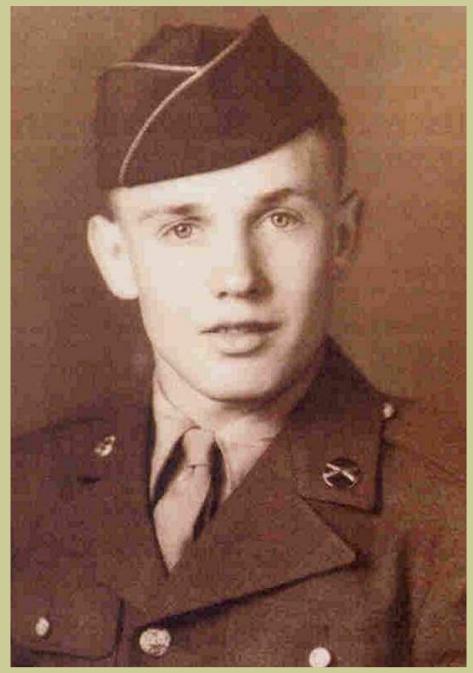


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U.S. Army - 86th Division, 105 Howitzer Company



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Veteran of The Huertgen Forest and the Rhineland Campaign

I entered military service at the induction camp in Rockford, Illinois on October 13, 1943, supposedly to participate in a specialized training program after 13 weeks of basic training at Fort Benning, Georgia. However, the afternoon prior to graduation, the program was closed and I became a member of the 86th Division, 105 Howitzer Company.

I was responsible for laying the guns and operating the radio/telephone. I saw action in the Rhineland campaign and took part in the battle of the Huertgen Forest, which began in September 1944.

Like many soldiers my age, I went to Europe as a replacement. That meant a speedy trip to and through England and France plus a very brief assignment in a reserve unit to experience actual combat training such as patrols and night support guard

duty. Because the 28th Division had suffered extensive casualties overrunning the Siegfried Line, I quickly became a rifleman in Company I, 109th Battalion, 28th Division located in the Huertgen Forest southeast of Aachen, Germany. That area with its high, wooded hills, several mountain fed streams in the valleys, numerous firebreaks, a major lack of roads or trails plus constant inclement weather assisted the Germans in holding the area while inflicting heavy casualties on the infantry and the support units. I was evacuated on November 16, 1944.

While overseas, most of my hospitalization was near Tidworth, England where both my legs were amputated three times by representatives of the 129th evac and 103rd general hospital staff. The third amputations were done at my written request rather than waiting until I arrived back in the United States. The two finishing operations were performed at the Percy Jones Hospital at Battle Creek, Michigan on May 19 and May 29, 1945.

Within three weeks, I was granted the first of two 30-day furloughs. To receive that first furlough, I walked without the aid of any assistive devices other than the prostheses. I was honorably (medically) discharged on the 22 November 1945, Thanksgiving Day. It is impossible to describe the wonderful medical and personal care I received in both hospitals, but especially in England.

Aden H. Clump
Springfield, Illinois