

DID NOT KNOW WHAT FEAR WAS

MAJOR JAS. A. WILLIS WRITES OF
323d INFANTRY.

Highly Compliments Lieut. Edwin Bruce

Tells of Battle Scenes Closing the
War.—Bruce Was in Front
Ranks of Fight.

The following very interesting letter from Major James A. Willis, of Barnwell, is reprinted from the Barnwell Sentinel.

On Active Service with American Expeditionary Forces, A. P. O. 791, December 10, Grancey-sur-Ouorce, France.—Mr. Frank H. Huggins, Barnwell, S. C. Dear Frank: On the morning of November 10th, between 10 and 11 o'clock, I was directed to take my battalion and occupy a line then held by a battalion of the 324 infantry, which had been badly shot up, and to hold that position until further orders. The position was located on the map and I was told to get there as soon as possible. At 11 o'clock we started through the town of Haudimont on the Verdun-Metz road in the direction of Manheulles. The men were marching in column of two's and we had not gone 100 yards before a shell landed near the head of the column, followed in a very few seconds by another. We had to go down that road for about two miles, then across an open field about a mile further before we could deploy. An enemy plane flew high over us directing the shots, and believe me, they came to us thick and fast. It was one continuous roar of bursting shells. Someone suggested that we get off the road and march on the side, but I noticed that practically all the shells were falling at the edge of the road and the old shell holes were on the edge, with very few in the middle of the road; therefore, I thought we had better stay where there were the fewest shell holes, and stayed in the middle of the road until we had to leave the road. I thought sure they would hit us when we left the road, and they did put them all around, but not a shell touched a man on the road or while we were crossing the field. As soon as we reached position, assault formation was taken up and the advance directly against the German line was commenced, and if the old boy and his imps ever broke loose, they did then, and paid us a visit. Shells of every kind and caliber rained down. We had about 1,500 yards to go to reach the position we were to occupy. Mixed with the shells was a lot of gas, one company lost 44 men gassed, but none of them died.

You never saw finer soldiers in your life, they never halted for one moment, but moved steadily to the front, an officer had only to make a signal and it was obeyed instantly. Soon after the assault started 10 or 15 men of the 324th infantry came running back through our lines saying that the Germans had machine guns covering that field and if the men advanced they would be wiped out, but not one of our men paid the least bit of attention to them, but kept right on. The machine guns opened fire all right, and kept it up all the time, but that made no difference to our boys; they never stopped until they reached the objective. How they lived through it I do not know, some fell wounded and some killed, but nothing like you would expect. The men were deployed with wide interval between them and that is the only way we can account for so few losses. A man would move forward a few yards and a shell would hit the spot he had just left and blow a hole in the ground that you could put a squad in, and in a few minutes another shell will fall a few yards in front of him. There seemed to be some unseen hand guiding us and protecting us. During the hardest part of the fighting an enemy plane flew just over us and something told me he was coming back; I told the men who were near me, this was at my post of command, to get up everything they could to shoot and be prepared for that fellow when he came back, and sure enough in two or three minutes he appeared headed directly toward us and not over 100 feet high. As soon as he got close enough he opened fire on us with a machine gun, but the men were ready for him and when I told them "let him have it," they let him have it for all they were worth with rifles, pistols and one man had gotten a Browning automatic rifle with which he did fine work. A soon as our firing commenced he turned and got away as fast as possible. Capt. Hollingsworth, who was just below us with his company, told me that

Continued on page 4, column 1.)

Just Arrived

We have just received three carloads of mules and hirses from the Western markets. These animals were personally selected by our Mr. W. P. Jones, and they are in the pink of condition. They are now to be seen at our stables. Don't fail to see them before you buy.

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BUY W. S. S. and Help WIN THE WAR

BUY W. S. S. and Help WIN THE WAR

Trotting Horses

The last of the present week I will receive another shipment of mules and horses. In this lot there are a number of fast trotting horses, and also some nice buggy drivers. They will be in the pink of condition, and I want you to call around and take a look at them. If you appreciate good stock, you ought to see these. My prices on these mules and horses are right, and if you are in the market for a mule or a horse, we can get together.

J. J. Smoak
Bamberg, S. C.

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