

The BULGE BUGLE

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THE ARDENNES CAMPAIGN

FEBRUARY 1999

"Too many of them did not return," said George Linthicum, president of Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge. He asked the crowd assembled at the ceremony to remember the 600,000 men and women who defeated three German armies. "We do so with humility and gratitude," he said.

INDIANTOWN GAP, PA JANUARY 29, 1999

Military officials and World War II veterans dedicate a granite monument that reads "A Triumph of Courage," at Fort Indiantown Gap to memorialize the 81,000 American troops killed or wounded in the Battle of the Bulge, which began in December 1944. A re-enactment of the battle was scheduled for the next day.

L to R: Stanley Wojtusik, VP, Military Affairs; Brig. Gen. Guy F. Melchoir, Military Attache from Belgium; George Linthicum, President, VBOB; Hon. Carlo Krieger, Deputy Chief of Mission, Luxembourg.



'A Triumph of Courage'

Reprinted from *The Patriot-News*, January 30, 1999, Harrisburg, PA
by Monica von Dubeneck

FORT INDIANTOWN GAP—When World War II veteran Michael Petrick brings up the Battle of the Bulge many people think he's talking about losing weight.

That's why events such as yesterday's memorial dedication to those who fought in America's largest land battle are so important, said Petrick, of Bensalem, Bucks County.

Petrick, who fought in the decisive battle in the Ardennes in fog, snow, ice, and bitter cold, attended yesterday's dedication to remember. He'll attend today's battle re-enactment, also at Fort Indiantown Gap, for the same reason.

Fifty-four years ago, the Allies fought three powerful German armies across the rugged mountains of Belgium and Luxembourg in a battle that left 81,000 American troops dead or wounded and caused 100,000 casualties among the Ger-

mans. The German armies managed to push a bulge into the Allied lines, but, in the end, the Allied line held firm.

It was a battle Winston Churchill called "an ever-famous American victory."

Petrick and his friends, John Long of Strasburg and Earle Hart of Allentown, were members of the 87th Infantry that slogged past hedgerows and through forests for several weeks in the winter of 1944.

My memories are of cold and snow that deep," Long said, pointing to his knees. "We had to live out in the cold."

Long was a forward observer who had to help find enemy targets and knock out machine gun and mortar nests.

(Continued on Page 11)

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CONTACT THE CHAPTER IN YOUR AREA. YOU WILL BE GLAD YOU DID.

THE BULGE BUGLE
February 1999

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

On December 16, 1998, I had the honor to represent you at the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington Cemetery as we observed the 54th Anniversary of the beginning of the ordeal we remember as "Our Battle"--the Battle of the Bulge.

The scene was peaceful, and as the bugler sounded Taps over that hallowed amphitheater, my mind filled with thoughts of our comrades who gave their lives in the Ardennes to make our victory possible.

I also remembered our VBOB comrades who since those days have joined their ranks, and said a silent prayer for the contributions they made to our country, and to the growth of our organization. It was heartening to think that at various sites around the nation as chapters, and as individuals, you were remembering too. Letters from our friends and allies in Belgium and Luxembourg reported on their feelings of gratitude that day for the sacrifices endured by all in the cause of freedom. After the moving ceremony that followed at the nearby VBOB memorial, we adjourned to the Fort Myer NCO/EM Club for a reception and executive council meeting where I shared a story, and a concern. The story related to a brief news item appearing in late November. It was just a small paragraph from one of the wire services carried in our local paper. The story reported on a survey taken from a group of about 30 high school students who were asked about the significance of December 7, 1941, to them. It was disturbing and disheartening, to read that only one student could relate it to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and America's entry into World War II. Maybe shocking would be a better word than disturbing!

As historians are reviewing the 20th Century, World War II is increasingly cited as the most significant event in world history, including the United States, in these past one hundred years.

I believe that is accurate, but if the small survey noted is any indication, the history of WWII isn't given the prominent place it deserves in the nation's classrooms. That leaves us--you and I--the veterans of that war a real challenge as we move toward December 16, 1999, the fifty-fifth anniversary of the German surprise attack in the Ardennes.

It is a challenge that I, as your president, ask you to take up. Our challenge simply is this, as survivors of the Battle of the Bulge, we must "Make Our Mark" in the hearts and minds of the generations of Americans following us. It is up to us to do all we can to carry the stories of the heroism, the sacrifices, and the pain we went through to achieve the victory we won in the largest land battle ever fought by the American Army.

That is a collective "We," because I believe that every one of the six hundred thousand American men and women who fought in that battle contributed in his or her own way to that victory, and can stand beside those who won victories at Yorktown, San Juan Hill or the Marne and have our battle take its well-earned place in our history books.

To achieve that goal, we must continue to grow as an



George C. Linthicum

international organization, even as our ranks thin out. We have to "Make Our Mark" with veterans who have not heard about us, and we have to reach out to VBOB families, World War Two Reenactors, historians and students to join our ranks and keep the memories of the Bulge alive.

I know many of you are doing that, I am encouraged by the reports coming in to national headquarters about the number of new chapters forming, and the increasing activities of our present chapters.

I am also encouraged by the initiatives taken by individual members, who on their own are taking prominent places in Memorial Day, Flag Day, Fourth of July and Veterans Day activities in local communities.

New monuments commemorating the Battle of the Bulge are being dedicated, and being planned. Just recently the World War II Reenactors, led by Dave Shaw and Larry Tucker, spearheaded a drive to erect such a monument at Fort Indiantown Gap in central Pennsylvania. Many of us attended the dedication January 29th as part of the annual "Battle of the Bulge" reenactment and we were proud to see so many young people taking part in the ceremony.

We are "Making our Mark" but in this anniversary year we can do more--and we will do more! Working together as we did in the bitter winter of 1944-45, we can make 1999 a year that our local communities, indeed the nation, will recall with pride a victory earned 55 years ago by her sons and daughters. ■

SPECIAL OFFER

50th Anniversary
World War II
Battle of the Bulge

VBOB's only book publication

We have received many inquiries for copies of this "collector's item book." In order to have the book reprinted, we need to have a sufficient number of requests. If you would like to have a copy, please send your check (cost of shipping and handling included) in the amount of \$22.00 to: VBOB, PO Box 11129, Arlington, Virginia 22210.

We will hold the check until the last day of March. If we have not received a sufficient number of orders by that time, your check will be returned to you. If response warrants reprinting, we will then order the book from the printer. It will probably take a month or two (after March) for you to receive your order.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

HEY, WHAT ABOUT THE 90TH DIVISION?

I have been a member of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge and I have yet to see something written about the 90th. We went in on D-Day and fought all the way until the end.

I have been a member for over 3-1/2 years and very proud to belong to the VBOB organization and also to the 90th Division Association.

I'm enclosing a copy of part of what the division went through in WWII. Please try putting it in *The Bulge Bugle*. [It follows:]

"In World War II, the 90th Infantry Division was reactivated as an Army Reserve division in March 1942 at Camp Barkeley, near Abilene, Texas. After participating in the Louisiana and California maneuvers, the 90th Division was shipped to England in the spring of 1944 and trained there in preparation for the Normandy Invasion. The 90th Division participated in the spearhead attack at Utah Beach on June 6, 1944, as part of the D-Day invasion force.

"Part of Lieutenant General George Patton's Third U.S. Army, the 90th Division distinguished itself in combat throughout the European Theater in World War II. The division participated in major Allied offensives to include the destruction of the German Seventh Army at the Falaise Gap, which led to the liberation of Paris, the relief of the trapped 101st Airborne Division at Bastogne during the Battle of the Bulge, the siege of the fortress city of Metz and the liberation of Czechoslovakia. Nominated by General Patton for the Presidential Unit Citation, the 90th Infantry Division earned the respect and admiration of Allied commanders, to include General Omar Bradley, who cited the 90th Infantry Division as one of the best American divisions in the European Theater.

"The 90th paid dearly for the price of freedom; it suffered over 21,000 casualties, to include 2,889 who died in combat. Of the latter, nearly 700 Tough 'Ombres are interred at the Normandy American Cemetery at Omaha Beach. Four 90th Infantry Division soldiers received the Congressional Medal of Honor for their actions in World War II: Technical Sergeant Forest E. Everhart, Sergeant John D. Hawk, Corporal Edward A. Bennett and Private First Class Foster J. Sayers."

Albert M. Yanez
915 FA BN A

THE 155 LONG TOMS GOT AROUND

I am writing this letter hoping *The Bugle* will print it. Not for any glory--but to tell you about my outfit--the 979th Field Artillery Battalion. This was 155 "Long Toms" pulled by Prime Movers. We supported a number of different infantry units and were active all over France, Germany, Belgium and Holland. As far as I know the 978th and 979th Field Artilleries were the only 155 Long Toms in service. I have never seen any since the war.

We did not become active in the BoB--until it was over, but did fire on German troops as they were retreating from our troops. We went through Malmedy and saw carnage. We chased the Germans firing until the ordnance battalion pulled our guns out of service some 40 miles short of the last vestige offered by the Germans on the Elbe River.

Today at 88 years of age, I thank the Good Lord that he kept me alive. And to experience first-hand combat action from Omaha Beach to the end. I was a recorder for our battery. God bless the GI's and thanks for listening.

Norman B. Shoults
979 FA BN B

FROZEN HELL IN THE ARDENNES

This letter is in reference to Bruce Frederick's article in the November issue of *The Bulge Bugle* on page 5.

I believe in his statement "Who Really Liberated Bastogne?". One answer--every soldier who went through frozen Hell in that winter in the Ardennes.

Some people forget about the soldiers in front of Bastogne during the Battle of the Bulge.

Thank you, Mr. Bruce Frederick.

Walter Merena
28 INF D 109 INF L

POINTING OUT ERRORS

Having been handed a copy of your November 1997 publication, I wish to point out some errors.

Your "President's Message" refers to "the men and women who endured brutality and torture in the Bataan Death March." While recognizing that this way of talking is "politically correct" nowadays, I must say that in fact no servicewomen of any sort were there. Army nurses from Corregidor were interned at Manila's Santo Tomas Prison as civilians. All survived in good health--whereas many thousands of male POWs died. True, there was a movie depicting female nurses as having been on the Death March and such, but this was an egregious falsehood.

Also, a piece about "the 16th Field Artillery Observation Battalion" refers to the writer as having been attached to "the 2nd Infantry," whereas the lowest numbered infantry unit in the U.S. Army (largely at Arlington, called "The Old Guard") is the 3rd Infantry--merged with the 1st and 2nd Infantry during the American Revolution. What your writer refers to, I infer, is the 2nd Division (a line division confusingly called an "infantry" one in contradistinction to "armored divisions").

Likewise, the piece refers to the 106th Division (a line division largely captured in the Bulge) erroneously as "the 106th Infantry" (logically a regiment, somewhere else).

The custom and practice of calling line divisions "infantry divisions" is outrageously confusing and invites phonies to insinuate that they served in the sure-enough infantry--that is, in an infantry regiment or separate battalion.

All "divisions" (of field armies) are miniature armies including almost all combat "arms" and semi-noncombatant "services," the principal fighters--in all divisions--being infantry of some kind: line, armored, motorized, airborne, mountain and light infantry (including marine infantry). Even the old "cavalry divisions" had as their principal fighters "mounted infantry" (dragoons).

Willis Case Rowe

SPECIAL MISSION

An article in your August 1998 issue, "The Enigma Machine--Not So Ultra," prompted me to send the enclosed item to you.

The Enigma article and many previous articles I have read accuse our commanders of being overly complacent about any German offensive along the VIII Corps front prior to December 16, 1944.

Enclosed [appears elsewhere in this issue] is an official report secured from the National Archives in Washington, DC. The report reveals that an operation was launched to make it appear that an additional division was moving to the front. The document only covers the activity of my unit--Headquarters Battery, 16th Field Artillery Observation Battalion. Such an operation would have to be initiated by VIII Corps Headquarters, not by a mere battalion. Many other outfits must have been involved.

Do any other VBOB Veterans have any recollection of the "Phantom" Division operation to deceive the German High Command just prior to December 16th? Although this mission did not deter the German offensive, it does indicate that Corps Headquarters were a lot more knowledgeable of the situation than the critics have indicated.

Edwin Kahner
16 FA BN HQ

THEY ALL SERVED

I am sure you are being flooded with letters concerning Willis Case Rowe's letter about the proposed officers not being combat veterans, and justly so. It is interesting that his identification is 12 ARMDD 17 AIB HQ.

I have read for every man in a fox hole there were 33 in the rear supporting him. This may or not be true, but the important thing is they either were drafted or volunteered, and they served, doing whatever task they were assigned. That's called teamwork and that is how we won the war.

I don't know all the officers but I have known President George Linthicum for a good many years, having served in the 26th Infantry Division at the same time. If it makes Willis Rowe feel any better, George has had plenty of combat experience.

BUT that is not what makes him a good president. He has served in various positions in the

(continued on next page)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Philadelphia Chapter of the 104th Infantry Association, in the 104th National Association, and the 26th Division. George is a willing worker, ready to spend the time and money to perform whatever is asked of him. My guess is the other officers have some of these same qualities. Most of us would not do the same, we are happy to sit back, read *The Bulge Bugle*, and send in a little dues once a year.

Shame on you, Willis, that is a letter you should have held onto and read over a couple of times before you mailed it. I hope you have had second thoughts by now.

I salute the officers who are willing to keep working for the association, no matter how they served.

William E. Sharp
26 INF 104 INF CN

[You're right Mr. Sharp, we did receive many letters in response to the mentioned letter. Your letter was one of the best.]

EVERYONE DID THEIR BEST

I was in a mortar and machine gun company (D-346) of the 87th Infantry Division during the Battle of the Bulge. I am proud of the performance not only of the 87th but also that of the 11th Armored Division as well as any other unit which fought there.

Everyone did their best under terribly trying and varying conditions and it was through the collective efforts and the sacrifices of all the GIs in that battle that finally, FINALLY, and at horrendous costs, drove those expletive-expletive-expletive Krauts back.

Every American soldier who fought there at that time can and should hold their heads high!!

Albert W. Scribner
87 INF 346 INF D

EXTENDING DATES OF THE BULGE

In the November issue of *The Bulge Bugle*, a letter from Ed Bredbenner, 80th Infantry Division, echoed the thoughts of Camille Kohn of CEBA on extending the dates of the Bulge. I, for one, have always thought they should be extended to at least January 31, 1945. Not only to accommodate almost 50 replacements that C Company, 134th Infantry, 35th Infantry Division, received on January 27, 1945, but because the 134th, which was attached to the 6th Armored, at that time, was heavily engaged liberating the Village of Neiswampach, Luxembourg. Twelve men of my company were KIA January 24-26 in that area.

We were relieved by the 90th Division on January 26 and moved into defensive positions along the Our River. January 29, 1945, marked the last offensive action by the 134th in the Bulge when Company I attacked and captured the Village of Kalborn, Luxembourg. The 134th was relieved and pulled off the line on January 31, 1945, and we were moved back to Narsage, Belgium, before returning to the Ninth Army and going into the line opposite Hilfarth, Germany on the Roer River.

Let us not forget these men who fell after January 25, 1945. Give them the Ardennes Campaign Battle Star.

James Graff
35 INF 134 INF C

COMBAT INFANTRYMAN BADGE

In his article entitled "Medals of Confusion" (*The Bulge Bugle*, May 1998), Clifford Jones is incorrect in stating that, "The Combat Infantryman Badge was awarded when an infantryman had spent the required number of days in a combat zone. It did not mean he had to be eyeball-to-eyeball with the enemy at any time."

Army Regulation 600-8-22 governs military awards, including the Combat Infantryman Badge ("CIB"). The "History" section of the CIB portion of that regulation states that the CIB was created in 1943 to provide special recognition of the infantryman's unique mission, "to close with and destroy the enemy, and to seize and hold terrain." This history section also states that the creator of the CIB, Lt. Gen. Lesley McNair (then commanding general of the Army Ground Forces), originally recommended that the CIB be called the "fighter badge," in recognition of the heavy casualties suffered by infantrymen in their active ground combat with the enemy. The historic reasoning behind the creation of the

CIB was thus the recognition of infantrymen who had engaged in actual combat with the enemy.

Likewise, the "Intent" section of the CIB portion of AR 600-8-22 states that,

"There are basically three requirements for award of the CIB. The soldier:

- 1) must be an infantryman satisfactorily performing infantry duties;
- 2) must be assigned to an infantry unit during such time as the unit is engaged in ground combat; and
- 3) must actively participate in such ground combat.

Campaign or battle credit alone is not sufficient for award of the CIB." (Emphasis added.)

Finally, the "Specific Eligibility Requirements" section of AR 600-8-22 for the CIB states that, "A recipient must be personally present and under hostile fire...in a unit actively engaged in ground combat with the enemy." (Emphasis added.)

If the criterion for an award of the CIB was the number of days that an infantryman had spent in a combat zone--as Mr. Jones claims--then the Army would have made a CIB a campaign medal, and not a combat badge. Instead, the Army made the CIB a badge--which, by definition, is a military award that is given to denote proficiency in the performance of one's duties under hazardous conditions and circumstances of extraordinary hardship.

The CIB is not a campaign medal--and days spent in a combat zone do not make one a Combat Infantryman.

Patrick J. Kearney
11 ARMDD 55 AIB

...WITH SINCERE APPRECIATION

I'm not writing about the soldiers in battle and the medals they received; however, I write to pay tribute to the wives, mothers, and sisters who were left behind when the men were shipped off to war.

I was raised in South Central Georgia--the second child of a family of six kids. My mom was illiterate and my father had gone blind due to cataracts. I had just finished the 7th grade and, in an attempt to better my education and learn a trade, I signed up for the National Youth Administration (NYA). This was a vocational tech school 120 miles from home (Brunswick). I met and made friends with people who took me in and treated me like one of their own. As I finished the first nine months, I was placed in a small ship yard where I learned ship building--welding and cutting steel. I had moved into the family house--as they had taken in ship yard workers--room and board.

I met their youngest daughter, Ruby, a very pretty girl. We became very close and as she reached 15, we decided to get married. With her family's approval, we married November 19, 1942. We lived in her family's house for four months. Then the draft board separated us and Ruby was pregnant. I was assigned to the 7th Field Artillery Observation Battalion as a heavy machine gunner.

As Ruby came closer and closer to delivery date (which was on November 7, 1943), I had been assigned to a short special training session--the 442nd Combat Battalion. I was a thousand miles away from Brunswick--in Indianola, Texas--when Ruby gave birth to our beautiful son. I got my first look at him when he was about six weeks old. She had gone through the lonely months by herself and with her family--my only support was through letters and occasional phone calls. I did have two furloughs, but they were only a few days at a time.

We were put on alert to be shipped out. I called Ruby to tell her. She decided I should see my son one more time before I went to war. So she boarded a Trailways bus in Brunswick headed for Hattiesburg, Mississippi. I waited and waited. After several days she called and said the bus system was on strike. She was in a waiting room somewhere enroute waiting for the buses to roll again. She was exhausted. Finally, a nice lady held the baby a while so she could take a nap.

When she finally got to Hattiesburg we were on tight alert and getting ready to ship out to New York. My captain learned of the situation and allowed me to go into town to spend a few hours with Ruby and our son. This 16 year old girl brought our son over 500 miles so I could see him before shipping off to war. There were no ribbons or medals for her devotion and love. I never really did take the time to thank her as our marriage ended less than three years after the war ended....

(continued on next page)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Please excuse the wording and writing--75 and with a bit of arthritis in my hands.

Jim Royal
7 FAO BN

[Jim's story points again to the many acts of love and sacrifice made during time of war by those who were left behind...to wait.]

"TROOPS" DECEIVING

The November, 1998, letter from Bob Queen deserves more discussion. His defense of "SS Troops" must be corrected.

The SS was not a military unit at all so the word "troops" is deceiving. The SS were a quasi-military special police force that also served as Hitler's personal guard. They had the lowest casualty rates of anyone who fought in the war...when you're killing unarmed soldiers and civilians there is not much risk of getting killed. There is a large body of documentation regarding the many instances of SS atrocities committed on civilians and other allied soldiers.

Although Mr. Queen had no battle unit listed, I am proud to say I served as a rifleman with the 90th Division, 359th Regiment, F Company.

Harvey Meltzer
90 INFD 359 INF F

GREAT OFFENSE TAKEN

I was furious reading Mr. Queen's letter in the November issue regarding Malmedy and the wonderful W-SS. It seems he is an admirer of the enemy's elite and most political unit. Since he doesn't reveal his unit, I am wondering if he is a VBOB at all or if he is, did he ever meet one of those wonderful people in combat. I also take great offense at his sarcastic and uncalled for reference to the "American Heroes of the Bulge" which again reveals his sympathies for the SS. We do not need letters such as his criticizing our behavior under combat conditions especialiy after we heard about maimedy!

German prisoners received far better treatment than was afforded us--Krauts in U.S. uniform deserved not one iota of consideration when captured and execution was justified! Tell us, Mr. Queen, where were you during the Bulge? What outfit were you with, if any? Did you ever have anyone fire at you in anger? Were you in fact in combat at all?

Nathan Futterman
5 INFD 10 INF 3 BN HQ

WE DIDN'T CONSIDER OURSELVES HEROES

In your November 1998 issue, on page 5, you published a letter from Bob Queen (no other identification) in which he takes us to task for our supposed atrocities while at the same time he defends his vaunted Waffen-SS: "some of the finest troops in the world," Queen writes.

Unfortunately, Queen does not tell us "which American unit it was who caught and hung German paratroopers to trees during that battle." Since he apparently has the necessary information at his fingertips--I do not--I would challenge Queen to share his knowledge with us, those poor misguided people he refers to as individuals who "have a very biased view of what history is all about." At the same time, I would like Queen to tell us how any can be "hung...to trees."

I disagree with Queen when he writes that the Malmedy massacre, which actually took place at the Baugez crossroads, were "not the norm to most units of the W-SS." If he truly knew his Waffen-SS history he would know this action in Belgium was the norm for all Waffen-SS units. As one historian (K. J. Muller, in 1980 a professor of contemporary history at Hamburg, Germany) has put it: "the Waffen SS were as reckless as they were brutal; their name is plainly stamped on such eruptions of bestiality as the massacres at Oraden-sur-Glane and Lidice." Look those up, Mister Queen, plus the actions of the 12th SS Panzer Division at Rocherath-Krinkelt during the Bulge.

By the way, Peiper's boys ("some of the finest troops in the world," remember?) didn't stop their killing spree at Malmedy. As Danny Parker has pointed out in his well-regarded history of the Battle of the Bulge (page 124), Peiper's men "killed another eight prisoners at Ligneuville a further three miles down the road, 12 GIs and three civilians at LaVaux

Richard, several U.S. soldiers at Honsfeld and dozens of civilians in the Town of Stavelot." I know, I know: these actions were not the norm for the fine, upstanding Waffen-SS troopers, they were an aberration caused by one small unit, right Mister Queen?

Finally, to Queen's snide comments about us "Heroes of the Bulge." At the time we fought this battle, I do not believe any of us considered ourselves to be heroes. And I do not believe, nor should any of us believe, we are heroes today simply because we took part in one of the great battles of World War II. This would only cheapen the U.S., British, and French soldiers who fought their own good fights north and south of us, and particularly in the south where the "little Battle of the Bulge" took place.

In my opinion, we were young men fighting for God, country, cause, and our fellow soldiers. We left too many good men behind to assume to ourselves, the survivors of this and other battles in northwest Europe, the mantle of hero.

I am certain Mister Queen would not consider this. He prefers to believe, as numerous Americans do believe, the German Wehrmacht was the greatest military assemblage in modern history and we--members of the U.S. armed forces in Europe--were only rank amateurs who did not deserve to be put in the same class as the mighty Germans.

Doesn't this make you, veterans of the Bulge, feel bad about whipping the great German military machine in stand-up battle? Shouldn't we apologize?

Albert N. Garland
84 INFD 334 INF 3 BN L

HISTORY REVISERS WILL HAVE A FIELD DAY

Roger V. Foebringer's letter "Twisting History" in the November *Bugle* got my attention. I found numerous errors in *Citizen Soldier* by Stephen Ambrose. To mention a couple: on page 242 "...the 6-ton bomb load went off." The maximum bomb load for the B-17 was 2 and 1/2 tons. And on page 430 Colonel Westmoreland was Chief of Staff of the 9th Infantry Division, not the 9th Armored. There are other, more serious mistakes. I wrote to the publisher citing the above two plus four more on 31 July 1998. I've received no response to date.

The history Revisers will have a "field day" when there are no longer any World War II veterans around to keep them honest!

Tom Raney

SIT DOWN AND WRITE YOUR MEMOIRS

You've published some of my stuff in previous *Bugles* so I'm somewhat reluctant to write again. If any of the following is of value, you can attribute it to a guy named Joel!

Revisionists get my danger up. One thing I do about this time of year can be seen in the attached Xerox. I'll send it every second or third year in various papers in the hope that it will stop some one and make them think. I'm surprised at the frequency with which the papers pick it up. [The article follows:]

"REMEMBERING HIROSHIMA AND BRITAIN

"The world properly grieves for Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Those of us who were there at the time grieve equally for the victims of Hitler's buzz bomb attacks on London. The buzz bomb, a cruise missile, was the immediate forerunner to atomic weapons. Pilotless loaded with TNT, 3,000 of these 'secret weapons' dropped on London and environs in a five-week period commencing shortly after D-Day. Their targets were damage and terror. They achieved both.

"Consider that Hitler, using the genius of Werner von Braun and the like, was within an eyelash of harnessing atomic power. His V-1 buzz bomb, then the far more destructive V-2 ballistic missile, bore grisly testimony to that. Suppose he had beaten the Allies to the punch?

"Without hesitation, in my judgment, he would have ordered London with its five million inhabitants annihilated. After that, who knows where he would have struck...New York?...Boston?

"This observation doesn't lessen one's anguish for those star-crossed Japanese cities. It merely is a speculation on a grotesque possibility that almost took place. Thank God Hitler lost the atomic race! Had he won, you wouldn't be reading this today."

"Joe" also urges veterans to sit down and write their memoirs. Dedicate them to the third or fourth generation

(continued on next page)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

down the line. Too many vets, of course, say they can't write. Baloney.

Lastly, the 7/29/98 *New York Times* had an article by Maureen Dowd entitled "An American Tragedy." In case you missed it, this excerpt jumped off the page: "Steven Spielberg has been giving interviews, talking about having made *Saving Private Ryan* to honor the men who fought in World War II and risked so much for freedom. Suddenly, baby boomers realize that, despite a buzzing economy and a passel of luxury goods, we are going to die without experiencing the nobility that illuminated the lives of our parents and grandparents. They lived through wars and depressions, life and death, good stomping evil. Our unifying event was 'Seinfeld.' We live in a culture more concerned with celebrity than morality, more centered on self than others."

Keep the *Bugle* blowing.

Ed Mooney
3626 QM TK CO

LE MEMORIAL

Re: Page of August 1998 issue: "Wall of Liberty"

I am always amused when I read the "new" comments from various readers in vets magazines which never seem to be aware of the complete picture concerning The Wall of Liberty and its relationship to The Normandy Foundation. Somehow Le Memorial creeps into the discussion with the implication that it is part of The Battle of Normandy foundation as suggested by the letter from Pierre Salinger.

As shown in photos I took on a 1993 visit to Le Memorial it is not simply a "memorial" suggesting a plaque or monument. It is a massive museum depicting history from 1911 onward which shows the evolution of the world's problems all seemingly in a never ending progress of wars till WW II. There are a few artifacts but not many. There are an assortment of videos, movies and stills. It is obvious looking at the grounds that there are many acres all donated by the City of Caen in memory of the horrible destruction the city suffered mainly from Allied bombings.

The dozen flags represent the countries which supported and helped fund the entire facility for dedication 6 June 1944. The DDR (East Germany) was also a sponsor whose flag was removed when E&W Germany became one.

Many of us became charter members of The Battle of the Normandy Foundation around 1990 and a charter assisted Le Memorial in a minor role but specifically established the Foundation's Projects: Le Memorial, U.S. Armored Forces Memorial Garden, The Wall of Liberty, The Normandy Scholar Program, WW II Commemorative Coin Program and The Eisenhower Statue.

Ground breaking for the Memorial Garden was held 13 September 1993. Several groups of university students were sent to Normandy to study the Normandy battle. Coins were authorized for sale by U.S. Treasury and French Treasury for sale via Atlanta, Georgia; Books of Normandy veterans were established with names of veterans and placed in the Le Memorial library.

The garden and Wall were planned to cover many acres adjacent to Le Memorial building. It was unfortunate that too few vets contributed to the Wall fund to enable the project to build to fruition while funds dwindled away in advertising, publicity and vital travel.

There were various volunteer staff retired officers at the Washington office which tried to get support from the many other veterans organizations with little success. There always seemed to be resentment within those organizations. Whether Congress will fund follow-on is doubtful in my view when they insisted that the \$100 meg for WW II Memorial for Washington, DC, be funded via contributions. Can Bob Dole make it happen?

Anyhow, I was a charter member and visited Le Memorial site twice and strongly recommend vets visit for half a day while in Caen.

William Leesemann, Jr.
26 INF 101 ENGR CMBT BN

MITCH KAIDY REPLIES

Neither in my writing nor in my private statements have I ever disparaged the Fourth Armored Division, which was certainly one of the best. Critics of my conclusions have to contend with the fact that I have never offered my own opinion without official, authoritative attribution. The question I

addressed in my article was: Which outfit actually lifted the siege of Bastogne?

All who read the piece will clearly find that authoritative historical attribution. Here is what General Eisenhower wrote in his postwar book, *Crusade in Europe*: "On the 26th Patton at last succeeded in getting a small column into Bastogne, but he did so by a narrow neck along his left flank that gave us only precarious connection with the beleaguered garrison. It was after that date that the really hard fighting developed around Bastogne..."

Those who dispute my citations also have to argue with another authoritative historian, the chief of the Ardennes section of the Army Historical Division, Robert E. Merriam, who wrote in his history *The Battle of the Bulge*: "By the first of the year, nine German divisions were closeted around Bastogne, closing in for the kill."

A siege is sustained attempt to capture an objective, so if the 4th Armored really liberated Bastogne, was the SHAEF commander wrong that "the really hard fighting developed" after December 26, when the 87th Infantry and 11th Armored Divisions started attacking? What about those nine German divisions described by the official Army historian as "closing in for the kill" in early January?

Mitch Kaidy
87 INF 345 INF 1 BN D

HELPING YOU "MAKE YOUR MARK"

The office has an "Education Kit" which could be very helpful to you in preparing a presentation for your local school, civic club, or church group.

If you would like one, send us a large, self-addressed envelope which has 77 cents postage on it and we'll send you one.

We also have a "Veterans Day Program--General Lesson Outline," which can be adapted to be used any time.

This, too, will cost you a large, self-addressed envelope with 77 cents postage on it.

One or both of these will be of tremendous help to you in formulating a lesson the children will long remember.

It's important also to remember that they will remember best what they can see. So, if you have an artifact or two you would like to take along, it will help them to remember it. I'm not talking rifles or bayonets--as the school would not allow that--but an old mess kit, a helmet, or something like that, will remain in their minds for a very long time. You might wish to check with the school office to see what, if any, objections they may have to what you decide to bring.

Also you may wish to have some of the materials reproduced for the children to take home with them--for example, the fact sheet, the history, the list of books and videos, etc. If their appetite is whetted, they may read more about the Battle of the Bulge or World War II in general.

Incidentally, it can also be a history lesson for their parents. I'll bet not too many of them know much about **your battle--the largest land battle in American history.** ■

951ST FIELD ARTILLERY BN HONORED IN GRANDMENIL

May 6, 1998, in Grandmenil Park, the municipality of Grandmenil-Manhan in Belgium, and members of the Center for Research and Information in the Belgian Ardennes (CRIBA) were hosts for the unveiling of a memorial honoring the service of the 951st Field Artillery Battalion during the Battle of the Bulge. The memorial was unveiled by Lt. Leo E. McCollum (Midland, Texas) and Lt. Russell L. Kelch (Derby, Kansas).

Battle of the Bulge Seminar Presented to Military Police Officers

A seminar on the Battle of the Bulge was given December 5, 1998, by veterans of that battle for Military Police Officers, 3rd BN, 318 REG, 80th INFD. This event was held in the Battle of the Bulge Memorial Conference Room, Post Library, Fort George G. Meade, Maryland, with comments by John Bowan, Historian; Dorothy Davis, Army Nurse, 57th Field Hospital; Pete Edmunds, 26th INFD, 101 IRF; Edward Radzwich, 26th INFD, 101st INF; and Alfred Shehab, 38th CAV REC SQ.

After a tour of the room's artifacts and a presentation on the development of the conference table and chairs, a brief movie of the Battle of the Bulge was shown followed by the veterans telling of their experiences in that battle. The young officers asked questions throughout the seminar and expressed their deep gratitude to the veterans for this interesting "look at history" by those who were there.

The Battle of the Bulge Foundation frequently sponsors these seminars. A similar activity will be held in February for a group of Medical Service Corps officers stationed at Fort Meade. In March, for the second year, the veterans will relate their stories to some 80 Young Marines, JROTC Cadets and other high school students in a morning-long event that is known as "War As I Knew It."

This is an enjoyable and effective method for veterans to provide a living history lesson for these young people and a great project for Battle of the Bulge Chapters!



From left to right: Pete Edmund, Hazel Collins, John Bowen, Dorothy Davis, Edward Radzwich. Furthest right, Alfred Shehab. Remainder of persons in uniform are military police officers.

LOST & FOUND

During our recent BOB Historical Foundation Banquet on 15 Dec 1998, someone left a nice 35mm camera in its leather pouch in the Hospitality Room. If you lost your camera please identify the make and write or call John Bowen at 613 Chichester Lane, Silver Spring MD 20904-3331, Tel 301-384-6533.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

No longer able to do anything for our brother, Cpl. Horace Marvin "Bud" Thorne, 9th Armored CCG, who was killed at age 26 in The Battle of the Bulge on December 21, 1944, we are asking for your individual participation in a countrywide search.

Remember, the fact is:

THERE IS STRENGTH IN NUMBERS.

Now in our 70s and 80s, we are losing our veterans daily by the hundreds and thousands. This is a frightening reality. My sister, Anita Keyser and I are so glad to qualify as Associate members. Our organization, Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge needs the strength and continued interest of Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge and appeal to each of you to encourage your family members and those families you meet who have lost their Veteran of the Battle, to join our organization. Many are unaware they are eligible to join. Many do not know of our organization.

We cannot allow the history of The Battle of the Bulge to be rewritten with errors and changes. You know the true stories and we cannot let the world forget what Veterans endured during this War which shaped the final outcome, allowing freedom to continue as we all know and enjoy.

I hope I can count on you to publicize our **nationwide toll-free number**, while encouraging those eligible to call. Who's eligible? Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, your family members, and family members of any deceased Veteran of the Battle. The toll free number will accept the name, address, unit of service, and any questions.

Call TOLL-FREE

1-800-WW2-1944

or write personally to:

Edith T. Nowels

637 Holly Hill Drive

Brielle, New Jersey 08730



December 15, 1998, Arlington, VA: Stanley A. Wojtusik, VP, Military Affairs presenting \$1,000 check to Maj. Gen. (Ret.) John P. Herrling, Secretary, American Battle Monuments Commission donated by the Belgian 4th Bn. Fusiliers. Left to right: William T. Greenville, President, Battle of the Bulge Historical Foundation; Maj. Gen. John P. Herrling, Secretary, WWII Committee; Brig. Gen. Guy F. Melchior, Military Attache; and Stanley A. Wojtusik, National Vice President, Military Affairs.

ROAD BLOCK

by Earl Stonefield
160th Engineer Combat Battalion

There is a military axiom that tells you when your line is breached you reinforce the shoulders, this prevents widening of the breach.

The Krauts breached the U.S. line in Luxembourg in December, 1944. The XII Corps was rushed to the southern shoulder from the Saar area and my outfit, the 160th Engineer Combat Battalion, went with them. We were in the Saarlautern bridgehead, a very hot spot at this time.

We went north of Eternach Luxembourg; the 5th Infantry was also sent there.

Other combat engineer unit were in the area and our job was to set up road blocks. Our road block consisted of two cases of TNT with primer cord wrapped around them. The wooden cases were nailed to a wide long board and the whole thing pushed into a culvert pipe that went across the road. A blasting cap was fixed to the primer cord and connected to the electric cable then to the "Hell Box" that generates current that set it off.

The cable would run back to a camouflaged protective area. Six men would monitor this, four riflemen and a bazooka team of two.

The first squad, first platoon of Company B had a very good arrangement, half of the squad was at the road block, the other half was back about one mile in a snug farm house, four hours on and four off.

For about two weeks during late December, we had this arrangement. Those men who were at the farm house were constantly practicing their culinary talents. The bit item was "liberated" fried potatoes. Ten-in-1 and C rations were provided and, of course, the favorite item was the canned bacon in the 10 and 1's. The resulting bacon grease was worth its weight in gold.

We had no idea where we were, now however, in looking at a map of Luxembourg, it must have been in the area of Berdorf, which is northwest of Eternach, by about 30 miles.

We knew nothing about the saboteurs and spies that were part of the Krauts' special section that was directed by Colonel Otto Skorzeny. Col. Skorzeny's people had a speaking knowledge of English and American slang.

This group consisted of about 200 men who at one time lived in the USA and for some reason went back to Germany. They were culled out of the armed forces in November, given a short training in sabotage, equipped with American uniforms and equipment and then turned loose at the beginning of the Bulge.

The weather was atrocious and I was in the farm house looking out onto the farm yard at our people who were "look-outs" between the road block people and the few that we had in the farm building.

A jeep pulled up, questioned our people and came into the building.

A short heavy set middle aged man, showing captain bars, came into the building. The jeep driver, a very young PFC stayed in the vehicle. The captain introduced himself, and I noticed that his clothing and helmet were new and spotlessly clean and he did not have any side arm. He wanted to know about us, what we were doing and how long we had been there. I told him everything he wanted to know and I noticed that he

wrote down everything that I had told him.

The captain then asked me what our code name was, but I had no idea what it was because I don't think that I had ever heard it. He returned to the jeep and went out the farm yard. We all commented on how well the captain and the PFC were dressed and that the jeep must have been just been painted.

Sometime later we heard that the captain and his driver were apprehended near Luxembourg City--they were two of Skorzeny's boys. I heard they were shot.

Our code name was Headstone Baker. Headstone for the 160th ECB, and Baker for B Company.

We left the road block and the farm house, moving west about 60 miles near the Dickerch area and the Sauer River, a hot place.

We assisted getting the 4th Infantry across the Sauer. ■

BATTALION HISTORY RECEIVED

Quite some time ago, R. L. SAWYER, 9TH ARMORED DIVISION, 60TH INFANTRY BATTALION, COMPANY C, sent us a copy of his battalion's history *Strike, Fight & Conquer* by Paul M. Crucz, of Middelburg, The Netherlands. Mr. Crucz compiled this history over a period of ten years of tireless and unselfish efforts. We failed to mention receipt of this in a timely manner and we apologize. It has been added to our archives and we very much appreciate having it.

VBOB OVERSEAS CAPS

Many have asked about getting VBOB Overseas Caps for the St Patrick's and other parades. They are available from the Keystone Uniform Cap Corp. The cap has olive drab sides, with a combination red, infantry blue and yellow top with red piping. The basic price includes the VBOB emblem on the left side and up to 21 letters on the right side for Chapter Name. Ask for VBOB Overseas Cap.

Cap basic price.....	\$29.95
Extra Lettering beyond 21 letters/per letter.....	.45
Shipping & handling per order.....	5.00

TOTAL

Chapter Name _____

Hat Size _____ Phone # _____

Extra lettering can be added on either side of the cap @.42 per letter. Specify what extra lettering and on which side(s). Send check or Money Order to: Keystone Uniform Cap Corp, 428 N 13th Street, Philadelphia PA 19123, 215-922-5493

Our God and soldiers we alike adore
Ev'n at the brink of danger; not before:
After deliverance, both alike required,
Our God's forgotten, and our soldiers slighted.

—Francis Quarles, *Emblems*

823RD TANK DESTROYER BATTALION

by Charles Dean Bennington

The first night was especially a rough one for our company (Company C, 3rd Platoon). We sweated out an air bombardment.

On the 16th of December 1944, flights of FW 190's passed over Hongen, without too much suspicion. The Luftwaffe was displaying a surprising strength, then the word came Von Rundstedt had penetrated the American lines in the Ardennes, and there was a full-scale counter-offensive.

To reinforce and help seal the torn gap in the U.S. front, the 30th Infantry Division and the 823rd Tank Destroyer Battalion, were relieved from XIX Corps, Ninth U.S. Army and attached to the V Corps, First U.S. Army. All units were immediately on the march, going south, through Aachen, Germany, near Eupen, Belgium. It was bitter cold and the ground was covered with snow.

After arriving, the battalion was then attached to the 2nd Battalion, 119th Infantry Regiment. Later than night Company C was attached to the 114th RCT and given orders to move on to Malmedy, Belgium. It had been reported Malmedy had been taken by the Germans. Upon arrival of the 117th Infantry Regiment and Company C of the 823rd Tank Destroyer Battalion, the enemy failed to make further progress.

Company C accounted for three distractors Mark V's, 2 personnel carriers, from 8 to 10 Mark VI's hit, a one quarter ton truck and half-track. This was on 18 December 1944, east and west of Stavelot.

My platoon alone knocked out one Mark VI, Sherman Tank, and an M10 of ours, the German were using. We also demolished two other tanks either Mark V or VI's. This took place on 21 December 1944, when our 30th Infantry Division along with the 823rd Tank Destroyer Battalion were transferred to the XVII Corps, AB. Then on the 22nd of December 1944, the 30th Infantry Division and the 823rd were relieved attachment to the First Army and attached to the Ninth. The 823rd was detailed the responsibility of planning and placing the gun position.

We didn't have M10's until that time, but had used half-tracks with towed guns. Our gun was put in a deflate position to keep it in low silhouette, as our field of fire was over-looking Malmedy. If the Germans had known how thin our defense was, it might have been another story. We were in fox holes, fighting side by side with the infantry.

In the center of the Bulge, Von Rundstedt forces had made progress, almost reaching Liege, Belgium, and the Meuse River to the north. Their strategy failed and the flanks held. There was a terrific loss of his men and armor.

Christmas day was bitter cold, and our feet were close to being frozen. We took off our boots in the fox holes, and tore what blankets we had up and wrapped our feet the best we could. Our aircraft was bombing, and often missed their objectives. Robot bombs whizzed through the air, as Malmedy was on their direct route. Artillery shelling was heavy, and there was a constant threat from their tanks, infantry and artillery.

The threat dissipated some, and then as the New Year approached the last great offensive by the Luftwaffe was made

to stop the great American counter-offensive.

By early January the entire 30th Division left from its line of departure, south of Malmedy, to seize and hold the high ground west of St. Vith. It was a hazardous undertaking. The Germans held on and their were many mines concealed throughout the area by the Germans.

My platoon was knocked out by a Mark IV, during the attack on Rodt, when I gave the order to my gunner, Cpl. Harvey B. Flammer to fire on opposing gun flashes on the distant side of the ridge, with binocular's I traced our shell right through the muzzle blast of the enemy tank.

The 30th Division had cleared all approaches to St. Vith so that friendly armor could come in and take possession of the town.

The 30th and the 823rd were given a short rest from the line.

I was one of the 35 officers and men to be presented the Bronze Star Medal by General L. S. Hobbs, personally. He was Division Commander of the 30th Division. This took place on 14 February 1945. We had also received a communique from General Hobbs as follows:

HEADQUARTERS
30TH INFANTRY DIVISION
APO 30, U.S. ARMY

To: The soldiers of Every Unit (Assigned and Attached of the 30th Infantry Division.

1. Another brilliant phase of your campaigning on the Western Front has been successfully accomplished.

2. The operations from 16 December to the present date (which including the taking and holding of Malmedy, Stavelot, Stoumont, LaGeize, Thirimont and the hill to the southwest thereof, Ligneville, Pont, Bellevaux, the famous crossroads at road block #2, Recht, Obr, Emmels, Ndr. Emmels, Ndr. Emmelser Heide, Rodt, Hinderhausch, Neudorf, Krombach, Weisten) represent a display of courage, fortitude, and endurance that will remain forever as a glorious part of the work of your division, of our unit, and of yourselves as individuals.

3. Again the division was in the right place at the right time to stop and then throw back the best the Germans had to offer on the Western Front.

4. All praise to you for a task well done. Your reputation as a fine fighting unit has been increased. You have fought the good fight, under terrific hardships of weather and terrain. My congratulations to you, one and all.

L. S. Hobbs

Major General--U.S. Army Commanding

The Battle of the Bulge was behind us, as we moved on to Durwiss, Germany, and then to Neidezier, where again Company C knocked out 2 Mark LV's. We experienced a terrific artillery bombardment during the night of the 23rd and 24th of February. The company knocked out a Tiger Royal Tank. It was a monstrous self-propelled gun, with a barrel 15 inches in diameter and seven feet long.

We were then attached to the 12th Tank Destroyer Group of the SVI's Corps to prepare for the crossing of the Rhine. After the crossing of the Rhine River, the war ended for me, as on the 27th of March, 1945, I was wounded, air-lifted to a hospital in Liverpool, England, and then home to Birmingham General Hospital in Van Nuys, California. ■

106TH AAA BATTALION

By Gus Theodore

I was with the 103rd Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion which was attached to the famous 1st Infantry Division (the Big Red One). Our battalion was an anti-aircraft and anti-tank outfit protecting the infantry and the artillery in our area.

The 1st Division made the invasion in North Africa and Sicily. I was a young replacement and joined the outfit in England in 1943.

The 1st Division made the invasion on Easy Red Beach (Omaha). A lot of the boys got killed going in. We were a little late landing in our LST because they had trouble establishing the beach head.

After we came into Normandy, we pushed through St. Lo and fought our way through other towns, the Hurtgen Forest, the Siegfried Line and captured Aachen, Germany. This was the first German city to fall to the Americans. We then got pulled off the front lines for a rest.

A Belgian family let us stay in their house so we parked our artillery piece and the truck in their yard. We thought that the division would be headed back home for training purposes and I thought that would be a good deal for us. Only in combat for seven months and then heading home to train others. As fate would have it, no such luck.

While we were staying with the Belgian family a USO show was going to be held in Eupen, Belgium, and we were told that one man from each gun section could go to the show. My ammo man, Marshall Wilcox was the lucky guy that got to go. He came back kind of early and we asked him why. He said German artillery was shelling the area even though they weren't supposed to be that close.

Marlene Dietrich from the USO and all the generals in the front row started leaving for their outfits. We didn't know it at the time but the Germans had busted through the 99th and 106th divisions so we had to go and plug up the hole.

Our gun section and half-track with four 50 caliber machine guns got into a convoy moving up with the field artillery. A lieutenant from the artillery was leading us but I don't think that he was too smart. He led us deep into German lines until he figured out that he had made a wrong turn. We pulled a u-turn and back tracked to what was called the Ecsenburg Ridge. We stayed there most of the time.

We had Germans in front and to the right of us most of the time during the Battle of the Bulge. All the outfits hung tough and didn't let the Germans get by us. To the south and east of us was Bastogne and Malmedy and the troops in those areas held as well.

In Malmedy, the Germans captured about 100 American artillery troops, marched them into a field and shot them. The field was covered in snow. Ira Bonnet, from Monson, himself lost, crept up through the snow and witnessed the shooting. Only one or two survived and this event became known as the Malmedy Massacre. After this, we didn't show any mercy for the Germans.

The weather was cold and snowy. We starved, froze and got shot at. It was so cold, about 20 below zero without the chill factor and about two feet of snow. My mother sent me a package with cookies, two pair of ski stockings and a whole salami in it. The salami had mold all over the outside skin but we were so hungry it didn't matter. I took my bayonet and cut off the slimy skin. The meat looked good so I sliced it up for

me and the boys in the gun section. Believe it or not, it was delicious. I bet the Germans smelled the aroma and got jealous of us.

The stockings were a life saver. When we crawled in our holes at night we slept with all our clothes on; jacket, overcoat, two pairs of GI socks, and the stockings that my mother had sent to me. I didn't have any shoes, just overshoes. The stockings that my mother sent to me saved my feet from freezing.

On December 25, Christmas Day, the Germans threw about 50 planes against us. I was the loader and trigger man on our gun. I said more Hail Marys and Our Fathers than the Pope probably says in a month. There is an old saying that there are no atheists in a fox hole.

We hit one German plane and the pilot bailed out and most everyone in the area shot at him. I didn't shot at him with my rifle because I had a change of heart. The others that shot at him were probably mad about the Malmedy Massacre. The poor German was my age, 19 years old. I had a piece of his parachute but I threw it away--I didn't want that kind of souvenir.

About three days later, I was cleaning some of the snow away from around the gun pit when the Germans were shooting their 88s artillery shells at us. Most of the shells were going over our heads so I said to the guys in the gun pit: "It's about time headquarters got shot at instead of us."

I spoke too soon. One shell fell short and landed about 20-30 feet away from me. Good thing it hit over me because most of the shrapnel from a shell goes forward. I got hit from a piece of the shrapnel that sent me flying. I landed in the snow and my buddies patched me up and sent me to a hospital. The shrapnel that hit me was a big piece because it didn't penetrate into me but ripped my shirt and shoulder. They took me to a hospital and sent me back to my gun site the next day. I was very lucky, or my prayers helped me and deafened me for a while. I came back to the gun crew and finished off the Bulge and made it into Czechoslovakia when the war ended. ■

TRIUMPH OF COURAGE from page 1

There were no "soft jobs," he said.

Remembering is important. Kids don't have the least idea what World War II was about," he said. "They might have heard about Pearl Harbor and the atom bomb, but that's as far as it goes."

Several speakers addressed the audience before unveiling the granite monument that read, "A Triumph of Courage."

David Shaw, president of the World War II Historical Federation, read a letter from former U.S. Sen. Robert Dole.

Also among the speakers were representatives of the governments of Belgium and Luxembourg. They said the people of their countries remember the sacrifices made by the Americans.

Brig. Gen. Guy F. Melchoir, military attache from Belgium said he lives a few miles from the battle line.

"The memory is still alive," he said. "Many in Belgium go to the monuments just to remember. I am so proud to be here, and thank you."

Today, about 1,500 re-enactors with authentic uniforms, weapons and vehicles will be re-creating the battle for the Bastogne-Arlon Highway, where the Allies fought a major delaying action against the German invaders.

The re-enactment, which will run from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., is open to the public for the first time since 1996.

MEMBERS SPEAK OUT

RUSS SUNBURY's friend, who lives in Holland, has been caring for the grave of **S/SGT STACY W. THOMPSON, JR., 101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION, 501ST PARACHUTE INFANTRY REGIMENT.** Stacy is buried in Margraten, Holland. It is believed that he had lived in Texas. Many of the people in the surrounding villages care for the graves in the cemetery with flowers and prayers. Russ's friend would like to contact Stacy's friends or family. If you can help write to Russ at: 4507 30th Avenue, West, Seattle, Washington 98199.

Juliette Matthieu-Rutten would like to locate **CPL ANDRIA T. GILMORE, 9TH U.S. AIR FORCE.** When she last heard from him he was going to continue his studies at Cornell University. If you can help her write Juliette: % Stan C. Bellens, Rue de la Trompette, 4; B4680 Hermee; Belgium.

Pamela Martin would like to hear from anyone who may have known her father: **MAJOR BERNARD "RIP" RIBERDY, 172ND ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION.** Write to Pamela at: 17256 Chestnut, Irvine, California 92612.

Mrs. Louise O'Rourke is seeking information about her brother, **ROBERT THOMAS COLLINS, 106TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 424TH INFANTRY, COMPANY C,** who was killed 16 December 1944. If you know anything write to her: 9 Laurie Drive, East Brunswick, New Jersey 08816.

JOHN R. WALKER, 750TH TANK BATTALION, would like to purchase a copy of Danny Parker's *Battle of the Bulge: Hitler's Ardennes Offensive, 1944-45.* If you have an extra or know where he can get one, write to him at: 3840 Arroyo Road, Fort Worth, Texas 76109-3411.

ORLANDO J. CAFASSO, 95TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 379TH INFANTRY, COMPANY C, would like to hear from anyone who served with him. Address is: 40 Whitman Street, Malden, Massachusetts 02148.

New member **IRA MULLINS, 9TH ARMORED DIVISION, 14TH TANK BATTALION, COMPANY A,** is looking for information regarding his brother **OSCAR M. MULLINS, 629TH TANK BATTALION, COMPANY K.** Oscar was killed December 26, 1944, holding a road blockade in Belgium. Can anyone provide more details? Write to Ira: Route 1, Box 137, Haysi, Virginia 24256.

Member Antoine Nouens is looking for information regarding the following: **FREDERICK T. ESENBOCK, 35TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 134TH INFANTRY, COMPANY G; JACQUES I. BONOMO, 82ND AIRBORNE DIVISION, 504TH PARACHUTE INFANTRY REGIMENT; JAMES R. FAULK** (unit unknown but served in or near Floret, Belgium; **THOMAS E. LAWRENCE** (unit unknown, served in or near LaVaux Richard; and **JOHN K. MARTIN** and **EARL F. BROWN** (units unknown but saw action in northern sector). Write to Antoine: A.C.H.G. Nouens; Vredestraat 173; 6511 AD Nijmegen; The Netherlands.

Michael Lorquet and friends sponsor the graves of three soldiers in the Henri Chapelle American cemetery. They are: **MIKE A. GALLUS, DAVID L. KEUHN, and JOSEPH J. CATTONE,** all of the **84TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 333RD INFANTRY.** They would appreciate any information regarding these men, so if you can help write to him at: rue des Recollets 56A; B4600 Vise; Belgium.

Hans Wijers is trying to locate anyone with the **1ST INFANTRY DIVISION, 634TH AND 613 TANK DESTROYER BATTALIONS** who defended the area at the Domanine Butgenbach. Please contact him at: Zegerijstraat 27, NL-6971 ZN Brummen (GLD), Netherlands.

New member Albert Horn would like to learn more about **6TH ARMORED DIVISION, 44TH ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION, COMPANY C.** His brother, **T/5 WILLIAM R. HORN,** was a member of that unit and was killed near Bastogne on December 31, 1944. Write to Albert at: 112 North West Street, Westerville, Ohio 43081.

WILLIAM A. GREENE, 8TH ARMORED DIVISION, 398TH ARMORED FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION, BATTERY A, like to some information regarding his unit. If you can help, write to him: 52 Ardell Street, Quincy, Massachusetts 02171.

DALLAS LARSON, 4TH INFANTRY, 8TH INFANTRY, would like to obtain a map of the area that the Third Army 4th Division covered between Luxembourg and the Hurtgen Forest. Can anyone help? He recalls seeing a road sign that read "Hermansdorf," but has never been able to find it on a map. Write to Dallas at: Box 455, Cooperstown, North Dakota 58425.

Mrs. Louise O'Rourke is seeking information about her brother **ROBERT THOMAS COLLINS, 106TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 424TH INFANTRY, COMPANY C,** who was killed December 16, 1944. If you can help write to her at: 9 Laurie Drive, East Brunswick, New Jersey 08816.

LEON HOROWITZ, 100TH ARMORED INFANTRY DIVISION, is looking for information on **JAMES TAYLOR,** from Bremerton, Washington. They served in basic training together in an ASTP unit in Ft. Benning, Georgia, and then were room mates at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana. They were assigned to different units of the 100th. The last time Leon saw "Jimbo" he was shooting craps at the replacement depot #2 in Epinal, France. Do you know anything about him, if so write: 600 Regency Crossing, Southlake, Texas 76092-9502.

DON BONHAUS would like to hear from anyone who served with the **243RD COMBAT ENGINEER BATTALION.** Don wrote the Company A chapter for the battalion's history book. He lost his copy in a fire and would like to hear from anyone with a copy. Write to Don at: PO Box 512, Navesink, New Jersey 07752.

DICK BIANCHI, 296TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION, would like to locate **FRANK VIOLA, 99TH INFANTRY BATTALION (SP),** (continued on next page)

MEMBERS SPEAK OUT

COMPANY A--last known address was Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. If you knew him or his current location write to Dick at: 14 Spruce Street, Milford, New Hampshire 03055.

HAROLD S. SMITH, 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION, 16TH INFANTRY, COMPANY M, would like to hear from anyone who served with him. Write to Harold: 1203 Grand Boulevard, Greenwood, Mississippi 38930.

T. DeBruyn, of Belgium, is looking for information on: **MAJ. GEN. HARRY L. TWADDLE, CLYDE W. KIDWELL, JOHNNIE D. YOUNG, and RICHARD J. COLEMAN**. Write to Mr. DeBruyn at: 3A, rue Dubray; 6120 Ham/s/Heure, Belgium.

Antoine Nouens would like to locate information on: **FREDERICK T. ESENBOCK, 35TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 134TH INFANTRY, COMPANY G** (later with **5TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 2ND INFANTRY, COMPANY K**); **JACQUES I. BONOMO, 82ND AIRBORNE DIVISION, 504TH PARACHUTE INFANTRY REGIMENT**; **JAMES R. FAULX** (who saw action in Floret, Belgium); **THOMAS E. LAWRENCE** (who saw action near LaVaux Richard); and **JOHN K. MARTIN and EARL F. BROWN** (who saw action in the northern sector of the Ardennes. Write to Antoine: Vredestraat 173; 6511 AD Nijmegen, The Netherlands.

WARREN S. MEANS, 531ST ANTI-AIRCRAFT ARTILLERY AUTOMATIC WEAPONS, BATTERY A, would like to know if anyone knows anything about **RUFUS B. COSBY**, first sergeant of his battery. Can you help? Write to Warren at: 1013 Easton, Buckeye, Arizona 85326-2626.

Hans Wijers is looking for anyone who served with either of the following groups: **TASK FORCE HALL, 19TH TANK BATTALION**, and **TASK FORCE PHILBECK, 9TH ARMORED DIVISION**. Later in this letter the units seem to be transposed (action took place on December 18, 1944). Write to Hans: Zegerijstraat 27, NL-6971 ZN Brummen (GLD), Netherlands.

NOTICE: We receive many requests to send pictures, postcards, etc., etc., from various places in the Nation's Capitol. Please be advised that this is not an easy task. Our offices are located in the suburbs of Virginia and travel into the District is a chore none of us are willing to undertake. Getting there is not the problem--finding a parking place is. There are none and parking in a parking lot is very expensive. Time is also a consideration--we simply don't have the time.

For it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an'
"Chuck him out, the brute!"

But it's "Savior of 'is country'" when the guns
begin to shoot.

—Rudyard Kipling, "Tommy"

("Tommy Atkins"—a name used for a private in the
British army.)

LET'S MAKE DECEMBER 16 AS WELL-KNOWN AS D-DAY

By Mitchell Kaidy

December 7, 1941 is known to every school child as "a date that will live in infamy."

June 6, 1944 is the date that launched the liberation of Europe from Nazi oppression. But who knows when the bloodiest and most pivotal battle in all of American history began?

If the American people and the world remain generally ignorant of the Battle of the Bulge, aren't we, who gave everything to fight and win it, partially to blame?

Do we, who fought it, know enough about it to mark and celebrate each December 16 as we should? Do we conduct ceremonies and connect to the media? Speaking generally, the media are anniversary-happy.

So should we be. Falling about a week later than the bombing of Pearl Harbor as well as before Christmas, the start of the Bulge campaign is difficult to publicize annually.

That's a comment but not an excuse. It can be done. It's my professional opinion as a journalist that, given the right push, December 16 can become just as ingrained in the American psyche as those other notable dates.

Publicizing the date will be one of the foremost objectives of the newly-chartered Genesee Valley Chapter of VBOB that is based around Rochester, NY.

At our age, it must be conceded, making progress will be difficult. Not only is there a tangle with two other important dates, but we are starting 54 years after our event began.

Nevertheless, the second bloodiest battle, the Battle of Gettysburg, is not only well known, it's often reenacted. If we work at it, we can leave a legacy among our posterity. The generation that includes our wives, our children and their children can form the nucleus to carry on our work. If we focus on this task with the same bullet-like determination that brought us through the minefields and 88 mm barrages of the BoB, if we are willing to dig into our pockets and our treasuries, the date December 16, 1944, can be seen as it should—one of the most significant dates in the survival of Western civilization.

On that date began the battle which culminated in the defeat of the totalitarian German Army, the major event which saved the world, and, in the brilliant words of Winston Churchill, allowed it "to move forward into the sunlit uplands." And as he also observed had we lost, "all that we have known and cared for will sink into the abyss of a new Dark Age."

We won. We saved Western civilization, and what we did deserves to be remembered—forever.

(Mitchell Kaidy of the 87th Infantry Division is a double prizewinning journalist who considers the Combat Infantry Badge to be his proudest achievement in life. He is a founding member of a new VBOB Chapter in Rochester, NY.)

I hate war as only a soldier who has lived it can,
only as one who has seen its brutality, its futility,
its stupidity.

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

REUNIONS

2ND ARMORED DIVISION, 17 ENGINEER BATTALION, COMPANY A, May 5-9, 1999, Sheraton North Shore Hotel, Chicago Area. Contact: John A. Shields, P.O. Box 106, East Butler, Pennsylvania 16029. Telephone: 724-287-4301.

2ND CAVALRY DIVISION, October 8-13, 1999, Radison Plaza Hotel, Fort Worth, Texas. Contact: Louis T. Holz, 726 Mancill Road, Wayne-Strafford, Pennsylvania 19087-2005. Telephone: 610-688-3715.

4TH ARMORED DIVISION, August 30-September 5, 1999, Radison Hotel, Kalamazoo, Michigan. Contact: 4th Armored Division Association, 1823 Shady Drive, Farrell, Pennsylvania 16121.

4TH INFANTRY DIVISION, July 26-August 1, 1999, Killeen, Texas. Contact: Doyle Volkmer, 3913 Aggie Drive, Bay City, Texas 77414. Telephone: 409-244-2717.

6TH ARMORED DIVISION, August 24-29, 1999, Radison Hotel Columbus North, Columbus, Ohio. Contact: Sixth Armored Division, PO Box 5011, Louisville, Kentucky 40255-0011.

11TH ARMORED DIVISION, September 13-19, 1999, Adams Mark Hotel, Kansas City, Missouri. Contact: Joseph Civitano. Telephone: 561-498-2814.

28TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 109TH INFANTRY, September 29-October 2, 1999, Bloomington, Minnesota. Contact: George H. Bunnell, 175 Cedar Drive (Berlin), Barre, Vermont 05641-2225. Telephone: 802-229-9260.

30TH INFANTRY DIVISION, October 20-24, 1999, Holiday Inn, Oceanfront/Downtown, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Contact: Bruce W. Tate, Jr. 948 F Avenue, Cayce, South Carolina 29033. Telephone: 803-739-1416.

75TH INFANTRY DIVISION, September 8-12, 1999, Sheraton Astrodome Hotel, 8686 Kirby, Houston, TX 77054. Contact: James E. Warmouth, 6545 West 11th, Indianapolis, Indiana 46214. Telephone: 317-241-3730.

84TH INFANTRY DIVISION, September 11-14, 1999, The Marriott Hotel, Torrance, California. Contact: Nick Cipiti, 1425 Stonewood Court, Rancho Palos Verdes, California 90732.

86TH CHEMICAL MORTAR BATTALION, September 14-19, 1999, Jekyll Island, Georgia. Contact: Chemical Mortar Assn, 818 West 62nd Street, Anniston, Alabama 36206.

99TH INFANTRY DIVISION, September 3-7, 1999, Sheraton Music City Hotel, Nashville, Tennessee. Contact: 99th INFID, PO Box 99, Marion, Kansas 66861.

511TH ENGINEERS LIGHT PONTON COMPANY, June 9-12, 1999. Contact: Nick Rosania, PO Box 412, Whitehouse Station, New Jersey 08889. Telephone: 908-534-2728.

529TH QMSR COMPANY, September 10-12, 1999, Media, Pennsylvania. Contact: Sten Dalstron, Jr., 140 Merrybrook Drive, Havertown, Pennsylvania 19083. Telephone: 610-449-1297.

555TH, 563RD, 564TH, 566TH, 573RD SIGNAL AIR WARNING BATTALIONS, September 17-18, 1999, Atlanta, Georgia. Contact: James Lynn, 3855 Utah Place, St. Louis, Missouri 63116. Telephone: 706-356-8886.

705TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION, September 8-12, 1999, Hyatt, Sarasota, Florida. Contact: Frank W. Brooks, 1674 University Parkway #313, Sarasota, Florida 34243. Telephone: 941-355-5527.

740TH TANK BATTALION, September 4-6, 1999, Biltmore Hotel, Oklahoma City. Contact: Harry Miller, 2410 West Manor Place #307, Seattle, Washington 98199-2023.

745TH TANK BATTALION, September 21-23, 1999, Fort Knox. Contact: 745th Tank Battalion Assn., 760 Glen Avenue, Marseilles, Illinois 61341.

749TH TANK BATTALION, May 14-17, 1999, Portland Marriott Downtown, Portland, Oregon. Contact: James Bobbett, 6780 Olivet Drive, Salt Lake City, Utah.

SHAEF, October 12, 1999, Sheraton Ferncroft Hotel, Danvers, Massachusetts. Contact: SHAEF, 7340 Dundee Street, New Orleans, Louisiana 70126.

SGT FELIX WEBB

Would the person who wrote regarding Sgt. Felix Webb please contact the office. Please indicate the state you thought he lived in. Your envelope was separated from your request and we don't have your name or address.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Duncan T. Trueman

106th Infantry Division, 424th Infantry, Anti-Tank Co.

[The following remembrance was offered by Duncan T. Trueman, Chaplain of the new Picatinny Chapter (New Jersey) at its meeting on December 16, 1998.]

As we gather here today, many others are gathering at Arlington to remember and pay honor. Gatherings are taking place everywhere.

Fifty-four years ago on this very day our circumstances were very different. Fifty-four years ago we were different men. Fifty-four years ago some of us were hungry and cold and desperate. Fifty-four years ago we were learning about struggle and sacrifice, about suffering and courage and fear and death.

The process was sudden and painful and not to be forgotten. It left many of us with scars in spirit with which we have lived through these fifty-four years.

But we **did** live. We lived whereas many of our comrades died. And so, on this 16th of December it would be inappropriate if we failed to pause long enough to remember those comrades...remember both the living and the dead.

I remember one who risked his life saving mine. Some **lost** their lives saving others. That is unforgettable!

So, in honor of all who were our comrades on December 16, 1944, and in memory of those who have gone before us to their reward, let us all bow our heads for a moment of silent prayer...and remember them before Almighty God:

(Silent prayer by all.)

Almighty God, we thank you for the lives and dedication and commitment of all who have sacrificed and suffered and died for our country. We pause to remember those who were known to us, who stood and fought beside us. We especially remember those who died at our sides, and sometimes in our arms. Their faces, their smiles, their laughter, their companionship are a part of us still.

And so, on this day when once we were cold and hungry and in pain, we gather in this comfortable place and give our thanks. And with our thanks we offer also our loving remembrance and our prayers. To those who have gone before us, we ask that you give your eternal blessing...and peace.

Amen



SHOTS



HAIRCUT



REVEILLE

SGT. GEORGE BAKER

TROOPER ASKED TO PICK PLAQUE CITE

EDWARD PENICHE, 101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION, 502ND PARACHUTE INFANTRY REGIMENT, 2ND BATTALION, was contacted by officials in Longchamps, Belgium, to select a site to commemorate his battalion's participation in the Battle of the Bulge. Peniche, a professor of Spanish at Kingwood college (Texas), stated: "I want the commemorative to be placed at the school location. In this way children can see it, learn from what went on there. There are no visible signs that the war took place. The battlefield is not visible anymore. It is covered with malls and houses."

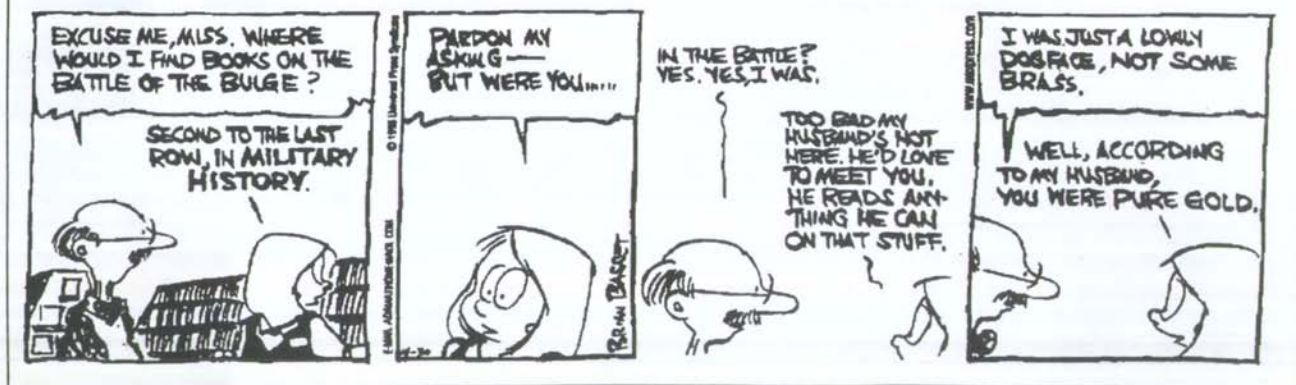


Official Swearing in of VBOB Officers at Ft. Myer NCO/EM Club, December 16, 1998: Left to right, Renato Victor Traphani, 4268 Quartermaster Truck Co.; Dorothy S. Davis, (57th Field Hospital), Corresponding Secretary; Stanley A. Wojtusik, (106th Inf. Div.) Vice President, Military Affairs; Thomas F. Jones (818th Combat MP Co.), Vice President, Membership; John Dunleavy (5th Inf., 737 Tk Bn.), Executive Vice President; Louis Cunningham (106th Inf. Div.), Recording Secretary; and George C. Linthicum (26th Inf. Div.), President.

4th Issue, 1998

Checkerboard — 99th Infantry Division Association

ADAM by Brian Bassett



LIVING LEGENDS



MEMORABLE

BULGE INCIDENTS

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 "close-up" combatant accounts are a complement to the study of strategy and logistics and are a legacy of an important battle and victory in the U.S. military annals.

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.

STEAKS AND A BIG RED APPLE

December 24, 1944

Henry W. Stluka
28th Infantry Division
109th Infantry Regiment
Company K
Houston, Texas

On the morning of December 24, 1944, K Company entrucked to Battalion assembly area near Mostroff where we were for R&R on the 16th when the Germans attacked. K Company just finished ten days of hell. We had met the powerful German counteroffensive driving off powerful enemy attacks, infiltrations and encirclements.

But our new mission was to clear out a patch of woods near Mostroff and take the town. We secured the left flank of the 10th Armored Division.

That night one platoon was left on outposts around Mostroff and one squad was sent on a patrol into Bettendorf, occupied by the Germans. We were to observe the enemy.

I was selected to go with the patrol as the radio man and report to the Company Commander Capt. Edward L. Peer every 15 minutes from the time we left.

We had to descend down a very steep hill walking along a road that was frozen and coated with ice. I slipped and fell on my back with the radio strapped to my back. There was a loud noise—a volley of German artillery came in to our right. We had to cross the river to get into Bettendorf, Belgium. There was only one bridge and our artillery was shelling the river bank and the bridge to keep the Germans from crossing into our territory.

We lost radio contact with company headquarters because of the low elevation. I became concerned when I could not communicate to the company. Captain Peer said, "If we don't hear from you every 15 minutes, we know you and the squad were captured."

The town was quiet except for our artillery shells exploding. Members of our squad entered a vacant house and paired up to go into the area to find the Germans and determine how many

enemy were in Bettendorf. We occupied three vacant houses. All civilians moved out.

I tried desperately to reach company headquarters by going into the attic punching a hole in the roof with my rifle barrel. The radio antenna was stuck through the roof—still no contact.

My BAR man was with me to guard the "radio man." He suggested we go outside to the top of the hill we had seen while looking through the window in the attic. I told the BAR man that would be suicide because the Germans would spot us in the moonlight when we reached the top of the ice-covered hill. The BAR man stated that he had the Browning Automatic Rifle to take care of any German soldiers and besides the Germans will think we're two of their own since no one would be stupid enough to expose themselves to the enemy. We went through the streets to the hill to the very top and stuck out like a sore thumb.

Sure enough it worked! I sent a message to Captain Peer and gave him the location of where the enemy was encamped. The artillery man came on and I gave him the location of the enemy also. I stayed on and then very effectively corrected our artillery on the enemy positions.

Captain Peer told me to get off the hill and return when we felt it was safe to get out. At this point the BAR man said, "We will get the Silver Star for this!" I told him that this was part of our job, but we may get the Bronze Star.

Hastily the BAR man and I moved back to the first line of houses where we saw smoke and live cinders coming out of the smoke stack.

Some of the fellows found a meat market with steaks in the meat cooler. The house had frying pans and fire wood stoves to fry the steaks on.

This was a good Christmas eve meal—along with K rations. We left about 4:30 a.m. on the morning of the 25th. When we joined the company in the woods we were trucked out and set up positions in the hills overlooking Mostroff.

About 11:30 a.m., two jeeps loaded with insulated food containers filled with baked turkey, dressing, cranberries, hot coffee and for dessert a big, delicious red apple. Boy, what a

delicious Christmas dinner that tasted and reminded me of those good old home-cooked meals. The large, delicious red apple--the first I had eaten since I left the States made up for the anxiety on the hill.

....

A SLICK OPERATION

December 23, 1944

William (Bill) T. Clark
735th Tank Battalion
Reconnaissance Platoon
Englewood, Colorado

After our all night move from Saarlautern, Germany, to Steinfurt, Belgium, our mission was to join the 26th Infantry Division. It was December 20, 1944, and the "Battle of the Bulge" had started on the 16th, just four days before. We were the first tanks sent to the Bulge by General Patton. In my books, I quote the page number from the Army's History of WWII. His first order sent us, the 735th Tank Battalion, the 818th Tank Destroyer Battalion, and the 10th Infantry Regiment. Of course there were many more issued almost simultaneously, but we were on the first order!

We arrived at Steinfurt, Belgium, about 2 a.m. in the cold and snow. We joined the 26th Infantry Division, and the next morning at daybreak, we jumped off in a frontal attack in support of the 26th Infantry Division. Our mission was to go until we met German patrols, dig in and wait for further orders. At that time we didn't know where the German Army was and our mission was to go until we contacted them--thereby establishing a front line, which we did. This was the first opposition the Germans had on the southeast of Bastogne! They counter attacked relentlessly as they were trying to go around Bastogne to the South because the 101st Airborne was surrounded in Bastogne and had stopped their western progress. At this time one of the "slickest operations" of the war occurred. As we were fighting to hold the front line, the 90th Infantry Division moved into exactly the same front lines as manned by the 26th Infantry Division. The 90th had removed all their "patches" on their uniforms, painted out all identification on their vehicles, and occupied exactly the same position as the 26th Infantry. We jumped off in attack on December 24th toward Bastogne, a few miles to our northwest. Needless to say, I'm sure the Germans were surprised to find out they were fighting two divisions, the 26th and the 90th on the same front at the same time, and the 735th Tank Battalion supported both of them. Not only that, a mile or two to our west was the highway the 4th Armored Division was to use to break into Bastogne and relieve the 101st Airborne Division. As luck would have it, a small undefended wedge of ground developed between us, the 26th and 90th, and the 4th Armored, and as luck would have it--good luck for the Germans--that's exactly where the German Army attacked to the south and west of Bastogne. General Patton, at the last moment, sent the 35th Infantry Division in to block this hole. The 35th Infantry Division didn't have any tanks so a few--I think a platoon from Company C, fought with them, not officially, but in support for a day or so. At that time, we were supporting three divisions--the 26th, the 90th, and the 35th.

....

WHAT ABOUT YOU?

We would love to have your story for this series. If you submitted one and it was not used, take a good look at it. It should be about **one incident which happened to you or someone else**. Make it as brief as possible. Many times a little background is necessary but if it tracks you and/or your unit for days and days, it does not apply to this series. It can be humorous or serious, but it must be about **one incident**.

So, come on. Send us **your** story. Many tell us: "I can't write that well." We're not giving out a Pulitzer Prize--we're only interested in sharing Bulge stories and experiences and your buddies are anxious to read your remembrances. Thanks.

FRIENDS

Excerpted from Bill Mauldin's *UP FRONT*

Friends in war are different in many ways from friends in peacetime. You depend upon friends in war much more.

The infantrymen can't live without friends. That forces them to be pretty good people and that's the reason men at the front seem so much simpler and more generous than others. They kid each other unmercifully--sometimes in ways that would seem a little ribald to the uninitiated.

For instance, there's the young guy who got married two weeks before shipping out, has been overseas two years, and is desperately homesick. Some other guy will say to him: "You wanna go home? Hell, you found a home in the army. You got your first pair of shoes and your first square meal in the army. You're living a clean, healthy, outdoor life, and you want to go back and be hen-pecked?"

He keeps up this apparently heartless tirade until the victim heaves a big rock at him and feels better. but it isn't heartless, because only a man who is terribly homesick himself would dare to say such a thing like that. He isn't just pouring it on the other guy--he's trying to kid *himself* into feeling better.

When you lose a friend you have an overpowering desire to go back home and yell in everybody's ear, "This guy was killed fighting for you. Don't forget him--ever. Keep him in your mind when you wake up in the morning and when you go to bed at night. Don't think of him as the statistic which changes 38,788 casualties to 38,789. Think of him as a guy who wanted to live every bit as much as you do. Don't let him be just one of 'Our Brave Boys' from the old home town, to whom a marble monument is erected in the city park, and a civic-minded lady calls the newspaper ten years later and wants to know why that 'unsightly stone' isn't removed."

Every man thinks meanly of himself for not having been a soldier. --Samuel Johnson, quoted in James Boswell's *The Life of Samuel Johnson*.

WITH THE 90TH DIVISION

by Helmer R. Wings

With the Bastogne Bulge deflated and nearly depressed to the Siegfried Line, the story of Lt. General George S. Patton's "Blackout Punch" can now be told.

Swinging the bulk of his Third Army from attacking positions in the Siegfried Line to the critical southern flank of the Nazi spearhead into Luxembourg. Patton slammed a holding force into the German pressure and prepared the stage for the smash that was destined to liquidate the Bastogne salient.

Under the cover of darkness and during a raging blizzard the 90th Division, experienced trap closers of Falaise and Metz, was sneaked from positions along the Saar to a point east of Bastogne.

All division identification was camouflaged on the vehicles. The famous "T-O" (Texas-Oklahoma) insignia worn on all the helmets and garments of the personnel of the fighting 90th, was covered with tape or erased from view. On 9 January, like mysterious marauders bent on destruction, Patton's blackout division lay poised, and ready to strike, in the white quilted hills of the rugged Ardennes.

On 9 January, Major William De Puy, commanding the 1st Battalion, 357th Infantry, received orders to attack and occupy the town of Berle. Other American units, having been in contact with the enemy in this locality, looked on the attack with skepticism, for they had been trying, without success, to take this objective for some time. After spending the night out in the woods in sub-zero weather, the battalion jumped off to take the town this day. The battalion was led by Major De Puy through thick woods that were thinly held by the enemy to the jump-off position. "A" Company, led by Capt. George Spaeth, was to make the main effort supported by fire power from "C" Company plus a task force of tanks and tank destroyers led by Captain Arnold W. Thompson and one platoon of "B" Company led by Lt. Rusk to attack the town from the southeast. Under the aggressive leadership of Captain Spaeth, and due to the excellent coordination of the supporting units and weapons, the town was occupied two hours later. One hundred and twenty-two (122) prisoners were taken. The enemy left many dead in the field.

In the still cold of an overcast night, on 11 January, two battalions of the 359th Infantry, led by Lt. Col. John Smith and Lt. Col. Robert Booth, swept silently into an assault on German positions controlling a vital road center in the vicinity of Concols at the base of the threatening bulge, six miles southeast of Bastogne. It was through this nerve center of connecting highways that the Germans were receiving essential supplies for their mad dash to the west. The crunch of the doughboys feet on the crushed snow was the only sound that shocked the winter silence. The tanks and armored vehicles had been left behind. This was an infantry effort that moved with the lightening silence of a spark along a powdered fuse. Through three lines of German out-post defenses the 90th infantry units moved across the frozen terrain. Quietly, they touched off the surprise which caught the Germans literally sleeping at their posts. "For a while, all our boys had to do was to step up to the napping Nazis, shake them by the shoulder and invite them to the PW cages," said Col. Donald Gorton, regimental executive officer. One German Battalion Commander, completely confused, erroneously mistook the quiet Americans for his own troops,

attempted to organize them in the blackness of the night, and discovered too late his costly mistake. He was promptly seized and sent to the rear.

Alerted by early morning, a German column of tanks and trucks sought escape from the jaws of the potential trap the 90th was setting, but Patton's "blackout" punch was ringing the bell. American tanks were rushed to the mouth of the only escape route. At close range they chewed up the Nazi column, destroying five enemy tanks, several half-tracks, a number of other vehicles and killing and dispersing the attending personnel. The midnight raids resulted in the capture of 250 prisoners, four new 88mm guns and the seizure of the vital positions in the German supply line.

Quietly, General Patton was smashing the Bastogne Bulge with the still unidentified power. The German high command sought verification of a well grounded suspicion. Orders were published directing all German personnel in the Bastogne salient to be alert for identification of the 90th Division units in this general area. These orders were captured by units of the 357th Infantry.

Cloaked in a shroud of security, the Division struck again. This time the assault was launched against the strongly held town of Nieder-Wampach, three miles north of Noncols, the 3rd Battalion of the 358th Infantry ran into intense German artillery and small arms fire in a small woods south of the town. This battle became a match of wits. Softly as a whisper, but potent as dynamite, the 1st Battalion of the 358th Infantry, under the command of Maj. Arthur H. Nichols, Jr., stole around the left flank of the German position. In two hours, the entire fighting force had covered four kilometers to assume positions on a wind swept hill northeast of the town. A salvo of fourteen artillery battalions plastered the German positions with shells, and behind this withering curtain of fire, 300 American troops of 90th Infantry Division raced shouting and shooting over the slopes of the flanking hills to outmaneuver the confused and baffled Germans defending the town. Six hundred prisoners were prodded from the basements and shelters of the destroyed village.

The mysterious power of Patton's forces was rolling up the southern flank of the shivering bulge of Bastogne.

The 358th Infantry moved northeast and grabbed the town of Oberwampach, and this move changed the trend of the battle. From a campaign of security and maneuver the action became a slam-bang affair of attack and counter-attack.

In a frantic effort to smash the still mysterious marauders, the Germans converged on the spearhead elements in Oberwampach. Within a period of 24 hours, Nazi infantry and armored units launched a series of five major counter-attacks which were hinged so closely together that the sequence of the assaults were almost unbroken.

So vital was the village of Oberwampach to the German high command that at 03:30 hours on 17 January, 40 German SS troops together with four tanks and assault guns rushed toward the village bent on recapture of this strategic point. The 90th combat units let them come until they were at point blank range. Then the American units opened up with everything they had. The American volley of fire ripped the Nazi ranks to shreds. After everything was over, 23 of the so-called elite SS lay dead in the streets.

In 15 days, the 90th Division stripped the laboring Wehrmacht of 2,713 prisoners, 31 tanks, 12 self-propelled guns, 75 half-tracks, 10-105mm guns, 38-120mm mortars, 4-88mm guns, 19 other assorted large weapons and 500 small arms.

After the Bastogne Bulge and Luxembourg, the 90th Division, under the command of Maj. General James A. Van Fleet, once again turned eastward toward the formidable Siegfried Line and the ultimate goal, Germany itself. ■

SAVE US POSTAGE

Check your mailing label to see if your dues are due.

LIPIZZAN STALLIONS

[We received a copy of a letter from SPERO L. YIANILOS, 26TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 328TH INFANTRY, COMPANIES I&M, addressed to his Division newsletter in response to a article on the Lipizzan Stallions. Although we seldom print anything not directly relating to the Bulge, we thought you might be interested.]

Gentlemen:

I read with nostalgia the letter of Edward (Stump) Uttian in the January-February issue of "Yankee Doings" concerning the Honor Guard assignment of the 328th regiment when General Patton attended the horse show of the Lipizzan Stallions in Austria. I, too, was a member of the 500 man honor guard, as a member of M Company at the time, the guard being composed of selected soldiers from many companies.

I have vivid recollections of some details, but I, too, am vague on others. I remember the name of the town was St. Martin in northwestern Austria, south of the Danube. The year was not 1944 as stated by Mr. Uttian, but 1945, after the war had ended and it occurred some time in the late summer or early fall, but I could not be sure. I had a small camera concealed in my "Ike" jacket so it would not show a bulge and took some pictures....

I recall that only those soldiers who were tall were chosen to be in the honor guard. I was 5'10" and I remember getting ready for the General's inspection as if it were an inspection in training camp. Rifles clean, boots polished, clothes pressed, ties straight, helmet liner clean and polished, all of the spit and polish of stateside barracks life.

I, too, saw the movie made of this event and can only surmise that there must have been more than one such horse show because as I recall, the Robert Taylor movie had Patton attending an in-door show while the show I attended was out-of-doors--on the grounds of a palatial mansion on the outskirts of town in a grassy level field. We sat on the ground--there were no seats.

Prior to the show, General Patton arrived in an open touring car, reputedly the one once used by Herman Goering. As he pulled into the courtyard, the honor guard snapped to attention. I was in the second row at the far right of the formation and got a good view. The General stood up in the car with full riding britches and the famous pearl handled pistols. His helmet had the insignia of every division in the Third Army. Colonel Cooley saluted him as he stood in the car and the General looked like a giant next to the Colonel. The General greeted him with some robust and ribald remarks typical of the salty language that contributed to his legend.

The national anthem was played as the General and all the officers stood saluting. Then the General and the officers with him inspected the guard moving down every aisle. He walked less than 2 feet in front of me. I heard him express pride and approval with the honor guard. I must admit, the occasion was charged with electricity and elation.

The horse show was conducted with pomp and pageantry. A band played as the horses went through some wonderful intricate maneuvers. At the start of the show, the leader of the troop rode to the bandstand erected for the General and gave his salute. The General stood up and tossed off one of the snappiest GI salutes you would ever see. His chest was so puffed with pride he looked like he would have burst his buttons any minute. All in all, it was a glorious day and a fond memory. ■

VBOBers TO MARCH

St Patrick's Parade

Sunday

14 March 1999

The National organizational and all Chapters have been invited once again to march in our Nation's St Patrick's Parade, down Constitution Avenue, from 7th to 17th Streets NW in Washington DC.

For those who are not quite up to marching we will have WWII vehicles for the walking wounded who want to ride. The vehicles are furnished by the Military Vehicle Collectors Society.

But we especially would like to have marchers to show the crowd that you Bulge Veterans still have alot of kick left. The march is about one mile and I will see what I can do to have us placed behind the Valley Forge Military Academy Band so that we have some good military marching music.

We invite all Bulge Veterans to join us. Line up time is 11:30 AM on the Mall at 7th and Madison Streets NW. This is the street near the Smithsonian Castle. You will know us by our flags and WWII vehicles. The parade starts promptly at 12 Noon. You can take the Metro (subway in and get off at the Smithsonian stop and walk towards the east to the Castle area on the Mall. If you drive there is parking on the other streets if you get there early enough. The vehicle people will return you to your vehicles

It is a particular pleasure to march in this parade because the crowd couldn't be more enthusiastic with their applause. In fact each year that we have marched we have had continuous applause from the crowd all along the whole parade route, something no other unit has sustained.

So get those shoes shined and caps out and if you can still get into your uniform please wear it as it really is a crowd pleaser. We will have our reenactor Color Guard this year so we do not have to fight with carrying the heavy flags. Mark your calendars for the 14th of March. (PS: If your chapter is coming or you want to come as an individual please contact John Bowen, National Trustee, 613 Chichester Lane, Silver Spring MD 20904-3331, Tel 301-384-6533 so we will know to expect you. If you come by charter bus arrangements will be made for bus parking. See you there!

Grow old along with me!

The best is yet to be.

The last of life, for which the first was made.

—Robert Browning, "Rabbi Ben Ezra"

ARE YOUR DUES DUE?

HISTORY OF THE 4.2 INCH MORTAR

By Richard T. Hartman

[The following article appeared in the newsletter of the 86th Chemical Mortar Battalion Association.]

For more than 50 years I have wondered about the development of 'our' mortar. Why is it measured in English units rather than the metric system used with the infantry mortars (60mm and 81mm) and the larger artillery weapons (105mm and 155mm) and why the peculiar decimal dimensions? My designation as one of the Historians of the 86th Association provided the incentive to look into the historical development of mortars as military weapons, with particular attention to the 4.2.

Mortars of 12-inch and 13-inch diameter were commonly used during the mid-19th century as weapons for coastal defense because of their ability to hit a vessel on its less-protected deck rather than to fire against more heavily armored sides. These heavy coastal weapons were used mostly in permanent emplacements and were not suitable for use as infantry support.

The development of a simple, lightweight, portable, smoothbore tube which could be attached to a base and raised to various angles is credited to the Germany army about 1906. This was followed, during World War I, by the appearance of a great variety of weapons, many of which proved to be impractical in combat, including mortars fired by acetylene or compressed air.

One of the most significant developments in what came to be known as 'trench mortars' was introduced in England in 1915 by Sir Wilfred Stokes (he was knighted as a result of his contribution). This was a smoothbore barrel with its base resting on a steel base plate and its muzzle supported by a bipod with a screw elevating gear. The cast iron projectile had a perforated cartridge at its rear end which held a 12-bore shotgun cartridge case filled with Ballistite powder. Explosion of the Ballistite pushed the shell from the barrel. Initially this design projected a shell that tumbled end over end in the air. Its explosion was ignited by a time-fuse. The British Army was slow to accept the design and Stokes modified the projectile by developing fin-stabilizers so that it landed on its nose. After further modification, approval was finally given and a 3-inch Stokes Mortar entered service in the British Army in August 1915.

Stokes later developed a larger 4-inch mortar along identical lines which was used to send gas into the German lines. The Stokes 3-inch mortar remained in use primarily for high explosives. When the U.S. Army entered the war it adopted the 4-inch Stokes as the standard weapon because of its ability to fire both gas and high explosive projectiles, although its range was only 1,100 yards.

Following WWI military leaders of many countries recognized the need to supply infantry with small, transportable weapons. Mortars seemed to be the answer, with two models competing for consideration: the Stokes type and a similar one developed by the French designer, Edgar Brandt. The latter was evaluated by the U.S. Army in two calibers, 60mm and 81mm. Both were approved and the rights to manufacture them in the USA were purchased from Brandt. With some modification they began to appear in the U.S. Army in the middle 1930's. The French origin of these weapons explains their metric measurements.

The United States Chemical Warfare Service had retained the

British-designed 4-inch Stokes Mortar after the end of WWI and, with a stock of ammunition, purchased from Britain, spent the next few years attempting to double its range and increase its accuracy. In 1924 Captain Louis M. McBride and Dr. G. S. Maxwell from CS rifled several barrels of the Stokes Mortar with varying pitches and number of grooves. Metal was machined from the bore, increasing its diameter to 4.2 inches between lands. In June 1924 one of these experimental rifled barrels sent three shells on an accurate flight of 2,300 yards. This represented the end of the smoothbore Stokes Mortar and the beginning of the new 4.2-inch Chemical Mortar.

Adoption of the rifled barrel made it necessary for each component of the mortar to be redesigned. In 1928 the Model M1 was ready for service but again extensive modification, particularly of the barrel support system, was required. The Model M1A1 with a range of 2,400 yards was available to chemical troops at the time of Pearl Harbor.

The possibility of using the chemical mortar to fire high explosive ammunition was proposed by General William N. Porter, Chief of CWS, in April 1942. A range of 2,400 yards was considered adequate for the use of chemical shells, but the use of HE required an increased range. Additional redesign of the base plate and barrel and changes in the propellant increased the authorized range by 1944 to 4,400 yards with M-6 propellant. We consistently fired at a range greater than 5,000 yards, although the reference books do not mention that fact.

It is interesting to note that the British Army adopted a modified 4.2 inch mortar with a wheeled base plate and a bipod barrel support.

Greater details are available in the references below, including recorded incidents of the 86th companies in action in the ETO.

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Brophy, Leo P., Miles, Wyndham D., and Cochrane, Rexmond C. 1988. *The Chemical Warfare Service: From Laboratory to Field*. Center of Military History, U.S. Army, Washington, DC.
Kleber, Brooks E. and Birdsell, Dale. 1990. *The Chemical Warfare Service: Chemicals in Combat*. Center of Military History, U.S. Army, Washington, DC.

WHAT ABOUT YOUR PAY CHECK?

Elsewhere in this publication is a story about the modernization of pay day. We thought it might be interesting to our members to learn if you ever had a funny experience with receiving (or disposing of) your pay check. If so, let us hear about it. Also, please remember to make it as brief as possible.

WEB SITES

2nd Armored Division

<http://www.2ndarmoredhellonwheels.com>

4th Infantry Division

<http://www.4thininfantry.org>

THREE DAYS AND A HERO TO REMEMBER

By Derk Strikwerda
17 ABND 513 PIR C

As the years pass so rapidly now, it is amazing how clearly I still remember three particular days during those indescribable months. January 4th, 7th, and 26th, of 1945, have lived indelibly in my mind and have been recalled so many times since that time. During those days it seemed that we would all surely die, and on the 26th of January, I saw a man step up and prove himself to be a hero.

On the night of January 3rd, as Operations Sergeant of Company C, 513th Parachute Infantry Regiment, I accompanied by Company CO, Captain Kendrick to the Battalion CP to mark up the appropriate maps for the attack we would make the next morning. Seventeen troopers in C Company were wounded during the night before the attack by tree bursts, and we had no information by battalion of the hailstorm that we would encounter in this first big attack.

When we jumped off the next morning at 0830, we had two platoons forward with Company Headquarters in between. The enemy fire we faced was unbelievable. In minutes, the Company 356 Operator was killed and Captain Kendrick was severely wounded. Everything went downhill right after leaving our main line of departure.

It was part of my job to hang on to the company records, and afterwards to piece together the information concerning exactly what happened since the day of the 4th. It was early morning of January 7th before I got everything unscrambled. The sorry truth of it all was that we lost 100 men out of the total company strength of 160 men!

While we were still reeling from this day in hell, we attacked again on January 7th. We attacked over the same open ground losing half of what had been left of Company C. Thirty more of our guys were KIA, MIA and WIA! I jumped in a jeep with a kid named Falconer from HQ, 1st Battalion, and we were hauling ammunition to the attacking companies.

As we sped up toward the Bastogne Highway, an artillery round came in and exploded near us. Falconer was hit and the concussion actually blew him out of the jeep. The jeep was still running and I finally succeeded in getting Falconer back into the jeep trailer, driving him back to the battalion aid station.

I never saw Falconer again. I thought sure that he had died of his wounds, as he appeared to be seriously wounded. [I later learned] that he had survived despite a piece of shrapnel that had entered his lower back and exited out of his sternum. Falconer died in 1993 and I deeply regret that I hadn't made an effort to contact him before that time!

January 7th became the second day of agony for C Company. My morning report turned in on January 8th showed 30 more casualties. One hundred thirty brave troopers were casualties in two attacks. It was all unreal!

On January 26th, Lt. Clark informed the Battalion CO that we had taken our objective and according to our map, a patrol would enter territory a mile behind the German lines. I joined the small patrol that was ordered to scout out the situation in enemy territory. We had no cover and were in plain sight when we

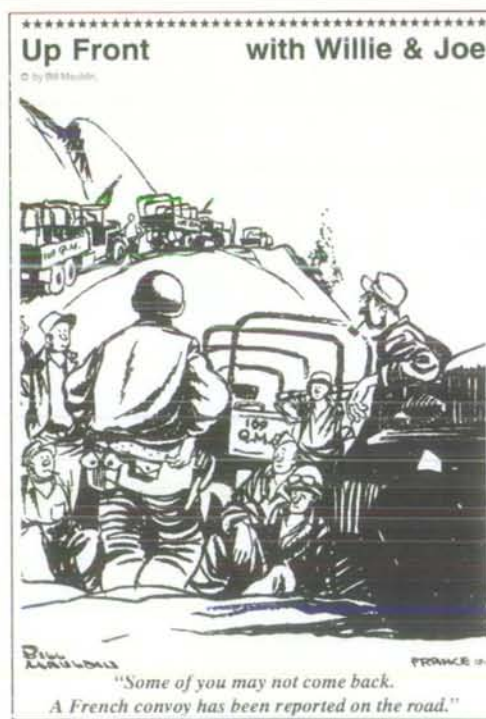
were about 400 yards from our destination. Much to my surprise, we made it to a row of trees and it was a miracle that we weren't all wiped out because the Germans were only a few hundred feet on the other side of that row of trees!

When we reached the trees, Lt. Clark sent James G. Smith, a machine gun sergeant, and three of his men to set up a gun 200 yards to the right of the Company CP. In minutes, the Germans brought them under fire with one being killed and another, John Erdman, being hit five times by a sniper.

One trooper with me was hit while we were routing out two Germans in a machine gun nest and a tracked vehicle started up nearby. Lt. Clark sent word for us to "Get the Hell out of there." Noble Eagle, my 300 radio operator, and I took off through the trees. We were running back over the same open ground, bullets snapping everywhere--I can't understand how they missed us.

We had run several hundred yards when I spotted an incredible sight. There was Jim Smith plodding through the knee-deep snow carrying John Erdman on his back. He and another trooper had already helped Erdman for about 200 yards when the other trooper couldn't help anymore, so Jim carried him alone. Eagle and I finally reached them. We made a litter of sorts and got Erdman back where he could get medical aid. Jim had carried Erdman on his back for almost half a mile before we reached them to help. We were all under enemy fire over half way back to our own lines.

There is no doubt about it. Jim Smith was solely responsible for saving John Erdman's life. It really didn't soak into me at that time, but I had never seen anyone put some one else's life above their own. I had never really experienced what "love for one's fellow man" or *esprit de corps* really meant until that day. I do now and I'll never forget the two terrible days of January 4th and 7th, and the day I saw a real-life hero! ■



AGAIN, THE TIME HAS COME FOR US TO BUILD OUR SECOND LINE OF DEFENSE

As you can well imagine, a power bigger than all of us is daily taking its toll on our numbers. We must begin to look to our spouses, children, relatives and history buffs to carry the load and see that the Battle of the Bulge is never forgotten.

VBOB continues to grow (a little slower than in the past)--but we are the ones who must ensure that that we have built a fortress so strong that it will not crumble with time. We have so much left to do.

We are, therefore, making a special effort to enroll family members and history buffs so that they can carry on our efforts. We are offering a two-year membership to any member of your family for the price of one--\$15.00 for two years.

"What am I going to do with two copies of *The Bugle*?" you might ask.

Glad you asked. This could be the most important piece of second class mail you have ever received--other than the *Victoria's Secret* catalog. The extra copy of *The Bugle* should be taken to your local high school or public library. If you have a college in your area, take it to their history department library. If there is a military post in your area, take it to the library there. These copies will be instrumental in helping to educate students of the sacrifices made during "America's greatest battle."

Many of you have a difficult time talking with your family about your war experiences. Perhaps, a gift of a two-year membership would whet their appetites to learn more and enable you to be able to speak of your experiences a little easier. Many of the letters we receive are from children who are eager to learn of their dad's experiences--"Dad never talked about it."

To take advantage of this offer, it is necessary that you use the membership application below--the regular membership application will not do. If you need more than one or do not wish to cut up this newsletter, make a Xerox copy and send it in along with your check.

-----Detach and Mail-----

SPECIAL ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP
Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, Inc.
P.O. Box 11129, Arlington, VA 22210-2129

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I am joining VBOB in honor of my _____ (relationship), whose name is: _____

He/she was in the following campaigns: _____

Unit(s) assigned to during period December 16, 1944-January 25, 1945. Division _____

Regiment _____ Battalion _____

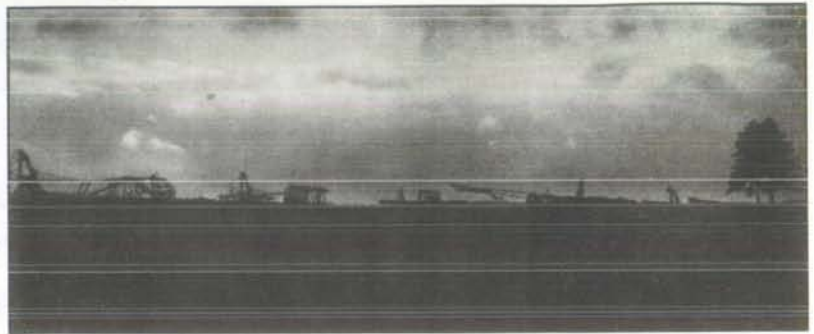
Company _____ Other _____

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

Applicant's signature _____

A Year After the Battle of the Bulge

A YEAR ago next week Americans were holding their breaths as the greatest single battle in U.S. military history since Gettysburg raged in the Ardennes. Starting December 16 as what was generally considered by the public to be a minor Nazi counter-offensive, the Battle of the Bulge developed into a powerful push that carried the enemy deep into Allied lines. Within a week the Germans had surrounded American forces at Bastogne and had swept on toward Liege. But by early January the offensive had been halted and on the 15th the enemy was in full retreat. The pictures here show the battleground today.



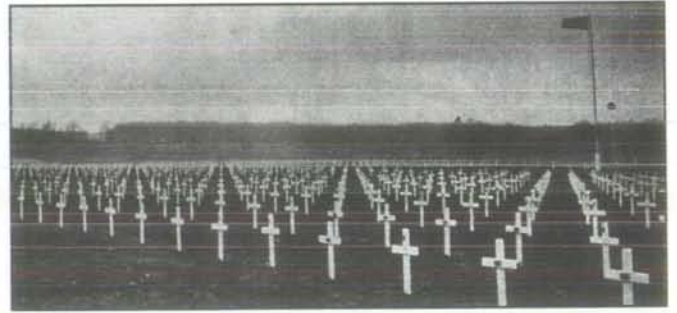
A year after the Battle of the Bulge, the skeletons of gliders which carried supplies to besieged Bastogne are outlined against a lowering sky. They have been stripped by inhabitants.



With war-torn buildings as a grim background, children march down the main street of Bastogne on their way to school. Here, defiant Yanks stood besieged.



A silenced anti-tank gun lies rusting in a field as a farmer passes with an ox-drawn cart. Across this land, battleground of centuries, German and Allies fought.



In a cemetery on the outskirts of Bastogne, crosses mark the graves of Americans who fell in battle. American casualties in the Bulge were more than 50,000.

—Reprinted from *The Philadelphia Enquirer*, December 9, 1945

REMEMBER WHEN??



During World War II the Army paid out millions of dollars to soldiers each payday, and security was a paramount concern.

TODAY--IT'S DIFFERENT

[The following information was taken from an article which appeared in the National Guard News, written by Cathy Ferguson. The photo is also from that article and no source was referenced.]

At various times during your military career, you probably stood in a line such as the above awaiting that "Big Pay Day." It may be that you stood in the rain, snow, and/or just plain freezing conditions.

Well, those days are over. A soldier's government allotment can now go directly to his bank account and, if so designated, his bills can automatically be paid while he sleeps, goes out for dinner, or otherwise enjoys himself. He can drop by the ATM machine later and get himself a little cash to run him for a while.

Years ago disbursements were made by a class "A" agent. This was a position which grew to be hated because, when the payroll bundle was "short" on cash when it was turned in, the agent had to make up the difference or undergo extensive investigation.

Then with automation came a system known as the Joint Uniformed Military Pay System (JUMPS for short). Soldiers were paid by treasury checks, but finances offices were still needed to provide U.S. and foreign currency so the checks could be cashed. Every pay day millions of dollars were required to keep things moving. So, JUMPS became outdated.

Today there's the DFAS (Defense Finance and Accounting Service). This agency is headed by Brigadier General Roger Scarce. The Finance Corps has taken its expertise into battlefield planning and operations. Scarce says, "In Operation Desert Storm, finance soldiers were on the second plane that

landed in Dhahran, sent in to set up an infrastructure before other soldiers arrived. Otherwise, who would take care of feeding and housing the troops? Or how would transportation be arranged, or gas be purchased? Someone had to acquire and pay for these necessities locally. That's the initial sustainment we bring to the fight."

Activated in January of 1991, DFAS played a major role in the success of Desert Storm. Defense Department financial management was improved through consolidation, standardization and integration of all the services' finance and accounting procedures, operations and systems.

"We pay people and we pay for items and services to keep soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines ready to defend the nation. With those responsibilities come a lot of challenges--integrating the varied ways services have done things in the past into one way of doing business; using technology to its greatest potential; reducing systems and changing business processes."

By 1999 DFAS will have restructured to only nine systems, replacing the more than 100 finance systems which it inherited. At that time there will be only one basic system paying: military and civilian pay, debt and claims management, vendor pay, contract pay, transportation pay, travel pay, and retiree and annuitant pay. All services will do things one way. ■

[Isn't automation wonderful? Makes you wonder though--I recently had about half of this newsletter done. When I went to save all my work, the information hit a bad spot on my hard drive and everything was lost. Think what could possibly happen to those hundreds of thousands of checks. It gives me the creeps.]

130TH GENERAL HOSPITAL IN THE BULGE

[The following was sent to us by JOHN J. STAMOS, 130TH GENERAL HOSPITAL.]

The 130th General Hospital was located at Ciney, Belgium. Its primary mission was to treat "combat exhaustion" casualties from the First and Third Armies.

(1) The tactical situation has constantly affected the mission and operation of this unit. Initially, when the Roer River offensive started 16 November 1944, 1,000 cases were sent here from Liege to relieve the burden in the then incomplete hospital center there. These were lightly wounded "ten-day" cases. They were well triaged and by 1 December most of them were back to duty, a long evacuation having been avoided. From 1 December to 19 December the unit performed its primary mission. The events from 19 December to 31 December can best be recorded in the wording of the daily journal kept at the time.

19 December 1944: Battle casualties begin to pour into the hospital.

20 December 1944: Surgical teams from the 12th Field Hospital and 3rd Auxiliary Surgical Group assist in handling large numbers of battle casualties. Over 600 admitted in past 24 hours.

22 December 1944: Prisoners of War returned to central stockade. Litter bearers pulled from all elements of unit. Flow of casualties between 500 and 600 per day. Patrols of enemy tanks and a few infantry troops have appeared south of the hospital less than three miles away. The 207th Engineer Battalion, only U.S. troops in the area. Because of the enemy advance, the NP personnel, hospital dieticians and physiotherapy aids evacuated to the 99th General Hospital. Total of 54 people involved in this evacuation. Unit transportation and trucks loaned by the 1233rd Engineer Fire Fighter Platoon utilized.

23 December 1944: Number of casualties entering station less than 200 during 24 hour period. Some ambulances enroute to station reported captured. Heavy gunfire heard east and south at an estimated distance of five miles. By use of hospital train and ambulances, evacuation down to non-transportables accomplished. Evacuation of all non-essential personnel recommended to Surgeon ASCZ. All personnel other than minimum essential number to care for patients evacuated to Ecole Athenee Royale, Charleroi, Belgium. At 2200 hours a jeep was fired on by German patrol between hospital and Sorbines, approximately two miles from hospital. Small arms fire heavy on the southern and western end of the rehabilitation camp reservation. Trucks were ordered out at once to avoid loss of critical transportation. Remaining at the station were only sufficient personnel to care for the non-transportable patients. Total evacuation--9 hospital trains in past four days, approximately 2,700 patients. To duty at 11th Reinforcement Depot 850 patients. Loaded directly from clearing station on train 200 patients.

24 December 1944: During the night two casualties brought in from two miles away with severe injuries (one with an arm and leg blown off and the other with half the face blown off and multiple chest and abdominal wounds) died as did one non-transportable case with multiple GSW of the head. Today we are out of contact with either our own or the enemy forces. Two men joined us during the night, Privates Buchanan and Ditzler from a clearing company of the 84th Division. These men had been held prisoner by Germans but were released some three miles away and directed by the enemy to "Go to the big hospital. There the Americans will take care of you and we'll be along when we have time!" The three dead were buried in the cemetery attached to the hospital at 1100 hours today. The priest of the school, M. Monat, after being assured all three were Christians, officiated at the burial ceremony. Graves were marked as prescribed by Graves Registration. Heavy firing east, west, and south all day.

25 December 1944: A few vehicles have come through the Namur today. No casualties. message sent to Surgeon, ASCZ, as to status of station. Advance elements of the Second Armored Division arrived during the afternoon. Artillery fire heavy at times. Deputy Surgeon, ASCZ, visited station and took CO for conference with Surgeon. Agreed station was to hold for the time being and one surgical team added to holding unit. CO proceeded to rendezvous point at Charleroi, collected personnel and returned to station at Ciney, Belgium.

26 December 1944: Active combat throughout the day and night, south, west and north of the hospital. The 41st Infantry preparing to jump off from a line 500 yards SW of the main hospital building. Artillery set up behind the hospital, firing over. Machine guns and mortars firing from the rehabilitation camp. Approximately 40 casualties during the day. One birth early in the morning, a girl baby being delivered. The parents, local town people driven from their home by the enemy. During the night a German paratrooper landed in the medical detachment bivouac area. This landing was two point--directly upon both testicles astride a fence post. Paratrooper was made a prisoner at once and immediately hospitalized. In the evening a call from Lt. Col George Rand, MC, Office of the Surgeon, ASCZ, advised that it was the surgeon's desire that all critical items of equipment be removed during the night. This was accomplished by unit vehicles. In the meantime, because the battalion aid station and clearing stations were still behind the hospital, the patients came to the station. Those who had been non-transportable, were now out of shock and were transportable. By midnight small arms fire was falling about the hospital grounds. Artillery fire from both sides was almost constant, the triangle Celles, Dinant, Ciney being a mass of fire of various calibers.

27 December 1944: By 0600 hours, no patients remained in the station. All critical items had been removed. Fire became more instead of less intensive. The bulk of the personnel holding had been at 0100 hours marched out, through the woods to Assesse, the rendezvous point. This group was guided by a party of natives, members of the resistance movement. At 0640 hours the station was abandoned. The Commanding Officer reported to the Surgeon, ASCZ, at 0730 hours and, after a conference proceeded to Charleroi.

(continued on next page)

130TH GENERAL HOSPITAL

28 December 1944: Station reoccupied at 1400 hours. The clearing station of B Combat Command (B Company of the 48th Medical Battalion) was found to be occupying the floors previously considered as suitable and guarding government property. An interval of some five hours had passed in which the station had been abandoned. In this period combat troops, and some civilians had taken small items and thoroughly rummaged through much of the plant. Inventory, however, showed less than \$500 of government property loss and no large personal item loss. Quarters were remarkable messed up, but few items were actually missing. Cigarettes, candy and the rare bottle of liquor had been searched for diligently by all concerned in the five hour period.

29 December 1944: Hospital being cleaned, shelves repacked and stocks re-inventoried.

30 December 1944: Hospital clean, minimal equipment available, one surgical team standing by. No patients.

31 December 1944: Standing by. Some small assistance rendered to Clearing Station. Air attack tonight with one stick of bombs on village and repeated strafing of roads--no damage to hospital or personnel. Enemy apparently recognize site, strafes road to hospital, cuts off guns and goes over at tree-top level, reopening fire on road and village immediately after clearing hospital.

VI--Summary

The year 1944 for the 130th General Hospital saw its activation, shipment, reorganization into a neuropsychiatric unit, reshipment, operation, evacuation, abandonment and reoccupation. It saw the hospital serve as a general hospital, an evacuation hospital, a field hospital, a clearing station, a battalion aid station and then, sitting between the lines, holding its non-transportables for either the U.S. Army or the Wehrmacht--whoever came first. It saw the hospital in the United States, England, France, and Belgium. In all, less than eight weeks of hospital operation was accomplished, but almost 7,000 patients were admitted and disposed of in this brief period. This (1944) was a year of packed activity for the 130th General Hospital.

Because of constantly changing tactical demands the primary mission of the hospital--the treatment and rehabilitation of soldiers with combat exhaustion--cannot be said to have been accomplished in 1944. The fact that a special neuropsychiatric hospital was flexible enough to change its function with constantly changing needs is worthy of note, because it could not have done so if it had been too specialized. The big lesson that 1944 taught us was that a special type hospital can do an efficient job in the advanced section of a theatre of operations only if the principle of flexibility of function is maintained. ■

NEWS ON VA HEALTH PLAN

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has announced that, in fiscal year 1999, it will enroll all veterans who apply for VA health care. The new enrollment program, part of the Veterans Health Care Eligibility Reform Act, requires that all veterans be enrolled as of October 1, 1998, to receive health care at the VA medical facilities nationwide. **While the program gets underway October 1, there is no deadline for applying for enrollment.**

"It is our desire to serve as many veterans as possible under this new law, and we've made it easier than ever before for veterans to obtain health care benefits," said Dr. Kenneth W. Kizer, VA Undersecretary for Health. "For the first time, enrolled veterans will have full range of services they need, not just those medical needs resulting from military service."

Under the Act's reforms, VA offers an expanded array of health care services, such as preventive care and outpatient services, in addition to eliminating many prior restrictions and confusion. Veterans can apply for enrollment in the program using a quick and easy application form which is available at any VA medical or benefits facilities.

Veterans who have received VA health care since January 1, 1996, will have an application for enrollment automatically processed on their behalf. ■

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WHAT IS THAT BINDS COMBAT VETERANS TOGETHER?

It isn't friendship. We all have friends. You can go to a company picnic or a convention and you will not feel the same emotion in the air as when you attend a veteran's reunion.

It is something beyond regular friendship. It is the knowing that "you and they have been to Hell and back." It is a deep-rooted emotion that binds you together. It is the knowledge that when things were tough, you and your buddies stuck it out and lived through it. You can attend high school reunions, college reunions, company conventions...the whole civilian works, but there isn't the "band of brothers" feeling that is felt when combat buddies get together!

You and your buddies may have less hair on top and a lot more inches around the beltline, but deep within all of you is the same comradeship that you had during those horrible days of war. Whether it is 10 years or 50 years, when combat buddies meet it seems like yesterday! All of the memories begin to assemble in your mind...memories that you thought had been pushed back into the recesses of your memory bank. "What ever happened to..." and "Remember when..." You try not to let on that these old veterans mean a lot to you, but by the time Auld Lang Syne is played and the flags furled and the station wagon is packed, there is a lump in your throat and a tear in your eye as you part company with the men who once lived and fought beside you.

You tell your wife: "Damn, it was good to see them again." *And it was!* Ole Charley might have gained 50 or so pounds, but he sure could fire that machine gun. "Chief" looked almost as young and fit as he did when he crawled up and gave you first aid under fire. "Danny Boy" is now almost bald, but he was quite a sergeant in those days and "Jimmy the "Pollock" gets around pretty good with one glass eye and one arm.

Yes, memories flood your mind as you head for home. No one knows the feeling except those of us who were there. You wonder if you will ever see any of them again. Combat was hell and you have many terrible memories of death and destruction but the memory of total camaraderie with men who shared that hell will forever be embedded in your heart. There is no friendship like that of combat buddies. It is something that lasts forever!■

The author is unknown

S-E-C-R-E-T HEADQUARTERS 16TH FIELD ARTILLERY OBSERVATION BN APO 308 US ARMY

Dates: 9-14 December, 1944

SPECIAL MISSION

December 9:

This incident, or "Mission to Moscow" as it was commonly called in order to conceal its true purpose, had many odd features attached to it. Officers were given temporary ranks to place the mission on the level of a Higher Headquarters. Vehicles were remarked with new unit numbers and given new code names. Their primary mission was to carry survey control for Field Artillery units of the VII Corps. Their secondary mission was to put in a 'blind' South network. Vehicles were to cruise through the adjacent towns to display the new unit designations. After the mission was completed, all 'mission' unit identifications were obliterated. All personnel were ordered to disclose no information whatsoever concerning the mission.

The "Mission" arrived in Biedweiler, P-268264, at 1530, December 9th. VIII Corps Artillery immediately laid a line to the Command Post.

Troops were billeted in surrounding houses. Operations commenced at 1600. After supper, the Commanding General gave an orientation lecture regarding the situation and the importance of military security. Afterwards, Lt. Tyler and the S.I.C. personnel made plans for the following day's work. A security-guard was posted with one hour reliefs during the hours of darkness. Captain Johnson planned a reconnaissance for the following day to lay a straight four second, five microphone base, sound OPs and flash installations.

December 10th:

Early in the morning, the survey party under Lt. Tyler's command, proceeded to their planned starting position and carried control by traverse for Field Artillery units. Captain Johnson made a reconnaissance for Sound Installations with Corporal Cole, the wire chief. As soon as the reconnaissance was completed, the wire crew began to set up communications. A situation map was set up by the S-3 with the full military picture including front lines and mined areas. The S.I.C. began to furnish information to Artillery units at the same time and operated very efficiently. The control points established by Lt. Tyler during the day were plotted on the S.I.C. map that night by Tec 4 Priebe.

December 11th:

Lt. Tyler's survey party continued to carry control for Corps Artillery. Corps itself moved to a chateau in Graulinger. Wire was promptly laid between Corps Headquarters and the CP and Biedweiler. A switchboard was borrowed from Corps to operate the communications' network in the Biedweiler CP. Wire and communications continued to operate very smoothly for the duration of the mission.

December 12th:

Lt. Tyler's survey party continued to carry forward control for Field Artillery units. The wire truck and one reconnaissance car continued to cruise through the area as requested. Radio and wire communications again operated satisfactorily. The S.I.C. maintained contact with the artillery units in the vicinity.

December 13th:

Lt. Tyler's survey party closed their traverse control although an additional traverse had to be run to accommodate certain artillery areas. All traverse closed within the allowable error and was acceptable to the artillery units. All survey work was completed by 1500.

Captain Johnson received orders during the day for preparation of movement to former area for all members of the "Mission." The wire crew began to dismantle wire communications. Due to a faulty mechanism on the RL#26, all wire had to be picked up by hand power. This job was completed by 1800. Henceforth, radio communication was the only form of communication available.

As soon as the mission was completed, all documents were classified 'Top Secret' and turned over to Corps. Then every identification of the unit was obliterated before returning to their outfit.

An unforeseen accident marred the entire mission. The nature of the accident was pending investigation at last reports. The enlisted men were killed and one command & reconnaissance car was a total loss.

December 14th:

At 0530, the unit began to pack equipment prior to returning to the battalion. Vehicles were stripped of their special mission figures with O.D. paint. At 1115, the battery left Biedweiler for their former area minus Captain Johnson and his driver who remained behind for further orders.

Throughout the period, the mission had proceeded without any difficulty. Morale was high, and cooperation between the VII Corps and the detachment from this battalion was at its usual level.■

♦♦♦♦

[The above was provided by **EDWIN KAHNER, 16TH FIELD ARTILLERY OBSERVATION BATTALION, HEADQUARTERS BATTERY**. Also see his letter in the "Letters to the Editor" column of this issue.]

Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge

Exclusive 1999 tour schedule

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May 27 - June 7, 1999

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Call and reserve your spot today.

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U.S. Soldiers Still Remembered

1LT Dorothy S. Davis

General George G. Meade Chapter

Unless you were there, most citizens cannot comprehend the terrible cost paid by those who served in World War II to preserve the freedom we so bountifully enjoy in our country today. A most insightful statement was made by President Franklin D. Roosevelt during those difficult years of the war:

"In all of the far-flung operations of our own Armed Forces, the toughest job has been performed by the average, easy-going, hard-fighting young American who carries the weight of battle on his own young shoulders. It is to him that we and all future generations of Americans must pay grateful tribute."

For those who served in the Battle of the Bulge (December 16, 1944, to January 25, 1945), this grateful tribute is nowhere more evident than in three American cemeteries in the Belgium/Luxembourg area, where most of those killed in action in that battle still remain.

The Battle of the Bulge lasted a scant 40 days, but 600,000 Americans participated in this bloody encounter. There were 81,000 American casualties—including 19,000 killed on the battlefield. Many of these 19,000 who gave their lives remain in three cemeteries in Belgium and Luxembourg.

The Ardennes Cemetery (Neuville-en-Condroz) is located a few miles from Liege, Belgium, and is known as the American Military Cemetery of the Battle of the Bulge. It was established on February 8, 1945, for the burial of First U.S. Army soldiers killed in Belgium, as well as for others who lost their lives around Aachen during the drive through the Siegfried Line. There are 5,328 Americans buried in this beautiful, peaceful, 90-acre cemetery. In the interior of the memorial chapel are three large wall maps composed of inlaid marble, describing American military operations in Europe. Inscribed on granite slabs along the outside of the memorial are the names of 462 missing in action, whose bodies were never recovered or identified. This is the only American military cemetery in Europe where newly found remains may still be

buried.

Not far from Liege in the village of Henri-Chapelle is another American cemetery. It was established in September 1944 by the 1st Infantry Division on the gentle slopes of the Belgian countryside, where costly fighting had taken place during the Battle of the Bulge. There are 7,989 Americans buried here—many who gave their lives in the Battle of the Bulge. The chapel is a simple but richly ornamental building overlooking the burial area. On the rectangular piers of the colonnade are inscribed the names of 450 missing in action who gave their lives in that area.

The Luxembourg/Hamm Cemetery is located just outside of Luxembourg City on 50 acres of a beautifully wooded, sloping area. A white stone chapel set on a wide circular platform surrounded by woods is just inside of the entrance to the cemetery. The names of 371

missing in action are inscribed on two large stone pylons that flank the chapel. Buried here are 5,076 Americans, most of whom were casualties of the Battle of the Bulge.

General George S. Patton, Jr., who died as a result of injuries, suffered in an accident in Heidelberg, Germany, in December 1945, was originally buried among the other men here. The number of visitors to his gravesite, however, was so great that surrounding grass was soon trampled down. It was then decided that a special site paved with beautifully laid rock in front of the chapel would be more appropriate. His grave is possibly the most visited of any in



Under fire, company aid men bandage an infantryman's shattered leg. Two thousand medics were killed in Europe on the front line.

the American cemeteries in Europe.

Every year, thousands of relatives and veterans return to these sacred places to remember and honor their loved ones and fellow comrades who gave their lives. And almost every day, hundreds of Belgian and Luxembourg citizens visit the cemeteries to show their gratitude for the sacrifices of these valiant young Americans. They bring flowers to the gravesites, write notes to the relatives of those buried there, and pass on the history to their children—that here lie those Americans who paid the ultimate price for the freedom of Belgium and Luxembourg.

VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE CERTIFICATE



The Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge Assn is proud to offer a **full color 11" by 17" certificate**, which may be ordered by any veteran who received credit for the Ardennes Campaign. It attests that you participated in, endured and survived the greatest land battle ever fought by the US Army. **You do not have to be a member of the VBOB Assn in order to order one but you must have received the Ardennes credit.** This beautiful certificate is produced on parchment-like stock and is outlined by the full color WWII insignias of the major units that fought in the Battle of the Bulge starting with the 12th Army Group followed numerically with Armies, Corps and Divisions and the two Army Air Forces. We wished that each unit insignia could have been shown but with approximately 2000

units that participated in the Bulge it was impossible. However any unit which served in the Bulge would have been attached to or reported through one of the unit insignias depicted. You may want to add one of your original patches to the certificate, when you receive it. Units were researched in the Official General Order No. 114 for **Units Entitled to the ARDENNES Battle Credit and will be the basis for sale of this certificate.** The unit insignias shown are also those used in the design of the Battle of the Bulge Memorial Conference Table dedicated and on view in the Garrison Library at Ft Meade, MD (open Mon & Wed 12:30-3:00 PM. The requests to date have been overwhelming, therefore we would request that you **allow approximately 3-4 weeks for delivery.**

A Special Certificate is available to spouses or children of those who made the Supreme Sacrifice in the Battle of the Bulge or who died of wounds received in the Battle of the Bulge. The individual request should have the date and place of death and be certified by the family requestor or by a buddy who was present. Multiple copies of the same certificate may be ordered if you have a number of children/grandchildren. Rank or command during the Bulge is preferred. It will be abbreviated to the WWII or three character standard. The certificate will be shipped rolled in a protective mailing tube. Please be sure to **place your name, service number and unit as you would like it to appear on the certificate.** The unit name should as full as possible as you want someone reading it to understand what unit you were in. We will abbreviate it as necessary. It is important that you type or print this information. **The unit must be one of the 2000 units authorized for the Ardennes Campaign credit. The cost of the certificate is \$15.00 postpaid.**

Unfortunately we do not have any more frames available at this time. John Bowen is presently trying to arrange with other suppliers who will produce these special sizes in quantities of 100. This may result in a higher frame cost. Our previous order had to be for 500 frames which took over three years to sell and resulted in the non use of a garage where they were stored. We will keep you posted.

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February 1998

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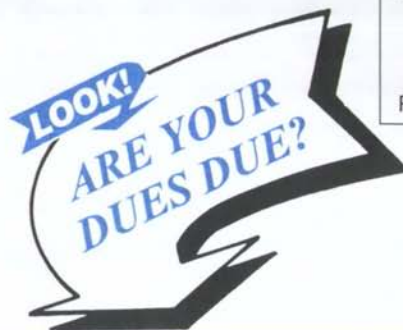


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