

TO THE READER OF THESE BOOKS OF MY LIFE:

PLEASE.....

EXCUSE THE ERRORS IN SPELLING... AND ..TYPING....

I AM HANDICAPPED TO THE EXTENT THAT MY ARMS, HANDS AND FINGERS ARE NUMB AND ARE DIFFICULT TO CONTROL THEM. SOMETIMES THE ONE FINGER THAT I TYPE WITH RUNS AHEAD OF MY MIND OR LAGS BEHIND, AS THE KEYS OF THIS TYPEWRITER ARE VERY SENSITIVE TO THE TOUCH, THE SLIGHTEST TOUCH OF THE KEYS BY THE OTHER FINGERS (WHO WANT TO GET IN THE ACT) CAUSE THE THE ERRORS.

ALL THE EXPERIENCES, SITUATIONS, DIALOGUES IN THIS WRITING ARE EXACTLY AS WRITTEN. OTHER EXPERIENCES I HAD WERE NOT CONSIDERED INTERESTING ENOUGH TO WRITE ABOUT.

THANK YOU

MICHAEL LETTIERI

AUTHOR



MAY 1944 - NAPLES, ITALY



1942 / LCAMP - BLANDING, FL.



NOVEMBER 1944 - VITTELL, FR.

THE THREE FACES OF

MICHAEL LETTIERI

After the war with Japan started, and all the young men had to report to the Draft Board to register for the service. One day, Mike received a letter from the Federal Bureau of Investigation to report to their office in Newark.

Wondering what it was all about he went to the F.B.I office. There he was asked all about his background and his thoughts about Italy being allied with Germany and fighting against the United States. Also, very slyly, was asked questions about his family and their reaction to the European situation and about the feelings of their friends and relatives, and about the kind of Social Club was the San Donato Society. His answers to their questions must have satisfied the Bureau because a few days later he was notified to report to his Draft Board.

BELOW IS AN ARTICLE THAT APPEARED IN THE STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE ON JANUARY 2000 THAT PROVES WHAT WAS WRITTEN ABOVE.

Italian Americans deserve some long overdue justice

Hundreds of thousands of Italian Americans were declared enemy aliens during World War II

By **MARIE COCCO**
LOS ANGELES TIMES NEWS SERVICE

It is not true, as the Justice Department said officially in 1992, that Italian Americans as a group were not targeted, relocated and interned as official enemies during World War II — that only a few, unlucky individuals were probed and held without trial.

It is not true, as Tom Brokaw wrote in his 1998 best-seller, "The Greatest Generation," that Italian Americans were not subject to wholesale revocation of their civil liberties.

were either stored or simply abandoned," Guttadauro told the panel. "We were forced to rent, in numerous cities, furnished apartments or homes at high cost due to our transient status. We had become, by military fiat, a family of involuntary gypsies."

They heard from Doris Pinza, elderly widow of the opera and Broadway star Ezio Pinza, about the day the FBI showed up at the couple's house in Mamaroneck and searched "every room, closet, drawer and file and found nothing of interest."

But they took Pinza to Ellis Island. He was prosecuted and interned on vague charges — the couple never knew what they were, or who made them. No lawyer was allowed. Pinza was held for three months, and was released after the couple won a rare second hearing.

All 600,000 Italian Americans were declared enemy aliens dur-

It is fashionable, nowadays, to rant about the "politics of victimization." Behind the complaint is annoyance that too many groups — women, gays, racial minorities, ethnic groups —

"continued on other side..."

On October 10, 1942, he was ordered to go to Newark N.J. for his physical. After passing the physical he was rated 1-A. All the Inductees were given a fourteen day leave to get their affairs in order; after which they were to report to their Draft Board to get transportation to Fort Dix, N.J.

Arriving in the camp they were issued their army uniforms and assigned living quarters in 'Tent City'. They each were given G.I hair cuts. They were to stay in Tent City until they were assigned to go to another army camp for their basic training. Seven days later Mike was on his way South to camp Blanding, Florida arriving there on Nov. 2, 1942. He was assigned to Company 'M' 119th Infantry Regiment, 30th Infantry Division. The new Draftees were assigned Barracks in which they were to live and were given the 'Rules and Regulations' which they had to adhere to during their basic training to become SOLDIERS. They were issued the M-1 Rifle and were shown how to clean them and how to carry the rifle when they went on hikes. They went on hikes for hour's. It was so they would be in shape physically. At the 'Firing Range' they were to shoot at targets. At the range Mike saw that he was hitting the 'Bulls Eye' and the area close to it, too often. As he didn't want to become an 'Expert Rifle man', he aimed to other parts of the target and even missed it. After all that, he still ended up getting a 'Sharpshooter' rating

All this marching and shooting was not to Mikes liking. So when he had to do K.P duty in the Company Mess Hall washing dishes, cleaning pots and pans, or peeling potatoes he decided he would rather do this than go on hiking trips that were becoming longer. He asked the chief chef if he could have steady K.P.. He was granted the opportunity and he enjoyed it. Some days, after his duty was finished he helped the cook prepare meals. When he showed them that he knew how to cook, they let him cook instead of doing K.P.. This was a terrific set up for him. The Company cooks worked one day and would have the next day off. On the days he had off, Mike would go to the lake in the camp, and go swimming. Sometimes he would go to the Starke, the town was close to the camp.

It MUST be known that the pay for privates in the 1940's was increased to \$21.00 per month! Mike made an allotment for his parents of \$12.00 per month. The laundering of his clothes was \$3.00 per month. P.X. prices were low and cigarettes were 5cents a pack. Mike was used to having little so he was happy to have this much money.

Mike was happy working as a cook. The soldiers enjoyed his cooking as it was tasty. Even the Company officers would eat at the Company Mess when Mike was on duty. Other days they would go to their officers Mess to eat. This caused one of the cooks to resent Mike as he was not from cooking school. Mike sensing this decided to leave the Mess before there would be a confrontation with him, and he wanted to avoid trouble. But, he still didn't like going on long hikes. It happened that his friend, the company clerk was complaining about the amount of work he had, with all the Company paper work and running the Regimental Headquarters. Mike saw an opportunity and asked him if he could help with his work. The offer was accepted. The Company commander seeing that he could handle the work very well, allowed him to work in the office.

One day Mike had to take some files to Regimental Headquarters. Arriving at Headquarters office after presenting the files to the officer in charge was told to sit at a desk and do some work for him. At the end of the day, when he finished the work given to him to do, he gave the work to the officer. The officer was very satisfied and told him to report to him in the morning as he wanted him to work there in Regimental Headquarters. He arranged it with the Company officer.

Meanwhile the cook seeing that Mike was not going out with the Company and had an office job, became more resentful and before anything could develop, Mike was transferred out of Company 'M' to Company 'C'. The officer at Regimental told Mike that he could stay there and do work for Company 'C'. So he continued going to the office every day.

Two weeks later as he was getting ready to go to the office company 'C' 1st Sargent, confronted him and said " Lettieri, where are you going and where have you been for the last two weeks"? "At Regimental Headquarters" replied Mike. " Well, what are you doing there? Your being carried on the Roster as A.W.O.L. for the last two weeks," said the Sargent. " The Regimental officer wants me to work there and after I was transferred from Company 'M' to this Company, he told me to continue working there for Company 'C', explained Mike. " If that's the case I will need a letter from him so I can straighten out your A.W.O.L. report", he said. " Yes , Sir", replied Mike, " i'll get it today". And he left for the office. as he was late. When he returned to the Company, after work, he presented the Sargent with the letter he had requested. He continued doing his work at Regimental and was happy that he didn't have to go out with the Company.

This setup was just fine with Mike, as he took advantage of the weekends and when he could get two or three day passes he would go to the cities close to the camp. He went to Jacksonville to see it. St. Augustine was his favorite. He went there more often as it was a little closer and there was a lot to see. He enjoyed the beach. In fact, on Christmas day he swam and layed in the sun. He knew that at home it would be cold and probably had snowed. He went as far as Ocala and at Silver Springs he went on the 'Glass Bottom Boat'. The benches were on the sides and your feet on the glass bottom. Looking down you could see all kinds of fish as they swam along. He went there a second time and the seats were low in the boat and you see through a port hole window and see fish. He also has gone to Daytona Beach. He enjoyed walking on the hard packed sand where they had car races. The boardwalk was long and had many attractions.

Working in the office, was a pleasure for Mike. He did his work conscientiously and the officer was content and gave him some special work when he got them from Division Headquarters or the Pentagon in Washington. He did his typing with one finger from each hand and it was all correct. One day a Directive came from Washington D.C. to Headquarters to list any Personnel in the Regiment who were fluent in the Italian language. The officer gave Mike the Directive to complete. He had to go through all the 201 Personnel files of the enlisted men to check their language skills. He also did his own name.

Basic Training was about over, and some were given a furlough to go home to see their families. On April 5, 1943 Mike got his leave. He took the bus to Jacksonville and there he bought tickets and boarded the Silver Meteor for his trip north. At Philadelphia he transferred to the train that would take him to Altoona. His parents were surprised and very happy to see him. They had a wonderful reunion, but the days passed by too fast and it was time to go back to camp.

When he got back to his Company, everything seemed to be normal but there were rumors now that the training was over that they would be going for more training. Finally everything was in turmoil. Everybody was packing their equipment getting ready for a new destination. Where were they going? Camp Forest, Tennessee? To a camp in Louisiana? No one seemed to know. It was May 29, 1943 the last day that the 30th Infantry Division would be in Camp Blanding. After packing his Duffle bag and putting it on the truck to be taken to the train, Mike went to the Regimental office to see what he could do there. On arrival the Lieutenant saw him and asked "Mike are you ready to ship out". "Yes, replied Mike, my bag is already on the train". "Oh, but you are not going with Division", the Officer told him, "You are leaving the Division. Didn't you know?" "What?", exclaimed Mike. "No I didn't know. Where am I going?". The Lieutenant called the Camp Commander and said, "Colonel, Lettieri is here and wants to know where he is going on that special order you called me about". Having received the information, he told Mike that the Colonel said it was something about Interpreter work and it was a very good opportunity as it was something new and it would be Overseas work. Mike thanked the Lieutenant and hurried to retrieve his bag from the boxcar. Lieutenant Zeigler, who was from Altoona, and knew Mike drove him to the train in his car. In the boxcar there were over two hundred bags and after moving about one hundred fifty bags he found his. Back in the Company area, Mike said his good-bys to all his friends and then in the Company 'M' to say good-by to his friends there. Then he went back to the Headquarters to await his orders and transportation to the Casual Company.

After many calls an ambulance came and took him to the Casual Company, as all the Company vehicles were on the train ready to roll. A few minutes later another Soldier came. His name was Bruno Brizzi and he was on the same special order as Mike. They were the only two in the whole camp that were picked to do this special work. They got a bus to the Starke Railroad Station where they waited for the train.

At 6:30 p.m. that evening the Sun Queen, the train they were to board arrived and departed shortly after. At Jacksonville the two boys tried to get the berth that the Government ticket authorized for them, but the conductor disregarded the request. They sat in the Pullman coach and when they saw empty berths, they again approached the conductor and demanded them. "There are plenty of empty ones now." Seeing how he couldn't refuse them again he allowed them to take one. They rode very comfortably to Washington D.C. where they had to change trains for Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. There was going to be some hours before the connecting train would arrive, so they decided to see some sites in Washington while they waited. Back at the station

they inquired of the time the train would leave Pittsburgh for their destination Camp Shenango, Pennsylvania. Informed that the train for camp would leave about 8a.m. the next morning, they asked if it would be possible to make a stop at Altoona and catch the next train for Pittsburgh as they would have a long wait for the train to Camp. They were told it would be possible, They decided to stop in Altoona - to see Mike's parents and then to Pittsburgh - to see Bruno's parents before getting the train for the Camp. They were elated at the prospect of seeing their parents before maybe getting shipped overseas.

In Altoona they got off the train and hailed a taxi. When the taxi arrived at the given address, Mike told the driver " Wait, I'll get some money". He went to the San Donato Social club where his father would be. Everybody in the club knew him and were surprised to see him. More so his father. They embraced and exchanged greetings, then Mike said " Pop , give me some money to pay the taxi driver." A friend overheard and went to pay the driver. Hundreds of questions were asked and the two soldiers were offered drinks. Mike asked for his mother and his father took them home . His mother was preparing for bed but at Mikes call came downstairs and was surprised. More embraces and questions-- " How are you?" " Fine , mom , and you ?"--" No mom I'm not going overseas yet"-- " Do you boys want something to eat?"-- "no"---"coffee" "Yes". When his mother was out of hearing, his father asked, "What is the matter,son? Are you going overseas?" " Pop don't worry about me. We are going to Camp Shenango and eventually go overseas as an Interpreter. Don't tell mom anything yet. I'll let you know for sure as soon as I find out". Leave- taking again and the two boys were on their way to the station. There they were told the train would be over an hour late. When they got to Pittsburgh Bruno had no time to call his parents as the train for the Camp came almost immediately and they had to board it.

It was raining when they arrived at the camp. They were placed in Casual Company and stayed there until after supper. Then they were assigned to Company'C', 12th Battalion, 3rd Regiment. All except Mike who had fallen asleep and wasn't awakened at the Roll Call.Later when the next Roll Call was announced not hearing his name, inquired why." Let's see," said the Sergeant, " You were on the previous list. You better come with me and we'll straighten everything out".

In the barracks where the Group that he was to be with, he found that they were all Italian and able to communicate in that language. There were 186 of them and found out that the Army was setting up a Special group that was to be used in Italy as a Civil Liaison to communicate with the Italian people and the United States Armed Forces. They were very proud and tabbed themselves as the 'Intelligencia' Group.

That week there wasn't a thing to do while they waited for orders. Seeing that the week was slipping by and there was no way to get a pass to go home, Mike decided to call his parents and explain.

" Hello Pop, I just wanted to tell you that we are not allowed to leave the camp. Yes, we are expecting to go overseas. No, you can't come here as we don't know when were leaving. Pop,

I have to leave now as there are other soldiers waiting to use the phone. Have mom be there tomorrow night. I'll call again, good-by." The next day everyone was on alert. It was impossible for him to get to the phone. There was to be an equipment inspection. They spread their equipment on their bunks and the officer came in, checked everything and left. Mike put his stuff in his bag and rushed out to the recreational hall to call home. The phones were busy with other soldiers calling their families. Finally, he got to a phone. His mother was there this time. The conversation was short, wishing for good health, good luck and a speedy return..... Goodbys were said and as he put the receiver down the officer told him to leave as the hall was closing.

The next morning they all took their barracks bag to the motor pool, where the trucks were waiting to take them to the train. The whole group with their bags on their backs, perspiring, cussing and making sarcastic remarks were spread all along the road from the barracks to the motor pool. Part way down the road, Mike saw a wheel barrow and decided that the bags were too heavy and he put the bags in it and wheeled it up the road. Some of the boys saw what he did and asked " Mike, how about putting our bags on it too. We'll help wheel it ". "Okay", answered Mike and they took turns wheeling the bags to the motor pool. At the motor pool when all the bags were on the trucks, they were told to form a column of three's and were told to march to the train. As they were marching down the road a band started playing! " what are they trying to do, break our morale?", asked one. " What morale?", another one wanted to know. " Put a nickel in it!", offered another in the rear. " Their trying to make us feel good after carrying the bags", said another. " They are probably glad were leaving", volunteered one.

At the station they boarded the train and after a considerable delay, finally got under way. It was stop and go. About midnight the train gave a terrific jerk as the brakes were applied and grined to a halt. Thrown out of their seats, they exclaimed, " What's the matter?" "Where are we?" " Oh it's nothing", came the reply, " we just missed a train up ahead". Looking out the window Mike saw some familiar buildings along the tracks and the bridge that they were under was the 12th street bridge in Altoona. After they stayed there for two hours then they started to move again. Still looking out the window he saw more familiar landmarks along the tracks. They didn't know where they were going, but by the direction the train was traveling, Mike figured they were going east and at Philadelphia they turned south. At 4:30 p.m. the train arrived at New port News, Virginia. From there they were taken to camp Patrick Henry for their preparation to ship out.

When they got to camp, the Company cooks wanted some help to prepare a meal for them because they hadn't eaten and it was late. They asked for volunteers to help. Mike was one of them and when he told them he was a cook in his old outfit, they gladly accepted him and gave them the job of getting the food prepared for them to cook. He cut about two hundred pounds of steak and fifty pounds of potatoes were peeled and sliced. When everything was ready they all sat down to the best meal they had in the army.

They had nothing to do except lounge around all day and wonder where they were would be going next. They knew that from where they were now, they would most certainly be going overseas.....but where!???? Finally on June 17, 1943, they were alerted that they were moving out. They packed their bags and by train they went to Newport News where they boarded the Ocean liner the S.S Mariposa. It was the former liner that traveled from San Fransisco to Hawaii in the Pacific Ocean. At 3:55p.m. the ship pulled away from the dock and anchored in the Cheasapeake bay until 6a.m. on June 18th, when they sailed away going east. All the men were crowded in one room that used to be the Smoking Parlor when the ship was a Luxury Liner. It was too hot to stay below, so Mike and some others slept on the deck. They spent most of their time on deck looking over the great expanse of the Atlantic, watching the dolphins leap in and out of the water following the ship to get the food that was thrown into the ocean. The first two days the ship was escorted by two American Aircraft, then it took a zig zag course crossing the Atlantic.

It was on June 25th about 5:10p.m. that Mike while looking far in the horizon saw something white in the distance thinking it was Land exclaimed so. Many refused to believe him. Shortly after he was proven right for there on the horizon in plain view was land!!!!!! Everyone in their hearts thanked God for the safe crossing of the Atlantic ocean.....As the ship sailed closer the white buildings becoming more visible. The heat from the blistering sand under the African sun could be felt as they neared the port city of Casablanca French Morocco!!! The whole ship rocked with enthusiasm. The soldiers cheered and were happy that the trip was at an end, and they would set foot on land once again.

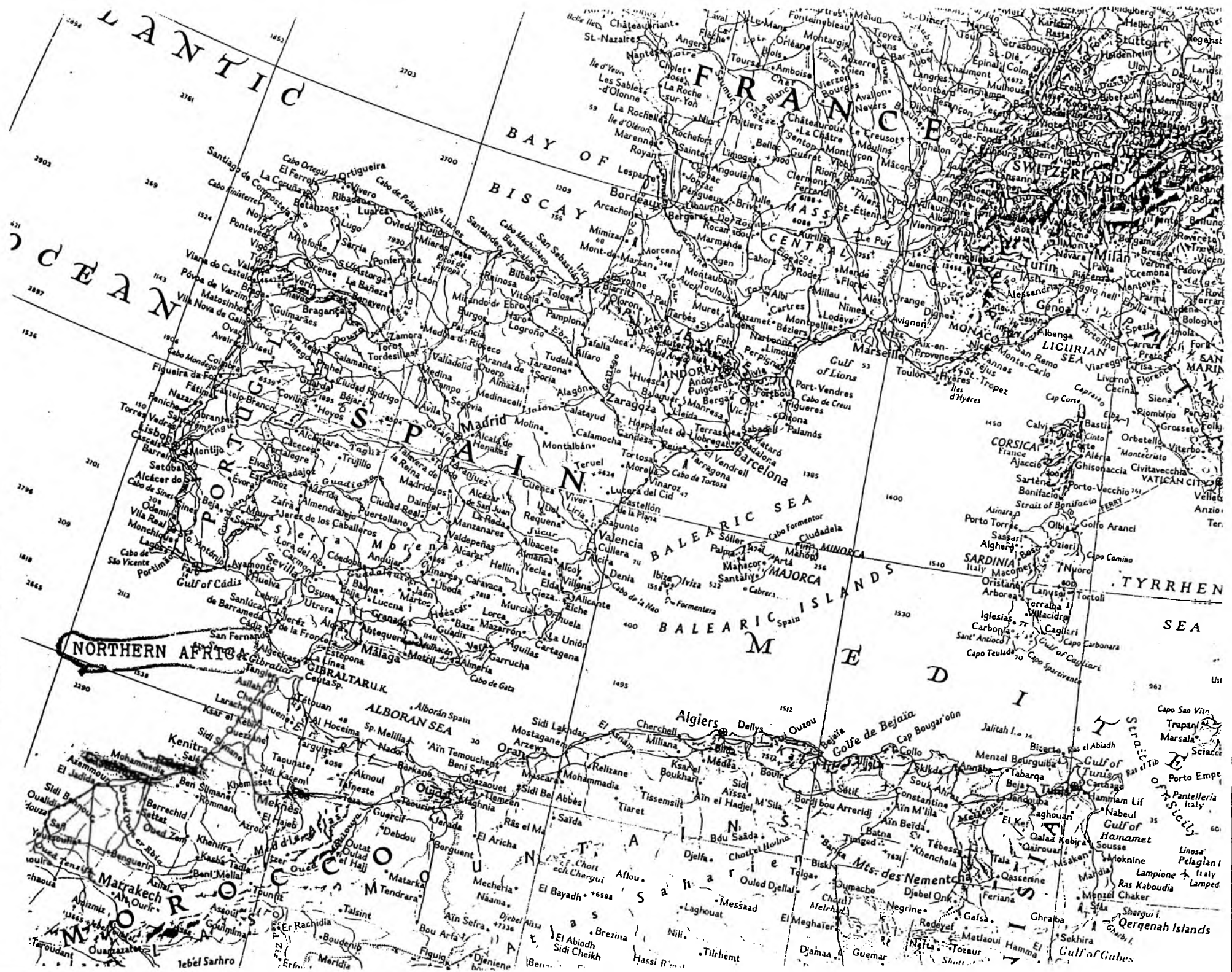
At 7p.m. the ship docked and at 9:15p.m. the 'Intelligencia' group loaded down with their bags and started down the gang plank and set foot on land in a new strange country. They put their bags on a truck and boarded another and started for... they had no idea where.....

Now, for the first time , Mike and the others saw their FIRST ARAB!!!!!! He was an odd person, unkept, Shabbily dressed, dirty and had an inquisitive look on his face as though seeming not being able to comprehend a foreign people. The soldiers were probably as odd to him as he was to them! The woman all had their faces covered and one could only guess at whether they were beautiful or ugly. All this was taken in as they were driven through Casablanca and out 17 miles to camp Marshal Lyoutay where they arrived at about 11p.m. and had to set up their Pup Tents in the blackout. " I never pitched a Pup tent before", Mike exclaimed to his buddy. " I didn't either", came the reply. They both laughed at the situation and soon the same remarks were heard through out the area. " How the hell do you put this up?, asked one. " Put the all in a straight row", ordered the Sergeant. " Are you crazy?" " The guy is nuts". " We can't see anything". These remarks and others were heard from the group. Finally after many wise remarks, laughing and cursing the tents were up and they went to sleep. During the night cursing was heard as some tents collapsed.

The next day the boys took showers.. about three men got in one sprinkler.. and that one

BOOK TWO

NORTH AFRICA



ATLANTIC OCEAN

BAY OF BISCAY

BISCAY

FRANCE

SPAIN

CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS

BALEARIC ISLANDS

BALEARIC ISLANDS

BALEARIC ISLANDS

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BALEARIC ISLANDS

BALEARIC ISLANDS

NORTHERN AFRICA

ALBORN SEA

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BALEARIC SEA

SWITZERLAND

ITALY

MONACO

LIGURIAN SEA

CORSICA

SARDINIA

MAJORCA

TYRRHEN SEA

TYRRHEN SEA

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only drippedone barely got wet and soaped that it was turned off.....water was at a premium here in Africa as they soon found out. For food they were given 'C' rations which were cans that contained some form of 'Hash'. Ugh!!!!. They were also given 'K' rations to take with them for when they traveled.

After 3 days of just doing nothing they were told to take down their pup- tents and pack their bags. The Army trucks took them back to Casablanca and to the railroad station. They boarded the French 'Pullman' railroad cars...they were actually box cars used to transport horses. Thirty-five men were put in each 'Pullman'! The horse manure was still on the floor.

The train chugged out of Casablanca that afternoon. They passed through Rabat and later through Fez and other towns on their way east. They were stopped when they had to get their food. The cooks set up a chow line along the tracks. They were given a large variety of good food, there was hash, spam, salmon and salt crackers. Oh yes there was also fruit cocktail!!! Surprised? So were they and with all that salty food they were allowed on canteen of water per man per day. That was for drinking and washing. Hardly anyone ate more than absolutely necessary. Many Arab children would go to the Americans and beg for food. They enjoyed the spam and hash from whatever the soldiers didn't eat. Some brought small bottles of wine to sell. Some who bought wine got diarrhea because it was very hot. Especially in the months of June and July the heat was unbearable during the day but during the night one wished he had his overcoat to put on as it was quite cool. In the last car of the train which was really a coach, where the officers with the Lister(water) Bag full of water and good food. How they suffered!!

The train stopped in Oujda, Spanish Morocco near the Algerian border. They remained there a few days as there was a derailed train a few kilometers ahead. Those who wanted to went into the city. Mike and some others went as they wanted to see different places and reprieve from the train ride. They had some good meals at the restaurants, toured the city, the Casbah section and saw how they lived. It was an interesting and educational experience for them. Soon they were on their way again.

On July 3rd they drove into the city of Blida, Algeria. It was just south of the capital city Algeria, which was on the Mediterranean coast. Blida was at the foot of the Atlas mountains. They drove up the mountain road that was full of many hair pin curves as they climbed up higher and higher to the top which held an enormous Hotel-Country Club building that was used as a Ski-Resort. It was called Chrea. The air was clean and healthy, none of the city dust and pollution they experienced down below. The water was delicious as it came from a water well in the mountain and there was plenty of it and it was always cold!!Chrea was situated in the Atlas mountains about five thousand feet above sea level. The views of the surrounding areas were indescribable. On a clear day looking North one could see Blida at the foot of the mountain and further out the city Algeris along the coast and the blue Mediterranean sea. Looking towards the south you would see nothing but the peaks of the mountains and the glare of the sands of the Sahara desert and when the wind blew from that direction you could FEEL the heat from it even

up so high. Chrea was usually always above the clouds looking out over the area you would see the tops of the clouds. It was quite a view!! A few times when some clouds tried to get over the top they would be enveloped in it. All in all they enjoyed it.

It was here that the group really found out what all this was for. They were to be the first in a new organization of the Army was forming called ' ALLIED MILITARY GOVERNMENT OF OCCUPIED TERRITORY or known as A.M.G.O.T. Their work would bring them in close contact with citizens of the country and set up a Liaison between them and the Americans in dealing with them. It was very important for that was the reason that they were all fluent in the Italian language.

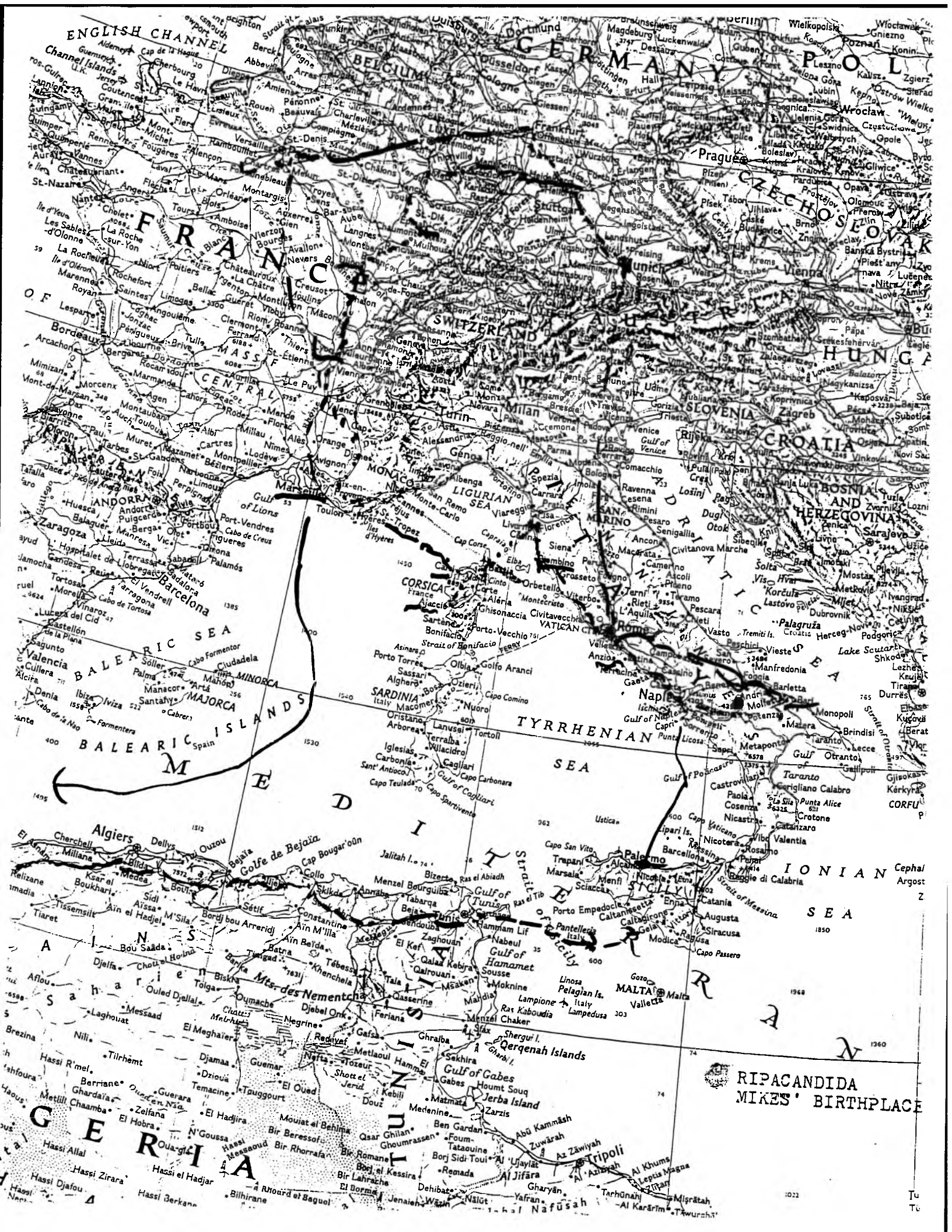
While they were there the natives saw there were Americans at the resort and they went up the mountain bringing baskets of Figs and other fresh fruit and also wine to sell to the soldiers. The figs were as big as a fist and they were delicious; Mike indulged himself as he liked them.

On July 10th news reached them that Scicily was invaded. Now they knew where they were going!! The next day they were alerted to move out. The jeeps formed a convoy. Mike road in Tom Sabilia's jeep. They drove down the mountain road and continued going east. They drove all day and when they stopped at night, Tom exclaimed " Boy I'm tired after all that driving." "Well," said Mike let me drive tomorrow, okay?" " Alright" said Tom. The next morning he got in the drivers seat and drove all day. It was the first time he ever drove a military vehicle. The convoy continued eastward and at a railroad crossing the convoy split as the train had to pass. They had to drive at high speed to catch up with those ahead. The scenery in Africa was beautiful, in the mountains, in the gorges, trough the tunnels of solid rock. The different color rock attracted the eye and when the sun struck the different stones they became ven more beautiful. At Guelma, they made an overnight stop. Most of the soldiers went to see the town and enjoy themselves. As they were driving along they saw at different places along the route walled buildings with Moorish type Domes, that were said to be the residents of the local Shiek's. There was only one gate in the wall through which they had access to their homes. It was all very fascinating to see things he had read about in school.

On the July 13th they arrived in Tunis, Tunisia. They were billeted in the "Ecole Normale" which was part of the French Arabic College. As soon as they were settled they ran to take showers to wash off all the dust and sweat they were covered with during their trip. Here the group was divided. Those that were to go to Sicily stayed in Tunis and the others were sent to Tel Aviv, possibly for different training. Having nothing to do while waiting for orders they were allowed to walk around the city. Mike and a couple of buddies wanted to see the Casbah section of Tunis. There they saw open air markets. The meat markets consisted of different animals hanging on hooks from which portions of meat was cut off as was requested and weighed. It was all very unsanitary as in the heat of the day and the smell of the meat brought a horde of flies and other insects buzzing around. There were also fish and vegetables. The Arab natives who lived there wore long loose trousers and tops which were white (?) and some wore long cloaks. The

BOOK TWO

SICILY



RIPACANDIDA
MIKE'S BIRTHPLACE

women wore long gowns and had their head and face covered with only their eyes showing. they all wore sandals...most of the children ran around barefoot, They wandered out of the Casbah into the main part of Tunis, It was much different there because there were Stores and Restaurants and the people were dressed in normal attire.

They were hungry after all the walking they did. so seeing an Italian restaurant, they went in for a good meal. They spoke to some Italian people in the Restaurant and after they finished their meal ,they were invited too their home the next day for a home cooked meal. They enjoyed each others' company asking questions about life in Tunis and answered many questions about their life in America.

After a few days, returning from seeing their new friends, they found that they were put on Alert to move out, They all put their things together and restlessly waited for the call which came at 11:30 P.M. They got in their Jeeps and drove to the Port here they found the LS T's still loading the cargo. They sat in their Jeeps until about three o'clock in the morning when they got the order to drive their Jeeps into the massive hold of the ship ;when the ramp was lowered . It looked like giant monster as it swallowed the jeeps one by one. It remained anchored until 6 AM, when it drew anchor and steamed out of the port to join a convoy. That afternoon they sailed past the Island of Pantellaria, an Island off the coast of Sicily. Early the next morning they sighted Sicily. It was D Day plus 9, and there were great fires still raging ashore.

In the harbor of Gela, they weighed anchor and had to wait for an opportunity to disembark as the cargo was taken off first put on barges and taken ashore. Late in the evening, the LST slipped into the improvised dock (the original was destroyed during the invasion) and they disembarked. They drove through the dark streets of Gela. Even in the dark one could see the shadows of the destroyed buildings looming against the moonless sky. Destruction was everywhere, many people were made homeless. At every turn they saw more and more devastation caused by the invasion forces and the retaliation from the German Air force and the retreating Army. Finally they came to a halt in front of a large building. Looking above doorway ,there was an old sign half destroyed hanging. Here they were to spend the night. Each soldier had to stand guard a half hour and then awaken person to relieve him. Some time during the night, Mike was awakened, " Huh? What do you want?" Grunted Mike sleepily, " You are to go on guard duty next". came the reply. "You're crazy ,I just got off guard, call the next guy", retorted Mike and went back to sleep. That peaceful sleep on the hard tile floor !!!!

At sunrise, Mike and some other soldiers went outside to look over the place to see where they were. The broken sign they had seen on the building when they arrived the night before, had the letters...P.N.F.. It was the Headquarters of the National Fascist Party in Gela that they had spent the night. After washing themselves, they had a breakfast of 'K' rations which they had with them. There was nothing to do except wait as no one knew what was going to happen next. Searching around Mike saw a cot and started to head for it and at the same time John Santone had the same intention of getting it to lie on. Arriving at the cot at the same time, they

compromised and both shared the small space. It was better than the tile floor that the others were sitting on.

Officers came in and they were to be interviewed individually and assigned, "I hope you get called first", said John, wanting the cot for himself. "Nope he is going to call you", retorted Mike. A few minutes later Mike was called in. John laughed as he said "See". What did I tell you?" "Well, he'll call you next and then I'll have it", replied Mike.

The Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Charles Polletti was the former Lieutenant Governor of New York before entering the Service. He would interview each soldier to determine the extent of his knowledge of the Italian language and capabilities to determine what duties they could best function in. Major Martin ushered Mike in to see the Colonel. "Lets see....you're a Clerk, aren't you Lettieri?" asked the Colonel. "Yes Sir" replied Mike. "Then we need a driver, tell Catanosa to come in", ordered the Colonel. "Sir, Catanosa was just assigned" responded Mike. "That's right" said the Colonel, "Get Santone." Mike went out and called for Santone. Santone lay asleep on the cot, hearing his name he answered, "What? Who wants me?" "AH, so it's you" said Mike, "The Colonel wants you". Back before the Colonel they were assigned.....Mike as the Clerk Interpreter and John as the Jeep driver. "I'm assigning you boys to Major Hannibal Fiore" said the Colonel, "He is a friend of mine and a swell guy. He is attached to the Second Armored Division. They are about here". Showing the position on the map. "Leave immediately, it's near Compobello. Give him this note. Major give them any other instructions." In the next room,, the Major gave Mike the map of Sicily and showed them the area they were to go. He gave John the pass to go through to the Front.

"Hey, John," said Mike, "we're going to the Front line and we have no ARMS!!!". "Tell the Colonel," said John. Mike re-entered the office, excused himself and explained the reason for the intrusion. "It's Okay," said the Major putting his arm around Mikes' shoulder and explained, "It's Okay! Just Trust in GOD that you get there safely." The Major and the Colonel both laughed and the Major went on to explain that they had no arms of any kind to give the enlisted men.

John and Mike got their equipment ready and said Good-by to their friends and prepared to leave. They found three other groups ready to leave so they formed a small convoy. They drove along the coast and through the city of Licata. Seeing the farmers selling melons and other fruit, they stopped and bought some so they would have something to take away the taste of the 'K' rations they had to eat!! Here they had to leave the small convoy as they had to go North to Campobello. Looking for the Second Armored Division they found it a few miles further North, Inquiring for Major Fiore, they were told that he was in the Municipio in the city. So, back to Campobello and found the Municipio and reported to the Major. H.M.Fiore.

Major Hannibal M. Fiore was a Lawyer and former Assistant District Attorney of New York from White Plains, New York, He welcomed the boys, and introduced to Captain Sutton, a British Officer who was working with him. He explained what their jobs would be. They

were to follow close behind the advancing troops and when the town or city was taken , they were to interview the local people and the Police that ran the local Government for that particular area, either keep or dispose those that would not abide to the new rules and regulations proposed to them by the Occupying Troops and Supervise them to see if they complied with the ordinances. Mike was to work closely with him in the Office and John was to drive him and other Officers when they had to go someplace. Mike was to interrogate the locals and report to him. Being that they would be working closely together they would live in the same quarters as the Officers. That night they slept in the local Baron's home where the Major and the Captain had their rooms . This setup was happily welcomed by the boys.

Early the next morning ,they hitched a trailer to the Jeep and loaded it with the Officers' baggage and squeezed their own bags in the little space left. They were to move with the advancing Troops to each Town,do their job and continue to the next one. In these smaller towns other personnel from the original group would take over the supervision of the locals,as the Majors' main objective was the city of Palermo. The Major wanted to drive, the Captain sat next to him and the two boys sat in the back. They drove back to Licata and took the Highway West to Porto Empedocia and to Agrigento. The next day after going through Ribera and on the highway they stopped off the main road to eat their 'K' rations. when they heard shots and bullets whiz over head. Not wanting to find out if they were the targets, the Major immediately got going as they crouched as low as possible and sped away from there FAST!!!! This route took them along the Coast to Sciacca, then on to Menfi where they took took the North westerly route to the city of Castelvetrano. Here they had to wait until the Second Armored Division advanced further North. It was slow going for a while because even though the Italian soldiers were retreating or surrendering , the Germans were trying to make a stand against the American Troops in the western sector and against the British Forces on the eastern section.

When they arrived late one night to the next Command Post, they had to bivouac in an open farm field. The Major parked the jeep and lay down next to it to sleep. The Captain went some twenty five feet away and Mike and John still further in the field where they tried to smooth out the deep furrows of the field stretched their blankets and lay down. John fell asleep almost immediately, but Mike try as he might couldn't persuade sleepiness to overtake him. During the night, Tanks started to arrive and drove into field. Mike, being unable to sleep , saw the pilot lights of the Tanks as they drove into the field. Thinking he heard a Tank TOO close for comfort, sat up and started to shout, "Stop! Stop! Stop that Tank!!!! Hey! Stop!". His cries awoke the Major, the Captain and John. The Tank came to a halt and Mike running toward it was asked by the driver what was the matter. Mike explained that men were sleeping in the field. There not more than TEN feet from where the Tank stopped was where the Captain had being lying down. They found some other place to spend the rest of the night.

As they were driving in the Northeasterly direction through the mountains they saw Bunkers and other Fortifications built into the Mountains on both sides of the Highway with cannons

aimed at the highway. They were so well concealed that it was difficult to see them .From those vantage points they could have stopped any advancing enemy If they wanted to.

Just before arriving in San Giuseppe, on the road, they saw a Company of Italian Soldiers marching down the road towards them. There were a couple of Officers and a Colonel leading them. When the Italian Colonel saw the American Jeep, he put up his hand in a signal of surrender. The Major stopped and the Colonel advanced toward the Jeep withdrawing his sword, and presenting it to the Major saying that he and his Company were surrendering to him. The Major had Mike tell him that he appreciated his surrendering to him, but he couldn't accept his offer and that they should continue a short way down the road where the Division Post was and surrender to them as they could better accommodate them. Mike later told the Major that if they ^{had them} taken to the Division as prisoners they probably all receive Medals for capturing a Whole Company of Enemy Troops!! They all agreed and had a good laugh over the incident.

The next bivouac area was just North of San Giuseppe, and the Major and John drove back to take care of some business he wanted to check up on. Mike remained at the Command Post and having nothing to do decided to take a walk. He had just started walking down the road when he saw a Staff Car coming down the road toward him. As it drew near, he saw Three Stars on the license plate. Moving off the road to get out of the way, he gave a sharp Salute as it passed. The Staff Car came to a halt and Mike heard, " Soldier! Come here!" Mike stopped, turned around and approached the Staff Car, Saluted and said, "Yes, Sir!" He recognized GENERAL GEORGE PATTON!!! who inquired, " What outfit are you with. Soldier?" " I'm in A.M.G.O.T., Sir," Mike replied, " Attached to the Second Armored Division, SIR!". "Oh, you are one of those guys," said the General, " Well as long as you are with us, you will wear your Helmet at all times". " Yes, SIR!!" replied Mike, saluting as the General gave his driver the order to proceed. Mike went back to get his helmet.

When John and the Major returned that night, Mike told them of the incident. Major Fiore laughed and said " You're lucky you weren't Court Marshaled! Patton is one tough guy. He's very strict when it comes to Army regulations." GREAT NEWS!! The U.S.O. was putting on an Entertainment Show for the troops in Sicily! The actor/ comedian Bob Hope, his friend Jerry Colonna,(another comedian) and other Hollywood personalities, were making a tour to entertain the troops that were fighting. One of the shows was near the area where the Second Armored Division was resting. They all went to see it. It was a great performance and brought a little of home to the soldiers.

Palermo was the final objective, at the Western side of Sicily the fighting was over. There was still some fighting going on in Eastern section as the Germans were resisting as they were in the process of abandoning Sicily because the Italian soldiers were giving up the fight. Heading toward Palermo they had to go through Monreale, a town in the mountain surrounding the Port City of Palermo. They were half way down the road when an officer came from the Division caught up to them and told the Major that General Gaffy wanted the Major to stay in Monreale as

the situation there was unstable.

In Monreale, they proceeded to the Municipio where ^{they} confronted the local city officials who were trying to hold on to their positions, but the people didn't want them. It was late so they found the officials in their office, relieved them of their duties and sent them home. The chief of Carbonieri (Italian Police) was agreeable to the new directives imposed by the Americans and was retained and ordered to maintain peace among the town's people.

They were tired from their trip since the landing in Gela and now that their objective was so close, they found some couches in the offices where they could sleep on and took advantage of them. They were able to bathe and change their soiled uniforms and change into their Khaki uniforms as it was hot in Sicily.

Early the next morning, hearing voices and commotion outside, Mike went to see what it was all about. The Towns' people hearing the Americans had taken over the Municipio, wanted to see them and had many questions to ask them. Many had legitimate requests, an Mike answered all that he could about the new Regulations such as : All the Citizens had to turn in Any firearms they owned : The shopkeepers were not permitted to Increase Prices on any items they sold, "The War Prisoners that had returned home were to report to Mike to be registered, and Everyone would continue with their every day functions. The questions that he was not authorized to answer were referred to the Major. The people seemed satisfied with the new order of things things that they were very cordial to the new administration.

John went often with the Major to Palermo when he had to see Colonel Polletti, who was now the new Provincial Administration Officer. Left alone, when he didn't have much to do in the Municipio, as everything was going smoothly, he took walks around the city. Right next to the Municipio was a beautiful Cathedral. Inside the whole ceiling had scenes of the Bible stories depicted in beautiful colored Mosaic. It's pilloried courtyard was beautifully landscaped. Their stay in Monreale was soon to be over as the new administration put in by the Major was working out good as the towns people seemed comfortable with. Meanwhile, the Major was looking for a place to stay near Palermo. He found a beautiful Villa in Mondello with in a short distance. It was situated on the coast on the Blue Mediterranean. The Villa was situated right on the Shore. It was pleasure to walk out and go for a swim the clear 'blue' sea. As everything was okay in Monreale, they had another trouble spot to go to. Since it wasn't too far from Mondello they stayed there until that trouble was taken care of and then they had to move again.

This troubled area was a few miles westward along the coast to Sferrocavallo. Here, again found another beautiful Villa on the Shore with a good beach. It was close to the next Town of Tommaso-Natale. They work in both towns as they were needed. Here the Major hired a Housekeeper to clean and do some cooking for them.

One day, Mike didn't feel well. The Major took him to the U.S. Army Field Hospital. There he was diagnosed as having Malaria. He had high fever, and they gave him the medication for it and since they were overcrowded with many patients with the same sickness, they told him

bed rest. The Major told him to stay home and rest until he was better. .

Lydia, the house keeper. knew that the Major and John spoke Italian but didn't know if Mike did. When she tried to speak to him, he told her that he didn't " Capisce Italiano " and she believed him, even when he gave her the right answers to her questions. Mike told the Major and John not to reveal to her that he understood the language, and they went along with the deception. One day, at the dinner table, Lydia said something that Mike didn't like. Angry at her. he told her ' off' in Italian. Dumfounded at the realization that he understood the language , then realized that was why he always gave her the right answers to her questions, she stammered, "I.I... thought he didn't speak Italian!!!" "He's a Spy", the Major told her, laughing at her surprised look .". No wonder he always followed me around and looking at everything I would pick up", she exclaimed. They all laughed at her and gave Mike funny looks when she saw him looking at her when she did something.

The Major used the large parlor on the ground floor for his Office as it would be more convenient for them to work from this location. The Major and John went often to the neighboring towns to check the local officials that they had placed to administer to their towns' problems. Mike was left behind at the office to check on the local Officials in Sferrocavale and the nearby town of Tommaso-Natale. Here Mike learned more in dealing with the problems the people had than he could in years of study. He showed some wisdom in dealing with the city Officials and the Carabinieri who often asked him to explain the reason for certain regulations imposed by the U.S. army.

In Palermo, there was a problem that there wasn't enough food and that caused the 'Black Market' to flourish. It was discovered that the Farmers from the nearby farms Carina, Partinico, and other nearby towns were not bringing the produce to the stores in Palermo themselves; instead the sold to certain people who would take the produce and sell it at higher prices; because the stores had to sell at the old established prices due to the New Regulations imposed by the U.S. army. It was discovered that produce was brought into the city by train. The railroad ran just south of the highway were the Villa was. The train station was there also. The problem that faced the Major was how to stop this 'Black Marketing'. A plan was worked out to 'Stop' the Train!!! and confiscate the produce. The train to and from Palermo had to pass through. Sferrocavale after it passed through a tunnel.

With the aid of the local Carabinieri and the U.S. military Police placed strategically on both sides of the tunnel exit as it reached the station, with orders to stop anyone getting off the train trying to run away. The Major, John and Mike continued with their 'Plan'. The Major stayed near the station, John drove Mike a few miles up the road where the highway crossed the railroad tracks and the trains always slowed down before entering the tunnel . John left Mike there and returned to be with the Major. Mike armed with a Tommy Gun, borrowed from the M.P.'s and a .38 Special Pistol saw the train coming. Getting in the middle of the tracks, started to wave the Tommy Gun signaling the Engineer to 'STOP'!!! The Engineer kept blowing the whistle but Mike



MAJOR HALEY AT
FORD DELFALCO AIRFIELD



CAPTAIN HALEY
RANPADA



MAJOR HALEY CAPT. MCKAY
US SCOT
MAJOR GILBERTSON
ENGLISH
IN CIVIL AFFAIRS - ADJUT. FAJERM C
W/ OFFICE PERSONEL



THE OR
SERVANT IN FRONT OF MUNICIPAL
OFFICE BLDG

didn't move. The engineer, seeing that Mike didn't move brought the train to a grinding halt and Mike quickly climbed aboard the engine told the Engineer to quickly proceed as if nothing had happened, and that he would give him his instructions as they moved on. They entered the tunnel and Mike instructed him that when the train exited the tunnel at Sferrocavalle he should halt the train just before the last couple of cars were still in the tunnel. The Engineer, seeing the Carabinieri and the Military Police was dumfounded but did as he was told. Mike quickly got off the engine calling a few Carabinieri, climbed aboard the first coach, John did the same getting on the last coach going forward and the Major took the middle cars. They went through the cars confiscating all the food that was not deemed to be for the owners' personnel use. Much food stuff was found that the owners were afraid to claim when they saw what was happening. All the food taken was placed in the station. and the train was permitted to continue its' run to Palermo. They did the same thing to the next two trains. Those admitting to selling the food to the 'Black-marketteers' were arrested. Some admitted they were selling the produce at high prices. Some were caught trying to get off the train.. All the stuff confiscated was placed the the Villa. The bread was given to the bakers in Sferrocavallo and Tomasso-Natale to be sold to the towns people "at the SAME prices that prevailed BEFORE the war" and the moneys derived from the sales to be used to purchase flour to make more bread and they were to follow the same procedure again. The next day another 'holdup' was staged, but not at the same place. This one was some distance along the train route. It also was a surprise and yielded much food. The parlor of the ville was full of the food taken from the two days' 'holdups'. Much of the food was given to the Hospital and some was sold to the local people, for which they very grateful. The farmers seeing what had happened in those two days were afraid to take food to the city. as they would have no way of knowing when it would happen again thereby dealing a severe blow to the Blackmarketeers. The Mafioso in Palermo were very unhappy because the farmers were fearful of taking foods to the city..

A few weeks later, the Major received Orders from the Headquarters that he was "hereby Transferred to the 82nd Airborne Command" stationed in North Africa!!!! They surmised that it was probably due to the pressure put on by the Mafia, for what had happened in Sferrocavalle. He tried to get Mike and John transferred to be with him as he had grown fond of them, but was denied the request. He did the best he could for them, he spoke to his friend Lieutenant Colonel Charles Polletti and had them assigned to work with Major George Haley in Palermo. On August 26th John and Mike drove the Major to the airport where he was to get the plane that was to take him to Africa, where the 82nd Airborne Command was stationed. He told them what he had done in their behalf and told them to report the Colonel in two days. He expressed his sorrow in leaving them and thanked them for their loyalty to him and their conscientious work while under his command. The town's people, also were disappointed on their leaving told them to come visit them when they could.

After two days of relaxing, they drove to Palermo and reported to the Colonel as they were told to do. When they arrived at the Provincial Office building where the Colonel had his Office, Major Martin saw them and recognizing them, said " I see you boys made it here safely. God must have been taking care of you!!!" Laughing ushered them in to the Colonel's Office. The Colonel told them what Major Fiore had requested for them and told them to report to Major Haley at the city Municipio.

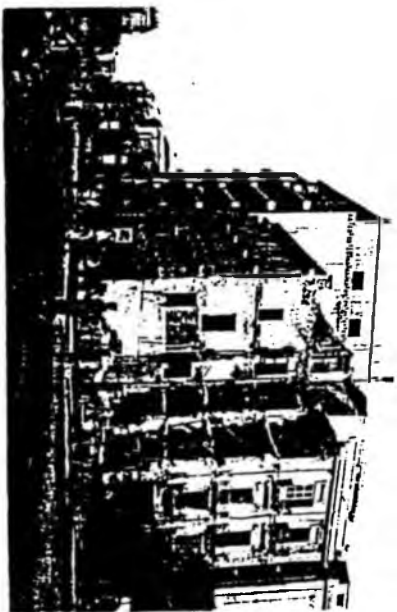
Major George Haley had been the Mayor of Annapolis, Maryland before entering the Service. Here now in Palermo, he had the position of being the Mayor !! It seemed to Mike that most of the Officers he came in contact with in A.M.G.O.T. which now had changed to A.C.C .(Allied Control Commission..) previously held high Political Office or were Lawyers.

The Major greeted them and told them that he wanted to be with him at all times, just like they were with Major Fiore. He told them what their duties would be and where they were to live. He had a Villa in the residential part of the city. It was at No. 11, Viale Regina Margherita, which he shared with Captain John McKay, a British Officer, formerly with Scotland Yard. A First Lieutenant Van Heuklen and a Second Lieutenant Sueben. The Villa was large, on the first floor lived the caretaker and his wife, on the second floor there were four bedrooms, a kitchen, a living room and a large bathroom. The Officers used this floor, the third floor had two bedrooms and a bath which Mike and John were to occupy. The rooms were large and spacious, marble tile floors. Every modern convince was available to them, Along side of the Villa was a driveway to park their vehicles. They were served Breakfast every morning that the caretakers' wife prepared for them. Fresh milk was delivered daily by the Milkman leading his Cow down the street and whoever wanted fresh milk got it Straight from the COW!!! It couldn't be fresher than that!!!

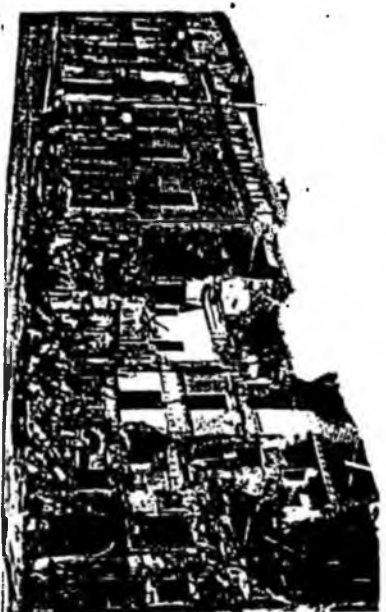
At the Office, Sergeant Gianforti, sat at the front desk to screen all visitors and referred them to the Officer in charge of their particular problem, Mike was in the inner office with the Lieutenants Sueben, Van Heuklen and Captain McKay. The Major had the private office and John had a desk at which he sat waiting to be summoned by any Officer that needed to be driven There was also a desk and chair for the Official Municipal Chauffeur. He drove a convertible Lancia Town Car, which was at the Officers' disposal. Some changes made in the Office personnel. Captain Rocker replaced Lieutenant Sueben, Captain Dastoli replaced the British Major Richardson. Private Lavaglia and Private Ziri were added to the office force. Mike was given the pleasure of having control of the paroled Italian Prisoners of War. They numbered about twenty thousand in the city alone. He had an office force of eight civilians to handle all the paper work in another office in the building.

Most of the Soldiers that were in the Group that came to Sicily with Mike and John were now in Palermo. They all had different duties and were billeted in a hotel in the center of the city. When they encountered Mike and John they wanted to know why only they were permitted to live out side of the Company and have the privileges they had. Except those that worked with them, they became jealous because they had so much freedom. Sometimes, Paolo, would drive Mike

** Equal to U.S. F.B.I.



BOMBED BUILDINGS NEAR THE PORT AREA, PALERMO, SICILY



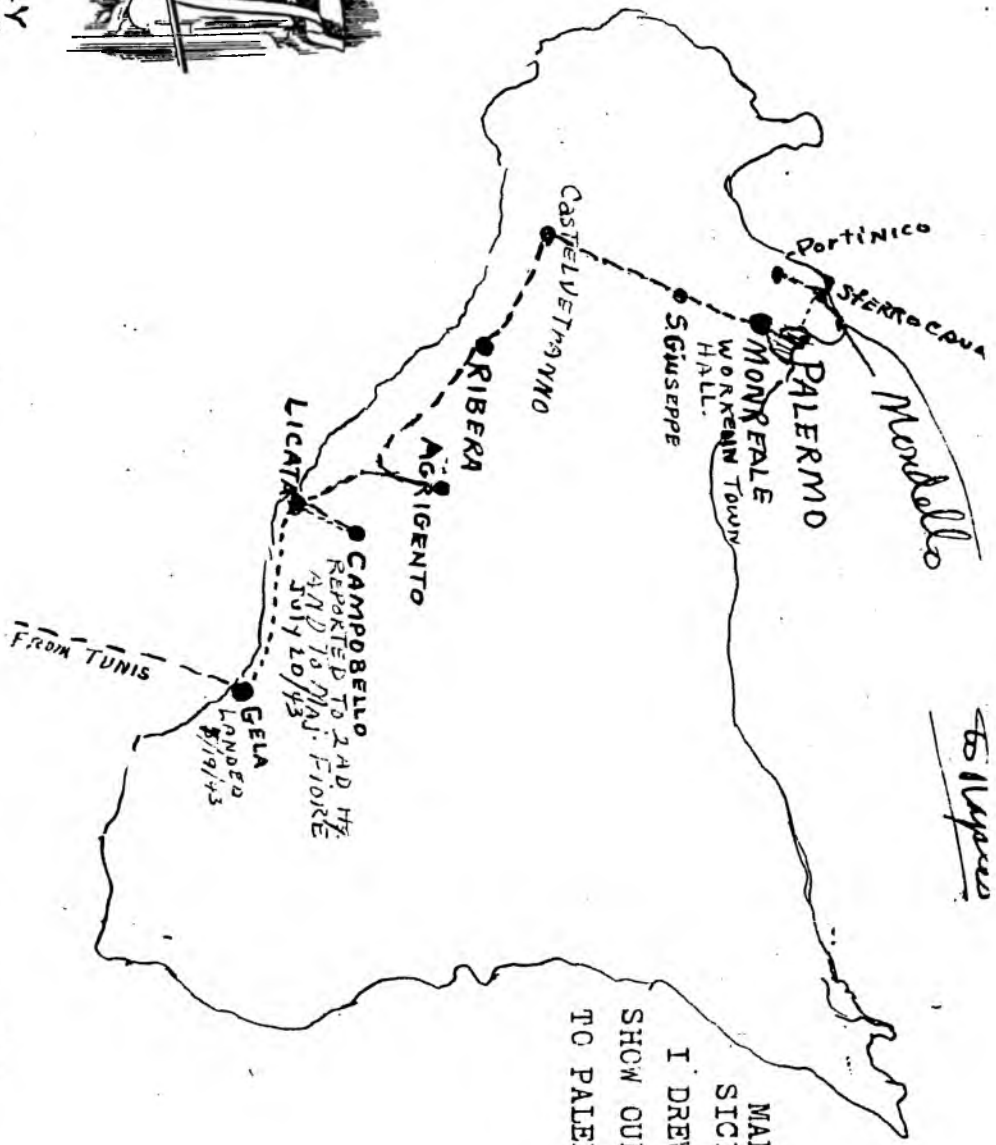
REMAINS OF PALERMO



PACIO (ASLEEP) WHILE WAITING FOR THE MAJOR IN THE MUNICIPAL CAR (THE LANCIA)

SHOOT
1/25/43

SICILY



To [unclear]

MAP OF
SICILY
I DREW TO
SHOW OUR ROUTE
TO PALERMO

THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIONS • THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC COMMUNITY SERV
THE SALVATION ARMY • THE YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIO
THE JEWISH WELFARE BOARD • THE NATIONAL TRAVELLERS AID ASSOCIATI'

and John around the city, they would sit in the back seat of the Lancia, when the other soldiers of A.C.C. Company saw them, they didn't know if an Officer was in the car, they would salute them.

Major Haley wasn't satisfied in having John to drive him in the Jeep, and Paolo having the Official Municipal Town car at his disposal, heard that someone in Palermo owned an American 1936 Nash sedan. He decided that he wanted it for himself for private business, so he wrote requisition form and confiscated it. It was a beautiful car with leather upholstery and with Right Hand drive. One day after getting the car, he wanted to drive it. Taking Captain McKay and Mike sitting in the back, and John sat in front with him. After riding a while, and enjoying it, Captain McKay turned to Mike and said, "What do you think of the present situation, General? What is next on the Agenda?.....Cigarette Sir?" Startled, Mike immediately took the pose the Captain gave him and replied, "Thank you, General. Oh, everything is satisfactory and according to our Plans, but in the future we must speed up our.....?" "Hey, what's going on back there?", broke in the Major. Both the Captain and Mike leaned back and laughed. "Take us back to the Office, George", ordered the Captain. They all had a good laugh.

Needing haircuts, John and Mike went to the local Barber Shop. There were some other Soldiers in there and some civilians in the Shop waiting. When the Soldiers were finished, they were ashamed to pay the listed price for their hair cuts, so they gave the Barber about what they would have paid in the U.S.. The Barber seeing this was asking the same price from the Civilians. When they complained they were told, "These are the new prices, if you don't like it, leave!" Mike, seeing all this, told the Owner of the Shop, "You cannot change your prices. The Law coming from the Municipio has Specifically Stated the Prices Charged for ANY Item, Foods, and SERVICES would Remain the SAME as they were Before. Any Increase would be in violation of the Order Issued by The Occupying Military A.C.C.". When the Barber Shop owner refused to comply to that Order, Mike called a Carabinieri and had him close his Shop and arrest him.

The Report went to the Questura for action. The Officer who handled the Report, seeing the name Lettieri on the form, was curious as from where he came from in Italy, he new people with that name. He decided to check to see if he new him. The Officer Giuseppe Colacicco went to the Municipio and inquired if he could speak with Mike. Mike was very surprised when he met the Officer from the Questura and was told that he knew the Lettieri Family from Ripacandida. He told Mike that they were childhood friends and named all of Mike's cousins. They had quite a reunion. He told Mike that his family had also moved, but only to the next town of Melfi. He said that he was going to write to them and tell of the surprise meeting with Mike. Later Giuseppe told Mike that he had received a letter from his family and that they were surprised and hoped Mike could get a chance to go there and visit with them.

Life was getting soft for the boys. Everyday was the same routine. Mike would get up about seven o'clock, shower, shave and wake up John in the next room. He would then go down

stairs to the kitchen where Rosa, the caretakers' wife, would have breakfast ready. The Officers would have breakfast with them. At eight-thirty they would leave for Il Municipio. Mike would supervise the people that worked for him in registering the Prisoners of War, then check what other duties he was responsible for. John waited until he was called to drive some Officer where he wanted to go. At noon John and Mike would go to the Villa to have Lunch, after which they returned to the Office, where they would have time to straighten out what they needed, as in Sicily the time from one o'clock in the afternoon until four o'clock was SIESTA time. There wasn't much activity going on. At five-thirty, the day was over for them, and they went home for their supper. The first thing they would do on their arrival was turn on the Radio to "Quest e' Radio Palermo. L'avanposta di Sicilia Liberata." They would receive American music by Fred Waring and his Orchestra, Glenn Miller, Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey, Harry James and others. Some times they would listen to Jack Benny, Charlie McCarthy and other shows. At times they would just sit and converse with the Officers going over the days problems or just talk about anything. If there was an Opera playing at the Teatre Massimo that they liked to see, they would go there. Some times Mike and John would be invited to Paolo's home. They enjoyed going there as Paolo's wife and his two children liked having them there. It gave them the feeling of being home.

Major Haley was acquainted with some U.S. Navy Officers, and when their Ship docked in the Port of Palermo, he would be invited to visit with them. He would take Mike and John with him. They were cheerfully greeted by the Navy. While the Major visited with the Officers, the two boys were gladly taken by the rest of the crew. They went to the mess hall and were given good food to eat and some to take home. They enjoyed these excursions.

One Sunday, the Major told the boys to take the day off and do what they wanted. They were glad to sometime for themselves and as it was a very hot day, they decided to go to Mondello for a swim and lay on the Beach,

While lying on the beach Mike saw a sailboat coming close and stop. Turning to John he said, "Let's go sailing!" "Okay", he replied, "Let's ask the guy." They walked in the water to the sailboat and asked the boatman. It's too late and besides it is getting windy and the Sea will get rough in a short while," he protested. But the boys insisted they wanted to go sailing, even if was a little distance from the shore, and they climbed on board the boat. The Boatman seeing he couldn't refuse them anymore, started to turn the boat around heading out to Sea, telling them he wasn't going out too far. After a short while, they themselves saw that it WAS getting to stormy to be out in the Sea. It was getting too windy, making it very difficult to control the sails. The waves were getting higher and were tossing the boat to and fro. The Pavilion and the Shore were barely visible, as they were taken further out into the Blue Mediterranean!!! "I told you this would happen", exclaimed the Boatman. "Help !! Help!!!" came over the waves, "Help!!!

Scanning

over the water, they saw an overturned boat, smaller than theirs, and to soldiers hanging on as the waves tossed them around like toothpicks.. Any minute they would go under as they were exhausted! Mike saw in their boat there was a coil of rope, He got it and threw it out to the soldiers. After two attempts they caught the rope and were being pulled to their boat. As they pulled the two soldiers in, their boat tipped dangerously taking in water. John was white with fear, panic stricken he began to scream, " Mike what did you make me do" I really didn't want to come!! I can't swim!! Oh, we'll all be drowned!!!!" "Shut up, John," yelled Mike," You're getting everybody more nervous!" The boatman was struggling trying to keep the sails in a position that would keep the boat from going further out to sea.. Mike was pulling the two soldiers into the boat, which listed badly taking more water. They were cold and shivering, and now the boat, more heavily loaded looked like IT would capsize, with every slap of the waves it took in water. They split the group , two on one side and two on the other to make an even balance. to make it a little easier for the boat man to control to the direction he wanted to go, After what seemed hours, they were able to head the over-laden, partly under water toward the shore. The Pavilion and the shoreline were barely visible. After what seemed an eternity, they reach the shallow water of the Beach. The two soldiers who were rescued were very thankful for their chance coming and to be able to rescue them from a sure death. They all Prayed and Thanked GOD for. bring them back safely.

"How would like to tour the Island", asked the Major, one day, as they sat chatting. " We'd like that very much," they replied, wondering what he was leading up to. "That's fine." he replied," John will come with me, as we will use the Jeep. Mike you have to stay here at the Office because you know what has to be done besides you other duties. But," he continued," "You can use the Nash " We will be going to the Eastern section of Sicily to Messina, Catania and possibly Siracusa, if we have time. You Mike, take charge of the Office and have the other Officers assist you if you need any help."

While the Major was away, one day Captain McKay had to do some business in Cefalu, a Sea coast town East of Palermo, and he asked Mike to drive him there in the Nash. He was glad for the opportunity of get away from the Office. It was a nice ride going to Cefalu, On the coast it was down from the road which was at a higher altitude. It looked like a nice town.. Mike also took some time off for himself wanting to see some other cities in the Eastern part of Sicily. He went to Trapani and Castlevetrani and Marsala. When the Major and John returned they said that they had just passed Mt. Etna when it 'blew it's top'. Mike said he had heard it on the Radio..

Now, Mikes' duties increased, he got the responsibility of Recording and Control of the Food supplies shipped to Sicily through the Marshal Plan. The Plan was set up to distribute much needed foods for the conquered people. The Supplies were brought into Palermo by ships and

BOOK TWO

ITALY

taken by trucks to the Warehouse where Mike recorded each delivery and was stored for further distribution. After some weeks went by, Mike was approached by some people made him some fabulous offers of monetary gain IF he would fail to accept delivery of a few trucks and divert them to another storage place. He declined the offers and said he could not do that. Not long after he was approached a few times and being refused, he was relieved of that duty. Could it be that he had stepped on the same toes that were stepped on in Sferocavallo???? It had caused the transfer of Major Fiori and now things started to change to the personnel in the Municipio.

Major Haley was transferred from the Mayoral position he had, to being Judge Advocate of the area, and moved from the Villa. Captain McKay and Colonel Rogers a new addition to the Municipal Staff, were transferred to the Naples area. Mike and John were assigned to the 8th Replacement Company to be re-assigned. There Mike and John were separated with John being assigned to a group slated to go fighting area in Northern Italy. Mike was left behind to be assigned later.

Finally it came, Mike was assigned with some others to another Replacement Depot in Italy. They were taken to the Port and boarded an L.S.T. for their trip to Italy.

On March 27 the, they arrived in the Bay of Naples. The whole area was covered in Smoke. Mt. Vesuvius had erupted a few days before and they could still see the fire and smoke coming out of the Volcano. Mike tried to imagine what it must have been like when Vesuvius erupted back in the Roman times Pompeii and Herculenum were devastated by the falling ashes and lava that spewed from the tremendous eruption which spread over a large area.

Upon disembarking, they were taken to another Replacement Center just North of Naples in Pontinia, which was near Anzio, where the American Forces had made a Beachhead Invasion to split the German Forces fighting in Italy. In this Company they were to wait for further assignment. With nothing to do Mike and couple of friends explored the towns of Anzio and Pontinia.

One Sunday, Mike and another friend, decided to go to Rome. They went to the Highway 1 and managed to get a ride on a Military Truck that was going North towards Rome. As the driver had to go further North, he took the Highway that went around the City and they saw the Wall around Rome. They were left off at one of the Gate entrances to the City. They entered the City, and as they were walking, they decided to go to see Saint Peter's Cathedral first. Asking for direction they should go to get to the Cathedral, they were told to cross the Tiber River over the Bridge near the Castel San Angelo and they would see it straight ahead.

It was Stupendous!!! They walked in the Great Piazza boarded by the famous Colonnades and Obelisk in the center. They stood there taking in the fabulous view, with the beauty of it all with the Statues that adorned the facade the Basilica and around on top of the Colonnade!!! They walked up the stairs and through the massive Doors into the Cathedral. They were astounded by the unsurpassable Beauty of the Paintings and the Mosaic Art that covered the ceiling and walls. There in one alcove was the Fabulous Statue of LA PIETA by Michaelangelo.

Walking up the right side, was the Bronze Statue of St. Peter the Apostle. Everyone that passed it, did reverence to it by kissing the foot of the Statue. In the center they came to the twisted Columns that were designed by Cellini. There are four Columns with a Canopy over some steps going down to what was found to be the burial place of St. Peter the Apostle. Mike had read all about this in school, but Seeing this in Person made it all the more interesting. They walked all around the Cathedral, seeing everything there was to see. They reluctantly left the Cathedral and walking, thought that the Vatican would be the ideal place to visit IF they could get in....

Reaching the entrance, the door was opened by a Swiss Guard. Mike asked if they were allowed in the Vatican, first in English then in Italian, not knowing which language the Guard would understand, when the Guard cut in with, "Do you wish to see His Excellency, the Pope?" In perfect English !!!! " Yes, if possible!" replied Mike. " Go up those stairs and go in the Reception Room<" he directed, His Excellency will have an audience shortly." What a day!!! Seeing St., Peters AND the POPE!!!! Mike was estatic! Fearing he would miss the Pope, he took the stairs two at a time, not wanting to waste a minute. When they reached the Reception Room, two Swiss Guards, one on each side of the door, presented them with a Rosary, saying " With the Blessing and Compliments of His Excellency the Pope". The Room, Mike discovered was the Sistine Chapel !!! Mike saw the fabulous paintings of Michelangelo. The Room was filled with Soldiers, American, English, Italian, French and even some Arabs (noticed by their attire).

Suddenly the Room went quiet.... the doors opened and two Swiss Guards dressed in Armor and Red and Green Velvet Uniforms entered and stood one on each side of the doors, then four more similar attired Guards entered surrounding the Pope. Stepping up on a Platform, so everyone could see him, they took their place on either side of Him. Pope Pius XI was dressed in a white robe and wore his Skull Cap. He said some Prayers for the audience and then Prayed for a speedy end of the War, He said, " I will now Bless any religious articles you have on your person at this time." He ended the audience with, " In GOD'S Holy Name, I, Pope Pius XI, Bless You and your loved ones at home. I Pray for a speedy Victory and happy return to your families."

After the audience with the Pope, as they were going out, Mike asked Swiss Guard at the door if he could take their picture. The consented, and then as more soldiers came out, they also took advantage of the opportunity.

Leaving the Cathedral, they crossed the Tiber, and walking through the streets, not knowing where to go, they came to the Pantheon. It was the best preserved of all the Roman buildings. They entered it and couldn't see any sign of deterioration because of its' long existence. The ceiling was a perfect sphere, you could see that the best marble was used for its' interior. At present it was used as the burial place for the House of Savoy, which was the ruling Kings of Italy.

They went out and looking where to go next. In the distance they saw the white Monument of Vittorio Emanuele III and they started walking toward it. It was built for the burial place of

Italy's' Unknown Soldier. Fronting it was a large Square, or a Piazza, as is called. Across the Piazza from the monument was the famous Palazzo Venezia, which was Benito Mussolinos' residence. The Balcony that faced the Piazza, was the one from which he made all those speeches that spelled Doom for the country.. In the Piazza in which they now stood, many Italian people took in and believed everything that was told them by the man that stood on that Balcony. They went inside the Palazzo to see it.. It had large spacious rooms, and beautiful furniture and furnishings. When they went into the room that had that Balcony, Mike went out on the Balcony and stood there on it.and looked down on the many people that were moving about. (I Think that Mike almost got the urge to make a speech!!) ...

It was getting late and they had return to the Camp. Walking toward the Via Appia, which was the Highway I, they managed to get a ride south to Pontinio. They vowed that if they were still in that Camp the next week, they would go back to Rome and try to see more of it.

The next week, they got an early start and were able to get a ride right away, and this time they were left off in the center of Rome, where the Roman Forum was. They walked through the ruins., and saw what was left of the Temples that were built to the Roman Gods. The Temple of Caesar Augustus, the Basilica of Contantine, who was the first Christian Emperor of the Roman Empire, The Statue of Julius Caesar, Caesar Augustus, and other Rulers of Rome, and the Temple from which Marc Antony made his famous speech. Continuing down the street , the most colossal of all Roman architecture.... the famous Colosseum and the Arc of Constantine. Entering the Colosseum, they saw where the seats were that the vast audience sat, and the Royalty when they watched the Gladiators fight and also when they fed the Christians to the Lions. One could visualize the action that took place there. Except, now the center of the Colosseum was escalated.... the story was that during the Dark Ages, many people had no place to live, so they dug up the floor into channels and made caves on each side, so the could stay there. Recently, the Germans covered the whole floor with wooden planks and had executed hundreds of Italians who resisted them.

They wanted to see St. Peters' again, in going in that direction, they passed another Church and went in and there they saw the Worlds' Famous Nativity Scene. It was fabulous!! Speaking with a Priest, Mike discovered that he was from Altoona, Pa and had come to Rome to study...

Crossing the Tiber again, they had the Cathedral straight ahead. Walking around the Colonnades surrounding the Piazza, they came to a door that had a Swiss Guard there.Mike got an idea.... he asked the Guard if was possible to ,go to the roof of the Cathedral. He was told that it was possible, but that there was a fee. So they gladly purchased tickets as proceeded to climb the stairs. They walked around the famous Cupula that was designed by Michelangelo for the Cathedral, then went to get a better view of the Statues that adorned the front of the Cathedral. From that vantage point the got a fabulous view of the City, Mike took some pictures of Rome, and going near the Vatican side they saw the beautifully landscaped Gardens of the Vatican Gardens.

After more sight seeing in other sections of the City, they were ready to return to the Camp. highway they were fortunate to get a ride South to Pontinio. .

A few days later, Mike and some other boys where transferred to another Staging Area Camp further North. They by- passed Rome, and as they rode North they saw the Monte Cassino Monestary on top of the mountain that was destroyed the German Air Force made an air raid on it. They crossed the Volturno River and went to Caiazzo, to what was a large Dairy Farm. 'The Farm', as the 411th Replacement Company was called. It was a temporary stop, as Soldiers were coming and going to new fighting units every day. After about a week, Mike and some other boys from the former A.C.C. in Sicily, were assigned for Temporary Duty in Naples. They were needed to do some work in the Real Estate Section. Arriving in Naples, they were settled in the Oriental School Building of the University of Naples. As soon as he was settled, Mike wrote a letter to his Uncle Donato Sinisi, in Ripacandida in Southern Italy, and told him that he would be in Naples for at least two weeks. He told him where he would be staying.

A few days later, returning from his duties, he heard his name called, turning around he saw his Uncle, who after receiving his letter, had come to see him!!! They embraced and were very happy to see each other after SIXTEEN Years!!! Mike spoke to his Commanding Officer and introduced his Uncle to him, explaining that his Uncle had come to Naples to see him and how long it was since they saw each other. The Officer was very kind and gracious, telling Mike that his Uncle could stay with him and also eat with him in the Company Mess Hall. They had a wonderful reunion, and after a few days, Mike received a letter from home and had his Uncle read the news from America, as Mikes' father wrote to him in Italian. Uncle Donato stayed a few days more, and said he had to return home. Mike took him to the railroad station, and got him a seat on the train that was over flowing with passengers. Good-bys and good wishes were said and the train departed. Mike was very happy to have seen his Uncle!!!

The Temporary Duties were extended for two more weeks. After doing his Duties, Mike explored the parts of the City not covered in his work, which was checking on the places where the Allied Forces found rooms to live in, as they were scattered over the City... .

He went to the famous San Carlo Opera to see a couple of Opera's.. On one wall outside of the Opera house there were 'niches' in which there were Statues. There were four of them, and seeing the postures of the; the Italians had made a joke about them. It started with one statue who had its' arm and hand pointing to the ground, as if to say, "Who, did that?" The next statue had its' arm out and his finger pointing to the next statue as if to say, " He did!" The next statue had one hand to its' chest and the other hand pointing to the next statue as if to say, Innocently, " NOT ME!!! HIM!" The last statue had both arms up, as if in Dispare!!!! When, Mike explained that to some Soldiers that were there looking at the statues they became hysterical with laughter. .

He went to the ' Galleria di Napoli' which a large building in which there were Shops that sold all kind things. It was what today would be an enclosed 'Mall". He toured the Bay, and from there the Ile of Capri was visible in the distance. Mount Vesuvius was not erupting , but little

BOOK TWO
FRANCE #1

puffs of smoke were still rising from the crater.

One Sunday, when they had nothing to do, Mike and a friend, decided to go see Pompeii. They got a ride to Sorrento, and from there another to Pompeii. In the City they saw the large Cathedral of Our Lady of Pompeii. They walked to the Ruins, down the cobble stone paved streets. The streets were very narrow, just wide enough for a horse drawn Chariot to pass through. They had all 'One Way' streets, because they were so narrow. What fascinated Mike was that there were 'Stepping Stones' for the pedestrians to cross the street at the 'Cross-walk' without stepping down from the high sidewalk. They were placed so the Horse had room to walk or run in the space between the two stones in the middle and the wheels of the Chariot on either side between the walk and the first 'stone'. They went in many homes that were destroyed, and in some of these were still to be seen, the Mumified bodies of the inhabitants that didn't have time to escape the boiling Lava and Ashes from the Volcano. Some homes, when the Archeologists excavated the City, were found to be almost free from damage. In these homes there were rooms that had paintings on some walls, and some rooms had scenes depicted in Mosaic. It was a wonder how they withstood the Volcanic ashes and the lava and all those years since they were done. Mike was intrigued by the style of the homes. They were built square with no windows on the outer walls, except for the entrance. All the windows were facing the inside Court, in which were planted shrubs and flowers. There was a walk around the Court with entrances to the rooms on the ground floor. There was a Balcony around the Court with doors and windows from the rooms on the upper floors. It was such a novel idea, as it provided complete privacy... They went to the Amphitheater, where Chariot races were held, and other forms of entertainment were held. Pompeii was said to have been a Resort area for the fluent Romans of that time. It was getting late, so it was time to be getting back to Naples.

They had another week of Temporary Duty, and they returned to their Replacement Company at the 'Farm'. Soon after their return, Mike, was transferred to another Detachment and sent further North to a Camp near Piombino, Italy.

" FLASH!!!!" American Troops Invade Southern France!!!!" At the same time the Allied Forces from England Invade France near Le Havre on the English Channel!!!!!"

Mike was assigned to the Advance Detachment of Allied Forces Headquarters, and the group was taken to Livorno (Leghorn), Italy, where they were flown to Corsica. It was the first time that Mike was in a Plane and Flew!!!. Mike took a seat where he could look out and enjoy the Views from the Sky! As they flew over the Sea, he saw the Island of Elba, where Napoleon was held prisoner. They landed in Bastia, and were taken by trucks across the Island to Ajaccio. This was the birthplace of Napoleon.. Mike's LOVE of History was useful, because Now he was seeing and visiting most of the places he had read about.

They stayed there until the Invading Forces had control of the Southern Coast; then they were taken to the Seaport of Calvi in the Northwestern part of Corsica. As they were entering Calvi, the people were celebrating the Fall of Paris to the Allied Forces who had invaded from

England, Mike, later learned the his former outfit, the 30th Infantry Division was in the Invading Forces and had received heavy casualties.

They were taken to Ile Rousse, where they boarded the L.C.I. (Landing Craft Infantry) and headed for the 'Cote Azure' of Southern France. That night there was a bad storm over the Mediterrean Sea, that tossed the boats around and the high waves washed over the deck. Everyone was told to put on Life Preservers! Later on in the day, the Coast could be seen. There was no Port to land in, so the had to make a 'Beach ' Landing. They had landed in St. Tropez , and going up to the grounds of Hotel Latitude 43,, they put up there pup tents for the night

When Mike awoke in the morning, he found that he had put up his pup tent right under a Fig tree. Seeing that they were ripe, he picked some and had them for breakfast. Some soldiers, seeing him eating them, asked what they were. He told them, and after tasting them, they also picked them to eat. .

They were told to go to the Hotel, and there they were interviewed and assigned to different Offices of the Headquarters of the Sixth Army Group. Mike was assigned to the Adjutant General Office and was to work in the Records Department, Receiving and Filing Incoming Reports and Correspondence according to the Information on them.

They moved into the Hotel, which was high on a hill, and gave a beautiful view of the French Riviera Beach on which they spent their time swimming in the Blue Mediterranean Sea. Mike also explored the town of St. Tropez. Mike and some friends took in a movie in the town, even though it was in French; but became hysterical when the Cartoon came on. Imagine the three Pigs speaking FRENCH!!!! Mike took advantage of the permission to use the Hotel Library to get some books to read.

The Sixth Army was advancing, so they had to move the Headquarters North to Lyon. As they were driving North, along the country side they saw many ruins of the Roman Temples that had been built when Gaul (France) was part of the Roman Empire. Lyon is a large City in the Eastern part of France. The Rhone River runs through the center , dividing it.. The many bridges that crossed it were damaged during the bombing raids. Some that weren't too badly damaged,, were fixed up with wooden bridges temporarily to allow access to both parts of the City. They set up a temporary Headquarters in an Industrial Complex Buildings, but were Billeted in a hotel close by. Lyon was an interesting City, and Mike took every opportunity to see much of it. He was able to purchase a Olympus 35mm camera, and some film so he would be able to take pictures of other places he would see..

Too soon they had to move the Headquarters again. This time they traveled by train. The railway cars, actually the were box-cars that seemed to have come from a museum, and it took two days for a trip that normally would take five or six hours. When they arrived in Dijon, they had to stay there for a few days until they were able to get trucks to move them to Vittel. Here they were supposed to have more or less a permanent Headquarters. They arrived late and were taken to the Hotel Splendid, and were told to find themselves Bedrooms in the upper floors.

PASS to Recreation Center
SPECIAL TROOPS
 Sixth U.S. Army Group

Issued to: *Michael Lettieri*
 NAME: 2563351 ASN

Organization: *AG Section, 6 Army Group*

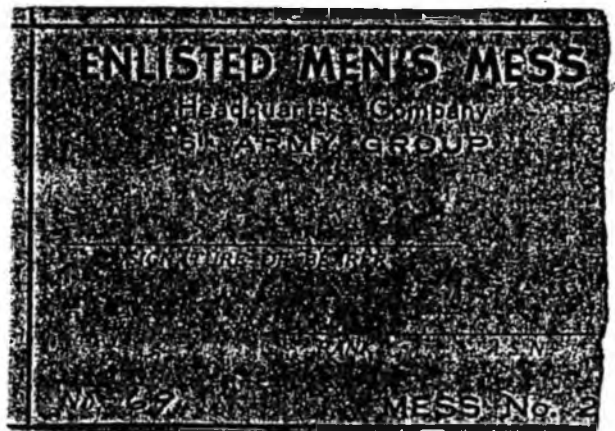
Issued by: *Carl E. Bosicker*
CARL E. BOSICKER
 Major QMC
 Adjutant

PASS No. H * 230
MICHAEL LETTIERI
 Issued to: ASN 32563351 (Name)
 1/5 (Rank) (Unit or Section)
 Authority to enter: **HEADQUARTERS**
ARMY GROUP.
 Issued by: *Howard M. Dailey*
CAPT. HOWARD M. DAILEY
 Provost Marshall

Membership Card — 6th ARMY GROUP

Foto Club
 Heidelberg Germany

Name: *Michael Lettieri*
1st Lt
 Officer *173*



Mike and a couple of friends, found a nice room on the sixth floor with a view of the main street and the Casino and the Park across the street, at least they had regular beds with inner-spring mattresses to sleep on..

Vittel, was a small town, but it was a Health Resort because of its' Famous Vittel Water that was bottled and sold throughout Europe and even in the United States. It had a Casino and a Racetrack. These were surrounded by beautifully landscaped Parks, that one could meander around in and enjoy the clean air and the sweet smell of the different flowers and shrubs. There were three large Hotels, to accommodate the people that would come to Vittel..

When they arrived in Vittel, one section of it was fenced in with barbed wire, as the Germans had kept civilians, most likely Jewish and possibly some prisoners of war and those French that tried to resist them. Those that the Germans couldn't move when they were pushed away by the Allied Troops, were released and the fences were torn down..

The Headquarters was set- up in the largest and best Hotel L'Ermitage. The Adjutant General Office was on the ground floor. The upper floors were used by the Officers, and the visiting High Ranking Officers and other Dignitaries. Lieutenant General Jacob Devers was the Commanding Officer of the Sixth Army Group. General Omar Bradley was the Commanding Officer of the Twelfth Army Group, General Montgomery Commanded the British Forces. General Dwight D. Eisenhower was the Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces. They all made frequent visits to the Sixth Army Group Headquarters were the conferred together about the War. General George Marshall and others from Washington, D. C., often visited. Mike saw them all , coming and going, as they had to pass near his desk.

The Casino, which had been taken over by the Special Forces for the Enlisted Men for their recreation, also had a Theater in which they showed American movies for them. They had a Touring Stage Play, 'The Barrettes of Wimple Street' with the renown Actress, Katherine Cornell and the British Actor, Brian Aherne. It was a great show!!!!

It was cold that winter when the German Forces, mounted a surprise Counterattack and successfully broke through the Twelfth Army Group line and drove deep into France, just East of the Sixth Army line. This penetration of the German Forces was called 'The Battle of the Bulge' as the Allied Forces tried very hard to contain it and push them back. These were trying times for the Allied Troops. Even in Vittel there was concern of the possibility of a breakthrough in their sector!! They were put on Alert to prepare to evacuate the area in short notice!!! There were quite a few Air-raids in their sector. 'Sally', as an announcer for the German Radio, was called, kept saying that the German Air Force was going to 'Bomb the Hell ' out of the Sixth Army Group in Vittel!!! Their Planes were flying over, BUT , they missed Vittel and hit Mirecourt not too far away. For a while, things were not going too good in the 'Bulge'. There was a shortage of Infantry fighting men, and all Enlisted men were required to take a physical examination, many passed the physical, but only those who volunteered were taken. Mike didn't pass the physical. Soon the tide was turned because the Germans could get the supplies they needed and the Allied

Forces halted their advance and began to push them back. Eventually they were pushed all the way into Germany. Now they were fighting on German soil with the Allies pushing Eastward and the Russians pushing Westward, the Germans had to fight on two fronts and General Clark had practically pushed the Germans out of Italy.

Now that there wasn't any fighting in France and the Allies were advancing in Germany, they were allowing the Enlisted Men to get so leave time. Mike and a couple of friends requested passes to Paris, because they didn't know if they would get to see it. Granted the passes, they got a ride to Dijon where they got the train to Paris..

Arriving at the Gare de Lyon,(the train station), they took the Metro(subway) to the American Express Office to check in and get their 'city passes' and were told where they were to stay during their leave. They were given a map of the city, so they could find their way around, and find the points they wanted to see. They started with the Place de la Concord, because there they thought would be a good place to start. Getting there they walked to the Place de L'Opera where they saw the famous Opera House. Walking down the street, there were many stores and Sidewalk Cafe's.. Mike saw something nice in a Jewelry Store, and he thought he would get something nice for his newborn Nephew, Dominick, from Paris. They went in the store, and looking around, saw a Silver set of a table spoon, a tea spoon, a fork and a cup. He thought it would make a fine gift. He asked the clerk, " How much is that?"

"5000 Francs, " he replied, nonchalantly. ,

Mike whistled and said, " I don't want to buy the store...just that set".

"5000 Francs", came the answer, just as if he had said '5 cents'

How much for that?", asked Mike, pointing to a fork and spoon set.

"2500 Francs," was the answer.

"How about that?" requested Mike, pointing to a cup.

"2000 Francs", he replied.

After hearing those outrageous prices, they walked out of the store.

" The only thing he didn't ask for, was your blood", said his friend . "Well, I guess my Nephew won't be eating with a Silver spoon", said Mike. They walked a short distance and saw a Perfume Shop. They went in and they bought some bottles of Lucien Lelong perfume to send home for their loved ones as a gift from Paris. ...

Across the street was the Rainbow Club in which the American Red Cross was to assist the G.I.'s, and had Coffee and Donuts for them. As they were sitting and having a welcome rest from all their walking, they listening to the Tex Beneke Orchestra. It was good listening to some American Music!! This was the former Glenn Miller Orchestra that Tex Beneke took over when Glenn Miller was declared 'missing' during a flight from Europe to England.. The plane was never found, and no one what had happened. It was a sad thing to have happened to the Music world, as Glenn Miller had one of the finest Orchestras'.

Walking towards the Place de la Concord, they passed the La Madeleine Church. It was

built in the form of a Greek Temple. It faced the large Square of the Concord, In the center of which stood the Egyptian Obelisk that was given to the French King Louis Philipe. There also was where the French mounted the Guillotine on which they beheaded their King Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette during the French Revolution.

Looking Eastward was the Palace de Louvre, the great Museum that contained Frances' Art Treasures. It was built with the three sides surrounding the Famous Tulleries Gardens a beautifully landscaped Park.. They went in the Louvre, and as they entered, there one the first landing of the grand staircase, was the Greek Statue of the Winged Victory. On the next landing was the other Famous Greek Statue of Venus de Milo. In the Art Section they saw the famous paintings of those great artists of France, Germany and Italy. The World Famous the Mona Lisa was displayed all alone in a specially built stand. After enjoying seeing all the Art works, they went out of the Louvre, and walked through the Gardens to the center of La Concord, and looking straight ahead Westward they saw the Arc de Triomphe which is where the Champs-Elysee ends. Under the Arc is buried Frances' Unknown Soldier. But that must wait for another day, as it was a long walk up the Champs Elysee, and there was a lot to see, so they went back to their Hotel and get something to eat as it was late..

The next day, they decided to take a Tour Bus that was leaving from their Hotel, so they would be able to see more of the City, as their time was limited. As they were riding down the Rue Victor Hugo, the Guide said, ". There is the Statue of Victor Hugo". Looking, they saw the Granite pedestal on which the statue HAD stood!!! "Of course," continued the Guide, " It isn't there now! The Germans," he explained, " were very much in need of metal, so they took all the . Bronze Statues we had in Paris." "Wonder they didn't take the Eiffel Tower," someone pondered aloud. "They were contemplating such a thing, but for some unknown reason they didn't," said the Guide, as they stopped at the Trocadero, to admire the Tower." It is 984 feet high and was built for the Paris Exposition of 1889, and it took two years to build. Now it is being used as a Radio Transmitting Tower," "Can anyone go up there?" asked one. "Only up to the second landing," replied the Guide, " Before the Parachute was perfected," he continued, " A man claimed that he had perfected it and wanted to prove it. He climbed to the top. There were many people and reporters from all nations to record the Event. The man jumped off.....The dammed thing didn't OPEN!!!!"

They left the Trocadero, drove across the Siene River to Les Invalides, which is the burial place of Napoleon. The Guide explained, " The Dome is gilded in Gold, and it cost the French Government Three Million Dollars." They went from there to the Notre Dame Cathedral, and as there was a Service going on, they couldn't go in.. They went to the Cathedral of the Sacre Coure, to get there they had to drive through the 'Pigale' Section of Paris.. Going back to the starting point they saw other interesting sites. Their time was up, and had to return to Vittel the next day, They enjoyed touring Paris and were happy they had the opportunity to come.,

A few weeks after they got back, the Sixth Army had driven deep into Germany, and they

BOOK TWO
GERMANY

had to move the Headquarters. On a captured bus, they moved up to Nancy, and then to Metz, going Eastward toward the French--German Border. Crossing the French Maginot Line and through the German Siegfried Line, which they had built all along the border that faced France. It consisted of Antitank obstacles and Armed Bunkers designed to keep any invading Troops, Tanks and other Military Vehicles from entering their country. The Sixth Army didn't have such a hard time to penetrate it. They drove through Saarbrücken and on to Kaiserlautern where they set the Headquarters, temporarily in the buildings of the former German Officer Training School. Some buildings were badly damaged by our Air Force. On April 16th, using the same bus, they moved again through Ludwigshafen and Mannheim. They rode on the famous Autoban, the German Superhighway to Heidelberg. Here they were to stay for some time. They made their Headquarters in the Famous Heidelberg University. On top of the hill on the side of the city where the University was there was an old Castle. The Neckar River ran through the city dividing it. They had their sleeping quarters in the University Dormitory buildings.

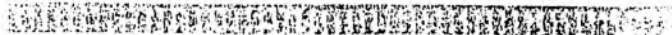
Now, Mike was going to see personally all the things that his High School teacher, Mr. Griminger, used to talk about in his class. It would now be more interesting for him as he had heard so much of it in Class.

They set up the Offices in the Main University building. There Mess Hall was in their Dormitory building. The Lecture Hall was taken for them to spend their leisure time and where Movies could be shown. The Boat-house was also taken for them. It was on the Beach by the Neckar, the Beach was good for swimming. In the Boat House were Row Boats and Kayacks. Crossing the River, to the other side, in the hills, there was a large Amphitheater that Hitler had built for Sports Events and for outdoor Theater Productions.

Heidelberg was Very clean. The streets were swept and cleaned every day! Any debris from the bombing raids were cleaned-up, and swept to the side of the street, leaving the streets clear for motor traffic and pedestrians. It was a pleasure to walk down the streets. On the Main street, there was, to Mike's surprise, The Capitol Theater (the movie house), The Singer Sewing Machine Store, a 5 & 10 cent Wool worth Store, next to it was a Horn and Hardat Automat!!! Just like Home!!!! The Schultz Photo Shop was taken over by Mike and couple of other Soldiers who knew how to develop film. There they had all the necessary supplies and the equipment to use to enlarge the pictures they had on 35mm and what they would be taking here.... There was a Strict Ban against the Military Personnel Fraternizing with the Civilians. The ONLY communication allowed was in Stores and Shops and to receive or give directions.

There was a Beer hall, that was taken over for the soldiers enjoyment. They would drink the famous German Lager Beer, and socialize. There was a piano and some boys who knew how would entertain them by playing and they all sang the popular songs of their time. Sometimes they would just drink beer and listen to the radio that broadcast American music. One evening, Mike got a Surprise, an old friend from his home town, Altoona, walked in the club! He lived just across the street from his house. He hadn't seen him since his graduation, when he left Altoona to

GETTING DECORATED

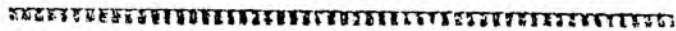


ADJUANT GENERAL
OFFICE PERSONNEL
IN FRONT OF HEIDELBERG
UNIVERSITY

THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE



HEADQUARTERS - 6th Army, 1st Airborne



STREETS IN HEIDELBERG



PHOTO

go to New Jersey to live. They had a good time talking about their home town, and about their old friends. Mike told him that he had met another friend from their hometown in Italy, and his name was John Valentino, and that he was in transit, but didn't know where. Mike Fusco told Mike, that he was in transit also, and the way things were going, he didn't know where he was going either. After a few days, he didn't visit the club, so Mike assumed that he had moved on.

Mike enjoyed his stay in Heidelberg, going Kyacking in the Neckar River, or swimming, but most of the time he went up to the Castle, where he had fabulous views of the City..

The War was going well in favor of the Allied Forces, the Russians had Berlin surrounded; and was about to fall. Hitler, seeing that his Armies were being driven back and Berlin about to fall, went into hiding in his under-ground Bunker!! On May 2nd, Hitler was reported 'DEAD'!!!! On May 3rd, the Germans Surrendered to General Mark Clark in Italy!! On May 4th, the Germans Surrendered to General Montgomery in the Northeastern section of Germany!!! On May 5th, Mike saw reports coming in the Headquarters, that the German General wanted to 'Negotiate' their Surrender to the Sixth Army!!!!!! On May 7th, Mike knew that the War in Europe was OVER!!!! as the Germans surrendered to the Russians, BUT the official date would be MAY 9th, 1945 !!!!!!!

Now, everyone wondered how soon would they be going Home, But, there was still a War going on in the Pacific with Japan! There were Orders that some of the New arrivals in Europe, would be transferred to the Pacific Theater of Operations, some would be kept in Europe as Occupation Troops. No mention of what was going to be done with those men who had been in the European Theater through all the Campaigns.

One day, Mike received a letter from his Father, in which he said, now that the War was over in Europe, if it was possible for him to get leave to go to Italy and dispose of some Property that his Father had just 'willed' to him, as he couldn't do anything with it. Mike wrote a letter to his Commanding Officer requesting 'a leave of absence' to go to Italy and comply with his Fathers' wish. He explained the reason for the request to his Commanding Officer, who approved the request and forwarded it to General Devers, who also 'approved' it. and was given authorization to travel by Aircraft to the Adriatic Base Command, which was in Southern Italy.

... Mike flew from Heidelberg, going South along the French-Swiss Border towards the French Riviera. As usual, he liked to look out of the window to enjoy the scenery from the sky. He saw the Snow covered Mountains of Switzerland . As they were flying near the town of Armecy, the Pilot saw a man in a rowboat, fishing in the Lake. He said to the Co-pilot, " Let's have some fun!" "Like, What?" inquired the Co-pilot. "Watch!!", he said, putting the giant C-47 Cargo Plane in a steep dive aiming directly at the man in the boat! The man, hearing the loud noise of the plane, looked up and seeing it was aiming for him, JUMPED into the Lake!!! When the Plane was about fifty feet above the Lake, the Pilot, pulled up out of the dive, and gained altitude again. The Pilots were laughing all the way to Nice.

There, Mike had to take another Plane that would go along the French Riviera to Monte

Carlo, and go along the Italian Coast over Genoa and down to Rome. Mike was enthralled in seeing all those Cities by air. At Rome, he changed Planes again for Bari, where the Adriatic Base Command was stationed.

Mike checked in at the Headquarters, and as he was in Bari, he decided to go and see his Brother-in-laws' Father and the Family. They lived in Corato, which was just a few miles outside of Bari. He got a ride with a Soldier who was going in that direction. In Corato, he asked for the Testino Family, and was given directions to their house. Mike saw Domenico Testino, his Brother-in-law Matteos' Father, who he knew, because he lived in Long Beach, Long Island, with his two sons, Matteo and Charlie, and had returned to Italy just before the War started in Europe.. He was happy to see Mike and introduced him to the Family and Friends.. After spending two days in Corato with them, he wanted to get to his birthplace to see his relatives. He got a ride with a soldier that was going to Foggia, from there he went to Ceringnola, Canosa and to Spinnazzola where he had to spend the night at the M.P.Headquarters. The next morning, looking at a map, he saw which road to take to get to Ripacandida, his destination. A Soldier,was headed for Salerno, had to use the same route, offered to take him along. After breakfast, they started out. At Venosa, they asked for directions, and were told it was just a few miles away. Mike, offered to drive, as the Soldier had a long drive ahead to reach his destination, and he could use the rest...

Driving around a mountain road, they came to a space of fifty feet where the road had been washed out! Mike put the Jeep in four wheel drive and drove on steadily through the wheel high mud, as they were sliding down-hill; as they advanced on to dry ground, and got onto the road again...Rounding the miountain, he got his first sight of birthplace,(since he left it in 1927).It was just on the next mountain top..

Driving up the road to the town, Mike stopped at the widest spot, as the road wasn't wide enough for the vehicle. The town folk, seeing an American Jeep with two Soldiers, all came out to see them, wondering what they wanted. Mike asked for his UncleDonato Sinisi, and for his other Uncle Antonio Lettieri. The people just stared at them, finally someone realized the Mike was speaking in Italian and in their dialect, and asked again who they wanted. His Cousin, Michele Lettieri, came and introduced himself, the two cousins embraced each other and were happy to see each other after so many years. The two cousins and the soldier went to Uncle Donatos' house, where they were made very welcome and he was happy to see Mike again. They were given food and drinks, and the soldier had to leave as he had to go to Salerno. The Uncle and the two cousins went down to the main road with him. He was happy to been welcomed and thanked them and for the extra food and wine, Mikes' Uncle pressed him to take..

As they were near the Church of San Donato, Mike wanted to see it. It was beautiful, just as Mike remmebered and the Church grounds were a masterpiece in landscaping. The Nuns didn't remmeber Mike, but when he mentioned his Mother and Sister Lucy who had stayed with them for schooling before leaving for America, they remmebered them..

The Sinisi household consisted of Uncle Donato, who was Mikes' Mothers' Brother, his wife, Rachela, Teodore, the oldest son, home from the Army, Giuseppe, the next son, who was a POW in England, another son, Ersilio, and two small girls..

Michele Lettieri was the only son of Mikes' Fathers' brother, who was killed during W.W.I. He took Mike to his house where his wife and two young girls, made him very welcome. He then took Mike to their other Uncle Antonio Lettieri, who was the youngest of Four Lettieri brothers(two were in America, one died) He told Mike that his Father had died just a few months before. Mike had wished he could have seen his Grandfather. Mike showed them his Fathers' letter, and the next day, the two cousins went to Rionere, which was the next town and was also the County Office, got a lawyer and made the transaction giving him the property as Mikes' Father wished..

Mike told his Uncle Donato that he had met Giuseppe Colacicchio in Palermo, and he remmebered Mike telling him that, when he saw Mike in Naples. He told him that that family lived in the next town of Melfi. They went there to see them. As they were walking up the road, Mike saw, as they approached the town, that it had a wall around it just like the cities in the Medieval times. They walked the large gate entrance, and not far from the wall was their house. They were happy to see Mike and told him their son had written to them saying that he met Mike in Palermo.

Mike was extremly happy to be in his birth place again!!! There was the house he lived in.....just across the way from his Uncles' house. Not far up the road there was a water fountain from which they got their water. It was cold and delicious, coming up from the mountain. The Cousins and their childhood friends took Mike to 'la cantina'. It was where Uncle Donato kept the wines that they made. It was full with the different wines, some in barrels and some in bottles to age and use as they needed. They sat there and drank wine as they reminisced about their life when they were children together. . and also of their lives as they grew up.

On the week-end there was a Wedding, and the Bride and Groom, said that they would be Honored if he would come to their wedding. Practially the whole town was invited. After the Church Cermony, it was the custom for the Bride and Groom to march through the Town, with all the guests following, then to the house for the Reception.

The days passed too quickly, as they do when you are having a Good time!!!! Now he was leaving his birth-place the seicond time!! His Uncles and Cousins went with him to Rionere to get the train to Naples from which he could get a Plane back to Germany.

At the Naples Airport, he got a flight to Rome, and from there one to Munich, where his Headquarters was to have moved. When checking in, he was told that his section had been moved to Frankfurt. Checking in at Frankfurt, he was told that he had been assigned to S.H.A.E.F. the Supreme Headquarters of Allied European Forces...in Paris, France, and was given flight orders to get there, on arrival he checked in, and was with his friends in the Records Section again. This Headquarters was set up in the Majestic Hotel, just a few blocks away from the Champs-Elysee and the Arc de Triomphe. He was happy to be in Paris and with his Friends..

BOOK TWO
FRANCE #2

This time, he vowed that he would see more of the City. With two of his old Buddies, went to the Trocadere, then across the Square to the Eiffel Tower, and took the elevator to the second level. That was as far up in the Tower any one was allowed to go. Mike, took pictures of the fabulous views of Paris, that could be seen from that spot. Under the Tower, there were some American Planes on exhibit, and from their vantage point, looking straight down, the people milling around the Planes, looked like Ants crawling around..

Having their fill of that area,, they went to the Palace de Invalides, Going inside, the Gold Dome building, there was Napoleons' Tomb. From there they went to the Notre Dame Cathedral.. This time they went inside to see its' magnificent beauty. They saw the Tower, that Victor Hugo wrote about in his Great Novel.....The Hunch-back of Notre Dame... which they read in High School. You must understand, that all this sightseeing was done during their free time from their Office. Their Sundays were usually free,, so they took advantage and enjoyed wandering around the City.

On the Champs Elysee, there was a Famous Restaurant, La Maximes, so they decided to try some 'French Cuisine'. One evening, they decided to go to the Famous 'Pigale' section of Paris. It was like what is known in New York, as the 'Village' or lately as the 'SOHO' District. As they were walking around, through the streets, they passed a Night Club, and being tired, decided to go in, have a drink and listen to the French music. Some girls came out, and they did the 'CAN-CAN'. It was all very interesting!!!!

They explored both the East bank, and the West bank of the Seine River. There were artists painting different views of what they saw, and others were making sketches. They took a river-boat ride down the Seine, they came to a point in the river where it was divided by a small Island,, and at a point, there was the Original 'Statue of Liberty'. It was a smaller version of the one the French gave to the United States..

They just had to go and see the Cathedral of the Sacre Cuore. They had to go through the Pigale section to reach it. It stood on a hill and the view from there of Paris was spell-binding. They were allowed to go up in the Bell Towers of the Cathedral..

Another time, wondering where to go next, and looking at the map, they saw that Versailles, wasn't too far. They thought that it would be great to see that Palace. When they got there, they walked through the Fabulous Gardens, that had many Fountains. The Gardens were in front of the Palace, and it was built with the three sides around the Gardens., They went in the Palace and went through the lavish rooms and in the large 'mirrored' room in which the 'Peace Treaty' that ended World War I, was signed!!!! They were glad to see where History was made..

Just a short distance beyond the Arc de Triompe, there was an Amusement Park. It was called the 'Luna Park'. The three Buddies, doing everything together, enjoyed the attractions. Most were just like the Parks at home.

Now, that the War was over in Europe, a Plan was being worked on to decide who would be going home and be discharged, who would be sent to the Pacific Theater, and who would be

kept in Europe as an Occupation Force. Finally, it was announced that there would be a 'Point System'. There would be : One point for each month of Service, One point for each month Over-seas, Five points for each Combat service in Each theater of Operation that the individual served in, Twelve points for each Child under Eighteen at home, The War Department announced 'Eighty-Five Points, with a Possible change.!!!

Mike recorded his Months in Service---Thirty-one...Months Over -Seas ---Twenty -Three ...Combat Area Stars..(1) Sicily :(2) Rome-Arno :(3) Southern France: (4) Rhineland :(5) Central Europe. Five Stars..Five Points Each...25 Points. No Children at home...Made the Grand Total of ..SEVENTY-NINE Points!!!! Much less than the required amount.His HOPE was that there would be a change! One day, reading a correspondence from the Mediterrean Theater, he discovered that he Had been in that Area within the times stated. IF, he could substantiate the ' time period' he, would qualify for another Star!!! That would give him Eighty-four Points ! Still not enough, But closer to the required Total... He showed his Commanding Officer the correspondence, and the information verifying the time period that he had 'Special Duty' in the Naples Area. The Colonel confirmed the time period, and authorized Mike to receive the SIXTH Star for the Naples-Foggia Campaign..Now the Hope was for the Change to a lower Total... Too bad, he also discovered that he had just missed the time period of the African Campaign by ONE Week!!!! Some Soldiers, with the required Points, were being alerted that they would be shipped to different Organizations that were preparing to be sent home... .Meanwhile, Mike was still enjoying his excursions through Paris, while waiting for his number to come up!!

On August 27th, a Special Order was issued to Mike, that he was to be Transfered to Berevern, Belgium, for Temporary Duty, for a period of Thirty Days. As much as he would have liked to see Belgium, he didn't want to leave, as he would miss his opportunity of going home if his number came up. After explaining that to his Commanding Officer, he was allowed to remain in Paris. A month later, he was notified that he was picked to go to London, England, if he wanted to go. He also refused, using the same reason.

One day, Mike was called in to the Colonels' Office. All the Officers of the Adjuant Office were seated. They offered him a Field Promotion to WARRANT OFFICER!!!! But, he had to sign up for One more year of Duty in the same Headquarters. The Promotion would give him the Privileges of an Officer. Mike, liked the idea, but said, " I'll sign up for another year, if you can transfer me to the Naples Area Command." He was thinking that if he was in Italy, he wouldn't mind being away from home, as he might be able to see his relatives occasionally. They said that it wasn't possible, as they wanted him to work with them in the S.H.A.E.F. Headquarters. After explaining his reason, he declined the Promotion....

Finally, on October 9th, 1945, Orders came with Mikes' name on them. He was to be assigned to the 66th Infantry Division at Arles Staging Area, for shipment to the United States, All those on the Orders were exhilarated to find that at LAST they would be going HOME!!!

They traveled to the Arles Staging Area by train, and after arriving they had to wait for orders to go to Marseille, the Port from which they would leave Europe. At the end of October, finally, they were taken to Marseille, and went aboard the Ship that was waiting for them.

They sailed out of the Port, going Westward along the French coast, Mike being on deck, watched it disappear, and the Spanish Coastline came into view, as they neared the Strait of Gibraltar. As they through the Strait, he saw the North African Coast on the Leeward (left), and the Famous Rock of Gibraltar on the Starboard side (right). Then onward into the Atlantic Ocean. ,

At that time of the year, there was much turbulence in the open sea. The huge waves crashed over the bow of the ship, washing the deck, as it dipped and rolled with the waves. The Soldiers didn't mind, because they were on their way Home! The hopes and dreams of all the Troops, were at last being realized.....

The Sailors passed out the "Scuttlebutt", the Ships' News Bulletin, to the Soldiers. On reading it, Mike found out that the Ship they were sailing to the United States on was the captured Italian Ocean Liner, the "Conte Bianca Mano"!!!! WHAT a coincidence!!!! IT was the same Ship that took him, his Sister and their Mother from Naples, Italy to the United States in 1927.... Imagine, going in the Same direction, twice, on the same Ship!!!!

On November 6th, the Ship slackend speed as it neared the Ambrose Lightship, which was barely visible in the mist and fog that covered the entire area. Slowly, the out-lined coast of Long Island, became more visible, as the fog lifted. Most of the Soldiers were on deck, wanting to get a view of their home-land... There was Long Beach...Next Coney Island came into view...As they entered the Bay of New York.....there was Staten Island.. There was New Jersey on the left...The Statue of Liberty....Governors Island...Battery Place...and the Tug-boats came to guide the Ship on its' last mile up the Hudson River to its' docking at Pier 88..... Almost immediately the Troops began to disembark. The Company L. of the 66th Division to which Mike was assigned, was almost the last to leave the Ship and set foot on the most desired Land. The Red Cross was on the Pier Welcoming the Troops,and distributed Milk and Donuts to them as they landed.

Soon, they were on a Ferry going across the Hudsn River to New Jersey. At Jersey City, they got on a train that would take them to Camp Kilmer. It felt good to be on American soil again... In Camp Kilmer, the men were given a short lecture on was expected of them, and a fair idea of how long it would be before they would be discharged from the United States Army.

On November 10th, 1945, Mike, with his Discharge Papers and Orders to travel, said " G.O.O.D.--B Y E to the Service and went H.. O.. M.. E !!!!!!!

He went to 432 - 70th Street, Guttenberg, New Jersey, where his Sister Lucy and her Husband Matty and Baby Dominick lived. Arriving there, he called his Parents in Altoona to tell them he was HOME....

THANKING GOD FOR LETTING HIM HAVE A SAFE TOUR OF DUTY FOR HIS
ADOPTED COUNTRY--AND BRINGING HIM TO HIS FAMILY SAFELY..... PRAISE TO
OUR LORD GOD.....

A Note From the Author.....

All that is written in this Biographic Account of my Life is the Truth.
All the Places and Experiences and Conversations were as they are written.

There were many Experiences that I had, that I didn't think would be interesting enough
to be included in this writing.

To All the people that I came incontact with, who worked with me and helped me
make this Account possible.

I THANK YOU !!!!

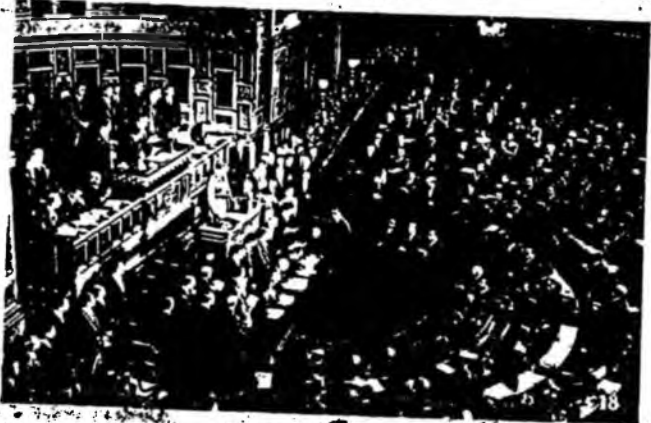
Michael Lettieri



W.W.II (over)
SIGNING of PEACE TREATY



DWIGHT EISENHOWER



MICHAEL LETTIERI
HEIDELBERG, GERMANY
1945



MICHAEL LETTIERI
VITTEL, FRANCE
1945

