







The Military Career of Joe Lipsius

272nd Inf. Regtl. Hq., Cn. Co. & 69th Inf. Div. Webmaster

b. Jan. 8, 1918 d. Sep. 6, 2015 (Age 97)

Written by 69th Inf. Div. Website Contributors. Updated Sep. 07, 2015 | [HTML Version](#)

1941	1942	1943	April 19, 1945	1946	2001	2010
Private	Second Lieutenant	Major	Surrender of Leipzig	Civilian	69th Webmaster	65th Elbe Day
						

The draft period was to be for one year at a salary of \$21 per month the first three or four months, Joe doesn't recall, then \$30 per month. Deductions for life insurance and other items left \$13 or \$14. Joe vividly remembers that from the first day, recruiters attempted by all manner of effort and contact to get you to enlist for three years which would allow you to immediately earn \$30 per month and a possible choice of branch of service. Joe resisted this recruiting. He had resolved to himself to try and be a good soldier, stay for the year, then return home and resume his life. Joe soon learned there were three classes in the army: (1) privates, termed enlisted men, and non-commissioned officers; (2) enlisted men with a rank who were called NCOs, and of different ranks; and (3) officers, men with special training (and apparently privileges), and had to be saluted by the enlisted men.

After about three weeks at Fort McPherson, in the middle of November, 1941, a large number were marched to a passenger train platform on the Fort's grounds, boarded, and departed, destination unknown. He doesn't remember the time. He does remember they arrived around 2 or 3 AM in the morning at a place they were soon to learn went by the name of Camp Croft IRTC, near Spartanburg, South Carolina. The IRTC stood for Infantry Replacement Training Center. Enroute, the boys peered through the windows trying to see town names so they could try and guess their destination. It was to no avail. Only after alighting from the train and asking the soldiers who were herding them to the supply room to get sheets for their beds and guide them to a barracks for a few hours sleep, was their destination revealed.

Camp Croft was unlike the other two places Joe had been sent. This was a recently built installation specifically for Basic Infantry Training constructed along with several others since enactment of the draft to supply infantry soldiers to the Divisions that might be called on to fight if war broke out. Training would be in discipline, close-order drill physical training, marching, rifle marksmanship, machine gun firing, message writing, map reading, guard duty and other things an infantry soldier needed to know.

The new arrivals had been sent to barracks that would hold about 50 men on two floors with two rows of beds on each floor. Sergeant Knight was in charge of the barracks Joe was in which he soon learned was called a platoon and was in Company C, 32nd Infantry Training Battalion. Joe also learned Sgt. Knight was regular (career) Army and straight as a nail and had served in the Philippines and other places for a number of years. A Captain Beck commanded the company of about 200



Fig. 1—Private Joe Lipsius, 1941.

men as the only officer at the time. At the first reveille (early morning assembly) Capt. Beck welcomed the men and one of his comments was he noticed several men had hair on their lip in several sizes of growth. He said that in order for the company to be uniform in appearance, no mustaches would be allowed but he would be glad to grow one, on request, if anyone wanted see a mustache. On dismissal, Joe rushed to the latrine to shave his fair-sized growth since his draft date of October 23, 1941. The Captain was never asked to grow one.

Also, helping Sergeant. Knight were four or five men who were called acting gadgets. They had been retained from previous groups to help train but held no rank. The very first day the platoon was lined up into four squads for the four rows of beds on the two floors with the tallest on one end and the shortest on the other, this applied to all four rows of beds. Joe was second from end in his row, being only 5' 5" and weighing in a just under 115 lbs. He laughingly recalls that when the platoon lined up alone or in the company to march, he was at the end of the two man line

This movement and getting squared away took place about the middle of November and training began immediately. The men soon learned where the Mess Hall, Post Exchange (PX), United Service Organization (USO) and nearby towns were located. Joe became a Chow Hound, liking the Army food, and would be one of the last to leave the mess hall. Joe had "the pleasure" of working "KP" being "latrine orderly" and "firing the boiler" in those early days. He became good friends with several men

Pearl Harbor Day - December 7, 1941

around his bunk and actually was enjoying army life. He was trying to be good soldier and looking forward to the year of service and returning to Montgomery and his job which would be available according to The Draft Act.

Things were soon to change. On Sunday afternoon, December 7, 1941, he and many of the two squads on his floor were sitting around, talking, playing poker, shooting dice, listening to hillbilly and symphonic music, when John Daly came on the radio Joe was listening to and announced the Japanese had just attacked Pearl Harbor! In a few seconds, Sergeant Knight came bounding up the stairs and restricted everyone to the barracks until further notice. He did not know what would take place next but he wanted us available to move out if called to do so. This restriction remained in effect until the next morning when they were allowed to go to the Mess Hall for breakfast. They could only stay in the Battalion area which included a PX. On December 8, 1941, President Roosevelt, in an address to Congress, called the attack a "Day of Infamy." He declared war on Japan and Germany and extended draftees stay in the service for the duration of the war. Things were now different. The U.S. was at war!

There was no interruption in training, according to Joe, and perhaps a new intensity took place. One day in late December, Sgt. Knight directed several men to report to his room. Joe was among them. Except for himself, Joe thought they were the best men in the platoon. At the appointed time, all assembled. Sergeant Knight announced the platoon was being assigned to guard the officer's club over New Year's Eve at which time a big party would be taking place. He considered it a privilege and honor and wanted the best men in the platoon to perform the duty, thus their being selected. When Joe left the Sergeant's quarters, he felt for sure, so far, he was being a good soldier.

Joe remembers performing the guard duty, saluting the incoming and outgoing officers with their wives or girlfriends with great pride because of what Sergeant Knight had said.

There was much fun nights and week-ends if you had had a few dollars and could get a pass. There were trips to Spartanburg or Gaffney, towns close by, reached by bus from the Camp. The USO arranged for visits overnight to family homes providing good home cooked-meals for the week-end. One such trip to a home with another friend, at the table was a Major Parks who was visiting the mother of the two girls Joe and his friend were seeing. Joe and three or four good friends hitched rides to Atlanta for overnight stays in his home more than once. He wonders now how they fitted in his father's

small place? Soldiers had no problem getting rides. A uniform and upheld hand, with thumb up, could snag ride from three or four passing cars. Joe also remembers five or six going to Gaffney around Xmas and strolling the town singing Christmas Carols which he bashfully did because he was Jewish!

The training continued uneventfully except in January a 1st Lieutenant was assigned to the Company and would wonder about getting acquainted with soldiers during breaks, talking here and there. His name escapes Joe but Joe remembers he was one of the few he ever saw wearing the flat brim cavalry hat. He got to know Joe. One day the Company Clerk told Sergeant Knight there was a message from Camp Headquarters to send Joe to a certain office for an interview. Joe reported and was interviewed. Before leaving he was told if he chose, he would be transferred and assigned to a job there and not have to finish basic training, or he could stay with the Company. Think it over and let the Company Clerk know in two or three days. The next time out training, the Lieutenant asked Joe what was the trip to Post Headquarters about. Upon being told, he advised Joe to stay with the Company. The war was going to require many officers and he was recommending Joe to be put on the next Officer Candidate School (OCS) list.

The 13 weeks Basic Training period for Joe's group was to end in February. The men eagerly awaited the posting of their destination orders on the Company Bulletin Board. Some were assigned to an Alaska unit, others to Ft. Benning units and various other places. Joe and several of the men from the Company and platoon were assigned to a Special Training Battalion at Camp Croft which they soon learned was attended preparatory to going to OCS at Fort Benning, Georgia.

Officer Candidate School

In late April, 1942, Joe was promoted to Corporal and assigned to OCS Class 27, at Fort Benning, Georgia, to undergo 13 weeks of training (thus the term 90 day wonder) almost like Basic Training but each attendee was to be leader and instructor, at times. The men were also initiated into the use of Army Field Manuals which were numerous and covered every aspect of infantry training, logistics for many things, probably including "how to relieve oneself" in the field! The men were in barracks similar to Camp Croft, two squads per floor, in a two floor barracks. A small group of four or five friends was made which was the usual in the army and soon a social life took place as well as the training. In about four weeks, the Lt. who was the leader of the platoon assembled the men and handing each a piece of paper, directed they list the men of the platoon from top to bottom in order of 1, 2, 3, 4 etc. rating. This struck fear in the men because each could see this as a means of being eliminated from the class if ranked at the bottom too many times! This rating took place three times during the three months. Ratings were not disclosed but before the 90 days were up, about 20 out of around 200 had disappeared from the class. Among Joe's friends, none were to go.

In the middle of June, 1942, clothing tailors appeared and measured the men for their officer's uniform with a choice of numbers of shirts, pants and dress blouses etc. Joe doesn't remember how arrangements for payment was made but when time came for delivery, he was ready to become a well-dressed officer.

In October, 1941, Joe received a letter he was to report to the Greyhound Bus Station, at a certain time, October, 22, to be taken with others to Fort McClellan, Anniston, Alabama for further examination and processing into the Army. A full busload of boys went. The following day, October 23, 1941, after a more extensive physical examination, Joe was sworn into the Army. Joe was 23 10/12 years old, 5' 5" and weighed about 115. He was now Private Joseph Lipsius, Serial Number 34162646.

You're in the Army now, you're in the Army now!
You're not behind a plow. You son of a bitch, you'll
Never get rich, you're in the Army now!

Joe spent a total of about 24 hours at McClellan and was sent with a trainload to Fort McPherson in Atlanta, Georgia, where about three weeks of various examinations, training and equipping took place. Even though his father's home was just a street car ride from where he was, try as he did, he could not obtain permission to leave. In fact, he believes his efforts to leave resulted in a couple of bad assignments. Army life was not going to be good. It was during this period and starting early on in it that Joe learned a maxim of the Army which followed him everywhere he went, "Hurry up and wait."

On July 2, 1942, graduation exercises were held. He was issued a discharge as an enlisted man and on the same document appointment as a Second Lieutenant, Army of the United States, Serial Number 01286516. Oh boy! He would even earn

\$150 per month. The men were also given Special Orders designating their assignments. Special Order No. 161, dated Fort Benning, Georgia, 3 July 1942, Paragraph 5, assigned 50 from the class to report to the Commanding General, 96th Infantry Division, Camp Adair, Oregon, not later than July 20, 1942. Travel expenses to be paid by the Government.

Company E 2nd Bn. 383rd Inf. Reg. 96th Infantry Division

Camp Adair was South of Portland, west of Salem and near Corvallis. It was a newly built Camp constructed on the order of Camp Croft with facilities to house two infantry divisions. When Joe reported he was assigned to Company E, Capt. Sullivan, Commanding, 2nd Bn., Lt. Col. List, Commanding, Major D. W. Mannan, Ex O, 383rd Inf. Rgt., Col. Edwin T. May, Commanding, 96th Inf. Div., Maj. Gen. James L. Bradley, Commanding. There were no troops to start training, just the officer leadership and major non-commissioned officers. Joe soon learned this type of group in the army was called the cadre.

There were two immediate differences he observed since the graduation at Fort Benning and arrival at Camp Adair. He had to be alert to return salutes of enlisted men. His sleeping quarters were different. Now he was in a barracks about the same size as at Camp Croft and OCS but the floors were divided into rooms accommodating two. His roommate was Frederick S. Green from his OCS class but not an acquaintance. Among the 50 from OCS 27 assigned to the 96th were two of Joe's friends but none were in the 383rd Inf. Rgt.

No time was lost in the beginning of training even though there were no troops. A new cycle of Basic Training was begun with the newly commissioned 2nd Lts. taking turns doing the instruction, Joe was a platoon leader in E Company. His company had maybe 20 Officers and NCOs. The company was assigned a schedule with different 2nd Lts. conducting classes. The training sessions were constantly being inspected by staffs from Div. Hq., Regtl. Hq. and 2nd Bn. Hq., the unit commander among them at times. Joe had numerous classes because the schedule was an eight hour day with one to two hour classes, five days per week. Much preparation was made for classes including charts and demonstrations. A blackboard was sufficient for some. Social life was begun with use of the Officer's Club which was operated by and within the Regimental area. Also, trips to the nearby towns.

On August 15, 1942, with no troops, just the cadre, a formal activation ceremony of the 96th Infantry Division took place. Activation was a march in review taken by the Division Commander, Maj. Gen James L Bradley and his staff, followed by an assembly for a welcome and address. More than ever, Joe felt he was in the army now!

Weeks of training had passed, the cadre training itself, probably completing a Basic Training cycle, when Joe and another 2nd Lt., George E. Frizell, also of the 2nd Bn., were summoned to Bn. Hq. to meet with Major D. W. Mannan, the Bn. Ex. O. Maj. Mannan told Joe and Frizell the Division was to receive its troops soon and he had been charged by Col. May to develop the plan to receive the 383rd's men. This meant meet the train they would arrive on within the post, remove them, take them to be fed, receive bedding equipment, towels, soap etc., and assigned to company barracks. He had a master plan from Division called "The RBA Plan." RBA meant Receiving, Billeting and Assignment. Joe doesn't remember how many men were to arrive but a Regiment has about 3,200 men so he thinks 2,500 or more were to arrive over a period of several days. Besides the Division order with certain instructions there were Field Manuals with guiding information and logistics. Major Mannan handed the order to Joe and charged the two to work and bring back the plan. The two were relieved of company duty and told they could work wherever they chose. The Officer's Club, one of the company day rooms or one of their quarters. There was the Division directive and Manuals with logistical information for guidance. Joe doesn't remember where the work took place but in a few days, after working together without any problems, the plan was completed and taken to Major Mannan. In a day or so, Major Mannan called both to Bn. Hq. and informed the two Col. May had looked over the plan and approved it. Joe doesn't remember why but Maj. Mannan charged him to present the RBA plan to all the Officers and NCOs of the Regiment at a meeting in the Regimental auditorium so their part in the plan would be fully known and understood. Frizell and Joe prepared charts and drawings for the presentation, The day arrived and all assembled to hear the instructions for the RBA of the incoming men. At one point, there was a slight commotion in the rear. The Div. CO had walked in and was saluted and stood in the rear. After a few minutes he left. Joe finished his program and on leaving the stage, Colonel May came up and complimented him on his presentation.



Fig. 2—Second Lieutenant Joe Lipsius, 1942.

2nd Battalion 383rd Infantry Regiment S-2



Fig. 3—Major Joe Lipsius, 1943.

Two or three days later, Joe was relieved of his assignment as platoon leader in E Co. and made the 2nd Bn. S-2. Here he would be working closely with Lt. Col. List, the CO and Major Mannan. This was a promotion! The S-2 was the staff officer in charge of intelligence and providing maps. The troops arrived and were received without a hitch and intensive training began. On marches which were plentiful, Joe would march at the head of the column to the left and rear of Lt. Col. List. Quite a difference from his days at Camp Croft, because of height, when he was at the end of the line. Often he would go with Lt. Col. List to inspect various units training. Soon he was taught to play poker by List and Mannan and a Major Cy Kennedy who was in charge of the Officer's Club. Often, they would play all night then get up to go to the mess hall for breakfast and fall out for training. Joe had beginner's luck and won his share of money. However, Col. May came in one night and saw him playing with what were called Field Grade officers and put a stop to it. Lts. and Capt. were Company Grade, higher rank were Field Grade. They were not on the same level. Joe was promoted to be a 1st Lt. in late 1942. He was still 2nd Bn. S-2 and things were going well.

In January, 1943, orders were issued by the 96th Div. Hq. ordering certain Officers to Fort Benning, Georgia, for a 30 Day Division Officer's Training Class for training in Division tactics, preparatory to going to Camp Shelby, Miss., to form the 69th Infantry Division. These Officers

would be the cadre of the 69th. Officers selected were to be Regimental staff, Battalion Commanders and staff, Company Commanders, certain officers from support units. Non-commissioned officers were also selected and sent to Camp Shelby and the 69th.

Joe was assigned to be a Regimental S-2 which carried the rank of Major although Joe was still a 1st Lt. Major Mannan, Major Kennedy and several officers Joe knew from the 383rd were in the group. Whispers were abound that eight balls were being sent to the 69th but close examination disclosed outstanding individuals so why and how selection came about was never fully understood.

272nd Infantry Regiment 69th Infantry Division S-2

Travel was on your own. Joe rode a Pullman sleeping car from Portland, Oregon, to Chicago, transferred to Atlanta where he stayed for several days, then on to Columbus, Georgia and Fort Benning. Exactly when the 30 days training began is not recalled. It was late February or early March, 1943. Joe reported and learned he was assigned to the 272nd Inf. Rgt., 69th Inf. Div., commanded by Col. Charles Truman "Buck" Lanham. Col. Lanham was a short, wiry, grey mustached individual, very close to Joe in size, wore army metal rimmed glasses and carried a stick, not a riding crop but a hickory stick. He was not the stiff overbearing military type but carried him self relaxed and at ease. A day or two into training, Col. Lanham was in a small group including Joe, during a pause in a class, he asked for a pencil. Joe whipped out a mechanical pencil which was a going away present from the 383rd Officer's Club. Joe's rank and name was inscribed on the pencil as "1st. Lt. Joseph (NMI) Lipsius." The NMI indicating no middle initial which was a standard way of being listed on a roster. Col. Lanham noticed the inscription and laughingly called Joe NMI or NIMI when he returned it and many times afterwards.

Joe was S-2, Intelligence. Capt. Veach was S-1, Administration. Captain Myles Whitlock was S-3, Operations in the field and Plans and Training in garrison. Captain Morse was S-4 Supply. They were Col. Lanham's staff officers. He does not remember whether the other 3 came from the 96th or elsewhere. All of the jobs were entitled to rank of Major.

The Division Commander was Brig Gen Charles L. Bolte, soon to be promoted to Maj. Gen. The Assistant Division Commander was Brig Gen Floyd L. Parks. On a break during training, Joe told Gen Parks of meeting a Maj. Parks at Camp Croft. It turned out he was Gen Park's brother.

The 30 days training covered tactical field demonstrations, lectures, black-board demonstrations, in all cases with the cadre watching and listening. Major Kennedy had a car and from the first night after settling, he, Major Mannan and Joe would go into Columbus or use the Officer's Club on the Post to socialize. Col. Lanham was friendly and liked by everyone but did not mingle on a social basis.

Camp Shelby, Mississippi

Soon, the 30 days was up and the group headed to Camp Shelby on their own. Camp Shelby was a military base dating back many years. They arrived sometime in April, 1943. The quarters were poor compared to Croft and Adair. Again, there were no troops on hand, just the cadre. Col. Lanham assigned Joe and a couple of non-coms to map an area across the road from Regtl. Hq. in a wooded area. The remainder of the cadre began training themselves. Not far from the Hq. was a house for Col. Lanham and his wife who stayed with him from time to time. The official Division activation was scheduled and executed, May 15, 1943. General Bolte and his staff taking review of the troops, then welcoming them afterwards and outlining training goals.

Captain Whitlock, S-3, the Plans and Training staff officer, was promoted to Major, his T/O rank. In June or July there was notification the troops would arrive. Joe assisted in the preparation of the troop reception plan. Immediately after arrival, the Basic training period was underway following the schedule prepared by the S-3. Three or four weeks into training, the troops are sent to the various weapons ranges for live firing of weapons. Part of the early training in garrison was in the disassembly and assembly of rifles, machine guns, etc and their care. The Regiment had some 3,000 men to be sent to these ranges and learn to live fire these weapons. It was allotted a certain period of time for this to be completed so other Regiments could have the ranges. The Division set a schedule for use of the ranges by the various units. The S-3's job was to prepare this schedule for the 272nd over the allotted time period and ranges .

One day Joe was summoned to Col. Lanham's office where Major Whitlock was present. The Col. explained the Major was having some difficulty setting up the range schedule and he was assigning Joe to help him. Whitlock and Joe left the office and went to Whitlock's quarters where he had been working on the schedule. He handed Joe the Div. schedule and several Field Manuals. He felt Joe could work better alone than with him. Telling Joe he could work there or in his own quarters, he left. Being accustomed to planning an operation from the RBA assignment in the 96th, Joe went to his quarters and worked during the day for several days and set up the schedule. On completion he took it to Major Whitlock. A day or so later he was again summoned to report to Col. Lanham's office with Major Whitlock. Holding the plan in his hand he said it looked fine and was a good job. Maj. Whitlock told the Col., Joe had planned it alone.

272nd Infantry Regiment S-3

A day or so later, Joe was made Regimental S-3. Major Whitlock was transferred from the Regiment.

Major Mannan was Bn. CO of the 2nd Bn. Major Kennedy CO of the 3rd. They both had been National Guard officers for several years before the war broke out, hence their rank. They had been friends with Joe at Camp Adair and Fort Benning although there was a big difference in ranks. Both were later promoted to be Lt. Cols. With Joe becoming S-3, even though he was still a 1st Lt., the gap officially narrowed between them. When Joe was not with Col. Lanham, he was either at Hq. making plans or in a jeep making inspections. If Joe went into either's area alone to inspect, while he rushed to salute, they treated him like an arm of Col. Lanham, that is with respect.

The Basic training continued without a hitch, mostly in garrison and in marches. After about three months, the Regiments began going to the Desoto National Forest for tactical training and bivouacs (overnight stays) where they were exposed to the dreaded chiggers of the Forest. The 272nd's area was centered around a beautiful sloping piece of terrain Col. Lanham immediately named "Victory Trail." Some of these bivouacs were for up to a week. Happy soldiers returned to Camp to shower, pulled chiggers from each other, got a good meal in the Mess Hall and a good night's sleep in their bunk instead of the ground.

Soon, a large number of soldiers were sent as replacements to Divisions fighting in the Pacific, Africa or Italy. New men would arrive and their Basic training begun. This sending of replacements and receiving of new troops happened many times. Joe was promoted to Captain. The entire Division went out into the Desoto National Forest for maneuvers. Later, it

would march to Mobile, Alabama, for an encampment off the beach and Gulf off Mexico, then march back to Camp Shelby, camping on the way, both to and from. This was often recalled as "The March to the Sea."

D-Day June 6, 1944

On June 6, 1944, D-Day took place. The launching by the allies of the attack against the Germans in France. Replacements were sent from the 69th. Among them was Col. Charles T. "Buck" Lanham, the commanding officer of the 272nd Inf. Reg., who was to distinguish himself with the 22nd Inf. Rgt. 4th Inf. Div. which spearheaded the Normandy breakout, entered Paris, attacked the Siegfried Line and held a key salient in the Battle of The Bulge. He was the officer whom author Ernest Hemmingway called "the finest bravest and most intelligent regimental commander I have ever known."

Col. Lanham left around the middle of June, 1944 and Lt. Col. Bryan Halter who had been, Regtl. Ex. O, second in command, took over as Acting CO. Training continued with everyone wondering what would happen next with them. Joe thinks, but is not sure, that around the first of September, Lt. Col. Halter told him the Division would soon be going overseas and a bunch of Majors would be sent in and he would be replaced from his S-3 job because of his Captain rank. Col. Lanham had tried to promote Joe to Major but was turned down because Joe had not been a Company Commander. After much argument, Joe and Halter were good friends, it was decided Joe would be sent to Cannon Co instead of a rifle company Joe had requested.

About this time, the Majors began to arrive, A Major Henry Green who had been a tactical instructor at Fort Benning came and was made S-3. The assignment to Cannon Co for Joe was made but first he went to the field to be acting S-4 (Supply) on a training exercise while all Regtl. Staff, Bn. Command and staff and Company COs remained in Camp for what was called POM, "Preparation for Overseas Movement."

One day during this exercise, Joe drove up to the field Command Post and went in to make a report on the status of company feeding which was his responsibility as S-4. It was almost a 24 hour/day requirement, even time to "relieve" had to be squeezed in, much less shave. He had about a 2 day growth of his heavy beard on his face. Joe who had smoked cigars since a late teenager, and in the 272nd with no objection from Col. Lanham, also had a cigar. The new acting Regtl. CO, whose name escapes Joe, on seeing him, led Joe outside with remarks he was taking him to meet the new Regtl. CO who was there just to observe what was taking place. Standing alongside a jeep was a very military looking individual who turned out to be Col. Walter Daniel Buie. The two saluted Col. Buie who returned the salute and ordered "At ease." After Joe's introduction and explanation of what his jobs had been and a few words, Col. Buie asked him when he had last shaved? Joe told him and why. A very erect Col. Buie replied that henceforth he, and all others in the Regiment would shave before breakfast and turned to walk away, then wheeled around with, "There will be no smoking in the CP, either!"

The troops returned to Camp Shelby with Joe taking command of the Cannon Company. At some time, Lt. Col. Mannan had been sent from the Rgt. and Lt. Col. Kennedy was made Regtl. Ex O.

Colonel Walter Daniel Buie

Joe began getting acquainted with the Cannon Company and the preparation for its movement. Everything was going fine. One morning, while at the Company Hq., one of the men rushed in and reported Col. Buie was in the Company area inspecting. Joe was led to and saluted Col. Buie. He walked the Col. around the area until told everything looked fine and no further inspection would take place. Joe came to attention and saluted which was returned with the question, "By the way Capt., what are the orders for shaving in the Regt?" Joe replied with the shave before breakfast which Col. Buie had told him at their first meeting and which he had done that morning. Standing, stiffly the Col. asked if he had carried out that order this morning? Joe had shaved and replied, "Yes sir!" The Col. retorted, "Next time, stand closer to the razor," turned and departed. This was the first of several conflicting encounters the two had until the Rgt. was on the Siegfried Line, late February, 1945.

The departure of the Division and Regiment overseas as well as movement is detailed on the 69th's Web site, <http://www.69th-infantry-division.com>. Joe only recounted some special incidents to take place. At several Company Commander's meetings held by Col. Buie, Joe voiced contrary views on the orders issued. Once in France, Lt. Col. Kennedy came to the Cannon Company area and begged Joe to stay quite at these meetings stating Col. Buie was threatening to re-

classify Joe. Joe replied he didn't think it could be done with the ratings in his file from Col. Lanham but he agreed to be careful. When the Cannon Company moved into its gun position on the Siegfried Line, he and 1st Lt., Glenn Nevins whom Joe relieved as CO of the Company, agreed the positions were not good. The two went by jeep to reconnoiter for a better position. As they were leaving the area decided on, Schu mines were observed. A mine platoon was called in to clear the area. When the first truck pulled in the next day with its 105 cannon, the 1st Sgt. and mail clerk alighted to set up the CP. On walking into the area, the clerk stepped on a Schu Mine that had not been detected. A few seconds later, the truck coming into the area to remove the clerk, rolled over another one. It was apparent the area was not cleared completely so the Company moved back to its original position. On arrival, there was word that Capt. Lipsius was to turn the Company over to Lt. Nevins and report with his gear to Lt. Col. Kennedy at Regtl. Hq. in a jeep which would arrive at a certain time to pick him up.

272nd Infantry Regiment S-2 again

On arrival, the jeep driver reported to Lt. Col. Kennedy and almost immediately Kennedy emerged. He told Joe the S-2 had been in an accident and he had recommended to Col. Buie to appoint Joe S-2, if Joe thought they could work together. Joe told Kennedy whatever was for the good of the Regiment he could do. Kennedy returned into the tent and soon Col. Buie emerged and returned Joe's salute. After stating almost the same as Kennedy, he told Joe he was to be the new S-2 and turned to go into CP. Before entering, he added, "Major Green is allowed to smoke in the CP, you will, too." This was about March 2, 1945.

Joe and Col. Buie worked well together and soon respected each other. Joe worked closely with Major Green in the preparation of orders that sent the 272nd across Germany. Green was a chain cigarette smoker. Joe was kept supplied with vintage cigars from German homes or stores. Between the two, the CP was filled with smoke but Col. Buie did not object although no others could smoke there. One incident Joe recalls was that the three, Buie, Gren and he, were in a house CP pouring over a map, planning the next movement. As usual, Joe was on his knees on a chair with Buie and Green to the right and left. Suddenly, there was a light rap on Joe's rear, with the question. "NMI, how are you doing?" The three turned and faced Brig Gen "Buck" Lanham! It turned out he was now Ass't Div. CO, 104th Inf. Div. After salutes and introduction by Joe, he and Lanham went outside for a few minutes. On return, it was obvious, Col. Buie did not approve of what had taken place.

Movement through Germany

The Div. moved through Germany with the 272nd Inf. Rgt. doing its share, according to Joe, which he explains can be read in the 272nd "Unit History" on the 69th's Web Site. He states one eventful incidents not recorded is the capture of General Von Ziegesar, commandant of the City of Leipzig, April 19, 1945. He quotes this event reading from page 94, "History of the 272nd Infantry: "The Battle of Leipzig offered to the mortar men of Company M a chance to engage the Krauts in to hand combat. Acting on information from an ally, a combat patrol was formed with the company of volunteers consisting of 2 Officers and 21 enlisted men. Starting at 0100, 19 April 1945 and armed mostly with pistols and carbines, they stormed an enemy garrison not knowing what was in store for them. Taking full advantage of the inky darkness they were able to liquidate several guards before the alarm was given. At this point the Krauts in it, taken mainly by surprise, quickly surrendered. A German Major was told that ten times as many men as were actually present had the place surrounded. Impressed by this, he agreed to guide around to the other barracks and try to persuade the rest to surrender. While this was going on many more of the



Fig. 4—Major Joe Lipsius (far right, dark shirt) at the surrender of the Nazi Army in Leipzig, April 19, 1945.

guards were being disarmed by force. After approximately 140 soldiers had been captured, the Commandant's house was approached by eight men and the German Major. When the Major called out to the guards at the commandant's house, all hell broke loose with automatic and small arms fire coming from the windows and doorways..." General von Ziegesar was the prize catch described by the IPW Team on page 131, 272nd History and surrendered the City to Col. Walter D. Buie and Joe by written document prepared by the IPW Team on the morning of April 19, 1945, recorded by Signal Corps film and shown in a single image on page 44 of the 272nd History.

The above photo is from a frame of 16mm Signal Corps Film. Joe is pictured at far right with the surrender document and a cigar in his hand. Col. Walter D. Buie is the gentleman with the mustache on the left.

May 9, 1945 - VE Day

VE Day took place on May 9, 1945. The Army began returning certain people home for discharge even though the war with Japan was still on. Major Green was returned and Joe was assigned as S-3. His long awaited promotion to Major was on Special Orders No. 152, dated June 01, 1945, Hq. 9th Army United States of America.



Fig. 5—Civilian Joe Lipsius, 1946.

Joe thought he might be selected for Army of Occupation so he requested for transfer to a Unit going to the Pacific. He was soon assigned to the 78th Inf. Div. stationed around Kassel, Germany. He was assigned to the 311th Inf. Rgt. Hq., stationed vicinity of Grebenstein, Germany. He was given the job of overseeing publication of the Regiment's history already underway by a staff in Fulda, Germany. Meanwhile, VJ Day took place which left occupation in Germany or going home as the only alternate. The history, called "Combat Journal" was successfully published with Joe being listed as Executive Editor. Soon, the 78th Div. was moved to the Bremen, Germany area. Joe now was commander of the 3rd Bn. 311th Inf. with his battalion occupying a well-conditioned German barracks in Bremerhaven, Germany. This was December, 1945.

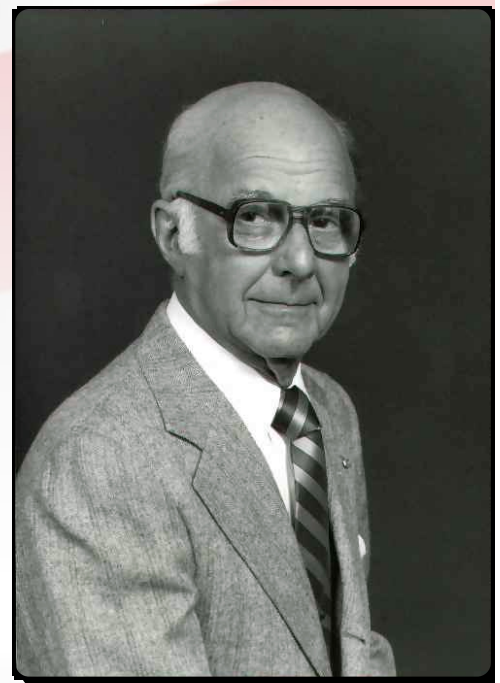


Fig. 6—Webmaster Joe Lipsius, 2001.

In January, 1946, Joe attained the 85 points necessary to return home. He was soon to leave on a Liberty ship for the United States and be discharged from the Army of The United States on February 19, 1946.

[End of Joe's original post]

* * *

[September 7, 2015 Update]

[Click here to read the first chapter, The Early Life of Joe Lipsius.](#)



Fig. 6—Honored Guest Joe Lipsius, Elbe Day 2010.
Torgau, Germany.

Webmaster Postscript: [Elbe Day 2010](#)

On April 23-25, 2010, Joe & Anne Lipsius, along with Don Connelly (Hq. Co. 2nd Bn. 271st Inf. Reg.), formally represented the veterans of the 69th Infantry Division at the 65th Reunion of the "Link-Up" in Torgau, Germany.

The Link-Up split the Nazi army in two and hastened the end of World War II. Two weeks later, on May 8, 1945, Germany surrendered unconditionally to the Allies—Victory in Europe Day (VE Day).

May we never forget the sacrifices that Joe and his 69th Infantry Division Band of Brothers made to secure our freedoms.

* * *

Small in stature, but a giant among men.

On September 6, 2015, Joe Lipsius died peacefully at age 97. Joe had only just retired as 69th Webmaster about eight months ago. Just five weeks ago he emailed webmaster, Michael McKibben. He was following up an opportunity to recruit a librarian to assist with improving Taps records. Joe does not want us to forget a single 69er, or what they did for us. We will certainly not forget him.

Godspeed Joe, as you join The Long Gray Line
and reunite with your brothers who preceded you.

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