

NAME: Bernard

RANK: Private First Class

ORGANIZATION: 76th Infantry Division

OVERSEAS WARTIME SERVICE: European Theater of Operations

- The following excerpt is directly from an original wartime period letter written by Bernard. This is the only letter from Bernard in the site curator's possession.
- The following excerpt is presented under fair use provisions for educational purposes.
- No controversial material has been omitted from the following excerpt aside from edited profanity for the protection of younger readers. No grammatical or spelling errors have been corrected.

Bernard writes a friend who is also serving in the U.S. Army:

“Brussels, Belg
6 NOV 45

Boy was I glad to get a letter from you at last.

You left Germany on July 22. On July 21 I left for the 16th Repo Depo in Compiegne, France. Before I left Germany I knew you were 54 RD, Marsielles bound. I bet you really sweated that one out.

For 2 d _ _ nable months near Compiegne we stayed in the 16 RD & had basic training. Finally the long suspense broke & I got on Camp McCoy shipping orders. Then we were sent to Camp Lucky Strike for about 7 weeks. Here we saw divisions come & sail for home but we stayed on forever.

Finally, the McCoy shipping orders were rescinded & I was lucky enough to get in a Ordinance Medium Automotive Maintaniance Company stationed 20 minutes from downtown Brussels by streetcar...

...I am no longer the combat infantryman but merely a 'Blue Star of ETO Commando' basking in the glory of former days in the Combat Infantry, & fighting for a place on crowed trams & overflowing dance floors. By a quirk of fate my English furlough was turned down. This month I'm applying for both a Swiss pass & a Eng furlough. Furlough & pass quotas are never filled because of lack of money & so much entertainment in Brussels. I never heard of anyone wanting to go to Paris, I hope to take a self-imposed delay in route on my way to England & see Paris...

...At present Im on 2-4 hr shifts of guard every 48 hours which isnt too much. On guard I usually write letters & study German. Since I came to Brussels on Oct 5, I've stayed in the barracks or stood guard from 6 PM to midnight only two nights. I was out every other night.

Actually James, I want to stay in the Army till XX JULY 46 & not a day after. On that day I get my hash mark & 4 yrs of College Education. I fear that life in the Continental U.S. Army is to chicken. Actually, if it weren't for the fact of not seeing my parents, I would be quite satisfied in Brussels till my time for discharge comes. ---- Actually James, when I look back, we certainly were fugitives from the law

of averages because we didn't get killed in the Infantry.

The rear echelon got rich off of the war. The proof is here. Write when you have time. What do you think of the USA Frauleins?

Bernard”

- Bernard made it through the Second World War and passed away in his 80s.
- **For visual context, this link connects to an original wartime period film in the public domain that covers the above time period (viewer discretion advised):**
<https://archive.org/details/OccupationSoldier>
- **For additional detail, this link connects to the Wikipedia article that covers Bernard's wartime organization, the 76th Infantry Division (reader discretion advised):**
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/76th_Infantry_Division_\(United_States\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/76th_Infantry_Division_(United_States))