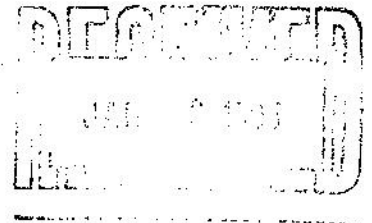


1679 Berkeley Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55105
Dec. 26, 1994



Gus Stavros
St. Petersburg, FL

Dear Gus,

You will be somewhat surprised to receive a letter from me. I don't even know if you remember my name. I was with you in I company of the 376th, and 94th from Fort Benning on. We often talked with each other. I recall your good sense of humor and your relationship with all of us men. I also remember your packages from home in New Jersey, I think, when we were overseas, and how you often shared the contents with the rest of us. Those were years of our lives which we will never forget.

I returned from the war in 1946, entered college in Minn. and after my three years remaining in college I entered a Lutheran Seminary in St. Paul and became a pastor. There were a number of things behind my decision and I think having been in the war had something to do with it. In my memory I recall that you were in the Greek Orthodox Church, but I could be wrong. To me it isn't that important which church we belong to in life.

I've been looking for your address to write you a letter of thanks for something you did 49 years ago. I always wanted to let you know that I was well aware of what you did for me in Germany in the year 1945. The event took place as follows:

A group of about 5 privates were called to help Sergeant (Kincaid ?) take a group of German soldiers back from the front lines to an area where they could be handled and sent on to prison camps. I was one of those selected. It happened that I was just preparing a meal of C-rations when the call came. You came by my hole and said, "Oh Russ, you'r just fixing your meal. I'll go for you." That was evidently accepted by the Sergeant.

After some hours only one of the patrol returned, a tall, handsome Jewish soldier named Levensen, I think. His report was that the patrol had been struck by a shell, Sergeant Kincaid was killed and all of the others were wounded. He said that you had been hit by shrapnel in your head.

There was no way we could locate where any of you men were. None ever returned to our unit. The war ended and we returned to our homes and our future work. I think I may have corresponded with one or two men after the war, but not for long. I often wondered where you were and what your condition was, but I neglected to search for you.

I went to Japan as a missionary and spent 36 years there. I was home every few years, but always busy and I didn't try to look you up. In 1988 I retired

from my work in Japan and I've been living in the U.S. since. I have traveled quite a bit, but never east to New York or New Jersey. But I have often thought of what you did for me, and I've told others about it.

A year ago I saw your name, and perhaps your picture, in the Division magazine. I wrote to Harry Helms and asked if he could locate your address. On the 8th of December I received your address from Harry. It has made 1994 a different year for me.

I don't think there is any mistake that you are the Gus Stavros I knew. I want to thank you, Gus, from the bottom of my heart! You saved me from being ~~badly wounded, and possibly from death by your kindness and your willingness~~ to go in my place with those German prisoners. I have lived a healthy 50 years since then and am now 70 years old.

I would enjoy seeing you sometime. If St. Petersburg is your permanent address I may be able to take a trip down to meet you. I've never been in Florida. I understand that you are a life member of the 94th Division Association. Perhaps I could meet you at one of the annual gatherings. Anyway, I want you to know that I'm deeply grateful for your kindness and bravery during our battles in Germany!

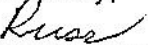
We have four children, the oldest 42, and the only one of the four who is married. Our oldest son is 41 and works for U.S. Customs in Los Angeles. I go visit him quite often and have just returned from two weeks in California.

I do several kinds of volunteer work since retirement. I'm fluent in Japanese and sometimes interpret for people, usually on a volunteer basis. I have a Japanese Karaoke. One of my interesting hobbies is taking background music of real old songs to Rest Homes, playing it, and having the residents sing along or listen. One of the homes has a ward for Alzheimer's patients and one of my best friends lives there. Lars can't talk anymore, but he can sometimes sing and we always go out for frozen yogurt at a nearby McDonalds after the music.

Well, Gus, that's me, Russ, and I will never forget what you did for me. As the years pass I believe I feel more and more grateful. I wish you a good new year in Florida. I think, perhaps, you are still in business there.

My phone is (612) 698-1836, and our address is at the top of the letter. I hope we can meet sometime.

Sincerely,


Russ Sanoden