

patrols along the river to prevent Fritz from floating thru our lines. 9:55 A.M.. August 21st 1971; road to Theicourt. Immense American Cemetery here, well kept. Now going down very steep hill into valley. Beautiful farming area; very heavy timber on both sides of road, a typical French tree bordered highway and then those red tile roofs and white buildings. There, that very large church standing by itself with a huge gun bunker near by! Open country. 10:10 A.M. Down hill; sharp curves; traffic light.

THEICOURT.....

Let's pause and review the drama of 1918! On the morning of September 12th 1918 the First All American Offensive was started! We took off near the small town of Firey at 6 A.M. Before the curtain went up we had third row front and center seats from which to view the largest and most fantastic barrage we were ever to see! It opened up with a barrage from Howitzers, which coughed out garbage sized shells! There was the 15th Field Artillery Battery with their 6" guns and the 12th Field Artillery's 75's and French 26" long rifles mounted on railroad flat cars at the edge of town!

THE BARRAGE!.....

At 6 P.M. a heavy barrage of machine fire was laid down, firing tracer bullets to prevent us from walking into our own barrage. Flairs fired so thick that No Mans' Land looked like Broadway at night! At our first stop we encountered a very deep reinforced concrete protection, furnished with all the pleasures of home for the officers, even to a piano. The pineapple treatment advised the host that the guests had arrived! Here it was that Captain Black of the 95th Company, a replacement officer, a real officer, on his first time over, was killed by a shell along with his runner, Morgan from Rockford! We reached our objective the railroad station at Theicourt on time!

AIR BATTLE!.....

We had been at Theicourt only a short time when an air battle of 18 planes, German, French and American Pilots staged a drama in the air above us; reported as the largest ever staged on American Front! Dog fights! Each firing tracer bullets, anti-air craft guns firing from the ground! Shrapnel giving off white puffs of smoke as they exploded, the high explosives black puffs! Each plane diving in circles, looping the loop with every bit of skill known to those fearless young fliers on both sides! Drama! Till you have seen men or boys engaging in mortal combat with no quarters given and none asked, and then one after another victory for someone! As those very small planes with one machine gun firing thru a circle in the propeller, burst into flames--the pilot forced to bale out; parachutes?---are you kidding? The plane itself goes down very fast, the pilot tumbling head over heels! Coming down, which from the ground seems very slow--till a group of trees on a high ridge furnished a comforting back drop--then oblivion!

WHERE IS HE?.....

On this day one of our prisoners was wearing a black ribbon with two white stripes, advertising the fact that he had received the Second Class Iron Cross. Knowing that he was to receive a sample of American Hospitality in a prison camp where he might not be allowed to wear it, I, (pardon the I) removed his ribbon, his Iron Cross dated 1914, and his Citation. His name Lastrum, Karl Voigt, 4th Komp, Verfungung der 77 Res.Div. IIA 21369. I relieved him of this, his prized possession on Sept.12th 1918. The citation he had received was dated Sept.3rd 1918. I'm sure he never had a chance to "strut his stuff" with his Fraulein on his arm. He raised no serious objection to this act, because I am sure he had learned that "all is fair in love and war." If anyone knows of his address, I would like to return it to him, begging his humble pardon for my rudeness.