

BRIDGE 37

(This story by Allan Henderson won the ten dollar prize as best story submitted to the Year Book in 1954.)

It was 1943 in a little town called Litzenville, Germany. Their peace loving people stood watching helplessly as the Nazi "supermen" rode by on motorcycles. Behind them came the tanks. Then came trucks carrying supplies and ammunition.

At a point high up the hill from the village lay two men with binoculars. One was a British agent named Scotty and next to him an American named Bill. He was known to his fellow operators as #63.

"We'll have to stop those tanks" said Scotty.

"Oh sure," said Bill. "we'll go down and ask them to turn around."

After the column had gone through the town. Bill said. "How can we do it?"

Scotty thought a moment and then spoke—"Four motorcycles, eight half-tracks and fifteen trucks filled with ammo."

"Bill", Scotty continued, "you want to take a chance;"

"Sure", said Bill "anything to stop the Nazi's and Hitler."

"I know of a bridge about four miles down the road," said Scotty. "with all that ammo the Nazi's will have to go slow. We can cut across country and get there before the tanks."

"But what are we going to do?" said Bill. "Take a deep breath and blow the bridge-over?"

"That's partly it," said Scotty, "with the help of dynamite."

With that the two men put away their binoculars. checked their guns, and started across country. After they had walked about three-miles, stopping only to hide when two guards passed, they came to a large tree.

There they stopped; Scotty got down on the ground and started digging with his hands.

"Hope it is still here," Scotty mumbled as he dug.

After digging for about ten minutes, Scotty hit something. He called Bill, and in due time they had a box of dynamite beside them.

"I thought it would come in useful," was all that Scotty said.

After filling the hole back in. the two underground men opened the box, and each took half of the sticks.

"Just in case one of us shouldn't get through," Scotty said, "the other one still has a chance."

After putting them in their sacks, they continued on.

In the last mile they walked, they had to take cover four times as German guards passed.

"Those tanks must be going someplace," said Bill.

"Ay," said Scotty. "usually there are only guards at the bridge."

Presently the bridge was sighted. Bill had expected to see a small structure across a narrow stream. But when he saw it lie was very surprised. The bridge was made of reinforced

lumber with guards at both ends; and he estimated the length of it at 500 feet.

"We'll there she is." said Scotty.

The bridge was situated over a fairly wide stream. At the middle it was 40 feet above the water.

From where Scotty and Bill stood they would have to descend about 50 feet.

The guards at each end had a machine gun attached to a post protected by armor.

As the two men started toward the bridge again, they had to hide because of approaching guards. Keeping themselves out of sight of the guards at the bridge they made their way to the river bank. They were at a point about 1,000 feet upstream.

Protected by trees and shrubs along the river bank, the two walked slowly and cautiously toward the bridge.

As they neared it, Scotty raised his hand and listened. Bill also heard it. In the distance they heard tanks. There was no mistaking that sound. It was the German tanks.

After looking around and taking a few more steps, they were under the supports of the bridge.

Scotty climbed the supports of the bridge and Bill crossed the river with the bridge between him and the German guards. The river being shallow he was able to wade across. As he climbed the piers and started to tie on the dynamite he could hear the tanks coming closer. He then waited for Scotty's signal meaning he had the dynamite attached to his side of the bridge. The signal also meant to light the fuse.

Finally he saw Scotty's signal and lit his fuse as did Scotty. After setting the fuses they both quickly and quietly reached the ground.

As they ran down the river the motorcycles got acrossed. Just as the tanks were on the bridge—BAROOM!! Bills dynamite went off. Five seconds later another explosion rattled the air.

Yells were heard, the tanks were falling into the river, and the guards were shooting wildly in the air.

As soon as the first blast was heard. Bill and Scotty dived and held their hands over their heads to protect them from falling debris.

As they turned to look at the sight, a terrible explosion was heard. Somehow a spark had hit an ammunition truck and it was blown sky high.

Two hours later, back in the hideout on the outskirts of Lit/enville, they heard a message over the German radio. The message stated—"We are sad to announce that seventeen tanks were completely destroyed and five ammunition trucks were blown up because of an unfortunate accident. Bridge 37 collapsed due to the hot humid weather."

After their return to their respective countries. both Bill and Scotty were honored and received medals for bravery in the field of battle.