

however, as we couldn't have been more popular. When we jumped out of the truck, we were hustled into the nearest tavern and the wine and cognac started flowing. After telling our friends that we were really American POW's, food and drink was heaped upon us. Bread, cheese and sausages, along with all the booze finally got the best of our shrunked stomachs and it started coming up as fast as we put it down. We did retain enough alcohol to get a good buzz on though. Somewhere along the line we were split up and I was being escorted by a most beautiful blonde. I had never seen such joy and hysteria. The streets were packed with bodies celebrating freedom from the Nazis. After dark fireworks could be seen all over the city. One would think they had had enough fireworks during the war. I was taken home by the blonde, where I shared her and the small two roomed flat with her husband, who told me that he couldn't do enough for us Yanks. He definitely proved this.

Upon returning to the DPD the next morning, we left Brussels on a train bound for an American camp near Paris. Here we received a very brief briefing, and told that we would be held here until there was enough of us to form a convoy to Camp Lucky Strike on the coast of France. We asked if we could go into Paris, and told absolutely not. We were under quarantine and would stay in the compound. Feeling that we had been quarantined in Germany long enough, we ignored this order and caught a ride into Paris that night with some GI's that were stationed here. We still wore our Limey uniforms so was expecting no trouble with American MP's.

The French people were just as anxious to entertain us as had been the Belgians. We were wined and dined like conquering heroes. Somewhere near Pig Alley was a large complex that had everything a liberated Kriegie would desire. The Germans must have set it up as an R&R [Rest and Recuperation] center for their troops during their occupation of the country. A large ball-room for dancing and dining with smaller bars and cafes around it that stayed open day and night. Two large hotels well stocked with beautiful women completed the dream. The place was overflowing with GI's and MP's who roamed about checking Americans for passes. They never gave us a second glance, dressed as we were. The next day we decided to stay another night, but that afternoon some kriegies came in that we knew and they told us that a convoy might leave the bastille soon, so we returned with them, only to find that we had missed the convoy by about an hour. Now we had to sweat out another convoy that took us to Camp Lucky Strike the 12th of May.

I was surprised and happy to find my old buddies from Moosberg still here. Bill Roberts had located our gunner sergeants, and we had a very good reunion that night. They had all been processed and were shipped out the following day on a troop convoy to the States. I would have to wait for the next one that was scheduled to depart May, 22.

We were given a good physical and interragation, then issued new uniforms and gear. We were back in the Army and it felt good. Everything possible was done to make us comfortable. Red Cross canteens were everywhere with their do-nuts and egg-nogs. I gained about twenty pounds in a week. I don't know how many theaters were

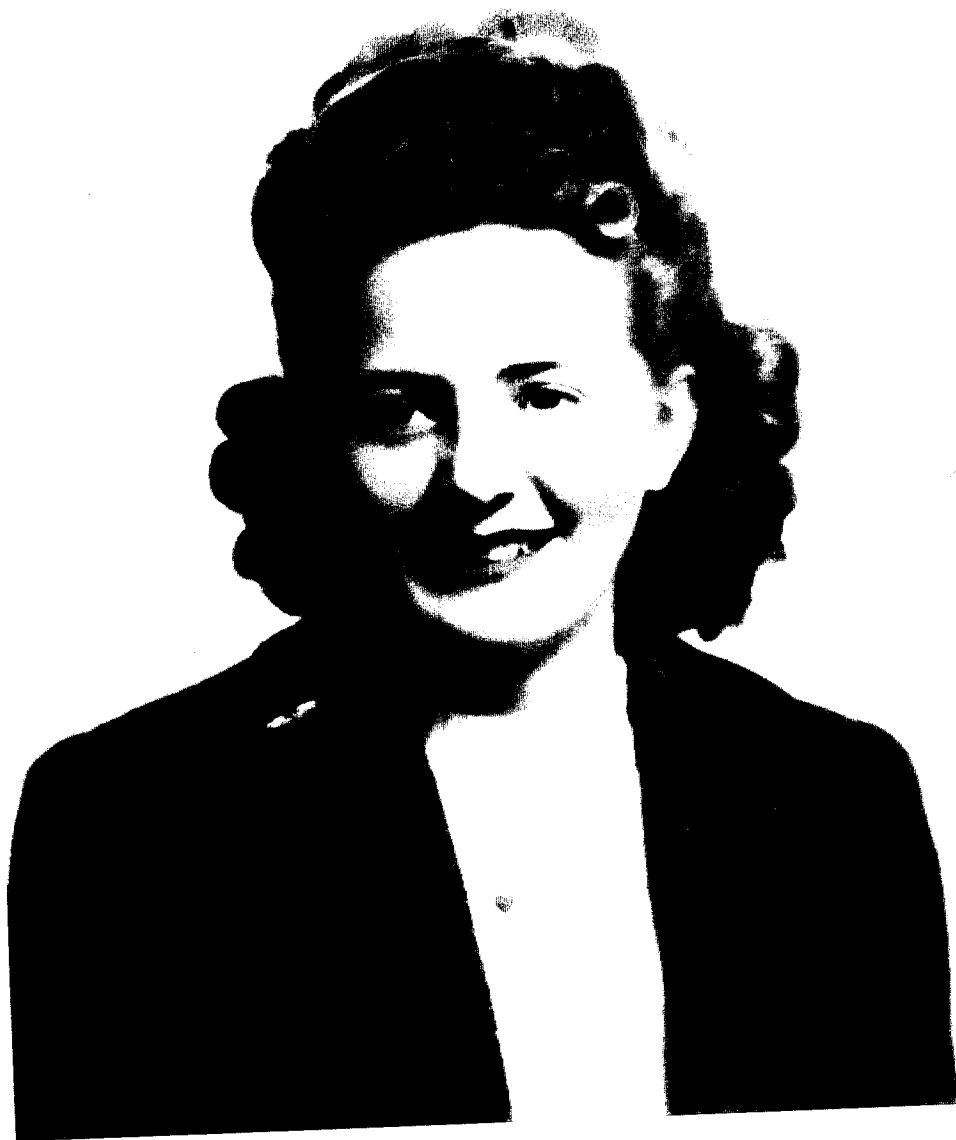
set up here, but after the noon meal, I would watch movies until mid-night and never see the same one twice.

The day before we were to embark for the U.S., we were allowed passes to go into town to buy souvenirs. Expecting the same enthusiasm from the natives as we had received in Brussels and Paris, we were rudely surprised to find the people almost hostile. Guess the Yanks had been here long enough to wear out our welcome. After getting home, my Father said that he had been here in World War I and the people were the same then. He and some friends had gone into town one night and were beaten up by the civilians. Being located on the coast, these people had seen a lot of war and hated anything in uniform.

May 22, 1945, we set sail for the United States and home. The convoy was made up of Liberty ships with Navy vessels as protection from the German U-Boats [submarines], that didn't know, or did know and didn't care that the war was over. These Liberty ships were quite small ships, so consequently were very rough riding. Some of the passengers were very sick all the way across and vomiting all the time. I never tossed my cookies, but was very uncomfortable during the entire voyage. It had taken only eleven hours to fly over, but would take eighteen days to get back. We just lay around, dreaming of home and playing poker at which I lost the two hundred dollars advanced me back in Lucky Strike.

We docked in Boston June 9, 1945, and standing on Old Mother Earth never felt so good. Now I know why people will fall down and kiss the ground when they get ashore. We were trucked from the dock to Camp Miles Standish a few miles out of Boston and zipped through processing. Early the next morning we boarded trains for home with a 30 day furlough. Five days later, June 15, 1945, I stepped off the bus in good old Greybull, Wyoming and was finally home with the war behind me.

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DORIS ALLEN 1943