

The BULGE BUGLE

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION • VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

VOLUME IX NUMBER 4

THE ARDENNES CAMPAIGN

NOVEMBER 1990

9th VBOB Annual Reunion Largest Ever

A RIGHT HAND SALUTE TO THE DELAWARE CHAPTER



"Look ma, no hands," says Bill Greenville, VBOB President, as he receives an all metal gavel from Bill Hemphill, initial Director (right) symbolizing the transfer of VBOB to VBOB, Inc. VBOB is now a corporation.



Sept. 27, 1990, VBOB members pay homage to fallen comrades at Valley Forge Military Academy Chapel, Valley Forge, PA.

Our deepest gratitude goes to Stanley Wojtucik and all of the Delaware Valley members and their wives who worked so long and tirelessly to make VBOB's 9th Reunion the biggest ever. No stone was left unturned to insure that every attendee had a memorable time and these efforts paid off in some wonderful memories. Here's a few of the highlights:

OPENING NIGHT 'MIXER'

Free drinks and hor d'oeuvres were provided by the Delaware Valley VBOB Chapter to start the 9th Reunion off with a bang.

The Ardennes Star was beautifully captured in shaved ice adorning a table filled with delicious tid bits. A tank made of cheese made its way up a cheddar hill.

Attendees were serenaded by accordion music of the 40's, played by a Delaware Chapter member.

World War II-uniformed members of the WWII Historical Re-enactment Society, headed by S/Sgt Steve Crowley, had a huge display of period weapons, equipment and gear which everyone enjoyed. Mr. Crowley explained the re-enactment of the Battle of the Bulge which is scheduled for December, 1990. Anyone interested please contact him at: 287 Glenwood Avenue, Woodbury Heights, New Jersey 08097. The Society's purpose is to keep alive the traditions of WWII combat soldiers.

VBOB's Treasurer, Bill Hemphill, introduced the 24-year-old he lives with--"Joe." (Joe is short for Josephine or Joseph because of uncertainties.) You met Joe (a Blue Fronted Amazon parrot) and Bill in the June, 1990, issue.

MEMORIAL SERVICE AT VALLEY FORGE MILITARY ACADEMY

One of the most moving and memorable of the events of the reunion was the memorial service held Thursday afternoon at the Chapel of St. Cornelius the Centurion at

See page 3

FOR UNFORGETTABLE FUN IN '91 TOUR EUROPE WITH VBOB

See page 4

**VETERANS OF THE
BATTLE OF THE BULGE**

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THE BULGE BUGLE is the official publication of Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge. It is issued five times yearly.

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PRESIDENT - Dorothy S. Davis
57th Field Hospital

PAST VBOB PRESIDENTS

Clyde Boden, 1981-1984
Robert J. Van Houten, 1984-1986
George Chekan, 1986-1988

*"This is undoubtedly the greatest American battle
of the war and will, I believe, be regarded
as an ever-famous American victory."*

SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL

Addressing the House of Commons following
the Battle of the Bulge



FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Ninth Annual Reunion was a great success, and the biggest ever. Many accolades are due our Delaware Valley Chapter for their splendid work in coordinating the arrangements for the meeting.

The Chapter sponsored the opening mixer with some 250 in attendance. They arranged to have the Greater Pennsylvania Chapter Military Vehicle Club display WWII equipment with their men and women dressed in WWII uniforms.

Our memorial service was one that will be hard to match in the future. We filled the chapel at Valley Forge Military Academy with more than 300 members and friends. The ceremony consisted of a presentation of the American Flag followed by the flags of the 13 colonies. Appropriate services followed with homilies by the Academy Chaplain, Brigadier General Alfred Sanelli, and our VBOB National Chaplain, Msgr. William O'Donnell.

At the General Membership meeting we proceeded to adopt our Corporate entity. We adopted our new entity with the same procedure that was used more than 200 years ago to adopt the United States Constitution. We had about 250 in attendance for the meeting.

The banquet doubled any prior numbers with 350 in attendance. Major General Gerald Sager, the Adjutant General of the Pennsylvania National Guard represented the Governor; our guest speaker was Col. Thomas Sweeney, Director of the Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, PA. He reviewed the Battle of The Bulge and how it related to bringing the war to an end and its impact on the history of our country.

Support your organization by paying your dues on time, and support our Historical Foundation with your donations.

Yours in comradeship,

William T. Greenville

VBOB - 1991
ETO TOUR
15 DAYS - MAY 24 - JUNE 7

the Valley Forge Military Academy and Junior College.

There, with historic Valley Forge nearby, several hundred VBOBers, with family and friends joined with the academy cadets to remember those who fell in the Ardennes, and members who have passed to their reward this past year.

With the autumn sun shining through the Chapel's stained glass windows of the colonial style building, it was a ceremony that will live long in our thoughts.

We saw a parade of flags, the posting of the Colors, and heard patriotic hymns by the cadet choir. They were the prelude to a homily by our Chaplain, Monsignor Bill O'Donnel (87 DIV).

After Vice President Bob VanHouten listed the names of VBOBers who had passed away in 1989-1990, President Bill Greenville with Stanley Wojtusik, president of the host Delaware Valley Chapter, solemnly laid a wreath at the foot of the altar in honor of our comrades. Taps were sounded to close the ceremony. Almost solemnly, the VBOBers filed from the chappel and boarded their buses for visits to the scene of Revolutionary War sites at Valley Forge Park. (Thanks to Jack Hyland (84 INF) for providing this write-up.)

Members Speak Out

Anyone interested in getting a reunion going for the 553rd AAA (AW) BN, please contact: ELLINGTON E. "ALEX" WALBURN, 176 Groveland Road, Mount Dora, Florida 32757, (904) 383-1340.

E. DI CASPARRO would like to know if anyone has any information on a reunion for the 382 FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION, 103 INFANTRY DIVISION. If so please contact him at 20 Brook Farm Road, North Providence, Rhode Island 02904. (Also let us know so we can put it in the "Reunions" column.)

An item in the June, 1990, issue misinterpreted what GENE S. CROCKER wanted. He says: "I wanted the request to read for anyone that belonged to or was a member of the 1058 ENGR. P.C. AND R. GROUP to contact me. Either officers or enlisted men. Only men from this outfit can supply me with information that I seek." Mr. Crocker's address is 8200 ParkVista Circle, Charlotte, North Carolina 28226.

FLOYD J. MC NEILL has advised of the formation of a "Location Committee" for COMPANY C, 320TH INFANTRY REGIMENT, 35TH INFANTRY DIVISION. Former members may contact: East of the Rockies--Alex Karavish, 1701 Horlacher Avenue, Kettering, Ohio 45420, 1-513-254-7411. West of the Rockies--Floyd McNeill, 687205 Juniper Way, Susanville, CA 96130, 1-916-825-3485.

VBOB member DONALD J. YOUNG (106TH INFANTRY, 422ND REGIMENT, I COMPANY, has written a new novel, "The Lion's Share." This work of fiction depicts the life of U.S. POW's in Germany (men from the Battle of the Bulge) and the confusion during the early days

DINNER SHOW AT LILY LANGTRY'S

Everyone enjoyed the lovely evening at Lily Langtry's ice spectacular, particularly our "sweet embraceable" Sean Kearney from Mansfield, Ohio (9 ARMDD).

.....

The following excerpt came from the 87th Division Association's "Golden Acorn News," June and September, 1990. Titled, "Take Advantage of Reunions While You Can," it was written by Donald Wall, of Homer, Louisiana, of the USS Bell DD-587: "...In closing this article, I would advise any man who served in any branch of the service during the war, to take advantage of a reunion. For we don't live forever, and to share a few moments with buddies that have once been as close as brothers, when you shared and shared alike, will be a memory that time cannot erase."

.....

We enjoyed rubbing elbows and swapping stories with the 6TH FIELD ARTILLERY VETERANS ASSOCIATION at Valley Forge. They held their 19th Reunion at the same hotel as VBOB and many new friends were made. For information write: Thomas E. Baker, 50 Sola Avenue, San Francisco, California 94116.

in the Ardennes. The book is available from: Avranches Press, 1700 Cheryl Way, Aptos, California 95003. Total cost is \$10.00.

STANLEY M. GRABOWSKI would like to hear from anyone in the 5TH ARMORED DIVISION, 46TH AIB, COMBAT COMMAND A, who can provide information regarding the weather conditions which caused frozen and/or frost bitten feet and the 3rd Army's policy that soldiers could not be evacuated with these conditions until the Bulge crisis was overcome. Please write him at: Hospital Heights, E. Apt. A-1, Rutland, Vermont 05701. Telephone: (802) 775-3952.

JOSEPH E. BIRO was been elected president of the 94th INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION at that organization's 41st annual reunion in San Diego in October.

REID W. McNARY, of the 981ST FA BN, VII CORPS, 1ST ARMY, would appreciate any information on the 87TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION (ARMORED) known as "Jeopard"/"Bushmasters". He believes that in 1945 they served in Panama and were brought into Europe about the end of 1944 or early 1945. Reid's address is: 1054 University Avenue, Salinas, California 93901. Drop him a line if you have any information.

Sue Fenton is looking for any information anyone may have on her father CORPORAL WILLIAM GEORGE CHAMBERS, whom she believes was in the Battle of the Bulge. He was reported missing and presumed dead while in action in Belgium at the end of 1944. She has no further information other than a book (received from *The Times* newspaper entitled "Britain's Homage," with her father's name printed on the front with the number 18040 (the significance of which she does not know)). Sue's address is: Brockley Cottage, Brockley End, Cleeve, Avon, BS19 4PP, England.

VBOB - 1991 ETO TOUR

15 MEMORABLE DAYS

Join your VBOB buddies on a tour of the Ardennes Battlefields, plus many favorite European sights - London / Normandy / Paris / the Rhine, etc.

A Return To The ARDENNES PLUS EUROPEAN SIGHTS

MAY 24 - JUNE 7

COME BACK TO WHERE WE ARE "ALWAYS REMEMBERED" - NOW IS THE TIME

There have been many requests for another VBOB tour - especially with a more comprehensive itinerary - covering a balance of military and tourist subjects.

Every VBOB member would be well served to visit the Allied countries that we, collectively, liberated. It is a most rewarding experience - to meet and be thanked by those to whom we gave back the precious gift of freedom - "they will never forget."

ITINERARY

Fly from JFK to London - London tour - Southampton with special G.I. Dugout evening/D-Day Museum - Cross English Channel to Cherbourg - Tour American Normandy D-Day battlefields - Paris/city tour - Rheims/cathedral/War Surrender Room - Luxembourg City - CEBA tour/ Hamm cemetery - Bastogne trip/Military Vehicle Group- Bulge trip to Liege/Malmedy/La Gleize/ - Bulge No.shoulder tour/St. Vith with CRIBA/- Rhineland trip to Rhine/Koblenz/Remagen bridge/Ft. Ehrenbreitstein/ - Rhine cruise-Koblenz to Frankfurt - Farewell Banquet - Flight home to states from Frankfurt.

TOUR SIZE - PARTICIPATION PRIORITY

The tour size will be determined by bus capacity - tour participation priority will be based on date reservation payment is received.

SO "JOIN UP"

Sign up for 15 days of remembrances, comradeship and convivial enjoyment. Send your \$200 returnable deposit ASAP so your place will be secured and firm tour plans can be made.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OPPORTUNITIES TO SHARE MOMENTS WITH YOUR BUDDIES

Any veteran is advised to take advantage of any opportunity to relive those moments with buddies that once had been close as a brother, when you shared and shared alike - it will be a memory that time cannot erase.

MORE INFORMATION

Further, detailed information and pricing will be in the January issue of the Bulge Bugle. To receive a full set of information as soon as it is available - fill out the form below and your name will be placed on the Tour Mailing List.

INFORMATION REQUEST - VBOB 1991 ETO TOUR

Please send available tour information and place my name on the Tour Mailing List for further mailings.

Name _____ Unit _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

RESERVATION DEPOSIT - \$200/PERSON - RETURNABLE

Mail Check To Tour Operator:

BATTLE STAR TOURS
EARLE R. HART
2571 WILD OLIVE COURT
VIENNA, VA 22181

TEL. 703-242-2298
FAX. 703-242-2298

For Flight and Travel
Information Contact
TWIN CITY TRAVEL SERVICE
1-800-544-0635
318-388-8884

SPONSORED BY THE VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

CHAPTER NEWS

FROM THE VP FOR REGIONAL COORDINATION

Congratulations to the Delaware Valley Chapter for the wonderful job they did in engineering the 9th Annual Reunion in Valley Forge. A great time was had by all at the various functions, the beautiful buffet on opening night, the impressive service at the Valley Forge Military Academy with the tour of Valley Forge afterwards, the tour of old Philadelphia or trip to the gambling dens of Atlantic City and the impressive entertainment and list of speakers at the delicious banquet the last night. It was all great and we thank the chapter for all their hard work.

We were thrilled to have eight chapter flags at the Annual Reunion in Valley Forge: Delaware Valley, Fresno, North Carolina, and the brand new chapters of Northern Virginia, Southern California, Central Florida, Tri-State (Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine), and Susquehanna (areas surrounding upper northeast Pennsylvania). We were pleased to meet members from these chapters and states and welcome a car load of brand new chapter members from Susquehanna. There was enthusiastic interest for new chapters in other areas which we hope will come to fruition.

I am happy to report that charters and chapter flags have been delivered to our five new chapters.

CENTRAL NEW YORK CHAPTER • Thanks to the efforts of Jim Hamlett in obtaining a Luxembourg flag, it was presented on the 15th of September at the banquet for the 28th Division Reunion held at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania. It was graciously received and by mere coincidence the guest speaker was Pierre Eicher from Luxembourg. Pierre was a very young man during the Battle of the Bulge, but when the war was over he did not forget; as witnessed through the dedication of much of his adult life to perpetuating the history and heritage of that battle so the world could see, remember and perhaps learn the true price of freedom. Through individual and committee efforts he has accomplished much to perpetuate the memory of our troops in Luxembourg. The caring of cemeteries, the building and maintenance of monuments, the frequent memorial and tribute services and the friendly reception of veterans when they visit Luxembourg are only some of his loving contributions. Here is a man who has never forgotten the Battle of the Bulge. Let us follow in his footsteps in helping perpetuate the importance of the Battle of the Bulge.

At our September meeting we began to make plans for our annual meeting for the commemoration of December 16th.

GEN. GEORGE S. PATTON, JR. CHAPTER OF ALABAMA • On August 10th, 53 members gathered for luncheon at the Birmingham-Homewood Holiday Inn. We had several new members and prospective members, three of whom joined at the close of the meeting. We discussed amendments to the by-laws and voted to support the amendment.

In early September we had a well attended luncheon of 46 members for Henri Register and Eddie Montfort of Belgium, members of CRIBA. They were brought to our meeting by Charles Corbin (3rd Armored Div.) of North Carolina whom they were visiting. Henri and Eddie are great friends of VBOB, always being on hand to give of their own time to host visiting groups of veterans. President Charles Hunter presented the guests with insignia lapel pins

from his own 16th FAOBn and Hunter Clan T-shirts.

Our first speaker was Mr. E. C. Wilson from Gadsden, who served with the 630th T.D. Battalion attached to the 28th Div. His speech was very interesting with humor interspersed with the seriousness of his involvement in the Battle of the Bulge. The next speaker, Mr. Ralph McCullers from Jasper, was introduced by Mr. Cooper by way of reading a newspaper article that was published in January 1945 concerning Mr. McCullers' involvement in the Battle of the Bulge. This article was recently found by a family member. It told of how Mr. McCullers, while serving with the 38th Infantry Regiment of the 2nd Div., had to take charge of his platoon after his Squad Leader was killed one morning of the battle and his Platoon Sgt. was seriously wounded that same afternoon. McCullers was personally responsible for killing 20 Germans and wounding others and was later wounded himself. Although he was separated from his unit, he was able to make it back to his outfit without being captured.

The chapter by-laws were discussed and adopted. President Hunter read the list of nominees for next year's officers. They were unanimously elected and will be installed at the December 14th meeting. They were Glen Arrington, President; Howell Dulaney, Vice President; Vic Neiland, Secretary; John Kent, Treasurer; Herschel Simmons, Assistant Secretary/Treasurer. Committee members were also voted in.

DELAWARE VALLEY CHAPTER • After the business meeting a letter to Bob Fisher from Tilly Kimmes, CEBA Luxembourg, was read stating again, of that country's gratefulness to the GI's and ending with "we owe you everything, because without you, we would be Germans."

A round of applause was given to Treasurer Bob Fischer for his outstanding work in that office. Six "first timers" were introduced.

Bob Fischer proposed that a memorial be established for deceased Del-Val members at the National Gallery, Ft. Meade, Maryland. The motion was passed by acclamation. The rest of the meeting was on the business of planning the 9th Annual Reunion. After the meeting the tape of National VBOB's December 16, 1986, memorial dedication of tree and plaque at Arlington National Cemetery was viewed.

We will continue to meet monthly and are planning ahead for our Christmas party.

MD-DC CHAPTER • We continue to meet monthly at the Cummings-Behlke American Legion Post #226 in Mayo, Maryland. At the last meeting a list of nominees was presented to the membership for next year's officers. Woodrow Franklin Pursell, Sr., was nominated for president. After the meeting we enjoyed lunch and fellowship.

NORTHERN VIRGINIA • At our September meeting we developed the by-laws for the chapter and are reviewing the possibilities for incorporation. We developed a resolution of support for the troops in Desert Shield which was read at the Annual Reunion and adopted by the membership. President Dean Fravel showed us slides of Jordan and the Middle East where he was working as a civilian on road building projects.

On October 17th we had a luncheon meeting at Fort Myer attended by 40 members and guests. Robert Van Houten

Cont'd on Page 6

presented our chapter with a charter and chapter flag. National President Bill Greenville welcomed the new chapter into the organization and Dorothy Davis gave us a review of the progress of the Historical Foundation. After the meeting a video, "Battle of the Bulge" from the War Chronicles Series was shown in the lounge.

FRESNO CHAPTER • At our fall quarterly meeting, nominations for next year's officers were called for. The membership asked the same slate to continue their good work and they graciously accepted. We met at a different location and had about 45 present, including wives. The program consisted of story swapping which is the first such we have had for over a year, except for our picnic.

We have been blessed with an ex-paratrooper (513th Reg. 17th Airborne) whose wife stays very busy crocheting afghans whenever she is seated. She donates the end product to the Chapter to auction off and, as happened three previous times, we raised about \$75 with our raffle (including money from tickets purchased by the subject paratrooper).

One of our members spoke out for stationary, membership cards, a P.O. Box, etc. Everyone thought all were good ideas and put into force except the mail situation which was taken under advisement. Following the Reunion in Valley Forge, President Ken Hohmann visited Carlisle Barracks and had a chance to meet Col. Sweeney and his assistant, who is in charge of the WWII veterans survey. It is 18 pages long. He complained about the length, but they pointed out that the 2-page Civil War Questionnaire and the 11-page WWI survey were both inadequate to meet the needs of a serious historian. We also discussed the recent Civil War TV series, in this regard. The producer's staff had spent three months at Carlisle Barracks, for it is the largest source of two-dimensional archives of the War. In any event, Hohmann encouraged him to establish contact with the VBOB Association and improve GI participation. He is filling out the questionnaire that was distributed at the Annual Reunion and urges all others who received one to do the same. Hohmann also informed him of the VBOB historical papers that are being collected and suggested that there could be some coordination between the two organizations.

Robert J. Van Houten
VP Regional Coordination

THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER

He sleeps unknown to all but One
High on this rolling hill,
In this most hallowed resting place
So peaceful and so still.
We do not know from whence he came,
Who were his loved ones dear;
We only know he gave his life
And lies in glory here.
He is enshrined within our hearts
And world wide in his fame,
But only God alone can tell
The Unknown Soldier's name.

Harold F. Mohn
Charter Member, VBOB

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- | | |
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MEMBERS SPEAK OUT Cont'd from Page 3

CHRISTOPHER McEWAN, of the 101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION, would like to know if anyone has seen a plaque like the one he brought back from Belgium during WW II. It was made by the Belgium people and shows the town of Bastogne with a German handing a surrender notice and General McAllife saying "Nuts" to the surrender. If you have any information please write him: 3480 Valejo Court, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80918.

Niko Van Kerchoven Budding Historian

The June 1990 issue of *The Bulge Bugle* contained a letter from Niko Van Kerchoven, a 10-year-old Belgian, who inquired about American forces in the vicinity of Ouren during the Battle of the Bulge.

The response of Bill Train (112th Infantry Regiment, 28th Infantry Division) in its entirety:

"Your letter to Mr. Clyde Boden, VBOB, dated March 7, 1990, was published in the *Bulge Bugle* of June 1990. It was a coincidence you are interested in the BoB, with special reference to Ouren. To help you understand the situation of the American troops in and near Ouren, I will tell you of my personal experience there.

"The 112th Infantry, 28th Division, was moved to the Luxembourg border about 14th November, 1944 after participating in the severe fighting in the Heurtgen Forest, southeast of Aachen. I was then a lieutenant colonel, executive officer of the 112th Infantry, which was commanded by Colonel G. M. Nelson. The headquarters of the regiment was located in a large farm house west of the Our River at the north end of a bridge. Our Cannon Company was deployed in a field north of the headquarters. Within the town the rear echelons of the 1st and 3rd Battalions, the medical detachment and the headquarters of the Cannon Company were located.

"Northeast of Ouren about a mile the 1st Battalion, 112th Infantry was deployed along the Lutzkampen-Harspelt ridge in Germany beyond the West Wall. Southeast of the town and extending the defensive positions along the Sevenig ridge southward the 3rd Battalion, 112th Infantry, was deployed. The 2nd Battalion, 112th Infantry, occupied defensive positions around Lieler, Luxembourg. Two days before the battle, we moved the kitchens of the 1st and 2nd Battalions east of Ouren so that we could provide hot meals to the forward troops, for the weather was very cold and bitter.

"On December 16th about 5:30 a.m. the Germans opened the attack with a heavy artillery barrage on our forward positions, while they infiltrated the gaps in our widely held lines. At dawn, they attacked our positions from the rear, but our defenses were prepared for all around defense. Consequently, the front lines held, but several hundred Germans were captured in the kitchen area. During the day about 15 or 20 tanks were destroyed in our sector by the guns of Company C, 630th Tank Destroyer Battalion, which was attached to the 112th and by our Cannon Company. A counterattack by our 2nd Battalion which crossed the Our River from Leiler cleared the majority of the Germans from our sector. The Germans launched another attack on the next morning, but were held east of Ouren. Again the 2nd Battalion counterattacked to clear the Germans from our area. However, by late afternoon, the Division ordered the 112th to withdraw West of the Our River.

"As the 112th was in the process of withdrawing across the river, the Germans launched a night attack about 8:00 p.m. and captured most of the medical detachment and other troops who were in the town.

"By daylight on December 18th, the 112th was deployed around Weiswampach, Luxembourg, to defend against another expected attack. I observed a German column of tanks coming north along the Luxembourg ridge road, after

they had crossed the Our River in the vicinity of Clearvaux, through the 110th Infantry, 28th Division, which occupied positions south of the 112th along the river in Luxembourg. Our tank destroyers knocked out the first two German tanks and the column, apparently unable to deploy for an attack turned around and went southward. We received harassing fire but the Germans had not yet crossed the Our River in the vicinity of Ouren. After the war it was learned from German records that their 1st day objective was Weiswampach, so we had been able to slow up their attack and forced them southward. We also destroyed about 25 tanks in our sector.

"The 112th Regiment was cut off from the rest of the 28th Division due to the German penetration towards Bastogne, and the regiment on 24th December withdrew through the newly established line of the 82nd Airborne Division in the vicinity of Manhay.

"While my story above is incomplete, it should at least help you to understand some of the events which occurred in the vicinity of the town of Ouren, in the early days of the BoB (16, 17 and 18 December, 1944).

"I have omitted the actions of the 112th after withdrawing from Weiswampach, but the regiment continued delaying actions under control of Marshal Montgomery, for the regiment was cut off from the division until about January 15, 1945. After withdrawing into the new American lines, the 112th launched a counterattack in the vicinity of Trois Ponts to help close out the BoB on January 3, 1945.

"Let me know if you have any more specific questions. I might be able to answer.

"Sincerely, "Wm. F. Train

"Lieutenant General, U.S. Army (Retired)"

REUNIONS

FORMER PRISONERS OF WAR (American soldiers interned at German prison camps 9A, 9B, and 9C), 18-21 April, 1991, Marina Hotel at St. Johns Place, Jacksonville, Florida. Contact: Pete House, 5662 Clifton Avenue, Jacksonville, Florida 32211. Telephone: (904) 724-8316.

OCS CLASS 33, TIS, FT. BENNING, GEORGIA, JULY 14, 1942, proposed 50th Anniversary Reunion in 1992. Contact: Robert A. Mott, 12979 Camino Ramillette, San Diego, California 92128.

29TH DIVISION ASSOCIATION, January 24-27, 1991, Ramada Inn, Satellite Beach, Florida. Contact: George I. Smith, 2412 Griswood Court, New Port Richey, Florida 34655. Telephone: (813) 372-8752.

52 ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION, 9 AD WWII, May 17-20, 1991, Hot Springs, Arkansas. Contact: Vern Reaugh, 222A Island Cove Court, Hampton, Virginia 23669. Telephone: (804) 723-4859.

99TH INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION, June 11-16, 1991, San Francisco Airport Marriott Hotel, Burlingame, California. Contact: Henry S. Richards, 19 Pinewood Court, San Mateo, California 94403. Telephone: (415) 349-5384.

174 FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION, November 10, 1990, Sandusky, Ohio. Contact: Arthur Sudbrink, 1830 Mills Street, Sandusky, Ohio 44870. Telephone: (419) 625-9700.

501 PIRA, Toccoa Paratrooper marker dedication, November 17-18, 1990, at 7:00 p.m., in Toccoa, Georgia. Contact: George Vanderslice, 3417 Tudor Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19136. Telephone: (215) 331-0595.

526 ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION ASSOCIATION, May 20-26, 1991, Liege, Belgium. Contact: Dick Stone, 6488 Church Street, Ferndale, Washington 98248. Telephone: (206) 384-1974.



50th ANNIVERSARY
U.S. AIRBORNE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
1990

AIRBORNE 50TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION GREAT SUCCESS

More than 12,000 proud troopers--paratroopers, glider and air assault troopers, air transport command personnel, special forces, special and services personnel--and an equal number of friends and relatives took over dozens of hotels in Northern Virginia and Washington, D.C., from July 4 through July 9, 1990, to celebrate 50 years of patriotic army airborne service. Veterans of World War II, and the Korean and Vietnam wars and the Grenada and Panama campaigns joined active duty airborne soldiers in what may have been the largest reunion of American former and present soldiers.

Units represented included the 11th, 13th, 17th, 82nd, and 101st Airborne divisions and many other separate airborne organizations.

Memorable events were a wreath-laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery, a ceremony at the site of the Korean Veterans Memorial near the Lincoln Memorial, a huge parade down Constitution Avenue and a dedication and memorial service at RFK Stadium. Unit activities were held at respective hotels.

The members of VBOB salute our airborne friends, many of whom are members of VBOB, and those whose planning and logistical expertise assured an outstanding event--Bill Weber and Charles Pugh, Co-chairmen, and members of the 20-man advisory board composed of representatives of each participating unit.

Hud Weikel Eloquently Expresses Reunion 557th AAA Battalion Feelings

"First, let me tell you again what an outstanding job you did involving our recent reunion. You well deserve all of the

congratulations. Second, I would be less than honest if, after forty some years, I would tell you I didn't have some thoughts as to what kind of reception there would be for Betty and myself. I can now personally vouch to any member who has never attended a reunion that their reception will be the warmest and friendliest they will ever have experienced.

"Time and years, Jim, have brought changes...a few more or less pounds, a few more eyeglasses, some less hair, I'm sure more aches and pains, etc., but I want to make it a matter of record: I was never more proud of anything than to know as we stood in honor of deceased members that I was among men who years ago laid on the line everything they had including their very lives to preserve the freedom of this country. Making it as personal as I can, they were willing to do it for my family, my grandchildren, members of this Weikel clan I will never personally know. I stood just a bit taller and felt honored and proud to have been part of these men as a member of the Fighting 557th AAA. I know one other thing, as I felt it among these men, even with perhaps decreased physical abilities in many of us, we would do it again at the drop of a hat. Could anyone ask for more? So as the saying goes, thanks for adding to the memories."

Regards from Bill Simpkins

Fighter pilot and VBOB Charter Member Bill Simpkins reports that his 510th Fighter Squadron has located about 70% of the pilots and 30% of the non-flying personnel.

Bill has many interesting, first-hand stories of World War II exploits and other activities of the 510th.

WHO ARE WE?

The June 1990 issue of THE BULGE BUGLE ran a questionnaire soliciting anonymous comments from our front-line combat veterans who served in the Battle of the Bulge. For those who responded we are grateful. It serves to convey a glimpse of just who we members are.

An analysis of the personal responses is provided below so that you may see just who we are. Results show:

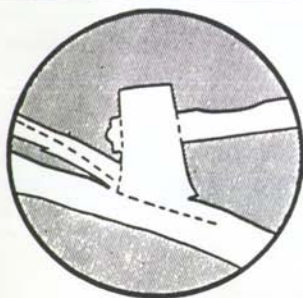
- 84% said they enjoyed military service
- 16% said they did not enjoy military service
- Average age at end of World War II 23.7 years
- Average years of total active duty 5.8 years

BRANCH OF SERVICE REPRESENTED:

- Airborne - Air Force - Antiaircraft artillery - Armor - Chemical warfare - Engineers - Field artillery - Infantry - Medical - Military Police - Unknown (cited "Army")
- 89% were enlisted men (345 Pvt/PFC)
- 11% were officers

STATE RESIDENCE AT ENTRY INTO SERVICE:

NJ; NY; OH; WI; IA; MN; KY; PA; TX; CT; MI;
VA; DC; GA; ME; MO; NC; CA; MD; MA; NE;
RI; WY.



GERMANS CALL 84th INFANTRY DIVISION THE HATCHET MEN

When it fought in France during WWI, the 84th called itself the 'Lincoln' Division. When WWII started the 84th called itself the 'Railsplitters.' But not long after they bumped into the German Army on the Siegfried Line, the Nazis had a new name for them - and it had nothing to do with the biographical background of Abraham Lincoln.

The Germans called them the Hatchet Men.

It was 18 November 1944 when the 84th first struck. Only a few weeks before it had been in the United States. After sailing to England and training at Winchester - where a few men were detached to go to the Continent and help speed supplies over the famous Red Ball Highway - Railsplitters embarked for France and were rushed to the Siegfried Line. Then began two months of savage fighting during which the 84th took 112 German pillboxes and bunkers in the Siegfried Line, and helped to crush Rundstedt's counteroffensive in the Ardennes. It was a notable start as any fighting outfit could hope to have.

Assigned to the British Second Army, the 84th set its sights upon Geilenkirchen, a mining and transport center with a population of 20,000. The 334th Infantry Regiment jumped off first, with Prummern as its objective. The regiment was supposed to have armored support, but its tanks got bogged down in the mud. That didn't stop the Hatchet Men, they went in anyhow. Then the 333rd Infantry joined in the fray, and Geilenkirchen fell on the 19th shortly followed by Suggester, Lindern, Beeck, and in one of the war's best examples of infantry-artillery teamwork - Leiffarth. As the 84th pushed toward this city, the Infantry moved forward confidently a scant

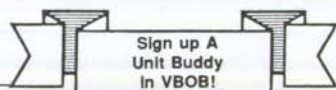
50 yards behind the crashing shells of its own big guns. Mullendorf was the scene of the Hatchet Men's last operations in the Siegfried Line sector, and the campaign was fittingly concluded when a battalion commander strode out of Nazi headquarters puffing a big cigar, with a captured swastika slung over his shoulder.

On 2 January, while the German counteroffensive (Battle of the Bulge) in the Ardennes was at its height, the 84th was rushed back to help and made a gallant stand south of Marche. With no flank support, the Hatchet Men held their ground and beat off one fierce enemy thrust after another.

Shifted later to the north side of the German bulge, under the First Army, the Division set off a counterattack together with the 2d Armored Division. Snow temporarily stopped most of the 'Hell on Wheels' tanks, but it couldn't stop the Infantry. One bunch of Railsplitters - the 1st Battalion of the 335th Infantry - made an urgent request for hundreds of suits of long winter underwear. Donning these over their combat uniforms, they sneaked across the white fields and took the enemy completely by surprise. By 16 January the 84th had rolled into Houffalize, and on that day, near Ourthe, one of the units joined up with the 11th Armored Division - thus officially linking the First and Third Armies and closing the gap that had separated them in the Ardennes salient.

Moved secretly to an assembly area in Holland the Railsplitters swept across the Roer River on 23 February and then led by a motorized task force built around the 334th Infantry, they roared forward - overrunning a German officers' replacement pool, not even bothering to stop to take many prisoners, capturing one city's whole police force intact, taking Dulken, Krefeld, and Moers, and ending up at the Rhine. They almost got to the other side via a tunnel connected to a mine shaft at Homberg, but the tunnel had been mined. After crossing the river they went out over the Weser River, took Erbeck, captured a Nazi arms factory built 350 feet into the side of a cliff and drove into Hannover. Farther on, at Brunswick, they consolidated forces with the 5th Armored Division, and the two outfits joined the British to wipe out an enemy pocket along the Elbe River south of Hamburg.

After V-E Day with headquarters in Hannover, the Railsplitters spent weeks trying to help displaced persons get started on their way home.



REMINDER!!!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!!

SPEND DECEMBER 14, 15 AND 16, 1990

IN THE WASHINGTON, D.C. AREA

WITH YOUR BATTLE OF THE BULGE COMPATRIOTS

On **FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1990**, starting at 6:30 p.m., the Third Annual Honors Banquet will be held at the Commonwealth Ballroom, Sheraton National Hotel, Arlington, Virginia. Hosted by the Battle of the Bulge Historical Foundation and Honorary Chairman, Brigadier General David J. Allen, the Banquet will feature a visit from Special Guests, the Belgian Fusiliers. Thirty-four of the Fusiliers (who served with the 1st Army during the Battle of the Bulge) will be attending, along with the Honorable Herman Dehennin, Ambassador of Belgium, and the Honorable Andre Philippe, Ambassador from Luxembourg. For the first time, the Banquet will also be attended by representatives of many major U.S. Corporations. Other invitees include one of America's astronauts, several of our Congressmen, and some surprise guests!

Attend the "Stage Door Canteen" on **SATURDAY EVE, DECEMBER 15, 1990**, from 6:30 pm-11:00pm. Plan to wear your uniform to this fun-filled evening featuring '40s music for listening and dancing, special events and refreshments.

On **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1990**, AT 11:00 a.m., the Belgian Fusiliers will join with Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge (VBOB) in the annual wreath-laying ceremonies at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the Battle of the Bulge Monument at Arlington National Cemetery.

DON'T MISS OUT — FILL OUT YOUR RESERVATION FORM NOW, and send it directly to the Sheraton National Hotel, Arlington, Virginia 22204.



Reprinted from The Richmond News Leader, December, 1989

After 44 years, the wounded Belgian boy found his Army nurse



DIVERSIONS

By Steve Clark

Richmond resident Ruth Puryear was a U.S. Army nurse in Europe in the winter of 1944 when the German army began its last-ditch strike against the Allied troops closing in on Germany.

One of the many interesting stories Mrs. Puryear can tell about her World War II experience involves a Belgian boy she treated in a field hospital. The boy had been wounded badly by shrapnel while he was running away from German troops during the Battle of the Bulge.

I will get to the story in a minute, but first let's review the historical setting for the story.

A surprise counterattack

After the D-day invasion of Normandy in June 1944, the Allies spent the summer and fall driving the Germans out of France and into Belgium. The objective was to push the Germans across the Rhine River, then invade Germany.

With winter coming on, the desperate Germans prepared for a counterattack designed to drive the Allies out of Belgium and back into France. In the weeks before Christmas, thousands of German troops were positioned along a 50-mile front in Belgium.

The counterattack began the morning of Dec. 16, 1944, when 38 German divisions moved out under a heavy cover of fog.

They regained a great deal of ground quickly, because the attack caught the Allies by surprise. Within a matter

of days, the Germans surrounded the Belgian city of Bastogne near the Luxembourg border in Ardennes Forest.

Bastogne was the site of one of World War II's most famous quotes. When the Germans asked U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Anthony C. McAuliffe to surrender the 101st Airborne Division, the general replied: "Nuts!"

Soon, American tanks led by Gen. George Patton broke through and regained control of Bastogne. The fighting in that area became known as the Battle of the Bulge.

While the fighting was going on, Ruth Puryear was an Army nurse with the 107th Evacuation (EVAC) Hospital. The hospital had been in Bastogne until the Germans got too close. Then it was moved across the French-Belgian border to a bombed-out mill in Sedan, France.

In January 1945, a Belgian boy was brought to the hospital. His name was André Meurisse. He was 7 years old. He had been running away from German troops at daybreak when a piece of shrapnel from an exploding shell hit him in the right shoulder.

"He was badly wounded," said Mrs. Puryear, 77, who lives in the Imperial Plaza apartments in Richmond.

Mrs. Puryear and other medical personnel in the hospital became attached to André Meurisse as they nursed him back to health. They quickly Americanized his name by calling him "Andy."

"We had very few children as patients, so I never forgot Andy," Mrs. Puryear said. "I remember when he was being rolled into the operating room, one of our surgeons spoke a little French to him. It made his face light up."

She did not forget the boy, and she always wondered what happened to him after the war.

Earlier this year, she found out.

The tall, handsome man was Andy

In late September, Mrs. Puryear went to Luxembourg to attend a reunion for veterans of the Battle of the Bulge. The reunion schedule included a tour of Bastogne, and a luncheon for the Americans at the Dahmen Hotel in the Belgian city of Bullingen.

At the luncheon, Mrs. Puryear was wearing a name tag showing she had been with the 107th EVAC outfit. Within a matter of minutes, she was greeted by a tall, handsome man about 50 years old. He spoke beautiful English.

It was Andy.

"We hugged and kissed and shed a few tears," Mrs. Puryear said. "He remembered me, and he was so happy he had found his nurse after all these years."

How is his right shoulder?

"He doesn't have full use of it, and it bothers him in bad weather," she said. "He told me, 'Ruth, I'll have to hug you with my left arm!'"

They caught up on their lives, and Mrs. Puryear learned that Meurisse lives in Bullingen, where he conducts tours of the Battle of the Bulge area.

Before parting, they exchanged addresses. After Mrs. Puryear got home, she received a letter from Meurisse.

"It was simply wonderful," he wrote. "You know, I've been searching for years in the everlasting hope to find someone among the numerous U.S. Army members who, in one way or another, took care of me... someone who could still remember a kid with a shoulder in rather bad shape. You are that someone."

"It really touched me beyond words, just as if it had been something almost like a miracle. I sure thank God for that day so long awaited."

"Kilroy" says:

Our annual dues are the main source of income for VBOB. If the arrow on the back cover of this newsletter indicated that you are in arrears, won't you please pay your dues and help support our wonderful and meaningful organization.

MERCI er Thank you!



RESERVATION FORM

RETURN FORM BY DECEMBER 5, 1990, TO:

BATTLE OF THE BULGE HISTORICAL FOUNDATION
P.O. BOX 2516, KENSINGTON, MD 20891-0818

Tel.: (301) 881-0356

Please make checks payable to: BoBHF Banquet

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1990 - HONORS BANQUET

NAME _____ TEL# _____

ADDRESS _____

UNIT _____

SPOUSE/GUEST _____

NUMBER OF RESERVATIONS TOTAL COST @ \$40.00 PER PERSON

Table assignment for the Banquet will be on your name card. If you wish to be seated with friends, please include their names with this form.

DRESS: Business suit or Tuxedo with Black Tie (Miniature medals encouraged)

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1990

10:00-11:30 a.m. - BATTLE OF THE BULGE HISTORICAL FOUNDATION MEETING

Number of Persons Attending

6:30-11:00 p.m. - STAGE DOOR CANTEEN

Number of Persons Attending

Total Cost @ \$5.00 per person

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1990

11:00 a.m. - CEREMONIES AT TOMB OF THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER AND VBOB MEMORIAL

Number of Persons Attending

12:00 noon - LUNCHEON RECEPTION AT FORT MYER OFFICERS' CLUB

Number of Persons Attending

HOTEL RESERVATION FORM

****THESE RATES ARE FOR DECEMBER 13, 14, 15, AND 16--Please state that you are with the Battle of the Bulge!!**

Mail reservation form to: Sheraton National Hotel
Columbia Pike & Washington Boulevard
Arlington, VA 22204



Please Print

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Arrival Date _____
day of week month date time

Departure Date _____
day of week month date time

Single _____ Double _____
\$55.00 PLUS TAX PER ROOM (SINGLE OR DOUBLE)
NAMES OF PERSONS SHARING ACCOMMODATION _____

Rollaway - \$15 extra per night/9.5% tax

Reservations must be received at the hotel by November 30, 1990

Reservations received after this date will be accepted on a space and rate available basis only.

FIRST NIGHT DEPOSIT OR MAJOR CREDIT CARD FOR ANY ARRIVAL AFTER 4 PM

A guaranteed payment assures you that a room will be held for your day of arrival. The room will become available for resale if you have not registered by 6:00 AM THE FOLLOWING MORNING. You will be billed for the first night's room & tax revenue if the reservation is not cancelled before 6 PM (EST) on the day of arrival. Please ask the clerk for a cancellation number (703) 521-1900, or call toll-free at 1-800-468-9090 or in Virginia, 1-800-541-5500.

GUARANTEE INFORMATION: (Please Print)

Firm name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Credit Card _____
AX, VISA, MC, DC, CB (circle one)

EXPIRATION DATE: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

**CHECK OUT TIME IS 1 PM; ROOMS WILL NOT BE READY FOR
YOUR ARRIVAL UNTIL 3 PM.**

CHAPLAIN WHO COULDN'T PUT UP PUP TENT LEADS BUILDING ESPIRIT DE CORPS

The counterman of Connors' Coffee Shop, the Rev. Edward T. Connors, Ninth Infantry Division chaplain, whose military service included the Battle of the Bulge, was a part-time poolroom attendant before entering the Roman Catholic priesthood.

At a roast in his honor when he retired as pastor of the Worcester (Mass.) Immaculate Conception Church, he remarked: "Here I am ready to build a church - and in the Army I couldn't even set up a pup tent."

The veterans of the Ninth, Hitler's Nemesis, also known, together with the First Infantry Division (also a Bulge Division) as The Varsity, who attended division reunions and religious services for all faiths at Worcester in the years following WWI, claimed that Father Connors built everyone's esprit de corps. The priest ranged far and wide fighting the combat soldier's problems with humor and compassion.

Also at the roast, Father Connors was given a plaque bearing an American flag and a seal of Worcester city. "I'm very pleased, very humble," mumbled Father Connors. "Are there any more gifts for me?" He later read a letter supposedly from the Pope, whom it is said he resembles. "It says here," Father Connors read, "Dear Ed: About becoming a Monsignor - forget it. And I hear I look like you so I'm having my face lifted."

At the roast it was alleged that Father Connors "by his unruly observance of military procedure did bring confusion and havoc on the troops." Father Connors said, "I had to agree. I never saluted anyone." General W.C. Westmoreland, who served in the Ninth with Father Connors, said: "Father Connors dressed so sloppily he looked like an unmade bed." And, added General Westmoreland, speaking about Father Connors morale-building efforts, "For a guy who couldn't build a pup tent, you were still doing pretty good on building morale, even decades after WWII."

Father Connors remembered the Ninth's Jewish chaplain, Rabbi Irving Tepper, who was mortally

wounded serving with the Ninth's 60th Regiment. Each prayed in his own faith the night Chaplain Tepper died. Father Connors served with the Ninth from its first campaigns in North Africa through the Ninth's eight campaigns in Sicily, the Normandy Invasion, France, Belgium and Germany, including the Battle of the Bulge. General Westmoreland also said of the fighting priest, "He was a lousy soldier and a wild Irishman, but the best chaplain." The Ninth's fighting priest won the Silver Star for rescuing a wounded soldier from a minefield.

Father Connors died in 1986 at 80. General Westmoreland said Father Connors acted as a catalyst who made division reunions very special in the lives of many people, just as he built morale during the bitter fighting in the Bulge.



BOOKS YOU MAY ENJOY....

A very recent arrival, a rare and welcome find, is the paperback, Best Little Stories from World War II. C. Brian Kelly, the editor of the World

War II and Military History magazines, published this fascinating compilation under his imprint, Montpelier Publishing of Charlottesville, Virginia.

Kelly is a professional, and those 101 stories cover an amazingly broad range and make fascinating reading. It compares most favorably with Hastings' Oxford Dictionary of Military Anecdotes without, however, the penchant of too many British authors for selecting judiciously only those episodes which put the "Yanks" down, across the board, in all our military endeavors. We stock the book, published in paper only, for \$10.95 plus \$1.50 postage/insurance.

Speaking of "good" British authors, Clyde Boden's friend Ken Ford's book "Assault on Germany--the Battle for Geilenkirchen" has come in. Of particular interest to those of you with the 84th, the 102nd, the 28th, the 104th, and the 2nd Armoreds and the 629th T.D. Bn. It is an objective, factual and very readable account sure to appeal to a much wider audience. In essence it is a worthy complement to "The Men of Co. K" with an illuminating account of the British part in this action, especially the "Wessex men" (43rd Infantry Division) and the "Sherwood Rangers Yeomanry" and other armored units, including the Germans. Cost \$17.95 and \$2.00 postage/insurance.

We accept Visa/Mastercard. Please make checks payable to Barcroft Books and mail to:

Paul J. Gartenmann
Barcroft Books
3621 Columbia Pike
Arlington, VA 22204
(703) 521-0743

ARE YOUR DUES DUE?

CHECK YOUR MAILING STICKER

Please check the mailing sticker which is affixed with your name and address on the back cover of this issue of *The Bulge Bugle*. This is our way of notifying you with each issue that your dues are current or owing. If your dues-are-due date (the arrow points to it) is shown as 04-26-89, this means that your dues were due to the National VBOB office on or before April 26, 1989, and you are delinquent in payment. We do not issue dues statements.

We have undergone considerable revamping and reprogramming of our computer data and if your due date is incorrectly reflected, please let us know. If you have a copy of your cancelled check it will help us track down the mistake a little quicker. However, it is important that you let us know as we are making every attempt to get everything in ship-shape order.

We regret that soon we must begin purging our membership records of persons who are delinquent in their dues. To put it simply, we can't afford the administrative, printing and postage costs involved.

We realize many times members just don't think about their dues. If that's your situation, maybe you would like to consider Life Membership. Life Membership is: Over age 70--\$60; between 50 and 69--(\$125); and 49 and younger (\$150). Your dues must be current to take advantage of Life Membership.

BATTLE OF THE BULGE REENACTMENT

Where: Ft. Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania (20 miles east of Harrisburg on Interstate 81)

When: Late January or early February. (Exact date should be known by mid-December.)

Sponsored by the National World War II Historical Reenactment Federation

The Federation is composed of historians, enthusiasts, and collectors whose purpose is to preserve the history of World War II. We participate in parades, public displays, and the most popular part of our hobby--tactical reenactments of the many battles of WWII. We strive for authenticity in our events by using original WWII uniforms, weapons and equipment. Some of our members recently attended the 9th Annual Reunion of VBOB in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. We received a great deal of thanks and compliments on the displays we put on.

At our coming event we will have approximately 200-300 participants ready to "do battle." We would like to have some of the veterans from the real Battle of the Bulge come out to see us "do our thing." This will be a Friday-Sunday event with the main battle taking place on Saturday. We would like to stage a small skirmish of about an hour in length for the "show" part of our event. We do not usually have non-members at our private reenactments but we want to allow the veterans to see what we do. After our theatrical portion of the battle we will continue to fight in the woods until about 4:00 p.m. When our fun is over we will return to our barracks to prepare for dinner--in a real Army mess hall no less! After dinner we usually return to the barracks or go to the NCO club for some evening fun. These evening hours will be the best time for you to meet and talk with the people who go to these great lengths to prepare the history that you ladies and gentlemen WROTE.

To have a proper reenactment we need an opposing force. We do have people that portray German soldiers--some even doing an S.S. impression. These people are very different from the fellows you met up with a few years back. They

are trying to recreate history in the same way as our American and British reenactors. They want to see what life was like on the "other side of the hill." Our German reenactors will be just as anxious to hear your stories as any of our other students of history.

For more information write: Andrew Doddington, 14820 Belle Ami Drive, Laurel, Maryland 20707. Telephone: (301) 490-6067.

HOW TO REPLACE LOST MILITARY MEDALS/RECORDS

To obtain lost decorations or awards, write to:

Commander (ARPERCEN)

9700 Page Blvd.

St. Louis, MO 63132-5200

explain how you lost the medals, request replacement and send copies of discharge certificates to show that you are entitled to them.

To obtain a copy of missing discharge records (form 214) write to:

Commander (ARPERCEN)

ATTN: DARP-PAS-EVS

9700 Page Blvd.

St. Louis, MO 63132-5200

If you have been awarded the Combat Infantry Badge (CIB), you are entitled to a Bronze Star Medal. If you have not received this award, write to:

HQDA (DAPC-ALA)

200 Stovall Street

Alexandria, VA 22332

Make the request and include a copy of your discharge certificate. This document should show that you received the CIB.



Search and Find: VBOB ARTISTS

Correspondence and personal contact with VBOB members indicate that there are artists and cartoonists among our ranks. One is Ray Fisher (668 Eng Topo Co) of West Seneca, NY (pictured in his studio.)

Ray has completed black and white sketches of his concept of fighting in the Bulge, the surrender situation at Bas-



togne and the Malmedy massacre. These will appear in THE BULGE BUGLE and will be placed in the Bulge Museum. Ray has been an artist, illustrator and painter for over 50 years.

Other artists are encouraged to send Bulge work to the Editor of THE BULGE BUGLE.



RESOLUTION

The Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge at their 9th Reunion held at the Holiday Inn, Valley Forge, have passed resolutions pledging their support for President George Bush and the U.S. Forces in the Persian Gulf Region.

The Veterans stated in the resolution, which was passed at a general meeting today at the Holiday Inn, "we realize the value of loyalty and we hereby express our loyalty to you the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the United States."

The resolution also pledged their support to General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, a 1952 graduate of the Valley Forge Military Academy and Commander of U.S. Forces in the Persian Gulf Region, and the men and women of the armed services who are serving in Saudi Arabia.

We who fought in the snows of the Ardennes forest in Belgium in the winter of 1944 during World War II know exactly the way you feel who today stand ready in the hot sands of Saudi Arabia.

And we assure you brave young people who serve in 1990 that General George Washington and the men of the Continental Army endured the same experiences in the winter of 1778.

"So we the soldiers of an earlier generation salute you the brave young Americans of today.

"We urge you to carry the flag. Carry it high. Carry it bravely.

"Display it to the entire world. Show them that you come from the land of the free and the home of the brave."

September 27, 1990



UNEDITED AND HERETOFORE UNPUBLISHED

Accounts of events and experiences in the Battle of the Bulge as recalled and expressed by veterans of the greatest battle ever fought by the U.S. Army in the greatest war ever fought are of much historical significance. These are priceless first-person recollections by living legends in what General Dwight D. Eisenhower foresaw as our greatest victory and Prime Minister Winston Churchill, in speaking before the House of Commons, characterized as an ever-famous American victory.



.....

December 16, 1944

Lionel P. Adda
D Company
393rd Infantry Regiment
99th Infantry Division
Whitehall, Pennsylvania

Of all my World War II memories those of the first few days of the Battle of the Bulge remain the most vivid.

On December 16 our positions, which were in a densely wooded area, abutted the international highway at the Belgium-Germany frontier. Immediately in front was a ditch paralleling the two-lane macadam highway, and beyond there was a cultivated field which offered a field of fire of 100-150 yards. The terrain then dropped off, and the edge of the field was our horizon. By walking about 100 yards to our right, however, we could see the dragon-teeth tank traps and beyond the pillboxes of the Siegfried Line.

I was on sentry duty from 4 to 6 or the morning of December 16. Toward the end of my watch I saw that the horizon was brightly lit, as if by searchlights. On other occasions there had been some illumination of the sky at night in the direction of the enemy, but it had never been so bright as on this night. I became concerned and considered calling Staff Sergeant Enloe, our Platoon Sergeant, whose sleeping hole was the first squad's area. I hesitated, however, since Sergeant Enloe was a very deep sleeper, and when I had called him on another occasion I had found it difficult to wake him up. In the meantime I heard conversation about 100-150 feet to my right; perhaps with a better view the sentries there were able to discern the reason for the light. On my left, however, all was quiet. Finally I

decided to waken my relief a little early, and for a few minutes we wondered about the light on the horizon. I then entered my sleeping hole, but I recall sensing that this morning there was something wrong. In addition to the light, perhaps subconsciously, the warnings which we had been given recently were contributing to my uneasy feeling. About a week earlier we had been visited by an officer who urged us to so improve our fighting holes that we "would be able to live and fight in them for days, if necessary." Then came the engineers who installed trip wires and flares in front of our guns. Finally there were the words of the mortar forward observer who told us of seeing a large number of wagons ostensibly filled with hay or straw (which, as he said, undoubtedly concealed supplies). However, I was cold and sleepy and wanted to rest; I am sure I did not think of these things at the time.

I had just taken off my boots when the first shell struck. We had had some minor harassing fire before, so I was not concerned, but the volume of fire increased rapidly. There were tree bursts, and shrapnel was entering the small opening of my sleeping hole. I put on my boots and was outside seconds after the shelling stopped. My fighting hole was on the other side of the first-squad machine gun, so I dropped into the nearest foxhole, which turned out to be Sergeant Enloe's (he occupied mine during the ensuing fight).

By the time I reached the hole the first-squad gun had started to fire and the second-squad gun began shortly thereafter. The bright light, which would have silhouetted the attacking Germans coming over the rise, was gone, and I had difficulty picking out targets. Tracers and one or two flares revealed bodies crawling towards us. I was firing my

carbine more rapidly than I had ever done before; I noticed that the first-squad gun on my right was firing effectively, the second-squad gun on my left was firing a little high.

Suddenly I heard a short in German a few yards in front of me. I recognized only the last word--Hitler! Then there were two sharp explosions one or two yards to my right--hand grenades--followed by a burst of burp-gun fire. The bullets dislodged dirt and stones in front of my hole, and they struck me painfully in the face. It occurred to me that I might be exposing myself too much. The fighting hole was well built, narrow, relatively deep and with a firing step. However, Enloe was significantly shorter than I, so I had to crouch in a narrow space in order to place my weapon at the level of the top of the hole.



Gradually the firing decreased in volume. The attack had failed. With the increasing light I could see at least a dozen bodies lying in front of us. To my right, just at the edge of the highway, a German lay with his body pointed directly at our gun. He was so close that I was concerned that the gun could not be depressed far enough to stop him, so I fired two rounds into his body. He was already dead.

Directly in front of me, about fifteen yards away, a German soldier raised his head and threw away his rifle. I called out instinctively, "Kamerad, kommen Sie hier." Sergeant Enloe ordered everyone to hold his fire, and the soldier rose and walked toward me, crossed the highway, and stumbled through the ditch. He was a handsome young man, not more than eighteen, wearing a snow cape, and with a faint smile of relief on his face. His eyes never left my face or the carbine I had trained on him. One of the B Company sergeants had him stand with legs apart against a tree and relieved him of his grenades. The soldier, fearing that he would be shot, began to cry. He would probably have been the first German I would have had to face in hand-to-hand combat if the enemy had crossed the highway. A rifleman was assigned to bring him to B Company headquarters. There may have been German penetration some distance to our left, along the path to headquarters, and I was told later that both men were killed on the way back. I tend to believe this not to be true, since I know that one of our walking wounded did make it.

Shortly after this, the burp gunner, probably the officer who earlier had tried to exhort his men, tossed away his weapon, tentatively raised his head, and slowly began to get up. Several rifle shots were fired, and he dropped to the ground and did not move again.

From the edge of the field a German with a light machine

gun on a sled stood up, shouted something, and pointed to the blood at his abdomen. He continued to call to us, either begging us to help him or to finish him off, I could not determine which. After about fifteen minutes he fell to the ground and was still.

All was quiet the rest of the day. At about four in the afternoon we received word from the right that a German attack might be developing. I recall Sergeant Enloe's words to me as we prepared to fight again--"good hunting," he said, as calmly as if we were starting out on a pheasant hunt in Pennsylvania. But there was steel in his eyes. The attack never materialized. (Sergeant Enloe received a battlefield commission, was transferred to a rifle company, and was killed in action some weeks later while leading an attack on German positions. He was a cool, intelligent, and very courageous soldier.)

The night seemed endless. All of us were on high alert. German patrols were operating in our rear. An occasional burst of automatic-weapon fire to the ground, designed, I suppose, to draw our fire, revealed in the flashes Germans as close as fifty yards behind us. From continually starting to our front I began thinking that I saw in the misty darkness some of the bodies move. Our Squad Sergeant said I was seeing ghosts. However, as dawn came one could see that at least three bodies had vanished, including that the burp gunner who had tried to surrender. Perhaps both of us were right about what I had seen.

We were immensely relieved to have passed through the pre-dawn and dawn without another attack, but at about eight o'clock we were told that our position was untenable. We fell straight back, reached a dirt road just in time to see a group of mortar men pulling out with a jeep and trailer loaded with ammunition, and continued further on to what appeared to be a headquarters area. There was something of a clearing and a dirt road. Many of the trees had been cut down, and the troops had actually built tiny log cabins for themselves.

Quite surprisingly all was calm and quiet the rest of the day and that night (although again we did not sleep). I had the impression that perhaps we were being shielded by some unit, conceivably one that had been in reserve. I don't recall our even setting up a defense line or perimeter.

Next morning we were told that the Germans were deploying large patrols, up to 100 men, and that they were attacking scattered units such as ours. We started to leave the clearing for the woods. The machine gun was moved to the edge of the clearing and was trained on the road, when my Squad Sergeant sent me back for more ammunition. Just as I picked up two boxes I saw and heard coming down the road a large group of smiling Germans, herding and prodding in front of them some of our soldiers. The GIs were being forced to shout, "Surrender, Americans." I recognized some of the members of one of our mortar platoons. Still carrying the ammunition, I ran back to the gun just as some of the men were moving into the woods.

Then began a very strange fifteen hours. We moved along a barely discernible path in the forest, led by an officer whom I did not recognize. He was understandably thoughtful and somber and looked at a map frequently. At one place we left the forest and crossed an open field in groups of two or three, running as fast as we could, and

reentered the forest. Occasionally we would stop, and immediately we would begin digging in. We had no shovels, and because of the tree roots we made little progress. At one point we were told that we would make a stand where we were; however, we remained there for only about one hour. The situation was eerie--there was no sound of fighting anywhere nearby, the forest was enveloped in mist, and we had no idea where we were or to where we were going.

The day wore on and with the mist it was becoming dark early. We emerged from the forest and entered a very large cleared area sloping upward. We came to a dirt road, passed a burned-out jeep, and then saw far ahead up the hill the barely discernible outlines of a building. The second gunner and I began to argue about the name of the town we were approaching. We were stopped by a burst of automatic-weapon fire--the tracers passed far over our heads. Although the ground was saturated from the run-off of the melting snow, we began digging in. Our Squad Sergeant called us and said we were turning back. We had been at the head of the column; when I turned around I was surprised at the number of men behind us--perhaps as many as seventy-five. In their midst there was a tall, strongly built German prisoner. He was turning his head, glancing quickly and anxiously, obviously looking for a chance to escape. The rear of the column moved into a draw or ravine which ran at roughly right angles to the direction in which we had been moving. The approaching darkness, the gloomy aspect of the draw, and the stress of the past three days suddenly began to affect me. I began to feel that this would be my last day alive, that I would not see another dawn.

Although we were moving through the draw in increasing darkness, the cloudy sky was reflecting fires which were burning not far off. To this illumination was added the occasional glow of rockets passing overhead. We were obviously near areas of combat.

At one spot there was some small-arms fire. I looked across the draw and saw, in the dim light, paper or wooden targets in human form--this had been a practice range, but now the shooting was apparently being directed from the target area to the other side. The draw narrowed somewhat and we came under artillery fire. There was at least one air burst; later I speculated that perhaps we had been shelled by our own artillery. In dropping to the ground I knocked off my helmet, and the machine gun I was carrying at the time hit me on the back of the head. I am sure I would have felt more pain if my adrenalin level had not been so high. We rushed through the narrows, heading none of us knew where. A soldier approached me begging for help. He had been struck in the throat by shrapnel, could scarcely speak, and smelled of blood. I could only offer encouragement, urging him to keep moving. He turned to someone else. I learned later that he did not make it.

The group began to move more slowly. We were emerging from the draw, the light from the bright orange sky revealed that an orderly column was being formed. I recognized the voice of a sergeant from one of the rifle companies, encouraging us and urging us to keep moving. We had reached American lines. We had survived to fight another day.

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Clarence Blakeslee
M Company
112th Infantry Regiment
28th Infantry Division
Rockford, Michigan

It seemed like a rest camp after the Hurtgen forest. We did some training made a few raids to capture German prisoners for questioning. The German prisoners always told us that all that faced us were old men and boys.

I was given the job of sound spotting, we could locate German guns by charting their flashes and measuring the time it took for the sound to reach us.

After a few nites I noticed some new guns on our right front, they had a different sound like they were mounted. Also there was more truck activity and sometimes voices. I was given a citation by Bat. HQ. They said my reports were excellent and detailed but they thought my compass must be off because they had sent a patrol into the area and had not found anything a few days before. The next nite I couldn't sleep so I went out where I could watch for flashes. There was no artillery falling near our positions.

Soon the Germans began turning on search lights which criss crossed over our positions. It was an eerie light that didn't case heavy shadows like moonlight. When you looked at the shafts of light it took a few moments for your eyes to adjust.

I went back to the dugout to warn the boys. I told them to keep their shoes on because something was happening. Switzer told me to quit scaring the h--l out of the men. They were mostly new, replacements for the ones we lost in the Hurtgen forest. I countered by saying that the Germans weren't lighting up the place just to [be] nice to us and went back out to the perimeter to listen.

Now I could hear the Germans talking, apparently their leaders name was Carl because the men kept calling his name. I found our sentry and used his phone to call the cp. They thought it must be one of our "white cow" patrols. I said they were talking in German and their leaders name was Carl. The Lt. said it would be "hell to pay" if I was wrong and he alerted the company. I said it will [be] worse if I am right and you don't alert the company. He said you stick with them and keep us posted and I will alert the company.

They crossed between our cook tent and mortar positions to an empty German bunker. The sky was beginning to get lighter so I had to crawl to keep from being seen. I could not see what they were doing. Someone from "K" company heard them and emptied his carbine at them and me, suddenly they came running toward me. I thought they had discovered me but they went by me full speed into the valley behind our position. I had asked for permission to fire on them but the Lt. had said just keep track of them.

There was a stunning explosion near me, the blast went over my head, huge chunks of concrete began falling around me. I was scared. They had blown up the big bunker beside me.

Now everyone was alerted for the beginning of "The Battle of the Bulge." We had a front center seat.

Sgt Rastus May from Rockford, Michigan (my home town) had an anti-tank gun just up the hill from Seveneg, Germany, it controlled the road coming out of Seveneg. I used his A.T. emplacement as a last stop, before I dashed across a field.

December 25, 1944

George Karambelas
A Company
333rd Infantry Regiment
84th Infantry Division
Alexandria, Virginia

The blinding flash and the deafening explosion were followed by screams. The medic, who a minute before was kneeling over me to give first aid, groaned and slumped on me.

"I'll help you," I said, but he was already dead.

And this is the way it is when riflemen are sent to fight tanks.

It was Christmas night, December 25, 1944, when the allied armies in Europe began a desperate and costly struggle, since known as the Battle of the bulge. Snow that Christmas was not one of nature's beautiful decorations but an enemy just as deadly as the German machine guns and tanks.

Some of the events that took place on the night of the 25th are only hazy recollections; others are still very vivid and will never be forgotten. Some of these events are responsible for saving my life while others may be viewed as premonitions of the impending tragedy. Every year at this time I find myself reflecting on these events and I wonder!

Christmas was uneventful except for the bright sun and clear sky which permitted our Air Force to become operative after a prolonged period of inactivity due to bad weather. The elation felt at seeing thousands of planes on their way to bomb the German panzers was short-lived because I knew that there was still a long, long road to travel before sanity would return to the world.

"All right you guys, pack up; we're going for a nice little walk," barked the platoon sergeant. We crawled out of our foxholes, a few miles from Marche, and after marching, waiting and freezing for what seemed an eon, we stopped at last in the courtyard of a large farmhouse. Orders, we were told, had not come through as expected and we would have to sit. A nearby barn, filled with hay, provided a perfect haven and as I crawled into the hay to warm my freezing feet, I thought how wonderful it would be if orders were delayed until morning and I could spend a whole night in luxurious comfort. The heavy guns roaring in the distance seemed very far away and the whole war seemed to detach itself from my little world. At the moment, the only thing that mattered was that I was under shelter and among my friends.

John Shaw, a close friend who always took meticulous care of his overshoes, said to me, "What kind of situation do you think we're in, anyway?"

"I don't know."

"Hazard a guess."

"I can't even do that. I've got a sense of foreboding, that's all."

With the customary abruptness, orders were passed around to assemble in the courtyard. There were moans and groans from everyone; our little haven was about to crumble. In the courtyard, I remember thinking that this would probably be just another "hurry-up and wait" affair because we were totally unfamiliar with the terrain and it would be suicidal to send troops on a night mission without adequate briefing. I

was sure that a night mission was out of the question, and worse, we would maneuver for position for the rest of the night. We were told briefly that German paratroopers (about one company) had occupied a strategic hill but since we would attack with an entire battalion, it would simply be a matter of policing-up just like we did in camp. (In camp, soldiers were formed into a rank and went along picking up trash; this was known as policing the area or simply police-up. I said to John Shaw, "If anybody has the notion of ordering us to attack now, he's crazy."

No answer.

"John, didn't you hear me?"

"I heard you."

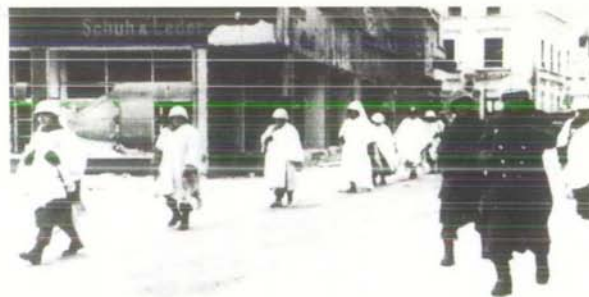
"Then why the hell don't you say something?"~

"I will, when I get my overshoes stashed away in a good, safe place."

We had been ordered to remove our packs, overcoats and overshoes.

Soon, we started marching toward a hill silhouetted against the sky. I wasn't particularly frightened but I kept wondering if we would find only a company of German paratroopers. I remember seeing a truck pulling an anti-tank gun up the hill, skidding and going into a ditch. The sight of the anti-tank gun didn't register at that moment but I have thought since about it a great deal and wonder if someone knew that anti-tank guns and plenty of them, were the main thing needed for that mission.

During the march to the top of the hill I kept stumbling for no apparent reason; I even dropped my rifle and was afraid that the bore might be plugged up. Shortly thereafter, I dropped one of my grenades and going through a few strands of barbed wire, I became entangled and nearly lost my helmet. When I look back on the stumbling, dropping of things and the barbed wire, I feel sure that they were warnings. I had never before dropped my rifle. At the time, however, I was more concerned with cleaning it and catching up with my platoon.



Someone was firing tracers behind us. "Shaw!" Do you see those Roman candles?"

"I see them."

"And you aren't nervous in the service, buddy?"

"It's only grazing fire, quit worrying."

The hill was very quiet and I remembered the scout in the Indian movies saying, "Yeah, it's too quiet." One platoon attacked the Chateau of Verdenne on the hill but very little firing ensued and we were told that the castle was taken and not to worry about it anymore. We were then lined-up and told to proceed through a designated section of the woods

firing and screaming in order to demoralize the Germans. The woods consisted of a few large trees and many smaller ones fairly close together. There was a wide path or road on our left flank and we were told to stay away from it but to guide on it. I was about ten yards from the road blazing away from the hip and screaming like mad. Someone was firing from my left and a little to my rear but too close for my comfort. "Hey, burrhead," I yelled, "do me a favor and point that peashooter at the Krauts instead of me."

"Sorry, George, I'll get up on the line with you."

It was my platoon leader.

All of a sudden the Germans began to return our fire; their machine guns appeared to span the entire width of the woods. I didn't feel particularly concerned about the machine gun fire and I don't think anyone else did. After all, German small arms fire had always been dealt with before; it was their artillery we feared. I don't think anyone in my immediate area was wounded but we began to crawl and continued to fire; the screaming was far less enthusiastic and soon no one screamed. I reached a small clearing in the woods near the road. The lieutenant came up and asked me if I could see anything; I said no but I thought I had spotted a machine gun nest and would try to hit it with a rifle grenade.

As I edged toward the road, the machine gun opened up again for a few seconds and the lieutenant cautioned me not to get too close to the road. In order to fire at the position I had picked out, I had to get on one knee to clear some trees. I fired the grenade, saw it hit and felt certain that I had knocked out the German machine gun. As I turned to crawl back, I felt something crash into my left thigh. It felt as though someone had struck me with a baseball bat. The blow knocked me backwards but I managed to crawl away from the road without much difficulty. I felt only surprise and amazement that I had been hit; after the initial pain, I felt only a mild burning sensation.

The lieutenant came up and asked me where I was hit.

"In my thigh."

"Medic!" he called.

The medic crawled up and said to me, "I'll check it to make sure an artery hasn't been severed."

I was flat on my back with my feet toward the Germans; this position (feet toward the enemy) saved my life. The medic knelt beside me, examined the wound and said it wasn't bad; no broken bones. He told me to take my sulfa tablets, while he applied a dressing. (The medic had come to our company just a few days before and I didn't even know his name.)

As he started to leave I felt an explosion which seemed to be right at my feet and felt a sharp pain on my right foot. I heard the medic groan and he fell over me. I tried to help him but he was already dead. The shrapnel from the German tank almost cut him in half. Then I heard screams from all around. Several of the men were hit and some were calling for a medic while others were just crying. I remember two in particular, one who spoke English with an accent kept saying "I die, I die," and the other was screaming about a wound in his back and that he couldn't move. I started to crawl toward the voices when another explosion, practically at the same place as the first one, knocked me unconscious.

I don't know how long I was out but when I came to I thought I was dead. What had been pitch dark before was now fairly bright, with fires burning in some places and flares going off. My first thought was that I was in hell. Slowly I regained my senses but when I started to move I knew that my legs had been shattered. I tried to sit up just as another shell came in and I fell flat again. This time I was very frightened because a small fragment hit me above the eye and the blood impaired my vision; I thought I was blind. When I wiped the blood away I could see and turned to examine my legs. My right foot felt as though it was held on hot coals.

I reached down to feel it--I suppose to make sure that at least it was there--when I heard a voice to my right rear saying, "George really got it that time; I think he's dead."

I turned my head and said, "Hell, I'm not dead; where is everybody?"

"Orders have come through to withdraw. Somebody must have admitted that we can't fight tanks with rifles."

Time had lost all meaning and I had no idea how long this whole thing had taken. I tried to get up, hoping against hope that somehow I could walk but soon resigned myself to the fact that I would not get out of the woods under my own power. I crawled over to the other men; there were at least five whom I had known very well.

I asked, "How badly are all of you guys hurt?" They seemed to have their legs shattered so completely that the slightest movement was impossible.

Then I asked the question that combatants have been asking since the first two tribes of primitive men clashed.

"Why hasn't help been sent to take out the wounded?"

Someone answered, "That's what I'm up here for, but now I'm hit and can't even help myself."

He was sure that no one would venture into the woods. Earlier, most of the wounded had been taken out, but now nobody would return.

"We can't stay here," I said, "the Germans might come though at any minute and finish us off. Nobody is returning their fire."

All agreed but there didn't seem to be much point to try to do anything. I searched around with my hands hoping to find a rifle. All the weapons had suddenly disappeared; the only thing I had was a grenade in my pocket.

After trying to think of something to do or something to say I also joined the mood of the little group which seemed to be if help doesn't come, we're lost, because there's nothing we can do by ourselves. From the German lines, machine guns sprayed the area periodically but not even close to us.

Finally one soldier spoke up and said, "If anyone thinks he can crawl, he'd better start, because the Krauts will be here in no time."

"I can crawl," I said, "but I don't know how far, and I don't want to become separated from the rest of you. I haven't any idea how far back the others have withdrawn. I'll try it with somebody else."

Compared to the others I was in fairly good shape and I would have to try to get back and send help. The next few minutes were the most heart rending moments I have ever known. I am sure that all the wounded doubted that I would ever get back and knew that even if I did, help for them

would not arrive in time. They gave me messages for wives, sweethearts and families (two of the men had babies which they had never seen) and last farewells to their loved ones which made me break down. (I may add that all of the wounded died but I did not contact any of their families.) After reassuring them that I would have help back in no time, I started crawling away from them. It soon became apparent to me that I would never get through the woods but would have to risk the road. I crawled to the edge of the road, was unable to see any sign of a human being, no gunfire of any sort and decided to crawl as fast as I could. The next period of time is very hazy. I am almost sure that I got up and walked a few steps but I can't be positive. In the meantime, the Germans had started firing again and I remember watching their tracers overhead. Nothing seemed to matter, however, except finding friendly troops because I knew that before too long I would pass out and freeze to death. At last I arrived at the point where we entered the woods some hours before. I was very tired by this time and crawled into a ditch to rest for a little while. I don't remember how long I was there but when I tried to crawl again, I knew that I had reached the end. I heard someone walking toward me on the road and became very frightened because I was certain that they were Germans and that they would see me and finish me off.

I took a grenade from my pocket, pulled the pin, and called out, "What company are you guys from?"

"A Company, 3rd platoon," one of them said in a surprised voice.

I replaced the pin. "Help me get to the first aid station, and then get word to headquarters that there are still wounded in the woods; and tell them to be quick about it."

But self-preservation comes to the fore at such times and the soldiers probably felt that I would be too much of a burden to them. They suggested I be carried to a nearby shack and they would hurry back to get help. I pleaded, threatened, cursed and did everything I could think of to persuade them to take me with them. At last they made a seat with a jacket and their rifles and carried me to the first aid station. I remember passing out several times on the way and I know what a burden I was to these two soldiers. Needless to say, they saved my life and I am very grateful. The aid station was set up near some trenches in which stretchers had been placed. I was lowered into one of them, covered with a blanket, asked where I was hit and given first aid, which consisted mainly of applying a dressing over any spot that was wounded. It was impossible to cut away clothing and boots for proper care.

Daylight came and with it a jeep. I remember being lifted out of the trench and placed on the hood of the jeep. I very kind voice asked if I was cold and gave me another blanket. In fifteen minutes or so I was in a building, placed on a table and attended to by an army medical officer. I don't remember what he told me but I felt very reassured. He gave me an injection, the pain ceased and I felt pretty good. He gave me a tin of hot coffee and a tube to drink through and then I saw what remained of my company. They asked about friends, I asked if help had been sent for the others, nothing really made any sense.

Shortly thereafter I was placed in an ambulance with some of my friends, and was told that we were going to a hospital.

Before long I began having terrific pains and asked the attendant to please give me something. He did and I remember falling asleep with two of my friends looking at me. I work up in a hospital ward, looked for my friends, but they had been taken elsewhere. Soon I was transported to Paris and began the long route through the hospitals to my eventual discharge from the army. To this date, I have seen only two of the men in my company but wherever they are and whatever they are doing, may God bless them all; they were the greatest.

December 1944

Mildred E. O'Neill

Wife of Sgt. Edwin Bates Stroble (1922-1976)

9th Infantry Division

Arlington, Virginia

I have been collecting shoes, both miniatures and "real," since I was fifteen years old in 1940, and now have 875, counting pairs as one. Each shoe is numbered and cataloged, giving all known particulars concerning that entry, as to how, when, where obtained and any history I can learn about that shoe. At the beginning of this collection, I had no idea that it would become so mammoth, so interesting, and even, historically, so important. The beginning catalog entries are one-liners, "Mom gave this to me for my birthday," or "Aunt Bee sent it for Christmas." Now, each shoe is given a description for identification, and a complete write-up.



Al Alesandrelli (l) and Bob Welker flank Mildred O'Neill who holds the model German boot given to her husband by a dying German soldier in the BoB. Al (557th AAA Bn, 84th Inf Div) is a VBOB founding member.

One of my most treasured items fits into the first category. I wish I had much more detail. It is a replica of a German boot, a traditional symbol of German might, soft leather, 4-3/16 inches high including the worn leather strap at the top. It is very detailed, stitched up the two sides from the sole, over the ankle bones, to top. The sole was made separately and attached. The heel is 1/4 inch high with five nail heads visible in the sole of the heel. There is an overlap of leather 3/8 inches high encircling top of boot, which is sewn up the

front. The entire boot is worn and scuffed, as though it had years of handling.

There is a small hole in it which resembles one caused by a rifle. One overlapping piece of the leather strap has come partially unsewn, but is still there.

This small German boot is catalog number 118 and was entered in January, 1945. That entry reads, "Eddie Stroble sent it from Belgium. It belonged to a Dutch guard who was dying and gave it to Eddie. The boot was a good luck charm to the guard. Eddie did not find out how the hole got in it or how the strap had been broken."



Eddie Stroble

family's charm. I hope it brings you luck."

At this time in our lives, we had no idea we would ever be married, and we weren't until June, 1956.

I tried many times to talk about the war, and his part in it. The only thing he ever told me pertained to this boot. Eddie was a Medic and was in the Battle of the Bulge. During battle, he heard a groan. He found a German soldier who was obviously dying. Eddie gave him medical comfort and sat with him. Just before he died, he reached to an inside pocket, handed this boot to Eddie and said something to this effect, "This has been my

December 1944

Mary E. Arthur
135th General Hospital
West Rutland, Vermont

Our busiest [time] was the C from BOB December '44 and New Years January of '45 as I recall. In one unit I was in, the big brass came to give the medals. One of my guys, first on left of ward, received the Medal of Honor. He, even though wounded, crawled around in back of enemy and confiscated a machine gun and some other stuff, and blasted the H--- out of the Germans, got back up and took a lot of prisoners and also the wounded were taken care of--he'd called for back-up.

He was tall, thin, dark hair and eyes as in Italian or Greek. Depressed because the other boys were teasing him about his valor. So I got after them and they straightened out, only helping him as he could not reach, etc., and legs and feet full of holes.

We were warned before the brass came to keep shut and not say anything but the patients were asking me to say they were not getting enough food. The General? asked, "Is there anything I can do for you? Anything you are not getting?" The patient I was standing by (bed patient) looked up at me with pleading eyes, and said "Tell them, Lt!" And so I did. That took care of that. Did it ever. They got more food. Did those guys ever love me after that! But the ward sarge was furious, and some others also I guess. But, what could they do about that yank nurse was a whole other thing!



Mary trying to do her desk work as sketched by artist ward patient.

THE 10TH REPLACEMENT CENTER

By Mary E. Arthur

After an all night ride in camouflaged army truck
We stood limp and weary, wet as a pack of ducks
In driving wind and rain, at a foreign replacement center.

Bruised and battered in every nerve and bone
Feeling lonely so far away from home
We managed somehow to find our way
To our strange barracks and without much ado
Fell into bunks assigned to us.

The next few days were the usual routine
Reveille, taps and duty latrine
Every hour brought a change of news
On the bulletin boards, it seemed.

When we stood in line for this and that
It gave us the opportunity to mingle and chat
With the guys returning from field combat
At the 10th Replacement Center.

Evenings we walked to the officer's wreck hall
Played darts, table tennis and had a ball
Where we ate and drank to our heart's content.

Yes, many a social hour was spent
Between the two different groups
The wise men, and those of us
Whose journey was about to begin
At the 10th Replacement Center.

December 1944

Thad F. Conway
A Battery
575th AAA Battalion
West Seneca, New York

How well I remember, December and January of 1944-45. The harsh winter and deep snows in Belgium. The continuous, both outgoing and incoming artillery. In the Battle of the Bulge, the snow was up to our "axles," and almost every night we had to dig a new foxhole. Those were the days, of "dig deep to stay alive."

I was with A Battery, 575 AA Bn., attached to the 492 ND Field Artillery, 11th Armored Division, Third Army. My job was, as a gunner on an M-16 Halftrack. (4-50 caliber machine guns, on a revolving turret)



Thad Conway
digging 'cm deep.



Thad with
souvenir
German burp
gun.

Now, retired, living with my wife of 39 years, here in a suburb of Buffalo, New York.

Spent my entire working career in Corporate Administrative Accounting.

Over the years, have maintained membership in three different area Veterans posts, and occasionally get together with another VBOB member, "Frank Tichy," of D Battery, 575th, at

one of the Posts, where we quaff a few ales, and win the battle over again.

December 1944

Simon R. Roebuck
Weapons Platoon
C Company
60th Regimental Combat Team
9th Infantry Division
Plymouth, North Carolina

About mid December we had a co-ordinated tank and infantry assault on Hoven. The Germans were patiently waiting, well concealed and fortified, for us to get well out into that mine covered field. We went tip-toeing through the mine field and soon our tanks were following. And once we were well out in that flat open field and past a point of no return the Krauts suddenly opened season on us. It was hell to tell the captain as we were caught in the deadly cross fire between our tankers and the German tanks and infantry. Our men were going down like weeds before a long mowing machine blade.



Photo taken during
ranger training with the
345th Infantry stateside.

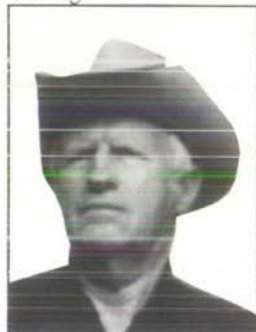
This was a day of carnage. I personally saw a bloody medic raise a red cross flag, and the Krauts promptly shot it down. And a short time later he raised a white flag, and the krauts lost

no time in shooting that down, also. They even had the Luftwaffe to come in to do some strafing.

Our artillery threw in a smoke screen, and we were told to leave our mortars and heavy weapons so as to travel fast. And any man that could walk or crawl and pull the trigger on a gun was to hustle forward. We would take Hoven--or there would be none of us left to fight.

We took Hoven at a very costly price, and left it to get back into the snow covered forest of the Ardennes. We fought day and night. And Christmas time of 1944 had went by before a lot of us realized it. The fighting was fierce and the Germans even crawled through the deep snow at night with knives in their teeth trying to get us. We wore out the firing pins and folded up the base plates on the mortars like catchers mitts. And the enemy wanted our butts so bad they would send in the Luftwaffe--right in the midst of a howling snow storm.

We finally tore asunder the panzer's pincers of Gen Gerd Von Rundstedt and his Bulge became deflated.



Simon in 1985 after
retiring from
Weyerhaeuser Company
in North Carolina.

.....

December 1944

C. W. Jackson
A Battery
20th Field Artillery Battalion
4th Infantry Division
Goldsboro, North Carolina

Here are a few old snapshots [taken] after we returned to Bastogne the second time. These were [taken] about three or four days before the Germans hit us. The snow had melted in this little town outside Bastogne and outside the town in the woods were bodies that were left before the snow when we were here the first time.



Left to right: Joseph Ann, Loyde, Dell Story, and Charlie Jackson.

Someone might recognize the place or one of themselves, friends, etc.

.....

December 1944

William R. Watts
Service Company
21st Tank Battalion
10th Armored Division
McAlisterville, Pennsylvania

I'll never forget that March north for the 10th Armored. We had a truck break down about 55 miles from Belgium. My motor officer was tail man of the column. He, Lt. Sujanski, had to go on ahead because no one knew where we were going. We went back the road a few miles, jerked the head of a GMC that just burnt that morning and put it on our truck in 2 hours and got going so we didn't have to destroy it.

About midnight we came to a cross road where a sign read "headed for Luxembourg." We were crawling on [the] road with our blackout flashlights to find tank tracks which way we were headed. We could hear bombing and artillery fire so we knew we were getting close.

Soon my motor officer came looking for us, but all [were] scared. All guns were pointed at each other. We didn't know password, so when cat eyes got so close we stopped dead and shut off motor. Soon I knew it was ok. They yelled my nickname softly and then led us in the camp area only a couple of miles.

The weeks to follow were all mixed up. A lot of people didn't know where their outfits were. Fog, rain, snow and freezing ice hindered our advance but when the fog lifted

and the planes came, gave us support and all advanced and pushed back the enemy. Soon it was all down hill.

.....

December 1944

Jack B. Warden
B Company
36th Armored Infantry Regiment
3rd Armored Division
Austin, Texas

B Company 36th Armd. Inf. Regt. 3rd Armd. Div. had just been wiped out from Dec. 10 thru 12th, 1944, on way to the Ruhr. We returned to Stolberg 13th Dec. to get replacements and equipment. I received Battlefield commission Dec. 15th. My platoon consisted of a total seventeen men, mostly replacements when the Bulge broke on 16th. They were PFC Calvin McCaslin, my runner, close friend and right hand, T/5 Eulis Barnett, S/Sgt Joseph H. Beter, Sgt Harold E. Cain, T/5 Charles G. Fitzgerald, S/Sgt Ralph W. Cavanaugh, S/Sgt Richard A. Gagnon, PFC Roy Weickert, S/Sgt Leonard Weidner, PFC Carlous C. Withey, (KIA after Bulge) and T/Sgt Rodrick T. Roberts. Cannot recall names of others.

Don't recall where we were from 16th to 23rd-24th [at] 0700 received orders to go to Ny from Soy and set up road block. About 2-1/2 to 3 miles. Arrived in process of outpostting crossroads when two light tanks arrived with 2nd Lt. John J. Modrack in command. Then two medium tanks arrived with 1st Lt. Smith of San Antonio, Texas in command. As we were deciding where to put them we received orders to go to Hotton, about three miles south where friends were in trouble. Meantime at 0830 an attack from Soy toward Hotton and from Hotton toward Soy along Soy Road jumped off. They both bogged down with heavy fighting before they joined up.

We arrived to the northeast edge of Hotton around noon or a little after. A German patrol had come back into the houses and was taking some of the GI's prisoner and others were hiding in the cellars. We knocked out their tank and dispersed their riflemen. Freed the one's in cellars and some Medics who were treating some wounded. We simply told them to load up in one of the trucks that were left and go. We had a good place to defend and set up our defense and reported "objective secure, now what?" The bridge to Hotton was to be held at all cost. We were on the out skirts of Hotton on east Bank of Outhe river. Not to be confused with Maj. Fickensen and his group on west side of Hotton. All roads from northeast and southeast merged on this bridge and they wanted it badly.

Smith got on radio and searched for any type help that was available. At last, contacted an artillery unit and gave our coordinates asking for everything they could spare in case of attack. They compiled at the peak of the battle that started about 1900 to 2000 and saved our tails. We got two more tanks with bazookas and Smith got the other six with his 75's. We set the tanks with great field of fire and super crossfire. My men had fifty cal., 30 cal. bazookas and rifles and grenades. We littered the fields with dead and lose one med. tank to panzerfaust and one man slightly wounded.

The prisoners we took said they had nine tanks and 1500 troops. We know the tank count was right and if the other

was right we were only outnumbered about 88 to 1.

We killed a calf and some chickens and had Christmas dinner. We felt we deserved a break. It was a nice Christmas.

This action was not reported at the time due to no reporters were ever near the front line. They spent their time from Regt. on back to Div. Hq. Their jobs were to make heroes of the upper brass and print their versions of battles as they saw it from several miles to the rear. Occasionally some brave soul would venture forward to Bn. Hq. in a basement and interview a brave Bn. Co. there and find how he was winning the war single handedly.

Another reason was my Company CO sent us to Ny. He and the rest of B Co. were dispersed as were we to other hot spots. He had no idea we were ordered to Hotton by the Task Force CO. Once we reported securing the objective and getting orders to hold at all cost, we lost contact with TF Co. We were on our own and of course we were expendable, and damn near was expended. There are many unanswered questions about that peculiar day, time and spot.

I am searching the National Archives and Division records such as After Action Reports and personal corresponding with the ones who are still alive. Everyone recalls generally but no one can recall specifics. They like I, have tried to forget about 45 years. The only reason I bring it up now is I hope to put together some history of our Company. With 104 KIA in our Co. and 987 KIA in our Regt. there are few left who saw more than one or two campaigns. I saw five from the front row.

December 1944

John B. Bavard
North St. Paul, Minnesota

A poem I wrote in my head while on guard and later sent home to my parents. It was about a road junction that my

company held open while friendly troops withdrew into the perimeter of the twin towns of Rocherath and Kinkelt on the north shoulder of the Bulge.

The German drive was halted
It says in the papers today.
But little the folks back home realize
The price we had to pay.

The panzers were coming from every direction.
Their tigers were belching flame.
The infantry man and his burp gun
To kill and destroy was his aim.

They came in the snow and the darkness.
We could hear them scream and yell.
Then our guns opened up in an instant
And the din of battle was hell.

We held and the first rays dawning
Showed destruction on every hand.
Twisted bodies of Yank and German
Lay there where we made our stand.

Do you see that form under the blanket?
That's a buddy I'll always hold dear.
We came in as replacements together.
Now he's gone and by luck I'm still here.

Yes, we held them there that morning
In the mud and the driving snow.
But remember the war isn't over,
We're still fighting a bitter foe.

VBOB members are encouraged to submit typed or neatly printed heretofore unpublished accounts and photographs, if available, for consideration for publication of Battle of the Bulge experiences.

Send to: Clyde Boden, VBOB, P.O.Box 11129, Arlington, Virginia 22210

VBOB SALUTES THE TANK DESTROYER ASSOCIATION

The Tank Destroyer Association will start phasing out late in 1990 after 10 wonderful and successful years according to an announcement in the summer 1990, *Tank Destroyer Newsletter*.

President Warren Mitchell (661st TD BN) stated that "The decision was not made abruptly or in the face of any problems internally or externally; frankly, we feel that we have accomplished those objectives which we established at the beginning of TDA in March of 1981 as part of our first Newsletter," viz:

- To tell the story (a history) of the Tank Destroyer Forces. (by Turner Publications)
- To locate veterans of the Tank Destroyer Forces and publish a period Newsletter. (13.955!)



- To establish a permanent Tank Destroyer Museum to commemorate the WWII activities of the Tank Destroyer Forces. (Fort Knox, Kentucky)
 - To establish a memorial dedicated to the Tank Destroyer Forces of WWII. (Fort Hood, Texas)
 - To collect and disseminate information to the veteran and dependents regarding rights and benefits to which they may be entitled. (We hope we have done well.)
- "Additionally, the Patton Museum of Cavalry and Armor has set aside a beautiful area of its Armored Forces Memorial Grove to receive individual Tank Destroyer Unit memorials. As part of the Third National Tank Destroyer Association Reunion in 1989 we set a central memorial to the Tank Destroyer Forces where individual units would add their unit memorials circled around the core stone set by the TDA."

The National Tank Destroyer Association was the concept of Marshall "Marsh" Hanks (818th and 808th TD BNs).

The members of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge salute our brave fellow front-line tank destroyer soldiers and extend every wish for good health and happiness.

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HELP WITH VBOB'S MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN

No doubt many of you belong to local veterans, civic, and fraternal organizations. Have you ever thought about the possibility that there may be many potential VBOB members there?

We are providing you with a flyer which you can clip out and place on your Moose, Elks, Masons, Knights of Columbus, DAV, VFW, Amvets, Rotary, Bar Association, etc., etc., bulletin board. If there's no bulletin board available, make some copies of the flyer and pass them out the next time you go. We're going for 10,000 members--won't you please help us?

-----clip along dotted line-----



**UNCLE SAM
NEEDED
YOU
THEN...**



**VBOB
NEEDS
YOU
NOW!**

- ★ Were you a soldier in the Battle of the Bulge?
- ★ Was your father, grandfather, or other family member in the BoB?
- ★ Are you interested in the history of World War II?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, you would qualify for membership in the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge (VBOB). VBOB was organized in 1981 to honor the Americans who served in the Battle of the Bulge and to remember those who never made it home. It now includes approximately 8,000 on its membership rolls. VBOB is a non-profit, educational organization which does not engage in political, lobbying, or propaganda activities.

VBOB's objectives are to:

- perpetuate the memory of the sacrifices involved,
- preserve historical data and sites,
- foster international peace and goodwill, and
- promote friendship.

In an address before the House of Commons following the Battle of the Bulge, Sir Winston Churchill said: "This is undoubtedly the greatest American battle of the war and will, I believe, be regarded as an ever famous American victory."

For further information please write:

**Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge
P.O. Box 11129
Arlington, Virginia 22210-2129**



VETERANS of the BATTLE of the BULGE

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Make check or money order payable to VBOB and mail with this application to above address.

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