It was like old home week when these troops found some wounded Americans awaiting them in a German hospital.

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With the Third Army in Germany—Ten miles north of Frankfurt there was a hospital for wounded soldiers, German and Allied alike. The hospital stood in a clearing in the woods on the night before the Americans arrived. The Allied wounded hobbled on crutches, loaned window or straitened themselves up from their pillows to look out. They could hear the artillery fire of the battle for Frankfurt and they wondered when the Americans would come. Many of the Germans doctors had cleared out but a few doctors, nurses and orderlies remained.

By morning on the 29th there was no longer any artillery fire and it was hard for the wounded to think those who could manage it donned their old uniforms, the khaki pants, the typing jacket, the felt hat and the wings. Some had been prisoners for months, others for years. There were men who had been gassed and wounded as much as five times and made them pale.

Those who were not bedfast ventured out for walks around the hospital. The others smoked their Red Cross cigarettes nervously, and waited.

Inside Frankfurt, the Fifth Division passed for a break on March 25, after fighting 31 days and crossing five rivers since its last jump-off. From Frankfurt, the Allies swept up Capt. Donald E. Robinson's recon troops out of Frankfurt. Robinson's recon was last to get out and one knew what was out there, but word had come back there were but few Germans in the vicinity, some of them Americans.

Going along the road with the recon troops we could see what they looked like. They were the same as those they looked at us. The Germans, swept along by the German wind, smelt of the future. They looked ahead. The displaced persons looked straight at us, ready to cheer or salute if we so much as causally wave. Five Russians insisted on shaking hands with Capt. Robinson once when the column was halted. Ten Frenchmen waved a tricolor flag made of rags.

Once in the town, suddenly and there was tension in the air. German soldiers had been seen on the roads and the word was being passed back. Some men got out of their jeeps and took positions in the ditches.

An ultimatum was sent ahead to the burgomaster of the village where the Germans were seen. He was to come out and round up whatever German soldiers there were and surrender them in the town square or we would shoot the place up. Then we rolled into town and the burgomaster rang a bell in the square summoning all the civilians. He read a document directing all soldiers to report immediately to the town hall. His voice was clear, and the sound of his voice was soft-shiny with sweat.

The column moved on and everything looked calm in the little villages. We passed two Russian women who told us they had been hidden in the woods as they went eating. The men threw them some rations.

A grave word drifted down the line of more Germans ahead—a burial of them approaching a crossroads. The men behind the guns turned as if they were going to stop. It emptied quickly. A German in front of the column crouched down in the air as if it were suddenly red hot. This was funny enough for a ripple of grim laughter to run down the column.
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Among the 21 Germans on the bus was a medical officer with a Heidelberg saber slung across his back. He was dressed in some Luftwaffe flak garments and two nurses wearing red cross arm bands. The medical officer perspired freely while explaining that his command had been flying all night across country. Meanwhile, our soldiers removed five cases of cognac from the bus as a German officer on the local mail run. The mailman looked at his letter from a prisoner in Stalag Luft III and said he was strictly minding his own business. In Stanley Switewich of Wyandotte, Mich., whose lead platoon had grabbed the bus, looked over the cases of cognac with a little grimly when he saw the Luftwaffe wings on the mailman's letter and heard that he had taken some flak garments. He said something very loudly about how he would like to fix them so they would never be any good hereafter as future fathers. The German officer grinned painfully. The GIs, with the platoon leader of soldiers, started at the German nurses.

The woods around us were resounding with artillery fire as the recon cars probed through our area with bullets for more Germans. Down the road we could see red and orange flashes from his pistol in front of it. It stopped and two rocks got out. "Tell them to keep that car off the road," said the captain to a soldier who spoke Ger-

We rolled for a thousand yards through the woods, and once we were back on our lines. It was very quiet until suddenly there was a loud scream, Simultaneously, we spotted the prison hospital and the men hobbling and crawling down the walks, calling to us as they came to us.

We got to them and they talked in loud, excited voices and what they had to say seemed to never to finish. There was a captain with the scars of burns around his eyes, men with missing legs, a small Texan with the Air Forces insignia on his shirt, a Canadian from Toronto, a flyer from Lawrence in the Shetland Islands. The recon soldiers didn't know what to say. They were windburned, healthy, cocky soldiers of a conquering army and the men they had found looked drawn and pale. But they got together with small talk over cigarettes and cognac while the German medics and Luftwaffe wounded looked silently. No one paid attention to them; this was an American old some time in the Greenbush Infirmary. A Yank with a bad leg added the final festive touch to the late afternoon when people in siren and its screams ran out into the still countryside. Everyone wanted to go back with the recon troops to Frankfurt, but Capt. Robinson explained that they would have to wait until doctors and ambulances came the next day. The men would have to stay in the hospital that night, others of the recon boys were out doing their job and had flashed more Germans bringing the total prisoner take to more than 100. Some of the wounded hobbled out of the siren for the changing guard around the hospital. It was not a large camp with orderlies and doctors and medics arrived. Those who could walk climbed into ambulances while the others were brought in on stretchers.

It was still very joyful but it also was very somber. It was a rare moment when the channel was open. An officer read off the names of every man going by him to the radio station for transmission. American soldiers again and they were on a hit and their names were broadcast.

They were soldiers again; it was roll call.