALLELUJAH !!!!!!!

THEY GAVE ME THE NEXT DAY OFF.

Del Sahlberg



**EVERYTHING I HAD LEARNED THAT DAY. A WRITTEN REFERENCE
COULD MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GETTING TO GO HOME
OR NOT.**

**AS BEST I CAN REMEMBER IT WAS GOING ON MIDNIGHT BY THE TIME I
HAD DRIVEN 'BLACK OUT' BACK TO BASE. I HAD HOPPED TO SLEEP IN
A LITTLE COME MORNING BUT MY NAME ASSOCIATED WITH A FEW
UNKIND WORDS POINTED OUT THAT WOULD HAVE TO WAIT. AT SIX
AM ANOTHER DAY HAD STARTED AND THE WAR JUST COULDN'T GET
ALONG WITHOUT ME.**

DEL SAHLBERG