

The BULGE BUGLE

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THE ARDENNES CAMPAIGN

AUGUST 2003

One Man's Decision:

WHY SHAEF FAILED TO HALT THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE



©WALT DISNEY

By Jay Von Werlhof
114th Signal Radio
Intelligence Company

"I'm not saying that the High Command would have done anything different if they had received our reports, but they didn't have a chance to respond, either. It is clear from the numerous studies conducted on this issue that I have reviewed, our unit, opposite the German Sixth Army spearhead, alone, received the data on build-up and maneuvering that no commander would have mistaken for simply training exercises as some asserted who had learned that there was some frontline shifting going on."

Page 11



**Last
Call
For
Quincy!**

**Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge
REUNION - Quincy, Mass.**
8 Miles South of Historic Boston
Sept. 4, 5, 6, 7, 2003

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INC.**
P.O. Box 11129
Arlington, VA 22210-2129
703-528-4058

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Publisher/Chief Editor:

George Chekan
9th Infantry Division

Contributing Editors:

Robert F. Phillips
28th Infantry Division

Historical Research:

John D. Bowen
Associate Member

ELECTED OFFICERS:

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CHAPTER PRESIDENTS

ALABAMA

GEN. GEORGE S. PATTON, JR. (XI)
Leslie Ray Huckaby 256-593-8353
99 Huckaby Hollow Rd
Horton, AL 35980-9771

ARIZONA

ARIZONA (XXVI)
Ponce Long 520-73-0253
648 W Central Ave
Coolidge, AZ 85228

SOUTHERN ARIZONA (LIII)

John G. Westover 520-297-1492
6100 N Oracle #20
Tucson, AZ 85704

BELGIUM

5TH FUSILIERS OF BELGIUM (XXXVIII)
Roger Hardy (50) 41 71 13
14, Landdijk
8370 Blanbenberge, Belgium

CALIFORNIA

FRESNO (V)
Kenneth Hohmann 559-227-5232
5515 N. Fresno St #124
Fresno, CA 93711-8335

GEN. GEORGE S. PATTON, JR. (XIII)
Donald C. Stafford 408-662-0472
101 Via Soderini
Aptos, CA 95003

GOLDEN GATE (X)
Russell S. Rodgers 415-731-8225
1912 10th Ave
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SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA (XVI)
John W. Mosley 562-947-1727
16428 Lebo St
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2530 San Joaquin Ct
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CONNECTICUT YANKEE (XL)
Richard Egan 203-634-0974
79 Alceve St
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245 S Golden Dr
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BRANDYWINE VALLEY CHAPTER (LXVI)
Charles Gaffney 302-762-3023
907 Shipley Rd
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FLORIDA
CENTRAL FLORIDA (XVIII)
Ray V. Brassard 904-734-2748
515 Lake Winnemsett Dr
DeLand, FL 32724-4816

FLORIDA CITRUS (XXXII)
Gerald V. Myers 863-686-2121
320 E Palm Dr
Lakeland, FL 33803-2650

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915 Hemlock St
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SOUTHEAST FLORIDA (LXII)
George Fisher 561-585-7086
3456 S Ocean Blvd #503
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GOLDEN TRIANGLE (XLVIII)
Harry E. Kirby 352-873-8380
11569 SW 71 Cir
Ocala, FL 34476-9482

FLORIDA SOUTHWEST CHAPTER (LXVII)
Vincent Runowich 727-323-3793
4063 10th Ave N
St. Petersburg, FL 33713

INDIANA
NORTHERN INDIANA (XXX)
Carroll Austin 219-365-5668
9260 Schillton Dr
Saint John, IN 46373

CENTRAL INDIANA (XLVII)
John R. Kerr 317-852-5665
1030 Harris St
Brownsburg, IN 46112-1704

IOWA

IOWA (XXXIV)
Pius P. Reis 712-368-2335
103 Davenport St
Holstein, IA 51025

HAWKEYE STATE (XLIV)
Harold R. Lindstrom 515-278-0081
4105 75th St
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MARYLAND/D.C. (III)
John T. Worthington, III
3110 Gracefield Rd #CC-203
Silver Spring, MD 20904

MASSACHUSETTS

L A M A R S O U T T E R / C E N T R A L
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21 Freeman Rd
Yarmouth Port, MA 02575

MICHIGAN

WEST MICHIGAN (XXIII)
Maurice Cole 231-879-4040
PO Box 81
Fife Lake, MI 49633

GREAT LAKES (XXI)
Chapter now defunct

MISSISSIPPI

MISSISSIPPI (XXXIII)
James E. Booth 662-258-7584
108 Meadow Ln
Eupora, MS 39744

MISSOURI

GATEWAY (XXV)
W. Kent Stephens 618-344-1616
107 Bluffview Lane
Collinsville, IL 62234

NEW JERSEY

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James K. Cullen 973-584-6126
6 Parkwood Rd
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FORT MONMOUTH (LVI)
Edward Turrell 732-264-5447
3 Chestnut Dr
Hazlet, NJ 07730

FORT DIX/MAQUIRE AFB (LX)
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SOUTH JERSEY (LXI)
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PO Box 285
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LONG ISLAND (LXIII)
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PO Box 7127
Wantagh, NY 11793

NORTH CAROLINA

NORTH CAROLINA (IX)
William R. Strickland 910-897-8295
R.D. #3, Box #514
Dunn, NC 28334

NORTH DAKOTA

NORTH DAKOTA (XX)
Sybil Peterson
(Address needed)

OHIO

BLANCHARD VALLEY (XLII)
Marvin A. Russel 419-423-8530
1926 Queenswood Dr #4
Findlay, OH 45840-6952

BUCKEYE (XXIX)
Milan A. Rolik 330-867-2061
1278 Culpepper Dr
Akron, OH 44313-6840

GEN. D. D. EISENHOWER (XXXV)
Gerald E. Hogue 419-675-2082
18905 State Route 309 E
Kenton, OH 43326-9723

NORTH COAST OHIO (XXXVI)
Edwin J. Stoch 216-731-1258
27101 Edgecliff Dr
Euclid, OH 44132

PENNSYLVANIA

DELAWARE VALLEY (IV)
Stanley Wojtusik 215-637-4191
9639 Wissinoming St
Philadelphia, PA 19114

SUSQUEHANNA (XIX)
Ms. Clara Gustin 717-342-8496
230 Crown Ave.
Scranton, PA 18505-2016

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA (XIV)
Harvey B. Waugaman 724-834-4474
9 Meadowbrook Ave
Greensburg, PA 15601-1711

OHIO VALLEY (XXXI)
Felix J. Cistolo 724-758-3163
111 Franklin Ave
Ellwood City, PA 16117-2214

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3419 Foster Ln
Reading, PA 19605

CUMBERLAND VALLEY (LXV)
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306 Lurgan Ave
Shippensburg, PA 17257

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RHODE ISLAND (XXIV)
William Gaynor 401-437-1297
PO Box 164
Warren, RI 02885

SOUTH CAROLINA

SOUTH CAROLINA (VII)
Joseph B. Jones 803-782-3638
5828 Pinebranch Rd
Columbia, SC 29206

TEXAS

GREATER HOUSTON (XXVII)
James C. Burtner 713-783-6149
10312 Briar Forest Dr.
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BEN FREEMAN (XXXVII)
Ned W. Smith
11399 County Road 2326
Tyler, TX 75707-9541

ALAMO (XLVI)
John Hamilton 210-696-1904
9605 Tioga Drive
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LONE STAR (L)
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PO Box 112474
Carrollton, TX 75011-2474

VERMONT-NEW HAMPSHIRE-MAINE

TRI-STATE (XVII)
Alpha A. Chevrette 603-485-9448
16 Birch Hill Dr
Hooksett, NH 03106-1523

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3745 Chain Bridge Rd
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CRATER (XLIII)
W. Baxter Perkinson 804-590-1185
9441 W. River Rd.
Matoca, VA 23803-1019

WASHINGTON

NORTHWEST (VI)
Lois Wick 253-566-7665
PO Box 64388
University Place, WA 98474-0338

WISCONSIN

NORTHERN WISCONSIN (I)
Elmer M. Dellenbach 715-845-3951
9202 Highland Dr
Wausau, WI 54401

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

Hope to see you all at our Annual Reunion in Quincy, Massachusetts, on September 4 to 8. Stan Wojtusik has worked very hard to present a wonderful program which will take us back to Christmas, 1944. Try to remember that day as you celebrate with us in the historic Town of Quincy, home of the Adams Family, who contributed two presidents in the early days of our Union.

Your organization continues to grow and thanks to all of the chapters, we are leaving our mark in cities all over the United States. The national organization receives reports from these chapters of monuments being placed at prominent locations through the efforts of the chapter members. I had the pleasure of attending the dedication of a beautiful monument funded entirely by the members of the Southern Arizona Chapter--John Westover, President.

I am very grateful to Buck Bloomer, Chairman of the Committee, and all the members of that chapter for the hospitality extended to my wife and me during our stay in Tucson. This chapter has grown rapidly in the five years it has been in existence through the efforts of these two individuals.

We are reminded of the never-ending police action in Korea that is observing its 50th anniversary. Our best wishes to all of those Americans who fought in that action and it is our hope that history will record accurately the terrible ordeal of these troops.



Louis Cunningham



"I was hoping you'd wear your soldier suit, -
so I could be proud of you."

We are now looking forward to 2004 as we prepare of the 60th Anniversary of the end of the largest land battle ever fought by United States ground forces. Most notably will be the dedication of the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C.

In order to get in ahead of the crowd, John Bowen, our Recording Secretary, with assistance from Dorothy Davis and Mary Ann Bowen, has reserved over 300 hotel rooms for members who want to attend. These rooms being held for VBOB members in three hotels in the Washington, D.C., area will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. Watch your *Bulge Bugle* for details. At the same time, we have scheduled our 2004 Annual Reunion to coincide with the memorial dedication rather than have two activities in the same year. We will return to the regular schedule in 2005.

We are still hoping for something definite on a trip to Belgium and Luxembourg in the latter part of 2004 to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of their liberation. It is our hope that the governments of those two countries, along with the U.S. Ambassadors, will come up with a plan soon.

There seems to be no end to the suffering of our military no matter where in the world they are asked to serve. Daily, we receive reports of another American being killed or wounded in Iraq. Our sympathy is extended to the families of these heroic soldiers. Our thoughts are of the many cemeteries with rows of white crosses in several countries across Europe where our friends are buried. It appears that the killing will never end.

On a more positive note, three of our members, Harry Meisel, Stan Wojtusik, and I, have been honored with the Legion of Honor presented by the Chapel of Four Chaplains. This is a great honor and deeply appreciated by me. Harry received his medal in person in Luxembourg in June. Stan and I will receive ours at a later date.■

SPECIAL NOTICE: We receive many inquiries about whether or not the Purple Heart Medal was issued for frozen feet. The determination is made on an individual basis by the Army Board for Correction of Military Records. If you would like to make application to them, we can send you an application. Send a self-addressed, stamped (37 cents) envelope and we will mail you a copy of the application. On the outside envelope, write "Purple Heart" for a quicker response. VBOB cannot determine your eligibility.■

IN THIS ISSUE

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 3. President's Message | 21. Members Speak Out |
| 4. Letters to the Editor | 22. Reunions |
| 5. In Loving Memory | 23. A Wager Pays Off |
| 6. WWII Monument Message | 24. 4th Infantry Division |
| 7. A Corporal's Story | 25. Arizona Chapter Monument |
| 8. A Trip to Europe | 26. VBOB Remembrance |
| 9. 2004 Reunion & Dedication | 28. "Terrible 20" |
| 11. Why SHAEF Failed | 29. My Bulge Experience |
| 16. Quincy VBOB Reunion | 31. Thanks to God |
| 20. Diesel Fuel and Sausage | |

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

MORE ON BULGE INTELLIGENCE

This is in response to page 8 of an article written in the February, 2003, issue of *The Bulge Bugle*.

As a member of "A" Company, 395th Regiment, 99th Infantry Division, there were five of us assigned a position to relieve an armored half track and its crew somewhere in the Ardennes Forest outside of Elsenborn. Our battalion stretched out on a five-mile front ahead of the main line of resistance. We arrived at these positions about November 1, 1944, and we remained there until December 12th. Soon after being assigned there, our kitchen was knocked out by shell fire. With that, they moved the kitchen a safe distance back and brought hot meals to us in a jeep and trailer. We would take turns going to be fed and bring food back for those back at our positions.

It could have been late November or early December when PFC Leo Summers and I were on our way back to our positions with breakfast for our buddies when we captured a German soldier coming toward us. When he saw us, he put up his hands to surrender. He was holding a nice new Czechoslovakian burp gun. Summers and I took him back to the chow tent and turned him over. He was taken back to Corps Headquarters where he told them Von Runstedt was building up enough forces to make a push to take Paris back as a Christmas gift for Hitler. He also told them he (Von Runstedt) had 7 Panzer Division and was waiting for a couple of more before he made his move.

With this information, Corps Headquarters thought it best to force his hand and sent small groups of troops to advance toward him and force him to move before any more help arrived. We moved out to encounter them on December 12th and had easy going until the fateful morning of December 16th.

I would like to hear from anyone who might have a similar story. (Address: 669 Mere Point Road, Brunswick, Maine 04011)

William Goss
99 INF 395 INF A

[William tells us that the characture we used to announce the Massachusetts Reunion ("One if by land and two if by sea"), reminded him that he "portrayed William Dawes on this most historical ride on April 19, 1965. From the heights of Elliot Square, Roxbury, Massachusetts to Brookline into Cambridge, into Arlington and on into the Battle Green at Lexington."]

PROUD TO HAVE SERVED

After a couple of weeks in France, I was sent to Malmédy, Belgium, and from there, moved into the Ardennes around late October or early November, 1944. I left the front lines with frozen feet on January 25th and spent the remainder of my time in Camp Carson Hospital in Colorado.

I was proud to have done my duty for this great nation.

John A. Voglewede
1 INF 16 INF C

KEEPING 'EM TOGETHER

I have a twin brother, whose name is Richard (Dick).

...you will notice my serial number is for those who enlist, but Dick's is for draftees.

My mother wrote to our congressional representative (Columbus, Ohio) and asked if he could help to keep her twin boys together in the service. As a result, I, the enlisted one, was kept out until Dick was called.

John Lewis
87 INF 312 MED BN D

AN ENJOYABLE EXPERIENCE

I would like to share a most enjoyable experience I had speaking to the fifth grade children at Coral Reef Elementary School (Florida). Since the class recently completed their history lesson on World War II, I was invited as a resource person.

Armed with large poster maps and a red laser ball pen, I immediately gave them the four very important dates to remember. Namely: December 7, 1941; June 6, 1944; December 16, 1944; and May 5, 1945.

Needless to say, I discussed the importance of these dates.

One poster had the German territory in 1939 before their lust for power. The other poster had the front line of the Ardennes Forest as it existed on December 16th and also outlined the "Bulge" in the line two weeks later. The Germans called it "Autumn Mist"...we named it the "Battle of the Bulge." This was the turning point of the war and the Germans surrendered 3-1/2 months later.

At the conclusion, I distributed an American flag to all and also distributed my medals for the children to see and feel. The letters of thanks I received were priceless. This was a most gratifying morning which will long be remembered.

The education of our younger generation is so vital and essential. Decreasing budgets and academic indifference have made World War II almost non-existent. It is our duty to correct this situation.

George Fisher
26 INF 328 INF 3 BN H

WHO WILL CARRY THE TORCH?

I, as a member of VBOB, have appointed our older son, Bill, as my associate member to succeed me as a member in the event of my demise and I have suggested to other members of the 87th Chemical Mortar Battalion Association that they do the same. The next question that they ask is "What will we have to do as an associate member besides paying dues?"

Could you please spell those additional duties out so that I, for one can pass the information on to any prospective associate member? Thank you very much.

R. Keith Ostrum
87 CHEM MTR BN

[A good question, Keith. We're hopeful that the associate members will carry on just as our regular members have done. Although they will not have your first-hand experience, they will be able to tell of their parent's experiences to help ensure that the Battle of the Bulge and the sacrifices of same are never forgotten. Eventually, they will be the ones who will determine their course. What better hands can we leave such an responsibility in? Do we want the Bulge forgotten?]

PICTURE BROUGHT BACK MEMORIES

Seeing the picture of Joanne Holbrook Patton brought back a number of memories for my wife.

BG Willard A. Holbrook, Jr., was Chief of Cavalry at Fort Riley, Kansas, and the name selected for a U.S. Army transport of the U.S. Army "General Class" Transportation Service, an early segment of the present day Military Sea Transportation Service (MSTS).

During the period 1949-1950, my wife sailed in Willard A. Holbrook, as chief ship's nurse on voyages from Bremerhaven, Germany, to New York and other cities in the USA, Genoa, Italy, to several ports in South America and a long voyage from Jakarta, Indonesia, to Rotterdam, The Netherlands.

This vessel, as well as three others Marge sailed in, was used for the movement of displaced persons from ETO to many countries. The Dutch from Jakarta were POW's of the Japs, both military and civilian, who had been interned for eight-ten years.

William Leeseemann, Jr.
26 INF 101 ENGR CMBT BN

TOO MANY DUDS

I was reading *The Bugle* of August 2002, page 26, by Gustav Swiersz. He was talking about shells falling and they were duds. Maybe I can help him understand why there were so many 88 duds.

Because of my age and putting so much out of my mind I do not recall some dates and places.

Some time in March of 1945, we were told to go into a captured munitions building. It had been secured so we had no fear of the Germans. There was a stack of boxes on the platform burning. We were told they were rifles.

As we entered the building we were sent to the lower floor about three stories down. As we entered the room, it stunk so bad we almost lost it. There was a lot of Polish.

(Continued on next page)

The following is a winning essay by Courtney Reid, 12-year-old student, in loving memory of her grandfather who was in the Battle of the Bulge. This was presented at the dedication of the VBOB Monument at Tucson, AZ on May 30th 2003

In Loving Memory of Henry C. Puryear Reflective Essay

My grandfather and I are walking along a long, narrow hallway when we abruptly come to a stop. And standing right in front of us is a door. I ask him where it leads and he tells me that it leads to a special time in history. He told me that it might not be a special time for everybody, but for him it was. Then I asked him if I could see what time in history he was talking about. He cautiously says we can see, but I had to be prepared for anything. Eagerly awaiting what lay before me, I said yes. We walked through the door with his hand in mine.

The first thing I see when we walk through the door are lights. I see what looked to be hundred's of orange lights in the sky that made enormous explosions. I bawl to my grandpa in horror. "What's going on Grandpa? Where are we? Let's get out of here. We're going to get hurt!"

"Don't worry" my grandpa says reassuringly. "Nothing is going to happen to us. We can't get hurt. This is just a time in history, it's already happened, so nothing can even touch us. And to answer your question, we're at the Battle of the Bulge. We're in Belgium."

"Oh my gosh, you mean we're really here?" I asked with a bit of fear in my voice.

He replied back, "Yes we are. And do you see that tall man over there leading those troops?"

So I looked toward where he was pointing and I spot a tall, slender, Caucasian man dressed in a dirty uniform that looks like it hasn't been washed in days. And he was leading a small group of troops through a raven. "Yes, I see him grandpa, but what does he have to do with anything?" I asked.

"Courtney, that man over there is...me."

Looking more closely at the man, I could tell that it was definitely my grandpa. "Wow grandpa. That's you? You look so brave and young."

"Thank you Courtney" he said with a little bit of admiration in his voice. "But just watch."

So we both stand there and watch carefully. But all I could do was think to myself wondering why anybody would want to fight. But before I could ponder my own thoughts anymore, I feel a sharp poke that makes me jump a little.

"It's about to happen any moment now if I remember correctly," my grandpa said in a very tense voice.

So I keep a very close eye on the man leading the troops. When all of a sudden I observe a short man jump out of some tall bushes and pulls out a gun and point it in the direction of my grandpa and his troops.

I have no idea what to think, I'm too terrified to do anything but cover my eyes. I finally open them when I hear four, loud, spine tingling booms from the gun. I scream in

total horror and close my eyes again. But I open them again when my grandpa promises me that nothing can happen to us and that it's all over.

I wipe the tears from my eyes and found myself staring at the most horrific sight I could ever imagine. My grandpa was lying on the ground with his troops surrounding him. I happen to notice that the man from behind the bush had disappeared to who knows where. I run up to where my grandpa was lying and kneel next to him in total shock. I try to hold him, but I can't. My hand just runs straight through him. All I could see was blood everywhere and people yelling for a medic.

Even though I didn't want to, I looked down at my grandpa. What I saw was unexplainable. He looked so helpless and lifeless just lying there with his eyes open staring into oblivion. I started to shout for help, but then realized it would do no good. Nobody could hear me. So I just knelt down and just started to cry.

I cried for who knows how long. By the time I stopped crying, everybody was gone-my grandpa, the troops, the medics that finally showed up after what seemed to be forever. As I looked up, I could see my grandpa how he looks now leaning on a blood covered tree patiently waited for me. I got up from where I was sitting and found that my legs ached from being in the same position so long, so I got up slowly noticing all the blood still on the ground.

I ran to my grandpa as fast as I could. As soon as I reached him, I put my arms around him and hugged him as tight as I could and cried. He put his frail arms around me and for the first time since we got there, I felt safe. After a couple of minutes, I finally let go. I looked into my grandpa's face and could see a single tear run down his face.

"I know, it was a really horrifying experience for me. But I survived. And thank God I did. Because if I didn't, I wouldn't have a wonderful wife, kids, or grandkids."

I had to smile. "So that's why this moment was so special to you, huh grandpa?" I asked. "Because you survived and had a family huh?"

"Yes Courtney. And if it wasn't for me getting shot, I never would have met your grandma and we wouldn't have gotten married and you probably wouldn't even exist," said my grandpa in an honorable voice.

So with that, we walked back through the door the same way we came in-hand in hand. But this time, we both had a smile on our face and a whole new look towards life,

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

(Continuation)

men and women putting 88's together. We were told that it stunk so the guards very seldom went in. As the casings came down the line men or women would straddle them and urinate in them. On the end where the detonators were being screwed in some one would spit in them. All in all, no telling how many American soldiers owe their lives to these prisoners or others.

I was in the 97th Division, 318th Regiment, Company I. We went on to Cologne later where we saw a bath tub hanging on the wall where the second floor had been. The next day after going on we were 14 kilometers northeast of Cologne when I got my two bullets--that ended my fighting days.

I am proud to say I left a lot of blood on that battle field which helped my country be free. One Nation Under God.

Earl L. Fort
97 INF 381 INF I



WW II MONUMENT MESSAGE

Pictured: One of the messages which will be a part of the WW II Memorial.

Picture was taken by

JIM NORLING

78TH INFANTRY DIVISION

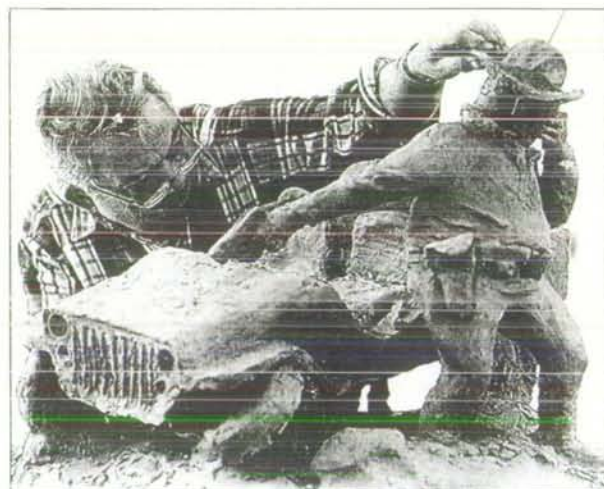


CONSTRUCTION OF WWII NATIONAL MEMORIAL WASHINGTON, DC – ON SCHEDULE

Stan Wojtusik, VBOB VP/Military Affairs and George Chekan, VBOB Exec VP visit the construction site of the National WWII Memorial last May 10th. Mike Conley, Associate Executive Director explained the various phases of construction. The WWII monument is on schedule for dedication the latter part of May 2004.



Sgt. Roy Dory



THE ARTIST'S HANDS: The late Pulitzer Prize-winning cartoonist Bill Mauldin sculpts the original clay model for his sculpture, "Cavalry Sergeant," at the Shidoni Foundry north of Santa Fe about 1991. It was one of Bill Mauldin's famous cartoons from World War II.

A clearly distressed cavalry sergeant covers his eyes and turns away as he points a gun at the hood of a jeep with a broken wheel axle. It's as if he is putting the mechanical beast out of its misery the way a cavalry soldier from an earlier era might have done to a horse with a broken leg.

The cartoon was said to have been Mauldin's personal favorite. Not surprisingly, when he took his first foray into sculpture, Mauldin chose this cartoon as his model.

EVALUATION OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

By Christian Kraft
President of CRIBA

[Translation from French] At the time of the battle of the Ardennes, I was a 14-year old boy and was living with my family in a house located in the Town of Liege to the rear of the front which was being subjected to major V-1 and V-2 attacks--we lived day and night in cellars. At that time, civilians like us were very poorly informed about the progress of the Ardennes battles. We listened every day to the censored news of the BBC.

Today, after reading many books from different sources on the Battle of the Ardennes and meeting numerous American, English, and German veterans as well as Belgian and Luxembourg civilians, I can form a better opinion.

The Ardennes offensive can be considered as a group of battles whose centers of gravity varied over time and space.

At the beginning of the battle, the powerful 6th Panzer Army after advancing a few kilometers, was halted by two American infantry divisions (2nd and 99th) supported by a powerful American artillery bombardment. This, at the very start, upset the plans of the German High Command.

The very mobile column Panzer group Peiper was pushed off course by Combat Engineer Battalions and was ultimately surrounded by the 82nd Airborne, 3rd Armored, and 30th Infantry Divisions.

Then the resistance of the 7th Armored Division at St. Vith kept the 5th Panzer Army of von Manteuffel from reaching the Meuse in the short time expected.

Further south, although the Town of Bastogne represents a symbol of the heroic resistance of the American Army in the 101st Airborne Division, it was rapidly bypassed by the Panzer Lehr and 2nd Panzer Divisions, which never reached the Meuse, blocked as they were by the 2nd Armored Division.

Between Bastogne and St. Vith, the very mobile 116th Panzer Division zigzagged its way forward and, after two major detours, was stopped in its march to the west by the 2nd Armored.

Finally, the northern offensive towards Liege by the 2nd SS Panzer Division was brought to a halt, in the battles of Manhay by the 3rd Armored and 82nd Airborne Divisions.

The overly ambitious German offensive ran out of steam because of a lack of fuel and reinforcements.

Next, the Americans counterattacked: first the raid thrust of Patton's 4th Armored Division, which liberated Bastogne, and then the general counteroffensive on the salient's northern and southern flanks, which came together at Houffalize on January 16, 1945. It must be recognized that the Germans carried out a remarkable defensive battle.

The real victors of the Battle of the Ardennes were the heroic American infantrymen who, instead of running away, held their ground at the start of the battle and allowed American reinforcements, with mobility extraordinary for that time, sealing holes pierced by the German armies and pushing them back to their starting point.

This group of battles constituted the Ardennes offensive and counter-offensive, called the "Battle of the Bulge" by the Americans. Responding one day to the young son of an American veteran, I could explain to him that the vast area over which these numerous battlefields were scattered is the reason why there is not an observation tower in the Ardennes, as there is at Gettysburg. ■

A CORPORAL'S STORY

by Carroll D. Willey
5th Infantry Division
11th Infantry Regiment
Company A

[The following article appeared in the VBOB Central Indiana Chapter newsletter, dated September 1, 2002.]

On a sultry day in July 1944 a young Army corporal began his long journey from New York City to England aboard the *Queen Elizabeth*.

First Combat

The Battle of the Bulge was in progress and the corporal was now a member of Company A, 11th Infantry Regiment, 5th Infantry Division of Patton's Third Army.

His first experience in combat came on Christmas Eve, 1944. His squad dug foxholes in a somewhat open area and assumed a defensive posture for the evening. Enemy artillery rounds battered the squad positions and tracer rounds criss-crossed overhead. The corporal shivered in his foxhole that night.

On Christmas Day the enemy army was retreating and the mess vehicle brought a hot turkey dinner to the troops. Not much time was spent in celebrating the holidays. The 11th pressed forward, crossing stream after stream; encountering mine fields and digging foxholes. It was not uncommon to dig through four feet of snow before they reached the frozen ground.

One evening the corporal was selected as a scout in a reconnaissance patrol. The patrol crossed a small stream and encounter friendly artillery rounds falling near their position. A few rounds were white phosphorous.

Days passed quickly, and rumors of a Rhine River crossing began to spread through the ranks. The 11th Infantry began to prepare for a small-boat river crossing. The young corporal moved with his squad into an enemy-occupied town--one like many they had already taken from the enemy. A barrage of 88's fell as they assaulted. While jumping into a small river, the corporal felt a sharp sting below his right knee cap. He realized that a piece of enemy shell had found its mark. He was evacuated to the hospital and he knew he would miss the river crossing. He was acutely aware of the seriously wounded around him.

His unit had crossed the Rhine while he recuperated. The corporal had mixed emotions as he pondered the heroic crossing his buddies had made. He feared he would never see many of them again. Then he received the good news that he would rejoin his old unit. He also learned that two or three of his closest friends had been killed in the crossing. He knew he could have been one of those casualties. This may have been the first time the corporal realized that God might have a plan for his life.

His unit was on the move again. They stopped at a large textile factory, where the corporal was told he had been selected for officer candidate school. He began to fill out the myriad of paperwork. The unit was on the move again. ■

Did you check to see if your dues were due?

A TRIP TO EUROPE

By Fred Hinson

4198/312 Quartermaster Battalion (3rd Army)

On December 17, 1944, eleven men of a black artillery unit (the 333rd Quartermaster Battalion of the 3rd Army) operating in eastern Belgium near the German border was in the unenviable position of being one of the American combat units at the point of the initial all out German assault through the Ardennes Forest which later would be called "The Battle of the Bulge."

Faced with being imminently overrun, they pulled back from their position--becoming part of the general retreat of American forces during the early hours of the German onslaught.

Coming upon a small hamlet in the mountains of the region called Wereth--exhausted, freezing and hungry and believing the hamlet to be already occupied by the enemy (seeing strong indications that they were cut off from American lines), they approached the town in order to surrender.

The hamlet had not yet been occupied by the Nazis, however, and local towns people took them in, gave them food and allowed them to rest.

Enemy troops did enter the hamlet shortly thereafter and demanded to know where the "nigger" soldiers were, having been tipped by sympathizers that they were in the area. The town's people denied any knowledge of their whereabouts and had given no aid or comfort to them. (Eye witnesses related [during our visit] that the GIs were told to make a run for it. But they were still too exhausted to attempt any further evasion).

All eleven voluntarily surrendered to the German forces in that area--to become more of the several thousand American POWs taken during those early hours of the general attack.

The Nazi forced them to sit on the freezing ground for hours. Then, under cover of darkness, hideously tortured all eleven men for hours (from autopsy reports) before executing them and leaving them to rot in a roadside ditch.

Subsequent inquiries into the atrocity by American forces, having yielded no positive identification of the perpetrators, were closed and never mentioned again by the military.

The incident would never have come to light were it not for accounts being leaked to the news media over 50 years later--as was reported by WJLA--DC Channel 7 News in 1996.

The inhabitants of the little hamlet of Wereth have remembered the sacrifices of those 11 black GIs however. Having suffered heavy collateral battle damage and destruction of their homes and losses of loved ones during the heavy fighting, they none-the-less suffered no reprisals for giving aid to the GIs from the Nazis.

As brutal reprisals against civilians were, the Nazis standard mode of operation, the hamlet of Wereth knew that even though they were tortured gruesomely--the 11 GIs must not have revealed the identity of the households who gave them aid.

Through all the 53 years since that horrendous day the hamlet of Wereth, Belgium has remembered those GIs in their hearts and in annual memorial services in recognition of their sacrifice.

On Saturday, May 23, 1998 - Fred Hinson, Sr., a black GI who had served with the 4198/312 Quartermaster Battalion (3rd Army) during the "Battle of the Bulge" happened to be back in Belgium on holiday--after 54 years, visiting a number of areas of service during his combat tour in the war. He was accompanied

by his son Fred Hinson, Jr.

He was invited among many others to attend the annual Memorial Day services held at the Ardennes American War Memorial where a number of old veterans (identifying each other primarily by the amount of gray and white hair) recognized others who had been through that terrific struggle. They would reminisce across the decades with each other--often finishing each other's sentences--as if they were young GIs again.

Later Hinson, Sr. and his small party visited the memorial site honoring the massacre of over 80 American POWs by the Nazis in the area of the Belgium town of Malmady--a more widely known atrocity committed by the Nazis during the war.

The highlight of the trip, and according to Hinson, Jr., the entire European tour, was when they arrived in that little hamlet of Wereth. The Hinsons coincidentally were in Europe during the time of traditional memorial day observances. Through the network of memorial organizations, Wereth learned that a black American World War II veteran who had served in the area would be within driving distance of their little hamlet on the day they would be observing the memorial to these 11 black GIs.

Arrangements were made and on the afternoon of Saturday, May 23rd, Fred Hinson, Sr. and Jr. along with his daughter (an American diplomat serving in Belgium) as well as several other Belgium citizens and retired military arrived at the Wereth Memorial. Many of the hamlet's residents including members of each household were present; the hamlet's Burgermeister as well.

The heart felt warmth and appreciation for American deliverance during the war and especially the sacrifice of those 11 black GIs was very emotional for all parties present--even after 53 years. ■



IMPORTANT NOTICE REGARDING REUNION SCHEDULE

Please review the listing for Sunday activities on the reunion program. There have been changes in the schedule.

We hope these alternations will not cause you any difficulty.

There is no change in the price of the events--just where you're going and when.

Winston Churchill's warning to the Nazis:

"We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender."

Kilroy says...

**"SIGN UP A NEW MEMBER...
DO IT TODAY!"**

2004 VBOB Reunion & WWII Memorial Dedication

It has been decided to hold the 2004 Annual VBOB Convention in conjunction with the World War II Memorial Dedication in the Washington DC Metropolitan area in May 2004. Early arrivals may want to come for the evening of Tuesday, May 25th. We will be offering tours and visits of Washington and the Museums and other venues. Because of the number of people who have already signed up it will be necessary to run some of the tours on alternating days so everyone can take part in the events. If you have not already sent in your intentions to attend please be aware that we are limited to 800 seats for the Friday night Banquet at the Fairview Marriott. We have contracted for 430 rooms at \$85 + Tax per night reduced from \$189 at the Fairview Marriott, Tysons Corner Marriott, Residence Inn and Townsutes, all Marriott hotels. As this goes to press we have received requests for 333 rooms and 683 people have indicated that they will be attending. Once all of the available room reservations are filled we will not be able to take any more. Each of you who have already signed up should have received a letter in the mail or e-mail advising you that the VBOB Convention will be held in conjunction with the WWII Memorial Dedication and asking you if you are planning to attend both and to send the exact nights for which you would want reservations.

However, we want you to read the additions and changes below that may affect your original intention of how long you would plan to stay. Because of the importance of advanced planning, and the need to secure sufficient rooms in advance, after reviewing this information we would appreciate your responding to let us know just how many days you would be planning to attend from Tuesday night May 25th 2004 through the evening of Sunday 30 May 2004. If you are planning to arrive earlier and stay longer please also indicate that so that we can secure rooms for you at the special VBOB price.

Over the 5 days we will include our annual meeting, tours of Washington, independent tours to several new sites of interest, as well as the WWII Memorial Dedication events. You do not have to do anything yet with the Hotel until I get back to you in a couple of months. At that time you will receive a slip with the hotel name on it and space for you to formally make your reservation with your credit card information and the address of the hotel to which to send the reservation slip. The hotel rate that we have secured from the Marriott Hotels is an excellent rate for the Washington DC area of \$85 plus taxes per night.

We know that there may be some concern about making reservations so far in advance and what 2004 may bring, so you should know that the hotel reservations may be cancelled up to a week before the event. Since this is such a major event in the Washington DC area it is only through this advanced planning that we can provide these services for you. At the present time we have 333 Hotel reservations and 683 people coming.

The current week looks tentatively like this:

Tuesday, 05/25/2004 VBOB Convention Early Arrivals
Registration open 5-7 PM.

Dinner on your own

Hospitality Room opens 5-10 PM

Wednesday, 05/26/2004 VBOB Registration Opens
8 AM - 6PM Fairview Park Hotel

Hospitality Room Opens 9 AM - 5 PM

Morning-Touring Event: Tour of Washington DC, or Tour of new Smithsonian Air Museum at Dulles Airport or tour of the International Spy Museum. Because of the number of attendees we will run the tours alternately in the morning and in the afternoon so you can choose one tour in the morning and an alternate one in the afternoon

Afternoon - See above

6:30 - 8 PM There will be a Welcome Reception at the Headquarters Hotel for registered VBOBers.

8 - 9:30 PM Bus Tour of Washington Under the Lites (This same tour will be offered on Thursday evening.)

Thursday, 05/27/2004 VBOB Registration 8 - 6 PM

9-11 AM - Annual VBOB Meeting, 9 - 11 AM

Two options will be offered after the Annual Meeting for the afternoon

a. Bus trip to Ft Meade MD leaving at 11:30 AM with lunch at Club Meade followed by visits to the Battle of the Bulge Memorial Room and the Ft Meade Museum & possibly the NSA Cryptologic Museum, or

b. Bus trip to Downtown Mall to visit Museums as well as Smithsonian Salute to Veterans on the Mall (See Below **).

8 - 9:30 PM Bus Tour of Washington Under the Lights (Same as Wednesday Evening Tour.)

Friday, 05/28/2004 VBOB/WWII Memorial
Dedication Registration 8 AM - 6 PM

Morning Bus Tour of Washington

Morning Bus to Museums and Smithsonian Salute to Veterans on the Mall

Lunch on your own

12:30 PM Depart for MCI Center by bus for 2:00 PM Matinee Salute to Veterans by the Defense Department.

This is a ticketed event but the tickets to MCI are free. See ABMC Information below **.

Bus Transportation from the hotel or at Museum drop off points will be available for sign up

6:00 PM VBOB/WWII Memorial Banquet Gala Fairview Park Ballroom. Begins with cocktail hour (cash bar) followed by Dinner at 7:00 PM. VBOB Convention ends at the end of the Banquet (Limited to 800).

Saturday, 05/29/2004 WWII Memorial Dedication
Morning Memorial Service 10:00 AM see write up below for details.

1100 hours seating opens at WWII Memorial for dedication with entertainment provided at 12:00 Noon

2:00 PM Afternoon Formal Dedication of World War II Memorial 17th Street NW and the Mall at 2:00 PM (see below for further details). Details about bus transportation will be forthcoming from the WWII Memorial Commission and most likely we will offer bus service to their pickup point since they will only allow their buses to bring personnel to the Mall dedication.

(continued on next page)

2004 VBOB REUNION & WWII MEMORIAL DEDICATION

Sunday, 30 May 2004

Departure for those desiring to leave.

Church Services will be offered for those interested on Sunday Morning and Saturday night.

Sunday is Memorial Day and some might wish to attend the Memorial Day Ceremonies in the Amphitheater at Arlington National Cemetery. The Smithsonian Salute to Veterans on the Mall ** will be open today also on the Mall and the Museums on the Mall will be open.

COST INFORMATION

Rooms at the Marriotts will be \$85 per night plus taxes.

There will be a registration fee for all attendees yet to be determined.

Bus transportation will be in the \$20-30 range for the day.

There is a fee for the International Spy Museum as this is a private for profit museum.

There will be a separate tour price for the tour of Washington and the Washington under the Lights evening tour.

The trip to Ft Meade will include lunch and bus transportation and will be fee bearing. The Battle of the Bulge Conference Room and the Museums are free.

The Banquet cost will be \$50 - \$55 per person but the exact price is still in negotiations.

The Salute to Veterans at the Friday MCI Matinee is free as is the Smithsonian Salute on the Mall however there will be a fee for bus transportation.

The WWII Memorial Dedication is free but there will be a fee for bus transportation.

There are generally no parades on Memorial Day in Washington however traditionally for the past 16 years there has been the Rolling Thunder Motorcycle Tribute by Vietnam Vets on this day. This event has reached as many as 500,000 motorcycles. There are wreath laying ceremonies at the Korean War Memorial, the Women in Service Memorial and the Vietnam Memorial on this day, generally in the afternoon. The Museums in Washington will also be opened. If the interest is there we will arrange bus transportation down to the Mall and back to the Hotels.

There will be shuttle service between the hotels and the Hotel rates will be the same for the hotels at which we have arranged blocks of rooms.

**The American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) which is planning the WWII Memorial activities has chosen the title "Tribute to a Generation" and has provided the following information at this time. VBOB will keep you informed as to procedures and further information.

"These dedication ceremonies will commemorate the memorial and celebrate the contributions of America's World War II generation. The Smithsonian Institution, the Washington Cathedral and Armed Forces ceremonial and musical units will participate in the American Battle Monument's (ABMC) official dedication events. Scheduled events include the Dedication Ceremony, a National World War II Reunion, a Memorial Service and an entertainment Salute to World War II Veterans.

DEDICATION CEREMONY

The memorial will be formally dedicated on Saturday, May 29 at 2pm. Gates will open to the public at 11 am. Pre-ceremony entertainment beginning at noon will include live music, video images of the wartime era and historical information about the

memorial. The ceremony that follows will acknowledge the service and sacrifice of the World War II generation and recognize the addition of the memorial to the National Mall area as a unit of the National System. President Bush has been invited to receive the memorial on behalf of the nation.

ABMC expects the dedication to be attended by thousands who lived and served during the war, as well as many interested visitors to the nation's capital. Priority consideration for seating, transportation and other amenities will be given to members of the World War II generation.

NATIONAL WORLD WAR II REUNION

The Smithsonian Institution's Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, in partnership with ABMC, will produce a National World War II Reunion on the Mall. The four day event (May 27-30) will provide a venue for members of the World War II generation to gather together former comrades, record oral histories, and enjoy 1940's music and World War II equipment displays. The open air and tented attractions will be exhibited from late morning to early evening and will be open to the public at no charge. An important goal of the reunion is to educate all generations on the importance of World War II to our nation and the world.

SALUTE TO WORLD WAR II VETERANS

ABMC will present a 'Salute to World War II Veterans' at the MCI Center in downtown Washington. The Salute will feature Armed Forces personnel in a musical and narrated tribute to veterans. "We will be attending the Afternoon Matinee on Friday, May 28th. The performances are free and open to the public.

MEMORIAL SERVICE

An interfaith memorial service is set for Saturday, May 29, at 10 AM at the Washington National Cathedral. The service will celebrate the dedication of the memorial and remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice. Military and civilian clergy, as well as WWII dignitaries are expected to participate in the service at the cathedral known as A National House of Prayer for all People. Attendance at the service will be controlled due to the limited seating in the cathedral. Efforts are being made to develop alternate viewing sites in the national Capital area.

EVENT ADMISSION

All of ABMC's official dedication events will be free admission, but seating will be controlled at the dedication ceremony, veterans' salute and memorial service. Priority will be given to members of the World War II generation. Specific arrangements for these events and other activities associated with the "Tribute to a Generation," including seating procedures will be made available through updates to (their) web site www.wwiimemorial.com, (their) toll free number 1-800-639-4992, (their) Fall 2003 newsletter and through the media."

Working on this event are John & Mary Ann Bowen, George Chekan, Dorothy Davis, Marty & Phyllis Feldman.

If you are planning to come please contact our Secretary John Bowen at 613 Chichester Lane, Silver Spring MD 20904-3331, Tel 301-384-6533, or e-mail johndbowen@earthlink.net as soon as possible with name, address, telephone, E-mail address, # of rooms needed, # of People, Arrival & Departure dates, # of bus seats, # attending Banquet and Unit served with in the Bulge.

ONE MAN'S DECISION: WHY SHAEF FAILED TO HALT THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

Jay Von Werlhof
114th Signal Radio Intelligence Company

I heard of the VBOB several years ago through a friend of mine, John Payne, Engineers Third Army, and only recently received a copy of your quarterly. I half-heartedly belong to the VFW and AL, but only get death insurance advertisements from them. Your organization and publication are quite the opposite in purpose and process, and I realize, as I should have years ago, that I need to belong to this organization. So, I am enclosing an application form as well as a year's dues.

I also did something recently that I've been intending to do since I was released from secrecy in 1975. The High Command in both the American and British armies admitted surprise over the wide breach of the West Wall that fateful morning in December 1944. However, it was no surprise to the TA Platoon of the 114th Signal Radio Intelligence Company which had built up the Order of Battle map and identified several units of the Sixth SS Panzer Army between 9-14 December. But to not embarrass himself or our company's good reputation in the eyes of Higher Command, our 1st Lieutenant refused to send in our first, and then even our revised, report on the build-up especially between Monschau and Manderfeld. In spite of identities and five-point DF fixes on eight German divisions within that border, and three others to the north as well as units in reserve, our lieutenant compared our data with obsolete reports from First Army, 12th Army Group and SHAEF that said there were only four divisions east of the entire Wall between Monschau and Echternach. Several of the units we pinpointed were supposed to be on the Eastern Front fighting the Russians or in R and R. Our lieutenant was a New York social climber, and hoped to make captaincy before the war ended. Our unit was pleased that when our CC was transferred at war's end and the lieutenant became CC he did not get a change in the rank he expected.

I'm not saying that the High Command would have done anything different if they had received our reports, but they didn't have a chance to respond, either. It is clear from the numerous studies conducted on this issue that I have reviewed, our unit, opposite the German Sixth Army spearhead, alone received the data on build-up and maneuvering that no commander would have mistaken for simply training exercises as some asserted who had learned that there was some frontline shifting going on.

This is a sort of a summary of the article I finally wrote. You might think it's too long for your quarterly, but you are the determiner of its suitability in length as well as thesis. You have a fine publication as well as an organization, and I am pleased to be a part of the Bulge once more, though 56 years later.

It was 5:30 in the morning of 16 December 1944 when the distant crash of artillery and the rumble of tanks ended the military stalemate along the northwestern front. The Battle of the Bulge was on. The Germans began this last and most brutal attack in World War II against a divided and weak allied line. The sudden offense over ran the front line sending our Allied troops into bold retreat and the surprised Supreme Headquarters of Allied Expeditionary Forces (SHAEF) command into hastily drawn but ineffective defenses. The Germans rolled west unopposed except in the Elsenborn sector.

Since the St. Malo breakthrough in July SHAEF headquarters and tactical field commanders had relied heavily on air reconnaissance and G2 (Intelligence) ground units for detecting enemy troop movements. But in early December, bad weather swept in from the North Sea grounding our air force and shielding German movements from other visible pries. For the first time, the Allied commanders were forced to depend almost entirely on the G2 reports of the Signal Radio

Intelligence (SRI) companies for tactical information along the Western front. Sporadic data from prisoners and espionage resources continued to filter through the line, but for continuity and reliability the G2 daily reports from the SRI companies operating near the front became the eyes of SHAEF. By the end of 1944, there were eight SRI companies operating along the West Wall, including the 113th, 114th, 116th, 117th, 118th, 129th, 135th. In addition there was the 113th SRI Battalion attached to Lt. Gen. Omar Bradley's 12th Army Group.

The technical level for obtaining frontal wide information on enemy positions and movements during WWII concentrated on two sources: aerial reconnaissance and ground interception of wireless messages. Though aerial photography was steadily becoming more sophisticated, good weather and frequent missions were required to have the comparative data for noting tactical changes of troops and equipment. Between the two wars, the British had developed cryptology into a science, and coupled to the pinpoint accuracy of directional finders the wireless could keep track of the tactical one. As will be discussed further on, the Directional Finder Platoon (DF) of five G2 units would pick up signals the Interceptor Platoon (IP) operator was monitoring, and each DF unit would then turn its antennae until it received the signals being sent. The location of the sender could then be plotted accurately.

In the 1920's, the Germans developed an encoding and decoding machine called the Enigma. To encode, an operator typed out a message on a keyboard similar to a typewriter. But the machine typed different letters than the operator had pressed. If the operator typed the letter "M," for example, the letter would be encoded as "R." A similar machine that was wired to the encoder would decode the message. To reduce the risk of the enemy deciphering an intercepted message by whatever means, the Germans daily changed the code used on the keyboard. Now the letter "M" would encode to "H."

The coding systems used two basic formats. For high echelon messages a five letter code would be used, requiring a similar machine to decode the text. On the other hand, lower units would communicate most frequently with three letter (TL) codes which simply needed an equivalency chart to decipher. In the absence of having such a chart, a trained traffic analyst (TA) or Cryptographer needed but a little time to break the code.

The British procured a few Enigma machines from Polish agents who had bought or stolen them from the Germans. By 1940, the British had remodeled them to more efficient equipment. Around these machines, by mid-war the British had developed a super-secret operation called "Ultra" with headquarters at Bletchley Park in London. Headquarters of SHAEF, Army Group, Corps and Army were interconnected with Ultra system, allowing for immediate transmission of reports and orders. All five letters encoded messages were sent to Bletchley Park if SHAEF did not have the time to work on them. On active days, as many as 50 such messages were intercepted along the front. For intercommunications, however, the allies preferred using direct telephone or teletype wires, or even couriers when time and road conditions allowed, to avoid German interception.

If the Allies immediately and obviously responded to intercepted information that the Germans were planning a particular move, the enemy would have suspected correctly the Allies were onto their communications system. Even so, the Germans had to assume that a certain proportion of their messages were being intercepted, and they devised various means to at least slowdown the process by which Allies received these communications. Following the Avranches breakthrough, the Germans revised the rather cumbersome way in which call signs and frequencies were changed. They published a book that showed for each day what call signs and radio frequencies were to be used over a six month period. The changes were to take place as each day's operations began. The books were distributed to all German division headquarters allowing a more rapid and smoother transition in message exchanges as a new day opened. Unknown to the Germans, however, at least two of the books fell into the hands of

(Continued on next page)

114TH SIGNAL RADIO

(Continuation)

the advancing First Army who turned one over to the 114th SRI Company, and perhaps later the Third Army's 118th SRI Company received the other. We nicknamed our book "The Mike Book," since the German label for the book was prefixed with a capital "M." Our TA Section never told the Intercept Platoon how we knew what the changes were. That was one of our own secrets.

The Order of Battle Section was charged with putting the accumulated date of German military positions on a printed wall map covered with a plastic sheet. Marking crayons showed clearly where various G2 sources placed divisions and armies along the front. These data were incorporated with information from TA and from DF as well as other G2 sources the First Army might send. However, it was a sore point with the TA Platoon that the flow of G2 information was always from bottom to top echelons and seldom from top to bottom. Even at that, much of the data we received from First Army Headquarters was already out of date, acquired days or even weeks before from aerial surveillance, prisoner interrogation, counter-intelligence sources, and suppositions of Army strategists.

The DF Platoon was ever mindful of its vulnerable position, remote from the rest of the company as well as other friendly military units. Its five units were from five to twenty miles from company headquarters, spread out closer to the front than any other company units. The Wire Platoon linked the DF Platoon to the TA, Order of the Battle, and Headquarters units with telephone wires for instant communication. The TA Section was responsible for trying into a daily report the data from Intercept, Cryptoanalysis, and Order of Battle. The completed report was given the 1st lieutenant supervising the Intelligence Platoon who might sign it, reject it, or send it back to TA for revisions. If the report was approved, a courier carried copies to Army and SHAEF headquarters. This chain of reporting from lower to higher echelons, but seldom from higher down to lower, was to have dire consequences at the Allies' most critical point in their drive to the Rhine.

Sometime after we bypassed Paris and were around Soisson or into Luxembourg, one of the American crews at Army headquarters "lost" an Ultra decoding machine. Despite General Eisenhower's direct orders to "find that truck" containing the machine it was never located. Probably it had fallen into German hands during some military move, for soon after that all intercepted messages appeared from random call signs and radio frequencies rather than the orderly changes the Mike Book had provided. The only clue our intercept operations now had was from their familiarity with the "fist of a particular sender, that is, his style of sending. The Intercept Operator immediately alerted his Trick Chief who passed this important point along to the TA Section which then urged the operator to stay on the frequency and listen for additional clues or messages. Even that continuity with the past was lost as new replacement operators entered the field. The continuity we still had going, however, was the map that our Order of Battle Section kept on the wall of its hutch. The DF Platoon gave us a five-point fix on the location of any sender who stayed on the air long enough for the crews to "shoot it" in. Though a frequency and call sign changed, the position of the sender might remain fixed over a few days. In itself this would have been a valuable piece of information on the static condition of the front, and possibly clues for the change in transmission modes.

Our SRI Companies were organized from British, not American, experience. The United States had not advanced the subject of remote intelligence (except in aerial reconnaissance) since WWI. The British, however, had worked out the lines of organization for G2 companies from wartime experience since 1939 and military exercises since WWI. They were very willing to share their knowledge and to train our troops once the United States entered the war. We were billeted at Marble Arch in London upon arrival from Vint Hills Farm Station in late January 1944, and immediately began our three months of training at Bletchley Place under British and American OSS supervision and testing. Our course aimed at service in Western Europe but also portions of Eastern and Southeastern Europe, and included the history

of spying, the development of the Enigma and Ultra, German military terms and military organization, Order of Battle maps, cryptography, and secrecy as a legal and military requirement. We were sworn to a thirty year silence on everything we learned or would do during our service. We were prohibited from keeping notes, diaries or maps, taking environmental photographs, or writing letters describing or identifying our work or locations then or in the future. Despite rigid background checks again to assess our reliability and trustworthiness with secret information, some personnel in SRI companies kept notes and journals of their military experiences.

Pictured at left, insignia for the 114th, designed by Walt Disney.



The key to our operations was acquiring data. This function turned to the Interceptor Platoon made up basically of three sections of 25 men each. Each section worked an eight hour shift with a Trick Chief as supervisor and as communicator with TA Platoon. An overall

administrator first lieutenant and platoon technical sergeant completed the personnel. The eight trucks assigned this platoon contained radio stations and work areas within an enclosed hutch mounted on each truck bed. The power for the IP operations came from heavy duty generators mounted on large trailers toward the behind the IP trucks. A telephone in each truck was connected to the TA unit. A member of the unit advised the IP Trick Chief to keep an operator on a frequency or return to search. After the "M" Book was no longer useable, each IP operator continued the mode of the operator he relieved--listening for call signs on a given frequency, or going on search. Operators copied all call signs and messages received along with notations of frequency, time of sending, date, and the operator's name. The Trick Chief advised TA of all activity, and had messages delivered to the TA truck usually parked at his back door.

The G2 Platoon--Intelligence--worked in three large vans, one each for the sections of Traffic Analysis, Cryptography, and Order of Battle. Fortunately for the U.S., most German military communications were between 600 and 1600 Kiloceles rather than short wave transmissions which were more difficult for the Cryptoanalysis Section to handle. This Section could manage TL traffic without trouble unless signals were so weak that the coded message became even more garbled. Seldom were the intercept operators to blame for the poor transcriptions. Couriers or teletypes were used to send five letter coded messages to higher headquarters for machine breaking. The TA Section was the traffic cop for the IP, advising operators through the Trick Chief for staying with a call sign and frequency or going on search. The swing and graveyard shifts were the most tedious for TA as well as IP since traffic was quite sporadic if at all. This was not the case, however, in the short days before the Ardennes breakthrough when the Germans did most of their military maneuvering for battle during the night hours. Especially the Sixth SS Panzer Army which Hitler chose to spearhead the attack was completed to send messages despite the blackout. Having only a few nights to move companies, battalions, regiments, corps and divisions into the battle line required communication no matter how brief. In cases of urgency the Germans sometimes resorted to uncoded communications. Such clear text messages were brief and without such clarifiers as articles, preposition, adjectives, adverbs, or punctuation marks. Verbs, pronouns, nouns and numbers were the usual inventoried (and sometimes abbreviated) contents of tactical messages which took knowledge and imagination to understand. We had those kinds of people in our TA Platoon.

(Continued on next page)

114TH SIGNAL RADIO (Continuation)

Linguists in the TA unit could handle any written European language or dialect. Sgt. "Jeeter" McPheeter, for example, had a PhD in European languages, and taught Romance languages at University of North Carolina. Joseph B. Rounds, who occupied the 2nd half of my pup tent, had set up a library for the League of Nations, was on leave as Head Librarian of Grosvenor Library in Buffalo, and spoke fluent French and German. Others in the unit covered the Slavonic languages. One of the members of our TA Platoon was a personal friend of Walt Disney, who agreed to design the logo for our reorganized company. The original is in the National Archives.... Taking the personnel in TA as a group, the average had six years of college. I put a severe dent in the average since I was a high school senior at the time I was drafted as the last available male in Tehama County, California. But according to the army, I tested at a magical IQ level and could be trained for any service category. For this reason in the troubled military year of 1943 I was maneuvered through six services as various military crises or shortages arose, including stints with infantry, artillery, medical (twice), engineers and finally the signal corps which landed me in late 1943 at the G2 staging area at Vint Hills Farm Station, Virginia.

In January 1944, I was transferred with a group to London. We were billeted at Marble Arch but trained at G2 Headquarters at Bletchley Place for three months where I and several others were taught to be TAs. Following that, we were put into the reorganized 114th SRI Company at Eastbourne on the south coast. In late May we relocated to Southampton to practice our operational field unit while waiting to cross the Channel. We landed in France the second week of July attached to Lt. Gen. Courtney Hodges' First Army. Our particular assignment was to assist Maj. Gen. Leonard T. Gerow's V Corps, Maj. Gen. Lawton J. Collins' VII Corps, and Maj. Gen. Charles H. Corlett's XIX Corps attack on Avranches. This was a military plan, code named Cobra, that Lt. Gen. Omar Bradley, Commander of the 12th Army Group, developed. After the success of this plan, though with a loss of 5,000 American casualties our 114th continued to follow the V and VII Corps north through France, Luxembourg and into Belgium. In early December, we set up operations southeast of Verniers, Belgium and six miles southwest of Monschau, Germany. We stayed in this general area until mid-January, overseeing V Corps as well as the 106th Division in the northern sector of VIII Corps.

Our southernmost DF unit was at the edge of the Ardennes, and our northernmost unit was near Eupen, giving us more than a twenty mile coverage of the northwestern front. With this placement we were west of the central sector of V Corps. The 9th Infantry Division was to our north, the 2nd and 99th Infantry Divisions were to our east, and the 106th Infantry Division to our southeast. The V and VII Corps were fighting to the northeast of Eupen towards Aachen and the Roer River dams as the main elements of General Dwight D. Eisenhower's code-named Operation Queen. They were still within our sector but extended our range to forty miles. All of this was soon to change.

Fieldmarshall Bernard J. Montgomery, Commander of the British and Canadian forces, and General Eisenhower widely differed on strategy over which Montgomery constantly complained and argued. But Eisenhower was the Supreme Commander, and despite the political pressures that "Monty" was able to bring to the contest, "Ike" stuck to his guns, so to speak. His long established overall plan was to maintain a broad military front rather than the select but limited objectives Montgomery sought. The British plan would possibly have kept the Germans wondering where the Allied attacks would develop next, but it also would heavily tax supply lines and support services as well as weakening military positions on the defense mode. Those were, in part, factors that aided as well as hindered both the Allied and German sides.

Gasoline and ammunition were always in short supply. To prevent one fuel dump from German capture, the Americans poured 125,000 gallons into a ditch and touched it. At the time near Metz when General Patton was complaining about gasoline shortages for his tanks, the 114th SRI Company intercepted a clear-text message from a panicky

soldier that he and two others were guarding a 50,000 gallon gasoline dump, and needed help. We contacted headquarters who saw to it that several airplanes supplied the help until a patrol could seize the site from the helpless defenders. The shortages in ammunition and replacement personnel following the Hurtgen Forest campaign were never caught up throughout the remainder of the war. Before the battle, General Bradley wrote of a need for 9,000 trained replacements, not including reserves. The Hurtgen campaign added 66,000 men to that need. The total loss of men to both sides added to 145,147 killed wounded, or missing. This amounted to seven full-strength divisions...though neither the Allied or German divisions were actually up to that strength even at the opening of the Ardennes Campaign. Replacements for prior American losses failed to materialize, leaving most divisions between 70%-60% strength. Some German divisions were operating at an even greater reduction with only 40% of their training manual size. Both sides also suffered from inadequately trained replacements, especially riflemen. Records reveal that a large number of American personnel were pulled from their assigned duties in noncombatant services, and sent as replacements to rifle companies. Many were given no training as riflemen except what their new field companions might provide. In early December, the United States Army planned scraping 65,000 non-combatants from the Air Force and service units for combat training. Germany was feeling the same pressure, and whole units were formed of men in their 60s, and others were not yet men--16 years old.

By the first of December, the V and VII corps had fought beyond Aachen, the ancient capitol of Charlemagne, and were along the Roer River facing the 272 Volksgrenadier Division. This drive under Operation Queen, aimed to prevent Germans from opening the Roer dams and flooding the Lower Roer Valley which would have stopped General Hodges' drive towards Cologne. Successes at the Roer River brought General Gerow's V Corps back to Monschau for regrouping and rest. This was just prior to the German counter-offense. As early as October, Hitler began pulling his best divisions from the West Front for refitting in Eastern Germany. His favorite, the Sixth SS Panzer Army was brought up to full strength while the Fifth SS Panzer Army and the Seventh Army remained under staffed.

Maj. Gen. Leonard T. Gerow's V Corps was holding the north pocket of the Ardennes front. Within it the 2nd Infantry Division under Maj. Gen. Walter M. Robertson held the right flank while Maj. Gen. Walter Lauer's 9th Infantry Division commanded the left. Adjoining the right flank of the V Corp was Maj. Gen. Troy. Middleton's VIII Corps composed of a cavalry regiment, three infantry divisions, and one armored division, all stretched out over a sixty five mile course, with but 500 men per mile.

The Losheim Gap, a fifteen mile opening between Monschau and Manaderfield, divided General Gerow's V Corps from General Middleton's VIII as well as separating the Elsenborn Ridge from the Schnee-Eifel ("Snow Mountain"). The gap was the only natural area in the Ardennes that was clear of deep woods and steep ravines. To the north and the south the Ardennes was difficult terrain, making the gap the chosen route in the 1918 and 1940 German invasions. It was again chosen in 1944.

The 14th Cavalry Regiment was transferred to Maj. Gen. Alan Jones' 106th Division after the 2nd, to which it had originally belonged, was transferred to Gerow's V Corps for the Roer River attack. The 14th was to guard the Losheim Gap, a gently rolling and lightly covered terrain. The 106th had been introduced to the frontline only on 12 December, and was given a twenty-nine mile section of the Ardennes to protect, though the High Command did not suspect it would be needed for that purpose.

On the southern flank of the 106th Brig. Gen. Norman D. Cota's 28th Infantry Division whose diminished ranks the 2nd Infantry Division had recently relieved from the Hurtgen Forest. The 28th was recuperating along a twenty-three mile quiet zone in the Ardennes east of Bastogne. On its southern flank was the 9th Armored (Continued on next page)

114TH SIGNAL RADIO (Continuation)

Division which also had been recently ordered south, in Maj. Gen. John W. Leonard's command. While the 9th commanded a wooded stretch of nine miles, the final ten miles of VIII territory belonged to the 4th Infantry Division under Maj. Gen. Raymond O. Barton. His Hurtgen Forest veterans were relocated during the week of 7-13 December for recuperation and refitting. During the last forest battle, General Barton's three regiments lost over 600 men each.

In October, General Eisenhower moved Lt. Gen. William H. Simpson's Ninth Army between General Hodges' First Army and Fieldmarshall Montgomery's 21st Army Group. Before the Ardennes attack the Ninth was stretched along the Roer River north of the dams and VII Corps. After the attack started, it and VII Corps were placed under the command of the British 21st Army Group.

Even considering the activity along the Roer River a military slowdown had been gradually evolving along the West Wall. As mid-December approached the front was relatively quiet. In the north, General Hodges was anxious to continue Operation Queen to Duren on the east bank of the Roer River while in the south General George S. Patton was in the final stage of preparing his Third Army for the planned 19 December all-out offense into Sugarland, southwestern Germany. In between these separated salients American troops were at rest or refitting while unknown to their Higher Command the Germans were amassing for a major assault through this quiet sector of the Ardennes. Hitler's plan, that he dubbed Wacht Am Rhein, would supposedly propel three armies of the Aryan super-race to Brussels and Antwerp and, in a mystic way, bring a quick end to the war. Readied, on 15 December they commanded 250,000 troops--3,100 men per mile.

Hitler, himself, outlined such details as the Army zonal boundaries from the West Wall to Antwerp, and refused even to allow any division to stray off course. He had lined up twenty divisions for the initial attack, with eight others ready to move in where support was needed, and an additional five to be waiting in the rear. The overall field command was under Generalfeldmarshal Gerd von Rundstedt. Head of Army Group B was Generalfeldmarshal Walter B. Model, who oversaw the performance of each of the three armies. The Sixth SS Panzer Army and its eight divisions with three in reserve were under Oberstgruppenfuhrer General Joseph "Sepp" Dietrich whose attack area was the most significant and crucial, between Monschau and St. Vith through the Losheim Gap. Spearheading the attack for this, the strongest of the three armies, was the youthful (age 29) but vicious Obersturmbannfuhrer Joachim Peiper, SS Colonel of the Kampfgruppe Peiper, the main armored regiment. Peiper was especially admired by Hitler who selected him for this critical position. The Sixth Army had been pulled from the west, after fighting across France and Belgium, and was sent to the Eastern Front where battle-hardened divisions and select troops taken from other infantry and tank units formed a crack army. In late 1944 the Sixth SS Panzer Army was the only German unit that had been brought up to full strength.

The Fuhrer added a unique element to the Sixth Army--a special commando brigade under the flamboyant Colonel Otto Skorzeny. Soldiers, sailors and air force personnel who could speak the American version of English, including slang, were recruited for this unusual outfit that army historian Robert E. Merram likened to the Homerick story of the Trojan Horse. Dressed in captured American uniforms and driving abandoned Jeeps the brigade crossed the West Wall ahead of the 1st SS Panzer Division and Kampfgruppe Peiper, re-directing traffic and making traffic jams at road intersections, spreading false information, and generally creating confusion about the attack. Their short term efforts were surprisingly successful, and of the forty Jeeps used in this exercise thirty-two returned to the Wall. Several participants were captured, however, some of whom were shot as spies.

General der Panzertruppen Hasso-Eckard von Manteuffel's Fifth Panzer Army struck at the north edge of VIII Corps, and seventh Army General Panzertruppen Erich von Brandenberger attacked to the southwest to stop General Patton's advance. With the Six SS Panzer Army were

other units that recently arrived from the East, notably the 12th Volksgrenadier Division the 2nd SS Panzer Division, and the 246 Volksgrenadier Division. In the Fifth SS Panzer Army was the Panzer Lehr Division which recently had arrived by rail from Bulgaria. Also from the Eastern Front were the 26th Volksgrenadier Division and the 62nd Volksgrenadier Division. From the Italian front was the tough 15th Panzer Grenadier Division. Specially trained were the new 560 Volksgrenadier Division and the 18th Volksgrenadier Division, both ready to be battle tempered.

General Patton is not known for graciousness, but it would be hard for any man to emulate his military penchant for daring and risk. However, he did appreciate meritoriousness in others and awarded the 118th SRI Company attached to the Third Army a special plaque for outstanding service as a frontline unit. Military historians have highly complimented the 114th SRI Company for the "excellent" coverage we had of German units during Operation Queen. Of treater importance to us, however, was the Order of Battle that gradually emerged on our map of the Sixth SS Panzer Army.

Even though Hitler had ordered strict radio silence of the three armies being stretched between Monschau and Eckternach, the Sixth SS Panzer Army seemed to have trouble getting its complex unit lined up in the few days before the attack. This army was the spearhead, and it was imperative that all units participating in the drive be fully organized. Yet, some commanders admitted in later years that they had no idea of the objectives or the Order of the Battle in the attack until three days before the offense began. To compound the problem, movements were made at night to avoid visual detection. Heavy cloud cover and fog kept aerial reconnaissance from noting or photographing ground movements or concentrations of men and equipment. It seemed clear that this planned operation needed communications at least at division levels while units were being lined up in their effective order of attack and support. While the 114th SRI Company received such data from Sixth SS Panzer Army divisions, SRI Companies covering other German armies adhering to the blackout did not receive similar messages.

The effective tracking zone of our 114th SRI Company was northeast of Eupen and southeast of St. Vith in General Hodges First Army sector. Our area overlapped V, VII, and VIII Corps. East of Eupen in the German LXVII Corps were the 89th, 344th, and 353rd Infantry Divisions, and east of Monschau facing our 99th Infantry Division were the German 272nd and 326th Infantry Divisions and the 3rd Mechanized Infantry Division. To their rear was the 2nd SS Panzer Division within 11th Panzer Corps. On the south was our 2nd Infantry Division across from the 12th SS Panzer Division and the 277th Infantry Division, with the 9 SS Panzer Division holding in reserve. In the Losheim Gap was the U.S. 14th Cavalry, and to the east was the 1st SS Panzer Corps with the 3rd and 12th Infantry Divisions, and the 1st SS Panzer Division. In front of the Corps were the Kampfgruppe Peiper armored regiment and the Skorzeny brigade. In the north flank of Fifth Ss Panzer Army across from the U.S. 106 Infantry Division were German's 8th Armored and 62nd Infantry Divisions of the 66th Corps.

Though messages were usually very short, they showed over a few days a growing pattern of amassed power. Our DF Platoon and Cryptoanalysis Section detailed a concentration of armored might not known before behind the West Wall. Some of the units could be identified, and our DF Platoon "shot in" many more. Operators recognizing "fists" of senders helped the Order of Battle Section to keep track of ground movements. Between 9-11 December, the 114th SRI Company constructed an impressive Order of Battle Map. While the daily reports we sent to First Arm Headquarters and SHAEF showed increased activity east of the front, 1st Lieutenant of our TA Platoon, Thomas R. Doyle, refused to send our consolidated report and map of 11 December. He compared G2 records from First Army Headquarters with our data, and cited records that showed some of our identified units to be on the Eastern Front, destroyed, or in rest areas. Roy Duke, Technical Sergeant in charge of the operations of TA Platoon, discussed with Lt. Doyle the difference between other (Continued on next page)

114TH SIGNAL RADIO

(Continuation)

G2 data and ours, but to no avail. To us, these G2 data were obviously obsolete in a fast changing tactical situation. Capt. Alfred R. Barddock, 114th SRI Company Commander, did not involved himself in interjectional matters which gave each senior platoon lieutenant final word. We immediately set to work re-doing our report from additional field data. By the 14th of December we had added several units to the Order of Battle Map, and incorporated these data in a new report. Again, our Lieutenant refused to accept our report as credible military intelligence. Traffic all but ceased in the afternoon of the 15th, apparently as the Sixth SS Panzer Army under General Dietrich, and the Kampfgruppe Peiper Armored Regiment under SS Colonel Joachim Peiper had the main elements of their attack force in line and ready to move. They now waited for zero hour.

G2 at Army or SHAEF levels were very slow in sending their accumulated data to their field companies. Not all of their reported resources were reliable. Too, Intelligence officers were not above political squabbles, as the Intelligence head of First Army was not on good terms with the Intelligence head of General Bradley's 12th Army Group--the 113th SRI Battalion, resulting in poor exchanges of data. Also, prisoners had different stories about the same activities: One stated that a wide attack was being planned but another said the attack was simply to present Adolph Hitler was with Aachen for a Christmas present. A pilot reported seeing a trainload of tanks near the West Wall, but aerial reconnaissance by trained personnel was nonexistent or too spotty for reliable interpretations. The Allied High Command recognized that some sifting of troops and equipment was going on behind the Wall, but supposed it was to give field units different experiences or were reinforcements to repel an allied attack against the Aachen-Duren zone. No clear picture emerged from Intelligence for lack of confirmed detail. Records available in post war research showed that over 150 trainloads of men and equipment snuck in from the east and south under cloud cover to bring the necessary attack force to the front. Colonel Benjamin Dickinson, General Hodges' G2 First Army at Spa Headquarters, wrote a paper of his analysis of the plans of the enemy. His paper Estimate No. 37, claimed that a counter-attack was in the offing, but not of such significance as a counter-offensive action. The colonel had a history of making prophetic announcements of enemy intentions, and with nerves rubbing raw at headquarters he was directed to take a vacation to Paris immediately. Other reports filed by First Army G2 sources between 2-10 December and the 15th specified that there were no changes along the front. On 14 December Eisenhower's G2 Officer's Order of Battle map showed only four divisions facing the VIII Corps front line.

Up to time of the attack at 5:30 on Saturday, 16 December, Eisenhower's Ultra provided no real clues that anything unusual was happening on the German side of the West Wall. It was early evening that day before SHAEF G2 reported an attack was in progress between the V and VIII Corps in Losheim Gap. That afternoon General Eisenhower attended the wedding of his chauffeur, and had a champagne celebration with General Bradley over the news of Ike's promotion to General of the Army. For an hour he and Bradley discussed the attack, and still assumed it to be a "spoiling" assault. They then played bridge until late that night. Not until the evening of the 17th did SHAEF finally realize how serious and extensive was the attack. And only in the 19th did Bradley redirect enough divisions to be a serious threat to the attacking Germans.

On 12 December, General Bradley flatly stated that Germany's ability to continue the war was waning, that their defenses were getting thinner and more brittle, and more vulnerable. In rare support of American views, Fieldmarshall Montgomery stated tat Germany was in a bad way, "and can no longer stage offensive operations." General Bradley met with General Middleton a few days before the enemy breakthrough, and said that the Germans would not again come through the Ardennes as they had in 1940 and 1918.

Danny S. Parker one of America's prominent historians on the

Ardennes campaign summed:

For the Allied intelligence services the Battle of the Bulge was an embarrassment...inpainting a picture of an enemy feeble and near collapse in December 1944, the Allied ground commanders and their G2s, particularly Bradley and the 12th Army Group, had committed the most grievous sin possible for an intelligence staff. They had totally underestimated the capabilities of their enemy p. 20).

And Robert E. Merriam, former Chief of the Army Historical Division in the Ardennes flatly stated: "We were completely, utterly fooled" (p.69). He also summed what should have occurred. "The function of an intelligence officer is first to collect, then to evaluate, and finally to disseminate to other levels of command, information of the enemy" (p.94 italics mine).

But it was one man's decision that kept the 114th SRI Company TA Section from sending the only reliable and current reports available to First Army and SHAEF Headquarters. In the ensuing battle, the American total casualties were 80,987; German totals were 81,834. That is 162,821 men killed, wounded and missing. Had First Army and SHAEF received and accepted the 114th report, there was time from the 11th to the 16th of December to blunt the attack. But one man's decision blocked that possibility.■



"It happened on that last big raid up North, he fell off the ladder getting out of his airplane!"

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WE'RE LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU
AT THE VBOB QUINCY, MASS. REUNION.**

If I didn't have air support, I wouldn't be here.

Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower
June, 1944

VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE, INC.



REUNION PROGRAM

Quincy, Massachusetts
September 4-7, 2003

• THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2003 •

2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Registration, Headquarters Hotel, Boston Marriott Quincy
6:30 p.m. Wine and Cheese Reception (Compliments of Quincy Marriott--ticketed function)
Dinner on your own

• FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2003 •

12:00 Noon - 5:00 p.m. Registration, Headquarters Hotel, Boston Marriott Quincy
The registration desk will be open the majority of the day.
9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Bus Departs for Boston City Tour
Lunch on your own
Dinner on your own

• SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2003 •

As needed Registration, Headquarters Hotel, Boston Marriott Quincy
The registration desk will be open the majority of the day.
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Board Bus for Salem, Gloucester, and Rockport Tour
Tour includes traditional Lobsterbake lunch
Dinner on your own

• SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2003 •

As needed Registration, Headquarters Hotel, Boston Marriott Quincy
The registration desk will be open as needed.
8:00 a.m. General Membership Meeting
9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Board Bus for Tour of Quincy
Return to hotel for lunch on your own
2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. Monument dedication in Quincy
6:00 p.m. Cocktails (Cash Bar)
7:00 p.m. Annual Banquet

• MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2003 •

Departure

Hospitality Room: Location and times will be posted in the lobby.

VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE, INC.

Quincy, Massachusetts

September 4-7, 2003

REGISTRATION FORM



Name _____

Address: _____

Wife/Guest Name: _____

Division: _____ Regiment: _____

Signature: _____

Please provide the name of the hotel where you have made reservations _____

	Number of Persons	Cost per Person	Total
Registration Fee (All attendees must register)	_____	\$25.00	_____
Thursday, September 4, 2003:			
Wine and Cheese Reception (Compliments of hotel)	_____	Free	_____
Friday, September 5, 2003:			
Boston City Tour	_____	\$35.00	_____
(Tour itinerary on Information Sheet)			
Lunch on your own			
Saturday, September 6, 2003:			
Salem, Gloucester, and Rockport Tour	_____	\$50.00	_____
(Tour itinerary on Information Sheet)			
Lobsterbake lunch is part of paid package			
Sunday, September 7, 2003:			
Tour of the City of Quincy	_____	\$25.00	_____
(Tour itinerary on Information Sheet)			
Lunch on your own			
Monument Dedication in Quincy			
(Bus fare included in cost of Quincy Tour)			
Reception (Cash Bar)			
Banquet	_____	\$39.00	_____
Indicate preference: Filet Mignon #____ OR Scrod #____			

Total Amount Enclosed

\$ _____

Mail registration form and check payable to "VBOB" to:

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REGISTRATION RECEIPT DEADLINE--AUGUST 25, 2003 - AFTER THAT DATE BRING FORM.

(Refunds for cancellations, will be honored in whole or in part, depending on availability of funds.)

INFORMATION SHEET - VBOB 2003 REUNION

Friday, September 5, 2003

After breakfast you will depart for a Boston City Tour. Your first stop will be the Kennedy Library. The John F. Kennedy Library and Museum is dedicated to the memory of our nation's 35th president and all those who, through the art of politics, seek a new and better world. The Kennedy Museum features the life, leadership, and legacy of President Kennedy through 25 exhibits, 3 theaters, and 20 video presentations.

You will then travel to the heart of Boston, right across from the city's famous waterfront, where you will see three large, beautifully restored 19th century buildings. You feel cobblestones beneath your feet. Hear roaming performers. Smell--and taste--wonderfully diverse ethnic foods. Your senses have discovered Faneuil Hall Marketplace. As you know, this is Boston in the truest sense. You will have time for lunch and shopping on your own at Faneuil Hall Marketplace. The Marketplace houses over 125 shops and 21 restaurants.

Farmers and tradesmen, mothers and slaves. They were daring. Daring enough to raise arms against an empire. Bold enough to fight a royal army on the fields and farms and muddy streets of Colonial Boston. They were rebels whose hearts were ignited by the spark of liberty. They were Revolutionary thinkers who stood steadfast against the tyranny of an unjust crown. They were America's first patriots and they would not surrender freedom. The Freedom Trail tells their story. It is the story of America. The Trail is more than bricks and buildings. It is more than words painstakingly inscribed on ancient, yellowed scrolls. It is the life and breath and voice of a people who declared their independence and built their country on the solid principles of democracy.

You will follow the "Freedom Trail," which will lead to the first stop, *The U.S.S. Constitution*. Located in the Charlestown Navy Yard, *The U.S.S. Constitution* was launched in Boston on October 21, 1797, and is the oldest commissioned warship afloat in the world. Her first mission during the late 1790's was to guard American commerce in the Caribbean against the French depredations. She defeated *HMS Guerriere* in the War of 1812, the first in a grand succession of victories in this war. It was in this ferocious battle that the seamen, astonished at how the cannonballs were bouncing off her hull, cried out, "Huzzah! Her sides are made of iron!" Hence her nickname, "Old Ironsides."

From here, you will then travel on through the North End, home of Paul Revere and the Old North Church. You will pass the Old State House as you wind your way to Beacon Hill, passing by the Boston Public Gardens and the Boston Common. You will also experience the Boston Tea Party. The year 2003 marks the 230th Anniversary of this momentous history-changing event. Old South Meeting House and the Boston Tea Party Ship will be celebrating by hosting an historic re-enactment of the debate that sparked a revolution! Come and participate in a spirited re-enactment of the Boston Tea Party as "protesters" rally against the tea tax at the Old South Meeting House, which hosted the original gathering in December of 1773. Then parade down to the Boston Tea party Ship to dump the "baneful weed."

Saturday, September 6, 2003

After breakfast you will depart for a tour of Salem, Gloucester, and Rockport.

She afflicts me! She comes to me at night and torments me! She's a witch! Words such as these struck terror into the Salem townspeople in the spring of 1692 as hysterical young girls called out names. By summer, hundreds had been accused and imprisoned--defenseless against accusations of witchcraft in a society driven by superstition and fear. The court, formed to try the victims, acted quickly. Bridget Bishop was tried on June 2 and hanged on June 10, thereby setting the precedent for a summer of executions. The Salem Witch Museum bring you back there, back to Salem 1692.

It's also in Salem where Nathaniel Hawthorne's famous novel comes to life. You'll meet characters from the novel, *House of Seven Gables*, including the ghost of Mathew Maule, a persecuted victim of the witch trials. Hear of the circumstances that drove the Pyncheon family to lunacy, the secrets that surrounded them and the curse that led to impending death.

Enjoy a traditional Lobsterbake for lunch and then you'll tour Cape Ann, the North Shore of Boston. You'll visit Gloucester, home of the ship, *The Andrea Gale*, featured in the movie *The Perfect Storm*. Then it is on to the country's oldest fishing village--Rockport. Rockport, designated by Walt Disney as one of the most picturesque towns in America, is famous for its art colony, located on Bearskin Neck, and for its galleries, shops and beautiful coast.

NOTE: CHANGES IN PROGRAM FOR SUNDAY.

Sunday, September 7, 2003

After the business meeting you will depart for a Tour of the City of Quincy and Quincy Bay. The City of Quincy is one of New England's and the National Park Service's most captivating destinations.

The story encompasses five generations of the Adams Family (from 1720 to 1927) including two Presidents and First Ladies, three United States Ministers, historians, writers and family members who supported and contributed to the success of these public figures. The site's main historic features include: John Adams' Birthplace, where the second United States President was born on October 30, 1735, less than 75 yards away the John Quincy Adams Birthplace, where the sixth United States president was born on July 11, 1767; the "Old House" home of four generations of the Adams Family; the United First Parish Church, where both Presidents and their First Ladies are entombed in the Adams Family crypt.

You will return to the hotel for lunch on your own and depart by bus from the hotel at 2:00 p.m. for Monument Dedication services in Quincy.

Transportation To and From the Hotel

There are two methods to get from the airport to the Boston Marriott Quincy Hotel.

Local Water Shuttle to Quincy: Price is \$10.00. You will then take a shuttle from the Quincy Dock to the Boston Marriott Quincy Hotel (no charge on this shuttle).

Express Bus: Take the Logan Express to the Braintree Express Terminal (price unknown). From the Braintree Express Terminal you will be taken by shuttle to the Boston Marriott Quincy Hotel (no charge on this shuttle).

BOSTON MARRIOTT QUINCY HOTEL INFORMATION

Telephone for Boston Marriott Quincy:
1-800-228-9290 or 1-866-449-7387
Hotel rates are \$82.00 +tax nightly
Be sure to mention "Battle of the Bulge"

From I-93 South:

- Take I-93 South to Exit 7 (Route 3 South)
- Immediately Take Exit 18 (Quincy Adams T Station, Washington St.)
- Stay in far-left lane, following signs for Quincy Center
- At first set of lights take a Left onto Centre St.
- Bear left at the next set of lights into Crown Colony Office Park, the Hotel will be your 3rd left.

From I-95/128 South:

- Follow I-95/128 South.
- I-95/128 South will turn into I-93 North (at Exit 12)
- Follow I-93 North to Exit 7 (Route 3 South)
- Take Exit 18 (Quincy Adams T Station, Washington St.)
- Stay in far-left lane, following signs for Quincy Center
- At first set of lights take a Left onto Centre St.
- Bear left at the next set of lights into Crown Colony Office Park, the Hotel will be your 3rd left.

From Boston:

- Take I-93 South
- Continue from Route 93 South directions above.

From Logan International Airport:

- Take the Sumner Tunnel to Route 93 South
- Continue from Route 93 South directions above.

From Rhode Island:

- Take I-95 North to Exit 12, follow to 128 South, which will turn into I-93 North
- Follow I-93 North to Exit 7 (Route 3 South)
- Take Exit 18 (Quincy Adams T Station, Washington St.)
- Stay in far-left lane, following signs for Quincy Center
- At first set of lights take a left onto Centre St.
- Bear left at the next set of lights into Crown Colony Office Park, the Hotel will be your 3rd left.

From Route 3 (Heading North):

- Follow Route 3 North to Exit 19 (Quincy Center, Washington St.)
- Stay in far-left lane, following signs for Quincy Center.
- At first set of lights take a left onto Centre St.
- Bear left at the next set of lights into Crown Colony Office Park, the Hotel will be your 3rd left.

From I-90/Mass Pike:

- Take Mass Pike East to Exit 14 (I-95/128)
- Take I-95/128 South will turn into I-93 North (at Exit 12)
- Follow I-93 North to Exit 7 (Route 3 South)
- Take Exit 18 (Quincy Adams T Station, Washington St.)
- Stay in far-left lane, following signs for Quincy Center.
- At first set of lights take a left onto Centre St.
- Bear left at the next set of lights into Crown Colony Office Park, the Hotel will be your 3rd left.

DIESEL FUEL AND SAUSAGE

By James D. Matthews
3rd Armored Division
Combat Command A

[The following article appeared in the newsletter of the Ohio Buckeye VBOB Chapter, dated December, 2002.]

I was a front-line wireman with Combat Command A, Third Armored Division, in General Hodges' First Army. When the Ardennes erupted on December 16, 1944, the Third Armored was fighting in Stolberg, Germany, a suburb of Aachen. This area was called "Purple Heart Valley."

Before daybreak, December 17, those of us in the Combat Commands were roused from our sleeping bags and in 2 hours were on our way back to Belgium. We were told about Germany's breakthrough and knew we were in for heavy action.

Our route took us south from Aachen through Eupen and west to Verviers on our way to the front. The towns which we had so recently liberated were lined with villagers who, with terror in their eyes, were weeping and pleading with us not to leave. We tried to still their fears and reassure them we would be back, although we were not convinced that all would go well.

The Third Armored was to hold a 20-mile gap on the northern shoulder from Hotten to Lansival. The eight-man wire crew plunged in immediately, laying communications from Combat Command A in Spa to Combat Command Reserve in Soy.

A wire crew always moved up with the troops in the daytime and laid wire in dense blackness all night. The senses of touch, smell, and hearing became extremely acute since blackout conditions rendered sight almost useless. As usual, this story takes place in the black of night.

In late afternoon of December 21, our wire truck and jeep headed for the supply depot in Hotten to replenish our truck with equipment. The truck carried about 22 spools, with each spool holding a mile of wire.

A wire truck is very noisy. There is no opportunity for stealth with uncoiling wire spools making a helluva racket. But noise is no problem at this time. This is the rear, right? Right! But not when you consider that the Germans are attacking from the south and the east and are shelling Hotten. We attempt to escape from the town, but we have caught the attention of a Panther is neutralized by one of our tank destroyers and we can proceed with our mission.

It is dark now when we finally inch our way out of town and begin laying wire from Hotten to Combat Command Reserve, three miles up the Hotten-Soy road. At this time both Americans and Germans are using this road--not at the same time, we hope.

We begin our job in the bone-numbing cold. Very little light reflects off the snow. With our usual luck, we will be working all night. The wire truck crawls at a snail's pace, unreeling spools of wire. Our jeep follows the wire trail. Two of us pick up wire every ten feet or so and tie it off the road on a tree or brush or post. We get about one mile of wire down and tied every two hours.

About midnight, the truck veers to go around six tanks whose occupants are hunkered down for the night. The truck crew continues to unreel the wire as it passes the row of tanks.

No problem. I pick up the wire from the road, climb on top of a tank, and throw the wire to my partner, who ties it off on a roadside tree. Then I leap onto the next tank and repeat the procedure.

I'm thinking the job is going pretty good but it's awful slow. I'm also wondering how those guys can sleep in the tanks with all the racket we are making. The unwinding spools of wire scream and whine, my heavy boots clank on the cold armor of the tanks, we are yelling back and forth as I heave wire over the tank to the side of the road.

Suddenly I freeze. The hair rises on the back of my neck. Fear stings my eyes. Something's wrong! What's wrong with my nose? I can't smell gasoline. Dammit! It's diesel--diesel fuel and sausage. Krauts always smell like sausage. My mind clicked! These are German tanks!

I fly off the tank and stumble to the jeep driver. In an urgent hoarse whisper, I spit, "These are German tanks!" He yells, "WHAT?"

I hiss at him "Be quiet!" as I try to shut him up. I scramble to my buddy at the side of the road. With hand signals, I motion him to come!

We pile into the jeep that the driver has already slammed into gear and make a dash for the wire truck a few yards ahead of us. The jeep pulls abreast of the truck and I yell, "Those are German tanks! Let's get the hell out of here!"

The truck loses no time in speeding toward Soy. The wire reel screams and wails like a banshee. With a life of its own, it keeps spewing wire randomly, looking like so many snakes ready to strike.

One of the guys on the truck grabs a hatchet, hangs over the tailgate, and frantically tries to chop off the run-away wire. The clamor of the truck noise, the whining of the jeep, the rattling and clanking of the wire drums, and the deafening harmonics of the wire all contrive to sound like a tank gone berserk.

When we arrived in Soy, we reported the incident to the officer of the guard. Six Sherman tanks immediately retracted our route. They returned as dawn was breaking and said there were no tanks in the area. Later we returned to the area and saw tank tracks headed south.■

GOOD RESPONSE TO DUES REMINDER

A dues reminder was sent our the middle of June and so far response has been good.

You can tell if your dues are due by looking at the date which appears just above your last name on the mailing label used to mail you this newsletter.

Annual dues are: \$15.00. Life membership: \$75.00 for 70 years of age and over; \$125.00 for those under 70 years-of-age.■

"The long gray line has ever failed us. Were you to do so, a million ghosts in olive drab, in brown khaki, in blue and gray, would rise from their white crosses, thundering those magic words: **Duty, honor, country.**"

--General Douglas MacArthur

MEMBERS SPEAK OUT

Ann Shields, an army nurse in Landstuhl Hospital in Germany is trying to help her Belgian friend Renee Nissen in her search for an American soldier who billeted in her home in the fall of 1944. Renee's parents were Jacque and Eva Nissen and they owned the Cafe de Centre pub in downtown Thimister (east of Liege). About 20 GIs lived upstairs, including a Lt. Brown, who was nicknamed "Dudley." David may have been his real first name. Dudley visited Renee's family in 1953 when he was a T/Sgt stationed in Wiesbaden. If you can help write to Ann at: LRMC, CMR 402 Box 297, APO AE 01980.

JOHN D. KNAPPENBERGER, 28TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 110TH INFANTRY REGIMENT, is looking for **GUIDO CENTOFANI** from Company D in his regiment. Guido was captured along with John and he last saw him at Stalag IV-B. If you can help John with information about Guido, write to him at: 604 South Lake Formosa Drive, Orlando, Florida 32803.

PATRICK J. KEARNEY, 11TH ARMORED DIVISION, 55TH ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION, would like your help. He has organized a campaign to have the Battle of the Bulge added to the Disabled American Veterans annual calendar. He asks those of you who belong to the DAV, to tell them in writing that you want the "Bulge" added to the December 16th date on their calendar. Write to Mrs. Susan Loth, "Bulge" Calendar Entry, DAV National Headquarters, P.O. Box 14301, Cincinnati, Ohio 45250-0301.

MARTIN and FRAN COLLINS are writing a book on the camp at Foxley, Herfordshire, England, during WWII. It is their understanding that a number of the wounded in the Battle of the Bulge were taken to the 123rd and 156th General Hospitals. Also various tank battalions took training there. If you have any recollections regarding Foxley you would like to share with them, write: 3 Ipswich Crescent, Great Barr, Birmingham B42 1LY, England.

JACK W. WEBER, 75TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 899TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION, writes to see if someone can advise him where he can locate a copy of Bill Mauldin's book "Up Front" and a 50th anniversary book printed by W. W. Nortman (sp) Company. If you can help write to Jack at: 112 Riley Cove, Ruidoso, New Mexico 88345-7066.

GRACIA JEAN RIST, 2ND EVACUATION HOSPITAL, writes to ask if we could advise her the number of VBOB members. *We thought you might like to know, too. As of May 2, 2003, we had on our roles 8,248. Of that number, approximately 600 are associate members. We just sent out (June) a dues reminder to approximately 1,000 members who are in arrears--we may have to adjust our figures in a month or so.*

Frank Whitt writes to see if anyone remembers his brother--**PRESTON T. WHITT, JR., 69TH INFANTRY DIVISION**, from North Carolina. He was wounded in the Ardennes. Five sons of the Whitt family served in WWII. Clyde, of the Army Air Corps, did not come home. Frank is anxious to hear more

about his brother's time in the service. Write to him at: 909 North "I" Street #305, Tacoma, Washington 98503-2135.

LESLIE M. CHASTAIN, 97TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 303RD INFANTRY, 2ND BATTALION, COMPANY G, would like information on the soldiers who served in the Ruhr Pocket and Czechoslovakia with the 1st U.S. Army, Patton's 3rd U.S. Army and General Bradley. Write to Leslie at: 190 West Park Avenue #9, Soldotna, Alaska 99669.

J. Edelhausen writes to see if any of you served in one of the three task forces sent to LaGleize. If you did and would like to share your experiences, write to him at: Falconetruwe 1, 6218 RL Maastricht, The Netherlands.

SEYMOUR KROLL wants to know why there are never any stories about his group the **35TH DIVISION**. Stories are submitted by the members and we use what we receive. Also, we try to use the stories as they are received--with the oldest being used first.

Associate member **Stan Bellens** is helping William Gillet in his search for his father. His father was named **GILBERT STEPHEN (or Stephen or Steven)**, and was from Newark, Ohio. He served at the caserne General Leman in Bressoux, near Liege, which was also a bakery for the U.S. Army under the HK 1817QMBD150-H--the regimental code was Q183J. If you can help write to Stan at: 4, Rue de la Trompette; B-4680 Hermee; Belgium.

Martha Chambers Herod is searching for information regarding **WILLIAM S. CHAMBERS, 118TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION, BATTERY A**. If you can provide any information send it to her: 414 Brewer Street, Navasota, Texas 77868.

HARVEY MELTZER, 90TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 359TH INFANTRY, COMPANY F, would like to find a list of the casualties for his division. If you can help him, write to Harvey at: 33 Greenwich Avenue Apt #15-F, New York, New York 10014-2766.

CARL B. MONTGOMERY, 28TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 110TH INFANTRY, 1ST BATTALION, SERVICE COMPANY, would like to hear from **JOSEPH M. ELEK, 16TH FIELD ARTILLERY OBSERVATION BATTALION**, who had an article in the May issue of *The Bulge Bugle*. Joseph, you and Carl were in the same POW camp. Write to Carl at: 5 West 8th Street, Apts 502-506, New York, New York 20003.

JAMES R. SISSON, 106TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 423RD INFANTRY, COMPANY C, would like to know if anyone can provide him with the address of the family of **DARRELL D. STONE** (also known as **ROCKY**) who has been missing since December 19, 1944, during the Bulge. Rocky was a runner in the 1st Platoon. *[James, sorry to be so long publishing this. You signed your letter "James R." and we have you on our lists as "J. Roger." You didn't have a return address on your letter.]* If you can help write to James at: 81 Middle Avenue, Tiverton, Rhode Island 02878-4507.

REUNIONS

2ND ARMORED DIVISION, 27TH ARMORED ENGINEER BATTALION, September 24-27, 2003, Holiday Inn & Suites Marietta, Marietta Georgia. Contact: John A. Shields, P.O. Box 106, East Butler, Pennsylvania 16029. Telephone: 570-836-2890.

4TH INFANTRY DIVISION, September 7-14, 2003. Contact: Gregory Rollinger, 13507 Danube Lane R-19, Rosemount, Minnesota 55068-3395.

7TH ARMORED DIVISION, September 18-21, 2003, Fort Mitchell, Kentucky. Contact: Charles Barry, 947 "A" Street, Madville, Pennsylvania 16335. Telephone: 814-333-8051.

9TH ARMORED DIVISION, 16TH ARMORED FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION, September 2-7, 2003, New Orleans, Louisiana. Contact: Harold Thethaway. Telephone: 570-829-4792.

30TH INFANTRY DIVISION, August 29-September 2, 2003, Sheraton Music City Hotel, Nashville, Tennessee. Contact: 30th Infantry Division Association, 2915 W SR #235, Brooker, Florida 32622-5167.

35TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 216TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION, September 25-27, 2003, Drury Inn, Nashville, Tennessee. Contact: Ralph L. Herndon, 8063 Crown Way, Jonesboro, Georgia 30238. Telephone: 770-473-4015.

38TH SIGNAL BATTALION, September 18-21, 2003, Eastontown, New Jersey. Contact: Bill Foiles, 2208 Dunvegan Drive, Columbia, South Carolina 29209. Telephone: 803-776-1114.

75TH INFANTRY DIVISION, September 3-6, 2003, Sheraton Music City Hotel, Nashville, Tennessee. Contact: Ted Richards, 4507 25th Avenue, Rock Island, Illinois 61201. Telephone: 309-786-6126.

80TH INFANTRY DIVISION, Wyndham Roanoke Airport Hotel, Roanoke, Virginia. Contact: Archer H. Futch, 1252 Westbrook Place, Livermore, California 94550. Telephone: 925-447-4858.

84TH INFANTRY DIVISION, August 23-26, 2003, Crown Plaza Hotel, Warwick, Rhode Island. Contact: Bill Almeida. Telephone: 401-433-2183.

87TH INFANTRY DIVISION, August 25-31, 2003, Adams Mark Hotel, Charlotte, North Carolina. Contact: Tom Burgess, 2616 Rea Road, Charlotte, North Carolina 28226. Telephone: 704-366-5911.

90TH INFANTRY DIVISION (All Units), August 14-17, 2003, Millennium Hotel, St. Louis, Missouri. Contact: James R. Reid, Sr., 17th Shore Drive, Willowbrook, Illinois 60527-2221. Telephone: 630-789-0204.

101ST ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION planning a reunion. Contact: Thomas J. Kirk, 13201 Sandston Court, Laurel, Maryland 20708. Telephone: 301-776-5127.

106TH RECONNAISSANCE TROOP, October 23-26, 2003, San Antonio, Texas. Contact: Joseph C. Haines, 7503 Haines Drive, El Reno, Oklahoma 73036-9599. Telephone: 405-262-3867.

150TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION, held its reunion May 14-16, 2003. Contact: Alexander W. Maciasaac, 21 Freeman Road, Yarmouth Port, Massachusetts 02675. Telephone: 508-362-6876.

159TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION, September 2-5, 2003, Thayer Hotel, West Point, New York. Contact: Russ Ruch. Telephone: 570-622-2942.

244TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION, September 18-20, 2003, at the Wingate Inn, Wilmington, NC. Contact: Marie Varrecchia, 1-330-896-0929.

249TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION, September 11-13, 2003, Howard Johnson Motel, Fredericksburg, Virginia. Contact: Irmin C. Magruder, P.O. Box 3134, Staunton, Virginia 24402-3134. Telephone: 540-886-6944.

264TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION, September 5-7, 2003, Greater Cincinnati Airport Hilton. Contact: Bob Latz, 148 Vicary Hill Lane, N.E. #1, Canton, Ohio 44714. Telephone: 330-493-4657.

275TH ARMORED FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION, November 7-8, 2003, Hampton Inn, Jackson, Tennessee. Contact: Kenneth Stevens, Box 143, Bolivar, Tennessee 38008. Telephone: 731-658-3361.

296TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION, October 1-3, 2003, Sturbridge Host Hotel, Sturbridge, Massachusetts. Contact: Joseph Civitillo, 9 Ireland Roach, Wethersfield, Connecticut 06109. Telephone: 860-529-2652.

297TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION, July 3-5, 2003, Washington, DC. Contact: Adele DePalo, 6040 Richmond Highway, #713, Alexandria, Virginia 22303. Telephone: 1-800-842-2289 or 703-329-0279.

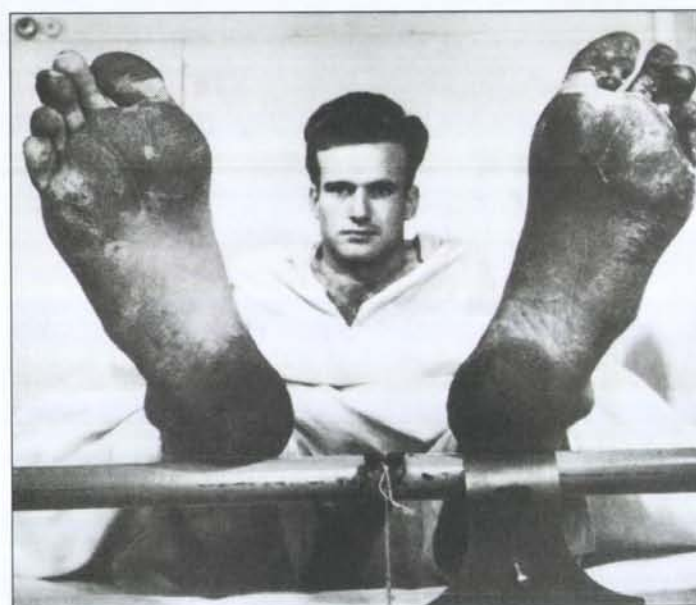
304TH ORDNANCE MAINTENANCE COMPANY (AA), September 5-8, 2003, Pocmont Resort, Bushkill, Pennsylvania. Contact: Harry Moosegian, 10103 Pemhaven, San Antonio, Texas 78240. Telephone: 210-696-2343.

328TH INFANTRY COMBAT TEAM, October 16-19, 2003, Holiday Inn, Tysons Corner, Mclean, Virginia. Contact: Alex Pagnotta, 302 Heritage Drive, Harleysville, Pennsylvania. Telephone: 215-412-3335.

644TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION, October 6-9, 2003, Surfside Holiday Inn, Daytona Beach Shores, Florida. Only address given was email address: <http://www.644td.com>

774TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION, October 5-10, 2003, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Contact: Art Pelkey, 705 38th Avenue, South; North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina 29582. Telephone: 843-272-5378.

SHAEF/ETOUSA VETERANS ASSOCIATION (WWII), October 6-8-2003, Doubletree Guest Suites Hotel, Charleston, South Carolina. Contact: Don Triffley, 7340 Dundee Street, New Orleans, Louisiana 70126. Telephone: 504-241-3065.



COLD FEET - 1500 AMERICAN CASUALTIES

During the Battle of the Bulge more than 15,000 American Soldiers were disabled by trench foot or frostbitten feet. The afflictions were quite similar: cold accompanied by moisture. In the case of trench foot: slowed circulation in the foot and dead tissue. Sometimes when gangrene set in, the foot had to be amputated. Pictured above: a victim raises and exposes his foot under treatment for trench foot.

A WAGER PAID OFF

By Phil Melleno
955th Field Artillery Battalion
Headquarters Battery

I would like to submit a story regarding our outfit -- the 955th Field Artillery Battalion which occurred way back when. A story of a different mode--one that may bring on a chuckle or two for some of you readers.

A group of us in Headquarters Battery were sitting around during a break in the action--we were in the Bullingen--Kalterberg area of Belgium/Germany in October-November 1944. We were just chewing the fat. B.S.ing (GI style) speculating about this and that and whatever. Well, this was during a period where there was quite a bit of talk about the war being over by Christmas 1944--remember???? The *Stars and Stripes*, in fact, had just printed an article outlining the discharge plans--85 points and out--remember???

Well our "talk" finally centered on the *Stars and Stripes* article and the speculation of whether or not the war would be over by Christmas 1944. A couple of the fellows thought "yes" it would. Others felt "no." Well, the discussion became hot and heavy with each side providing facts and reasons for their beliefs. Fred Lane one of our group was the most vocal in the belief "yes," the war would be over by Christmas. Bob White was the most vocal of the opposition, stating "no" the war would not be over by Christmas 1944. Well the discussion became a real heated argument resulting in a wager being made, i.e., if the war was over by Christmas 1944, Bob White would kiss Fred Lane's bare fanny in front of a battery formation, and if the war was not over by Christmas 1944, Fred Lane would kiss Bob White's bare fanny in front of a battery formation.

Well, of course, we know the war was not over by Christmas 1944.

We all went through those miserable expletive-expletive-expletive days of the Battle of the Bulge.

No! the war was not over by Christmas 1944.

Well now, it was payoff time.

Several months later, March, 1945, our Headquarters Battery went into position at Rheineck Germany, and we occupied a large castle (Schloss Rheineck) overlooking the Rhine River. It was a strategic military position. It also gave us a thrill to remember--living in a castle for several days. The castle had a large courtyard so we prevailed on our First Sergeant Ted Econ to call a battery formation (when feasible) so the wager could be settled--which he did.

When the troops were assembled, Econ ordered Fred Lane and Bob White--"Front and Center!!!. He then called on Sgt. Gallagher of our medical detachment to approach the group. Gallagher was preadvised of the purpose of the formation and of his role. He came well prepared for his action. Bob White was then ordered to drop his trousers and expose his fanny.

Gallagher, getting into the spirit of the proceedings, proceeded to go into an elaborate act of opening his first aid kit, putting on gloves, spreading out a clear white towel, reaching into the medical kit for a cotton swab and then the alcohol. He then proceeded to apply the alcohol at the "point of contact" on Bob White's fanny. He then declared the area medically approved for

the planned action.

Fred Lane was then ordered to carry out his role, i.e., the loser's part of the wager, kissing Bob White's bare fanny before a battery formation. When he proceeded he was met with hoots, cheers, comments, etc., etc., from the assembly.

Yes, it was a few moments of fun. The only regret we had was that no one had the presence of mind to have a camera to preserve the action for posterity or whatever.

I am certain many of the readers have stories to tell regarding fun moments that took place over there way back when.

P.S. Just a brief comment re: the 955th: We were a great outfit, we landed at Omaha Beach June 16, 1944, earned 5 battle stars and received several commendations for our role during the Battle of the Bulge. ■

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL NOMINATIONS FOR 2003-04

At a meeting of the Past Presidents chaired by Immediate Past President John J. Dunleavy on June 24, 2003, the following slate was approved for presentation to the General Membership at the 2003 Reunion in Quincy, Massachusetts.

President: George Chekan
9th Infantry Division

Executive Vice President/Vice President

Military Affairs Stanley Wojtusik
106th Infantry Division

Vice President/Membership Harry J. Meisel
56th AAA AW Battalion

Vice President/Chapters George Fisher
26th Infantry Division

Vice President/Public Affairs Demetri Paris
9th Armored Division

Treasurer William P. Tayman
87th Infantry Division

Corresponding Secretary Dorothy S. Davis
57th Field Hospital

Recording Secretary John Bowen
Associate Member

Trustees:

Three Years Richard G. Guenter
511th Engineer Light Ponton Company

..... Neil B. Thompson
740th Tank Battalion (Med)

..... Robert F. Phillips
28th Infantry Division

Two Years Frederick R. Carmichael
87th Infantry Division

..... Frances Dougherty
Associate Member

..... James W. Hunt
1st Infantry Division

One Year Joseph F. Zimmer
87th Infantry Division

All who serve on the VBOB Executive Council receive no compensation or expenses for attending meetings of same.

Respectfully submitted,

John J. Dunleavy

VBOB Immediate Past President

**HEADQUARTERS
4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
LETTER DATED JANUARY 4, 1945
FILE AG 201.22**

**SUBJECT: COMMENDATION TO COMMANDING
OFFICER, 12TH INFANTRY**

*[The following was sent to us by KENNETH NAGEL,
4TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 12TH INFANTRY
REGIMENT, COMPANY E.]*

1. On 7 December 1944 the 12th Infantry regiment completed with brilliance a month of bitter fighting in the Hurtgen Forest. On December 9, ranks gravely depleted and weary, you went into a defensive position on a ten mile front along the Sauer River. East and North of the city of Luxembourg holding the north sector of the front of this division. In this supposedly quiet sector it was intended that you received and integrated vitally needed reinforcements, renew equipment and raise your level of supply. Procedure had been initiated which would have enabled you to effect reorganization while at the same time securing a respite, well earned and greatly needed, from offensive combat.

This however, was not to be.

2. On 16 December the German Army launched a general offensive along the greater portion of the western front with fury born of desperation, the assault was implemented to the limit of the enemies resources. Penetration of substantial depth quickly were made in areas to the north of your position, and it was apparent the intended southern shoulder of the German offensive fell squarely within the sector of your regiment.

Inflamed by his successes to the north, the Germans drove to establish and expand through you to the south. The full strength of the 212th Volksgrenadier Division was hurled against you. These were young, well equipped troops, who it had been learned trained for this gamble.

Against them stood the 12th Regiment of United States Infantry under strengthened and bearing scars of recent battle. At stake was the dominating ground and road not [sic] which was open to the enemy the city of Luxembourg Radio Luxembourg and military installations of prime importance together with tremendous supply establishments.

3. At 1415 hours, conscious of the imperative necessity that the initial German drive be held this headquarters issued an order of substance as follows. "There will be no retrograde movement in the 12th Infantry Sector."

Twelfth Infantry held; held in the face of odds so ominous that it would be difficult, even in retrospect, to believe possible had not one seen during months of continuous combat, the high courage and honor which marks all ranks of the 12th Infantry.

Meeting the urgency of the occasion and undismayed by the odds, your resistance never faltered.

Panic did not visit this field of battle even with mass German infiltration as deep as four kilometers behind elements of your command.

4. The history of America's participation in this war will be rife with acts of heroism, by individuals and by units, but in collective self-sacrifice and sheer courage it is doubtful whether

any shall surpass the stand made by Company E, in Echternach, during this period. Isolated by the initial German thrust, this company was subjected alternately to enemy shelling and repeated attempts to storm the town. On 8 December two friendly tanks contacted the company and urged an attempt to withdraw under tank protection. This company refused, electing to continue its valiant defense though hopelessly out numbered. After a long and costly operations this isolated but determined group of American Infantry men was over powered, yet the tactical advantages accruing, from Company E's gallant stand and our admiration and debt for their complete subjugation of self-interest to a higher cause, cannot be overstated.

5. Without exception, each unit of your command exhibited a similar high resolve. So, too, was the spirit of the many units attached to and in support of your effort during the Battle, although they would be first to resist any suggestion that had not been primarily a 12th Infantry hour.

The commanding general, Third United States Army, characterized the battle of Luxembourg as in his opinion the most outstanding accomplishment of this division in its long series of engagements 12th Infantry Regiment in the unit meriting the greatest share of this high tribute.

You held the Germans from thrusting south, you reduced the 212th Volksgrenadier Division to one half of its original strength. You denied him vital installations seizure and exploitation of which might have prolonged the war and imaginarily could have been regained only at cost greatly in excess of that acted in the defense; and equally important it was on an extension of the line held by your regiment when relieved, on 24 December that reorganization of the allied position in the south was based.

6. More than once history has found its course shaped by the impact of the 12th Infantry for yours is a regiment rich in deeds of courage.

The performance of the 12th Infantry Regiment in the Battle of Luxembourg accords with the finest traditions of your enviable past, and I take this occasion to acknowledge and salute our magnificent service.

The Commanding General
4th Infantry Division



GERMAN POWs: captured in the battle of Bastogne, are marched to the rear by Private Frank Kelly, an MP 4th Armd. Division, past a well-laden halftrack (note the M1917 .30cal Machine Gun sticking over the side. US Army Photo

LONG MOVE HALTS BIG NAZI PUSH

[The following article appeared in *The Blue Ridger*, the newsletter of the 80th Infantry Division. It is dated May 28, 1945, and was written by Robert Richards of the United Press. It was sent to us by PAUL PLASTER.]

150-Mile Dash Plugs Gap at Luxembourg

With U.S. Forces on the Western Front, December 30 (U.P.)--Troops of the 80th Infantry Division going without hot food and riding in open trucks through freezing weather, made a 150 mile dash into a defense line formed to save the City of Luxembourg. It was disclosed today as more details were released on the part played by Lieutenant General George S. Patton's troops in stemming the German counteroffensive.

The 80th, commanded by Major General Horace L. McBride, was resting at the French town of St. Avold after hard fighting in the Saar, and was due to go back into line on the night of December 17-18. So it traveled 4 miles east to Bitche, and they got a sudden order to move north when the German offensive opened.

To Protect Luxembourg

One regiment was loaded into trucks there at 1:00 a.m., December 19, with orders to form a defensive line north of Luxembourg and hold it to the last man. Luxembourg city was a vital communications point and sheltered at least 50,000 men, women and children.

The regiment was in the line the morning of December 20, registered its guns and opened fire. By afternoon the whole division was in position although the greater part of its men had nothing hot to eat or drink for 36 hours.

Although the line was a defensive one, the 80th was ordered to attack on the morning of the 21st. The order was countermanded and then given again, because the position was decidedly fluid.

One regiment's trucks had gone back for more troops, so the regiment moved through the snow on foot for six miles to the West. It turned back when the orders were changed, then set out again to the west--a total hike of 18 miles in all.

At 6:00 a.m. on the 22nd, it attacked and made 14 miles in the next 48 hours through the savage, rocky ravines and wooded ground, with no time to sleep, no hot coffee or food.

"Purest Butchery" of Germans

It emerged along a road which formed one arm of a "V" along the other arm of which a German infantry division was moving northwest in close column, not suspecting the presence of the Americans. The Americans hit the middle of the German Column.

"It was purest butchery," said one officer. "The 80th stood at a road junction, emptying its magazines into a mass of struggling men and horses."

The head of the Germans columns fell back in panic and the 80th reported it wiped out about two-thirds of the German division.

The advance continued until Christmas Day. ■

ARIZONA CHAPTER DEDICATES MONUMENT

Approximately 300 people attended a May 30, 2003, ceremonies of the dedication of the Tucson Chapter's Battle of the Bulge Monument. The site was in the heart of the city (El Presidio Park), where in 1775 a Spanish fort was established and Tucson came into being.



Pictured above is the Battle of the Bulge Monument dedicated by the Tucson Chapter of VBOB on May 30, 2003.

The monument is of light gray Georgia granite, six feet high, five feet wide, and weighing 2,800 pounds. It is engraved fore and aft with the brilliant colors of the VBOB logo and the American, Belgian, and Luxembourg flags.

The idea for a monument was conceived in October and within six weeks the money was raised from the chapter itself in amounts ranging from \$10 to \$1,000. Costs began to run over so a luncheon was held to raise additional money. The City of Tucson generously paid the expenses of rental of chairs, podium, sound system, and canopy for the dedication ceremonies.

The 36th U.S. Army Band from Fort Huachuca, set the tone for the ceremony. Guests included a Belgian consul, a U.S. Representative, the Mayor and Council, a number of city officials and a large representation of veterans' organizations. Letters were read from the Luxembourg Council stationed in San Francisco, Senators John McCain and John Kyle, and others. A proclamation from the Governor was read. The dedication speech was by VBOB National President Louis Cunningham. Framed certificates of appreciation, paper weights displaying the VBOB logo, and a specially-created VBOB medal was distributed to participations. Newspaper and TV coverage was outstanding.

A significant moment in the program was when a 14-year-old, middle school girl read an essay, entitled *Through the Door [elsewhere in this issue]*. In it, she imagined herself in a time warp, accompanying her grandfather and seeing him gravely wounded while leading his platoon. There was not a dry eye in the audience. ■

See page 5

CHECK THE MAILING LABEL TO SEE IF
YOUR DUES ARE DUE.

THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE HISTORICAL FOUNDATION
Invites You to Join Your Friends for the
"EVENTS OF REMEMBRANCE AND COMMEMORATION"
OF THE 59th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE
December 14, 15 and 16, 2003
Metropolitan Washington, DC

The Marriott Fairview Park, 1495 (Capital Beltway) and VA Route 50, Falls Church VA has been selected as the site for activities commemorating the 59th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge, December 14 - 16, 2003. This hotel, just off the Beltway will provide easy access and accommodations, for a reduced rate of **\$85.00**, single or double occupancy. Parking is free. This rate is available for any night(s) between December 13 and December 17. For room reservations please call the Marriott Reservations (1-800-228-9290) or Marriott Fairview Park at 1-703-849-9400 or by December 3, 2003. Mention that you are attending the Battle of the Bulge events for the special rate.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2003

- 2:00 PM – 6:00 PM Registration (Hotel Lobby), receive name badges, Banquet/bus tickets. (If you are only attending the Banquet, you may pick up your tickets with table assignment at the Marriott Fairview Park at 6:00 PM Dec 15th.)
- 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 Hotel restaurant has been reserved for supper from 6:30 – 8:00 PM for the Battle of the Bulge Veterans (payment is on your own). A time to renew friendships & visit w/old friends

MONDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2003

- 8:00 AM – 9:00 AM Registration/receive name badges, Banquet/bus tickets (hotel lobby).
- 9:30 AM Charter buses depart hotel.
- 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM Tour the new Smithsonian Air Museum at Dulles Airport on its opening day. This new addition will be opening Dec 15th as the Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center for the display and preservation of its collection of historic aviation and space artifacts. It will include an IMAX theater, on your own, as well as three levels of air and space crafts.
- 12:00 PM -- 1:00 PM Lunch on your own at the Museum.
- 3:00 PM Return by bus from Smithsonian Air Museum to Marriott Fairview Park Hotel.

BANQUET AT MARRIOTT FAIRVIEW PARK, FALLS CHURCH VA

- 6:15 PM Social Hour/Cash Bar.
- 6:45 PM Seated for Dinner.
- 7:00 PM Color Guard/Members of the Drum and Fife Corps/Ceremonies.
- 7:15 PM Dinner served.

Program:

- Greetings from Dignitaries.
- Speaker: Colonel James P. Totten
 Grandson of General George S. Patton.

BANQUET ENTRÉE

The choice of entrée for the Banquet is:

Seared Chicken Breast

OR

Mustard Herb Loin Pork

After Banquet

Hospitality Room open at Marriott Fairview Park.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2003

- 9:45 AM Bus from Marriott Fairview Park to Arlington Cemetery
- 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 Amphitheater.
- 12:30 PM Bus to Marriott Fairview Park, Falls Church VA
- 1:00 PM Buffet Luncheon, Marriott Fairview Park Hotel
- Swearing-in of new VBOB officers.
- Comments by VBOB President.
- Farewell.

December 14, 15 & 16 December BOB Commemoration

RESERVATION FORM
"REMEMBRANCE AND COMMEMORATION"
OF THE 59th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE
December 14, 15 and 16 2003
Metropolitan Washington, DC

Return form and check by December 3, 2003 to:
 Battle of the Bulge Historical Foundation
 PO Box 2516,
 Kensington MD 20895-0181

Questions:
 Dorothy Davis 301-881-0356
 E-Mail: johndbowen@earthlink.net

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Spouse/Guest: _____

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

Battle of Bulge Unit: _____

RESERVATIONS:	<u>Number Attending</u>	<u>Cost/Person</u>	<u>Total</u>
Registration Fee	_____	\$15.00	\$ _____

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2003

6:30 PM – 8:00 PM: Marriott Fairview Park Restaurant _____
 Please indicate the number that will be attending so that we can advise the hotel.

on your own

MONDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2003

Chartered Bus, 9:20 AM – 4:30 PM	_____	\$20.00	_____
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New Smithsonian Air Museum at Dulles Airport	_____	Free	_____
Lunch, On your Own at Museum	_____		_____
Shopping, Stop at Virginia Mall	_____		_____

Commemorative Banquet, Marriott Fairview Park	_____	\$49.00	_____
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Please make your Main Course selection(s):

- ☐ Seared Chicken Breast _____ (Name _____)
OR
☐ Mustard Herb Loin Pork _____ (Name _____)

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

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2002:

9:45 AM	Chartered bus to Arlington Cemetery	\$15.00	_____
11:00 AM	Ceremonies: Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers/ VBOB Monument	No. Attending:	_____
12:30 PM	Bus Return to Marriott Fairview Park		
1:00 PM	VBOB Luncheon & Installation of Officers	\$10.00	_____

Total Cost of Luncheon is \$22.00 of which VBOB will pick up \$12.00

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

Banquet Dress: Business suit/black tie (miniature medals encouraged) or military dress uniform
 Room reservations must be made with the Marriott Hotel directly, by December 3, 2003 (Telephone (1-800-228-9290)).
 Return completed Reservation Form for events to BOB Historical Foundation by 3 December 2003, (Telephone 301-881-0356).
 No cancellation refunds after December 9, 2003.
 Please indicate in all places the number & names attending so that we can be advised of the proper number to plan. Thanks!
 ***PLEASE BRING A PICTURE ID (Drivers License, Passport, Mil ID)

December 14, 15, & 16 December 2003 BOB Commemoration

FIGHTING "TERRIBLE 20" VICTORS BY 100 TO 1 IN 7-HOUR ARDENNES SIEGE

[The following article appeared in the 87th Infantry Division newsletter Golden Acorn News, dated March, 2002. It was reprinted from an article by Pat Mitchell of the Stars and Stripes.]

With the 87th Infantry Division, January 24--The platoon leader liked to fight. So did his Terrible Twenty riflemen of K Company of the 346th Infantry Regiment.

Second Lieutenant Glenn J. Doman, of Philadelphia, and his men attacked the strongly held Ardennes Village of Tillet, held the Nazis at bay for seven hours, killed at least 100 Germans and lost only one man. Disgruntled at being the regimental quartermaster, shave tail, Doman, who was a quiet medic student before the war, switched to the rifle line and on the first day of duty tipped off the attack against the Nazis who were "snug and warm in this village," he reported.

"So I made patrol early in the evening," Doman said, with S/Sgt. James Deal, who calls himself "the California Hobo," and Pfc Warren Horton, of Madison, Kansas. The patrol was seeking a warm place for the Yanks, who were freezing out in the open.

He called for six volunteers for a patrol and picked S/Sgt. George S. Blannkerbaer, of Borden, Indiana; Sgt. Emil J. Piger, Allentown, Pennsylvania; Pfc Gerald Cramer, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; Pfc Clyde D. Ridder, Sonohomish, Washington; Pfc John R. Hales, Bentlyville, Pennsylvania; and Richard Ruseluis, Whitehorse, New York.

We jumped off at 3:00 a.m., got into the town and moseyed around looking for a lone Jerry. Piger spotted a hefty Nazi sitting guard duty at a ice house so I sent him and some others to surround the joint while Blannkerbaker and I pushed open the creaky door and surprised Jerry.

The house was full of Jerries but my pistol was deep in his belly and he came quietly. At 4:30 a.m. he sent back twenty men, splitting the group in two to sweep the town from end to end. They ran into trouble at the same house from which they had taken the Jerry prisoner, but Doman sent a BAR man against a street sweeping machine gun nest. When the road was cleared he called for a group under T/Sgt. Donald Corbin, of Zanesville, Ohio, to fall back to building taken previously.

"I then saw 30 to 40 Jerries coming at us and called on my radio for artillery," Doman related. "As time went along that artillery got better and better. Especially with the help of Sgt. Lloyd J. Cassista, of West Hartford, Connecticut, who relayed my double talk along."

Finally along about 11:00 a.m., according to the platoon leader, the Jerries brought up a Panther tank to blast the Yanks from their stone house.

"The damn tank started to fire into us and pumped eight direct hits into the building which started coming down. I radioed for permission to retire even though we were surrounded. We got away.

[The preceding article was presented by Nelve McFarlin, 346th Infantry Regiment, Company K, who submitted the following comments:

I was a member of the "Fighting Terrible 20" and would like to comment on the events of the next few days.

We were headed for St. Hubert's and were pinned down by machine gun fire. We lost several of our men.

Pfc Gerald Cramer was seriously wounded to the extent that the chaplain said a few words over him. He was sent back to the hospital and recovered and rejoined the unit at Fort Benning, Georgia. I was wounded at the same location. The medic who took care of me discovered that my feet were frostbitten. I was evacuated to the 185th General Hospital in Taunton, England. I almost lost both of my feet from which I have a disability. Note: The medic who took care of me was killed a few days after I was wounded.

Four of our men were captured in the same battle--Pfc's Benz, Bates, Martin and Ridder. The Company Commander Lt. Glenn Doman received the Distinguished Service Cross.■

UPCOMING EVENTS

The following events are listed that may be of interest to Battle of the Bulge Veterans.

4-8 Sep 2003 VBOB 2003 Annual Reunion, Quincy Marriott, Quincy Massachusetts. See Registration Form in this issue.

13 Oct 2003 VBOB Memorial Dedication by Central Massachusetts Chapter at Holy Cross College, Worcester Mass. Contact "Gen" John E. McAuliffe, President, 425 Pleasant Street, #1410, Worcester MA 01609, Tel 508-754-7183 or j.mcauliffe@verizon.net

14-16 Dec 2003 BOB 59th Anniversary Commemoration Banquet, Marriott Fairview Park Hotel, Falls Church, VA and Arlington Cemetery Ceremonies at the Tomb of the Unknowns and VBOB Monument. See Registration Form in this issue.

27 Jan - 1 Feb 2004 Battle of the Bulge Reenactment sponsored by WWII Federation at Fort Indiantown Gap PA. Veterans are invited to stay in original WWII Barracks, starting Tuesday the 27th of January and enjoy the reenactment on 31 Jan. For registration form or information contact John D. Bowen. Veteran Coordinator, 613 Chichester Lane, Silver Spring MD 20904-3331, 301-384-6533 or www.wwiifederation.org

25 - 30 May 2004 VBOB 2004 Convention and WWII Memorial Dedication. See preview elsewhere in this Bugle or contact John D. Bowen, VBOB Secretary, 613 Chichester Lane, Silver Spring MD 20904-3331, 301-384-6533 or johndbowen@earthlink.net

14-16 Dec 2004 60th Anniversary Commemoration of the Battle of the Bulge Banquet and Arlington Cemetery Ceremonies at the Tomb of the Unknowns and VBOB Monument. Details to follow in future Bugle.

If you have an event planned, please let the Bugle Editor know by sending information to our Headquarters address.

MY BULGE EXPERIENCE

By Arnold L. Brown
30th Infantry Division
358th Infantry Regiment

[The following is extracted from an interview on a program entitled "A Mile in Their Shoes."]

Brown: My first operation in the Battle of the Bulge was in the Town of Niederwampach in Luxembourg. A and B Companies had attacked Niederwampach and were held up, so they asked me to go around the left flank and attack from the rear.

In an attack position such as this, I always attacked with two platoons forward and one in support, and my position is always in between and slightly to the rear of the two attacking platoons, so I can keep abreast of what's going on and if I need to commit my support platoon, I'll know where to do it.

In approaching Niederwampach, the two platoons split up a little bit, so the village in my immediate front had not been cleared. I entered this building with this command group. When I say command group, that was just myself, my communications sergeant, the radio operator and my messenger.

We entered the barn part of this building, and when I first entered, I turned around and started to say, "I don't believe there's anything in here." There was a platform of hay on the right side, the platform was about waist high, and the hay was a little higher than that, and it started to move. So we squared off toward that hay with our weapons, and a German said, "Nicht schiessen!" (Which meant, Don't shoot.)

I said, "Hande ho! Hande ho!" (Put your hands up.) So they put their hands up and come out and surrendered, there must have been about ten or twelve Germans.

When they surrendered, there was another group of four or five men who came out from the stall behind us, and they surrendered. I heard a commotion over my head and I looked up and there's a German descending from a rafter up there, and I noticed that he had hand grenades around his waist belt. He came down and surrendered.

To this day we don't know why they did this. I bring it out just to show you how lucky I was all through this combat over there. And then I had my other platoons clear out the other buildings, and we captured Niederwampach.

From Niederwampach, we were to go and take Oberwampach.

Before we left, the battalion commander informed me that the situation was serious, but it wouldn't become critical as long as we could prevent the Germans from widening the gaps in our lines. They were sending me into Oberwampach, which was in the shoulder of this breakthrough, with orders to hold it at all costs. Don't let the Germans widen the gap.

In moving across the open fields to get to Oberwampach, we came under machine gun fire from a position on our right front. So I said to the radio operator who's carrying the SCR300 radio on piggyback right beside me, I got the transmitter radio calling for artillery fire to neutralize this machine gun fire. This radio operator now is shot through the head and falls dead at my feet while I'm on the transmitter making that message. There are bullets whizzing around pretty close.

Instead of getting artillery that time, one of the tanks that we had in support took care of the machine gun nest.

Another man picked up the radio and we moved on into

Oberwampach, and took Oberwampach with very little resistance. It was about dusk, and before I got my security all arranged. Why? A German half track towing a 120-millimeter mortar and a crew of 12 had moved into our midst. We didn't know it at the time, but they moved into one of the buildings. They didn't know we were there and we didn't know they had moved in, until I sent my messenger back to one of my other platoons. He went back to the building where this platoon had originally been. He opened the door--it was full of Germans.

It looked like we'd have a firefight right in our midst. Two platoons were going into position, so I took another platoon and gave them the mission of knocking out or capturing these Germans, and I told everybody in the company to keep their heads down because we're going to have a fight right in our midst.

So this platoon got in a semicircle around that building, and they opened up on it. They fired a few rifle grenades, and when the rocket launchers fired, one of these Germans put up a white flag. But only six of them surrendered. See, that's what the Germans will do sometimes, they'll surrender some while the others get away. So in the dark these other six escaped through the darkness while we stopped shooting.

Well, these Germans are all six foot blonds and they had Adolph Hitler shoulder patches. They were part of Hitler's elite guard. In other words, up until this time they had been protecting Hitler's headquarters, and this is the first time I guess that they had actually been committed to hard fighting.

We were literally fighting Hitler's supermen. They all had the same blood type, so if they had to have a transfusion, they didn't have to be checked out, they'd just take one man to another.

Interviewer: What did you do with them? Did you send them back to the rear?

Brown: I questioned them, and found out they were part of a panzer division moving into the area. I sent them to the rear.

Based on that information, I asked the battalion commander to send me some more weapons to defend against an armor type attack. He sent me a platoon of tanks and a platoon of tank destroyers, and I deployed them. It's a good thing, because the Germans launched an attack at 3:30 in the morning. And if we hadn't rushed up those tanks and tank destroyers, they would probably have overrun us the first night.

Let me add this: This little knoll, the high ground on our right, gave us good observation of one of the Germans' supply routes to the troops that surrounded Bastogne, and we were shooting up those vehicles. They sent elements of a panzer division to knock us out. We ended up in somewhere between a 36 and a 72 hour battle, night and day. When the Germans were not making a ground attack, they were bombarding us with artillery fire and direct tank fire.

All of their attacks were at night except one. And this was their last attack. I'll get into that in a moment. But when these battles were going on, two of my senior platoon sergeants came to me and said, "Captain, this is the roughest that we've ever experienced." They said, "We think we had better withdraw. If not, we'll probably have to surrender."

All I had to tell them we're going to hold until the last man.

I was no hero. Those were my orders. Knowing that at some time, if the Germans got these tanks into our position, we're out of ammunition, and there's nothing we could do to resist, I would surrender or tell the men to bug out. But I couldn't tell these men that at that time.

Now these sergeants were brave.

(Continued)

MY BULGE EXPERIENCE

(Continuation)

They'd fought the Germans longer than I had. They'd fought the Germans in Sicily, Africa, and they'd been with me from Normandy in five major battles through the French Maginot Line, and the German Siegfried Line. So they were just stating the facts and I agreed with them. But, I had to do what my job was at the time.

We did hold. And rather than go into a lot of these operations up until the last attack, it was either on the 18th or 19th of January, the Germans made their main effort to overcome us, and they made this attack in daylight hours.

They hit my right flank where I had a platoon on this knoll I told you about with four tanks and I estimate a platoon of infantry. Coming across a big long rolling ridge to our front we could count 11 German tanks. There was infantry riding on the tanks. There was infantry in halftracks following over this ridge just as far as we could see, and they were shooting everything they had while they were moving in.

I got on the telephone with the battalion commander, and I asked him to give me all the artillery fire he had available.

He turned me over to the artillery liaison officer of the battalion, and he asked me to zero one gun in on this target.

I had two observation posts set up, one in the right platoon and one in the left platoon, with wire communications to them, so through them we relayed information. We zeroed this one gun on this target, and the artillery officer said, "Fire for effect."

He had nine battalions--that's 108 artillery pieces--that hit that target at one time.

You never saw such a slaughter in your life. These Germans were turning around and withdrew--they didn't make a tactful withdrawal, it was every tank and man fleeing for his life. Nothing could have overcome that--it's impossible. Some of my men were firing standing up, like shooting ducks in a pond, but they were so far away they'd be lucky if they hit anyone.

The Germans withdrew and they didn't fool with us anymore.

One other incident took place that I think is of interest.

My company command post in Oberwampach was set up in the home of the Schilling family. When the Germans were shelling us, a 5 year-old boy got excitedly dashed out the front door--into the impact area of the artillery. A 20 year-old soldier dashed out to rescue the little boy. They were both mortally wounded.

The soldier asked someone to rub his left arm, he claimed it hurt him. I did rub his arm, and he turned blue and died.

The little boy died slowly in his mother's arms, and to see the grief this mother was going through, really brings some strong lessons to you.

This soldier's name was Sergeant Whitfield. He was 20 years old. I recommended him for a decoration and he got it. He was a true hero. He gave his life not in defense of himself, but to rescue an innocent little boy, and truly he earned his decoration.

Interviewer: What decoration did you put him in for?

Brown: A Distinguished Service Cross.

After the battle, we picked up a German soldier who had been wounded. He had been shot in the leg apparently with a .50-caliber bullet, and he laid out overnight in this freezing, subzero weather. Both his arms and both his legs were frozen stiff as a board. He begged us to shoot him.

I couldn't do it. I asked for a volunteer. Even if he survived, he'd have to have both arms and both legs amputated, and this could have been a mercy killing. But these battle hardened soldiers who had been fighting Germans a few minutes before

would not volunteer. One soldier, out of sympathy for the suffering and bravery of this soldier, lit a cigarette and held it to his lips so he could smoke. Another soldier brought him a hot cup of coffee and held it so he could get coffee until we got the litter jeep up there and sent him to the rear. I've always been curious to know what happened to him, but believe he probably died before they got him back to the aid station.

After this battle, the division decoration board section came down and they said that with what happened the men deserved some medals. They said, "We want to write you up for a DSC."

And I said, "No. Every man in the outfit deserves it as much and some of them more than I do." I was really being honest about it. I wasn't trying to collect medals. I was trying to save as many of these men as I could from getting killed in this terrible war. I don't know whether I would have received it or not, but I wouldn't even let them write it up. I told them about the experiences of this platoon on the right flank. I had to withdraw them a couple times because the Germans wrestled that knoll from us and we retook it. There were some heroes up there and I asked them to check it out and see if they could find out who deserved it from the group.

A couple of weeks later, the battalion commander informed me that here was to be an exchange of foreign decorations, and that a British Military Cross would be presented to one officer per infantry regiment, and that in our regiment, the regiment had asked that each battalion submit the names of two officers for their recommendations and their preferences. From among those names they chose me to receive the British Military Cross. I take this as the best reward, or best compliment that I could have for my experiences during World War II.

After the Battle of the Bulge, there was still some fighting to do....

POST CARD OF VBOB STAINED GLASS WINDOW NOW AVAILABLE

As you may recall, VBOB dedicated a stained glass window at the U.S. Army War College, in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, on September 11, 2001.

We have been able to secure a full color, post card sized, picture of this beautiful window.

During the dedication, Robert R. Ivany, Commandant of the War College said: "This window will serve as a glowing inspiration for future generations and as a lasting reminder of the heroism of the American soldier. For this gift we are grateful, and for this 'Triumph of Courage' we are forever in your debt." Your dues made this gift and remembrance possible.

If you would like one, please send \$1.00 (cash, check or money order) along with a self-addressed, stamped (37 cents) envelope to VBOB.

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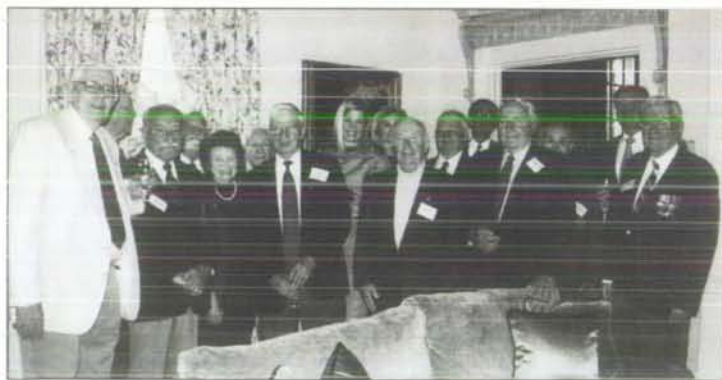
[The following was sent to us by EDWARD BRONENKAMP, 8TH ARMORED DIVISION, 148TH ARMORED SIGNAL COMPANY.]

During WWII, I was a radio operator. I was in the 8th Armored Division with a rating of Tech/Sgt and was in the Battle of the Bulge. General Patton was the head man and the greatest general over there. I was 20 years old. Our outfit was going through France. The half-track that we were in was cutting out and we fell out of the convoy. The driver of the half-track was Corporal Phil Rangel. He now resides in California. He sent me the following letter.

Say, Ed, do you remember when we were broken down outside that town, and there was still a lot of shooting going on around us. You and I walked by the church and the priest came running out. He asked us if either one of use knew how to defuse a bomb. I said "Yes." You looked at me and said, "Rangel, you don't know a damned thing about defusing a bomb." I said, "We will give it a go." We went into this church, I looked up at the ceiling, there was a hole in the roof four foot square where it came through. It landed right in front of the altar without going off. It was half buried in the floor. It was loose, and we carefully rocked it back and forth. The damn thing came out. We took it out of the church, and left it in the field behind the church. When we came back, the priest told us God would bless us and no harm would come to us the rest of our lives.

Ed, I really believed what the priest said, because I have been through so much. A lot of things come into my mind that happened to us over there. I could just go on and on. Maybe one of these days we will get together and just sit down and think back of all those things that we went through....

*God Bless,
Phil*



BULGE VETS AT NETHERLANDS EMBASSY RECEPTION

Their Royal Highnesses, Prince of the Netherlands Willem-Alexander and Princess Maxima, and a group of Battle of the Bulge veterans at a reception at the Netherlands Embassy, Washington, DC on 5 May 2003 in commemoration of the Netherlands World War II Liberation Day. (Princess Maxima - tall blond lady in front of picture on wall. Prince William - second from right by door frame.)

VON RUNDSTEDT'S BREAKTHROUGH

**By Roger Hardy
5th Fusiliers of Belgium**

In the November 2002 issue of *The Bulge Bugle* on page 19, the second paragraph of the article submitted by John R. Breth, 740th Tank Battalion caught my eye; it was: Colonel Cox stated the general wanted us.....

The 5th Belgian Battalion of Fusiliers which was attached to 1st United States Army on December 13, 1944, was sent to the Ardennes in the Spa, Malmedy, Eupen areas on same day and the 2nd Company of this unit received the order to protect the installations of the 310 Ordnance Battalion on December 18 in Spirmont, Comblain-au-Port and the anti-tank positions along the road Remouchamps to Trois-Points and also the 310 Ordnance Battalion HQ.

During the week of December 16 to 23, the 2nd Company captured nine German paratroopers, four of them wearing American uniforms. They were handed over to the American MP's. In his weekly report to the 5th Belgian Battalion HQ, Captain C. LeJeune, CO of the 2nd Company, mentions also that the 310 Ordnance Battalion commanding officer was very satisfied with the good behavior of the Belgian soldiers.

The *Stars and Stripes* issue of January 6, 1945, reported as follows: "The 2000 men of 310th Ordnance Battalion under the command of Major Lyman Hedtke, of Sint-Paol, and Colonel Nelson M. Lynde, of Denver, assisted by 150 men of the 5th Belgian Battalion of Fusiliers delayed the Nazis during two days until the arrival of reinforcements.

The 5th Belgian Fusiliers delegation present at the 50th Anniversary Observances of the Battle of the Bulge in St. Louis, Missouri, in December, 1994, was surprised and pleased to meet a veteran of the 740th Tank Battalion, who remembered them. ■



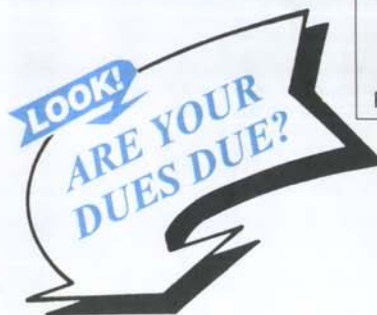
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