

The BULGE BUGLE

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION • VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE, INC.

VOLUME XIX NUMBER 4

THE ARDENNES CAMPAIGN

NOVEMBER 2000



55th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

By the winter of 1944, the United States and our Allies had turned the tide of the Second World War. Allied forces had liberated the Italian peninsula and were gaining ground in France and the Low Countries. In mid-December, in a desperate attempt to halt this steady advance, Adolf Hitler launched a furious and massive counteroffensive. On December 16, 29 German divisions flooded the Allied line in the Ardennes Forest region of Belgium and Luxembourg. The Battle of the Bulge had begun.

Facing superior enemy numbers, rugged terrain, and bitter weather, the American troops at first fell back. But their determination to defeat the Nazis never wavered. For 6 weeks, U.S. soldiers responded to fierce German offensives with equally determined counterattacks, refusing to succumb to the Nazi onslaught. The siege of Bastogne in Belgium remains an enduring symbol of their indomitable spirit. At that strategic crossroads, a small detachment of the 101st Airborne Division and other attached troops were encircled. When called upon to surrender by the much larger German force, Brigadier General Anthony McAuliffe dismissed the demand with his legendary one-word reply: "Nuts." Against all odds, he and his men held firm during the siege until reinforcements arrived and helped halt the German offensive at a critical point in the Battle.

Inevitably, the spirit, toughness, valor, and resolve of the U.S. forces led to victory. By late January of 1945, the American and Allied counterattack had succeeded in pushing back the Nazi forces, eliminating the threat of further German offensives and ultimately sealing the fate of the Nazi regime. But this victory was costly. At the end of the Battle of the Bulge, some 19,000 Americans lay dead, and thousands more were wounded, captured, or missing in action.

Now, more than half a century later, we still stand in awe of the courage and sacrifice of the more than 600,000 U.S. soldiers and airmen who fought that epic battle. These seemingly ordinary Americans achieved extraordinary things. Leaving their homes, their families, and their civilian lives behind them, they stepped forward to wage a crusade for freedom. They laid the foundations of the peace and security we enjoy today and planted the seeds of democracy that now are bearing fruit throughout Europe. Many of these heroes and patriots have gone to their final rest; but their service, their sacrifice, and their achievements will live forever in the memories and hearts of their fellow Americans.

The Congress by House Joint Resolution 65, has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation honoring the veterans of the Battle of the Bulge.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the period of December 16, 1999, to January 25, 2000, as a time to commemorate the 55th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge. I call upon the people of the United States to express our profound gratitude to the veterans of the Battle of the Bulge and to honor them with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of December, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fourth.

William J. Clinton

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

IF YOU FIND YOU HAVE A LITTLE TIME,
WRITE TO VBOB AND WE'LL SEND YOU THE
NECESSARY TOOLS TO GET OFF TO A
GOOD START IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A
CHAPTER IN YOUR AREA.

YOU'LL FIND THAT IT'S EASY TO DO AND
THE REWARDS TO ALL OF THOSE YOU
BRING TOGETHER CANNOT BE
DUPLICATED.



President's Message

We are happy to report that our Annual Reunion in the beautiful City of Colorado Springs, Colorado, nestled amongst the majestic Rocky Mountains, was in the opinion of most, a huge success.

All the events which took place from August 31st to September 3rd, 2000, were well attended and our Banquet on the last night was attended by 251 people.

At the Banquet, the Posting of the Colors was done by the U.S. Air Force Academy and the National Anthem was sung by Sgt. John Teamer, U.S.A.F. During the dinner, the U.S.A.F. Band of the Rockies--"The Falconers"--provided "Glen Miller-type music," ably assisted by male and female vocalists.

The Holiday Inn afforded us two beautiful hospitality rooms which were always well stocked with domestic and foreign beers donated by the Coors Brewing Company. VBOB provided a large assortment of hard liquors and snacks.

Our tours of the Air Force Academy, the Cripple Creek gambling town, the Flying "W" Ranch dinner and show and the Garden of the Gods not only provided an educational experience but also gave us an opportunity to view some parts of the spectacular Rocky Mountain area.

During the course of the reunion, I had the opportunity to talk to many old friends and to make new ones of our Bulge visitors. Some conversations were brief and some were in depth, but my lasting impression of all was the deep affection that each Bulge veteran had for the others, even after the passing of so many years. After a while, it became increasingly clear to me that the events of 56 years ago were deeply entrenched in their memories and would never fade with the passage of time.

While entering the lobby of the Holiday Inn one morning, where many of the veterans would gather and as I greeted one after another, I came upon an old soldier of the 101st Airborne Division, 501st Parachute Infantry, named Christopher McEwan, of Colorado Springs. It could be easily seen that he was proud of his affiliation with the 101st for he was wearing a black jacket and hat with the 101st Airborne emblazoned on front and back. As I engaged him in conversation, Chris McEwan told me that he was originally from Staten Island, New York, and had entered the military from there. Our conversation eventually drifted to the defense of Bastogne and after much discussion, he reluctantly told me that he was recommended for the Medal of Honor for his operation of a 30 caliber air-cooled machine gun at a point of attack. The recommendation was later down-graded but he received a Silver Star for the action. Knowing that the 101st and attached units were completely surrounded for many days by vastly superior German Forces, I asked McEwan if the thought of being over run had ever occurred to him. After some thought, he said, "No, not really, because we were going to do it to the last man." Noting the many other awards on the hat he was wearing, gave added significance to his last statement.

Such are the men of the Bulge and the war in Europe, in the air and on the ground. Total unselfishness, determination and



John Dunleavy

stamina to see the thing through. Some veterans who signed up to come to the reunion couldn't make it due to illness--like James Edmundson, of Carson City, Nevada, whose granddaughter called us at the hotel and said her grandfather would love to be with us but just couldn't make it. Frank Walsh, of Galloway, Ohio, a tank destroyer defender of Bastogne, a good friend who makes all the reunions, had to cancel at the last minute because of illness. They remembered us and we remembered them.

I also ran into Bill Fugit and his wife, of Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, Captain of the 2nd Infantry Division, defending the Elsenborn Ridge and a mining engineer in civilian life. They were happy to hear that the next reunion (2001) is being planned for Orlando, Florida. Milan Rolik, of Ohio, taped the business meeting and offered words of encouragement. Bob Jurick, from New York, Darrow Jackson, a detective from Wisconsin, Dan Iannelli, from Pennsylvania, and Wayne Field, of Colorado, were always available for their support and comradeship. Frances Doherty, whose late husband, Jack, served as an officer with the 825th Tank Destroyer Battalion and Eva Popovich served with the CIA in Europe during the war, attended the 4-day reunion, as they have been present at most national reunions.

Of the attendees, 75 were infantrymen, closely followed in numbers by tankers and tank destroyer men, field artillery, airborne, engineers, air force, anti-aircraft and hospital personnel. The 75th Infantry Division and the 106th Infantry Division had the highest number of attendees. California, Oklahoma, Texas, Colorado, New York, Florida, Maryland, Oregon and Arizona were all well represented.

After the reunion, a number of veterans and guests motored west through the Rockies to view the spectacular scenery. Some went directly home. But wherever they went, they will always remember those bitterly cold, icy days and the men who served at their side--for in those days, all we had was one another.

Please remember to sign up for our Annual December 16th events at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia at the Tomb of the Unknowns--banquet on the 15th with Arlington Cemetery ceremonies on the 16th followed by a luncheon. Complete information in this newsletter.■

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ARE YOUR DUES DUE?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE NAME FITS

I have just read the article "General Bradley's Thoughts" and I cannot believe that he did not include our unit at St. Vith. The 9th Armored Division was called "The Phantom Division," and now I know why.

To quote from the general's thoughts, "Of course our front was overrun but the front line divisions fought stubborn delaying actions and slowed up the advance." One of the most important of these actions was at St. Vith. Here, the 7th Armored Division and a regiment of the 106th Infantry held up the 6th Panzer Army for three days. While General Bradley may have forgotten, the combat command of the 9th Armored Division was defending St. Vith for about 18 hours before the 7th Armored arrived and witnessed the demise of the 106th Division.

We fought alongside the 7th until we were ordered out by General Montgomery, who said we had done all we could and it was a splendid effort. We were pulled out because our flanks were exposed and then we were surrounded.

I am not trying to take anything away from the 7th. We were with them and fought with them until we were both evacuated. In fact, we, Combat Command B, 9th Armored Division, were cited in the order of the day of the Belgium Army on Decree #1329. So I guess we were there. Combat Command B, 9th, also captured the bridge at Remagen.

I hope the in general's memoirs that too won't be forgotten. We of the 9th have been upset for many years because we were never given any credit for the battle at St. Vith only because we were just one-third of a division. Situation maps have always showed us on the left or right of the 7th Armored Division until we were both evacuated at the same time.

Harold Threthaway
9 ARMDD 16 AFA BN CCB

BEAUTIFUL STORY APPRECIATED

I deeply appreciate the beautiful story, "I was there...At the Battle of the Bulge," by Paul Reed, published in the August 2000 issue. The seventh paragraph was particularly comforting because finally the participation of black men, caught in the Battle of the Bulge, has been recognized by other distinctive American warriors.

Few white Americans are aware of the fact that a million black men fought in WWII just as their forefathers who engaged an enemy to preserve a way of life they helped develop.

The 998th QM Salvage Collecting Company was one of several service groups so relegated, perhaps because colored men were deemed by the Pentagon and Congress as being inferior and incapable of doing anything other than menial tasks.

Most colored soldiers in WWII had been trained for other endeavors, i.e., field artillery, corps of engineers, signal corps, tank men, ordnance and even fighter pilots.

Segregated black units were disbanded and personnel were transferred to the Quartermaster Corps, with only a remote connection to combat duty.

The 998th QM Salvage Collection Company was formed to collect from the battle field, for recycling, discarded and abandoned materials, personal equipment, clothing, shoes and small arms.

The platoon, assigned to the Third Army, was cited by General George Patton for its success in providing 78 percent of such goods when Atlantic shipping stalled because of devastating German submarine activity. Our unit took prisoners of war, earned five bronze battle stars because we were always in the battle zones.

Almost half a sister company, the 237th QM Shoe Repair Company, in the process of setting up for work, was blown away before our eyes one bright, sunny afternoon by German fighter bombers just outside Bastogne.

I'm still haunted by the ugly sight and memory because I was one of the clerks who helped process the more than 30 fatalities.

Hugh F. Semple, Sr.
998 QM SAL COL CO

THE ARDENNES--IT'S A BALL

I found the article on General Bradley's thoughts very, very interesting.

I was with the 106th Infantry Division combat medics with the 81st Engineers Battalion--fresh from the States.

We relieved the 2nd Infantry Division. They told us that nothing would happen in the Ardennes--it would be a ball. They in the meantime left us and went out on another mission which turned out to be a rough one.

December 11th, I was with Headquarters until all Hell broke loose on about December 18th. Some of our medics were assigned to other units which were captured. We retreated from near St. Vith (near Bastogne) while others were captured. We then reorganized in Belgium about December 27th.

After being assigned to C Company of the engineers while clearing mines (as a medic), I was pinned down by big 88's. A German was in a church belfry (a forward observer). He was soon found out. Don't know what happened to him after that.

I often wondered what might have happened if we had more supplies....

John E. Kultzow
106 INF 81 ENGR CMBT BN MED

BY THEIR SIDE

After reading Boyd McNeil, Jr.'s account of the 253rd Armored Field Artillery Battalion's actions, I felt I had to reply.

All of the actions he participated in, we of the 35th Infantry Division, were closely connected with. I joined C Company, 134th Infantry Regiment, 35th Infantry Division on January 8, 1945. We, in conjunction with the 4th and 6th Armored, fought south and east of Bastogne.

On January 15, 1945, the 134th Infantry was attached to the 6th Armored. From then until January 31st, their story would also be our story.

During the attack on Arloncourt, Belgium, we were to witness 13 knocked out tanks of theirs aligned along the road leading into Arloncourt. These tanks had been knocked out earlier in an attempt to capture Arloncourt. I remember they lost a couple of vehicles that day and we were dug in by a couple of tanks that night and a German tank refueled right out in our front.

Next morning as we were moving out, we walked through a farm complex. A 6th Armored tank was sitting there. All of a sudden a German tank pulls out of the woods and started shooting at the tank. All of the tankers except the driver were standing outside watching us move up, you ought to have seen them scramble. You know they managed to knock out the Germans with three rounds. Nobody got out as it burned. Later on up in the woods, we ran into elements of the 9th Panzer Division. I dug three foxholes that day.

Later on as McNeil says the 253rd supported the 1st Battalion of the 134th on January 24. We were attacking from Wilwerdange toward Weiswampach, Luxembourg. Our company suffered severely during the three days January 24 thru 26th--losing one officer and eleven enlisted men KIA and many wounded and frostbite victims. The 69th Tank Battalion was our support during this time, but German tank fire pretty much held them at bay.

According to a recent graph I saw that January 15, 1945, was the coldest day in the Bulge. I know we suffered severely from the cold and snow. It was about three feet deep on the level up there.

Jim Graff
35 INF 134 INF C

WHICH BATTLE OF THE BULGE WAS GENERAL BRADLEY SEEING?

While engaging in meetings with veterans groups, fighting for those American POW's who were used as slave labor (primarily in the Pacific, but also in the ETO), I read with some disbelief General Omar Bradley's comments on the Bulge. When I say disbelief, I mean DISBELIEF!

General Bradley is often referred to by correspondents and pundits as the "soldiers' general." Up to the time you published some of his papers, I sort of felt like that, too. But who was kidding who? American troops got caught in the middle because of our generals. To try to justify the largest land battle American troops ever fought, the generals tried to minimize it. If we believed those who were calling the shots, we would have to believe that our top brass actually knew what it was doing and had laid a trap for the enemy.

If so, it was a trap gone awry. The ones who got caught in the vise of this deadly trap were the American troops who suffered such horrendous casualties

(continued on next page)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

In our battle at Merseberg, about half of my buddies of Company A were either killed or wounded. It was hell on earth, and a very sad part of the Battle of the Bulge for me. Where I was located in February-April, the Battle of the Bulge was longer and bloodier than the army admits, and that the greatest battle in American history didn't end on January 25, or January 28, but ended as those who fought it know, after February 1, and after March and April, 1945. I was there, and I kept a record of things. For now, I am just grateful to be alive.

LaMar C. Berrett
2 INF 23 INF A

A LITTLE PRAISE FOR THE BUGLE

The *Bulge Bugle* magazine which I receive is so totally interesting and brings back so many vivid memories.

Also, I never knew that combat medics who served in the U.S. Army in the European Theater were entitled to the bronze star medal until I read a write-up in *The Bugle* which mentioned this fact.

Furthermore, after nearly two years of writing to U.S. Army Records in St. Louis, Missouri, I received all the medals due me, plus the bronze star. The bronze star medal came in a beautiful case. Thank you for having noted in one of your newsletters that all combat medics who served in the ETO were entitled to this medal.

May God bless the VBOB organization and I'll be a member until the day I die. Thank you so much for all your help and may our organization last forever.

Theodore J. Taggart
28 INF 109 INF MED

[Thanks Mr. Taggart, we couldn't help patting ourselves on the back a little bit by publishing your letter. We also wanted your letter to point out that our members should write for their awards and also let them know that it takes patience. We realize that many of the records were destroyed by fire, but it's worth pursuing. Many say that they don't care about the medals as they want to forget about the war--but down the line these things will be very important to your children and/or grandchildren. Elsewhere in this issue you will find the address to write to.]

FLYING THE FLAG

Regarding flying the United States flag. I have flown the flag daily since 1955 when I moved to Long Island from New York City, as well as here in Safety Harbor. We live in a subdivision of 107 homes; only one other vet has the flag out daily. Over 35 other vets, from WWII and Korea and Vietnam never show the flag. A nearby friend (West Point, 1937) has his flag out

Bill Leesemann
26 INF 101 ENGR CMBT BN

TRUE GRIT AT 10 BELOW

Just south of that "shoulder" where General Bradley says the First Army blocked the German BoB push into Belgium and Luxembourg (*Bulge Bugle*, August 2000) there was another "shoulder" at Echternacht, blocking even further into German lines. The 12th Regiment of the 4th Infantry Division held it--and held it and held it and held it, even though one company was entirely overrun.

This unsung bit of main strength and ugliness, as one guy put it, was performed in spite of the fact that the whole division was badly undermanned and still rebuilding after the Hurtgen Forest in November, an obscene slaughter that could never be justified, then or now. We lost thousands and thousands of good men. As a litter bearer in a four-man litter squad from D-Day on, I carried enough of them off the line to know something about what our rifleman did and suffered in that God-forsaken forest.

Immediately afterwards we were in Luxembourg, to regroup when the Bulge broke over us. Working out of the City of Luxembourg we carried casualties from the 1st Battalion of the 8th Regiment at night because the Germans had the countryside under observation. But our guys prevailed, and as our strength built up we pushed into Belgium and Germany in January.

One incident illustrates what our riflemen were going through in that bitter sub-zero weather: Some time in January my litter squad and two others, 12 men in all, had moved up to a tiny railroad way-station near a tunnel which had concealed one of those huge German railroad guns. I was familiar with the Ozark Mountains back home, but this terrain was even hillier and more jumbled. Worse, it was buried in two to four feet of fresh snow.

Early in the morning a runner came with word that his company had to leave two casualties during the night in the snow on a ridge about a half a mile up the line. We decided all three litter squads should go, each one taking a turn breaking trail, sometimes in drifts above our waists.

The runner guided us to the two wounded men, sprawled 15 yards apart under some tall pines. We quickly found that one was frozen solid, poor guy. But the other was a Survivor, with a capital "S."

He had burrowed down slightly in the snow, stanching the bleeding from his big leg wound, and covered himself head to toe with his shelter-half. He had some cubes of solidified alcohol, and the butt of his rifle was heavily charred. He said he would like a cube with his zippo, set his rifle stock into it, and flap the shelter-half every so often to clear the air. He had made it through the night like that.

Getting him out of there was a job. We strapped him tightly onto a litter, one squad broke trail, one carried the loaded litter with the litter handles on their shoulders, the third followed, getting their second wind. We were determined to get our survivor back to the aid station and out of the cold. We did, and I feel sure he made it all the way to the States.

The 4th Division fought on through February, March, and April, and our 8th Regiment was in Munich when the war ended. And we all know who won it: Savvy riflemen like our BoB Survivor.

William C. Montgomery
4 INF 4 MED BN A

TWO SUBJECTS

I found two subjects discussed in the August "Letters to the Editor" fascinating. I'd like to comment on both.

Television Interview: The first has to do with Mr. Steve Cowan, Sr., who watched a television interview during which someone who said he was with the 106th Infantry Division made the Bulge sound as though it was "a picnic." In a book I am writing on the Bulge, I have been researching the subject as thoroughly as I can. My findings are that many men in the ill-fated 106th fought bravely. But then there were others who gave up with little fighting. On December 19, 1944, some 7,500 surrendered en masse. I do not pretend to judge these men and their actions. But I would suggest that those who did not distinguish themselves in battle are apt to treat the Bulge in a casual way. It's as though they don't want to make a big thing of it. From their point of view, the less importance attached to it, the less important their own actions. I can understand that. The facts are that when the trumpet sounded, they didn't answer.

Eric Fisher Wood: One of the heroes of the 106th is the other subject I want to mention. It concerns Eric Fisher Wood, an artillery lieutenant. The complete story on him isn't known beyond the fact that he was one tough cookie. He fought bravely in encounter after encounter, refusing to give up against the most formidable forces. I was planning to research him in depth but then I thought that in the vagueness of who he was and what he did, Lt. Wood stands as the brilliant symbol of the Bulge during which time countless GI's did remarkable things that weren't witnessed or went unrecounted. Even today he stands as another kind of hero, one who didn't live to tell about it. Unlike the non-hero who lived to lie about it.

Edward A. Marinello
286 FAO BN

THUNDERBOLTS IN LUXEMBOURG

In his "Letter to the Editor" in the February 2000 issue of *The Bulge Bugle* ("When Did It All End?") Camille Kohn, the President of Luxembourg's CEBA, inadvertently omitted to mention the role that the 11th Armored Division played in the liberation of northern Luxembourg during the last week of January, 1945.

Camille's unintentional oversight was corrected on May 28, 2000, when he, Jean Milmeister (the Vice President of CEBA) and Frank Kieffer (the curator of CEBA's Museum

(continued on next page)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The generals who subsequent (long subsequent) to the actual hardship and horrors of The Bulge, claim that it was a victory are kidding themselves--and hoping to fool posterity. They can't kid those of us who were there. WE suffered through their so-called victorious plan.

Ask the GI's or young officers who had to pry a dead body out of an ice-cold tank. See what they thought of his "victory." As to having, and I quote "better equipment," if that weren't so sad, it would be funny. Our light tanks had .37 mm guns as their biggest weapons. That's right, .37's.

The one thing we did have is men with guts, men with determination and men who looked out for each other. And, of course, we did have our tremendous air power and the gallant pilots who saved us time and again.

But it is a fairy tale to believe that the United States Army was victorious BECAUSE of the Bulge; we were victorious DESPITE the Bulge. Everyone who belongs to the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge knows of its horrors. It is way too late to rewrite history. And every year around New Year's Eve, I think of the men who fought alongside me--and I salute them and all the other Bulge veterans, alive, wounded and dead. I refuse to let General Bradley's or anyone else's memoirs take our honor and glory away from us.

Eli J. Warach
11 ARMDD 42 TK BN D

WARNINGS ISSUED OF IMMINENT DANGER

With all due deference for General Bradley's "Calculated Risk" ("Bradley's Thoughts," *The Bulge Bugle*, August 2000), his memoirs however contradictorily state that, although he was taking a risk in the Ardennes and a calculated one, it is followed by, "My estimate of his (the enemy's) capabilities at that time were nearer right than wrong" which he subsequently qualifies with, "I had greatly underestimated the enemy's offensive capabilities."

As Russel F. Weigley's classic *Eisenhower's Lieutenants* confirms, despite several Eisenhower warnings of imminent danger; SHAEF Intelligence Chief General Strong personal warnings to Bradley (on a visit to HQ, 17th Army Group) of German movements toward the Ardennes, and albeit further repeated reports of German troop movements, Bradley left to join Eisenhower at Headquarters in Paris where they drank champagne to celebrate Eisenhower's promotion (to General of the Army) and play bridge that night.

The time required for a mandatory build-up to support an Allied Spring 1945 offensive and the German High Command's discounting its implementation, view that they held the 11 Roer Dams (major obstacles to the Rhine) with which they could flood the Roer Valley, prompted their attack through the Ardennes and divide the British-American sectors. Of the seven key dams, were Urfttals and Schwammenauel near Schmidt--which the 28th Infantry Division could not take. The delay, in doing so, was the green light to launch the German thrust through the Ardennes. It was not until 6 February 1945 that the 78th Infantry Division supported by the 774th Tank Battalion and the 60th Infantry Regiment (9th Infantry Division) secured that dam.

John K. Kingsley
774 TK BN A

IT WAS THE 2ND ARMORED DIVISION

I read both Charles Bedford's and Malcolm Wilkey's letters. I not only understand their pride in the British XXX Corps, but I am happy that they have been able to bring their actions to the attention of Bulge readers. However, the statement that it was the XXX that stopped the Germans at the Meuse, and not the U.S. 2nd Armored Division is absurd. I was a member of the 2nd Armored Division and was with the CCB of the division. Of the some 800 German tanks destroyed in the Bulge, over 100 of them were knocked out by the 2nd Armored Division, many of them in front of the Meuse.

If General Montgomery had been able to have his way, the 2nd Armored would not have been at Ciny, or for that matter in the Bulge at all, but fortunately General Harmon disregarded his idiotic order, and by a 90-mile night march from above Aachen put us in position to help stop the German attack.

Meredyth Hazzard
2 ARMDD 17 ARMU ENGR BN

CORRECTIONS FOR HISTORY'S SAKE

The passage of time diminishes memory and this may be the cause of errors in Thomas E. Ward's letter (*The Bulge Bugle*, August 2000, page 15), which should be corrected for future historians and researchers.

Following his induction in October 1942, Ward states he was sent to Ft. Thomas, Kentucky. There was no Ft. Thomas. It is likely he went to Ft. Knox, Kentucky.

Ward claims his next post was Ft. Raleigh, Kansas. No such post existed. He probably went to Ft. Riley, Kansas, where the 9th Armored Division was activated. As a member of the 14th Tank Battalion of that division, he actually trained at Camp Funston.

Neither Ft. Thomas nor Ft. Raleigh are listed in the *World War II Order of Battle* by Shelby L. Stanton.

Ward reports his crew evacuated their tank when it was hit by German fire. He incorrectly claims "when tank men hit the ground running, they have no weapons." Not so. Tank crewmen were equipped with a .45 caliber submachine gun, an all metal, automatic weapon commonly called a "grease gun" which it resembled. Ward's 14th Tank Battalion had 449 of these weapons. His platoon leader had a .45 caliber pistol.

Demetri Paris
9 ARMDD 14 TK BN

THINGS WERE PRETTY EQUAL

I appreciate the excellent article "Bradley's Oldest Division," by Raymond G. Carpenter which appeared in the August 2000 issue.

A few updated footnotes are in order: The 28th Division sustained 107% casualties in the Huertgen Forest. Col. Harley E. Fuller's after battle "Report of Operations of the 110th Infantry Combat Team 16-18 December 1944" has finally surfaced. He states, "The 110th received about 65 percent of officers and enlisted men after coming to Luxembourg." This fits well with my recollection that our platoon in front of Marnach was still 40 percent under strength and ill prepared when the Bulge started. We were no better or worse off than any other 110th rifle platoon at that time. Things were pretty equal.

After dark on December 16, German forces appeared with 33 Panther tanks--about equal to the number of our rifles. Never mind we had no ammo. Additionally, although the regiment was in the center of the line at a focal point of the German drive, and upset their time table, the 110th Regiment never received a unit citation.

L. D. "Whitey" Schaller
28 INF 110 INF B

GETTING IT RIGHT

In the May issue on page 9, somebody got my outfit wrong. It is supposed to be 776th Field Artillery Battalion, not 726th as you have. Must have been my fault--I don't write too good. Can you run it again sometime?

Victor J. Dubaldo
776 FA BN

[It doesn't matter whose fault it was--we're happy to make the correction.]

I'M JUST GLAD TO BE ALIVE

As a veteran of the Battle of the Bulge, and a life member of our organization, I would like to write a letter to the editor.

I was in Company A of the 23rd Regiment of the 2nd Infantry Division until the war ended in May 1945. After the war I served for another year as a drummer in the 2nd Infantry Division Band.

In Vol. XIX, No. 2, of *The Bulge Bugle*, page 7, a lot is said about when the Battle of the Bulge ended. Historian Charles MacDonald was my company commander for a time. MacDonald has the "official" closing date of the Bulge as January 28. I loved Captain MacDonald. He was the kindest officer I ever met.

I cannot understand why there are such divergent dates as to the end of the Battle of the Bulge. As I re-read my own notes from which I wrote a journal, and remember vividly the April 14-15 battle to take Merseberg, an oil-refining city in Germany, I wonder why some have set earlier dates for the end of the Battle of the Bulge.

(continued on next page)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

of the Battle of the Ardennes) played host to several members of the 11th Armored Division Association in Clervaux, Luxembourg. During his speech to our members in Clervaux Castle, Camille recalled our division's dead who died in northern Luxembourg during the Bulge, and paid tribute to all of our men who fought for the liberation of the people of the Grand Duchy at the end of January, 1945.

In his speech during the annual Memorial Day Ceremony at the American Military Cemetery in Hamm, Luxembourg, on May 27, 2000, Luxembourg's Defense Minister Charles Goerens likewise singled out the 11th Armored Division for its role in the liberation of northern Luxembourg at the end of January of 1945, and paid tribute to the men of our division who sacrificed their lives for the freedom of the people of Luxembourg during the Bulge.

And on June 1, 2000, in Ettelbruck, Luxembourg, Paul Heinrich and John Thurmes (the President and Vice President of Luxembourg's GREG) also recalled the role that our division played in the Bulge in northern Luxembourg in the last week of January, 1945. In his maiden speech in English, Mr. Heinrich stated that the people of Luxembourg would always remember the men of the 11th Armored Division, and the work that they did to restore democracy in northern Luxembourg 55 years ago as members of General Patton's Third Army.

At Clervaux, Hamm and Ettelbruck, the work of the men of the 11th Armored Division is remembered to this day. And in the hearts of the people of Luxembourg, the work of the "Thunderbolts" will always be remembered.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Patrick J. Kearney
11 ARMDD

TELLING THE CHILDREN

In January, 2000, I received a call from Mrs. Boufford, a third grade teacher at St. Casimir School in Manchester [New Hampshire], who asked if I would come to the class and tell the children about WWII and the Battle of the Bulge.

On February 11, I went to her class at 8:30 a.m. and prior to my talk, I had my granddaughter who is in the class lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance and also a short prayer.

I showed the children a Nazi flag and pictures I took. Also pictures of Hitler and Eva. I have a bayonet but didn't dare bring it to the school. We had a question and answer period and they kept me busy with questions. It was a very rewarding morning for me.

I would like to see more of our veterans going to their schools, the children are hungry for this history.

Last week I received 23 hand made cards the children had made with their own sayings on the cards--it brought tears to my eyes.

I also gave each child a copy of the history of the Battle of the Bulge.

Clayton A. Pare
666 FA BN SVC

GET IT RIGHT

This note is just to correct the mistake in placing me in the 731st Field Artillery Battalion. [Bulge Bugle, "Blowing One's Horn," May 2000, page 6] I was never in the 731st. My unit was the 802nd Field Artillery Battalion, which was the unit I was writing about. But you placed me as follows: J. D. Winstead, 731st Field Artillery Battalion. I was referring to the achievements of the 731st when I asked for space to blow my own horn for the 802nd Field Artillery Battalion.

J. D. Winstead
802 FA BN

[Sorry. We try, but we don't always get it right.]

The time has come to stop beating our heads against stone walls under the illusion that we have been appointed policeman to the human race.

WALTER LIPPMANN

Luxembourg Prince Crowned

LUXEMBOURG—Crown Prince Henri was sworn in as Luxembourg's new monarch when his father, Grand Duke Jean, abdicated the throne of one of Europe's smallest and wealthiest countries.

A signature and brief embrace between father and son was all it took to bring to an end a 35-year reign during which Luxembourg turned itself from an industrial backwater into a center for financial services and satellite communications.

Henri, 45, pledged allegiance in parliament to become Luxembourg's sixth grand duke since 1890, when the modern monarchy was established. Afterward, he and his Cuban-born wife, Grand Duchess Maria Teresa, strolled around the block, waving to spectators and shaking outstretched hands.

Jean's decision to step down at the age of 79 followed a precedent set by his mother, Grand Duchess Charlotte, who abdicated in 1964.

Overshadowing the festivities was the fact that Prince Guillaume, 37, Henri's youngest brother, remained in serious condition in a Paris hospital after a car crash in September. Parades, concerts and fireworks were canceled or rescheduled.

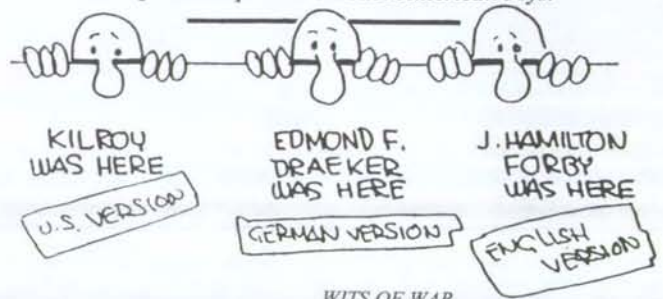
(News Services)

Up Front

with Willie & Joe



"We're just a coupla red-blooded American boys."



MEMBERS SPEAK OUT

JOHN BEALE WATKINS, 179TH COMBAT ENGINEER BATTALION, XX CORPS, 3 USA, would like to hear from anyone in his unit. Write to him at: 1827 Edgewood Road, Baltimore, Maryland 21234-5207.

Jean-Marc Hauglustaine writes to see if someone can provide further information on the soldier whose grave was adopted by his father. The soldier's name is **HUGH McGRADY**, who belonged to **2ND INFANTRY DIVISION, 3RD TANK DESTROYER GROUP, HEADQUARTERS COMPANY**. Hugh was killed in action on December 22, 1944 and is buried in Henri-Chapelle. If you can help, write to Jean-Marc at: rue des Alouettes, 31; B-4801 Stenberg, Belgium.

JOHN GOOD, 83RD DIVISION, 453RD AAA AW BATTALION, would like to hear from anyone who served in the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) at the University of Syracuse during the years of 1943-44. Write to John at: 3271 Cleveland Street, Paris, Texas 75460.

Gaston Vandermeerssche is trying to find information on the American (1st U.S. Army) and British soldiers who liberated him from the Prison of Luttringhauser (Ruhr Region, near Dusseldorf). His date of liberation was May 8, 1945. If you can provide any information write to Gaston at: 3610 Bayou Circle, Longboat Key, Florida 34228.

GUS EPPLE, 345TH INFANTRY, 87TH INFANTRY DIVISION, is interested in receiving a copy of the history of his regiment as mentioned in Mitchell Kaidy's article in the May newsletter. If you know where he can get one, write to him at: 43 Route 47 South, Cape May Court House, New Jersey 08210.

NORMAN WASSERMAN, 286TH FIELD OBSERVATION BATTALION, would like information on the Bulge units who were awarded the Bronze Star and how to go about making application. If you can help, write to Norman at: 75 Henry Street, Brooklyn, New York 11201

HANS M. SIVERTS, 4TH CONVALESCENT HOSPITAL, 1ST U.S. ARMY, would like to hear from anyone who may have served with him. Write to Hans at: 8611 North 18th Avenue, Phoenix, Arizona 85021.

Associate member Stan Bellens corresponded with **ALBERT N. COLLINS, 327TH GLIDER INFANTRY**, for several years after the war, but eventually lost touch. Stan has discovered that Albert was killed in an airplane crash January 1, 1950, and is buried in the New Silver Brook Cemetery in Anderson, South Carolina. He would like to have a couple of pictures of the grave and will be happy to reimburse the photographer for his expenses. If you can help, contact Stan: 4, Rue de la Trompette; B4680 Hermee; Belgium.

WALTER P. CARR, 80TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 318TH INFANTRY REGIMENT, COMPANY E, is preparing a written account of his combat infantry experiences. He would like to know if there is someone who could provide him with

some further information on the cut off and seal off operations of General Middleton's VIII Corps' 8.5 mile advance to Houffalize. He has referenced the following books: *The Ardennes* and *A Time for Trumpets*, but finds little. Do you have information or could recommend a book with details? If so, write to Walter at: 1811 W 3rd Ct, Russellville, Arkansas 72801-4733.

WILLIAM GOODHUE, 612TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION, needs help! Congressman James McGovern has written this office in his endeavors to help William with his claims for his medals earned in WWII. William's records were destroyed during the St. Louis Records Office fire and he is unable to verify his claim. If you knew William or can help in any way, write to the Congressman's office as follows: Linda Hickman, 1 Park Street, Attleboro, Massachusetts 02771.

Anette Dutz, who lives in LaCalamine, Belgium, is searching for her father. Anette was born December 2, 1945. Her mother's name is Resi Dutz. Her father's first name is William. She does not know the last name. He served with **15TH ARTILLERY DIVISION, 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION, OR 26TH INFANTRY**. William gave Resi a ring with a red stone. If you can help, write Anette at Krickelstein 36, 4720 LaCalamine, Belgium.

CARL FELDMEIER, DET E4, COMPANY C, 2ND MILITARY GOVERNMENT REGIMENT, last stationed in Kassel, Germany, formerly various Civil Affairs Units, would appreciate hearing from anyone with his former organizations. Write to him at 1819 Chateau DuMont Drive, Florissant, Missouri 63031.

Steve Kirman, son of **GEORGE T. KIRMANIDES, 45TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 157TH INFANTRY**, would appreciate hearing from anyone who may have served with his father. George was killed in action March 29, 1945. He may have been an ambulance driver and was killed when he drove over a mine. Write to Steve at: 4818 Sheffield Drive, Newport Richey, Florida 34655.

JOHN KALAGIDIS, HEAVY FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION, 79TH GROUP, 552ND FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION, A BATTERY would like to hear from anyone who served with him. His address is: 2545 - 58th Street, NE, Canton, Ohio 44721.

Donna Dutcher has some photographs which belong to her cousin who was in the ETO. Her cousin was in the **705TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION**, but no one from that unit seems to recognize the men in the photo. Names on the back of the photo are: "My Buddy" **RAUSCH, LT. JOE BLESSINGER** (from New Jersey), **ERNIE HEATH**, and **RICH TARNAU (?)** (from Syracuse). The photo further says: "Our first shaves in the ETO, ten days after the Mosselle River Crossing." If you know these guys, write and let Donna know. She will be happy to send them the photos. Donna's address is: 23 Quarry Ridge, New Preston, Connecticut 06777.

(continued on next page)

MEMBERS SPEAK OUT

Andre Meurisse, of Belgium, sends each of you his very warmest greetings for a happy holiday season.

John C. VanDruff writes to see if someone can help him find his high school teacher. **PERCY MARTIN** taught John English at Phoenix Union High School 1951-53. If you know Percy, write to John at: 902 135th Street Court, N.W., Gig Harbor, Washington 98332.

G. Stephen Minaudo is trying to learn more about his cousin, **FRANK COLUMBO** from New York. He doesn't know the unit he served in but he was killed in action during the BoB and his body was returned to a cemetery on Long Island. If you have any ideas to help him, write to him at: 159 Middle Street, Portsmouth, New Hampshire 03801-4304.

MALCOLM M. CHRISTIAN 1123RD ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION, HEADQUARTERS COMPANY, would like to hear from anyone who may have served with him. Write to him at: 200 Tarrytown Drive, Richmond, Virginia 23229.7321.

GOLDEN TRIANGLE CHAPTER



Members of the Golden Triangle meet in Mt. Dora, Florida. They are left to right: Joe A. Krep, 4th Infantry Division; Milt Bartelt, 5th Division; Max Bermudez, 4th Armored; William Carmon, 4th Armored; Sam Davis, 8th Armored; Harold Ledbetter, 30th Division; W. A. MacDougall, 99th Division, Irvin Null, 35th Division, Jack Pease, 3rd Armored, and Elrod Pitzer (President of the Chapter), 4th Armored.

"What's for breakfast?"

"Powdered eggs."

"How do the chickens lay 'em?"

—Adolf Hitler—My Part in his Downfall

NO NEWS ON POW MEDAL

We previously announced the availability of a POW Medal and listed a telephone number to call. The telephone number turned out to be a FAX number and even if you FAXed it you got no response. We have not been able to determine the availability of this medal and have been advised that it does not exist. If we hear anything further, we will publish the information for you. ■

Propaganda
Ministry



Belgium Looks At War (1945)

FLORIDA VETERANS DAY PARADE

Central Florida area BoB veterans are invited to march and ride in the November 11, 2000, Veterans Day Parade. The parade will honor veterans of all wars and will be the first such event held in 18 years. WWII era vehicles will be available for Bulge veterans who are unable to march. Marchers will be accompanied by a band and snow covered float. Following the parade veterans will gather at the GI monument in Lake Eola Park for refreshments and comradeship. For details contact Harry Meisel, 1329 Alfred Drive, Orlando, Florida 32810. Telephone: 407-647-4672. E-mail: smcatherine@msn.com.

BEST WISHES & A NEW ADDRESS FOR TILLY KIMMES

Many of you know Tilly Kimmes. She sends you her best wishes and wants you to know that she had a new address. It is:

Kimmes-Hansen Mathilde

Centre Saint Jean de la Croix

30 Rue St Zithe

L-2763 Luxembourg, Europe.

TUCSON CHAPTER PARTICIPATES IN MASSING OF THE COLORS

The Tucson Chapter of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge participated in a Massing of the Colors and Service of Remembrance on April 15, 2000.



Pictured in the front row: R. Gremlitz, Chapter Secretary, and Dr. C. Hornisher, Chapter Surgeon. Back row: V. Bloomer, Chapter President, and S. Sharp, Vice President. ■

•ATTENTION---ATTENTION•

HOW TO REPLACE LOST MILITARY MEDALS/RECORDS

To obtain lost decorations or awards from WWII, write:

Commander (ARPERCEN)

9700 Page Blvd

St. Louis, Missouri 63132-5260

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

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

Commander (ARPERCEN)

ATT: DARP-PAS-EVS

9700 Page Blvd

St. Louis, MO 63132-5260

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

Commander (ARPERCEN)

ATT: DARP-PAS-EAW

9700 Page Blvd.

St. Louis, MO 63132-5260

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

[You will need to exercise patience. It will take time.

Don't forget to send copy of your discharge.]

THE SERVICE COMPANY

By Carroll E. Austin

3519th Ordnance Medium Maintenance Company

Automotive

[The following article appeared in The Ardennes Campaign--41 Days in Hell, which is the newsletter of the Northern Indiana Chapter of VBOB.]

Of all that has been written about WWII, little has been said about the role service companies played in helping to bring this conflict to a close. Those of us who served through that era are aware that men on the front lines would have lasted but a short time if had not been for the efforts of the men who served in the rear. I recall having read somewhere that it took three or four men in the rear to keep one man on the front lines.

Someone had to move the clothing, food, gasoline, ammunition, vehicles and tons of items too numerous to mention, plus keeping the equipment in repair. I served in one of those repair units. My unit was an ordnance company, known as the 3519th Medium Automotive Maintenance Company. We served under the command of General George S. Patton, Jr., Third Army.

Our primary objective was to repair vehicles from the lowly Jeep to the six by six trucks, thus the description "Medium Automotive Maintenance Co." In addition to the automotive mechanics, six of our approximately 130 man company were "Small Arms Repairmen." I was one of the six. We repaired 45 caliber pistols, Carbine M-1 Rifle, Springfield Rifle, Sub-Machine Gun, Browning Automatic Rifle, plus the 30 and 50 caliber machine guns. We were good at what we did because we were well trained.

In addition to the training I received with my own unit, I spent eight weeks at the Army Ordnance Proving Grounds, Small Arms School, Aberdeen, Maryland. When we finished there we were able to disassemble and reassemble any small arm piece, blindfolded. Although we were capable, I don't recall ever being asked to assemble a piece in the dark.

Even though our unit was primarily vehicle repair, we were called on to do other things that were essentially necessary. As an example, after the ground troops got a toe hold on the French soil, the infantry was losing men to a fine wire stretched tightly across main roads. As men were traveling unsuspectingly in an open Jeep, roaring down a road, they were decapitated by the tight wire. After a few of those incidents our unit was called on to weld steel bars with a sharp blade built into a hook. The blade was welded to the front bumper of the Jeep. As the Jeep traveled down the road, the hook would catch and cut the wire. This bar idea was the brainstorm of some lowly GI. Their ingenuity was uncanny.

In another incident, soon after landing on French soil, the German soldiers were hiding behind hedgerows and pinning our infantrymen down. Some GI thought up the idea of welding blades onto the front of tanks, much like a bulldozer. The blade cut through the hedgerow allowing our infantrymen to cross to the next hedgerow and to the next.

There were times that our men repaired half-tracks and other vehicles but most of the vehicles were Jeeps, weapons carriers and six by sixes.

In the lull before the Battle of the Bulge, we were located in Nancy, France. One day four or five six-by-sixes came roaring into our area, all loaded with damaged small arms covered with mud and blood, which had been picked up from the villages and open fields after a recent battle. They were brought to us for repair. We took every M-1 and Carbine apart, piece by piece, cleaned them and replaced parts. After reassembling, we fired 8 rounds of ammunition through each before returning them to service. Generals Eisenhower and Patton just happened to make an inspection of our unit at the time. We received a Presidential Citation for the efficient manner in which we conducted our work. The citation recognized the entire company, not just the small arms division.

Ordnance units were only one of the many service companies that contributed so much to the soldier on the front line and to help bring this war to a conclusion. ■

Recruiting officer: What were you before the war?
Standard answer: Happy.

FORTRESS HOTEL

By Bill Shadell

4th Infantry Division

[The battered hostelry in little Berdorf is a monument to the spectacular marksmanship of 54 Yanks who battled there five days to stop Rundstedt's drive.]

Luxembourg--There isn't much left of Berdorf, a little resort town up in the hills north of Luxembourg City--just a few battered buildings, the usual rubble, some wrecked tanks and half tracks. On the edge of town there's part of a first floor still standing--the first floor and foundation of what was once the Parke Hotel. But in Berdorf and to the men of the 4th Infantry Division that's a monument--a monument to 54 men who lived and fought there for five days, and ruined the Germans' chances of driving on Luxembourg City itself.

The Grande Parke was a five-story building, the pride of Berdorf, and sturdily built, like Luxembourgers themselves. Turned into a fortress, it lived out the role like its medieval forerunners, giving away a floor a day under the relentless pounding of mortars and artillery. Each day, with monotonous regularity, the Americans moved their snipers and observers down another floor until by the fifth day their only shelter was the basement.

The miracle of the Parke hotel is the slight wounding of only three men. Almost miraculous was the morale of the men throughout those five days--explained by two factors still outstanding in the minds of officers and men. One centers around a cook named Casey, with a slogan, "Chow at eight, twelve, and four." The other was their own deadly marksmanship, appreciated now for the first time, and practiced against an estimated three battalions thrown against them. An Irishman speaking Yiddish to his German captors, a hunter of the Adirondacks practicing running-deer shots, a jeep driver roaming the enemy-held woods for seven days. Casey, the cook, and 50 other heroes--all these elements add up to another saga among American fighting men.

Berdorf was one of six fortified villages held by the 16th Infantry Regiment, spread out over a 12-mile front. On December 16, D-day of the big German counter-offensive, a newly-equipped Volksgrenadier division poured out of the Siegfried Line and across the Sauer River, with the intention of widening the base for the bulge. The City of Luxembourg offered a road network to the west and the south. German intelligence knew all about the depleted regiment that was using this "easiest route to Luxembourg" as a rest area, licking its wounds from the Hurtgen Forest ordeal.

F Company had received a few reinforcements and was assigned to the tip of the sector just west of Echternach. Berdorf was its town, the Parke Hotel the headquarters. Its three outposts circled to the north, but at some distance. They were manned in turn by three platoons, dividing the watch among their limited numbers.

The artillery barrage on the morning of the 16th cut communications to those outposts. Lieutenant Dick McConnell, of Utica, New York, found a road, he ran head-on into a column of Germans, marching as if on parade. He surprised them as much as himself. His driver skidded to a stop, leaped toward a shed on the left. McConnell dashed off to the right in the hope of making the nearest house. The Germans started firing at him, but he got inside and never stopped until he hit the third, and top, floor.

The krauts were soon in the house and looking for him. He fought Germans since D-Day, but here the odds were too great. His German was bad, but his Yiddish pretty good. The Irishman had sold papers on the streets of Miami and had learned enough to give it a try. The Heinies understood, all right, that he was coming down, and promised not to shoot. It was the first American officer they had seen, and they gathered around as if he were a man from Mars.

His Yiddish proved more valuable. It seems the Germans were not sure about the command post. It was supposed to be in Berdorf, and McConnell assured them it was. About 12 of them started out with McConnell, depending on his directions. They became suspicious when

they neared the Parke Hotel and saw Americans in the windows, but they had two squads backing them up, and the lieutenant, they thought, would call for a surrender.

McConnell saw those Americans, too, and was close enough now to hear them.

"Are all those your prisoners?" someone shouted.

"Hell, no: I'm the prisoner," McConnell replied.

It was a tough decision for the CO, Lieutenant John Leake, of Keokuk, Iowa. He couldn't allow all those krauts to come on when they were backed up by a force outnumbering his.

It was McConnell's life against the rest of his company. It was the defense of Berdorf, as well. He ordered his men to get set. "Pick your targets, men. It's just like shooting ducks in the gallery. Squeeze 'em off and don't waste ammunition."

McConnell heard that, too, and understood. For the benefit of his Heinie escort, he could only shout, "Don't shoot! Don't shoot! And don't miss!"

Inside the hotel, Corp. Robert Hancock, the mail orderly from Cordova, Alabama--a tall, lean railsplitter--was already picking his target--the kraut next to McConnell. "They were only some 25 yards away now," he explained to us. "I drew a bead on him. I could see the lieutenant's shoulders and Jerry's left pocket. I held on that pocket. I just let go and smacked me a Jerry. I looked around and there weren't no more to shoot at."

"A tricky shot!" we asked.

"Aw, I guess not. I had a few inches to spare. Yuh see, I was raised in the mountains and practic'ly cut my teeth on a gun barrel."

To McConnell, it sounded like one rifle, but Germans were down all around him. "I found I was the only one that wasn't hit," he told us. "I ran into a near-by barn just as our men spotted the other German squads and opened up on them. We killed 33 Germans in those few minutes. There was only one wounded--that was the sergeant who talked Yiddish with me. I picked him up and carried him into the hotel, and was dam glad to be with my men again."

That was the start of the 5-day siege. That also was the start of a long session of fancy shooting.

The story of that siege--the acts, the feelings, the morale of the men--we learned by spending several days and nights with them, listening to them, jotting down their marvelous quotes. There were only 33 left in the company when the outposts were overrun. The build-up to 54 was the result of stragglers. They got out without losing a man, but immediately they set up a line to the south that proved costly. That's why there were only a few, comparatively, to talk with. There were some who never reached the hotel that first day, but wandered from three to six days in the Heinie infested woods. Those were the only survivors from the outposts. There was also Lieutenant McConnell's driver, Corp. J. M. Mandichak, of Cresson, Pennsylvania, who dashed from the jeep to the nearest shed, and thereby started a seven-day personal tour of enemy positions.

Mandichak hid in the barn in some straw, while the Germans prowled all over the place. Giving up the hunt, some of them parked in the barn for the day--better than fighting--and annoyingly smoked while Mandichak craved for a drag. That night he decided to get out. He made his way towards the woods and stayed there until morning to keep from stumbling into Germans. He thought he might make it to the outposts, having no idea as to the proportions of this German drive. The next night he got to the river and into one of the caves of the high cliffs. Germans were seen around there, too, so he moved on. That wandering went on for seven days. He lived on potatoes stolen from the German caches, kept bumping into enemy patrols, but somehow managed to duck out of sight.

All this time he was learning the terrain and noting artillery positions. When he finally worked his way to our lines, he was able to make a valuable report. His discovery of our lines was due entirely, he avows, to his hunger for a smoke. He detected American cigarette smoke, in contrast to the German

(Continued on next page)

FORTRESS HOTEL

cigarettes he had been smelling since the first day in the barn.

Sgt. Edward Potts, of Hudson Falls, New York, was one of the three to rejoin his company from Outpost No. 1. That was 10 days before the German attack. What happened to No. 2 Outpost can be gathered from his account. The terrific 24 hour battle he heard about Outpost No. 3 is the only testimony to a heroic stand.

When No. 1 lost its contact with headquarters, Sgt. Potts started out with two men to check the wires. On the way, they heard the chatter of a burp gun, their first indication that Germans were following up the heavy barrage of early morning. Then they spotted five Germans, but chose to avoid them to get on to No. 2 Post. Within a hundred yards of that post, someone yelled for them to get down. Sensing trouble, they asked for the Lieutenant. "Come around to the right!" was the reply in good English. The first move, however, brought a spray of automatic fire. The three worked their way back to their post to notify the others. It was decided they would try to make their way to headquarters, dividing into groups of three, and each group for itself.

Sgt. Potts' group came out near the main road only to find Germans all around. One kraut saw them, started to give an alarm so they shot him. But that shot drew the attention of at least a company off to the left. They would have been in trouble then, had it not been for the enemy artillery opening up at the same time and shelling its own men.

There were three days and nights of the same sort of thing. During that time they saw one of their own lieutenants from the outpost, and three men, taken prisoner. They wounded an artillery observer and captured the medic aiding him, collected the maps of the officer, and finally hit the road to Consdorf and our lines.

Meanwhile, the Parke Hotel, now completely encircled, was being attacked night and day by waves of Germans. The men learned they could shoot and kill as far as they could see. W. C. Schumann, of New Rochelle, New York, proved that to them, and there were others who tried to follow his example.

Schumann, "the best shot in the whole outfit," was one of Casey's cooks. He had pretty well made the rounds of an infantry company--mortar man, machine gunner, rifleman, and now cook. He proved, however, that he knew the rifle business best of all.

He had started shooting when just a kid, in the National Rifle Association's junior rifle program. He qualified all right, and then his dad started taking him on hunting trips. To keep in practice, he fixed up his own rifle range in the basement at home. He also got friendly with police of his home town and fired on their pistol range.

He was at work in the hotel kitchen when McConnell showed up with the first Germans. It didn't take him long to borrow an M1 and get in on the shooting. The first German he saw, besides the dead ones lying out there near the hotel, was running across a field about 800 yards away. "I just ran her all the way up for elevation," he said, "because I didn't know the zero. My first shot was high; the second one was right on. I caught him and he stayed down. The next I saw was a group of about 15 with a machine gun at the edge of the woods. Two of us opened up and scattered them, but five stayed there--and were still there the next day. The others we spotted later when they started firing that gun from the loft of a barn. The range was 550 yards.

We interrupted right here when he started talking about specific yardage. But we couldn't stop him. He explained his training with the mortars had helped his range estimating, but, most of all hunting. Lieutenant McConnell backed him up with the assurance that this shooting was all observed, and so did the 12 or 15 men around the stove that evening.

Back on the subject of that German machine gun, he continued, "My first shot was low and chipped concrete off the edge of the window. The second shot went in, and then, knowing I had the range, I fired six more. We never had any more fire from that window. By now I had glasses, so I watched a suspicious movement in a building 600 yards [always those positive figures] down the street. After about two hours of watching, I could make out some shadows in the window. I loaded

up again and fired in there. Don't know if I hit anything, but I never saw any more shadows. Another machine gun was spotted along a hedgerow. We just turned one of our machine guns on that, and when the crew started down the hedgerow, I got in two shots and got two more Germans.

"Those glasses were a big help. I watched another window in a farmhouse 650 yards down the road. I finally made out a shape in a window and then picked up the reflection of glasses. He must have been an observer for that artillery fire knocking us around."

"I kept my eye on him while I was bringing up the M1, fired one shot and saw him grab for a curtain. Another shot and he lurched hard, then curtain and kraut went down."

Schumann was talking faster than we could take notes on a typewriter, but we let him go on. We've listened to many a GI rifleman but this sounded more like McBride's "A Rifleman Went to War" than anything we ever heard.

"My best shot though, was on another window in a house only 400 yards from us. There was a Heinie in the window, leaning up against the frame drinking coffee. I guess it had a grating of some kind, like bars over the window. I'm really proud of that shot. You see, it was at an angle. By the time you figured that out, the window got pretty narrow. I took my time on that one, and that Heinie just stayed there talking, and with that arm crooked. When I put that shot in there, he fell toward the grating. Then grating and kraut came right out the window."

There were others with sniper ambitions besides Schumann. Sgt. Norman J. Fina, of Detroit, Michigan, was in on the volley that saved McConnell's neck. Then his first long shot was a fluke, so he said, "I saw two krauts digging a foxhole about 1,200 yards from the hotel. I just thought I would scare them, so I ran my elevation up as far as it would go, rested across the window sill and fired. I thought I hit one. The next morning when I looked out there again with glasses, sure enough, one was still lying there.

Sgt. Joseph Sinnott, of Baltimore, Maryland, spent most of his time going from one window and from one room to another, carrying a tommy gun and watching for those early-morning and late-afternoon rushes. Once he tried a shot with an M1, just out of curiosity. It was set for 600 yards, and this kraut was about 1,000 yards, he estimated. He ran it up 15 more clicks, fired and got him. He's sure of hits at 600 yards when the krauts were running between buildings, trying to work up close for another rush.

George Morey, of Gloversville, New York, telling his part of the McConnell incident, kidded Sgt. Carmine Colageo, of New York City, about that volley. Morey claims the sergeant insisted on picking off the German sergeant, and then only nicked him in the seat of the pants, while the others got sure kills.

There's much more, of course, to the story than the long-range shooting. The shorter ranges proved that aimed shots would pile up Germans as well as machine guns, and without any waste of ammunition. Ammunition was an item, too, as Sgt. Sinnott found out in running the gauntlet to the garage, 100 yards away, and back again that first night. He and four men made it back with all the ammunition they could carry, but that was the last attempt. Machine guns firing at them proved that the rest of the stores would have to be forgotten.

The only other attempt to get supplies was during the first day. Thomas Elkington, of Adams, Wisconsin, volunteered to go to battalion over the enemy controlled road. He with two others made the trip and returned. After completing the round trip, they tried another one, this time to take out nine wounded among the stragglers that had come in before the encirclement. This time the Germans were on to them. The return was only with the help of a tank and a half-track as escort, all fitted with rations and small arms ammunition.

Another sortie, before things tightened down completely, was made in an effort to link up with some of our tanks on the other side of town. Sgt. R. V. Sifuentes, of Del Rio, Texas, started from the hotel with eight men. They met the tanks

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FORTRESS HOTEL

and started working down the main street in an attempt to get at machine guns set up at the intersection.

With four men working each side just ahead of the lead tank, Sgt. Sifuentes and Leslie Martin, of Indianapolis, Indiana, found themselves out in front. The tank was holding back for fear of German bazookas, and rightly so, for, as the sergeant and Martin ducked into a house to get away from the cross fire, the tank took a bazooka hit. The Germans then rushed the house. Sifuentes got the lead German with his tommy gun while Martin was finding a hole at the back of the house for a get-away. That was a tight squeeze, literally. By taking off their helmets, they got their heads through, and told us, with the Jerries right on their tails, there was never any question of getting the rest of themselves through. In a wild dash, they made it back to the hotel to stay until the fifth day.

In addition to the artillery and mortar fire which knocked off one floor a day of the company's fortress, there was the continuing attack of an estimated three battalions of infantry. Those attacks came from all sides and by every device known to the book. The rushes were usually in the haze of early morning, in late afternoon or at night. Krauts were knocked off within a few feet of windows or doors.

Pole charges, bazookas, grenades through the windows were all the order of the day. Sgt. Willis Gervis, of Augusta, Georgia, saw three Germans coming at the window in one of those charges. He fired the BAR point blank at one; then the thing jammed. He grabbed a rifle from Paul Bernard, of Mt. Vernon, Illinois, and knocked down the two others. In the excitement, he yelled in Bernard's ear, "Why aren't you firing, you damned fool?"

Bernard's reply calmed him down. "I can't. You've got my rifle."

T-5 Joseph Ferner, of Grandville, Michigan, fired rifle grenades at eight Germans waiting in an open shed. Two Germans ran out and some riflemen in the hotel got them. Corp. Hancock, the Alabama kid, also remembers those attacks at close quarters. He could hear one German under the window shouting, "Comzieout!" In a conversational mood, he replied "Comzieout, hell! You ain't got anything I want to see! and with that dropped a grenade."

Jeremiah Casey, of Boston, the cook, was the star performer, receiving the popularity vote of everyone. He was the big morale builder, never failing to serve a hot meal--and never missing a fight. With all the windows of his kitchen blown out, he managed to serve hot biscuits. When the kitchen range was demolished by a shell, he managed to dash out that night to the supply room, 100 yards away, to bring back the field range. Plaster fell on his workshop and got mixed up with the chow. He spent the rest of the afternoon apologizing for the poor meal. It was his idea to tap the hot-water boilers of the heating system to provide the only water supply. When he wasn't firing a rifle, it was only because he was bringing hot coffee to the men who were firing. But the picture they all carry of Casey is the picture of a guy with a big spoon in his left hand, a rifle in his right--bringing the rifle and spoon up together to fire a shot, the spoon sticking up high past the trigger guard, then turning around between shots to stir the pots.

Casey was one of the three wounded only slightly. Evacuated by force to the cellar for a few hours, he bobbed up again in the thick of the fight, one arm in a sling, the other furiously throwing hand grenades.

On the night of the fifth day, those 54 men got orders to pull out. They ran the gauntlet of some 800 yards, to tanks and infantry that had come to within the point of retrieving them. Their luck still held. They brought out their three wounded without further casualties. They then set up a line around Consdorf to fight some more, holding that line with the help of engineers, MPs, and mortar men until a relief regiment took over. ■

BULGE REENACTMENT

24-28 January 2001

The federation has announced that the annual Battle of the Bulge Reenactment will be held again this coming January, 2001, at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania, near Annville, Pennsylvania--just off of Interstate 81 about 25 miles north of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

The cost this year will be \$55.00 for a bunk in actual World War II barracks and breakfast and dinner and entertainment on Saturday, 27 January 2001. If you would like, you may arrive any time after 1800 hours on Wednesday, 24 January 2001, or any of the subsequent days of Thursday, Friday or Saturday. You may come on any of those days. There will be hospitality, videos, and good old fashion camaraderie that only veterans know how to show. A good time is had by all and it gives you an opportunity to view the reenactor barracks, both Allied and German as they transform them into what barracks living was 56 years or more ago. Last year there were over 1,400 reenactors and 120 veterans attending.

If you would like a registration form, please send a stamped self-addressed, long (#10) envelope to John D. Bowen, 613 Chichester Lane, Silver Spring, Maryland 20904-3331. Registration for veterans closes on 31 December, 2000. ■

WORLD WAR II MONUMENT PAMPHLET AVAILABLE

By the time you receive this newsletter the ground-breaking for the World War II Monument should have been accomplished. We have secured a supply of pamphlets which contain the architect's final designs. If you would like one, send VBOB a self-addressed, stamped (with 33 cent stamp), #10 (wide letter size) envelope. ■

DON'T FORGET OUR NEW YEAR'S TOAST

In tribute to all who served in the Battle of the Bulge, let's all drink a toast again this year (the fourth year). The choice of beverage is yours. Again this year the time will be: Noon--Pacific time; 1:00 p.m.--Mountain time; 2:00 p.m. Central time; and 3:00 p.m. Eastern time on New Year's Day.

It's a way we can all be together again, even it is only in our thoughts. We shared so much so many years ago, we should remember those we were with and be grateful for each and every one. HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES. ■

COULD YOUR DUES BE DUE?

Check the mailing label used to mail this newsletter to you. The date above your last name is the date your dues were due. Please save us the money and time we will have to spend to send you a dues reminder. ■

513TH AIRBORNE WITHDRAWS

By John G. Westover

Most veterans of the Battle of the Bulge will remember the exploits of the 101st Airborne Division at Bastogne and the valiant fighting of the 82nd Airborne near St. Vith. Few people realize that there was a third American airborne division fighting in the Ardennes--the 17th.

The 17th had been the school troops at Fort Benning and were the "cream of the elite." When the airborne instruction wound down, the 17th was shipped to England and was thrown into the Battle of the Bulge on January 2, 1945. The site of their initial engagement of the enemy was in the Monty--Mande-St-Etienne-Flamionville-Flamierge area west of Bastogne.

The men and units of the 17th entered battle immediately on their arrival but they fought not as green troops but as the professionals which they were. The 513th Parachute Regiment, under Colonel James Coutts, made attack after attack under conditions as bitter as any in the Ardennes. The regiment was successful in capturing a number of objectives while taking very heavy casualties from German tanks, artillery, and infantry. The success of the 513th, however, put the regiment ahead of the units on their flanks until eventually, the casualties and lack of ammunition and support, led to an order for the regiment to withdraw from its farthest gains.

The following verbatim narrative is the concluding section of the after action report written by me in Flamierge, January 14-16, 1945:

"At 1400, a radio on which repair men had been working feverishly all morning, contacted Regiment. The radio was in a window--the only place where sufficient volume could be obtained. The arty FO began to adjust, more by sound than sight, in the storm, when three rounds of arty hit the building knocking the walls down on the set. The radio operator and operations sergeant were wounded, and three civilians talking with [Major Morris] Anderson (3d Bn CO) were killed. Anderson, himself, was LWI. At this time Anderson's personal operator, PFC Corley H. Wright volunteered to run the telephone line thru to the rear and make repairs when it was necessary. The job was believed impossible as the line was laid across open fields and the enemy tanks were astride it. Wright, himself, didn't believe that he could make it yet he started on his mission crawling slowly forward along the line under fire until he had been wounded three times--through the chest, shoulder, and nose. He told Anderson on a check call that he was going on as long as he could, but Anderson ordered him to return. Wright withdrew and continued to help despite his wounds. He never left the battle and marched out with the Bn. The firing continued heavy until dark (1730) when all of the tanks withdrew except two which maneuvered so they could fire down the main street of the town and establish a "killing ground." The men got around this by crawling across the street under the fire. At 2100 this direct fire ceased, but mortar and indirect arty fire continued all night. During the entire day Anderson never had any doubt of his ability to hold the town.

"Coutts had lost communication with 2nd Bn until they withdrew to the large forest between Millomont and River du Pape. The Regt was too weak to hold off any strong enemy attack. Div moved the 507 behind the 513, and [Maj] Gen [William H.] Miley ordered 3 Bn to be withdrawn. This was not possible as communications were non-existent. After dark two 3 man patrols from the Regt S-2 section were sent out to deliver the message. The first patrol got to the buildings just short of town and found them occupied by the enemy. They therefore returned with the word that the Bn was gone, the town was in enemy hands. Enroute back they met the second patrol and gave them this information. Both patrols returned. Coutts did not believe this and prepared to send another patrol. At this moment the S-4 of the 3d Bn, McGuire, came in with a patrol and announced that the Bn was holding and they had a radio in operational shape, and the Regt should open their radio at 2100 for five minutes and then again every thirty minutes.

The Bn did not desire to keep their radio open any longer than that for they believe that every 300-series radio was drawing fire. Radio contact was not made at 2100 so a radio set was sent forward. Coutts instructed Corps Gidley with the mission and gave him both an encoded message for Anderson and then told him the nature of the message. Contact with the Bn was finally established at 090100. Anderson and Gidley talked over the sets. Gidley asked if the Bn had an M209 Code Converter, but Anderson had to reply that all codes and code machines had been lost. Gidley then began to speak in a code which he improvised as he went along. The first message was the 3d Bn to withdraw. It came like this, "My favorite song has always been, *When the Cowboy Herds His Doggies Back to the Old Corral!* Then he told them to split up and come in small groups. "Stray doggies move faster." next the order to leave the wounded men under an officer to arrange their surrender. "A wheel always stays with crippled doggies," Anderson said, "That was the most uncomfortable time of my life. I was lying on a snow covered straw pile and was terribly cold. The messages took an hour to come thru, and I realized that our town would have to be given up. We wanted someone to come up to support us."

"The orders to withdraw were quickly given. Every man was on post and a third of them were designated to remain until the others moved out. The groups left 8-10 men strong, each under an officer or a non-com. The men were sent out at odd times on compass courses varying from 147 to 155 degrees. The Bn did not know the password so an arbitrary set of Phoenix-City was given to each party. This they knew would always work among paratroopers for it is the name of a carnival area just off Fort Benning (where all of the men took jump training). The wounded who could not walk were left behind under Lt Charles A. Lewis, who was wounded in the head and foot. Kelly and Bohner [the medics] also remained behind with the men. All of the houses were mined or booby trapped with hand grenades or gammon grenades. The men carried all of their weapons and much of their equipment with them. The lack of sleep for the past two nights, the lack of food and water, the heavy loads, the knee-deep snow, frozen feet, and enemy fire in the area, made the return a bitter one. The men hated to leave Flamierge--and said so. But all of them who started, including the walking wounded, made the trip successfully. Enroute four men were wounded by fire, and several groups used the informal password. Capt Henry P. Stoffregen and Anderson were in the last party to leave. It was now almost dawn. They had gotten only 150 yards out of town when the Germans began to shell the town very heavily. The party continued on carrying of its members the final distance into friendly lines. In the 513 area the men received a hot meal, the wounded were evacuated, and the others sent back into the line by 1000. In the attack, defense, and withdrawal, the 3d Bn had lost more than half its strength.

On 10 January the Regt was moved to the right of the small town of Senonchamps. Here they remained for the day and were not subjected to any attack. On the 11 Jan, 3d Bn moved N and captured Forest E (506615) in a sharp engagement. On the 13th the Regt moved forward, this time uncontested. 1st and 2nd Bn moved into the Gaimont forest and 3d was given the honor of moving back into Flamierge. Friendly shelling and bombing had so battered the town in their absence that they could not tell the results of their booby traps.

"On the 2nd Jan 1945, the 513 Regt had an effective strength of 144 officers and 2,290 enlisted men. On the 15 Jan its strength was 81 officers and 1,036 men. The casualties which the regt sustained, 63 officers and 1,117 men, were lost almost exclusively on the two main attacks which the Regt participated in. These figures are the adjusted figures in light of the most recent knowledge (17 Jan) available. The loss of 54% of the strength of the unit, it should be remembered, is a loss of more than 70% of its effective fighting strength."

[This excerpt is just as I wrote it in 1945. I have left out footnotes as being inappropriate....]■

512TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION

Submitted by Eugene C. Kazanecki

[Excerpts] I just received the second publication of *The Bulge Bugle* and after reading some of the letters and articles I noticed that most only mention one or two outfits that were involved.

...I was a gunner corporal on the 105 mm Howitzer, 512th Field Artillery Battalion XII Corps, under Lieutenant General George S. Patton, Jr. We were on the line for 19 months with only one day off. I have been checking the VFW News for 54 years for any reunions or a mention of my outfit without finding any.

I never spoke of my experiences in the service until my youngest son found a manuscript in the basement. He sat there and read the entire story of my outfit. I hadn't seen the manuscript in 53 years. I have no idea who the writer is or where I got it. It mentions every outfit in the Third Army that we fought with side-by-side and supported. It also mentions the names of all those killed or injured and how it happened. After reading it, my son said, "Dad, I did not realize what you had to go through."

The manuscript is so old and brittle that I had to be careful how I turned the pages. It was then that I decided to retype every page and included maps and pictures and made a copy for each of my three children. The cover page reads, "I decided to put this journal together to let you, my children and grandchildren, how what my army life was like when I was 18, 19, and 20 years old, which are the best years of a young man's life. I thank the Lord for letting me come home in one piece with the exception of some bumps and bruises, frozen hands and feet, and a hornet's stinger in my eye while those around me never made it."

[We have extracted from Mr. Kazanecki's papers that portion which leads up to and immediately follows the Battle of the Bulge--as that is our area of concentration in this newsletter.]

[Excerpts from Foreword] The 512th had quite a career. It was known and respected by some of the most famous outfits in all the armies. In 265 days in combat it fired over 87,000 rounds and had one day off the line in the entire period. It had been commended by the Army Commander, General George S. Patton, Jr., and by other high officers under whom it served. received more high decorations for valor, a DSC, several Croix de Guerres, and Silver Star Medals, than many an infantry regiment in combat. ...The 512th had no history previous June 25, 1943. It will probably cease to be at the end of 1944 and those who hope for a peaceful world hereafter will join hoping that it will never again be called into existence.

[Excerpts from text] In November another river had to be crossed...the Seille. The 512th pounded out another path for 80th Division--over 700 rounds were delivered the ene between 0500 and 0615 on November 8th. The guns of 512th thundered...and the heavens thundered in echo. Do came the rain...torrents...flooding the entire area...and it was miserable night spend in crossing the Seille River. But in all rain and mud, the artillerymen moved forward...part of the di into the Saar Basin.

On the 6th of December orders came through that the 512th would be relieved of their position...and would move to the rear

to fire a demonstration of the new POSIT Fuze for the 12th Corps. Moral might have bounced for the battalion...what with the chance to get out of the line even for a little while...a welcome rest. But joy disappeared as quickly as it had come. On the 7th...just one day later...they were ordered back into the line...to support the 35th Division's push against the Saar River line. The first goal was Saareguemines...and the resistance was tough all the way. Mile by mile...it became more and more difficult to crack the German wall of defense. There were heavy counterattacks, and heavy counter artillery fire...a position would be selected for the coming guns...but before it could be used...it was very often destroyed. And the rain continued...the 512th was mud-bound more often than not, but in all of this morbid state...the artillery men managed to squeeze off at least 700 rounds a day...contributing in no little manner to the softening of the 35th Division advance toward the Saar.

Rain turned to sleet...and mud to snow. For the 512th Field Artillery was moving north now. It was the 19th of December and the night was spent marching...without rest...for there was no time for rest. The Third Army was now fighting time. Came the dawn...and the 512th was once again in support their old running mate...the 80th Division. This time in the bitter battle of the Ardennes. Staggering in the snow to hips...casualty lists mounting not from the mere sting of bullets...it was the cold. Frozen feet and hands claimed the finest soldiers as victims...more Purple Hearts. The advance proceeded...through snow covered and shell wrecked Belgium...on to the junction of the Our and Sauer Rivers. There facing the 80th Division and the 512th Field Artillery was one of the densest portions of the Siegfried Line. Von Runstead's Bulge had burst like a bubble. All the ground taken in the German offensive was now rested from the enemy and the Third Army was now ready to strike into Germany. On the 19th of February, 1945, the 512th crossed the Our river near Bollendorf...the frontier was pierced.■

174TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION MEMORIAL

On September 28, 2000, members of the 174th Field Artillery Battalion planted a tree and dedicated a memorial at Arlington National Cemetery. The monument is located in Section 34, Grant Drive (S).



Thanks to RAY B. KUBECK for providing this information along with other information provided regarding the battalion's reunion.■

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.

BREAKFAST IN THE BEAUTIFUL, SNOWY ARDENNES FOREST

January 4, 1945

Matt Miletich

Company I

333rd Infantry Regiment

84th Infantry Division

Bellevue, Washington

We arose early on the frosty morning of January 4, 1945. This sleeping outside in a bed consisting of several inches of cold, wet Belgian snow is a new experience for me. It's a far cry from hot, sunny Florida where I and my fellow riflemen replacements took infantry combat training in the blazing summer of 1944.

That's army logic: train us in the blazing hot temperatures of a Florida summer and then send us into combat into terrible snowy blizzards in Belgium without any kind of training to acclimate us to winter warfare. Some things about the army never change!

The night before I had experienced a few, fierce moments of panic. When I went to scoop a shallow hole in the forest floor for my bed, I discovered that my shovel was gone. "My shovel's gone! How can I dig a hole in the ground for my bed or a foxhole later for protection from the enemy and the weather?" I asked myself.

"Where did it go?" I asked. I recalled that I was one of several soldiers who had to sit cramped tight together on the steel floor of the big army truck that brought us to the woods, as the American Army launched a counter-offensive against Hitler's blitzkrieg breakthrough in the Battle of the Bulge.

I theorized that the hard bed of the truck may have pushed the handle of my shovel up and out of its canvas holster on my cartridge belt. I frantically ran back to the road to see if the truck was still there. It was, thank God!

I hurriedly groped around the bed of the truck and fished for my shovel in the dark. I quickly found it. What a relief! For a rifleman to be without his shovel can be almost as bad as being without his rifle. Sometimes he uses his shovel much more than his rifle.

I went back into the trees and started digging a long, shallow hole in the tangled, tough, fir tree roots in the bed of the forest. The roots made the digging and hacking with my small shovel very difficult.

Tired and cold, bewildered by my new circumstances, tears of frustration and rage welled up in my eyes. (That was the second time I had shed tears since entering the army in June, 1944. The first time was when I "froze to death" for several hours on a cold, windy hill at Hotton, Belgium, on New Year's Eve, waiting for a rumored German attack that never came.)

During the night's sleep, I had scant protection from the weather. I brushed off some snow that had fallen on me while I slept, if it really could be called sleep!

I crawled out of my light, zippered "fartsack." Nobody can name anything better than the lowest-ranking soldiers, because they know what it is like to be the lowest-common-denominator human being. Hence, the term "fartsack" for sleeping bag.

This was my first night of bivouacking in the open since landing at LeHarve, France. The night before I had come under enemy fire for the first time.

The Germans heard us loading into the trucks. They threw in some .88 millimeter artillery shells. I had thrown myself prone on the snowy ground. I'd heard for the first time how the shells rustled through the air. I learned what Company I veterans meant when they said the Germans could shoot the .88's "right into your pants pocket."

During the shelling, I had felt for the first time the hard, cold knot of fear in my belly as I heard the .88's come whistling in before exploding in back of me. After a few minutes, the shelling stopped and we resumed reloading.

We rode many miles in the backs of the open trucks. It was a freezing, numbing ride in the dark. Then we were literally "dumped" into the trees to "go to bed" for the night. Little did I suspect how much worse the nights of January 4 and 5 would be!

But now, as I awakened in early morning, I was cold and starving. I came to life as I smelled the intoxicating aroma of steaming, hot coffee. I followed the smell and the sights and the

sounds in the hazy morning light until I got to the kitchen truck that had been driven right into the fir trees.

The big coffee cauldron sent aromatic steam swirling up into the frigid air. Company I Cook Carl Ladensack leaned out of the back of the truck and poured the delicious, invigorating coffee into my metal canteen cup, tossed hot pancakes on my cold metal mess kit and poured hot syrup on them. The hot pancakes and syrup tasted like heaven.

An ugly thought popped into my head and I asked myself, "Are they fattening us up for the kill?" I kept my thoughts to myself. It doesn't pay to have a big mouth in the army.

I'll just take what comes my way regarding my fate. I can't do anything about it except prepare for the worse and do my best. That's all I can do.

"Hell, I don't even know where I am except somewhere in Belgium called the Ardennes Forest," I told myself. I had never heard of the Ardennes Forest but what happens in the next 48 hours will make it certain that I will never forget the Ardennes Forest!

UNDER A TIN ROOF

December, 1944

L. D. "Whitey" Schaller
Company B
110th Infantry Regiment
28th Infantry Division
Bolivar, Pennsylvania

In combat, the life and mood of infantry soldiers is full of rapid unexpected change. The 28th division left the Huertgen Forest on the 16th of December for rest and rehabilitation. Twelve men went to guard an observation post located in a deserted mountain top village overlooking the Our River. Huertgen was a terrible, deadly place. I was so jumpy that eight more days passed before I became aware that my shins were cold and my feet had been frozen. In this hyper-alert state of mind we assumed the on two, off four duty assignment. We were comfortable sleeping in dry conditions of a previously shelled house. We weren't shooting at any one and the Germans weren't shooting at us. We might even doze a few minutes in a watchful nap in the warmth of an afternoon sun.

We moved in under super dark conditions on a rainy night. Within minutes I was located at a BAR post in a shed and under a tin roof attached to a barn. The shape of the outpost indicated the direction of the front and we understood a mine field and booby traps surrounded our position. You know it had to be too good to last. Soon ordnance personnel arrived, loaded repair weapons, fired them at German positions and then quickly departed. Of course, German forces took offense and responded in kind. They shelled us two days in a row after the jeep carrying war chow appeared. On the third day, American artillery took care of the German Panther.

Soon after, dog and owl calls were heard at night as German patrols probed the territory. "Have no fear, we are enclosed in a safe area." But then one night we heard and recognized enough German to know someone fell into our slit trench. They had safely penetrated our mine field. Soon after, again on a rainy night under the tin roof, a big black and white cow jumped up on the sand bags immediately in front of me. An amazing feat! I did calm down and return the grenade to the safety of its

nest at the BAR post. On succeeding days we eliminated stray cats that prowled the area setting off explosives.

As the Germans became more aggravated, a heavy weapons section moved into two houses below us. With remarks of, "You guys are just jumpy," they ignored our warnings. Two wisps of smoke curled from two chimneys. Two 88 rounds neatly removed the chimneys at the roof line and put the fires out. It was quiet after that until the day we left.

Noticing the increased activity as units arrived preparing to jump off, German artillery saluted us. Two shells relocated a machine gun nest and the BAR post. A third round rang the bell in the church tower. We left that place and occupied positions in front of Marnach and were well forward and center when the Bulge began.

A DAY IN BELGIUM

January 1945

James A. Steinhaufl
Company C
134th Infantry Regiment
35th Infantry Division
Denver, Colorado

This story occurred in January 1945, during the Battle of the Bulge. The Allies were recovering the lost ground and were beginning to push into Germany. We were in Belgium near the Luxembourg border. The time was in January of 1945, perhaps the middle of January. After being wounded in the leg by grenade fragments at Habkirchen on December 13, I had recently returned to Company C. At this time the 35th Division was part of General Patton's Third Army. I was with Company C of the 134th Infantry Regiment.

I looked up into the morning sky. We had been struggling through the snow for a few days. It was very cold. We sought shelter whenever it was available. We had been sleeping in the snow at night. It was a long way from the bridge at Habkirchen and the hospital. My leg still felt tender as I pushed through the snow. About 25 of us from Company C were in the area. I was in a squad of six or seven soldiers. Our patrol was moving near a battle area.

As we trudged through the snow we came upon two burning American tanks. The smell of smoke and burned flesh hung in the air. It had not been long since the two Sherman's had been knocked out. The acrid smoke from the smoldering tank rose in the air. The two American tanks had come out of the woods together, side-by-side and were knocked out by a German tank patrolling in the area. The American tankers tried to get out.

Some men were dead and one was hanging out of a hatch. We lowered our heads as we walked on. Shuffling through the snow some following in the footprints of those ahead, a few making their own new trails on the flanks. Everyone was alert, looking with twisting eyes.

We came upon a small shack. It was an old cabin. Our patrol went in. We were just trying to get our feet warm. We soon recognized it was a prime target for the Germans to shoot at, particularly since there was an American Sherman tank from Patton's Third Army parked next to the cabin. It was one of our tanks that began shooting at a German tank. The Tiger had come out of a firebreak. It could have been one of the large tanks called a Tiger, one of the Panzers. We couldn't see the

German tank's position from the cabin. Soon the Tiger was exchanging shell for shell with the American Sherman. Our patrol had come to this area about three hours earlier. That is when the action began.

Following is a summary of the events which led to our squad being in the cabin:

The weather was bitter cold. We were on a patrol. It was during a brief tank skirmish with two or three tanks on each side. In this region of Belgium and Luxembourg, there was no front line. We were trying to clear a small area of the Bulge.

Earlier in the day, as we patrolled along a road, we heard and then spotted a large German tank. A German patrol was walking with the tank. It was a common German tactic. The patrol was protecting the tank. The soldiers were the outside eyes. The tank was probably a hunter providing the infantry intimate close support. I recall that the tank could have been a Panzer VI Model E Tiger I heavy tank or a Panzer VI, Model B, King Tiger heavy tank. Both were equipped with an 88 mm, 22 foot long barrel, if I remember correctly. The Tiger I was probably the most famous and most feared tank of World War II. The Tiger I weighed 55 tons and had 2.4 to 3.2 inches of side armor behind the tracks while the King Tiger weighed 68 tons had 3.2 inches of side armor.

When our Company C Commander Captain Wallace Chappell, saw the German Tiger, he ordered us into a very narrow ravine. The gully sloped down away from the road into the dark Ardennes forest. The woods were of intermixed birch and pines that provided some cover in the narrow confines of this slash in the earth. Nevertheless, the patrol and German tank saw us take cover in the gully.

We were watching him and the German squad. The tank was above us. The tanker could look down into the ravine. It was about 150 yards from the tank to the gully. We crouched and pressed into the small recesses. I knew we had been spotted. We couldn't run.

Before going into the gully we had been milling around and we had been in and out of the shack. It was in a clearing surrounded by pine trees. Moving and stomping our feet helped keep us warm.

Through the cold air, I could hear the distant sound of hatch covers clanking shut. The tankers had been riding with the hatches open. As we crowded into the gully, I listened to the grinding of the turret as it twisted toward us. I pushed lower into the small recesses. Hiding was impossible.

Once, I looked up. It was possible to see the menacing, dark growling hulk silhouetted against the dark cloudy sky. The tank was above us. The barrel lowered, searching and point. We were dark stationary humps in the snow. I buried my face deeper into the frosty granules. I didn't notice the biting cold as the snow pressed into my cheek. My hand held the steel pot tightly to my head as I tried to edge further under it. The vision of death had come to us many times before. I thought how this would be a carnival shoot for the tanker. Our squad was directly below the steel-grinding hulk. The sound of the engine, protesting the movement of the turret, rolled over our heads. The engine seemed quieter than the pounding, racing beats in my chest. My senses were on high alert and were working very good.

Another patrol was further into the ravine. They were probably from another company of the 134th Infantry Regiment. They had taken cover in the bends and twists, behind a stump, at the

base of a tree, or a hump of dirt, just below us. The snow mixed with our rifles and gear as we pressed into sides of the ravine. I know that Private First Class James Graff was somewhere nearby.

I felt the first blast of cold air directly above my helmet. As much as the German tanker would try, he couldn't lower the barrel far enough to shoot directly at us. If he had, he would have exploded shells among us. You could hear the barrel being adjusted and then the engine's protesting as the barrel came to a stop in its lowest position. It was terrifying. He hit a guy further down in the gully but the tank was not able to lower his muzzle further to get to me. So the 88 mm rounds were going over my head.

After the first shells swooshed over our heads and crashed into the gully below us, we understood that the tanker was hitting the troops below us. You could hear shouts, then calls for help. We heard moaning and a call in the crisp cold air for a medic. The shells were so close I decided to take my pack off. It was good the German tank couldn't depress his turret further. I could hear a swish, then the boom from the barrel, as the shells were traveling faster than the explosive sound traveled. The sounds were very close together but the swish seemed first.

The patrol below us was taking all of the tanker's fire. I didn't know then which company, but they were from the 134th. More shells slashed overhead and crashed below us. A tree was thrown upward. We knew that all of the pieces arching in the air and bouncing off the trees was not all rocks or wood. My hand gripped tighter to the steel helmet. We were trying to push deeper into the snow. Then the shooting stopped.

I could make out the grinding sound of the tank moving away from us. The crunching of protesting snow reached our position as the German tank moved. The turret searched and pointed, looking for targets. I do not know why the tanker stopped shelling us. Perhaps he sensed vulnerability in his position. Or the German patrol had sighted one of Patton's armored division Sherman tanks. He may also have known we were just wasps in a nest below him, I guessed. He had tried to take out a few of us. Perhaps to push us back or gain some time, while the German patrol accompanying him moved for protection.

The German tanker's real adversary was not the wasp nest in the ravine. It was our tanks in the area. The German tanker must have known he was in a battle with Patton's scattered Sherman tanks. In a battle like this there seems to always be a tear-jerker. The battle in the gully was like many battle scenes. Two brothers were serving in the area together. Here in the gully one of the brothers was killed. As the lumbering sound of the creaking-clanking tank moved away from us, a GI came into the gully and shouted a name, his brother's name. He rushed from group to group, calling his brother's name. Someone in our patrol replied that we didn't know his brother. It could have been Graff or one of the replacements. I remember glancing at his boots and wondering if his feet were cold like mine.

The tension of the shelling drifted away. We brushed the snow from our pants and coats as we rose to stand. I wondered how any of us would get our feet warm again. We often didn't.

One person in our patrol shouted to the snow-covered GI that there were other troops below us. He should check there. He could now hear the guys below us moving. Calls for help had stopped drifting up to us. The searching GI's face tightened as he looked down the gully and realized we had motioned to the area the tank shells had been exploding. As his face tightened

and his eyebrow lowered, he stepped around us and slogged down the ravine. We learned later that his brother was one of those killed in the crashing, exploding shells.

It is possible that this German Tiger knocked out the two Sherman tanks we had seen smoldering, two hours earlier, before we got to the gully.

The night before the gully incident two of us were on guard duty at an outpost. During the night several GI's came and took the machine gun from us. The reason for the outpost must have expired so we left our post. Our guard duty must have been over. We went back to Company C. In the morning we moved off on the patrol. We didn't have the heavy 20 caliber machine gun, if we had needed it. We had been lucky.

Captain Chappell sent a sergeant down into the gully to tell his troops to move out. Shortly the sergeant came to our patrol and we were told to leave the gully, and to go to the cabin. We were happy to leave the terror. The sergeant didn't have to tell us twice. We moved back into the trees away from where the tank had been. At this time American Sherman tanks came up, from around the bend, and into a good position. They took out the German tank that had been shelling the ravine. I don't recall that the German patrol accompanying the tank had fired at us. When the Sherman hit the tank, the German patrol ran away and into nearby trees.

The company was moving out. There was no front line. I recall now that it seemed the 35th Division of which the 134th Infantry Regiment was a part, was up on the front line more than any other unit. We had to walk up a hill to the rundown shack-like cabin. It was about 10 feet by 10 feet in size. An American Sherman was parked along side the cabin, maybe 20 to 25 feet away.

After we were inside and beginning to get warm again, the Sherman started shooting from its hidden position. After we realized the American tanker was using the shed as cover, it didn't take us long to understand that we needed to move and move fast. We bailed out of the cabin and took cover away from the Sherman. As a group we watched the shoot-out. The cabin allowed the Sherman to shoot from a concealed position. It had to be hidden for protection. Close in the American tank could take the turret off the German Tiger tank. But a German tank's 88 mm shells could rip through the Sherman easily if it were caught in the open.

The American hit the German two or three times with no effect. In the Sherman tank's maneuverings, the American tanker was able to place a shell in the narrow two to four inch space above the tread and below the over-hanging armor. The tanker's considered this a soft spot on the German tanks, especially the Tiger. The armor was only two to two and one-half inches thick behind the treads.

The shot was a lucky one. On a Tiger tank I had inspected earlier in January, my hand would barely fit in the space above the tread. I could run my hand along the top of the tread below the impenetrable thick steel above. There wasn't much more space in addition to my hand. I could just barely touch the thick armor behind the tread.

The two tanks were 500 yards apart. You could hear the swoosh-thump of the shells from our hidden position. The shoot-out lasted only a few minutes. Ten to 15 shells were exchanged. I had left the shack during the shooting. The Sherman would move forward from behind the cabin. He would shoot a shell and then draw back. You could hear the tank

engine surge as the driver kept the rev up to quickly move. In a few minutes the tank would move forward again. The American kept repeating this maneuver. The guy in the Sherman was missing all the time. The Tiger was by himself. We couldn't see any sign of a patrol. The cabin and the American Sherman tank were about 500 to 1,000 yards apart. Other American troops were closer to the Tiger but we didn't see them during the shelling.

One of the American tanker's shells hit just over the tread of the German tank in that hand-width space. It was quite a shot given the distance. A lucky hit! When the Tiger exploded, a German tanker came out of a lower hatch and ran away. We could hear more explosions from inside the bucking hulk. It became quiet except for the sound of burning mixed with an occasional exploding shell.

We had been standing in the trees watching the battle. The sound of our boots stomping and crunching the snow mixed with the sounds that drifted from the burning tank. We were well hidden. No small-arms fire came from the German patrol. We had not fired toward them. After the ravine, we didn't want to attract more attention.

It was possible that this was the German Tiger that knocked out the two Sherman tanks we had seen smoldering, two hours earlier. Before we got into the gully. After the German tank was hit and a few minutes after the German tanker was running up the hill, our patrol walked back to the cabin. We were standing outside the cabin talking, swinging our arms and stomping our feet to get warm. Someone shouted that a kraut patrol was coming toward us.

The German patrol would have had to come down through the same gully we had been hiding in. They came out of the trees toward us. Their arms were held high above their heads. Most of their helmets had been thrown to the ground. They began to shout: *Comerade, Comerade*. They had also dropped their weapons, packs, and ammo belts before coming up the hill toward the cabin and where we were standing. They had winter hats stuffed inside their coats.

It was normal for surrendering German troops to shout "*Comerade*" as they came toward us. These same Krauts did this as they walked toward us: *Comerade, Comerade*. So, we moved down toward them. We stopped and waited for the ten German soldiers to come up the hill the remaining distance to us. They were through with this war and they knew it. We surrounded them and put our rifles on them. At this they bunched up. They were all standing at attention.

They had a *Hauptmann*, equal to a captain in the American army. If this rank is correct he was probably with the *Waffen SS*. It was strange to see a German officer with such a small detachment as this patrol. He was not a tanker, so he could have been *Waffen SS* or from the regular German army known as the *Heer*, part of the regular German *Wehrmacht*. The officer and these men could have been part of the *Wehrmacht Waffen SS*. (See note which follows.)

Because a *Waffen SS* captain was called a *Hauptsturmführer* and we referred to this captain as a *Hauptmann*, he was most likely an officer in the *Heer* part of the *Wehrmacht* (the regular German army).

As the German patrol trudged toward us, I wanted the edge on them so I walked in close with my M-1 pointed into the group. I walked up to the officer. I pointed the M-1 close to the officer's chest and said, "*Nicht Schiessen*." German words we

used with prisoners that were supposed to mean "no shoot." The officer still had his helmet on. I indicated for him to take it off. His long coat opened as he raised his hands again over his head. As the coat opened, it was possible to see a small leather pistol holster on his right hip. It could have been a back-up weapon. I motioned to the holster with my rifle muzzle.

I again told the German officer "Nicht Schiessen." He recognized my meaning and his glare turned, looking now toward the pistol on his hip. He loosened his belt and slid off the holster. His eyes rose from the holster. He looked directly into my eyes as he handed it to me. It was a burning glare. He didn't want to surrender to a common soldier. He was stiff and unbending. I could feel some of the tensions subside, as he knew his war was over and that we would not schiessen.

Seeing the officer was unusual. You didn't capture many German officers in the heat of battle. It was obvious that this officer was not pleased to have had to surrender. Especially now! He must have felt it was very degrading and without a traditional ceremony. I'm sure he would have preferred to surrender to an officer. He was not happy.

I took the small holster and pistol from the German officer's hand. You could see that he was chilled. I opened the holster and could see the butt of the pistol. The German officer's Walther pistol was a smaller automatic pistol than the normal Luger worn by most officers. The small pistol was made to be worn concealed. Before the war, the German secret police often used this model. I quickly put the pistol in my backpack so an American officer would not take it away (as they seemed to think they had the right to do).

We didn't talk with the prisoners. The mystery surrounding why this officer was carrying the small Walther 7mm pistol will probably never be known. Nor his name! We will never know why he was with this patrol. I don't recall what happened to the German patrol but it was normal for one or two GI's to take them to the rear after we had made sure they had no weapons. The GIs would turn them over to the first American unit they came upon and then return to our unit. Someone else took the officer to the rear.

I have often wondered why the German officer and patrol surrendered to us. They must have been tired of the war and recognized that it was going bad for them. Sometimes surrendering German troops would hug you, and smile. Other times they could be quite nervous and serious. Often, you could understand that some of them were quite relieved, especially when it was clear to them that we would treat them kindly.

This was a typical day in the life of a GI. I had been scared to death, and then I had captured a German officer, all in a matter of moments.

Note #1: Of all the German organizations during WWII, the SS is by far the most infamous and the least understood. The SS was a complex political and military organization made up of three separate and distinct branches, all related but equally unique in their branch of this overwhelmingly complex organization. The Waffen-SS (Armed SS), were the other branches that made up the structure of the SS. It was the true military formation of the larger overall 600,000 men by the time WWII was over. Its unit would spearhead some of the most crucial battles of WWII. Its men would shoulder some of the most difficult and daunting combat operations of all the units in the German military. The fact is that the Waffen-SS was a front

line combat organization. The Waffen-SS is sometimes thought of as the fourth branch of the German Wehrmacht (Heer, Luftwaffe, Kriegsmarine and Waffen-SS). Source: "http://www.uwm.edu/people/jpcpes/ss.html" www.uwm.edu/people/jpcpes/ss.html.

Note #2: The German Heer was officially formed in 1935 with the passing of the "Law for the Reconstruction of the National Defense Forces." After World War I the Weimar Republic--the successor of Imperial Germany--was allowed only a small defense force known as the Reichswehr. The Reichswehr was allowed a small standing army, the Reichsheer, and a small defensive navy, the Reichsmarine. In 1933, the National Socialist German Workers Party (NSDAP) came into power and the infamous Third Reich was formed. Two years later in 1935 under the complete control of the NSDAP, the Treaty of Versailles was renounced and the Reichsheer was renamed as the Heer and classified as being a part of the new defense force, the Wehrmacht--a collective term for all three branches of the German Armed Forces. Between 1939 and 1945, the Heer bore the majority of six years' worth of fierce combat, some of which was so fierce--as on the Eastern Front--humankind will likely never again see such fighting. Many hundreds of Heer units were formed during the war, and nearly all these units served with distinction and bravery in the increasingly futile fight against the Allies. Although not immune to the overtones of politics--especially in light of the era it was a part of--the Heer was not a political formation and it served with great distinction across many thousands of miles of battlefields. The Heer was defeated with the German capitulation on May 8, 1945, but amazingly, some units continued to fight for a few days longer in fits of sporadic resistance mainly against the Soviets in the East. The allied control Council passed a law formally dissolving the Wehrmacht on the 20th of August, 1946, the official "death" date of the German Heer. Source: http://www.uwm.edu/~jjjppipes/heer. www.uwm.edu/~jjjppipes/heer.html.

[Story was edited by David R. Jensen]

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.

REUNIONS

SIGNAL AUTOMATIC WEAPONS BATTALIONS, September 13-16, 2001, Midland, Michigan. (For all who had a part in Signal AW (Radar) during WWII. Contact: Don Hawkins, 504 West Chapel Lane, Midland, Michigan 48640-7328. Telephone: 517-631-2283.

Received too late for timely publication:

285TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION: Contact: Nicholas Zillas, 190-12 35th Avenue, Flushing, New York 11358-1918. Phone: 718-463-1321.

511TH ENGINEERS LIGHT PONTON COMPANY: Contact: Nick Rosania, PO Box 412, Whitehouse Station, New Jersey 08889-0412.

644TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION: Contact: Liz Sawichi, 800-722-3297.

BULGE VETERANS MEMORIAL AT CAMP ROBERTS

Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge are honored by a plaque at the California Army National Guard's Western Mobilization and Training Complex at Camp Roberts.

The plaque honors the 238 Bulge veterans who trained at Camp Roberts in the fall of 1943--when the camp was known as the Infantry Replacement Training Center, and the men were members of "B" and "C" Companies of the 80th Infantry Training Battalion at the camp. After their training cycle ended in November of 1943, these 238 men were eventually assigned to the 11th Armored Division and the 28th Infantry Division--where they fought as combat infantrymen of General Patton's Third Army during the Battle of the Bulge.

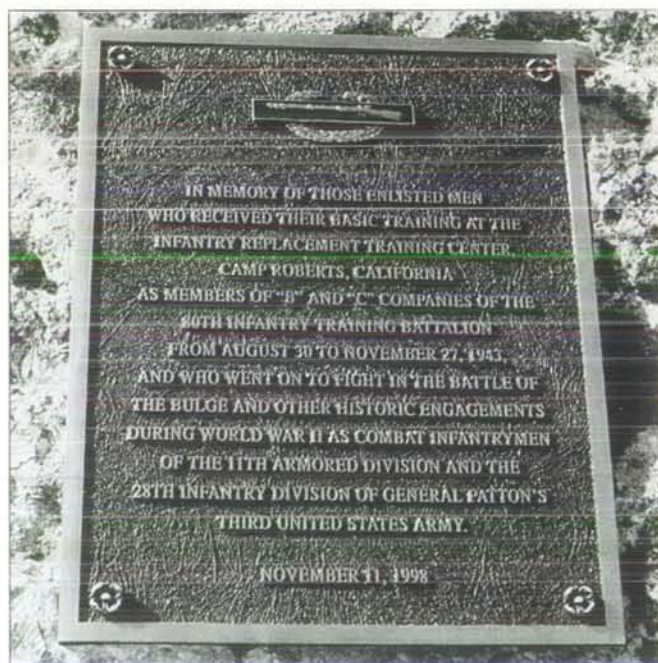


Photo and information provided by **PATRICK J. KEARNEY**, 11TH ARMORED DIVISION, 55TH ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION.

MICHIGAN VETERANS VISIT LOCAL STUDENTS

WILLIAM DUDAS, 2ND INFANTRY DIVISION, 38TH REGIMENT, 2 BATTALION, COMPANY G, and veterans from Desert Storm and Korea visited with students of the Prairieview Junior Middle School to share war stories and impress upon the students the value of patriotism last Veterans Day.

Bill stated, "People today have forgotten about the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. They've forgotten things like the Normandy invasion. One history book I looked at recently never mentioned the Battle of the Bulge. What we're trying to convey to people is that they have to read history more."

The veterans' discussions must have made an impression, one of the six-graders remarked the veterans "taught us not to joke around about being free in this country, that people fought so we could be free." □

LEADING THE PARADE

DON YOERK, 4TH ARMORED DIVISION, 37TH TANK BATTALION, COMPANY D, was Grand Marshall of the East Aurora, New York, 2000 Independence Day Parade.

In an interview by Cynthia Thompson, of the *East Aurora Advertiser*, Yoerk recounted an experience he had in the Battle of the Bulge.

"The 4th Division broke into Bastogne as one of the first to relieve the 101st [Airborne] at the Battle of the Bulge. 'We went in beside Col. Abrams, who became Army Chief of Staff after the war,' said Yoerk.

"That afternoon, Yoerk was among the tanks that were asked to escort the ambulances and trucks taking the wounded out. When he returned to his company the next morning, he went back to where he'd parked his tank, and found a big bomb hole. Yoerk added, 'You could tell by the snow.' If he hadn't gone on that escort duty, 'I'd have had one down the turret.' □

NO SWEAT



"I don't know how our 'peace talks' delegation is making out in Paris, but I know how I'd be making out if I was in Paris—"

SALUTE TO THE SIXTH ARMORED DIVISION

[The following was extracted from an article which appeared in the 6th Armored bulletin written by George F. Hofmann.]

The famous World War II 6th Armored Division veterans will hold their final reunion in Louisville, September 12-17, 2000. On the 14th the Association will make its fifth and final pilgrimage to Fort Knox, where the 6th AD was activated on February 15, 1942, in old Theater No. 4. Twenty-nine months and twelve days later the division was committed to combat in Normandy. Except for a period of less than two weeks, the 6th AD was continuously in combat for nine and a half months in the European Theater of Operations until the end of the war with Germany. By that time the Super Sixths, which was made up almost entirely of citizen-soldiers, had fought in five major campaigns in Western Europe, sustaining 1,274 killed in action and 10,842 casualty losses.

For the majority of the time the 6th AD served in Lieutenant General George S. Patton's Third Army. General Patton considered the Super Sixths and its commander, Major General Robert W. Grow, one of his most dependable leader and divisions. One reason was that Grow was one of the pioneers in mechanization of the U.S. Cavalry, serving in the 1930's as the S-3 under Colonels Daniel VanVoorhis and Adna R. Chaffee, Jr., the Father of Armor. Later, during the early days of the armored force, he served under Patton. As a result of this experience, he became familiar with the dynamics of aggressive leadership, of fighting mounted and dismounted, and exploitation. The division inherited this philosophy and consequently established an impressive record of mobile war fighting. Unlike most other armored divisions, the 6th routinely reconfigured its combined arms organization of combat commands, depending upon the mission.

In his farewell speech to the division, General Grow said: "You have made history, history that will be recorded and read as long as men cherish gallantry and glory in the record of success in combat. For your story is the story of men who never failed. If and when we meet, you and I, or you and you, let there always be a bond of close personal friendship that was cemented by the trials of battle." Grow's vision of brotherhood carried over in the post-war period when in 1947 the Association was founded by Colonel (later Lieutenant General) George W. Read, Jr., at Fort Knox. A year later the same reunion was held in Louisville. That same year Gammon Field House at Fort Knox was dedicated to Staff Sergeant Archer T. Gammon of the 6th AD, who was one of the recipients of the Medal of Honor for his courageous action near Bastogne on January 11, 1945....

At present the Super Sixers average age is 81 years, and in the last five years over 100 a year had their final taps played. Today the taps are played more frequently for the aging 6th AD veterans. They left a remarkable history, which is an example of loyalty and service to their country, the U.S. Army and their division, and their wartime commander who never forgot his boys, the Super Sixers. This lasting mutual loyalty between the commander and the Super Sixers is an example of that unique military brotherhood that when the last taps and played and their bodies turn to dust, the spirit and the history of the 6th Armored Division will still live forever. Therefore, the 6th Armored Division veterans, who sacrificed so much for their country, will live forever. ■

196TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION COMMENDATION

[The attached was sent to us by FOREST HARTLEY.]

Subject: Commendation
To: Commanding Officer,
196th F.A. Bn
APO 230 (Thru channels)

On the 6th of December 1944, the 196th FA Bn was placed in direct support of my unit, 3rd Bn, 395th Inf. This unit's supporting fires were immediately felt by the members of the 3rd Bn and even prior to the time the Germans made an attack on Hofen, Germany, numerous company commanders remarked to me how well the FA unit was giving us support and the cooperative spirit they had.

On the 16th of December 1944, the Germans launched an attack against my position. This attack was preceded by an intense rocket, artillery and mortar barrage at 0525 in the morning. By 0550 the barrage had ceased and the Germans were attacking the front line with infantry. Although the attack of the Germans was an infantry regiment, the position was not penetrated and the attack was repulsed. One of the major factors that contributed toward repelling the enemy was the artillery fire that the 196th FA Bn gave us when called for. In addition to this, the 196th FA Bn was also largely responsible for the capturing of 14 prisoners, as the fire laid down by the artillery in front of our front lines not only killed or drove back any enemy that might be in that position but also prevented the enemy in front of the artillery barrage from retreating and the Germans had their choice of either staying in front of our lines and being killed or surrendering. On the morning of 18 December 44, time 0430, the enemy again attacked the positions in Hofen, Germany. This attack although not preceded by a heavy barrage of rocket, artillery or mortar, was increased in strength to include two new regiments of infantry plus the remnants of the regiment left after the previous attack, and 10 tanks. Here again the 196th FA Bn was a major factor in repelling the enemy, driving them from our positions and holding this town. The fighting in this vicinity became intense and it was necessary for me to request six different concentrations of 5 minute duration on my front lines by the artillery to prevent the enemy from over running my front lines. The 196th FA Bn demonstrated that it was an efficient, well trained and fighting outfit. They placed the fire where requested, when requested, and in the intensity requested when needed. To demonstrate my point, at two different times, this FA Bn fired 58 missions in 50 minutes in support of my unit. In addition to this they fired on this particular day in a 9-1/2 hour period, more than 3,600 rounds.

When it is taken into consideration that the German mission was to take Hofen, Germany, at all costs regardless of price and that to the south the enemy had been successful in making some penetration of the Allied lines, this unit (196th FA Bn) disregarding reports that come in and the confusion that existed around them, fired efficiently and accurately when and where they were requested and in a volume that is credit to any outfit if not a record. I believe that they deserve a commendation for their noble efforts and efficient work.

McClelland Butler
Lt. Col. Infantry
Comdg. 3rd Bn. 395 Inf. ■

PLANS UNDERWAY FOR 2001 VBOB REUNION

2001 Reunion Chairman Lou Cunningham has advised us that the dates for the 2001 Reunion will be September 22 through 26, in Orlando, Florida.

Many activities are being planned--among them are ceremonies at the recently erected VBOB Monument.

It would be a good time to bring your children and grandchildren along. They can meet your VBOB buddies and see Mickey and Minnie at the same time.

So mark the dates on your calendar and we'll see you there. ■

TANK BATTLE

By Jerry C. Hrbek

428th Military Police Escort Guards

Our wall-less castle kept us out of the wind, but thank God it was not bitter cold. On the 17th of December one of our squads from the Divisional MP Platoon of the 99th Infantry joined us. They pulled in just north of our castle in two six-bys about 50 yards away. Johnny Strange said they were taking over a former Jerry barracks they had stayed in before just up the hill from us. It held about 20 men and equipment. I said I'd see him tomorrow, but I had a feeling I would never see him again.

Their squad had 13 men. The following night all but one, a guy we called Pop, because he was 39 years old, were killed by .88 barrage. Pop happened to be behind a door. The shell hit the building, their corporal got a direct hit and immediately disappeared, to be plastered all over the room. They died at the snap of a finger. Harold was waiting for an appointment to the Military Academy at West Point. This guy knew exactly what he wanted to do for the rest of his life. His appointment came through four days after his death. All of them were overseas no more than a month or so. This was their first time under fire.

The next morning the Jerries jumped us with a squadron of Stuka-dive bombers. You could hear them coming. We went out in the road thinking they were ours. Then they started peeling off. Everyone you laid eyes on was running every which way. Miller and I dove for one of the inside corners of our castle. We got there as one and hung onto each other. The interim between the peeling off and the initial impacts of the bombs was enough to scare you to death. You get five of the mostly ghastly combination of sounds you would ever want to hear. The peeling off of multiple planes, the diving, the pull up, about this time you're asking your maker to please help. The screaming of the bombs, followed by the dribble explosions all around you. When it's done you can't help thinking how or why you were still around. I survived air raids, but Stukas?

The perimeter of one of the bomb craters was on the other side of the wall Miller and I were crouched behind. I had a buzzing in my head for two days and a case of vertigo. The wall standing about ten feet high fell on top of us. A lot of guys died, including a direct hit on an ack-ack pit killing everyone in it.

Late the next afternoon a jeep pulled up. A colonel asked Sergeant James, "How many men do you have?" The sarge replied, "Eight, Sir." He said, "Sergeant," pointing to a field across the road, "have them dig in on the other side of the road. You may very well earn your CIB tonight." And off they went. We stood there looking at each other, no one said a word. We crossed over and started digging in.

I chose a spot about 30 yards in from the road. Tom Tompkins was the only to dig in beyond me. The rest dug in along the roadway. By the time it was dark everyone was settled, the only thing you heard was the wind.

My foxhole was about two and a half feet deep by a foot and a half wide, and over five feet long. Hell, I was only about 5'4" at the time. Shortly, I fell asleep.

Pow! Pit-tu! Blam, and I was on my knees, eyeballs popping out of my head. Pow! Pow! Pit-tu! Pit-tu! Blam! Blam! The shells were flying right over my head. You could see them

go by. About 100 feet away was a tank, how he got there is beyond me. Then it started. There were more tanks behind him. The only thing on my mind was "Hail, Mary, full of grace"--It wasn't bad enough that they opened fire, but then someone started shooting back. The shells were so many they would collide and fly upward. Then it stopped. I snuck a peek at the closest tanks--Pow! Pit-tu! Blam!--right over my head. I actually saw a Jerry standing on top of the tank.

By this time I was numb to thinking. I thought the next time that gun goes off, he's dead--you could see [him] by the flash of the gun. I dropped myself over the edge of the foxhole, my piece pointing in the same direction. Pow! Pit-tu! Blam! My heart almost stopped--he wasn't there. He was in the turret! All you could make out was his head and shoulders. I said, "Now!" I rolled out of the hole and rolled down the slope toward the edge of the road. I stopped abruptly, realizing I had rolled against someone. Ya know--Jerries have a definite smell of ersatz cigarettes and leather. For a couple of minutes, I didn't move a muscle. The firing stopped. I assumed this guy was dead. I sat up real fast and threw myself over the lower part of his body to get away from him. Halfway over he had me by my jacket. I twisted out of his grasp, horror was overwhelming, reaching for my trench knife in my legging. I was on top of him swinging at where his head was. I hit him in the side of his head. Why hadn't I just stabbed him I thought. I rolled off of him backwards and got into the gully at the edge of the road. Pow! Pit-tu! Blam! It stopped. I snaked my way across the road and crawled up against the shot wall of our castle. I laid up against the wall trying to become a part of it. The tanks were shifting around. Then it was quiet. I crawled around to the side of the building, and to the rear corner. There I was lying at the edge of the crater where Miller and I had crouched together during the air attack. Finally, I got to the edge of the pine line about 100 feet behind our castle. I chose a thick pine, lying on my stomach, head against the trunk and facing the shooting. Everything was quiet.

Eventually I dozed off. Next thing I knew it was getting light. I watched the fog rising slowly off the ground. It looked like I was the only person on earth. I was lying there thinking of Mom and Dad and praying to God for help.

Someone was coming down the road and calling. Then I heard him distinctly. "Tom, hey, Tom, Yankee." It was Sergeant James looking for Tom and me. I yelled, "Sarge, over here." He came running over to me saying, "Are you alright?" "Yeah," I replied. "Where's Tom," he asked. I told him I didn't know, that he dug in beyond me.

We crossed over into the field. Sarge said, "Where'd he come from? He wasn't there when we dug in last night," pointing to the jerry lying on his back. I looked closer, he had a welt on his temple. "My God," I thought. I looked toward my trench knife in my legging and then I realized that in my panic I had struck him with the butt end of the knife and not the blade. He was badly wounded from another wound. He probably grabbed at me for help and instead I hit him. "Shit," I thought. We yelled to Tom and he poked his head out of his foxhole, looked at us and made a long drawn out excremental remark. No one in our squad got hurt. When the shooting started, they were near the edge of the road. They got into the ditch on the side of the road and took off in the direction of our lines. You can't fight tanks with small arms.

[Those nine days, December 16th to 25th, were almost two life times. Out of the total mount of our two squads of 21 men, 12 were KIAs, 2 were WIAs. I wound up in the 2nd Evacuation Hospital in Eupen, and after a week or so was sent to a rehab hospital in Dinant, France. Two years ago, by the grace of God, I located Bill Tompkins, known as Tommy. He now lives in Mustang, Oklahoma, with his wife Sahra. Fortunes of War? Someone up there sure liked us.]

MONUMENT TO LT. ERIC F. WOOD

Many members send more information and pictures of the monument to Lt. Eric F. Wood, 106th Infantry Division, who with other stragglers roamed the Ardennes causing terror and death among the German troops.

We couldn't print them all, so we are using the first one we received.



Monument to Lt. Eric F. Wood, of the 106th Infantry Division, at Meyerode, Belgium. Picture taken May 23, 1992, with fresh flowers and a basket of Easter eggs. Pictured are left to right: Josef Theissen, of St. Vith, and Dean F. Jewett, of Company B, 168th Engineer Combat Battalion.

HERSHEY'S TROPICAL BARS-- A REAL TASTE TREAT

Stephen J. Ackerman reported in *The American Legion Magazine* that over 3 billion chocolate bars had been produced by Hershey's Chocolate for consumption of WWII soldiers. The Logan Bar (Field Ration D) was a big hit. Three bars per day would supply 1,800 calories sustenance.

It was originally produced in 1937 and even served to nourish the astronauts of Apollo 15.

TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT SCHOLARSHIP

Pete Leslie, who started nine northeastern Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge Chapters in recent years, is one of the United States representatives of scholarships by the University of Antwerp's Institute of Transport and Maritime Management in Antwerp, Belgium. This scholarship is available to any descendant of a U.S., or Allied Nation, World War II veteran who helped liberate Belgium between September 15, 1944, and January 26, 1945.

The course confers a Masters Degree in Maritime Management after a two semester course of study. At the present rate of exchange between the Euro and the Dollar, the course is worth well over \$8,000.

Reprinted from Telegram & Gazette
Worcester, MA - Wednesday, August 16th 2000

Road to be renamed to honor veterans

Fifty five years and six months after the Battle of the Bulge, the Massachusetts House of Representatives has voted to pay tribute to the men who fought in it with a 4.5-mile-long slab of blacktop.

State Rep. John P. Fresolo, D-Worcester, said the House has passed a bill to call the stretch of Route 146 from Interstate 290 to Route 122A in Millbury the "Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, Central Massachusetts Chapter Highway."

The bill is now before the Senate for consideration.

Rep. Fresolo, a co-sponsor of the bill in the House, said it pays a much-needed honor to Central Massachusetts veterans who served in the historic World War II battle.

The Battle of the Bulge began Dec. 16, 1944, when Nazi forces of the German Wehrmacht launched a massive counteroffensive in the Ardennes region of Central Europe in an attempt to stop the Allied juggernaut. The offensive was Hitler's attempt to crush the Allied armies and win the war in one master stroke.

The Germans broke through the advancing Allies and pushed a "bulge" into their lines from the front in Luxembourg into central Belgium. But the Allies held firm and in January 1945 began

pushing the Germans back.

When the battle was over, more than 1 million soldiers and armor, 600,000 of whom were Americans, had been engaged in combat. The battle was the largest and most decisive of the land war in Western Europe. German losses were some 120,000 men killed, wounded or missing, along with thousands of tanks, planes, vehicles and artillery pieces destroyed.

Allied losses, mostly American, were about 7,000 killed, 33,400 wounded, 21,000 captured or missing, and 730 tanks and tank destroyers smashed.

Among the American casualties were 86 prisoners captured by the 1st SS Panzer Division at Malmédy on Dec. 17, 1944, who were lined up and machine-gunned to death.

The battle also became notorious for being fought during one of the worst, coldest winters in Europe in recorded history. Many casualties were due to frostbite, and many soldiers froze to death at their posts.

The 4.5-mile stretch of road named in honor of the battle is part of the Route 146-Massachusetts Turnpike reconstruction, a public works project second in cost only to Boston's "Big Dig."

Submitted by
John E. McAuliffe
Central MA, Chapter VBOB

=====

Applicants must have a degree that included courses in mathematics and economics to qualify. Applicants without these courses, but with a bachelors degree, must have had experience working in the transport industry. Courses are in English, the international language of transportation.

Ocean transportation is a large and growing industry that has always provided foreign travel and opportunities to meet and communication with people worldwide. It does, however, require tact and the ability to quickly respond to changing situations.

You can contact Pete on the web at vboblesl@goes.com. A folder is available and will be mailed to you direct from Antwerp. Otherwise call 908-689-6037 or FAX 908-689-5382. You can contact ITMMA at its webside <http://www.ua.ac.be/itmma> or E-mail at itmma@ruca.ua.ac.be.

Veterans' ear problems ignored in violation of law

By MITCHELL KAIDY

During the World War II battles in which Julian Zielinski fought, artillery and mortar gunners fired approximately 100,000 shells as large as 105 mm. at the enemy. As the missiles were being fired, the gunners were taught to keep their mouths open.

This was said to forestall ravaged hearing by "equalizing" the pressure between their ears and the repeated explosions.

Artillery gunners in today's Army wear specially-designed earmuffs, and no one with any knowledge of audiology would endorse the old means of "reducing" the noise pressure. In World War II, Zielinski was an artilleryman/radio operator, receiving and sending messages over noisy, static-plagued radios near the frontlines.

For the past five years, Zielinski, of Rochester, has tried to convince the Buffalo office of the Department of Veterans Affairs that the conditions undergone by artillerymen in World War II merit a free hearing aid. But even after intervention by the office of Rep. Thomas Reynolds (R-Clarence), Zielinski was recently refused a hearing aid for the third time. This is nothing new for World War II veterans.

Repeated rejection has also been the lot of another Battle of the Bulge infantryman, Jack Tuttle of Rochester. Even though he informed the VA that artillery boomed incessantly on the frontlines and even though he described two events that severely eroded his hearing, he was denied a hearing aid. After repeated rejections, Tuttle finally won his case last year when dozens of combat veterans testified to repeated frontline noises. But he was a definite exception.

Sixty years ago, when Congress first grappled with soldiers' and sailors' combat traumas, it became apparent that because frontline warfare is so chaotic and undocumented, the recognition and treatment of combatants' claims must be both broad and liberal. So in 1941 Congress adopted the following language: "... the Secretary (of the VA) shall accept as sufficient proof of service connection ... satisfactory lay or other evidence of service of the incurrence or aggravation of such injury or disease, if consistent with the circumstances, conditions or hardships of such service ..."

This standard, Congress decided,



was to be accepted "notwithstanding the fact that there is no official record of such incurrence or aggravation in such service, and, to that end, shall resolve every reasonable doubt in favor of the veteran. ..."

So if that's the law, why did the bureaucracy repeatedly refuse to believe Zielinski, Tuttle, and thousands of other frontline fighters? Clearly, Congress, but not the bureaucracy, understood that a combatant should not be confronted with an impossible task — proving a chronic condition by citing a time, place and circumstance when it happened; all he need do is establish that his ailment was "consistent" with combat conditions. And if there is any doubt, the VA was commanded to decide in favor of the former combatant.

Perhaps, though, the problem is not that the statute was hard to understand but that it required expensive decisions. Hundreds of thousands of artillerymen who practiced the open-mouth method of ameliorating loud noises were bound to begin seeking hearing aids in later life.

The question of why hearing loss and other impairments weren't discovered at discharge continues to bedevil both the VA and World War II veterans. Why is this so? The answer may be located in the context of the time: After the atom bombs were loosed on Japan in 1945, the war ended summarily, and millions of men mobbed demobilization centers. Even if they knew they had suffered some disability, these young and optimistic soldiers elected a quick exit from the military rather than be stockpiled waiting for medical checkups.

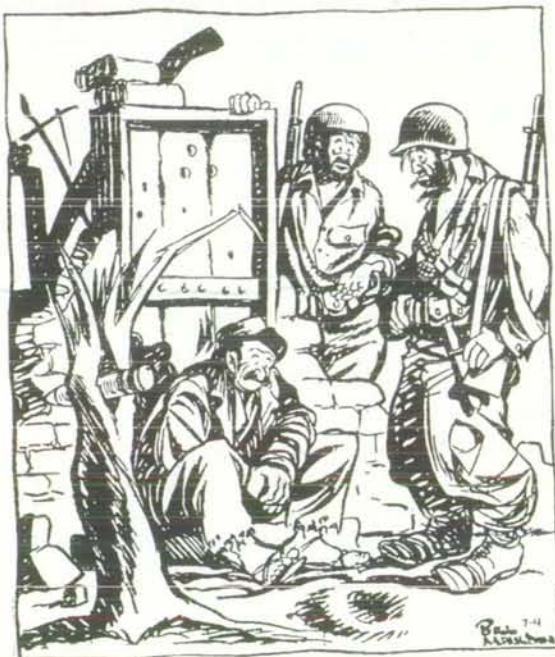
Many World War II combat veterans complain that the VA keeps rejecting them because it is waiting for them to die. I think they're right.

MITCHELL KAIDY of Rochester, a decorated infantryman in World War II, is vice president of the Genesee Valley Chapter, Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge.



**ARE YOUR
DUES
DUE ?**

Up Front with Willie & Joe



"Tell him to look at th' bright side of things, Willie.
His trees is pruned, his ground is plowed up,
an' his house is air-conditioned."

They said . . .

We came here with hope and determination. We leave here friends in fact, in spirit, and in purpose.

December. The final sentence of the Teheran declaration, signed by Roosevelt, Stalin, and Churchill

In ten years Hitler has led us from poverty and impotence to victory. He is now leading us to the greatest of victories.

January 30, 1943 GOERING

Some time next year . . . but it may well be the year after . . . we might beat Hitler, by which I mean beat him and his powers of evil into death, dust and ashes.

March 21, 1943 WINSTON CHURCHILL

The tide has turned. The free men of the world are marching together to victory. I have full confidence in our courage, devotion to duty and skill in battle. We will accept nothing less than full victory.

June 6, 1944 EISENHOWER'S ORDER OF THE DAY

BATTLE OF THE BULGE HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

Invites You to Attend

"EVENTS OF REMEMBRANCE AND COMMEMORATION" OF THE 56th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

December 15 and 16, 2000

Washington, DC

The Sheraton National Hotel (Columbia Pike and Washington Boulevard), Arlington, Virginia, has been selected as the site for activities commemorating the 56th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge, December 15 and 16, 2000. This hotel is located only a few minutes from Arlington Cemetery, and will provide accommodations for a reduced rate of \$89.00 single or double occupancy. This rate is available for any night(s) between December 13 and December 17. For room reservations please call the Sheraton National Hotel of Arlington (1-800-468-9090 by November 21, 2000. Mention that you are attending the Battle of the Bulge Banquet and events.

This year, 2000, is the 50th anniversary of the beginning of the Korean War and we shall remember and honor those who also served our country in that bitter conflict. Many of our Bulge veterans who remained in service or were recalled saw service during the Korean War.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2000

- 2:00 PM – 6:00 PM Registration/receive name badges (hotel lobby).
- 3:00 PM – 10:00 PM Hospitality Room/Exhibits, scrapbooks. John Bowen & Earle Hart, Battle of the Bulge Historians will be the hosts. A private area in the Café Brasserie has been reserved for supper from 6:30 – 8:00 PM for the Battle of the Bulge Veterans (payment is on your own).

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2000

- 7:45 AM – 8:30 AM Registration/receive name badges (hotel lobby).
- 8:45 AM Charter buses depart hotel.
- 9:15 AM Library of Congress – Special Tour of their world-renowned Map Division.
- 11:00 AM To Union Station for lunch on your own, model railroad exhibit, shopping.
- 1:30 PM Buses depart for Newseum, world's only interactive museum of news, behind the scenes to experience how and why news is made. Opened in 1997, it has welcomed more than 1 million visitors.
- 2:00 PM Tour of Newseum.
- 4:00 PM Return by bus to Sheraton National Hotel.
- BANQUET AT HOTEL GALAXY ROOM (Beautiful view of city lights).
- 6:00 PM Social Hour/Cash Bar.
- 6:45 PM Seated for Dinner.
- 7:00 PM Color Guard/Drummer and Fifes/Ceremonies.
- 7:15 PM Dinner served.
- Program/Speaker/Presentations to Korean War Veterans.
- After Banquet Hospitality Room open.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2000

- 11:00 AM Impressive ceremony and placing of wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns, Arlington Cemetery.
- 11:30 AM Ceremony of Remembrance, Battle of the Bulge Memorial, across from Amphi-theater.
- 12:15 PM Buffet Luncheon, Hosted by VBOB, Sheraton Ball Room.
- Swearing-in of new VBOB officers. Comments by John Dunleavy, VBOB President.
- 2:00 PM Farewell.

National Salad/Choice of Dressing
Chicken Roulade with Apricot Glaze

OR

Sliced Sirloin of Beef with Sauce Merlot
Twice-Baked Potatoes
Stir-Fried Fresh Vegetables
Mini-Baguettes and Butter
Year "2000" Dessert
Coffee/Selection of Teas
Glass of Blush Wine with Dinner

BANQUET MENU

RESERVATION FORM
"REMEMBRANCE AND COMMEMORATION"
OF THE 56th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE
December 15 and 16 2000
Washington, DC

Return form and check by December 3, 2000 to:
 Battle of the Bulge Historical Foundation
 PO Box 2516,
 Kensington MD 20895-0181

Questions:
 Dorothy Davis 301-881-0356
 E-Mail:
jdbowen@gateway.net

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Battle of Bulge Unit: _____

Korean War Service: (6/25/1950 – 1/31/1955) When: _____

Unit(s): _____ Where: _____

RESERVATIONS:	<u>Number Attending</u>	<u>Cost/Person</u>	<u>Total</u>
Registration Fee	_____	\$10.00	\$ _____

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2000

6:30 PM – 8:00 PM: Café Brasserie, Dinner on your own _____ **on your own**
 Please indicate the number that will be attending so that we can advise the hotel.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2000

Chartered Bus (All Day-Round Trip) 8:45 AM – 4:15 PM	\$15.00	
Library of Congress Map Division AM Guided Tour		
Luncheon/Shopping: Union Station (On your own)		
Newseum PM		

Commemorative Banquet, Galaxy Room, Sheraton Hotel	\$44.00	
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Please make your Main Course selection(s):

- ☐ Chicken Roulade with Apricot Sauce _____
- OR**
- ☐ Sliced Sirloin of Beef with Sauce Merlot _____

GRAND TOTAL (Enclose check made out to BoBHF Commemoration): \$ _____

Table assignments for the Banquet will be on your name badge. If you wish to be seated with friends, please list their names:

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2000:

11:00 AM	Ceremonies: Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers/ VBOB Monument	No. Attending: _____
12:00 Noon	Reception/Buffer hosted by VBOB at Sheraton Hotel	No. Attending: _____

NOTES & REMINDERS:

It has been necessary this year to charge a registration fee to cover the overhead costs (Name Tags, Table Cards, Decorations, Color Guard Food, Hospitality, etc.) of this event.

Banquet Dress: Business suit/black tie/ military dress uniform (miniature medals encouraged)

Room reservations must be made with the Hotel by November 21 (Telephone 1-800-468-9090 November 2000)

Return completed Reservation Form by 3 December 2000, (Telephone 301-881-0356).

No cancellation refunds after December 5, 2000.

Please indicate in all places the number attending so that we can be advised of the proper number to plan. Thanks!

BULGE MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS

Horace M. Thorne 9th Armored Division

Rank and organization: Corporal, Troop D, 89th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, 9th Armored Division.

Place and date: Near Grufflängen, Belgium, 21 December 1944.

Citation: He was the leader of a combat patrol on 21 December 1944, near Grufflängen, Belgium, with the mission of driving German forces from dug-in positions in a heavily wooded area. As he advanced his light machine gun, a German Mark II tank emerged from the enemy position and was quickly immobilized by fire from American light tanks supporting the patrol. Two of the enemy tank men attempted to abandon their vehicle but were killed by Corporal Thorne's shots before they could jump to the ground. To complete the destruction of the tank and its crew, Corporal Thorne left his covered position and crept forward alone through intense machine gun fire until close enough to toss two grenades into the tank's open turret, killing two more Germans. He returned across the same fire-beaten zone as heavy mortar fire began falling in the area, seized his machine gun and, without help, dragged it to the knocked-out tank and set it up on the vehicle's rear deck. He fired short rapid bursts into the enemy positions from his advantageous but exposed location, killing or wounding eight. Two enemy machine-gun crews abandoned their positions and retreated in confusion. His gun jammed; but rather than leave his self-chosen post he attempted to clear the stoppage; enemy small-arms fire, concentrated on the tank, killed him instantly. Corporal Thorne, displaying heroic initiative and intrepid fighting qualities, inflicted costly casualties on the enemy and insured the success of his patrol's mission by the sacrifice of his life.



Day G. Turner 80th Infantry Division

Rank and organization: Sergeant, Company B, 319th Infantry, 80th Infantry Division.

Place and date: At Dahl, Luxembourg, 8 January 1945.

Citation: He commanded a nine-man squad with the mission of holding a critical flank position. When overwhelming numbers of the enemy attacked under cover of withering artillery, mortar, and rocket fire, he withdrew his squad into a nearby house, determined to defend it to the last man. The enemy attacked again and again and were repulsed with heavy losses. Supported by direct tank fire, they finally gained entrance, but the intrepid sergeant refused to surrender although five of his men were wounded and one was killed. He boldly flung a can of flaming oil at the first wave of attackers, dispersing them, and fought doggedly from room to room, closing with the enemy in fierce hand-to-hand encounters. He hurled hand grenade for hand grenade, bayoneted two fanatical Germans who rushed a doorway he was defending and fought on with the enemy's weapons when his own ammunition was expended. The savage fight raged for 4 hours, and finally, when only three men of the defending squad were left unwounded, the enemy surrendered. Twenty-five prisoners were taken, 11 enemy

dead and a great number of wounded were counted. Sergeant Turner's valiant stand will live on as a constant inspiration to his comrades. His heroic, inspiring leadership, his determination and courageous devotion to duty exemplify the highest tradition of the military service.

[Associate member Judy Greenhaigh, of the Lehigh Valley Chapter, send us a picture of the marker of Sergeant Turner which is in Hamm Cemetery in Luxembourg. On a trip to the cemetery in 1997, Mrs. Greenhaigh's group was looking for those who had served with the 702nd Tank Battalion or the 80th Division as those were the units that her father-in-law Donald Heckman had served with. She took this picture on this trip and they wondered at the time what vallant deed this brave soldier had done to have this highest military award bestowed upon him.]



BULGE TIDBITS

[JACOB BRYAN SPERRY, 75TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 291ST REGIMENT, 1ST BATTALION, sent along these tidbits regarding his experiences in the Bulge.]

On or about Christmas day in 1944 we were in reserve on the north side of the Bulge. The sky cleared and we were strafed by our P-38 planes. I don't know if we had any casualties.

Later on after we entered the battle and the ground was covered with snow, we were in a small town (a rare luxury) in Belgium. A town crier went down the street and occasionally stopped to ring a bell and give a short speech. I had no idea what was going on, but shortly women began coming from all directions with their arms loaded with white sheets. They turned them over to our outfit to use for camouflage. This is just one example of how the Belgian people were.

One other time in Belgium, a woman got us a pan of hot water to clean up in. We were like a flock of birds around this pan since we hadn't washed for days and possible weeks. This woman asked us to not take any SS troopers prisoner. She said they would come into your house and do anything or take anything they wanted. They didn't deserve to live she said. ■

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 insignia 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.

VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE CERTIFICATE ORDER BLANK

I request an 11" x 17" Certificate and certify that I received credit for the Ardennes Campaign during my military service. I have enclosed a check for \$15.00 for the Certificate. Please include the following information that I would like on the certificate:

First Name _____		MI _____		Last Name _____		Serial Number _____	
Organization: Company, Battalion and/or Regt, Division _____						Rank (Optional) _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Killed in Action _____		Location _____		<input type="checkbox"/> Died of Wounds _____		<input type="checkbox"/> POW _____	
date _____		place _____		date _____		dates _____ Camp _____	
MAILING INFORMATION:							
Name _____			Street Address _____			Apt No. _____	
City _____			State _____			Zip + 4 Code _____	
Telephone Number (In case we need to call you) _____			VBOB Member: Yes _____ No _____			Signature & date _____	
			not a requirement				

Make checks out to VBOB for \$15.00. Orders should be mailed to VBOB Certificate, PO Box 11129, Arlington, VA 22210-2129. Questions can be directed to John D. Bowen, 301-384-6533, Certificate Chairman. 01/08/99

VIEW OF THE BULGE BY AN AIR OBSERVER

By Jack H. Kruse

770th Field Artillery Battalion (SEP)
Headquarters & Headquarters Battery

Following the end of the month-long campaign at Brest, France, our battalion, as an VII Corps support unit, motor-marched across France to Belgium. We took up positions south of St. Vith in the vicinity of Oudler, Belgium, with headquarters in the village. This was just west of the Our River. I was billeted with a local farm family, who by the way I visited about 10 years later while being on Occupation Duty in Germany.

Weeks of flying as an air observer in a L-4 aircraft through October, November, and early December yielded a limited number of fire missions. A very quiet sector patrolling our Our River and Schnee Eifel range sector from Echternach in the south to St. Vith in the North across the 2nd and 28th Division fronts. Around 12 December, about the time the 106th Division was replacing the 28th Division, we happened to fly too close to the West bank of the Our and took several rounds in our aircraft. (Several of which came within inches of bore-sighting me in the rear seat.) Fortunately, we made it back to our airstrip, intact. About two days later, while taking off on a mission, our aircraft stalled out and we crashed in an open airfield in about 3 to 4 feet of snow. The pilot, Lt. Davis was severely injured and eventually evacuated back to the States to end his part in the war. My injuries were minor rib and cartilage bruises. Capt. Wolfe, our battalion surgeon, taped me up and grounded me for several days.

We were awakened on the morning of 16 December by intense shelling from across the Our River. Oudler Village was in defoliate so the rounds were landing beyond us in our service battery area. Colonel Burnett, our battalion CO, sent me, taped as I was, to the air strip, where we began flying missions to attempt to assess the situation and fire some missions, were possible. We had to fly low level due to bad weather, but were able to spot long columns of German units on our side of the Our River. Then we got one of those once-in-a-lifetime breaks. SP's, troop carriers and flak wagons were passing by a checkpoint where our battalion had registered previously. So many of our ground forces were shifting positions that it was difficult to get a fire mission set up. Finally, a response from fire direction center set up a mission of approximately a battalion of 3 rounds along the target area. Much fire, smoke and explosions indicated that the mission caused a lot of damage to the German column. However, smoke screens then obscured the column and flak wagons began intensive fire in our direction thereby driving us away from the area. There was nothing left to do except return to the airstrip for refueling and new orders.

Since the FA units, along with many others, were withdrawing westward and out of position, the FA Group to which our battalion was attached directed all aircraft to assemble in a rear area. The air sections vehicles and personnel joined them there. The plan was to have the aircraft leap-frog to fields in a south westerly direction. The air sections to follow as well as possible. I was directed to form a column of the group, battalions, and 106th Division air sections and link up with our aircraft "somewhere" along the way. Considering the fact that we had no communication connection with the air units or any other

ground units, we moved on, guessing the best way to avoid the German advance.

The first night we stopped in Marche to regroup, determine our route northwest and rest. However, our rest was short lived when an engineer unit roused out all units to cross the nearby river before the bridge was blown. A long motor march ended some time later with our arrival in Namur, Belgium. There we found billets and parking for the column and replenishment of our depleted stock of C-rations.

Through contact with a MP battalion in Namur, we learned that our aircraft were located in Sedan, France. We started a night motor march south, but within a few miles were strafed by a German night-fighter, fortunately with no casualties. Returning to Namur, we waited until daylight and again started toward Sedan, a march of several days. Finally, without further incidents, we made it to Sedan on Christmas Day and rejoined our respective command units. Next began our battalion move north and west pushing the German armies back into Germany. We fired some missions, and at one point, observed U.S. troop units moving toward relief of Bastogne. Further on during an observation flight in the vicinity of Prüm, I spotted several SP guns and a tank on a ridge. They appeared to be setting up firing positions. (Now comes the "second" of those once-in-a-lifetime breaks.) Just below, on a crossroads near the German armor, was a checkpoint used by our battalion to register the guns. I set up a fire mission and was given a battalion 2 or 3 rounds. The results for the Germans--disastrous! When the smoke cleared all SP's and the tank were destroyed and mostly on fire! An artillery man's dream came true!

We continued on westward in support of different units, but finally, due to a shortage of 4.5 ammo, we were removed from combat and carried out a new mission of "peaceful capturing" of by-passed towns, posting the "Eisenhower Bans" (removal of all guns, cameras, personal weapons, establishing curfews, etc.) later to be followed in by civil affairs units. We did liberate a small concentration camp and was the first U.S. unit into Stalag VII A at Mooseburg, Germany. At the war's end, we were guarding SS prisoners in the Dachau Concentration Camp! My contribution to the Battle of the Bulge was 138 combat firing missions.

[Note: The 770th Field Artillery Battalion (SEP) was one of several activated and equipped with 4.5 inch guns, tractor drawn, with separate loading ammo. Extreme range of these guns were around 24,000 yards, which made them ideal for long-range interdiction missions. These units were almost identical with 155 Howitzer battalions except for different gun tubes, ammo, and utilization.]■



WITS OF WAR

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NOVEMBER, 2000

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VBOB Logo Patch - 3"	\$ 4.50		\$
VBOB Logo Patch - 4"	\$ 5.50		\$
VBOB Logo Decal - 4"	\$ 1.25		\$
VBOB Windshield Logo - 4"	\$ 1.25		\$
VBOB Logo Stickers (10) - 1 1/4"	10 for \$1.25		\$
Baseball Cap w/3" VBOB Logo Patch - Navy only	\$ 10.00		\$
Windbreaker w/4" VBOB Logo Patch (Navy only) <i>Please circle size (they run a little snug): M L XL XXL XXXL</i> <i>(XXL and XXXL - see prices)</i>	\$ 25.00 (M, L & XL) \$ 26.00 for XXL \$ 27.00 for XXXL		\$
VBOB Logo Lapel Pin - 1/2"	\$ 5.00		\$
Miniature VBOB Logo Medal w/Ribbon (pin on type)	\$ 8.50		\$
VBOB Logo Belt Buckle - Silver tone or Gold tone <i>(Please circle choice)</i>	\$ 16.00		\$
VBOB Logo Bolo Tie - Silver tone or Gold tone <i>(Please circle choice)</i>	\$ 16.00		\$
VBOB License Plate Frame w/Logos - White plastic w/Black printing	\$ 5.00		\$
VBOB 100 Sheet Notepad w/Logo - "This Note Is From... A Veteran of the Battle of the Bulge" - White paper with Blue printing	\$ 3.00		\$
VBOB Tote Bag - 18" x 15" natural (off-white) color tote bag with navy handles and large navy VBOB logo	\$ 8.00		\$

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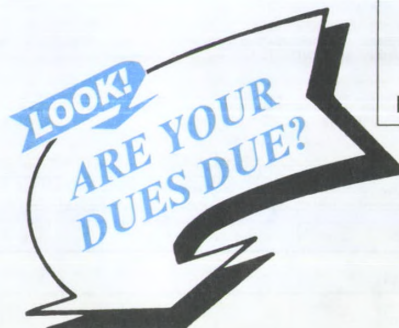


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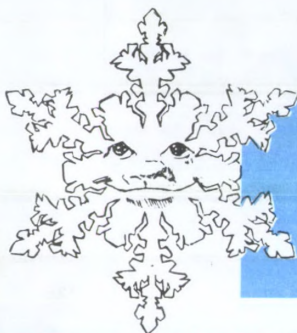
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Unit(s) to which assigned during period December 16, 1944 - January 25, 1945 - Division _____

Regiment _____ Battalion _____

Company _____ Other _____

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

Applicants Signature _____

RECRUITER (Optional)