

The BULGE BUGLE

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

VOLUME XXV NUMBER 1

THE ARDENNES CAMPAIGN

FEBRUARY 2006



WORLD WAR II DIARY

Captain Dean F. Stillson
87th Infantry Division
345 Infantry Regiment
Battalion Surgeon

Page 25

MEDICS in the Bulge

By Ralph Storm
11th Armored Division

The winter of 1944-45 was the coldest, wettest winter period that western Europe had experienced in 30 years. ...More than 45,000 soldiers were hospitalized as cold injury casualties between November, 1944 and April 1945.

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WERE GOING TO LOUISVILLE - DETAILS NEXT ISSUE

**VETERANS OF THE
BATTLE OF THE BULGE,
INC.
P.O. Box 101418
Arlington, VA 22210-4418
703-528-4058**

Published quarterly, *THE BULGE BUGLE* is the official publication of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge.

Publisher/Chief Editor:

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9th Infantry Division

Contributing Editors:

Robert F. Phillips
28th Infantry Division

Historical Research:

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7231 Cleveland Cir
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Chapter now defunct

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BUCKEYE (XXIX)
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1278 Culpepper Dr
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GEN. D. D. EISENHOWER (XXXV)
Richard M. Shape 216-731-1258
211 Oakcrest Ct
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NORTH COAST OHIO (XXXVI)
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Alton L. Litsenberger 740-363-0613
320 Saratoga St
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PENNSYLVANIA
DELAWARE VALLEY (IV)
Stanley Wojtusik 215-637-4191
9639 Wissinching St
Philadelphia, PA 19114

SUSQUEHANNA (XIX)
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Greenburg, PA 15601-1711

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111 Franklin Ave
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WISCONSIN
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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.

President's Message

With pleasure and sincere gratitude for your confidence in selecting me as your president once again, I accept, with renewed energy and enthusiasm, the responsibilities necessary to fulfill our mission, strengthen our force and regenerate the lively interest we've experienced over the years. I'm no stranger to hard work, sleepless nights and "pie in the sky" dreams. I really enjoy "army life," military history and "making a mark" to showcase what we accomplished together 61 years ago, while appreciating the friendship and loyalty of many comrades, forever remembering our "buddies" who didn't make it home. I feel rewarded for the effort already put forth.

My predecessor, George Chekan, has earned "his space to relax," along with his committee, John Dunleavy and John Bowen, after the successful September reunion in Pittsburgh. The Chekan Family participation was a highlight amongst many other pleasant memories. Organizing an event like this is not an easy task and having family from the area pitch in was certainly a plus and another center of attention during his presidency. George, you, and your family deserve our thanks.



Stanley Wojtusik

I'm very much aware of the great responsibility, long hours and self-sacrifice and we have a lot of work to do together. Frankly, I've been thinking a lot about the word "opportunity." This is just not an opportunity for me but an opportunity for all of us to reshape this organization and make it more responsive to the vision we must develop during our remaining years and for future generations. Oh, no...I am not your president to encourage "retirement," but rather a "beginning."

I'm not saying I plan to throw out everything that came before me since previous leadership has made it unnecessary to "reinvent" the organization, but they have given us plenty to build on, and plenty of opportunities to strike out in new directions. Let me outline what I see as important. We will have to address--aggressively and successfully--such problem areas as: accountability--both financially and administratively, membership incentives, visibility of your officers at chapter meetings, member participation, better communication and actively pursue Congressional approval to become an officially chartered organization. The fallout from the 2004 trip to Europe which has jolted our trust and lends to great embarrassment to our organization is being vigorously pursued by Past President John Dunleavy and our very capable Treasurer Bill Tayman.

On a more exciting note is anticipating the installation of our majestic memorial in Arlington Cemetery hopefully on May 8, 2006. Another "investment in history".... [Monument to be inscribed as follows.]

**A TRIBUTE TO WORLD WAR II
AMERICAN SOLDIERS WHO FOUGHT THE
GREATEST LAND BATTLE IN THE HISTORY
OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY IN THE ARDENNES--
DECEMBER 16, 1944 TO JANUARY 25, 1945,
IN APPRECIATION BY THE GRATEFUL**

PEOPLE OF THE KINGDOM OF BELGIUM AND THE GRAND DUCHY OF LUXEMBOURG

I know what a great organization I have to work with and I look forward to the challenges because we will be facing them together. ■



VBOB has a new address:

PO Box 101418

Arlington, VA 22210-4418

The old address still appears on many things.

•ATTENTION••ATTENTION•

HOW TO REPLACE LOST MILITARY MEDALS/RECORDS

To obtain lost decorations or awards from WWII, write:

Commander (ARPERCEN)

9700 Page Blvd

St. Louis, Missouri 63132-5260

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

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

Commander (ARPERCEN)

ATT: DARP-PAS-EVS

9700 Page Blvd

St. Louis, MO 63132-5260

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

Commander (ARPERCEN)

ATT: DARP-PAS-EAW

9700 Page Blvd.

St. Louis, MO 63132-5260

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

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

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

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

REGARDING THE PROXIMITY FUSE

I read with interest James R. Bird's excellent letter in the November issue, in which he mentioned that the proximity fuse was first used in December 1944.

His documentation appears to be impeccable, but from the enclosed [below] pages from the book "146 Engineer Combat Battalion--ESSAYONS," I believe that I saw the proximity fuse in use in Simmerath, Germany, about 10 November by a new style tank destroyer with a 90 mm gun. If any TD's have knowledge in my beliefs, I would be forever grateful if you would write your comments to *The Bugle*.

"It was at Simmerath where I first saw the "proximity fuse" in use by one of our new style tank destroyers. The chassis appeared to be similar to one of our new tanks, as the bogie wheels were evenly spaced and ere larger than those on the M-4 Shermans. They were distinctly different from any TDs that I had seen previously, and they mounted a 90mm gun. I marveled at the consistent height of their air bursts.

"When I asked the gunner how he could set his fuses so accurately to get such uniform air-bursts, he replied that a magnet in the shell's nose caused it to explode automatically at the desired height, when it neared the ground. I said that it couldn't possibly be a magnet--it would have to be some kind of a radio signal. But a radio transmitter and receiver within an artillery shell--impossible! I had no ready answer, and learned only later that my initial notion had been correct.

"Through our binoculars, we observed German ambulances making multiple daylight runs to the pill-boxes at the base of the slope. It looked suspicious, and we thought that they might be bringing in ammunition, food, or other supplies in the ambulances; even though this would have been a violation of the Geneva Convention--and German regular army units were usually quite scrupulous in abiding by its dictates.

"The proximity fuse may well have been the reason for all the ambulance runs that we observed. The British had developed the proximity fuse in 1940 but it was not yet in common use by any army. I had not seen it, nor had I even heard of it before then. Chapter 4 of "War as I Knew It," by General George S. Patton, stated "the night of December 25 and 26, we had used the new proximity fuse on a number of Germans near Echternach and actually killed 700 of them." (We had seen the proximity fuse used with devastating effect six weeks earlier, even though several WWII books have stated that the proximity fuse was first used during the Bulge. These authors were in error by no less than five weeks!)

**WES ROSS
146 ENGR CMBT BN B**

BOSE COMMENTARY & BIRD'S ANSWER

While I was but a mechanic in a 40mm antiaircraft outfit. I do own an aftr action report of the Third Army. Somewhere buried in this large heavy book I read that the proximity fused ammunition was first used, shooting V1 and V2 rockets coming in over the English Channel in the Battle of Britain. They would have been fired by 90mm

antiaircraft guns and duds went into the channel. I believe the section said they were 80% successful and were responsible for victory over that battle.

I also read the AAA 90mm outfit carried ammunition with proximity fuzes during the Battle of the Bulge from whence comes Patton's admiration for them.

Our outfit, the 565th AAA AW Battalion protected 3rd Army Headquarters in Luxembourg City so never got close to where the action was, except the fact railroad cannons would zero in on us every night firing from Trier, Germany, about 20+ miles east of us. Early in the Bulge, our gun batteries did have a bit of target practice when a stray meg was lost. This was our very first assignment. We were attached to 3rd Army Headquarters. Did see the "old man" General Patton once. He was out walking his dog, "Willie," and I almost ran over the dog--I suppose I'd still be in Leavenworth if I had.

**CHET KRAUSE
565 AAA AW BN**

YOU NEED SOME MUSCLE

In early October, 1944, our outfit set up shop facilities at the railroad station in Francorchamps, Belgium. We were a heavy maintenance company (tank) and our job was to repair and replace tanks and tank destroyers as it became necessary. The equipment that was being turned in showed wear and tear big time. The old equipment was on the rough side and obsolete. Although the old equipment was obsolete, that being the 75mm gun, the new 76mm gun was only a step ahead. It still didn't match up with the 88mm gun. However, I did ask one of the tank men how they faced the German tanks and his answer was, "We gang up on them." That was not a good answer but an honest one. You do the best that you can but why could we have not done better?

John J Dunleavy, of the 737th Tank Battalion, made his point in the August 2005 issue when he expressed his opinion of our little Sherman. You need the muscle when facing a monster of a tank and the 88mm gun.

Later on, the T-26 was more of a match for the German tanks, with our 90mm gun, but, by that time, the war was just about over. A little too late.

**EDWARD ECHMALIAN
557 ORD HVY MAINT CO (TK)**

P.S. The railroad station is no longer there. A soccer field has taken its place.

CEREMONY AT ST. VITH

My friend, Hans J. Wijers, of Holland, organized a formal wreath-laying ceremony to yhave taken place on Friday the 16th of December to commemorate the start of the Bulge on the 16th of December, 1944, and requested several units involved there to furnish wreaths for it. I sent him the money for one "In memory of the 7 membrs of my squad, my A Company, the 38th Infantry Battalion and members of the 7th Armored Division who failed to survive the battle of St. Vith, 17-23 December, 1944, along with my picture in full uniform inasmuch as I couldn't be there in spirit. Hans was able to get the color guard from the 26th Infantry

to help in the ceremony that was also attended by several units involved in the battle--the 106th Infantry, 26th Infantry and a couple of others.

GLENN R. FACKLER, SR.
38 INF BN A

RED LETTER DAY

This is a Red Letter Day for me--for once my dues are on time.

You and the staff should be commended for the information and data in *The Bulge*. I am also a member of the VFW, American Legion and the DAV but your publication has a greater source of information.

I pass *The Bugle* on to a doctor at the Brockton Hospital where I volunteer one day a week. His father was a captain in the medical corps and served at St. Vith, Belgium.

I'll close for now and drink the toast to us all at the date and time cited in the newsletter.

FRANK C. PAGLIUCA
75 INF D

BROTHERS-IN-ARMS

[This letter was sent to the "Legionnaire Magazine" last year, but was never published, after the publication of "Brothers in Arms" by the basketball player Kareem Abdul Jabbar.]

To understand the contribution of any World War II unit in Europe, one must consider its size as well as its mission. The 761st Tank Battalion, about which the book *Brothers in Arms* was recently published to much acclaim, consisted of about 1,000 black soldiers plus 30-40 light and medium tanks.

It was dwarfed by at least 10 armored divisions that were about 20 times its size and, because of their attached units like anti-tank and anti-aircraft, were vastly more capable of executing consequential assignments.

Moreover, the 761st Tank Battalion arrived in Europe in November, 1944, while many of the other major units had arrived before or shortly after D-Day in June. So these leviathans not only possessed immeasurably more firepower, but had much more combat experience than this small battalion.

It is in such a perspective that the latest book *Brothers in Arms* picturing the heroism of the 761st Tank Battalion, must be viewed. In late November, 1944, the 761st was attached to my infantry division, consisting of about 15 to 20 battalions of infantry, artillery, tank destroyers, anti-aircraft ordnance and other units. So, in total numbers, we had at least 15 times as much manpower and measurably more firepower.

To this day, 87th Division infantrymen affirm under oath that the 761st's tankers fell back during several extreme crises, such as the action to drive the Germans out of the Village of Tillet, Belgium.

As personal and heroic as the book by Kareem Abdul Jabbar pictures this one small battalion, its claims and major contributions cannot be accurate, and because they reflect on much larger and more decorated units that

suffered vastly higher casualties, cannot be accepted.

As an index of *Brothers in Arms'* accuracy, consider the battalion's reports of enemy units or weapons destroyed or disabled. Any war's insistent demands make it impossible to determine whether an infantry or an armored division or this small battalion's artillery, mortar or tank fire destroyed an enemy vehicle. As in any way, with many units firing simultaneously or successively, no effort could be spared, or in actuality was never spared, to determine whose bullets or artillery destroyed which tank or enemy artillery.

Nor is it true, as the cover of *Brothers in Arms* claims, that while infantrymen received furloughs from frontline duty, this small group of black tankers remained fighting throughout the war. Millions of infantry riflemen, machine-guns, mortar gunners, jeep drivers, cooks, clerks and artillerymen remained fighting, because in World War II in Europe, there were only two ways to be evacuated from the frontlines. One was to be seriously disabled, and the other was in a casket.

MITCHELL KAILY
87 INF D 345 INF D

REUNIONS

11TH ARMORED DIVISION, August 13-20, 2006, King of Prussia, Pennsylvania. Contact: 11th ARMD, 2328 Admiral Street, Aliquippa, Pennsylvania 15001. Telephone: 724-375-7295.

78TH INFANTRY DIVISION, August 16-19, 2006, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Contact: Herman (Red) Gonzales, 104 Oak Glen Road, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15237.

80TH INFANTRY DIVISION, September 20-23, 2006, Columbus, Georgia. Contact: Robert H. Burrows, Box 453, Broomfield, Colorado 80038. Telephone: 303-439-2198.

86TH CHEMICAL MORTAR BATTALION, May 7-13, 2006, Chattanooga, Tennessee. Contact: George L. Mobray, 818 West 62nd Street, Anniston, Arizona 36206. Telephone: 256-820-4415.

87TH INFANTRY DIVISION, June 8-10, 2006, Portland, Maine. Contact: Sam Thompson. Telephone: 508-285-4656.

296TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION, October 11-13, 2006. Contact: Robert T. Williams, 123 Robeth Lane, Wethersfield, Connecticut 06109.

328TH INFANTRY COMBAT TEAM, October 17-19, 2006, Atlantic City, New Jersey. Contact: Alex Pagnotta, 609 Brandon Drive, Jeffersonville, Pennsylvania 19403. Telephone: 610-539-3337.

501ST PARACHUTE INFANTRY REGIMENT, June 13-18, 2006, Fort Mitchell, Kentucky. Contact: Valeria Amburgey. Telephone: 859-781-4126.

771ST FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION, May 18-20, 2006, Canton, Ohio. Contact: Chris Christofferson, 4020 36th Avenue Court, Moline, Illinois 61265. Telephone: 309-762-3881.



The older an ex-soldier gets, the better a soldier he was.

NO SWEAT

... More 'n More



"Let's blame it on George, he's not here today!"



Artist
Howard Brodie '45

Numbing Cold

and winter took out G.I.'s
not reached by German guns.

MEMBERS SPEAK OUT

Associate Member Richard F. Jones is trying to find information regarding PFC ERNEST L. BARNES, 99TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 194TH INFANTRY REGIMENT, COMPANY K, who was killed in action in Belgium, December 19, 1944. Cause of death according to "Report of Burial," was Pen-W Neck, K721-34B and his family would like to know what that means. Any information you can provide will be very much appreciated. Write to Richard at: PO Box 80464, Canton, Ohio 44708-0464.

Associate Member Antoine Nouens recently found two dog tags. They belonged to GLENN W. BUHRMAN, 78TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 310TH INFANTRY REGIMENT, COMPANY K, (from Delaware) and ANTHONY P. ALUSKA, 75TH INFANTRY DIVISION, (from Port Richmond, New York). (Found another request from Antoine--RALPH SHAPIRO, probably 1ST ARMY (Pittsburgh), and ARTHUR J. SMITH, 75TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 289TH INFANTRY REGIMENT, (East Providence, Rhode Island). If you can provide information on any of these men or their families, please write to Antoine at: Aawal 41; 5211 PS; Den Bosch; Holland.

ROBERT D. SCHRELL, 509TH MILITARY POLICE BATTALION, writes to express his gratitude to the people of Ciney, Belgium, which helped his battalion in so many ways. Robert says they had enough TNT planted around Ciney to blow it off the map. If you remember the 509th please write to Robert at: 2530 San Joaquin Court, San Diego, California 92109.

Associate Member Marva S. Farnsworth would like to know if someone could provide her with information or tell her where to find out about the activities of the 526TH ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION. Her husband, HUGH JAMES FARNSWORTH, served in this unit. Can you help? Write to her at: 776 South 105th West, Centerville, Utah 84014-2173.

BOB PINER, 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION, 26TH INFANTRY REGIMENT, COMPANY B, is seeking information regarding the following nurses stationed at the 317TH STATION HOSPITAL, in Belgium, December, 1944: LIEUTENANT JERRY McEVOY, LIEUTENANT ELIZABETH TICENDORF and LIEUTENANT BERTHA EICHORN. If you know anything about these ladies, write to Bob at: 2412 St. Andrews Blvd #6, Panama City, Florida 32405.

Josh Horth writes that he is writing a book about WWII and would like to interview some of the BoB veterans. If you can help him write to him at: 2018 North Jay, Aberdeen, South Dakota 57401.

Can anyone provide CLYDE J. HUNZEKER, 87TH INFANTRY DIVISION, with a map showing where his division fought? Write to him at: 357 North 32nd Road, Syracuse, Nebraska 68446-7812.

2ND ARMORED TROOPS ARE "AMERICANS AT THEIR THEIR MOST MAGNIFICENT"

[The following article appeared in the January issue of the 2nd Armored newsletter "Hell on Wheels Bulletin. The article was written by Stanley Baron, of the London News Chronicle, in his story on the Battle of Samree, Belgium, which he described as "The Greatest Action Since First Army Attacked. The article was sent in by Irving Miller of the 41st Armored Infantry Regiment.]

Eastern Belgium, Wednesday, Jan. 10 (Delayed) - This is the story of the battle of Samree, the story of just another name on the Ardennes battle map which the Germans tried to make another St. Lo.

But now, after 48 hours of most bitter, murderous fighting which has gone on night and day through snowstorms and temperatures which made the very rivers freeze, they are fleeing to the south.

And the weary dirty bearded G.I. Joes half dead on their feet for want of 12 hours' sleep in a week, half frozen for lack of a single hot meal since Wednesday last are stumbling triumphantly after them.

It was ten o'clock this morning when the town on the ridge northeast of Laroche fell to a dash of tanks and men who picked up their leaden feet to run in the wake of them. But the story goes back to a wooded gorge six miles northward.

These were ten Tiger tanks in those woods. The snow had drifted over them so that they were completely camouflaged. The fog seeped down into the gorge and at intervals the sound of the advancing American tank tracks would come to the Germans.

There was room for only one at a time. The Germans had only to sit still and wait. Then, through the fog at 50 yards range the shape of an American tank would loom, there would be a sudden violent burst of fire and the sound of the tracks would stop.

We lost some tanks. The tank crews who survived stumbled out, not to back from the battle but to renew it. The engineers went forward and in the face of point-blank fire pulled the tanks off the road making way for the next. Mobile gun teams stayed by their guns all Monday night pouring fire into the woods seeking the invisible targets.

By Tuesday morning snow was driving through the pitch dark, covering the tank periscopes, but suddenly under these conditions the Americans again thrust forward.

It was a quick sharp stab made possible by men who had gone quietly out under cover of darkness strewing the road with cinders and sand to give the steel tank tracks a chance to grip, and it succeeded. With a rush the tanks went through.

There is a dip between the point at which the advance had now arrived and the town of Samree. On the east dug-in tanks were commanding it and others were firing down from the town against the engineers who worked through the snow to destroy the road blocks the Germans had made by felling the wayside trees.

Once again the decision was taken to attack before dawn. Once again the artillery was firing all through the right against Samree. As the fog cleared and the stars came out a red glow

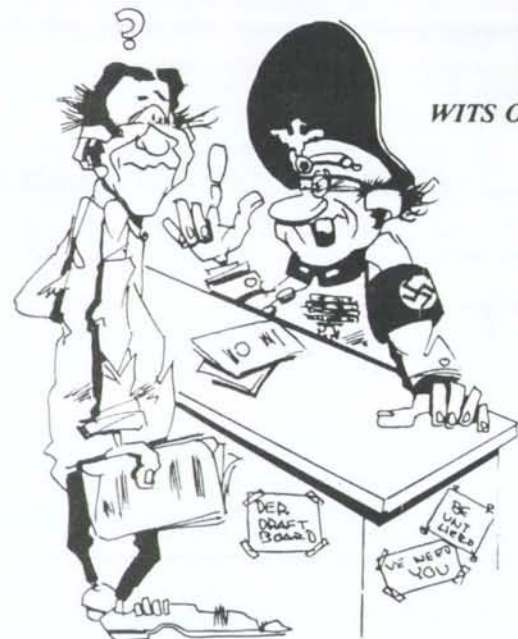
hung over the town lighting the snow on the slopes a strange Alpine rose. It originated from the pin-points of seven burning tanks.

At seven o'clock came the order to attack. One tank column went to the left, another to the right. They moved close in to the right to take advantage of the paths the engineers had again prepared. After them the infantry ran and then, as the tanks diverged to the heights south-east and south-west of the town the doughboys went straight in.

To the last it was a perfectly coordinated action. As the infantrymen cleared the town from house to house the tanks above poured fire ahead of them.

Before they entered, smoke shells had blanketed the enemy tanks and guns. Their crews are remnants of a division we believe completely decimated. The cooks, the bottle-washes of the division's headquarters company have all been thrown in. They came toward the G.I.'s today with their hands over their heads, broken, utterly defeated men.

Tonight, the Second Armored Division still goes forward. Since the breakthrough they have taken 1,700 prisoners, killed 3,500 Germans, smashed or captured 110 tanks. They carry with them a special congratulation from Field Marshal Montgomery. They are Americans at their most magnificent. ■



"YOU'RE EXEMPT IF YOU'RE OVER 65 AND HAVE PROOF YOUR FATHER IS AT THE FRONT."

Sign in Third Army area (Patton's)

YOU ARE NOW IN THE THIRD ARMY AREA

No helmet	20 dollars
No shave	30 dollars
Buttons unshined	40 dollars
Windshield up	50 dollars
Pants down	60 dollars

(Bill Mauldin is said to have added a few to the original list)

—The GIs: Americans in Britain

NIGHT ATTACK PATROL

[The following article was taken from the December 2001 newsletter of the 87th Infantry Division (The Golden Acorn). The author's name has disappeared.]

Somewhere in the Bulge our platoon was ordered on a night patrol. Its purpose was to infiltrate the enemy, have a fire fight if necessary and take prisoners for intelligence purposes.

It was a dark moonless night which was ideal for night patrols. The platoon was headed by a second lieutenant. We readied our weapons and took care that our equipment didn't rattle while going towards the German lines. Actually we were to find out exactly where they were. This was the first platoon of A Company, 347th Infantry Regiment.

As we proceeded in a double file we were heading in an easterly direction but I noticed that we were slowly turning in a more northerly direction.

As we continued to veer off in what I felt was the wrong direction I became more and more convinced that we were off our mark. We were going north not east! This patrol started about 1 or 2 a.m. and we moved slowly and as quietly as possible. We were in an endless pitch black barrel with no recognizable land marks.

After a bit I edged my way up to the platoon leader and indicated to him that I thought we were moving in the wrong direction. I received a curt and unpleasant answer. "I have the compass and I know which way we're traveling."

I returned to my position and thought, "You're so damn smart it's OK with me that we are not going in the direction of the enemy. I'll live another day." Having been on other night patrols I had some idea about the drill. We usually contacted the enemy within some yards between them and us and then the place would erupt in small arms fire with tracers from us and them giving a fireworks display in the night--I did not like to see these tracers. There usually was a lot of ammo expended but few if any casualties on our side. We'd break off and return--at least we knew where they were even though I don't think many of any rounds hit their mark.

Our march in the dark continued. Lo and behold the next thing we heard was a strident "Halt" in English with its request for the password. Luckily the correct password was given and we were admitted back into our lines.

Here we had been up all night with the only perceived result was that we had successfully made contact with some unit of another battalion that luckily hadn't opened up on us in the dark.

After some time of receiving directions from the friendly unit's men and officers we were shown the way back behind the lines to our unit.

This had been a night in which we hadn't fired a single round, marched for hours, scared the hell out of a sentry of another American unit and almost got shot by friendly fire. On the trek back to our unit we were cold and hungry.

I didn't know whether to condemn our leader for his stupidity or bless him for keeping us out harm's way. In any case we and our unit would have been better off if we had stayed in our fox holes catching some sleep on and off in our miserable holes. ■

MEMORIALS TO AMERICANS IN LUXEMBOURG

Berdorf	10th Armored Division
Berle	90th Infantry Division
Bertrange	5th Armored Division
Bettborn	26th Infantry Division
Bettendorf	5th Infantry Division
Bigonville	4th Armored Division 9th United States Air Force
Boulaide	35th Infantry Division
Brandenburg	28th Infantry Division
Clervaux	GI Memorial
Consdorf	10th Armored Division
Consthum	28th Infantry Division, 110th Infantry Regiment
Dahl	80th Infantry Division
Diekirch	Liberation Units
Echternach	Liberation Units
Eschdorf	26th Infantry Division
Eschälzette	United States Army
Ettelbruck	Patton Memorial
Findel	4th Infantry Division
Graevenmacher	83rd Infantry Division
Heiderscheid	80th Infantry Division
Heinerscheid	6th Armored Division
Hoesdorf	28th Infantry Division, 109th Infantry Regiment
Hoscheid	5th Infantry Division
Hosingen	Liberation Units
Larochette	United States Army
Lieler	712th Tank Battalion
Marnach	28th Infantry Division
Marte Lange/Rombach	4th Armored Division
Medernach	9th Armored Division
Montfort	Liberation Units
Osweiler	Liberation Units
Perle	385th Bomb Group
Petange	1st Fallen GI
Rambrouch	26th Infantry Division
Redange	511th Engineer Company
Rodenbourg	Ernest Hemingway
Sandweiler	5th Armored Division
Schumanns Eck	1944-45 Liberation Memorial
Steinfort	Patton Memorial
Stolzembourg	5th Armored Division
Troisvierges	6th Armored Division
Vianden	6th Cavalry and 1255th Engineers
Waldbillig	9th Armored Division
Weilerbach	5th Infantry Division
Weiler/Putscheid	28th Infantry Division 110th Infantry Regiment
Weiswampach	35th Infantry Division Dwight D. Eisenhower
Wincrange	90th Infantry Division

Please check your mailing label to see if your dues are due.

GENESEE VALLEY CHAPTER DEDICATES MONUMENT

[The following information was gleaned from an article written by Mitchell Kaidy, Editor of the "Bulge Echo," the newsletter of the Genesee Valley Chapter. It was sent to us by Chapter President Thomas W. Hope.]

On a sunny, autumnal day in November (2005), a great unveiling took place at Ontario Beach Park facing Lake Avenue--the dedication of a ten-feet tall white granite monument that will live in the memories and history of the Rochester-Monroe County community.

Members of the Genesee Valley Chapter had covered the polished stone marker with an authentic WWII parachute owned by John Cipolla, of Greece, who served with the 101st Airborne Division. Cipolla and others dramatically dropped the parachute revealing the granite monolith topped in a colorful offset of the circular symbol of the national Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge.



It was fitting that the largest battle in American history--which claimed 81,000 killed, wounded and captured 61 years ago--had erected such an imposing remembrance, drawing a gathering of over 300 from the Rochester area, including relatives of some soldiers killed in action.

Speakers included State Senator Joe Robach, who played a prominent role in state financing, Monroe County Executive Maggie Brooks, Rochester Mayor Bill Johnson, Stan Wojtusik, of the national Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, the Chapter's Founding President Dick Brookins and Secretary John Foy.

Chapter President Tom Hope acknowledged the visionary role of Joe Tedesco, whose suggestion of a modest monument ballooned up to the present tall marker engraved with the words contributed by the executive committee of the VBOB Genesee Valley Chapter.

Senator Robach conceded that, "It has been a long work in progress," but paid tribute to those who persisted to make the monument a success. "If it were not for these World War II veterans," he declared, "we would not be here. This memorial will recognize their sacrifice and help the community show its eternal appreciation...."

Chapter Founding President Dick Brookins, of the 28th Infantry Division, observed that the "real heroes were those who never came home. We owe our lives to them and we will never forget them." He introduced Gary Beikirch, of Rochester, who received the Medal of Honor as a medic in Vietnam.

In a moving retrospective, Chapter Secretary John Foy, a machine gunner in the 87th (Golden Acorn) Infantry Division, declared that those who fought were "from the farms and factories, offices and schools, the sidewalks of New York City to the shores of San Francisco. For a brief moment in history, these men held our nation's destiny in their hands," he said, adding dramatically, "They did not fail."

Foy, who received the Bronze Star, the Combat Infantryman's Badge, and three battle stars, recounted his still-powerful vision of his assistant gunner feeding bullets into Foy's machine gun. Sensing that his gunner had fallen quiet, Foy turned to find that a bullet had scored a direct hit on him.

"For the most part we were children in our 20's," Foy said, "citizen soldiers, draftees, and volunteers--young men hardly more than boys. The real story of the Battle of the Bulge is the story of these soldiers and the intense combat action of the squads, platoons, companies...around their necks hung their dogtags and their rosaries; on their heads their steel helmets, and in their breast pocket was a picture of the girl back home...."

Sketching conditions during the month-long battle, Foy recalled that "the ground was snow-covered and frozen solid, the skies were gray, the days were short, the nights long and frigid. These are the men you see before you," he said. "It may be hard to believe, but 60 years ago we were young and tough...for us, the soldiers who fought in that war and the families of those who died, the war will never end."

The memorial reads:

BATTLE OF THE BULGE WORLD WAR II

This memorial is dedicated to the soldiers who fought in the bloodiest battle waged by the American Army in World War II.

The Ardennes Campaign was fought in Belgium and Luxembourg December 16, 1944-January 25, 1945, forcing the German army back into Germany and leading the way for victory in Europe in May, 1945.

600,000 American soldiers fought in bitter cold and snow. 19,000 were killed and more than 62,000 were wounded, captured or missing in action.

Presented by their surviving comrades
Genesee Valley Chapter
Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge

Executive committee members who forwarded the monolith and wrote the text included Joe Brandt, Jack Foy, Felix Liebmann, Bill French, Tom Hope, John Cipolla, Mitchell Kaidy, Dave Busy, Joe Tedesco, and Marty Cocca. ■

SWAMPED BY THE GERMANS

Frank J. Creed, Jr.
106th Infantry Division
423rd Infantry Regiment
2nd Battalion
Company H

PFC Frank J. Creede, Jr., age 19, was assigned to a heavy machine gun squad, H Company, 2nd Battalion, 423rd Infantry Regiment, 106th Division, arrived at Le Havre, France, December 3, 1944 and replaced the Second Division in the Schnee Eifel (snow) mountains of the Ardennes, December 11, 1944. The Second Battalion was in reserve in Born, Belgium, and on December 16, 1944, moved through Schonberg on the Our River (the border between Belgium and Germany) to plug a gap in the line caused by the withdrawal of the Second Division in support of the First Army offensive at Aachen.

We were guarding a heavily wooded, hilly forest on the western slope of the Schnee Eifel when the Germans burst through the lines heading for the Meuse river--objective Antwerp.

In the frozen forests of the Ardennes, an army of 250,000 men with 2,000 pieces of artillery and 980 tanks awaited the hour of attack at 5:30 a.m., December 16, 1944. This was described as a quiet sector where no heavy engagement other than patrol activity was anticipated. Little did we know that two days later we would be attempting to retake Schonberg and that Kampfgruppe Pfeifer of the 1st SS Panzer Division (Malmedy massacre) followed by the Fuhrer Begleit Brigade would be passing through Born shortly after we moved to the front line.

The quiet ended in a shattering eruption of fire and steel five days later; in another two days two regiments and supporting artillery and armor of the Golden Lion Division were wiped out.

In those two days the men of two regiments were engulfed by the overwhelming might that the Germans' breakthrough spear-headed.

The story of the 106th's disaster started in the foggy dawn on December 16 as it occupied [word missing] around the Schnee Eifel, a rocky, wooded ridge 10 miles long and two miles wide astride the Siegfried line.

The Germans turned their guns then on the 422nd and 423rd Regiments and followed with infantry and tank assaults. By daybreak of December 17 the Germans had thrown two divisions into this part of the front and by mid-morning enemy columns were swarming around the Schnee Eifel. They swamped the 422nd, 423rd Regiments and the 424th was forced to withdraw.

At the 3:35 p.m. on December 18, the radio said that all units of the two regiments were in need of ammunition, food and water. Parachuting of supplies was out of the question because of the fog.

While one German pincer moved through the Losheim gap the other advanced south of the Schnee Eifel. The threatened link-up would surround the two regiments defending the high ground. The defenders did not comprehend the true situation. Secure in good positions, they spent a easy day repulsing an occasional German patrol. Proud of their ability to hold their ground in this, their first combat, they did not realize that they confronted a German replacement battalion and that the real decision was

taking place deep on either flank.

Surprise, coupled with dense fog, allowed the German assault companies to advance to almost on top of the American positions before detection. In some cases the attackers annihilated entire platoons before they could react.

At only one point did the Germans achieve the type of clean breakthrough that "Wacht am Rhein" required. The seven-mile-wide Losheim Gap provided an east to west invasion route that the Germans had used in 1870, 1914, and 1940. Remarkably, it was the sector on the Ardennes front most likely held by the Americans. One-half of the 14th Cavalry Group, about 900 men, was responsible for the southern five miles. Normally, they were attached to the adjacent 106th Infantry.

The enemy were now closing a pair of pincers on the two American regiments on the Schnee Eifel. On the morning of 17 December, the second day of the battle, Gen. Alan Jones telephoned his Corps commander, Gen. Troy Middleton, at Bastogne on a bad line, which caused a serious misunderstanding. Both men were concerned about the 422nd and 423rd but Middleton was reluctant to sanction a withdrawal and Jones perhaps gave Middleton too sanguine an impression. By now the 14th Cavalry Group had pulled right back to the north-west of St. Vith and the German 294th Grenadier Regiment had swung south to capture Schonberg, cutting the main road from the Schnee Eifel to St. Vith. Another regiment of the 18th Division [word missing] the early morning on the 17th and by 9:00 a.m. they had linked up with their sister regiment at Schonberg.

The Germans were now concentrating on moving their forces forward to capture St. Vith and throughout the 17th made no attempt to attack the 9,000 Americans trapped on the Schnee Eifel. Late that night Gen. Jones sent a message to his regiments, telling them to break out to the west and promising an air drop of ammunition, food and water. The U.S. troop carrier aircraft, back at Welford in England, loaded these supplies and flew out to Belgium, but a lack of coordination and drive led to the drop being canceled.

Next day the two regimental commanders agreed to begin the move west, but from then onward each regiment acted independently and with a steady deterioration in control. The 423rd tried to attack towards Schonberg, but was stopped by enemy fire. One battalion became separated from the regiment and was fired on in error by part of the 422nd. Eventually 423rd Infantry surrendered.

The 422nd came to a similar sad end. In moving towards Schonberg the regiment lost the way. At daybreak the three battalions moved out once more and were just crossing Bleialf-Auw road, when they were hit by tanks from the Fuhrer Begleit Brigade, Hitler's Bodyguard, then an independent tank brigade moving up to help a German Division capture St. Vith. At 2:30 p.m. Colonels Descheneaux and Cavender surrendered some 7,000 Americans as prisoners of war.

The Major General Allen Jones lost communication and believed his orders were to remain in our existing positions. The 422nd and 423rd regiments were surrounded by the 18th and 62nd Volksgenadier Divisions by December 17, 1944. On December 19, 1944, at 4:00 p.m. the two colonels surrendered 7,000 men to the Germans. We were without food, water and ammunition, had no armor and much of our artillery was destroyed. General Hasso Von Manateuffell, commander of the 5th Panzer army, spent the night of December 17th in the town of Schonberg.

(Continued on Page 17)

Malmédy Massacre



Artist
Sgt. Howard Brodie '45

Five nights after what came to be known as the Malmédy Massacre, a heavy snow fell, mercifully blanketing the bodies of the eighty-six dead (seventy-two in the field where the main massacre occurred) and temporarily concealing the evidence of the most heinous crime inflicted on American troops during the course of the war in Europe.

Charles B. MacDonald
Author of
A Time For Trumpets

24 HOUR EXPERIENCE OF A COMBAT MEDIC

by C.A. "Doc" Baumley
2nd Armored Division
41st Armored Infantry Regiment
3rd Armored Infantry Battalion
Company H, Medical Detachment

During one of many phases of combat in the Battle of the Bulge, when attached to the 1st Platoon, H Company, 3rd Armored Infantry Battalion, 41st Armored Infantry Regiment, 2nd Armored Division, as their Company Aidman, the Company was assembled in a Village with jump off at day break. During this time a squad leader named Russell approached me and said "Doc, I am not going." As a trained Medic it did not take but a second to realize that he was or could be a dangerous person. Not to disturb him in anyway. I said Sgt. Russell give me your weapon for I may need it later. I guess having confidence in me he handed it over without hesitation.

Any Combat Infantry veteran knows they have good repose with their Medic. I immediately reported the matter to Platoon Sergeant Barker and in turn he notified the matter to Platoon Leader 1st Lt. Hugh Fitzhugh. Sgt. Russell was sent back to the Aid Station to receive professional treatment for Combat Fatigue.

The Company crossed the IP on time and arrived to the edge of the Village without any casualties. Later on a rifleman was hit by a sniper as he crossed from one house to the other. Someone called for a Medic. As I pressed by Sgt. Barker going to the injured, he grabbed me and said, "Hold it Doc, if you go to him now you will be laying by his side." We were both behind the house near him and Barker told him to play dead or he would be shot again. The sniper was spotted and taken out by a rifleman. I then got the injured behind the house and treated him for flesh wounds and sent him back to the Aid Station.

Later in the day while clearing the house again someone called for a Medic. I went to the side of the injured and found that he had been shot in the left cheek. As I was preparing to treat him I looked up and there stood a German Soldier pointing his rifle at us. I immediately turned my Red Cross Arm Band toward him to let him know that I was a Medic. At this time the situation looked bad. My patient was aware of the situation and I whispered to him we had to get into another room for I knew Sgt. Turner was at the window and could protect us. I told him he had to help me move him, this we did immediately. The German rolled a grenade into the room. Guess this was our lucky day as it was dud or he failed to pull the pin for it did not explode. Sgt. Turner took out the German and I moved my patient outside and behind the house. As luck would have it things were pretty quiet and I was able to stay with my patient and keep his airway passage cleared from the bleeding from his wound. He was never unconscious. Litter bearers were called and he was taken back to the Aid Station. His name was Pvt. Rigby.

We began to receive heavy artillery and mortar fire. There was a dead horse nearby and everyone was sweating it out if one of the rounds hit the horse and we would get showered with you know what. At this time I observed to our right flank men from

the 2nd Platoon running to the rear. At one point all of them were falling to the ground. My thoughts were the enemy was picking them off one at a time. I was unable to see them get up and keep running. I found out later they were tripping over a fence wire that was under a knee deep snowdrift.

Word came down that we were to move back to the tree line to our right rear and setup into a defensive position. The report was that a superior force of German troops and tanks were approaching the other side of the Village. This we did and received heavy artillery fire all during the night.

I was assigned a foxhole with a rifleman and lucky enough to get a two-holer with over head cover. Anyone that has been in this situation knows that without overhead cover there is no protection from the burst.

During the night the rifleman that shared my hole was pulled away for some reason. Sometime later while crouched down in my hole, I heard foot steps and something fell into the hole. My first thought was grenade, due to the earlier experience with a grenade. All I could do was hold my breath and hope for the best. Nothing happened so it must have been a rock. The footsteps were these of the rifleman coming to get me.

Just before day break word came down for us to assemble to a designated area to regroup. As we were moving through the forest, I came upon an injured soldier that had been previously treated by a Medic and awaiting litter bearers. I hated to leave him, but had to move with my unit. I did give him a shot of morphine to help prevent pain and shock. He was not a member of our unit.

Upon arrival to the assembly area, I was told that I was supposed to be dead. The person thought to be me, was my good buddy Billy F. Bennett, who was the 2nd Platoon Medic. He and I joined the Army June 26, 1943, at then Camp Blanding, Florida.

This 24 hours was one of the luckier ones that we had during the Battle of the Bulge, but the loss of a fellow Medic was a bad one. ■

NOTICE TO CHAPTER PRESIDENTS...

LOOKING FOR NEW MEMBERS?



LOOK NO FURTHER...

They're right there in your own chapter. Last year we did a study of chapter membership and what did we find? We found that there are more non-national members in some of the chapters than there are those who are members of national.

So, come on...flush 'em out. They're sitting right next to you and we need their support. ■

AS I REMEMBER

By Armand F. Boisseau
941st Field Artillery Battalion
V Corps, First United States Army

I would like to share my small story with you and the rest of our Battle Veterans. Hopefully I'll hear from other Veterans whom were also there, and may know more about my Battalion's history. After 60 years my memory is no longer what it used to be, my son has researched as much as he could with some success but we believe there's more to the unit's history. This much we do know the 1st Battalion, 941st Field Artillery was build from the 172nd Field Artillery Regiment and the 773rd Field Artillery Battalion was built of elements from both the 172nd and the 941st.

It all started when our outfit assigned to the 1st Army, V Corps, V Corps Artillery, 406th Field Artillery Group, 30th Division Artillery serving in the 1st Battalion, Headquarters/Headquarters Battery, 941st Field Artillery (heavy) Commanded by Lt Col John F. Ahern. We were ordered out to advance on the German positions marshaling along the Belgium German boarder, in direct support of the 38th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron (mech) and advanced units of the 30th Infantry Division from 16 to 21 December, 1944. We set up firing positions in the vicinity of towns called Venwegen, Monschau, Eupen, Hofen, Niveze, Longfaye, Hockai, Cockaifagne. Our call-sign was "Vineyard", and I was assigned to Headquarters Battery as forward lineman and assistant switchboard operator on the wire detail. From time to time we would set up OP's and assist after-action artillery surveying teams.

G2 Headquarters had advised the Battalion Commanders of the (186th, 941st and 955th) to take heed about enemy infiltrations we're told some specialized/English speaking Germans were dressed as American MP's and regular GI's disrupting communications and sabotaging roadways. The Ardennes--a heavily rugged forest-grown region that expanded from eastern France, to southeast Belgium and down along to Luxembourg. There were a few good roads and many defiles, the terrain was very rugged--not well suited for towing 155's and the new 4.5" guns. Everywhere we went there were large fields of ice/snow, cold/freezing rain and thick sticking mud. We endured the cold, first it would snow then snow again. It seemed never to stop for days on end. To this day cold weather does not set well with me.

We all hoped this campaign would be over by Christmas, I had just spent my 24th birthday (December 8th) with two buddies huddled underneath a burned out, destroyed Army truck in the freezing snow/rain hoping to win the war soon and go home. It was not to be, the Germans launched their major offensive against the allies early 16 December 1944 and hit us hard.

There was a full scale assault against our own positions, temporarily repulsed by forward elements of the 38th Cavalry, some ack-ack guns, and a few 105's. It gave the rest of the battalion time to advance in the opposite direction to regroup and return fire covering the retreat of the forward elements that were holding the line. Not sure where the 186th and the 955th Field Artillery Battalions were at this time. In the Ardennes Forest of Belgium we learned the Germans broke through many thinly held American lines and drove toward the English Channel heading for the Port of Antwerp nearly destroying two American

divisions in their path.

The fighting was fierce, our Battalion would constantly move out, set-up firing positions discharge hundreds of rounds, move out, set-up and fire again. This would go on day in day out for two three weeks without a warm break. The Battalion Commander would reminding us from time to time to think about the infantry and armored units up on the front lines slugging it out with German tanks and elite well trained mechanized infantry. Saying, "If you think you got it bad, think about the boys up front." the colonel was a good man we all liked him a lot.

Interesting enough after reading the story about the 146th Engineer Combat Battalion in the August 2004 *Bulge Bugle* newsletter, we too were tasked with augmenting some men from the 941st Field Artillery to the 38th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron (Mech). It was a successful attempt to block and delay the advance of the ruthless Col. Peiper's 1st SS Panzer Division and advanced elements of the 326 Volksgrenadiers. Two of the 15 men whom were out of Services Battery were from my hometown, Homer Hewitt and George Landry of Manchester, New Hampshire. We learned they all earned the "Distinguished Service Badge" for their actions. Once again word came down that it was Col. Peiper's forces that had intercepted and captured a large group of U.S. soldiers most of which were artillerymen driving south along with elements of the 7th Armored Division. Under orders they were herded into a large snow covered meadow and gunned down with machine guns and automatic weapons left to freeze in the snow.

The men of the wire details out of Headquarters were Henry Plante, Horace Abbercrombie, John Busse, Peter Olean, George Pasqual, Hang Henderson, John Busse, knee-high, and myself to name just a few who were under supportive vigilance of Camille Cevalier, Harvey Lessard, Lester Bloom and Ralph Hooper. We were always under constant threat of German snipers, land mines and booby traps. Each time we were sent out to lay or repair broken communications wire we all had to keep a watchful eye for these personal hazards. I later received the Purple Heart for wounds received when our weapons carrier hit a German AT land mine, killing one wounding four.

Our first up close encounter with German armor scared the living daylights out of us all. The wire detail was outrunning new lines up forward to a new OP. Headquarters had marked the roadway (if tracked snow and mud dug-out by heavy armor and trucks constitute a road) guiding us to the OP. All morning we would see our small truck and armor convoys passing us while we were working on the wire placement. We later would hear an echoing sound coming from the thick dense forest just ahead and from both sides of us, metal clanking and squealing sounds muffled with low rumbling engines moving around just on the other side of the tree lines. We believed it was our guys moving into defensive positions, perhaps digging in waiting for others from division, we just kept on working, it was snowing cold, wet and muddy.

We were taking a quick smoke break while heating up a couple of cans of beans (we would place them on the exhaust manifold of our running truck) then we heard heavy artillery and mortar barrages. Next came machine gun and rifle fire, it got closer and closer still we were unaware of the danger we were in. One of the guys said "Armand, we should saddle-up and get out of here." Good idea! As we started to load our tools into the truck we turned to the tree line and saw GI's running out from the forest slipping,

(Continued)

AS I REMEMBER

(Continuation)

tripping and falling running as fast as they go hollowing at the top of their lungs "Tanks, German Tanks"!

This was the first time we saw German Tanks in action, what we saw earlier were burned and destroyed hulks of either Mark II and III Panzers but, here we would learn were the heavy Mark V Panthers and Mark VI Tigers. They were the biggest armored machines we've ever seen, cannons blasting machine guns firing crashing through the tree lines. Armed only with sidearms and carbines we were no match for what was heading our way so we did the next and only best thing...bug the hell out!! No time to pick-up, dropped everything even left the truck running in place. (We had a utility trailer and extra spools of wire hanging off of both). We finally made Headquarters and reported what happen then learned that the Germans had broken through our lines and was pushing us back.

The whole battalion started bugging-out, jeeps, weapons carriers, 6x6's, M3 Halftracks towing 105's and trailers, M5's (hs) tractors towing big boys the 155's and the new 4.5" gums. Ack-Ack gun crews, ambulances, medics, maintenance and service personnel. MP's directing traffic, security teams setting up machine gun and mortar emplacements (serving as a first line of defense) against the advancing Germans. It didn't appear to be chaos, more like well "orchestrated" confusion, everybody had a job to do and that's what we were doing. The Battalion had trained for this States-side while on field maneuvers in Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas and desert training in southern California at Camp Iron Mountain.

Once the Battalion regrouped we set up new firing positions, posted heavy security, new Op's and informed Division we were ready for fire missions. Orders to fire came, the 941st had three batteries four guns each--(12) guns total let loose with such a tremendous explosion of fire and defending thunder it felt like the earth around us was coming apart at the seams. The roar of these guns echoed for many miles around, I can't say let alone know what damage we did but, this is for sure (1) we blasted the Germans advancement three times harder than what they dished-out to us, and (2) we made plenty of fox holes for our own GI's to fight out of.

An after action report from S2 revealed the 941st Field Artillery had expended over 15,300 rounds into the advancing Germans for the month of December 1944 with only (4) battle casualties. No idea what the other two Battalions (186th and the 955th) had also fired but, it would be safe to say at least the same if not more. The German army had surely paid dearly for this mistake, and we were very glad to have obliged them with extreme prodigets. Within three months (November, December and January) we set up headquarters and firing positions through towns known as Hemmeres, Courtil, Tillet, Venwegen, Mont, Vossenack, Rohren, Wiltzfeld, Rotgen, Honsfeld and Winterscheid. If there were others I've long forgotten their names.

I wish to express my most sincere humble appreciation for being able to serve with the men of the 941st Field Artillery. If not for their courage and dedication I feel I would not be here alive today writing this letter. For all VBoB's its an honor to have served with you, it was a good fight and hopefully with God's grace not worth repeating. A special thanks to Harry Plante (deceased) and Horace "Abbie" Abbercrumby of Headquarters Battery--two men who taught me well and became my good friends. I welcome all who can correspond helping to validate your story, good bad or indifference. Would appreciate hearing from anyone who served in the 187th and 406th Field Artillery Groups as well as the 186th, 941st and 955th Field Artillery Battalions. As we used to say in the Guard "Load with Cannister." ▣

You Earned It! Why not be part of the elite,
Join the organization for Combat Infantrymen!



Membership requirements: The applicant must have been awarded the Combat Infantry Badge as certified to by official notation on the applicant's DD-214, Official Army Orders, or other official documents. Applicant must attach a copy of such documentation to this Enlistment (Membership) Application. Dues are \$20.00 for two years or \$75.00 for a life membership. We do not have a one (1) year membership.

For more information and membership application please visit our website at www.cibassoc.com or contact:

Daniel R. Sankoff, Major, C.I.A.
National Membership Officer
236 Danby Road
Lehigh Acres, FL 33936-7531
E-mail: silverfoxx236@aol.com



A TOMB FOR THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER
NONSENSE, WE KNOW WHO ALL OUR
SOLDIERS ARE

Do you know a Bulge veteran
who doesn't belong to VBOB?
Ask him to join...we need his support.

Remembrance & Commemoration

61st Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge

December 16, 1944 - January 25, 1945

On Wednesday, December 14, 2005, veterans, family members, and friends arrived at the Fairview Park Marriott Hotel, in Falls Church, Virginia. Registration took place in the Hospitality Room, which was decorated by Dorothy Davis, Robert Phillips, John and Mary Bowen, and Martin and Phyllis Feldman. The Hospitality Room contained many books, magazines, memorabilia, etc., about the Battle of the Bulge. Friendships with old friends were renewed and new friendships were made. A private area in the hotel restaurant was reserved for the members in attendance.

Thursday, December 15, 2005, attendees were given a guided bus tour of Washington, D.C., with a stop at the WWII Memorial. Other sites included the Federal Triangle, Canadian and British Embassies, The White House, the Capitol and the Library of Congress. Lunch at Union Station was on your own. Shopping was available at Union Station which contained a model railway exhibit from Norway. Bus returned attendees to the hotel.

Thursday evening, the Commemorative Banquet was held in a ballroom of the Fairview Marriott Hotel. The program began with a welcoming address by Master of Ceremonies LtCol Alfred Shehab, Ret., 38th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron. Presentation of the Colors were made by members of the Fife and Drum Corps and the Color Guard of the 3rd United States Infantry (The Old Guard). Stanley Wojtusik, 106th Infantry Division, led attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance. The Color Guard retired the Colors. John Bowen, Chaplain's Assistant, gave the Invocation. George Chekan, President of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, 9th Infantry Division, thanked VBOB member and friends for attending this solemn Remembrance and Commemoration of the 61st Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge.

Robert Phillips, 28th Infantry Division, offered a toast to those who served in the BOB.

John McAuliffe, 87th Infantry Division, offered a toast to the grateful people of the Kingdom of Belgium and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

Demetri "Dee" Paris, 9th Armored Division, offered a toast to all of those serving our country.

W. Glenn Yarborough, 2nd Armored Division, offered a toast to our fallen comrades.

A bugler from the U.S. Army Band rendered "Taps."

The after-dinner program consisted of greetings from Monique Thill, Consul, Embassy of Luxembourg; BGen Dany Van de Ven, Military Attache, Embassy of Belgium; and Paul Goffin, Belgium/American Association.

LtCol Shehab introduced guest speaker John C. Metzler, Jr., Superintendent Arlington National Cemetery. Mr. Metzler spoke about repairing The Tomb of the Unknowns, the addition of burial sites at Arlington, and the proposed new VBOB Memorial.

Dorothy Davis, 57th Field Hospital, presented commemorative plates, inscribed with the Battle of the Bulge dates to John Bowen, Robert Rhodes and Ralph Bozorth for their efforts in presenting video-audio programs in the hospitality and banquet rooms.

Joseph F. Zimmer, 87th Infantry Division, spoke on reflections of the Battle of the Bulge [*elsewhere in this issue*].

LtCol Shehab's remarks closed the Commemorative Dinner.

A DVD presentation entitled "A Tribute to Those Who Fought in the Battle of the Bulge," created by Robert Rhodes, was shown after dinner in the banquet room.

On Friday, December 16, 2005, attendees proceeded by chartered bus from the hotel to a Ceremony of Remembrance and Wreath Laying at the WWII Memorial in Washington. Mrs. Louis Cunningham and Mrs. William Bearisto laid the wreath in front of the Battle of the Bulge inscription. From the memorial, members proceeded to the Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington Cemetery to meet up with other VBOB members for the ceremony. At the Tomb, all in attendance were privileged to witness the impressive military par excellence of the Changing of the Guard (3rd U.S. Infantry Honor Guard). The personal appearance, dress uniform, and rifles were meticulous. The Guard was a work of precision, cadence, shouldering rifle, and changing of position of rifle were done in a flawless manner. The Sergeant of the Guard reminded the audience to stand, refrain from loud talking, and remain silent out of respect to the sanctity of this hallowed memorial.

To the right of the Tomb, led by a "Buck" Sergeant, the relieving guard was meticulously scrutinized from head to toe, front to rear, and his rifle was likewise thoroughly inspected. After the inspection procedure, the sergeant led the relieving guard, in coordinated cadence, to the center of the Tomb where the change took place. The relieved guard gave the order, "All orders remain the same." The sergeant and the relieved guard, in cadence, departed the area. The Tomb bears the inscription: **HERE REST IN HONORED GLORY AN AMERICAN SOLDIER KNOWN BUT TO GOD.**

At 1105 VBOB President George Chekan and VP Military Affairs Stanley Wojtusik, escorted by the Sergeant of the Honor Guard, laid a wreath at the base of the Tomb. A U.S. Army Band bugler sounded "Taps." The sergeant and the bugler then departed the area.

From the Tomb of the Unknowns, VBOB members and friends walked to the VBOB marker opposite the Amphitheater. President Chekan presided over the proceedings. VP Wojtusik led the Pledge of Allegiance. John Bowen, VBOB Historian, offered a prayer in remembrance of our fallen comrades who fought and died in the BOB. Ralph Bozorth, Associate Member, paid tribute to those who made the supreme sacrifice by reading a poem entitled "Please Remember Me." [*copy elsewhere in newsletter*] Martin Sheeron, 53rd Field Hospital, and Robert Phillips, 28th Infantry Division, placed the wreath at the VBOB Memorial. A bugler from the U.S. Army Band rendered "Taps." President Chekan closed the ceremonies.

Following these services, members and friends proceeded back to the hotel for a reception and luncheon. President Chekan introduced the newly-elected VBOB Executive Council Officers. Past President Lou Cunningham, 106th Infantry Division, conducted the swearing in ceremony. Newly-installed President Stan Wojtusik gave an acceptance speech and adjourned the ceremonies.

Marty Sheeron
53rd Field Hospital

PLEASE REMEMBER ME

I fired the first shot at Concord
A shot heard all around the Earth.
We gave up our lives so that
Freedom and Justice was given its birth.
Remember me, America, for I was once your son
I fought and died at Valley Forge with George Washington.
I was there at Gettysburg on that tragic, tragic day
When brother fought against brother--the blue against the gray.
I rode with Teddy Roosevelt on the charge up San Juan Hill
Some came back to fight again--but I just lie there still.
I went to France with A.E.F. to bring the peace to you
I was twenty-one and full of fun--I never saw twenty-two.
I'm still here at Pearl Harbor since that December seventh day
of infamy.
Lying silently with my shipmates on the Oklahoma, the Utah,
and the Arizona at the bottom of the sea.
D-Day, June 6th, 1944, we hit the beaches of Normandy
And we fought uphill every inch of the way.
We routed the Germans and hurled them back
But what a terrible price we had to pay.
I served on a U.S. submarine, the bravest of the brave
Until a German depth charge gave us a watery grave.
I bombed the Ploesti oil fields, they blew with one big roar
But in the attack we were hit with flack--I'll never bomb
anymore.
I helped to raise the flag on Iwo Jima
And it just lifted our spirits oh so high.
But the cost of this island took its toll
It was the lives of 4,000 Marines and I.
In Korea I heard the CO shout, We'll make it--I'm sure we
will."
I lost my life to try and take a spot called Pork Chop Hill.
Vietnam! Vietnam! When will we ever learn?
I'm one of the sixty thousand who never will return.
I left my town, my wife, my kids, and my home so cozy and
warm
I was killed in a scud attack in a war called "Desert Storm."
And so in my eternity my thoughts are all for thee
I'll never forget my America--I pray she remembers me.

John J. DiRusso
15th United States Air Force
485th Bomb Group
Conshohocken, Pennsylvania

General Skorzeny in the Battle of the Bulge gave his infiltrators
this advice on how to imitate an American:

1. slouch
2. chew gum
3. relax against the wall
4. put hands in pockets
5. say, "Go lay an egg" "So's your old man" "Go crap
in your hat, buddy"

—Ardennes: *The Secret War*

"If you ain't Airborne you ain't Shit."

Old Airborne Proverb



Arlington Cemetery, December 16, 2005, President George Chekan and VP, Military Affairs, Stanley Wojtusik, escorted by the Sergeant of the Honor Guard, prepare to lay a wreath at the base of the tomb.



Arlington Cemetery, December 16, 2005, Marty Sheeron, 53rd Field Hospital, and Robert Phillips, 28th Infantry Division, getting ready to place a wreath at our VBOB Memorial.



WWII Memorial, December 16, 2005, Mrs. Louis Cunningham and Mrs. William Bearisto laid a wreath in front of the Battle of the Bulge inscription.



December 16, 2005--John McAuliffe, 87th Infantry Division, admires the beautiful VBOB wreath at the WWII Monument.

"Walking is man's best medicine."
Hippocrates

SWAMPED BY THE GERMANS

which was behind us on the Schonberg-St. Vith road.

We slept the first night in a churchyard in Prum, marched to Bitburg and to Gerolstein and spent four days in 40' x 8' box cars arriving at Stalag IX B, Bad Orb, on December 25, 1944. There was no Christmas dinner waiting for us.

While we were in the Rail Marshaling Yard at Koblenz, British Mosquito bombers bombed a half mile from our line of cars and we were staffed by an American plane in Stalag IX B, 37 miles north of Frankfurt.

I lost 32 pounds on 600 calories a day. I was liberated April 2, 1945, back in New York April 28, 1945 and home in San Francisco on V.E. day. ■

LONE STAR CHAPTER ON VETERANS DAY

Members in the Dallas-Fort Worth and surrounding areas participated in this year's Veterans Day Parade as they have for the last five years.



Pictured in the Humbee: left to right--Charles Kam, Cecil Gilliam, and Paul Schreck.

Cecil reports that the parade was good and the weather was cooperative. There was good publicity for the service men and women and the veterans and the parade was a great success. ■

Boot camp advice to new recruits:

Don't Worry

If you're not in the army and you're at home

Don't worry.

If you are in the army, but you're in the States,

Don't worry.

If you are across, but you're in the rear lines,

Don't worry.

If you're in the front lines, but you're not shot,

Don't worry.

If you are shot, you can't worry, so—

Don't worry.

—GI Jokes (1945)

MEDICS IN THE BULGE

By Ralph Storm
11th Armored Division
21st Armored Infantry Battalion

[The following excerpts are taken from the CRIBA website.]

[Excerpted and altered for space] The average American soldier in WWII first encountered Army medics at Army induction centers where inductees were given physical examinations. These men had earlier been examined by hometown doctors, but Army officials became aware that many local physicians tended to overlook certain ailments among the prospective inductees which might have precluded them from becoming healthy soldiers.

Some GIs never went on sick call and were never injured. For those soldiers in the European Theater who became ill or injured, there was a huge medical complex in place by D-Day, 1944. There was no exact way of knowing how many hospital beds would be needed, but ETO's Chief Surgeon, Colonel Paul Hawley, was insistent on building the latest and most elaborate hospital complex seen in any army in WWII. There were the mobile hospitals either in tents or in suitable buildings that had been taken over by the Army. These facilities were near the front and provided only patch-up work for the wounded. The goal was to keep patients alive and sent on to the next hospital where more sophisticated procedures could be used. The general hospitals where the patients could be reconstructed and rehabilitated, were located in areas more distant from the front in such continental cities such as Liege, Paris, Dijon, and many cities and towns in England.

One issue concerning seriously wounded soldiers was whether some should be sent back to the States on hospital ships. General George Patton had a somewhat unsympathetic answer to this question: "If you have two wounded soldiers, one with a gunshot wound of the lung, and another with an arm or leg blown off, you save the son-of-a-bitch with the lung wound and let the god damned son-of-the-bitch with an amputated arm or leg go to hell. He is no god damned use to us any more." The ETO medical policy on such cases was that if a patient needed six months (180 days) or more of hospitalization, he would be sent to the States. Later, during the Bulge, when beds were scarce, the policy was shortened to four months.

Keith Winston, 100th Infantry Division, wrote how it was done under ideal conditions: "A boy gets hurt on the line. Within a minute or less a telephone message is sent back to our forward aid station, a distance of 300 to 1,000 yards from the front, where a sergeant and four litter bearers are always on hand. They rush right up to the line with a litter.

"During this time, the company aid man is administering first aid on the spot, usually consisting of stopping the bleeding with sulfanilamide powder externally, bandaging and giving wound pills internally. By that time, another litter team is there and carries the casualty to the nearest point where a jeep can travel, anywhere from 25 to 3,000 yards, depending on conditions. He is then rushed to the aid station—one to three miles behind the line. Here the physician removes the first aid bandage, makes a proper diagnosis, applies a more permanent bandage, administers blood plasma if needed, and in severe cases, gives morphine. Next the patient is rushed by ambulance to a clearing station

further to the rear. Here he may be given an emergency operation. Then he is taken to an evacuation hospital further back for first class attention." Aid stations had no beds and were equipped only with bare essentials. After patients were diagnosed and treated, information was jotted down on a card, which was attached to a buttonhole on the patient's coat.

Litter carrying was hard, exhausting work and often only two bearers were on hand. Glen Ghrist, Jr., a medic with the 32nd Battalion, 3rd Armored Division, recalled carrying wounded GIs near Sart, Belgium: "It was cold as hell--some survived the cold. Captain Duffy and I volunteered to get some wounded soldiers from a field which was under artillery fire. We had to wade a small stream to get the two soldiers and bring them back to the jeep. We carried them on our shoulders, sometimes crawling, sometimes running, to get the hell out of there."

It was not unusual for battalion surgeons to occasionally act as litter bearers. Keith Winston wrote of his unit being short of litter bearers in emergencies: "If an emergency arises your position means nothing. If it calls for five litter teams immediately, Doc and I will go up and haul. He and I were doing it one day with no facilities at all."

During medical training, army medics received training in the use of the carbine and .45 pistol since some medics went to the Pacific where the Japanese had not signed the Geneva Convention. Some also carried weapons in the ETO on certain occasions. Donald Ratliff, 7th Infantry Division medics, once captured a German in Vielsalm, Belgium. "One night in Vielsalm, Belgium, we went into a house to set up a battalion aid station. One of the men opened a closet door and a German soldier was sitting on the floor. He quickly surrendered when one of the men showed a .45 pistol." Although medics in the ETO were not armed, many medics carried pistols for self-protection.

For the most part the Germans respected the rules of land warfare and did not shoot at combat medics while they did their first aid work and litter bearing. Medic Philip Hahn, of the Medical Detachment, 13th Field Artillery Observation Battalion, recalled an extraordinary situation in which his German cousin in a German field artillery position observed an American army aid station near Walheim, Germany: "The last towns we were in before the Bulge were small towns near Aachen. One was Walheim. After the war, I visited my cousin who was a lieutenant in the German field artillery. In looking over his records, I saw the name of Walheim. He said that he had the crossroads zeroed in--he knew exactly what farm house we had for an aid station because of the red cross hanging from a window and that there were probably German civilians living there."

There were many exceptions to this. Peter Couvillion, 9th Armored Division, served as an evacuation jeep driver in Luxembourg and recalled one exception: "On the second day of the Bulge after all our line companies had been surrounded, we attempted to contact "C" Company. Enroute, we encountered a battle line of Germans. They did not shoot at us. On this mission we evacuated 16 wounded and left the slightly wounded behind.... Early that morning my assistant and I contacted our "B" Company. We found the company medic. Leading us to where he had some wounded, a sniper shot both the company medic and my assistant. Both died before I could get to them. Men from the platoon found the sniper and shot him."

Two types of casualties occurred in the ETO that troop commanders were

(Continued)

MEDICS IN THE BULGE

(Continuation)

not well prepared for. In 1941, the army lacked a definition, a treatment system, or even a name for its psychiatric casualties. These casualties by the end of the war would amount to over 150,000, or an average for every three men killed or wounded, one other soldier became a combat exhaustion case.

Medical writer Albert Cowdry described some of the symptoms of the soldiers with combat exhaustion: "Intolerable weariness and baseless alarm. Some were in a stupor and withdrawn, some tense and violent, some suffered from Parkinson-like tremor or from delusions.... They were beyond self-control and orders and threats meant nothing. Weeping, shaking, curling up in the fetal position...they had ceased to be soldiers for a time."

Veteran war correspondent Ernie Pyle was deeply touched when he met two GI psychiatric casualties: "...two shock cases...staggering down the road. They were not wounded but were completely broken...the kind that stab into your heart. They were shaking all over, and had to hold on to each other like little girls when they walked. The doctor stopped them. They could barely talk, barely understand. He told them to wait down at the next corner until we came back, and then they could ride. When they turned away from the jeep, they turned slowly and unsteadily, a step at a time, like men who were awfully drunk. Their mouths hung open and their eyes stared, and they still held onto each other. They found more war than the human spirit can endure."

Once during the Bulge, General Matthew Ridgeway encountered a dysfunctional sergeant: "An hour later in the same spot, the tough airborne General Ridgeway came under enemy fire, and a sergeant nearby became almost hysterical. He threw himself into the ditch by the side of the road crying and raving. I walked over and tried to talk to him, trying to help him get hold of himself. But it had no effect. He was just crouched there in the ditch, cringing in utter terror. So I called my jeep driver, Sergeant Farmer, and told him to take his carbine and march this man back to the nearest MP and if he started to escape to shoot him without hesitation. He was an object of abject cowardice and the sight of him would have a terrible effect on any American soldier who might see him."

At times some officers suspected that some soldiers were feigning their "combat fatigue." Paul Boesch, 28th Infantry Division platoon leader, alleged that his platoon sergeant had deserted under the guise of combat exhaustion: "My platoon sergeant was missing. One sectional leader, a soft-spoken Georgian T/Sgt Arthur N. Clarke, explained his absence." Lieutenant Clark said slowly, "Jim left. The first time that machine gun fired, he handed me his Tommy gun and said he couldn't take it any more. He took off."

I listened...stunned. "He said for me to take charge of the platoon," Clarke continued. I could hardly believe it. The platoon sergeant was the same man who, less than a week before when I had first joined the platoon, had stepped forward, his eyes shifting a bit, and regaled the replacements who had arrived with me: "Listen you guys," he had barked harshly, "I don't want any of you guys to turn yella, see! A yellow-belly sonofabitch is worse than a damned Jerry! If you see a man turn yella and run, shoot him in the back like a dirty dog!"

This I thought was the man who was going to shoot the first "yellow-belly" in the back. To leave the platoon this way, was just plain desertion. "Hey, Lieutenant," one of us shouted, "is that the guy who was going to shoot us in the back?"

Albert Cowdry described the symptoms of shock in wounded soldiers: "Shock made the anesthetist's job especially touchy. A young man in deep shock had the metabolic rate of an old man and repeated doses of morphine, given in the field to kill pain further depressed his respiration. One in every 40 to 50 wounded men were in shock when they reached the hospital and the condition seemed to begin a series of destructive changes through the body that often ended in death."

Keeping morphine from freezing was another cold weather problem for company aid men. Once frozen, morphine had no value and medics had to store their syrettes under several layers of clothing to keep them warm. Cold injury which was so prevalent among line soldiers in the winter of 1944-45 was for the most part caused by the lack of warm winter clothing and boots. General Omar Bradley described how this had come about as a result of the euphoria that existed among the western allies in September 1944: "When the rains first came in November with a blast of wintry air, our troops were ill prepared for winter time campaigning. This was traceable in part to the September crisis in supply for, during our race to the Rhine, I had deliberately by-passed shipment of winter clothing in favor of ammunition and gasoline. As a consequence, we now found ourselves caught short, particularly in bad weather footgear. We had gambled in our choice and were now paying for the bad guess."

The winter of 1944-45 was the coldest, wettest winter period western Europe had experienced in 30 years. ...More than 45,000 soldiers were hospitalized as cold injury casualties between November, 1944, and April, 1945.

Winter warfare in the Ardennes placed a heavy burden on the hospital systems. As a result of bitter campaigning in the Hurtgen Forest and along the Moselle River, tens of thousands of men were already hospitalized in early December with trench foot. Hospitals also contained 14,000 German prisoners. Ordinarily these POWs would have been sent to the States on troopships, but because the War Department expected an early victory, the shipment of prisoners to the States was halted.

The 107th Evacuation Hospital had to be moved from Libin, Belgium, to Chateau Roumont. After the siege of Bastogne was lifted, some 1,200 patients were brought into the hospital and all told they handled some 2,700 patients. To relieve the strain on the Liege hospitals, a dozen hospital trains were running between Liege and Paris--carrying patients to already over crowded Paris hospitals.

Sulfa drugs and penicillin contributed remarkably to the saving of lives in the European Theater. Each GI in forward positions carried a first-aid packet, complete with bandage, sulfa pills and sulfa powder. Sulfa was used to stabilize the bacteria while penicillin kills organisms. In 1943, penicillin was in short supply. However, by D-Day the American and British drug companies produced the amounts needed for the Normandy invasion.

The ETO Army Medical Service program was both complex and successful. By March 31, 1945, the total number of medical personnel had increased to nearly 250,000. Casualties by that time had reached over 13,000, of whom 2,200 were killed. The majority of those killed, wounded, or captured in combat were battalion aid men and litter-bearers. It was not unusual for an infantry company to replace 100 percent of its aid men.

The system possessed mobility, and field medics had access to jeeps, trucks,

(Continued)

MEDICS IN THE BULGE

(Continuation)

half-tracks, and even Sherman tanks for evacuating patients from forward areas to rear area clearing stations. In contrast to the German Army which often lacked adequate transport and even such basic medical needs as bandages (not to mention penicillin), the U.S. Army Medical Corps in Europe was certainly the best equipped. The value of antibiotic was demonstrated by the smaller death rate from disease as compared to WWI. In WWI, pneumonia took the lives of 18,000 American soldiers. During WWII, even during the 1944-45 winter, the coldest and wettest in 30 years, only 70 GIs died of pneumonia in the European Theater of Operations. ■

NO PURPLE HEARTS FOR BEE STINGS

**Henry "Hank" Mooseker
87th Infantry Division
347th Infantry Regiment
Company A**

[The following article appeared in March-April, 2005, issue of "The Golden Acorn," which is the newsletter of the 87th Infantry Division.]

During the Battle of the Bulge we Dog Faces were constantly cold almost frozen, (our feet would get frozen, frost bitten or go black with trench foot), wet and hungry. K-rations hardly satisfied our hunger and these were downed with remarkable speed. Sometimes when several K-Rations were provided I'd loose one or two of them in a fire fight and this only made matters worse.

Along with rations we always (almost always) received a carton of cigarettes once per week and these were used as much to allay nervous apprehension as they were used to satisfy hunger.

I also remember how the condoms we were issued were put to good use keeping matches and cigarettes dry. They were also used to keep the muzzle of our weapon from filling with snow and ice or mud when there was a thaw. A plugged barrel could cause an explosion of the breech which could seriously wound one's face. They sure as hell couldn't be used for anything else.

We searched every beat up house, hovel, cellar and barn for anything edible. I can remember finding Brussels sprouts, carrots and some potatoes in a root cellar. I found a can of fat (nondescript and could have come from anything) that most houses stored and used to fry the potatoes, carrots and sprouts in my mess kit over the square wax candle we were issued. These candles helped heat up a fox hole if you set them in a niche dug into the side of the fox hole you happened to be in. Disregarding standing orders not to eat or drink things we found that wasn't GI we gobbled up anything edible. A good find was fruit and jelly preserves.

Along with what we could scrounge I always found bee hives rewarding. There were many hives in the Ardennes and were used to pollinate the many orchards in the area. At this time of the year (winter) it was easy to get at the honey combs as the bees were dormant. I could quickly wrest a few combs from the hive and put them in my gas mask bag which had long since lost

it's gas mask. (You quickly learned not to carry anything that wasn't absolutely necessary.) The bag lining soon got very sticky. I'd chew the combs, extract the honey and spit out the wax after a good chewing.

In or near Dickweiler, Luxembourg, we came to a farm house and I noticed this five foot high rectangular building with slats or louvered sides. A small door permitted a stooped entrance. This turned out to be the largest beehive I had ever seen. It was too big that you could walk into it and when you did you were surrounded by honey combs. Here was a large treasure trove of honey. The bees were dormant and the combs easily removed. I stuffed my gas mask carrier full and figured I was fixed for several days.

It didn't take long to tell the rest of the squad and soon they were going and coming from the hive. Now dormant or not the bees decided to attack the marauders. Soon there were yells from the looters. The bees were really stinging now. Those that got stung were moving away as fast as they could.

Mud was the only solace and there are no Purple Hearts for bee stings. ■

WORLD WAR II MUSEUM NEEDS YOUR HELP

The WWII Museum was moving along on a 200 million expansion when Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans. While the Museum itself was damaged by the storm and its gift shop looted, the major crisis is loss of ticket revenue. The Museum operates exclusively on private funding, ticket revenue and private gifts. Without visitors to buy tickets, it cannot reopen and continue to tell the story of WWII.

The Museum is still closed [at the time this information was received] and visitors to New Orleans are few and far between. So, if you can help, please send your donation to: America's National WWII Museum, c/o Bill Frederick, PO Box 2951, Orlando, Florida 32802. (Bill is a director of the museum.) ■



Soldiers of Troop C, 87th Reconnaissance patrol, 7th Armored Division, advance into the battle-scarred St. Vith, Belgium. 24 January 1945

WHERE DID ALL THE TRUCKS COME FROM?

By Lloyd L. Goss, Jr.
148th Ordnance Battalion
Company A

For many years I have been reading the WWII Magazine and other publications--also watching movies on TV. The impression would be that a 2 1/2 ton trucks used overseas were shipped all assembled and ready to roll. Never has it been explained that the majority of trucks were shipped in crates and had to be assembled in Europe. I was a T4 in the 148th Motor Vehicle Assembly Company. Our company was comprised of 175 men of all technical ranks. Our job was to assemble the 2 1/2 ton trucks, jeeps and trailers.

It was never mentioned where these trucks came from except that they were from the 4049th Quartermaster Truck Company and the 514th Quartermaster Group. I am writing this letter to let everyone know just where the trucks and other vehicles came from during the invasion of France [and in the ETO].

On January 8, 1944, we anchored in the Firth of Clad, Scotland. The company did not disembark until 4 days later. That night we boarded a train for Liverpool, England, arriving in Aintree Liverpool the next morning. The company took up quarters in what were once stables for many famous race horses. The stables were made quite comfortable with the addition of stoves and wooden floors. Shortly after everything was set up and in order, the company began work at Depot 0-629, this work consisted of spot assembly of 1 ton trailers and 2 1/2 ton GMC's with one platoon doing maintenance in the depot maintenance shop. Our stay was not permanent however! On April 8, 1944, we were transferred to depot 0-631 located in Bromborough, just outside of Liverpool. We stayed at Woodslee Manor which was a three story castle with sufficient rooms to hold two companies. The quarters there were much better than the ones we left. Work soon began, an assembly line was operationed and began turning out 2 1/2 ton GMC trucks.

A small detachment of men was sent to learn vehicle waterproofing, this was necessary as all of the company vehicles had to be waterproofed before crossing the channel. All the T/E vehicles were drawn, checked and put into operating condition. A rolling reserve stock of vehicles was also assembled for our own use in France.

Later we left Bromborough for the Longridge Deveril assembly area here we were given a brief rest with no duties or details. This short stay soon ended and the company was loaded onto seven LST's at Portland, England, with destination France. The first thing we saw when we crossed the channel were sunken ships just offshore. These ships were lost when the first Allied Troops landed. The LST that I was on had two trucks, one other member from our company and a sailor who operated the LST. We were about 200 feet from the beach, the tide was going out suddenly we struck a sunken LST. We were stranded there for about 24 hours. Our LST started to buckle in the middle we thought that the truck in the front was going to go overboard--that truck was carrying all of our tools which we needed on the assembly line. The truck in the back was carrying our machine

shop used for making parts. In order to secure the front truck we locked up the wheels and ran a chain to the rear truck. When the tide started coming back in a line was fired out to us and we secured that line to the LST. The men on shore used two Cat D-8s to pull us on to the beach.

The company landed on Omaha Beach and immediately drove to a bivouac area. That night after a cold supper of "C" rations, we made ready for bed as it was getting dark and no fires could be lit.

However, there was no sleep that night as about 2200 hours all hell broke loose--anti-aircraft emplacements opened up all around and flack was falling like rain. The remainder of the night was spent in "foxholes." The following day the remainder of the company arrived and after reforming the convoy set out for La Combe, France. This was to be the bivouac and operational area for the next few months. The quarters were pup-tents, but were later replaced by wooden shacks built from lumber salvaged from the GMC crates.

Thirty-three hours after landing in France the first vehicle to be assembled on the continent was completed. An achievement which caused *Stars and Stripes* to claim a record set for becoming operational in record time in a combat area. Later on these operations became so efficient that vehicles were coming off the line at the rate of 60 a day. Previously the company had received a citation from Mag. Gen. H.B. Saylor, ETO Ordnance Officer, for assembling 40 a day. We worked seven days a week from 7:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m., just taking time off long enough to eat.

All this time the fighting around St. Lo was at its height. On the 25th of July, the men witnessed the 3,000 plane raid on that city. The same day an American fighter plane accidentally dropped a 250 pound fragmentation bomb right in the middle of the 148th working area. Luckily it failed to explode and buried itself 15 feet into the ground.

In November the company finished with their work in France on the 13th of November an advanced party left for Antwerp, Belgium. Our commanding officer Capt. Charles Reese, Lt. John P. Hoben, T/Sgt. Harvey W. Beaver and T/4 Jasper E. Hilley made up the advance party. The Germans celebrated their arrival dumping a "Buzzer" right in the middle of the lane in front of the barracks. Two days later the company followed with full equipment and materials necessary for setting up another line. The others followed two days later in three convoys they arrived at Lake Hofstade, Belgium, on the 16th, 17th, and 18th of November. We were the first to occupy the summer resort which was later called Depot 0-654. We were billeted in what was once a very beautiful summer resort. These were the best living accommodations since we left the USA. The only discomfort we encountered was a never ending stream of buzz bombs passing overhead nightly during the blitz of Antwerp-- some fell short of their targets but none caused casualties among the unit.

Work began after the company was set up and we functioned smoothly. The first job was in Antwerp where a ship load of vehicles was unloaded. The ship had been waiting 54 days in Firth of Clad for the Port of Antwerp to be cleaned up and opened. Here again the men sweated out the buzz bombs and rockets falling all around the dock. We saw many horrible sights as a result of the rockets falling--with the crowded streets, many civilians were literally blown to pieces. The vehicles, after being unloaded, were convoyed to depot 0-654, from there they were convoyed to the different fronts. (Continued)

WHERE DID ALL THE TRUCKS COME FROM?

(Continuation)

On December 15th a class II and IV Depot moved on to the post and began setting up an assembly line. Their supplies began coming in by the train load and their personnel not being sufficient in numbers to handle the job of unloading, were obliged to call on the 148th for assistance. The men worked twenty four hours a day during the Bulge getting the equipment unloaded so that more could be brought in.

After the Bulge, the company was engaged in setting up spot assembly sheds, service sections, warehouse and motor pool. After these were completed they began to spot assembly 2 for 5 ton and 20 ton trailers. Also some GMC trucks and weapon carriers. This job lasted until sometime in April. ■

526TH ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION

Written by James Ammons and George Wendt
Unit Historians

[The following article appeared in the October, 2005, issue of the battalion's newsletter "The Pekan Newsletter"]

While in Normandy, the 526th was assigned to the 12th Army Group. This group consisted of several American and British Armies and was under the command of General Omar Bradley. On or about October 26, 1944, the 526th left for Belgium with a stopover in Verdun, France. From there the battalion went into Belgium, settling in the Malmedy, Harze, Aywaille area in eastern Belgium. "C" Company was detached from the battalion at this point and was assigned to the 12th Army Group Headquarters in Luxembourg City where they served as personal security guard for General Bradley and his staff.

On December 16, 1944, Hitler shot his last wad of the war by invading eastern Belgium by the way of the Ardennes Forest. He hit the weakest point of the front line by attacking the American 106th Infantry Division. This division was made up mostly of raw recruits who had just finished their basic training in the United States and who had been sent to Europe only a few days before the Germans mounted their offensive.

All of the companies of the 526th were involved with fighting in the Battle of the Bulge, except "C" Company. They were kept busy protecting General Bradley and his headquarters from the German assault. Killing General Bradley and his staff was a German top priority, and, "C" Company can be given credit for not letting that happen.

"B" Company was hit the hardest, suffering numerous casualties and many men were taken as Prisoners of War by the Germans. "A" Company was hit hard at Stavelot, Belgium. While in the thick of the fighting in Stavelot they were given credit for stemming the German advance by setting afire 4 million gallons of American gasoline. Had the Germans captured this fuel depot the outcome of the Battle of the Bulge might have been different.

Headquarters Company was not spared. They had their problems with a German mine field. Men from Service Company were moving targets from the Germans, as they

feverishly tired to supply the various companies with ammunition and supplies.

And, the Medical Detachment, was in grave danger, especially the Medics assigned to "B" Company.

On or about January 27, 1945, "C" Company moved with the 12th Army Group to Namur, Belgium. A short while later, Headquarters Company and "A" and "B" Companies joined T-Force, and all went their separate ways into Germany.

T-Force was a unit of special troops of the 12th Army Group selected for specific missions, the 526th was assigned as security personnel for this unique force. T-Force was a highly mobile group and traveled extensively throughout Germany. ■

DISCHARGED AS A PFC

[Thanks to the determination of his daughter, Theresa Gedaro-Fox, PFC ROCCO N. GEDARD, 90TH DIVISION, 357TH INFANTRY REGIMENT, COMPANY C, received his sergeant's stripes in a ceremony in September, of 2002.]

[Rocky sent us the following remembrance.] On January 13, 1945, I was removed from the front lines for the second time with trench foot (frozen feet). I was in the First Aid Tent waiting to be sent back to the hospital when word came through that the Germans were counter-attacking. All the wounded that could fire a rifle were loaded on trucks.

They wrapped my feet in a blanket and put me in the truck. They drove us as close as possible to the front and unloaded us. They told us that they expected the Germans try to break out at this point and we were to hold our positions at all costs. Here are a bunch of wounded soldiers along with cooks, bakers, MP's and whoever else they could find.

The Germans hit us hard and tried to break through our lines, but we held on, it was like shooting ducks in a shooting gallery we shot so many of them that they finally surrendered. We took many, many prisoners. We later found out that this was called the "Battle of the Bulge" that we protected.

I was picked up and carried to a truck and brought back to the Aid Station. The soldier next to me looked at me and said "Rocky". He was my best friend! We grew up next door to each other. We had gone through school together and graduated from Portland High School in 1942. I asked him where he was wounded and he said that he had frozen feet. We rode together in the ambulance to Verdun, France. There we both were shipped to England. He went to a different hospital than me. I never saw him again until he arrived home in 1946. His name was Reginald Papi and he passed away on September 30, 1974.

[Rocky's promotion never reached battalion headquarters in time for his discharge--so he was discharged as a private. It's interesting to note that Rocky never wanted to be promoted to sergeant. "Sergants," he explained, "kept dying."] ■

SAVE US MONEY--CHECK TO SEE IF YOUR DUES ARE DUE. YOUR DUES DATE IS RIGHT ABOVE YOUR LAST NAME ON THE LABEL.

SPEECH BY

CONSTANT GOERGEN, PRESIDENT U.S. VETERANS FRIENDS LUXEMBOURG Thursday, December 15, 2005

Dear American Veterans and Friends:

Christmas 2005! What a wonderful time to remember. What a wonderful time to be grateful and to honor all those women and men in American uniforms who some 61 years AGO, came to our country to liberate Luxembourg from four and a half years of cruel Nazi tyranny. We shall always remember American Veterans. You are the living legacy of a painful past and now you are our true ambassadors of peace and freedom.

Today more than 60 years ago, are we still realizing what drama shook our countries and our families at that time? Even now, are we able to measure the sacrifices made by our liberators? Even now, are we ready to give a daily thank you to those who sacrificed their youth and their dreams for our freedom? These are just some of the important questions we should be asking ourselves at a time when any happiness is fleeting and perishable, at a time when men lose sight of true humanism and sacrifice the most important human values on the altars of the gods of greed and degradation.

In the American Military Cemetery at Hamm, Luxembourg, 5,076 crosses and Stars of David remind us that these young Americans sacrificed their lives for our survival and our well being. The message these soldiers who fell on the front lines of the Ardennes Battlefield beg us to cherish life, our families and our neighbors. They implore us not to refuse anybody the right to their life and human dignity, not to impose any dangerous political economic or social system on anyone else. This message of peace, freedom, independence and realization of human values is joined by the same message from the thousands of German soldiers buried in the German cemetery close by. Fate made them enemies in their worldly lives, but now they implore us from eternity where they are reunited and united, to live brotherly life where selfishness and strife for power have no place.

May all they who thrive on power and domination mediate over the tombs in all military cemeteries strewn over the countries. May they reflect on the messages of the millions of lives lost on battlefields from antiquity to today. May they learn the lesson of history. Dear Veterans, Luxembourg has not forgotten. From the depths of our hearts we all thank you. We wear in our hearts the noble words spoken by President Abraham Lincoln at Gettysburg: "We highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain. It is for us the living to be dedicated to the unfinished work which they who fought here, have thus far so nobly advanced." Our gratitude to our dear veterans and heroes is boundless. We salute and adore you and invite you to visit us whenever the mood strikes you. You have a permanent invitation and you are always welcome. Our American-Luxembourg Friendship Week will beheld June 21-26, 2006. You are always welcome to join us.

We wish you a Merry Christmas and a peaceful and healthful new year. ■

MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR

From Camille Kohn
President
CEBA

[Harry Meisel, long time member from Winter Park, Florida, shares his Christmas and New Year's greetings with you.]

Already before the Battle of the Bulge began, in November 1944, units of the 28th U.S. Infantry Division Headquarters stayed in the Luxembourg Ardennes City of Wiltz. It was on the 5th of December, 1944, when the 28th Signal Company (Message Center Section) invited the children of Wiltz as their guests for a Santa Clause Party.

Some days before, they had collected small gifts such as chocolate, cakes and other candies, taken from their own rations and Christmas packages from overseas, to give all those fine things to the Luxembourg kids. It was the GI Richard Brookins, from Rochester, New York, who played Santa Claus.

On December 5, 1944, I was a little boy of 9 years! I never had gotten chocolate or cakes from you.... But you gave me much more! Instead of candies you gave me back my liberty, you freed me from the horror of a terrible dictatorship and not only me, but also my parents, my siblings, my home village, my district, my country even the entire continent, where I am living till now during 61 years in freedom and peace. I owe it to you, my dear! Please do understand: I owe it to you and to hundreds of thousands of your comrades in arms, to nobody else! Be proud!

Your fine present to me in 1944-45 can never be repayed! Not by words and not by letters of thanks, not by receptions and not by monuments! Let me tell it to you old boy: I am most deeply indebted to you! Beyond your grave!

I can't help to thank you again by this way from the bottom of my heart for what you had done for me and my fellow countryment. We wish you and your family: Merry Christmas-Happy New Year! ■

MORE ON SANTA IN WILTZ

Richard Brookins recently provided us a copy of *The American St. Nick*, written by Peter Lion, which details the incidents in Wiltz mentioned in Mr. Kohn's comments (above).

The book is based on the true story of soldiers (28th Infantry Division Signal Corps) who donated their gifts from home, military cooks who baked sweets and Corporal Brookins who borrowed clothes from the local priest and rode through town as St. Nicolas to delight the children and their parents in Wiltz. Richard still returns to Wiltz to reenact this much anticipated event.

The book was published by WindRiver Publishing, of St. George, Utah. If you're unable to find one at your local book store, contact Richard at 585-586-4642, and he'll be able to help you locate one. ■

INTRODUCTION TO A TIGER TANK

By Allen R. Goodman
517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Once the advance of the Germans was stalled at the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium in January of 1945 our responsibility was to clear any enemy pockets still existing as we traveled East on our final target which was Berlin. It was cold and miserable with plenty of snow as we trudged along the road clearing each little hamlet or town of any enemy resistance. For the most part, the enemy had departed and was trying to re-group to protect their rear flank as they retreated from the assault of the American and British troops.

Our platoon had slowly cleared this one particular group of buildings possibly a family farm at one time, and was moving on to clear a building 50 to 60 yards up the road when we encountered enemy rifle fire. The final building turned out to be their last defense and they had some of their riflemen, with snow uniforms, laying out in the fields behind cows that had been shot but were still breathing, so you couldn't pick up the breathing of the German riflemen. This made it almost impossible to realize they were there. Once we left the protection of the buildings of this little hamlet and advanced to the open roadway heading toward this remaining building--the enemy opened fired on the targets we provided.

Our advance scout, Hubie Ford, from Chicago, was shot in the head and laid out there on the road crying for help while the rest of the platoon went for cover. It was only then that we realized where the rifle fire was coming from and we were unable to go to the aid of our lead scout. We did return heavy fire at the enemy and they finally retreated to the protection of their stronghold. In the meantime we finally reached Hubie but it was too late. I might just mention at this point that Hubie and I were quite close--why because while in training back in Georgia we both enjoyed the big band sound and it's vocalists--so when the "Hit Parade" came on with Frank Sinatra--we were the only two who would stay in the barracks to listen, in spite of the squealing of the teenagers. The rest of the platoon would vacate the barracks.

At this point, with resistance still forthcoming from the building up the road, we withdrew to the hamlet that we had just cleared and settled in for the night. We were assigned to different stations and told to keep on the alert for any further attack by the enemy. A big barn presented shelter for many of us, some in the hayloft, others on the main floor and I ended up alone in the harness room on the second floor with a view of one flank that I was to pay heed to for further enemy action.

Night came on and many of us fell asleep--and then it happened. What looked like a giant tank--which it was a Tiger Tank top of the line in the way of German armor. It quietly rolled its way over a hill to our front and opened fire on the barn. Talk about alarm waking one from his beauty sleep. It blew about half of the barn away and sent most of us scampering for a way out. All this brought most of us to the center courtyard of this little hamlet and our first reaction was to take off as fast as we could run away from the shelter we have been in. It just so happened that the two officers with us had already

retreated to safety to some rear position and we never saw them again.

We had one non-com, a mortar sergeant (Pete Lockhart by name), who stopped us all and said, "I'll shoot the first *\$%# who leaves the shelter of these buildings--our safety is here, hiding in the buildings and attacking the tank if it dares to come into our midst. Once, we leave the protection we have and enter the open fields, we're like shooting ducks!" We did stay and by doing so we discouraged the tank commander from entering what would have been our trap. The tank withdrew and we were safe. Sgt. Lockhart, once the story was told, was given a battle field commission and became our platoon commander.

Further up the road we were quartered in another barn and I was sent back for more ammunition with another man. As we approached the side entrance to this barn a sniper opened fire on us. My buddy was closest to the door and should have been the poorest target while I was more exposed but fate would have it--he was shot in the stomach as he turned to enter the barn. At first it didn't appear to be fatal but on turning him over we saw the gaping hole in his back and he was gone within minutes. That was the closest I came to leaving this earth and made me realize how lucky a person could be. □



A King Tiger is used as a signal pole by men of the 82nd Airborne Division./US Army

SAVE US THE EXPENSE OF SENDING A REMINDER...

The certificates and quartermaster items we sell have helped us keep our dues at \$15.00 for many years. Your help in submitting your dues on time can also help. So check your mailing label to see if your dues are due (or past due) and submit them without a reminder. Reminders are costly. Save us the expense. Thank you. □



WORLD WAR II DIARY

Captain Dean F. Stillson
87th Infantry Division
345th Infantry Regiment
Battalion Surgeon

[The following article appeared in *The Golden Acorn*, the newsletter of the 87th Infantry Division, March/April, 2005.]

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: My name is Jeff Stillson and Dean Stillson was my father. After the war my father settled in Youngstown, Ohio and raised our family. He died in 1974, but we didn't find his handwritten diary from the war until about ten years ago. Dad's best friend, Charles E. Rath, who was also an Army surgeon in the war, typed up my father's experiences in the war. He, like many, never talked with his family about what happened to him there.

[We have excerpted the portion of this account which deals with the Battle of the Bulge and information which will make the story complete.]

Excerpts: Preface: The World War combat journal of Capt. Dean Earl Stillson, MC, AUS, that follows was found recently in a storage trunk that had been in the basement. Its existence had been previously unknown. Dean was my best friend at the College of Wooster we roomed together for the first two years at Western Reserve University Medical School (Now--Case Western Reserve), we both got married in the summer of 1941 and we shared a week of our honeymoons in Canada. We lived in adjacent apartments for two years after marriage and were called to military service before our internships were completed, and began our combat careers in Germany, not far apart, in December, 1944, as battalion surgeons.

In editing the manuscript, I have used italics to emphasize Dean's statements that I thought have had special meaning for him. Within parentheses italics are used for comments by me, (CER) regarding place names and observations that seemed to me to be worthy of comment. Charles E. Rath, M.D. (CER).

WORLD WAR II JOURNAL OF CAPTAIN DEAN E. STILLSON, MC, AUS, 1944-1945

November 24. Left Biddulph, England

November 26. Arrived at Southampton

November 28. Arrived Le Havre, France at 1400, with duffel bag, and full field equipment, amidst all the rubble of a bombed out harbor. We waited several hours for trucks to take us to the next place.

November 29. Bivouacked in an open field outside Le Havre under shelter halves and trees amid rain and mud. (Near Roue, France).

December 5. Took off from the orchard on a nice train ride in cattle cars (40/8). Wonderful weather! Rain by the buckets. In our boxcar were Captain Kramer and Jerry Stockwell, both of whom became KIAs shortly afterwards.

December 8. Arrived in Metz. Detained at Briey. Carried our

luggage up a nice long hill to the trucks. (Oh my aching back. Still lovely weather. Lots of clouds and heavy dew. Rode in trucks to Metz. Settled in one house for the night, then move to another the next day. Set up our Aid Station. During our stay in Metz, the regiment made attempts to take forts outside the city. Two of them surrendered. The house used for the Aid Station sure was a setup. Hot and Cold water, and we were able to take a bath--plenty of room too.

December 13. Left Metz early in the morning. (CER--General Runstedt launched the German Ardennes offensive this day.) Took a truck ride toward the Saar. (CER--this probably means Saareguemins or Saarbrucher on the Saar River, due east of Metz). Pitched tents in an open field. An observation plane crashed close to where we set up. Stayed that night.

December 14. Moved on our way into battle. Arrived at Suicide Hill late at night. Set up our CP (command post) Tent, and ten of us bedded down in it. It was a pitch black, as black as the depth of hell. Along about this time we got our first introduction to enemy artillery. A shell came close enough to scatter mud on our tent, and produced our first casualty. For once the Medics became the most popular members of the unit. For a few minutes that familiar cry heard throughout the war was first heard, *Medic!* Funny how excited people get when death stalks at their doorstep. The rest of the night passed without a mishap.

December 15. Stood around most of the morning until about noon when a few shells dropped in--this time right in the middle of a group of men that were having an after dinner chin-fest. The result was that a number of men met their maker and several others came close to it. War suddenly became a reality and not just something in a newsreel. It wasn't fun anymore. During the afternoon we moved back over the hill to a more reasonable safe distance. During the evening chow a few more rounds came in. This time we didn't stand around with our mouths hanging open but got ourselves as close to Mother Earth as possible--and to hand with the chow!

After dark we wandered around the convoy until we came to a nice big field where we put up for the night. This time we dug in. The shells whistled over every so often.

December 16. Then came the dawn and we pulled out on our way to a nearby town, Rimling (CER. I can't find this town on the map). Here we stopped at another Aid Station to get kind of oriented. They offered us coffee and we ate k-rations for breakfast. We found ourselves in a house in the town where we set up the aid station. It wasn't much. Just two rooms. In the afternoon casualties began to be brought in. Administered our first plasma. *Saw our first patient die*. In fact--had our first experience as combat medic. Late the same day--moved to the next village. Guderirk. (CER--can't find this town either). Took over a couple of rooms from a family and set up again. Had our first Jerry casualty. We slept in the kitchen.

December 17. Moved on to the hillside where we set up Our Station (CP Tent) along side a ravine. Dug in. Tried cooking 10 in 1 ration on a squad burner. *The nights were darker than the lowest depth of purgatory.* It was all one's life was worth to try to go any place.

December 19. Moved to relieve another battalion. Arrived in our spot right in the middle of a beech forest. Our first "pissing off" came when the MAC (CER--I'm not sure who is meant by "the MAC"). Each medical unit had a medical corps officer

(Continued)

Dean E. Stillson Diary (Continuation)
MAC) but he did not outrank the MC or medical corps officer.)
ordered the CP tent to be dug in before we got our own little slit trench made.

Finally, after a considerable amount of bitching, both were done. The tent was piled high for protection and our own little hole started. As the day passed the hole got deeper and piled high with logs for protection. It was at this point that the Jerry's developed a bad habit of throwing in mortars and 88 shells to keep us uncomfortable. Jerry patrols were reported to have wandered woods at night. At the end of our stay, word came from CP to send all litter bearers to the front at once. We did. As usual somebody got all hot and bothered before the time, and there wasn't nearly the business we had envisioned. MAC's have a way of doing such things.

December 23. Left the hillside. Took off on a long cold ride. The convoy got mixed up a few times as usual. *(CER--On this date according to the official record the 87th Division received orders to break contact with the enemy in the Saar Region and got going immediately for Belgium to help contain the Bulge. The division including the 354th Regiment, then moved 350 miles in three days.)*

December 24. Arrived in a small town where we set up in a house beside the village church. The town's name was Cutting, France. *(CER--Can't find this town either.)*

December 25. Same place. Had a regular Christmas dinner. Church held services all day. It was a beautiful day. Had a short breather before pushing off again. Bivouacked 6 km. from Reims, France, for three days. *(CER--Reims is halfway between Paris and Metz, and a long way east of the Saar region.)*

December 29. Bright and early, we began an approach march to Moiricy, Belgium. *(CER--About ten miles west of Bastogne).* At Freux *(CER--About 2 1/2 south of Moiricy), we were pinned down by snipers for some time.* Set up our Aid Station in town once it was cleared. The place was a tavern. *(CER--I used a tavern whenever possible because of the wide entrance doorway making it easier to carry a litter and also the bar could be used as an examining and treatment table. There was usually a sink and running water as well.)* The proprietress was quite helpful and didn't object too strenuously to our using her place. Here we met a young marquis who came in and talked to us in broken English.

This was the beginning of our part in fighting back General von Runstedt's counter attack. *(The Bulge).* The troops ran into difficulties. Late in the afternoon the casualties began to come in.

December 30. Our first big day as combat medics. Many casualties of all kinds. The troops ran into trouble. Tiger tanks, 88s and all the rest. *No support on our side.* Jim Bockley was badly shot up--FC both legs *(Commimuted fractures).* Captain Kramer killed *(CER--according to the 87th Division second captain Kramer leading the 1st Battalion, to which I believe Captain Stillson belonged, stopped the German Panzers at Moiricy).*

December 31. Rough going. Left Freux for another town. Arrived, set up, stayed at night.

January 2, 1945. We were removed from our quarters by Corps Artillery. We pulled out and moved up the road and set up in a fine old chateau. Spent a couple of quiet days here. Snow has begun to come down in quantity.

January 4. Left the chateau for Ochamps. *(CER--not on map)*

Set up in a bakery. Replaced another Aid Station which had paved the way for us, consequently the people were very friendly. Had some of our first Belgian rye bread. Delicious. Here Owens had a little run in with our "beloved" MAC, all over cleaning up the latrine--guess who won the moral victory.

January 7. Left Ochamps. When we left, the proprietor of the place where we stayed gave us a huge apple pie for a couple of cakes of soap. Later we stopped at another village long enough to eat and set up. Then late at night we pulled out.

January 8. Jenneville *(CER--This is probably Fenneville, Belgium, about 7 miles north of Moiricy.* Our Aid Station was set up at Jenneville. We stayed here several days. Many casualties. *Harrington had half his face blown off. Stockwell was apparently killed. Barbato was hit.* The barn immediately behind the Aid Station caught fire and we "tore ass" to get away lest we make a good target for the artillery. The people in the house were very friendly and would rather we were there than the Boche.

January 11. Moved back to Moiricy. Moved into a house that had a few holes blown in it from the counterattack of the 30th. Rather quiet now. Saw our first movies, held in a hayloft. Went to Bertix *(CER--I found this one. It's a small village in Belgium, very close to Bastogne)* for showers. Plenty of snow now. Nothing in the way of casualties. Washed some of our ODs out for the first time.

January 14. Spirmont. *(not on the map)* Left Moiricy, went through Tenneville headed for Spirmont. Ran into a bit of difficulty before we arrived. Just on the edge of town a bridge was blown out. Here was the one and only time that we had to pack our equipment on our backs to get across the river where Kid Owens the Port Amboy kid met Denise. *(CER--Probably an inside joke)*

Our Aid Station in this town was a house where only the night before, the Jerries had stayed. Seems as though one of them got in front of the window and someone took a pot shot at him and put a bullet right through his belly. Poor fellow died. The lady of the house told us all about it.

Had a few days here. We were no more set up than the civilians began coming in for treatments of one sort or another. *(CER--I had a similar experience in Germany. The doctors were all Nazis so they left and we took care of many of the civilians.)* Some had unfortunately gotten in the way of shrapnel and bullets. We evacuated some of our first civilians. Saw some movies here, an Abbot and Costello feature, up in the hayloft it wasn't anyway warm. In back of the house where we were on a hillside, were the remains of an aviator who had been shot down by the Germans. Portions of his plane were strewn along the roadside. The population couldn't understand why he wasn't removed immediately upon arrival.

The people with whom we stayed were very pleasant. We ate with them in the kitchen using our own food. White bread was a rare treat for them. The two daughters, Denise and Lucille, were very nice. At this point in the war, the Germans were very much on the run. Back a ways, T/3 Owens had a bit of trouble with MAC, and now the results of the fracas came up. Our technician was relegated to the position of aid man in one of the companies, along with our truck driver who was deposed by another of our men, who had considerable more ability to "brown nose." It all ended well.

On the whole we had a good time here. The people were nice in spite of the fact

(Continued)

Dean E. Stillson Diary

(Continuation)

that some of their relatives were killed by our artillery. We had no battle casualties to care for and few of the ordinary little things. Facchiano and Back (?) got into a bit of a fight over a silly little cause, as usual. Did you ever see two guys fight wearing all the clothing that the army issues them for winter wear? Not too much chance of getting hurt but once down, a derrick would help to get one up.

January 18. Left Spirmont. Took a long truck ride south through Arion (CER--In Belgium on the Luxembourg border, about 16 miles west of Luxembourg City) to Luxembourg, and then to Beck (CER--about 6 miles SW of Echternach which is about 24 miles NE of Luxembourg City, on the Sauer River at the German border.) The town was completely evacuated. The houses had been completely and thoroughly looted but not bombed. Ate ourselves some K-rations. Found we were in the wrong place, took off north a piece, and set up in a more or less isolated farm house.

The kitchen moved with as well as the communications section. In the back of the house a piece was a battery of "Long Toms" that had the bad feature of belching forth shells every so often practically shaking all the plaster down and rattling what remained of the windows. *Had some nice deep snow that made getting the patients and casualties a rather difficult proposition. In fact there was one man killed and another injured and it took all of seven or eight men to get the poor fellow back to the Aid Station.* Some thirteen road blocks had to be gotten around in order not to set off the booby traps or mines that might be hidden there. This was the longest and probably the toughest litter haul that any of our men had to make during our combat experience.

January 21. Moved from our spot outside Bech and into the town of Scheidgen. (CER--Can't find Scheidgen). Had a Gasthaus for an Aid Station. It made a right nice place--big room for the station proper, a couple other rooms for sleeping, a good basement for protection against shells just in case. As it happened we didn't have any use for it. The town was in the zone that was completely evacuated by civilians so we didn't have them to contend with. There was a dead bull in the barn over the garage but then dead animals began to become a common sight from now on for a spell. The companies were spread out in defensive positions around Echternach and along the Sauer River.

Here we had our famous Prayer Meeting. It began when the captain developed nasopharyngitis and was taken back for a brief rest. In his absence, we were "honored" with a substitute supplied by Regiment, an excitable sort of person as bad as our MAC. Along about this time the officers were given their liquor ration and this meant a bit of partying. To complicate matters, there was a wild rumor of making a river crossing (Sauer River) at Echternach, and attacking the enemy positions on the other side of the river. For some reason the officers got the notion that it would be their job to construct some means of doing this. All sorts of weird plans were made for constructing a raft or bridge, etc., to haul patients to shore. Some fun.

The point of this came the day we pulled out of the place in a long convoy. One night when the corks on the bottles popped a little too freely certain hunks of brass (officers) got a bit on the polluted side. At the height of all this a message came from someplace that we were alerted. Holy Moses! This was it! The

excitable portion of the outfit got all upset over nothing and everyone was led in a word of prayer, and then took off for more details at the CP. Of course, as it turned out it was a routine alert, and very little to get jumpy about, but people have a way of jumping to conclusions. One of the officers tried to find his way into his bedroll with a great deal of difficulty and slept off his inebriation with the exception of a few moments when mother nature called.

Got a lot of replacements, but unfortunately some of them had the mumps which complicated matters a bit.

January 26. Left our nice comfortable spot in Scheidgen on a long ride that ended in Limerle', Belgium (Close to the Luxembourg border about 15 miles NE of Bastogne). Found ourselves a spot for the Aid Station. By now, the Battle of the Bulge was under control. Limerle' was a sort of crossroads, and every conceivable outfit seemed to be cruising through Houffalize, Belgium, (about ten miles north of Bastogne) and Bastogne where recently there had been some really tough battles. Houffalize was pretty well beat up. Outside of town were many tanks which had been beat all to hell in the fight. Two good looking daughters lived in the house where we set up. We sat in the kitchen with the family and visited as best we could in broken French.

(CER--On January 27th the 87th Division received orders from General Patton to "Drive the enemy out of Belgium and crack through the Siegfried Line."

January 28. Left Limerle' and stopped at Ourthe. (CER--Can't find the village of Ourthe but there is an Ourthe River in the vicinity.) Cooked up a meal for ourselves on squad burners--coffee, sausage, etc. Visited with the family in the kitchen although now we are getting nearer to Germany and getting a bit leery of the people. *No telling when they might get violent.*

January 29. St. Vith, Belgium (About 28 miles NE of Bastogne and about 3 miles from the German border). Arrived in town where our 1st Sergeant had picked us out a couple of rooms for our Aid Station in a big apartment house. The only thing we had to do was clean out all the furniture, block up the windows to keep out the cold and generally get set. We did this and got most of our equipment in when our brave Charlie (MAS) discovered a nice big 100 lb dud lying under the snow on the door step. It wasn't long until we moved again to another place in a nice small cozy dark cellar.

On our way to St. Vith, we had to take a most devious route in order to avoid mines. *In going through the snow drifts, the truck (CER--Probably a 3/4 ton U.S. Army truck) broke down. It had to be unloaded and the stuff hauled in by jeep.* On our next move, we had to leave much of our stuff behind until the truck was repaired.

January 30. Pulled out of St. Vith and moved to a small mill in a bit of a village called Huen (*can't find it*). This was probably the worst of all our inside stations--barny, dirty and all in all, unattractive. Had originally picked a better place, but the CP decided they needed it. (CER--My experience was similar--the commanding officer always got first choice of accommodations). Brass must be properly taken care of.

It was during our stay here that the third battalion had a lot of casualties. We took care of them. *It seems a shell landed in a chow line--bad for the troops.* The people in the place where we were staying must have been hard hit by the war because they were saving K-ration boxes and scraping the wax off them for candles.

(Continued)

Dean E. Stillson Diary

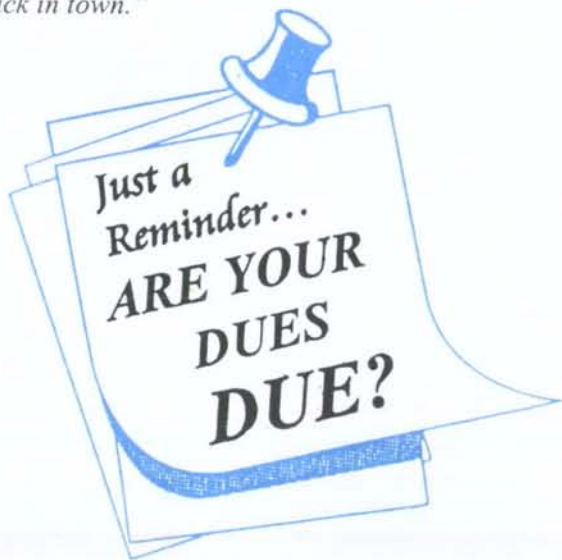
(Continuation)

One of the companies took off in the attack and ended up taking the wrong town. Rather embarrassing! (CER-- Events like this were so common that I often said--"how come we are winning this war?")

Also about this time during a rather difficult time, most of the officers and the non-coms in the company found excuses to come back to the Aid Station. Sure had a mess on our hands for a spell. It was here that Pvt. Sullivan, one of our litter bearers turned up missing. Sullivan was a funny sort of kid--very seldom said anything. In Le Havre he picked up a mine and tossed it against a wall to see if it would go off. Turned up in the Station one day with a home made Tommy Gun concocted out of another. Sullivan turned up some months later as a POW--more luck than brains. ■



Don't look now but there's old 'coushay awvec' back in town."



German Surrender

has become a more common sight than before



Truck Ride gives these soldiers a chance for a much needed nap before going on a new attack.



REFLECTIONS

By Joseph Zimmer
87th Infantry Division
345th Infantry Regiment
Company B

Good evening on this 18th Commemorative Banquet for the 61st Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge.

Difficult is the softest word which I have chosen to sum up our present feelings. In the course of speculating about the reasons for our world being in such a disorderly state, at the moment, we can turn our conversation to the present scarcity of what used to be known as heroes. Some say it is due to the absence of ideals and civility. Heroes, after all, are the men and women who carried out, in a heroic way what you and I were brought to be, or, raised to regard as noble ideals--like patriotism, sacrifice, and courage.

General Douglas MacArthur's farewell address to the Army Corps at West Point upon his return as UN Commander, during the Korean War in the early 1950's, summarizes these ideals, in a military way, by the theme of his words: Duty, Honor Country, in a very drastic manner. The men and women in our military now engaged in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other areas fighting terrorism, and, those Americans stationed and serving our beloved country in over 120 countries around the world, as we meet, exemplify the highest standards of bravery and dedication just mentioned. We owe them our prayers and support. May they return to their families in more peaceful endeavors and duties, as quickly as feasible.

Each of the veterans of the largest land battle ever fought by our U.S. Army, can fully understand and appreciate tonight's commemoration. It is to honor, remember and recall, the memory and tragedy of the 19,000 who gave their last full measure of devotion--their lives, those 62,000 wounded and those who survived unscathed. Our presence here is to make certain that what we did, went through and suffered from will never be forgotten.

It was Christmas eve and we were able to attend midnight mass as there was a cease fire to collect our dead. I cannot fully describe the feeling I had carrying my M-1 into the church near Alsace Loran, it will never be forgotten.

Each of us can gaze in a mirror reflect briefly, and see the image of one who made the difference in that terrible time and that terrible battle. It was a cold and desolate place, the Ardennes Forest, and the surrounding environs to be fighting a major battle to stop the massive German drive toward Antwerp and the Meuse River. Towns and villages like Tillet, Moiricy, St. Vith, St. Hubert, Houffalize, Arlon, Echternach, etc. Echternach comes to mind while cleaning the Germans out of the town, I came across a woman's petticoat hanging in a closet. It later served as great camouflage for me in the snows that followed, maybe I'm here today because of her largesse.

Like past history repeating itself our intelligence guessed wrongly based on the information received and contributed to underestimating the extent of the force the enemy had massed for the operation WACHT AM RHINE (Watch on the Rhine), which started the morning of December 16, 1944, at 5:30 a.m. The

routing the Germans took mimicked the same one taken in the Franco/Prussian War of 1870, and World War I. (My father suffered dearly in a mustard gas attack by the Germans in 1917).

Thirty-two Medals of Honor were awarded during the Ardennes-Alsace Campaign. First to receive was Tech Sergeant Vernon M. Garity, of the 393rd Infantry, 99th Division, who after being treated for wounds during the Krinkelt battle, returned to the fray to lead his squad, rescuing wounded under fire and single handedly destroying an advancing enemy machine gun section. Out numbered and facing superior weapons, many U.S. soldiers fought to the bitter end; survivors surrendering only when their munitions had run out and escape was impossible. After two days of fighting his men were captured after firing their last bullets.

My own division, the 87th Golden Acorn, received one Medal of Honor Sgt. Curtis Shoupe. Altogether in our combat from 2/13/44 - 5/8/1945, we received 420 Silver Stars; 1,519 Bronze Stars; 31 Air Medals; and 4,671 Purple Heart for wounds received in action--combat related. My own combat experience after fighting in France, Belgium, Luxembourg, and twice in Germany ended after the battle of the Bulge when I was wounded (2/8/45 in the German Sigfried Line). After seven months (four months paralyzed) in four different hospitals: BarLeDir, France; 91st General, Oxford, England; Harriman General, New York City; Newton D. Baker Hospital, Martinsburg, West Virginia. I was discharged from the Army with a permanent disability on September 4th, 1945.

The Arlington Cemetery--this garden of stone which carries the flower of our youths, contains over 250,000 souls who have given their lives in combat and service to your beloved country.

In summary then, facing death in the cruel fierce world of combat, everything abnormal and unstable, it gives one a different perspective on what is important in life. I have been told that of the original 200 men on our rifle company only 29 came home--many wounded. Before many more years pass, all that will remain of history's most terrible war will be the books and cemeteries, museums, and monuments. No one will remember those who fell, where they came from, why they fought, how it felt to watch them die. There will be no reunions of old soldiers retelling improbable tales. There will be no names of buddies carried like lockets close to the heart. One lesson learned from all of this is that we cannot discover ourselves by ourselves.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all. May we all meet again next year. Be safe in your travels as you head for home. □



VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE CERTIFICATE



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

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

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

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

VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE CERTIFICATE ORDER BLANK

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

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Organization: Company, Battalion and/or Regt, Division			Rank (Optional)
<input type="checkbox"/> Killed in Action	_____	Location	_____
_____	date	_____	place
<input type="checkbox"/> Died of Wounds	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> POW	_____
_____	date	_____	dates
			Camp

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Telephone Number (In case we need to call you)	not a requirement	Signature & date

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



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FEBRUARY, 2006



**WE'RE NOT HORSEING AROUND
WE WANT TO SEE YOU IN
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY
September, 2006
Details in the next issue.**

Detach and Mail