November 1944: World War II at 80

Progress on all fronts

By Ronald P. May

The month of November saw progress across all the fronts of the war.

In Northern Belgium, British and Canadian forces focused their efforts on opening the key port of Antwerp.

Antwerp is 55 miles inland from the North Sea. The city and its port had come under Allied control back in September, but the long estuary approach to the city's port had still been under German control.

On Nov. 1, Operation Infatuate began with British amphibious landings on Walcheren, a former Island, at the mouth of the Scheldt estuary in the Zeeland Dutch province.

By the end of the month, British and Canadian forces had cleared the estuary approach from German forces, and it was fully open all the way to the port of Ant-

werp for Allied shipping. Once the estuary and port at Antwerp were open, war supplies reached advancing Allied troops much sooner than when transporting the cargo from the port at Cherbourg, France.

Back in the U.S.

Nov. 7 was Election Day in the United States. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt easily won an historic and unprecedented fourth term as president.

His continued presence in the White House ensured consistent and competent leadership as the U.S. entered its fourth year in the war.

Action in France

Meanwhile, in eastern France, General George Patton's Third Army crossed the Moselle River on their advance toward Germany.

Patton's forces had pushed 400 miles across northern France following the Allies break through the Normandy region.



The US Third Army, 378th Infantry, makes its way along the outskirts of Metz, France, on Nov. 17, 1944. (U.S. Army Center of Military History courtesy photo)

lies ability to supply them, Infantry, 95th Division. especially with fuel for the sent to the Netherlands for Operation Market Garden.

fuel forced the Third Army to halt near Metz, France, and allowed German forces to strengthen their defensive line around the city.

By mid-November, Patand engaged German forces in combat.

ing, the 3rd Army took control of the city. However, German resistance from isolated forts in the area continued.

Local casualties

PFC Hobart Wayne Cox in an undisof Ashland Township in

Morgan County was among the forces fighting at Metz, France.



COX

soon became a farmer and employee at Oscar Patrick. He married Lois Appleby

on Dec. 6, 1941, one day before the attack at Pearl Harbor.

across France outran the Alssigned to Company K, 378th

After arriving in Europe vehicles well behind them in August 1944, Cox and and the bulk of fuel getting his division were attached to Patton's Third Army.

Cox lost his life on Nov. This critical shortage of 10 during the siege of Metz. He was 30 years old.

His body, temporarily buried in the military cemetery at Limey, France, returned to Indiana in July 1948, and he was buried ton's forces entered Metz with military honors at Cloverdale Cemetery.

Two other Morgan Coun-After a few days of fight- ty men lost their lives in action around France in November.

First Lt. Emmett E. Martin of Martinsville died in

combat on Nov. 12 at the age of 26 closed location.

Martin, who attend-

ed Martinsville High

School, enlisted in the Army in 1938. He served as a sergeant in Company K, 151st Infantry and was later commissioned a second lieutenant in March 1943 after completing officer candidate school in Fort

MARTIN

Benning, Ga. He married Margaret Gowin of Indianapolis in Cox enlisted in the Army January 1944. She was a Their speedy advance in August 1942 and was as-widow 10 months later.

Martin's body was re- mother wrote a remembrance in more than 9,000 civilian turned to Indiana in July 1948. He was one of 112 other Hoosier deceased, including Hobart Cox, who were transported from Europe on the Army Transport Oglethorpe Victory, which brought end of his days. back to America 4,383 de-

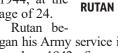
After arriving home, Martin was buried in Centennial Cemetery in Martinsville.

ceased service members.

Pvt. Loren C. Rutan of Martinsville was also

serving in France with the Third Army in November.

He died on Nov. 8, 1944, at the age of 24.



gan his Army service in November 1942, five months after marrying Marie Payne. After his training in Colo-

rado, he served for a time as a bodyguard for President Roosevelt. Rutan was deployed to

Europe in June 1944. On Nov. 8, he was re-

ported missing and, shortly thereafter, was reported as killed in action in France.

His widow, Marie, later was awarded his Purple Heart for his wounds and ed ballistic missile, the V-2s ronaldpmay.com. Check death in France.

anniversary of his death, his September 1944, resulting Stories with Ron May.

poem in memory of him that and military deaths. was printed in the Nov. 8 edition of the *Daily Reporter*:

Loving and kind in all his

Upright and just to the

We little thought when you left home

That you would return no

To our hearts there comes a longing Dear Loren, if you could

only come home to us again. We do not know what pain you bore.

We did not see you die. We only know you passed

And could not tell us goodbye.

sadly missed by mother, brother and sisters

England pummeled

France and Germany were not the only places suffering from war in Western Europe during November.

crosshairs of Germany.

This time, it was Germany's newly developed V-2 rockets that were hitting English cities.

The "V" referred to a vengeance weapon, and it P. May and his books at lived up to its name.

were first launched into out his videos on YouTube A year later, in 1945, on the England and Belgium in at: World War II History &

By November, the Germans had improved the accuracy of the weapon and an average of eight V-2 rockets were hitting England every day.

November saw 2,754 Londoners killed by the V-2 and another 6,500 injured.

There was no defense that was effective in stopping the weapon once it was aunched.

Pacific Theater

In the Pacific Theater, November marked the first time that B-29 Super Fortress bombers, taking off from the Tinian Naval Base in the Northern Marianas, reached Tokyo in bombing missions.

bombed was the Musashino aircraft plant on Nov. 24. Other sites included Japanese port facilities and industrial areas. The bombing of Tokyo

The first site to be

continued periodically for England was back in the the next 9 months, until Aug. 15, 1945, when Japan finally surrendered.

Next time: December

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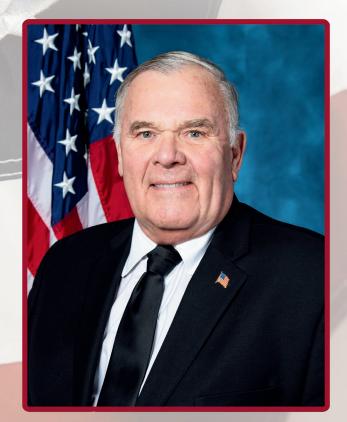
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