

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
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OFFICE OF COMMISSIONER
JAMES H. QUELLO

Walter Power, Captain USMC
Officer Selection Service
2500 Packard Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Dear Captain Power,

It is a pleasure to recommend Corporal John G. Kruse for Officer Candidate School.

I have been a close personal friend of the family for over twenty five years and I have known Corporal Kruse from the day he was born. He is exceptionally well qualified from the standpoint of background, patriotism, intelligence and motivation.

John comes from a solid patriotic American background. His father is a distinguished civic leader and lawyer who staunchly supports our armed forces.

As a former combat infantry battalion commander in WW II (Lt. to Lt. Colonel), I sent a number of prospects to OCS. I would have welcomed someone with John's background and qualifications as a promising officer candidate. Eventually he could be a fine prospect for the highly specialized judge advocate general department in the Marines.

Sometimes the exploits of my generation of officers tend to grow more heroic with each passing year. So I thought the enclosed article might lend some validity to my credentials. It was found and sent to me two years ago by an FCC attorney.

Please write or call (202/632-7557) if further information is required.

Sincerely,

James H. Quello
James H. Quello

Enclosure

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45th Division News

MAY 13, 1945

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Last Big Fight Pitted 180th Inf. Against SS Men

When most of the rest of Munich had been occupied and other troops were beginning to take it easy, 1st Bn., 180th Inf., was starting the toughest fighting it had seen since the Siegfried Line.

G-2 reports told them there were two battalions of SS men holed up in the old SS college and the only way to approach it was over 1,000 yards of open ground. To make the first battalion bitter was their recollection they had passed through the 3rd Bn. the day before, and the 3rd had rounded up a thousand prisoners with practically no trouble.

The SSers were prepared to fight for their old alma mater. They had dug nice dugouts in the open field, where they could sweat out the shelling, then come out into trenches to fire on the advancing Americans. Their defense consisted of rifles, burp gun, machine gun and 88 fire at close range.

To assist A and B Companies in the assault, the 20th Armored Division contributed about a dozen tanks - - and the men in them were in their third day of combat.

The morning's attack got under way with fire from our artillery, our 60 and 81 mm mortars and chemical mortars from 2nd Chemical Bn. The fire was not precisely adjusted, and the attack got nowhere. Observation hadn't been good.

First Bn. tried it again that afternoon. "We showed them a powerhouse", reports Maj. James H. Quello, Detroit. "Company's A and B were behind and between the tanks. Two hundred yards behind came the armored infantry and half tracks. Co. C tailed the armored infantry."

"Then we got the best artillery support I've ever seen", continued the major. "They were dropping smoke and HE just 100 yards in front of the tanks. The mortars, as usual, were right on the money."

Tanks and infantry went forward, firing to beat hell. The SS men lay in their holes until the tanks had passed, then got up to fire at the backs of the infantrymen.

Co. B went into the barracks and started mopping up, and Co. A outflanked its opposition, going through to B's right, where it belonged.

Some of the stalwart SS men had taken off when they saw what was coming, but many stayed. Seventy-five were taken prisoner and 80 killed.

One of the prisoners had been run over by a tank, covered with dirt, and just his mouth and nose were showing. He walked away with his capers, which might indicate how tough the 1st's opponents were.

The fight was filled with incident. Pfc's Homer Bearden and William Trimmer, Co. D heavy .30 MG men with Co. A, set up their gun to find they were directly across from a German 88 not far away. A duel ensued between 88 and MG. The 30 obviously couldn't hurt the gun, but Bearden and Trimmer kept the lead running for an hour, all through the fighting, and kept the 88's crew flat on their bellies, their gun out of the fight.

First Lt. William F. Jennings, New York City, took over one of the companies after four of its officers had been shot, reorganized it on the spot, and led it in the attack.

Capt. Edward L. Kerker, Shawnee, Okla., jumped into a hole to get out of sniper fire, found five SS men there, and took them prisoner.

The CO of Co. B led his men after he had been hit in the hip, and didn't quit until he was shot a second time.

Apparently, this was the last tough battle the 45th was to fight in the European war.

- I was the Battalion Commander

- Lt. Healy was shot in the hip and shoulder, but lived! I still have the letter he wrote me from the army hospital.

Selected by European Theater official historian, General S.L.A. Marshall, as best Infantry Division in Europe. (amphibious)