

Japs Scurry Like Rats When Surrounded by Americans

After he was severely wounded by an improvised Jap grenade, made from a shell case packed with explosives. Pfc.

Nicholas Lieber, 27, of RFD No. 1, Twining, shared his foxhole with two enemy soldiers. The young infantry rifleman told how two Japs thought him



dead and how he was powerless to help as he saw one fire a machine gun to kill another Doughboy. Overseas more than three years, he fought with the Americal Infantry Division on Guadalcanal, Bougainville, and Cebu, in the Philippines, where he was wounded. He was awarded the Combat Infantry Badge, for exemplary conduct in action against the enemy, the Purple Heart, and the Philippine Liberation ribbon. Pfc. Lieber is the son of Mrs. Barbara Lieber, of the Twining address.

Temporarily paralyzed by his wounds and unable to use his Browning automatic rifle, Pfc. Nicholas G. Lieber watched a Jap jump into his foxhole and open fire and kill the Doughboy who had shared the position with him.

The 27-year old, former upstate Michigan farmer, returned to this country for treatment, told in an interview at Letterman General Hospital, San Francisco, California, of the experience after he was wounded in action with the veteran Americal Infantry Division on Cebu, in the Philippines.

"My squad," he related, "was holding an outpost or sort of 'strong point' on a little knoll away from the rest of the platoon.

"When the Japs charged us, just after midnight, they were using dynamite grenades—shell cases packed with explosives and armed with a short fuse. One exploded a little in front of us, and the next one right on my shoulder. I had shot two Japs before I was hit, but after I was wounded I was no good. I tried to swing my BAR around, but I couldn't even get my arm up to it. I could feel and hear the blood coming from a wound in my neck.

"One Nip jumped in the hole with a bayonet. He must have felt sure I was dead. He didn't jab me with the bayonet, as nine out of ten of them will do when they find a wounded man.

"After the first one went on, a second one, with a light machine-gun, got into the hole. He didn't pay much attention to me. He knelt and fired a couple of bursts that killed the man who had been sharing the hole with me. When the grenade went off in the hole he had got out or was knocked out, and was 10 or 15 feet away from us."

Following the company's telephone line for direction, Private Lieber crawled several hundred yards through the dark to reach another position of his platoon, where he had to await daylight before evacuation was possible.

"There were still a lot of Japs between us and the company," he went on, "and it would have been suicide for the company aid men to have tried to get through."

Wearer of the Combat Infantry Badge, for exemplary conduct in action against the enemy, the Purple Heart and the Philippine Liberation ribbon, the Michigan rifleman was overseas more than three years. He saw his first action on Guadalcanal, then fought on Bougainville for 13 months before going to the Philippines.

"For the first two years," he said, "I carried the same BAR I had when I left the States. There isn't a better weapon in the world than the BAR, and it was a good one. Even the barrel was still in good shape after all that use."

His battalion won praise for severing the important Numa Numa supply trail on Bougainville.

"It really was a good operation too," he declared. "Three companies circled around the enemy position on Horseshoe Ridge, took them off balance and did the job in one day. There were 42 dead Japs at the first count. And the trail was closed to them from then on."

Private Lieber has been in the service since April, 1941. After basic training at the Camp Croft, S. C., Infantry Replacement Training Center, he joined a regiment which became a part of the American Infantry Division when it was formed in the Pacific.