

NEWTON BOYS IN THICK OF FIGHTING WITH 7TH ARMY

~~1/4/45~~
URBAN VOLK AND BILLY REED ARE
MEMBERS OF THE FAMED
CENTURY DIVISION

SIXTH ARMY GROUP, FRANCE —

Private Urban Volk and Private William C. Reed of Newton, help make up the 397th Infantry Regiment of the 100th (Century) Division which is one of the newest units fighting on the U. S. 7th Army front in Eastern France. However, they have the satisfaction of knowing they played an important part in the "squeeze play" so thoroughly applied to the German 19th Army.

While French troops spearheaded drives through the Saverne Pass in the north and Belfort Gap in the south, both routes leading to Strasbourg and the Ruins, the principal part of the 7th Army fought relentlessly against the thousands of Nazis caught in the middle. With the French helping the army in on the sides, the 397th, and other units of the 7th Army, drove piston-like against the middle.

The 397th began its push, and its baptism of fire, in the dense forests of the Vosges Mountains in the vicinity of Baccarat. The fighting conditions were as tough as any that any troops faced along the extended Sixth Army Group front, The Group consisting of the American 7th and the French First Armies.

In addition to the fanatic enemy who fought with the ferocity of a trapped rat, the 397th faced innumerable land-mines, booby-traps and well-prepared defense installations. The weather was cold, it rained frequently and mud was ankle-deep. The forest, covered with a heavy undergrowth, provided cover for Nazi snipers.

But stubborn slugging and skillful maneuvering enabled the 397th to push through Raon l'Etape, Senenes and other key towns leading toward the Rhine and the eventual defeat of the last Germans in France.