

Dispatches

From Page 6B

Medal for his valor during the fight. After his discharge, he returned home and became a truck driver. He married Darlene Tweedy and with her as his loving and devoted wife raised 6 children: LeRoy, Larry, Linda, Lonnie, Lois and Lyle. Bud currently lives (independently!) in Yankton and turned 89 on September 2, 2013. Marvin's family includes many who have served our country: Sons-LeRoy, Larry and Lyle; Grandsons-Skylar, Padgett and Lee LaCroix; Granddaughters-Lyndsey LaCroix and Leah LaCroix; Brother-Merlin; and Nephews-Mitch LaCroix and Matt LaCroix. We sincerely thank them and all other veterans from our hearts. (Submitted by Marvin's daughter-in-law, Laurie A. LaCroix.)

Charles 'Chuck' Kendall

He grew up in Yankton and received his education in Yankton Public Schools. After graduation, he received a Civil Service Appointment on July 1, 1942 to enter the U.S. Army Signal Corp Reserve at Northern State College in Aberdeen. He was the first student to graduate which allowed him to volunteer for the Army Signal Corp. On November 11, 1942 he was sent to the Reception Center at Jefferson Barracks in Kansas City, Missouri. Three days later, he was sent to Signal Repair Service Company at Camp Crowder, Missouri, for basic training. From there he was transferred with his unit to 12 other units throughout the east coast. In January 1945, he left the states for Belgium, France and Germany. In late 1945, his unit was placed on a ship to an unknown destination, which he hoped was home. They learned they were going to the Philippines and later to Japan. He received an honorable discharge at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, in February 1946 as a Tech. Sergeant for the U.S. Army Signal Corp.

Harriet Johnson Randall

NOTE: This item was originally written by Donna Schafer for the Vermillion Plain Talk

Staff Sergeant Harriet Johnson Randall was a member of the WAC, Womens Army Corp. #2. She was born Jan. 21, 1922 in Vermillion. Her family moved to Meckling when she was in the second grade. She was in a class of 10 and the only girl. Her father wouldn't let her join the military so she had to wait until she was 21. She joined the Army around Feb. 1, 1943. Omaha was the city she had to go to for her physical. She stretched with all her might to reach 5 feet, but because of her determination to be tall enough, they let her join. The U.S. Army didn't have uniforms for the women, so they had to wear the men's clothing. It must have been quite comical to see these women with rolled up sleeves and trousers with their shoes covered with the old fashioned five-buckle overshoe. It wasn't long until she was given her uniform which consisted of a wool jacket, a wool gored skirt, rayon nylons a shirt, tie, and sturdy shoes. Her hat was made of the same material as her jacket. Money was not excessive. She received \$21 a month, plus of course, her room and board. After doing basic training, she took a test to be a part of the radio and Teletype group. This was a top secret job, so she had to be investigated. When she passed, she wondered what school she would be sent to. They didn't send her to a school because the results of her test showed that she had the knowledge of a student who had finished two and a half years of college. She is proud that her education took place in the small school at Meckling.

Staff Sergeant Johnson was in the first detachment west of the Rockies; her camp was in Wilmington, right next to Long Beach, CA. She never had KP duty because the Italian prisoners were housed there and they did all the KP duties. Harriet's brother, Howard, was in the service at the same time. Because she was in radio and Teletype, she knew his location. Not being able to reassure her parents that Howard was OK was probably the most difficult part of her work. Even so, she enjoyed her work because she felt that she was doing something important for her country. One of the things which always amazes me is that any former military person can rattle off their dog tag numbers as though they just received them last week. Well, Harriet is no exception. She still has her dog tags, and as I was looking at them she rattled off her number. She also said that she couldn't fault the food she ate. "Maybe that was because we didn't have much variety at our dinner table during the Depression years, that I felt fortunate for the food in the Army."

Yes, she did have a sweetheart. She met her future husband, Forrest Randall in Long Beach, Calif. They were married New Year's Eve in a wedding chapel in San Diego. Her Aunt Anna and Uncle Charlie were there, also. They crossed the Mexican border and spent a short time in Tijuana, Mexico. They found out that they weren't supposed to go over the border and were interrogated quite rigorously. Finally Aunt Anna stepped in and was able to explain why they were going over, and were given permission.

Another one of her first experiences was an earthquake. It was quite frightening for her until she found out what it was and how often it happened. In August of 1945 she was discharged from the Army. A troop train took her to Omaha, Neb., and she took another train to Sioux City, Iowa. When she got off the train and everyone was gone, she stood there all alone not knowing what to do. She wanted to get home to Meckling, but didn't know how to do it. She

even considered walking home, but decided that was too far. She finally saw a man working around something and went over to him. Since she had on her uniform, the man asked what she needed. When she told him she needed to go home to Meckling, he said, "Well, I'm delivering the *Sioux City Journal* to all the little towns going west and if you want to ride on a pile of newspapers, you are welcome to go with me." She hopped in the station wagon and got home at 2 a.m. She was very careful not to wake anyone when she walked in the house, but as soon as she got in her dad said, "Is that you Harriet?" And she was home.

Joseph F. Goeden was married to Ethel Christensen on June 18, 1942 and was inducted into the U.S. Army on July 8, 1942 where he took his Basic Training at Camp Robinson, Ark. He then was sent to Camp Bowie, Texas, where he was transferred to the 818th Tank Destroyers (818 T.D.) Battalion, Company B. The Tank Destroyers served under General George Patton from the time they landed in Northern Ireland until World War II ended. Then he was sent to Camp Hood, Texas, to go to Automotive Mechanic School where he came in 2nd highest in the class. He then came home on a 10-day furlough and left for Camp Pickett, Va., where he joined up with the rest of his company "B" group where they prepared for Amphibian Training. On Sept. 1, 1943, the 818th T.D. were sent to Fort Dix, N.J. They were later moved to Camp Shanks, N.J.

They boarded the *USS Fairisle* army transport leaving the harbor on Oct. 21, 1943 while Joe was watching the Statue of Liberty. While on the boat he received a cablegram from Dr. Abts that Joe was a father to a baby girl on Oct. 26.

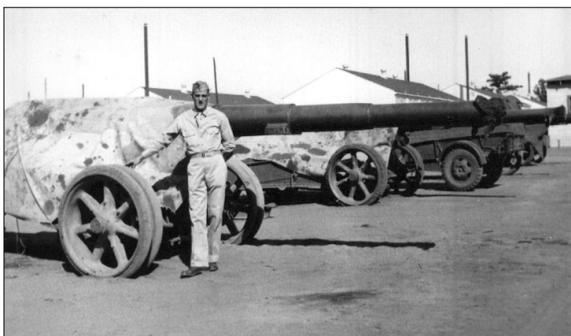
They arrived in Dundrum, Northern Ireland, on the 1st of November 1943 where Joe met a family and was invited to their home every Sunday after Mass at the Catholic Church. They stayed in Northern Ireland until May 1944 arriving in England on May 14.

They departed for "Utah Beach" Normandy, France. On July 28th Co. B was supporting the 19th Infantry. By July the whole 818th T.D. was moving so fast it was heard they had difficulty keeping company locations. They went west of Pompey on Aug. 5, 1944. They passed through St. Lo and Averances which had been badly demolished by bombs and artillery on Aug. 6. They marched through France, Vitre and moved south of France near St. Clements. They were held up for 2 1/2 days in the vicinity of Angers. After hard fighting they built a pontoon bridge over the Maine River where they succeeded capturing Angers. Arriving in the St. Calais sector a group of 120 American bomber pilots were found in the woods around Orleans. They had been shot down over France and had walked out of the vicinity of Paris. They ran into heavy fighting near Malesherbes. Then on to Nemours held up by hard rain on Aug. 25, fighting their way to Nogent on Aug. 27. They continued on northward to Reims and entered the city on the 30th where they stopped for two days to do maintenance on equipment. They moved east and crossed the river Seine at Nogent and the river Marne at Epernay. Crossings were made on pontoon bridges as all bridges had been destroyed by the Germans.

On Sept. 1, they moved east with the 5th Infantry. They traveled from Reims to Cleremont east to Verdun, France. They continued east of Verdun moving across the Muese River where they were met with very heavy fighting. They kept moving through towns in France, Luxem-



ABOVE: Joseph Goeden is shown in a photo taken in Northern Ireland; RIGHT: Dan Steiner is photographed with a South Korean house boy during the Korean War



LEFT: Manley Fjellestad is shown at Fort Bragg with some of the long-range artillery on which he trained as a cannoneer during World War II. RIGHT: This photo from the collection of Charles "Chuck" Kendall shows soldiers loading on a bus during wartime.



bourg, Belgium and Germany. They ran into terrible cold and snowy weather under firing from the enemy. By the time World War II ended the Company was in Czechoslovakia. Joe was in five major campaigns and won five battle credits: Normandy, Northern France, Ardennes, Rhineland and Central Europe. Joe was a scout driver and served overseas in Ireland, England, France and Germany from Oct. 21, 1943, until September 1945 with the 818th Tank Destroyer Battalion, as a driver of a scout car for the command post. In case of engagements with the enemy he would maneuver the car into the best position for effective fire against the enemy while at the same time attempting to reduce the car's exposure to enemy guns. He took over firing a .50 caliber machine gun; laying down, aiming and firing the gun. They captured 4,265 German prisoners. Joe returned home on October 14, 1945 to see his daughter who was nearly 2 years old. He was a Tech 5. After coming home he worked as maintenance manager, mechanic and foreman for construction until August 1953 when he started Goeden Construction Co. The company is now owned by his son, Kent Goeden. Joe passed away December 26, 2007.

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By the time World War II ended the Company was in Czechoslovakia. Joe was in five major campaigns and won five battle credits: Normandy, Northern France, Ardennes, Rhineland and Central Europe. Joe was a scout driver and served overseas in Ireland, England, France and Germany from Oct. 21, 1943, until September 1945 with the 818th Tank Destroyer Battalion, as a driver of a scout car for the command post. In case of engagements with the enemy he would maneuver the car into the best position for effective fire against the enemy while at the same time attempting to reduce the car's exposure to enemy guns. He took over firing a .50 caliber machine gun; laying down, aiming and firing the gun. They captured 4,265 German prisoners. Joe returned home on October 14, 1945 to see his daughter who was nearly 2 years old. He was a Tech 5. After coming home he worked as maintenance manager, mechanic and foreman for construction until August 1953 when he started Goeden Construction Co. The company is now owned by his son, Kent Goeden. Joe passed away December 26, 2007.

The 818th T.D. has a reunion every year in different states. Joe and family had the reunion here in Yankton 3 times.

remember we lived in a bunker that had no light and no heat. It had a dirt floor. We made a heater from an oil can which worked pretty good. Thanks, P&D.

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On land. By air. By Sea.

We salute the men and women of our armed forces both past and present, for their bravery, dedication, and commitment to upholding the ideals and freedoms we enjoy today.

To those dedicated servicemen and women, we say, "Thank You"

JOHN DEERE

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