

REMEMBERING AND COMPARING:

As I sat in that car August 21st 1971, and thought of the road we had covered today, I pinched myself to keep from thinking that I just had an impossible dream about November 28th 1918!

Had you traveled that road which Don and Papa had traveled so far this day, I'm sure you would agree that every member of the First Battalion, Sixth Regiment, USMC were dam tough! Come mud, wind, rain or what have you--when you heard "Fall in all you sick, lame and lazy" you moved out!

This story of my life of 53 years ago, is just a repetition of the lives of all those men of the 1st Battalion 6th Regiment USMC. Should the word "I" creep in, it is not intentional.

FRED.....

Let me give you a few personal facts about Fred Mordt. His mother passed away early in life. His father (German), when he heard that Fred had enlisted, said, "I hope you never come back!" Fred had been a star Basketball player at Wilson YMCA, Chicago. He could dribble a ball at terrific speed and shoot a basket from any angle.

In life he was fearless! He played the Game of War like he played basket ball. I had known his aunt very well, but had never met Fred until a chance meeting in October 1918. Little did I think I would be at his bedside the night he passed away after a very serious cancer operation due to Belleau Wood Gas Burns. June 1918. He died like many Marines--"I've had it, Cy!" He was gone! That night also ended a romance with a wonderful girl of his, whose letters meant so much to him. When the cry, "Mail O", came, wherever we were--Fred Morf was sure to receive a letter from that girl of his dreams.

MORE ABOUT FRED.....

Nov. 27th 1918: draw up your chair in this small tavern. Pa and Ma and two fine daughters..Ma and Pa speak Americano very well. They are glad to see us after sharing four years of life under Kaiser Wilhelm. Fred, returned to our outfit after being gassed, and got into the "Semi Finals" ten days of Hell with the French Army at Champaigne. He had played in the "World's series" at first base from Nov.1st to 11th 1918!

FIRST BURST OF BELLY LAUGHTER!

Fred spoke pretty good German. He wore a Sharp Shooters Badge, was a sniper in action. We were sitting at the table in the corner. One of the girls pointed to his Sharp Shooter Badge and asked, "Vass 1st dass?" Fred got his German just a bit mixed up and answered. "Das 1st fur Scheissen" instead of "fur sehiesen." You could have heard a fly making a four point landing--then with their hands to their faces they marched from the room, bursting with laughter! Papa and Mamma came in the girls pointing their fingers at Fred. The first occasion for a real burst of "Belly Laughter" since June 1918!