

911 S. Bridge St.  
Belding, MI 488 09

April 14, 1986

Dear Fred,

In answer to your request by card for an insight on MAIL CLERK the following may help.

Perhaps you have seen the TV ad depicting "mail call" which runs regularly on TNN\*-Nashville. It shows the mail clerk distributing mail from a truck. The mail clerk calls out names for letters and packages with individual reaction to the daily event. Am sure you remember a like scene and the disappointed guys who received no mail.

Basically, my job was to sort and passout the incoming mail. Also to collect the outgoing mail. Mail came on a truck or jeep to the Company along with rations ~~from~~ the kitchen. Outgoing mail went out on the same vehicle to its point of origin. I do not know where that was. I picked up the mail, put it into a bag, tied it and sent it with the driver of the vehicle.

That same routine was followed in all locations with variations according to circumstances of the location.

At Camp Forrest the steps of the day room was the place for the mail distribution each evening. (much the scene as the TV ad) Little sorting was needed there. If a guy happened to be away from camp he would come there first to pick up his mail.

On the various sites of maneuvers mail and rations came by truck or jeep to the company location with the same basic procedure -- mail and rations.

In heavy combat Much movement was made in the dark. Again the meals came with the mail. Meals came in insulated buckets and mail in bundles. I with my assistant would ride the jeep to the closest possible location of troops. Mail had already been sorted at the point of origin into platoons and squads. The one platoon in reserve could move the mail and meals by runners from the squads. Squad runners came to the jeep to pick up mail and meals and then take them to the individual GI.

As for special action during mail movements, once in awhile a jeep got blown up with loss of mail and driver. Mail was not at any regular time. On occasion the mail bag had to be left and picked up the next day. I'm proud to say the mail got through almost every day.

As an aside. Probably the greatest thrill of my job was when I received a letter from our Company Commander, Jess Barton, then

Under care in a hospital. He had been wounded in action and presumed dead. The word spread like wildfire through CO. F. He has attended a few reunions of the company and plans on the one this summer at Lexington, KY.

Imarked "Deceased" or "Wounded" on incoming mail if either was appropriate. For those already hospitalized very little got to me for it had already been removed from wherever it came when mail was soted for the Company.

My other duties were the same as the rest of the company. I took all the hikes, carried the BAR rifle, slept in the foxholes, and fought the same war the rest did.

As for souvenirs there were few restrictions. Letters and souvenire went postage free. For the things that I sent home I simply gave them to the jeep driver, with the mail bag. He took care of it . Many things had to be packaged wherever he took the mail. This was the same procedure for the other soldiers of the company.

I have a couple pictures of interest. One is outside the day room at Camp Forrest at Mail Gail. It is small with no persons that can be identified----just the scene. Another was in Austria after VE Day where we set up a day room in a two story building that shows Austrian architesture. Signs indicated that "F Co Cpl. Mason upstairs, and F Co Supply Sgt. Snyder upstairs." Snyder now lives in Albany , NY.

Hope all of this will help you just a little in this monumental task of the 80th Division history. My wife and I are anxious to receive a copy. Also we will donate one to our local library for their collection of war stories.

If I can further help please ask.

Sincerely,