

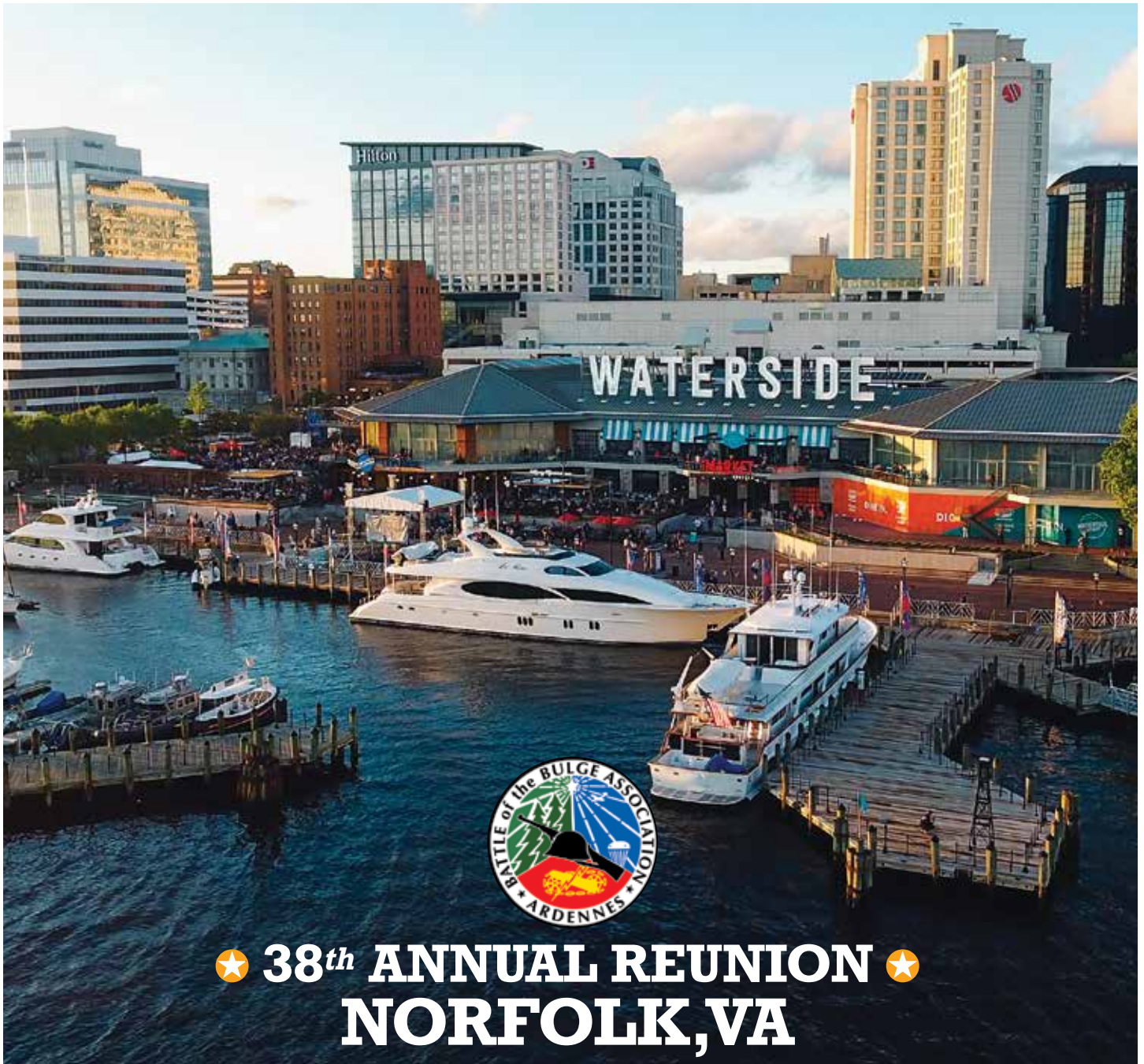
The BULGE BUGLE

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

VOLUME XXXVIII NUMBER 2

THE ARDENNES CAMPAIGN

MAY 2019



★ 38th ANNUAL REUNION ★
NORFOLK, VA

October 11 - 16, 2019

See pages 16-19 for full registration details.



Battle of the Bulge Association, Inc.
PO Box 27430, Philadelphia, PA 19118-0430
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WE NEED YOUR
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**Consider making a
donation today**

Sign up your family and friends! Encourage your chapter members to join national BOBA. (See membership application on the back cover.)

Memberships make great gifts! One year for \$20!

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Gary Higgins



GREETINGS! These winter months have provided some additional opportunities for Carol and I to promote the Battle of the Bulge organization. We have met several groups of people who have expressed an interest in BOBA—many with relatives who served our country at the Battle of the Bulge or in other WWII operations. I can only hope that what we shared will be enough to have them sign on, tell their families' Bulge stories, and encourage others to join us.

Fortunately, promoting history is a theme for many different organizations. I recently attended an Indian Pow Wow, sponsored by the Florida Indian Heritage Association, for the first time. I was very impressed by the honor and respect they showed to all veterans. During the opening ceremony, every veteran in attendance was invited to join in and march in the "Grand Entry." The American flag and POW-MIA flag were proudly displayed, and the Indian staff lead dancers, in full regalia, accompanied the veterans around the arena. For all of us who participated, it was a great feeling and honor to be recognized.

The excitement is building to honor our BOBA men and women during the upcoming 75th Bulge Anniversary celebrations in Belgium and Luxembourg. You will find details in this issue [See page 15.] The tour company of DDMT (D-Day Memory Tour) has been selected to take us on this historic tour, with a full itinerary including some very familiar names and sites. We'll see the always-smiling faces of Marcel and Mathilde ("M & M") at the Remember Museum 39-45—always a real joy to visit them! Of course, we are hoping for a big turnout by our WWII veterans, to whom this is dedicated. My wonderful experiences during the 60th, 70th and now the 75th anniversaries will forever be in my heart.

Traveling on these long journeys can be demanding for all of us, both mentally and physically. Our thoughtful planning and all the little details will make it as safe and enjoyable as possible. Yes, some of our veterans have indicated they will indeed be with us, each as excited as the last time!

It may be springtime here, but December 2019 will be cold, similar to December 1944. Our warm hearts and spirit will triumph over the elements, and our veterans will inspire us—each of them with an individual story that only they can share. So be prepared for a fantastic time!

Our hope is that many families will join us, along with the veterans. Those who have taken a previous tour know all the work and planning necessary to make it a success. We all need to personally thank Barbara Mooneyhan and Alan Cunningham for their

outstanding efforts—what an accomplishment to make this unfold for us! So many meetings, phone calls, emails and endless logistics. DDMT has shown real concern in insuring our guests and veterans are well cared for. Their efforts will also promote the legacy of BOBA.

Many members have also been clamoring for details about our annual reunion. Members voted at our last annual reunion to have it in Virginia this fall. It will be a Naval theme, as 2018 was Air Force themed. [See pages 16-19 for full details and registration forms.]

Please be aware that our BOBA insignia is trademarked, and there are legal issues around using it. We are protected and have the rights on its usage. Please contact the BOBA office with questions about usage: tracey@battleofthebulge.org; 703-528-4058.

As always, seek a new member and sign them up! New memberships are critical to our continued legacy and healthy finances.

The winter has been cold and brutal. Remember what those veterans had to struggle through! And remember to talk to the veterans and learn all you can. Write it down and send a story to our editor.

Enjoy your spring, and enjoy this new issue of *The Bulge Bugle*.

—Gary Higgins, President and CEO,
Battle of the Bulge Association

How to submit stories for "The Bulge Bugle"

Please continue to send us your Battle of the Bulge stories. All members are reminded to submit stories about veterans you know who fought in the battle. Guidelines for submitting stories and photos are:

Stories and letters: Please send typewritten (not handwritten) text whenever possible. We reserve the right to edit for length or clarity. Clippings/articles from recent newspapers or other periodicals must contain the name & date of publication, so we can obtain reprint permission. Original stories will be given preference over reprinted articles. NOTE: We cannot reprint from books or pamphlets, unless you are the author. **Stories or clippings will not be returned, so please do not mail originals you want to keep—send legible copies.**

Photographs: Please identify the place and/or people in the photograph. Photos copied on a copy machine are not suitable for publication. Scan photographs at high-resolution (300 dpi.) **Photos will not be returned, so please do not mail valuable originals—send copies.**

Please include your e-mail address or telephone number, in case we have to contact you.

Send material to: (Preferred method) by email: tracey@battleofthebulge.org, or by mail: Battle of the Bulge Association, Inc; PO Box 27430; Philadelphia, PA 19118-0430

NEXT ISSUE (AUG 2019) DEADLINE: June 21, 2019

QUESTIONS? Please contact Tracey Diehl,
703-528-4058, or by email: tracey@battleofthebulge.org

LETTERS TO BOBA



ANYONE REMEMBER SIMPELVELD?

My name is Wim Hendriks, nationality Dutch, age 84 years. I am a member of BOBA, and live in the township Simpelveld (Netherlands, South Limburg), close to the point where the borders of Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands come together.

As a boy of 10 years old, I can still remember December 16, 1944, the day that “The Battle of Bulge” (Ardennes offensive) started. Day and night the cannon roar could be heard, and the lightening of the night sky above the Ardennes was intense. My place of residence, Simpelveld, was later (January, February 1945) a recovery and resting place for the GIs.

My question now is: Are there any veterans or relatives who remember or known the name “Simpelveld”? Or the places Vaals, Heerlen, Kerkrade (and Aachen in Germany)? Perhaps, they may still have information about that time, such as pictures or documents.

If you have any information, please contact me by email: ahwhendriks@yahoo.de; or mailing address below:

Wim Hendriks
Diddenstraat 23
6369 CR Simpelveld
Nederland

Thank you in advance. With kind regards,

Wim Hendriks, Member

PATTON MUSEUM LIBERATION REMEMBRANCE, SEPTEMBER 2019

On September 21 and 22, 2019, the town of Ettelbruck celebrates 75 years of liberation from Nazi occupation. Ally Troops liberated Ettelbruck twice in 1944, first on September 11th and then again on the 25th of December. The General Patton Museum, in collaboration with the ‘Groupe de Recherches et d’Etudes sur la Guerre 1940-1945’ (G.R.E.G.)

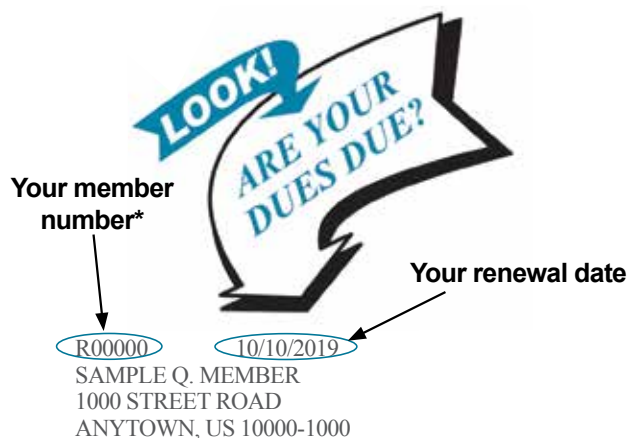


VETERAN MEMBER VIDEO INTERVIEWS

Watch our veterans' videos on our website at:
www.battleofthebulge.org, then click on “Video”

WHEN ARE MY DUES DUE?

Look at the back cover address label:



***PLEASE NOTE: If your member number starts with the letter “L,” you are a LIFE MEMBER, and do not owe dues.**

and the generous help of the municipality of Ettelbruck, organizes a Remembrance Day in honor of the 1944 liberations of Ettelbruck.

If by any chance you are in possession of photos, articles, letters from your grandparents or any other objects in connection to Ettelbruck’s liberation or the Battle of the Bulge, we would highly appreciate if you could put those at our disposal for the festivities.

For the Remembrance Day celebrations, the Hotel Dahm in Erpeldange is offering a special accommodation price to anyone taking part. You can make use of this offer by simply referring to the Patton Museum when booking or requesting rates, as soon as possible.

The hotel is situated approximately 10 minutes by car from Ettelbruck, and alternatively offers easy and fast public transport solutions to Ettelbruck. Contact details for the hotel: Phone: (00352) 816255 1; E-Mail: Dahm@pt.lu; Website: www.hotel-dahm.lu



Jos Tholl, Secretary, Patton Museum

For further information on the celebration or the museum, Contact Jos Tholl by email: patton@patton.lu; or view the website: www.patton.lu.

HELP SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT BOBA!

YOU are all our best membership advocates. When you meet someone at a military organization, or anywhere else, and get to talking about WWII, please hand them one of these promo cards so they can learn more about BOBA via our website, and encourage them to join us! We have made up these cards for you to download, print and sign your name. (They will print 10-up on a standard business card sheet such as those made by Avery.)

If you can print up sheets of cards, email Tracey Diehl, BOBA Member Services, to get a printable pdf of 10 cards.

Or, if you don't have printing capability readily available, email, write or call Tracey (contact information below) and she can mail printed ones to you.

Battle of the Bulge Association, Inc.

PO Box 27430

Philadelphia, PA 19118-0430

703-528-4058 or email: tracey@battleofthebulge.org



You've just met _____,
a member of the Battle of the Bulge Association, Inc.
Learn more about us at: www.battleofthebulge.org
Or call: 703-528-4058

IN MEMORIAM

Please notify us when you hear that any member of our organization has recently passed away, so that we may honor them in a future *Bulge Bugle*. Also, kindly notify us of any errors or omissions.

Please send notices by mail: BOBA, Inc., PO Box 27430, Philadelphia, PA 19118-0430; or by phone: 703-528-4058; or by email: tracey@battleofthebulge.org.

We have been notified, as of March 22, 2019, that these BOBA members have also passed away:

Balestracci, Alfred	3422 ORD MAIN CO
Garner, Clyde	3 ARMDD 36 AIR 1 BN HQ CO
Godbey, Oral J	8 ARMDD 58 INF BN CO A
Huseman, William K	8 ARMDD 398 ARMD FABN HQ
Ingles, Ernest	75 INF 290 AT BN
Kalagidis, John	552 FABN 32 FA BRIGADE
Martin, Harold	75 INF 291 INF 1 BN A
Meier, Lloyd	75 INF 290 INF 3 BN CO K
Morgenstern, Edwin	17 ABND
Nolan, Katherine	53 FLD HOSP
Perry, Faye	MEMBER
Pigg, Sr., Brady	104 INF 663 QM TRKG
Salemink, Richard	106 INF 424 INF CO G
Saucerman, Eugene	106 INF 422 INF 1 BN CO
Sawtell, Charles	84 INF 557 AAA AW BN
Sparks, Loman	87 INF 346 INF 3 BN CO L
Vervack, Paul	1 INF 26 INF CO A
Wright, Eugene	4 ARMDD 489 AAA AW BN SP

NEED BOBA MEMBER DONATIONS TO BULGE EXHIBIT AT THE NEW NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM

The Battle of the Bulge Association, Inc. is co-sponsoring the Battle of the Bulge exhibit at the National Army Museum, along with the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. Luxembourg has already pledged \$125,000 for half of the cost of the exhibit. BOBA is raising the other half, so that our name will be on the exhibit and will create more awareness about BOBA.

The Campaign for the National Museum of the U.S. Army is being run by the Army Historical Foundation. For those who are not aware, the museum is under construction at Fort Belvoir, Virginia near Washington, DC. Completion is expected sometime in 2019. We expect that BOBA will tour the museum once open, as part of our December Commemoration, probably in 2020 (we will be in Belgium for the 75th Anniversary in 2019).

As the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, we have already contributed \$2,500 to the Army Historical Foundation for the Museum. They have set up an account for BOBA for members, chapters, and friends who want to contribute to the Battle of the Bulge exhibit in our name, so we can meet the goal of \$125,000.

To make a contribution:

1. Make checks payable to the National Army Museum Fund and use the memo line to write "BOBA - Acct #3601720"

Mailing address for checks:

National Army Museum Campaign

Attn: Beth Seaman

2425 Wilson Blvd

Arlington, VA 22201

2. If you prefer making a donation via credit card, you can call Beth Seaman at (703) 879-0006. At the time of the call, you can let her know you'd like your donation to be put towards the Battle of the Bulge Association Fund.

3. Another credit card option is using a special web link specifically for BOBA donations. Anyone makes a donation via that link will have their donation automatically credited to the BOBA record in the National Army Museum Campaign database. This option is on our website with the following link: Go to: battleofthebulge.org, search for "The Campaign for the National Army Museum." Then on that page, click on the link: "Donate here to the National Army Museum Campaign."

EUGENE HARMACK AWARDED FRENCH LOH



(Left) Eugene Harmack, Technician 5th Grade, communication operator, 83rd Infantry Division, 329th Infantry, HQ Company. (Right) The Consul General of France for the Midwest region Guillaume Lacroix, presents the Legion of Honor to Eugene Harmack.

Three Missouri veterans, including BOBA Member Eugene Harmack, were awarded France's highest distinction, the Legion of Honor, during a ceremony at Soldiers Memorial Military Museum on Wednesday, Jan. 23, 2019. Consul General of France for the Midwest region, Guillaume Lacroix, presented the Legion of Honor medal to the 3 veterans for their participation in the liberation of France during World War II.

Eugene "Gene" Harmack, 98, of St. Louis (MO), was a Technician 5th Grade, communication operator, 329th HQ Company, 83rd Infantry.

Harmack was born in St. Louis, MO in 1920 and entered into active service in September 1942. In May 1944 he arrived in England where he joined the 83rd Infantry. He was tasked with setting up communication lines during combat. On July 12, 1944, as all communications were down during heavy fighting near Sainteny (Manche), Harmack successfully retrieved a vehicle that was trapped between lines, to use its radio to call for support. Disregarding his own safety, he drove to a covered position, receiving shrapnel wounds. He was awarded the Bronze Star with Oak Leaf Cluster and V for Valor. Harmack was also awarded a Combat Infantry Badge for his actions in France, the European African Middle Eastern Campaign Ribbon, 5 Bronze Battle Stars, the Victory Ribbon, 3 Overseas Bars, and the Good Conduct Medal.

On June 14, 1944, he was sent to Omaha Beach. Weather conditions resulted in him being stranded on the Channel for 4 days. He landed on June 19th. Harmack participated in the following campaigns: Normandy, Northern France, Rhineland, Ardennes, and Central Europe. Harmack participated in the liberation of St. Malo. During the Battle of the Bulge, he suffered from frostbite.

GOLDEN LIONS AND GUARDIAN ANGELS

by David Bailey, 106 INF, 422 INF, 3 BN, CO F



A native of Bluefield, West Virginia, as a young recruit I enlisted in the Army in November 1942 and completed my basic training in the infantry at Camp Wheeler, Georgia in April 1943.

After completing my basic training, I qualified for the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP), which was the brainchild of the Chief of Staff and Secretary of the Army, who believed that the ASTP would provide a pool of available leaders when the war ended.

I studied military government and engineering at Alabama Polytechnic Institute and Clemson College. However, ASTP was later disbanded, in order to provide the Army with replacements to depleted US divisions serving overseas. I was sent to the newly formed "Golden Lions" of the 106th Infantry Division and later assigned to Company F, 422nd Infantry.

Deployed from Fort Miles Standish (near Boston) on November 10, 1944, we sailed on the troop ship *Aquitania* and arriving in England November 17th, where the Division trained briefly before moving to the European Theatre of Operation. The 106th landed at Le Havre France on December 3rd and were trucked to the front east of St. Vith, Belgium a week later. We were relieving the 2nd Infantry Division in the Scene Eifel sector, a snow-covered ridge of the Ardennes Forest, covering a 27-mile front bordering Germany and northeast of Luxembourg.

The Army used the Ardennes to acquaint newcomers, like the 106th, with some of the milder elements of infantry warfare—such as observing and patrolling.

Needless to say and against all odds, in the early morning of December 16th the Germans launched a surprise attack outnumbering our troops by a "factor of five" in terms of armor and manpower. Our Division had only five days of front-line experience, had no air coverage due to the dense fog, and indeed was cut off from our supply lines. This was the start of the largest and bloodiest battle of WWII, in which there were 81,000 American casualties and 19,000 killed.

The German's ultimate destination in this last ditch, "all-or-nothing" initiative was the strategic port of Antwerp. So sudden and swift was the attack that it soon punctured a huge hole, or salient, in the Allied lines that gave the battle its name: "The Battle of the Bulge." Those of us at the 422nd and 423rd who survived this ordeal were able to take part in the reorganization of the 106th Division, which regrouped in northern France and participated in all future European campaigns until final victory on May 7th 1945.

On the following day, May 8th 1945 (known as "VE Day" Victory in Europe), I had a streak of luck and appeared with some of my 106th comrades on the cover page of the Army newspaper *The Stars and Stripes*, celebrating the happiest day of our lives. We were the lucky ones who were able to return home to friends and family and a life thereafter. In my particular case, I have always relied on my Guardian Angel, in addition to *Having Faith! And Going Forward!*

THE RING – A HISTORICAL VIGNETTE

by Thomas D. Morgan

There are many human-interest stories of heroism and sacrifice that have come out of the great Ardennes Campaign of 1944-45. One of the most unusual concerns that of Major Matthew Legler and his U.S. Military Academy 1939 Class Ring. He lost his ring during the hectic days of combat at the start of what Americans call "The Battle of the Bulge." It was returned to him 40 years later by a young Belgian garbage collector whose hobby was military archeology.



**Cadet Matthew L. Legler,
U.S. Military Academy 1939**

The Quiet Ardennes

On 16 December 1944, Legler was a 28 year old major commanding the 1st Battalion, 393rd Infantry Regiment of the 99th Infantry Division. His battalion was positioned near the twin villages of Rocherath-Krinkelt, just west of the German border in the Belgian Ardennes Forest. The 99th Division was newly arrived from the United States and untested in combat. Since arriving on the Continent in November 1944, the 99th Division had been placed in a defensive sector to gain combat experience. The front lines of the 99th Division ran for 19 miles through

belts of timber in the Ardennes that contained rocky gorges, small streams, and steep hills.

At the start of the German Ardennes Offensive, the 99th Division held the right wing of V Corps looking at the German West Wall defenses of the famed Siegfried Line. The Ardennes sector had been quiet for weeks, and the 2nd Infantry Division was attacking through the 99th Division to capture the Roer Valley system of dams. If this attack was successful, the 99th Division was scheduled to follow the 2nd Division and cover its southern flank. It was to be the 99th Division's first, large-scale operation of the war. Little did anyone know how large-scale it would be.

The Ardennes sector appeared to offer no special risk, because V Corps and the 99th Division had only identified three under-strength German divisions to their front. When Hitler unleashed his Ardennes Offensive on 16 December, V Corps did not know that 12 of approximately 30 German divisions were assembled in front of it, ready to launch the breakthrough attack. The 99th Division was in the path of the 6th SS Panzer Army attack and, in particular, the I SS Panzer Corps consisting of two armored and three infantry divisions.

In late November, Legler had moved his battalion from regimental reserve to be the right flank battalion of the regiment. The 393rd Regiment only had two battalions on line, the 3rd and Legler's 1st, because the 2nd Battalion had been attached to the 395th Regiment to the north. The 393rd Regiment had demonstrated in front of the German West Wall defenses during the 2nd Division/V Corps attack against the Roer on 13 December. The regiment was deployed along the Belgian-German frontier in the eastern edge of a long forest belt, and the International Highway that marked the border. The 393rd Regimental headquarters was in Krinkelt, and the 1st Battalion held a front of about 500 yards approximately four miles to the east. Of the twin villages of Rocherath-Krinkelt, the Belgian-German border cut diagonally through Legler's battalion position, and the battalion had a view of the Siegfried Line defenses.

"All Hell Broke Loose"

The night of 15 December, Legler's right flank units reported tank tracks clanking. Just before dawn on the 16th, Legler said, "all hell broke loose" as artillery, mortars, and Nebelwerfers (rockets) crashed into his positions, and tanks with searchlights ablaze came rumbling through the anti-tank obstacles of the Siegfried Line 300-400 yards to his front. The German gun and Nebelwerfer barrage lasted from about 0525 until 0600. Then, German grenadiers of the 277th Volksgrenadier (people's infantry) Division advanced out of the artificial moonlight created by the tank searchlights. The other front line battalion of the 99th Division underwent the same type of overwhelming assault. The entire 277th Volksgrenadier Division was destined to hit only three battalions (the 1st and 3rd of the 393rd Regiment and the 2nd of the 394th). These battalions suffered greatly, but by absorbing and delaying the 277th Volksgrenadiers, they held up the entire I SS Panzer Corps.

Most of Legler's fighting positions were at the edge of the forest belt overlooking the International Highway and generally open ground. That gave them better fields of fire than their neighbor battalions on either side. Legler's battalion held on, and inflicted a heavy toll on the Germans with their mortar and machine gun fire. None of the advancing Germans got inside of Legler's position, and the German assault in his sector ground to a halt. Legler credits his initial success to two factors. The battalion had fighting positions for every 1-2 men in addition to their sleeping foxholes; and daily leadership checks of the soldiers' feet had kept the battalion free of the debilitating trenchfoot that was well-known to soldiers in the damp, cold Ardennes. Nevertheless, regardless of the reasons, it was a heroic action on the part of all of the men.

A Pyrrhic Victory

As the German attack stalled, the commander of the 277th Volksgrenadiers committed his reserve regiment and drove back the American lines about 300 yards in some places. Some of the platoons of Legler's line companies fell back, and he had to commit his reserve to prevent a breakthrough. By the end of the day, Legler's battalion still maintained a cohesive defense, but more than one-half of the battalion's foxhole strength had been lost; and the 3rd Battalion on his left had its right flank pushed back several hundred yards, losing almost as many men as Legler.

About 1030 hours on 17 December, the 393rd Regimental Commander ordered the 1st and 3rd Battalions to move to new positions closer to Rocherath-Krinkelt. The move was completed that afternoon. Just after dark, the Germans overran Legler's not fully-established command post. Legler and some of his men evacuated the area and spent the night hiding in the forest. The next morning on the 18th, Legler and his staff returned to their former command post area, where he assembled the remaining troops of the battalion. Here, Legler joined Captain Bob McGee, the S3 of the 2nd Battalion of the 394th Regiment on his right flank, and his remaining troops. Together they proceeded west cross-country

106TH INF DIV ASSOCIATION REUNION



The 73rd reunion of the 106th Infantry Division Association will be held September 4 - 8, 2019 in Providence, Rhode Island. For more information, please go to <http://106thinfdivassn.org/reunion2019.html> or contact Wayne Dunn at 410-409-1141 or WayneDunn@comcast.net.

on the morning of the 18th, taking a few vehicles and those wounded that could be moved. While moving back toward Murringen and the American lines, the remnants of the two battalions met a hail of enemy small arms fire from a village. Communications were sporadic, but an artillery liaison officer with the group called in enough artillery fire from a Corps Artillery unit to enable the group to escape back into the woods. The main body followed a creek bed and, under cover of darkness, entered American lines in the vicinity of Wirtzfeld. On the morning of 19 December, the 1st Battalion, 393rd Infantry dug-in along the Elsenborn Ridge with less than 300 of its officers and men left.

Legler and his battalion remained on the Elsenborn Ridge until the end of January 1945. They formed part of the critical northern shoulder of the “Bulge” along with other V Corps units, the 9th, 2nd, and 1st Infantry Divisions. The 6th SS Panzer Army could not shake this hard shoulder free and the major German role in the Ardennes Offensive passed to the 5th Panzer Army to the south.

The Battlefield Gives Up The Ring

Legler has no recall when he lost his ring, nor when he first realized that he did not have it anymore. The heavy gold ring with an onyx stone was found in an overgrown foxhole in a forested area called the Rocherwald, not far from the village of Murringen. From the location of the foxhole, it would seem that the ring was lost on 17 or 18 December, when Legler and his unit were trying to avoid the Germans and set up a defense. The man who found it, Alain Jacquemain, was a 26-year-old garbage collector from Charleroi, Belgium, who spent his free time going over battlefields with a metal detector, looking for military souvenirs. Jacquemain had found many objects in this manner, and he had accumulated an extensive private collection of World War II relics. He even drove a restored World War II jeep as his personal vehicle. In spite of his previous success in ten years of searching on the battlefield, he admitted that Legler’s ring was the nicest thing that he had ever found. Naturally, he was excited with his souvenir and anxious to find its owner.

Finding the owner of the ring is almost a story in itself. Jacquemain found the ring in 1982. While visiting the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) near Mons, Belgium to see a rugby match, Jacquemain asked a British colonel if he could identify the ring’s owner. The colonel immediately recognized the ring as a West Point class ring and saw Legler’s initials engraved on the inside. U.S. authorities at SHAPE researched the USMA register of Graduates and determined that Legler was retired and living in Hilton Head, South Carolina. That got the ball rolling. The author and his commander, Colonel David E. Schorr, USMA 1957, became involved in notifying Legler, and negotiating with the Belgian Gendarmerie and Jacquemain for the return of the ring. It took almost two years to convince Jacquemain to part with the ring. Jacquemain delayed in returning the ring—not because he wanted a reward or to keep it, but because he wanted to be sure that Legler was really alive and that he would receive it. (Jacquemain had heard that Legler had died.) Also, it was Jacquemain’s fondest wish to be able to return the ring to Legler in person. That was not possible, and finally Jacquemain agreed to turn over the ring to the author in a semi-official ceremony at SHAPE. That way Jacquemain would have proof that he had done the right thing. The ring was promptly mailed to Legler, heavily insured, and

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS!

*We salute these new members who joined BOBA
between January 12 - March 22, 2019:*

DeSalvatore, Gino	Member
Durkee, Russell	Member
General Patton Memorial Museum	Member
Goetschi, Deborah	Member
Howard, Douglas	Member
Howard, Pamela	Member
Huffman, Jennifer	Member
Kalagidis, Ann	Member
Lombardo, Anthony S	Member
Martin, Stephen J	Member
McSween, Hilda	Member
Reader, Karell	Member
Rentz, George	82 ABND 504 PIR CO C
Schwerin, Joan	Member
Smith, Bruce	Member
Stiegemeier, Craig	Member
Taylor, Brad	Member
Tayvinsky, Jan	Member
Watson, Rolland G	Member

he had it back almost 40 years after when he had lost it.

The return of the ring was a fitting end to a story that had started in 1938, when First Classman Legler bought his 1939 Class Ring from Tiffany’s. Legler wore his ring during his Firstie Year at West Point, and as a young officer for five years during peacetime and wartime training assignments, before ending up in Belgium in 1944. After surviving the initial stages of the “Battle of the Bulge,” Legler tripped a land mine on 1 February 1945 that resulted in his medical retirement in 1946 as a Lieutenant Colonel. The war was over for him, as well as his career in the Army. A Silver Star and Purple Heart are his souvenirs of the war. Since then, Legler retired a second time from Mobil Oil in 1980, and moved to Hilton Head.

When first approached about his ring, Legler did not seem anxious to return to the scene of the “Bulge.” No doubt the memories of fallen comrades, and the end of his promising military career, had something to do with it. In researching this article, the author was pleased to learn that Matthew Legler had finally returned to the Ardennes in 1989, on a historical tour with noted World War II historian Charles B. MacDonald. The battlefield had given up his ring after 40 years, and Legler had made his pilgrimage on the 45th Anniversary year of the “Battle of the Bulge.”

LTC Thomas D. Morgan, USA, Retired is a USMA 1958 graduate who visited the Ardennes several times while stationed at SHAPE in the early 1980s, and later in the 90s while working for a Defense contractor. The historical background sources for this article were: Charles B. MacDonald’s A Time for Trumpets: The Untold Story of the Battle of the Bulge; Hugh M. Cole’s The Ardennes: Battle of the Bulge, US Army in World War II; and correspondence with LTC (Ret) Matthew L. Legler.



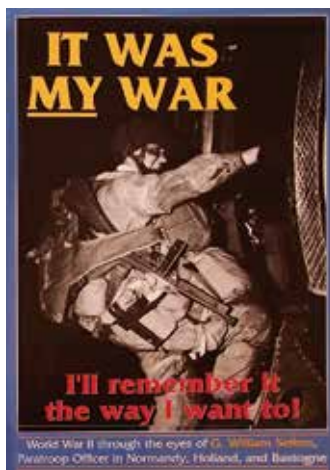
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IT WAS MY WAR, I'LL REMEMBER IT THE WAY I WANT TO!

by G. William Sefton

Reviewed by Larry Lewis, Member



While this book is not new, written in 1994, it was new to me and to a number of others. Lt. Sefton was in the 501st Regiment, 101st Airborne Division during World War II. While Sefton does occasionally step back to give the big picture of what was going on around him, he mostly describes the war from his own point of view of an infantry officer.

The book opens with an airborne attack on D-Day over Normandy. Looking down from the plane, Sefton was sure that the water observed

was the English Channel, but it turned out to be flooded land because Germans had blown up dikes. Thus the book opens with the first of many confusions that seemed to be the norm in battle.

Sefton became an "S2," an intelligence officer. In training he repeated the oft-quoted phrase that "in combat, the only constant is confusion." He wasn't shy about explaining how troops in training or combat relieved themselves! Colorful anecdotes are sprinkled throughout the book.

Sefton shipped out, arriving in Scotland in January 1944. During training in England, he witnessed the horrors with which the civilians had to cope. A man walking calmly past him, holding a wounded baby and saying that his wife's arm had just been blown off, was just one such horror.

Because he was airborne, his war started with a parachute drop on Dec. 5, 1944 (D-1). He was jump master, meaning he was last one off the plane. Once on the ground, he began to gather up random troops and head to what he thought was his objective—again, confusion was the rule! When troops asked him what his plan was he would answer, "Follow me!" He had been told that if in doubt, head toward the fighting!

From Sefton's viewpoint, much of the war (his war) was a series of misses and near misses, where luck saved him while others were killed or wounded. He vividly described comrades getting shelled or shot. Early on, in Normandy, he jumped into a ditch that ended up having 8 feet of water. However, every time he surfaced, a sniper was shooting at him. He slowly crawled along the bottom of the ditch to emerge free from the sniper.

Sefton was ordered to take a truck to the beach and get Navy food for the hungry infantry on the front lines. First thing he did was scrounge for German equipment like helmets, bayonets, etc. Then he found a "DUCK" or an amphibious cargo vehicle that could bring his truck full of German goodies to a "good-sized" navy ship. There he bartered his German loot with the Navy cooks, who desperately wanted souvenirs to bring back home after the war. In this way he could deliver better food to his fellow, low-morale infantry mates.

After intense fighting, Sefton's unit was ordered back to England on July 13. The 501st had started with 168 officers, 2175 enlisted on June 5. They arrived back in England with 38% losses (killed, captured, wounded or missing).

After rest and more training, Sefton's regiment jumped into Holland as part of operation Market-Garden, the failed mission led by British Field Marshal Montgomery, on Sept. 17. Thus began his fighting in Holland, 3 weeks after my own father had landed in France as part of the 104th Timberwolves. The jump into Holland went perfectly, unlike their Normandy drop. As S2, Sefton was frequently in small units to probe enemy location and strength. He then requested, and received, permission to be a platoon leader, which put Sefton even more in the thick of things. After 7-8 weeks in the "dikes" they finally had a chance to shower (5 minutes) and get new clothes.

In December 1944 the 501st had a brief respite, but then they were ordered to "exploit a breakthrough." The breakthrough was the German's counterattack, later called "the Battle of the Bulge." Sefton was sent to Bastogne. His description of the fighting there is amazing in its detail. Sefton saw friends and comrades killed and wounded. In many cases he lived through near-misses, not to mention extreme cold.

Sefton's last combat was in the south of France in Alsace. Finally he was with the army of occupation.

This book is well worth the read for anyone who shares my interest in what our relatives did in the war.

Larry Lewis is the author of "Sadie's Boys," available from Amazon or by contacting him: larrylewisnotge@gmail.com.

DONATIONS: We thank the following the following people for donations received January 12 - March 22, 2019:

Atwell, Allan	28 INFD MP	Hardy, Charles	282 ENGR CMBT BN	Parker, N Tyson	Member
Bartusek, Marcus	106 INFD 424 REG	Henderson, Charlene	Member	Pratt, Clarence	1221 QM SVC TEAM
Basler, Herman	4 ARMDD 489 AAA AW	Kaplan, Rosemary	Member	Puff, Paul	Member
Condon, Leonie	Member	(IMO Seymour Kaplan, 14 CAV RECON)		Rhodes, Robert	Member
Driscoll, David	Member	Klopp, Sherry	Member	Schneider, Robert	11 ARMDD 151 SIG CO
(IMO David W Sexton, 359 REG)		(IMO Harry McCracken, 99 INFD 395 REG)		Steinberg, Frank	84 INFD 333 REG
Fischer, Walter	75 INFD 291 REG	Lee, Owen	Member	Tate, Brenda S	Member
Gaudere, Francis	30 INFD 119 REG	Maskell, Richard	2 INFD 23 REG	Walter, Beau	Member
Goodrich, Thomas	Member	McAuliffe, John	87 INFD 347 REG	(IMO Myron Polzin, 689 FABN)	
(IMO Ward Goodrich, 123 ORD CO)		McKinniss, Robert	Member	Watson, John B	Member
Gronlund, Ruth	Member	Ortiz, Nicholas F.	Member	Watson, Larry	Member
Hanline, Leonard	80 INFD 319 REG	(IMO Nicholas Daniel Ortiz, 772 FABN)			

ENEMIES NO MORE

by Lester Bornstein, 168 ENGR CMBT BN, CO B



The Bulge began on December 16, 1944 where my unit was assigned to support the Second Infantry Division in the Ardennes, St. Vith, which is close to the German border.

My unit had landed in Normandy in June 1944, and fought with Patton in the areas to recapture the ports of Cherbourg and Brest. We accompanied Patton's historic battles leading to the liberation of Paris. Our final destination was to the Ardennes where we supported the veteran Second Infantry Division. After a very short period of time, they were replaced by the newly arrived 106th Infantry Division.

We were bivouacked in the woods on the outskirts of St. Vith - our mission was to maintain the few secondary roads leading to the front lines now occupied by the 106th division. Although there was sporadic artillery fire, the area was relatively quiet.

On December 16th 1944, we were suddenly aroused from our sleeping arrangements in our make-shift huts. Non-commissioned officers were shouting, "Grab your guns! Leave all personal items behind! The Germans have launched an offensive!"

The members of our three companies A, B, and C trudged to the area where the enemy artillery was targeting. This was a secondary road connecting the main thoroughfare to St. Vith. It was apparent that the enemy had concentrated its assault on the areas that the 106th had occupied from the Second Infantry Division.

Our unit dug foxholes and set up obstacles to prevent the advance of the enemy. My personal involvement was to join a highly respected sergeant in my company, James Hill. He came from Massachusetts as I did.

We had a bazooka and ammunition to hopefully destroy any tanks coming up the road towards St. Vith (which the Germans expected to capture within twenty-four hours). We could hear the sources of the approaching enemy—artillery and small arms fire. It was apparent that the American defensive line had been penetrated. Within a short time, the enemy tanks were coming towards us and they were accompanied by well armed foot soldiers.

Sergeant James gave me the order to load the bazooka. I removed the first of the four projectiles that I had been carrying. As I inserted the projectile into the bazooka, my hands were shaking so hard that I broke one of the leads that would charge the bazooka shell.

To say Sergeant Hill was upset would be an understatement. He tensely ordered me to put in another round. Once again, with my shaky hands, I broke the second one. By this time, the approaching column had come within twenty-three yards of opposition. My heroic buddy inched forward on the edge of the parapet of our deeply dug foxhole and was so careful to await the perfect spot to hit the underbelly of the approaching lead tank. As I dug my head into his shoulder, I whispered a prayer to Jimmy, "Please don't miss!" As I held my breath, the projectile hit its mark.

To a crunching halt, the tank suddenly erupted in flames—and its

occupants were screaming with the fire engulfing them. The foot soldiers accompanying the tank rushed forward with loaded rifles, seeking out what enemy forces could stop this formidable assault group. The sounds of war had stopped and all we could hear was this group of soldiers talking to one another and as they sought out the defending forces on the outskirts of St. Vith, their final destination. My brief knowledge of Yiddish allowed me to understand what the Germans were saying. They were perplexed by any formidable defense forces leading to the town.

Fortunately, our freshly dug foxhole was camouflaged by boughs of tree limbs that had been shredded by artillery fire concealing us from the road. This factor saved our lives. Jim Hill ordered me to get a grenade ready which I did, while I simultaneously grasped the handle to prevent the premature activation.

Suddenly, a German command could be heard shouting, "Kum Tzirick!," ordering the accompanying ground troops to return to the main force a few hundred yards back.

Many years later, in 2004, I returned to St. Vith with my wife for a ceremony to celebrate the allied victory. Because I wanted to show her the spot where I hit the tank, we drove together up to the outskirts of St. Vith in our car. Suddenly, around a certain bend of the road, I slammed on the breaks and I said to my wife, "This is it, this is where I hit tank."

Getting out of the car, I saw an old farm house and a woman outside feeding chickens. I wanted to try and speak to her, so I went up to her by myself. The woman told me that her son spoke English, so she introduced me to him. When I told the son about my experience at this road, he told me that he remembered the moment when I shot the tank. At that time, he was a young man and hiding in the basement of his house. When heard the German artillery coming up the road, he was watched the action from the cellar window. He spotted two young American soldiers from a foxhole shoot a German tank with a bazooka. When the Germans turned around, the young man came out and emptied the tank, to see if there was anything valuable. I asked the man to show me where he saw the two young Americans, and he walked me over to my very foxhole. Because I now had a witness to mine and Jimmy's wartime action, later Jimmy and I were both honored by the US military with medals for bravery.

Soon after receiving the awards, my comrade Jimmy Hill received a letter from a German tank driver, Hans Geng, who had been in that column approaching St. Vith. Geng had relatives living in St. Vith and was visiting them. He was told by one of the residents of St. Vith that there was a monument to a unit that was involved in the defense of the city. Geng found a newspaper article detailing mine and Jimmy's story. Geng found Hill's address in Florida and wrote to him, telling him that the bazooka team had made a lucky shot by destroying the lead tank of the assault column.

When my daughter Karen learned of this saga, she felt it was newsworthy and related this story to a friend at NBC. He shared it with Chuck Scarborough, a leading broadcaster at NBC. Chuck saw this as an opportunity to bring these two former enemies together. So he put together a four-night series called "Enemies No More," and Hans, Jimmy, and I met in St. Vith in 2004 to record the documentary of our reuniting.

To watch the documentary about Lester Bornstein and Hans Geng reuniting, go to [YouTube.com](https://www.youtube.com), and search for "Enemies No More."



At the US 3rd Army Central Command Headquarters event (left to right): Vernon Brantley, Pat Waters (Patton's grandson), Gerald White, General Pershing (portrayed by Dane Coffman), and General Patton (portrayed by Denny Hair).



Gerald White and Vernon Brantley outside 3rd Army Headquarters, Shaw Air Force Base, Sumter, South Carolina, with a World War II motorcycle.

BOBA VETERANS FROM SC CHAPTER (7) MEET "PERSHING" AND "PATTON"

On November 7, 2018, BOBA Veterans, Gerald White, 2nd Infantry Division, and Vernon Brantley, 75th Infantry Division, met Generals Blackjack Pershing (portrayed by Dane Coffman) and George Patton, Commander of the US 3rd Army (portrayed by Denny Hair). This meeting took place at US 3rd Army Central Command Headquarters at the combined services location Shaw Air Force Base, Sumter, South Carolina. This occasion was the 100th Anniversary Celebration of the organization of the US 3rd Army.

As most of us know, General Patton's 3rd Army was rushing across France on their way to Germany and was preparing to penetrate the

vaunted Zeigfried Line. When December 16, 1944 began and the Germans attacked, Patton's was the only force available to turn north and attack the German left flank, and relieve some of the pressure on the American troops fighting in the Battle of the Bulge.

Gerald and Vern were treated as celebrities and were greeted personally by Lt. General Garrett, Commander of US 3rd Army Central. Thus began a close relationship between "Patton's own 3rd Army" and the Columbia, South Carolina Chapter of the BOBA.

—Submitted by Douglas Patterson,
SC Chapter President

CHAPTER 55 MEMBER HONORED

The members of the Lehigh Valley Chapter of the Battle of the Bulge Association would like to acknowledge the work of our long-time associate member, Judy Greenhalgh. She helped initiate the education program many years ago for our chapter, with a host of heroic Battle of the Bulge veterans as speakers. They have held numerous presentations in local grade schools, high schools and even museums. One of our chapter's Battle of the Bulge veterans, Lionel Adda, recently presented Judy with an honorary Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge certificate for her long service in continuing our education program. Thanks to her, the program has reached thousands of children and young adults over the years, and is still going strong. Mrs. Greenhalgh's stepfather and uncle both served honorably in Europe during WWII.

—Submitted by Stephen Savage, Member, Chapter 55



A HEROIC VETERAN TELLS US HIS STORY

My name is Sean Kennedy and I am 10 years old. (I think I may be the youngest member of the Battle of the Bulge Association!) I was thrilled to meet the many Battle of the Bulge Veterans at their Reunion in Colorado Springs in September 2018. (There is a picture of me and Joe Landry, Tom Ingram and Irving Locker in the November 2018 issue on page 23). Another veteran who I was thrilled to meet was Wayne Field, President of the Colorado chapter [Rocky Mountain #39], and I was happy to learn that he lives not very far from me.

I was thrilled when Mr. Field agreed to visit my school (Chipeta Elementary School in Colorado Springs) and talk to my class about his experiences. He spoke to 3 groups of 5th graders and we were intrigued with his stories. Of all his stories, we liked the one about how he cooked eggs in his helmet the best! He also told us stories of how he earned medals in the para-olympics through the years. He has to use a wheelchair to get around, but he still manages to earn medals as an expert swimmer! We were inspired by his accomplishments despite his handicap. I wanted to share the story and photos of his visit to our school.

Mr. Field has since given me a book about WWII, "Unexplained Mysteries of WWII." (He knows that I like to read books.) I appreciated his gift!



Rocky Mountain Chapter President Wayne Field speaking to a 5th graders at Chipeta Elementary School in Colorado Springs, and (below) with young BOBA member Sean Kennedy.



I just wanted to say that I learned a lot by talking to the veterans at their reunion, and listening to Mr. Field speak to our class. I learned about some of the hardships of the soldiers as they fought for my freedom. I appreciate all that they did, to pave the way so that I can live my life now.

—Written by Sean Philip Kennedy and Doris Davis,
President of the Golden Gate Chapter

In Memoriam



John Kalagidis, 552 FABN, 32 FA BRIGADE (above), president of Ohio Buckeye Chapter 29 (below).



John Kalagidis, president of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge Chapter Ohio Buckeye Chapter (29) passed away peacefully surrounded by his family Thursday, Jan. 24, 2019. John was born in Canton, Ohio to the late Olympia (Fotiadis) and Nicholas Kalagidis. His parents emigrated from Pontes, Asia Minor.

John graduated from Kent State University with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Health and Physical Education, and taught physical education until his retirement in 1989. He also coached freshman football, basketball, and girls track. John served in World War II, with the First Army, 552nd Field Artillery Battalion, 32 Field Artillery Brigade, "A" Battery. He participated in five battles in the European Theatre: the Normandy invasion landing at Utah Beach, Northern France, Rhineland, Ardennes (Battle of the Bulge) and Central Europe.

WE NEED YOUR CHAPTER NEWS!

Send to: tracey@battleofthebulge.org.

**NEXT ISSUE (AUG 2019) DEADLINE:
JUNE 21, 2019**

IN THE NEWS: BOBA MEMBER BUD HANLINE

by Tim Rath, reprinted with permission from *The Pioneer*



**Leonard "Bud" Hanline,
80 INF 319 REG**

For the past several years, on Veterans Day, World War II veteran and long-time Barryton resident Leonard "Bud" Hanline helps put on a program for children at the local elementary school that he calls "War is Hell." For Hanline, who volunteers with local branches of veterans' service organizations including the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars and Disabled American Veterans, staying involved in the community is important. But the annual program for school children is particularly significant.

"Kids don't learn about war in school, not as much as they should.

They need to know that the guy over there, even though he is our enemy, he is someone's friend. He is a person," Hanline, 93, said during a talk at his home last month.

"One time, a student asked if I had killed anyone. Once I got over the shock of him asking such a blunt question, I told him, 'I gave fire orders to men to pull guns. Where it went, who it killed, nobody knows. I hope I never killed a man, but I don't know if I have or not.'"

As a private in the U.S. Army during some of the American military history's bloodiest conflicts, Hanline has seen his share of brutality. In a way, he said, he asked for it — getting permission from his parents, Walter and Vera, to enter the war after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Dec. 7, 1941. "I was in Ann Arbor at a movie on Dec. 7. It wasn't only me, it was hundreds of guys in that theater who were swearing up a storm about them Japanese and what they done. We wanted to go and do something about it," Hanline said. "I was only 16, so I had to get my dad's permission. He told me to make sure I got home alive."

Hanline dropped out of school in Ionia and went to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, where he received training to become a field lineman. In conflict, Hanline would be responsible for laying telephone wire from forward observation posts, or OPs, back to artillery units. He was shipped to England a few months before D-Day, biding his time before the invasion of Normandy with intense training.

On Sept. 12, 1944, Hanline received orders that placed him in the 319th Infantry Regiment, 80th Division, of Gen. George Patton's Third Army. Together with a crew of four other men, Hanline would lay groundwork for communications in France, Luxembourg, Germany and Austria for the remainder of his time in the war.

For Hanline, one of the most memorable incidents during the war came shortly after joining the regiment. They were assigned to install an OP at a hotel in a bombed out French village that controlled by Americans. The Germans were shelling the village and approaching U.S. forces. Despite the fire erupting all around them, Hanline's unit drove their truck through a hotel wall and put in the OP.

However, the artillery fire quickly cut the line of communication. Hanline and another man in his unit got out to fix the line, but it was soon interrupted again. They were preparing to fix it once more when they were knocked off their feet by a mortar round.

"All hell just broke loose," Hanline said. "We were getting hit like that for more than an hour."

The men survived the attack and fixed the line for good. Eventually,

the Germans were forced to retreat. For their effort, Hanline and his team received Bronze Stars.

Among the conflicts Hanline was part of was the Battle of the Bulge — a monthlong, wintertime slog through the densely forested Ardennes region of Western Europe that ended up being the last major German offensive campaign on the Western Front. Hanline recalled the speed with which his unit was assigned to fight in the battle.

"We were in Saarbrücken, Germany, at the time, which was a major train hub. Ike (Gen. Dwight Eisenhower) got ahold of Patton and said, 'I want the 317th, the 318th and the 319th Infantry Regiment on the right flank of the Battle of the Bulge in 12 hours. Don't give me no (lip service) — get them there.

"We were 150 miles away at the time, but 12 hours later, we were fighting. They put us in big semitrucks and drove us over there with big lights on. I'll never forget that."

During the battle — famously fought in snowy, rainy conditions — Hanline suffered nerve damage injuries that have stayed with him throughout his life.

A few months after the Allied victory in the Bulge, the war was over in Europe. Hanline was transferred back to England, where he stayed for a few months, before coming back to the U.S. He recalled seeing the Statue of Liberty on Christmas Day in 1945 as a welcomed sight.

"Seeing that old girl, holding the torch up, that was amazing to see," Hanline said.

Hanline was honorably discharged, receiving six battle stars, plus his Bronze Star and infantryman's badge. He went on to work for the Ionia County Road Commission for a few years before joining General Motors at the Fisher Body plant in Lansing, eventually retiring from the Walker plant after 30 years as a machine operator.

Hanline married a girl from West Virginia, Doris Lou, shortly after his return home. Together, the two raised two children; Naomie and Lenny. Doris Lou passed away in 2005 after nearly 60 years of marriage.

Hanline still lives on his own, in a home near Tubbs Lake, and drives frequently. He is deeply religious; an active member of the Barryton Church of God.

Hanline said he has spoken with church leadership many times through the years in order to reconcile what happened in Europe so long ago.

"I've asked my minister a number of times, 'What about, thou shalt not kill? Have we been forgiven?' And he says, 'Yes, I think you have,'" Hanline said. "We had two options — either kill them, or they'll kill you. He says, 'You did what you had to do.'"

Hanline has stayed active through the years in a number of community activities. One of his favorites, he said, used to be umpiring Little League baseball games. In the early 1970s, he was asked to umpire games at the Little League World Series in Pennsylvania — the first man from Michigan to hold the honor.

But his most meaningful community work, he said, comes from his involvement in veterans service organizations — giving veterans their due and helping tell their stories.

"We just buried a man who spent over a year in Iraq, catching hell. He came back from Iraq and got hit by an automobile," Hanline said. "The thing of it is, they deserve everything they get from us, as veterans. If we don't do it, who will? That's why I'm so active."

TOUR



75th ANNIVERSARY of THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE December 10-19, 2019



The Henri-Chapelle American Cemetery and Memorial, Belgium

The official Battle of the Bulge Association approved tour

for the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium and Luxembourg has been finalized and is ready for members and friends to book. Our selected tour company is very experienced in tours of this nature in France, Belgium, and Luxembourg. The details of the trip are available on the website: www.boba75tour.com. Once at the site, you will need to enter the password: **boba75** to see the information about the tour and the registration form.

We want to let you know that there are a lot of tours during the Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge, but this tour is the only official tour that is being fully supported by the governments of Belgium and Luxembourg. After returning home, we would not want you to have buyer's remorse from booking another tour and finding out that you did not get what you expected.

Our tour has made arrangements for the first 10 Battle of the Bulge Association WWII Veteran Members to get their ground tour package paid in full! If we have more WWII Veterans who sign up, we are investigating other sources of funding, to get all their ground expenses covered. This means that WWII Veterans are only responsible for the air portion of the trip! Sign up early to ensure that you get your tour package for free!

Here is the basic information about the tour:

The arrival in Europe will be on 10 December 2019 in Paris. You will be transported to Reims, where you will get a tour of the city, starting at the location where General Jodl surrendered the German Forces to the allies. You will then have time to recover from your trip, as we spend the night.

The next day we will travel by motorcoach to Spa, using the

same road as the 82nd Airborne in their deployment from Reims area (Sissonne & Suippes), seeing "Parker's Crossroads," La Gleize and the December 44 Museum. We will be staying in Spa for 4 nights, so you can unpack and enjoy the local area on your time off.

We will also be visiting St. Vith - Kampfgruppe Peiper Route, US Cemetery Henri-Chapelle, and the Remember Museum 39-45, owned by Marcel and Mathilde ("M & M"), who are looking forward to seeing all of their friends from the Battle of the Bulge Association, and finally, Bastogne.

After our time in Spa, we will be traveling to Luxembourg City for our next 3 nights. On the way we will be stopping in Houffalize/Clervaux/Diekirch/National Military Museum. Again, there will be time off to relax and shop in Luxembourg City.

On 16 December we will spend the day visiting and participating in the many activities commemorating the 75th anniversary of the battle. Our day ends at the cemeteries of American and German forces. After participating in many events on 16 December, we will spend a day to relax and shop at your leisure. This also provides time for special events for those who are interested.

We then say farewell to Luxembourg as we tour the German fortifications of the Siegfried Line, and we drive on to a typical German lunch in old town Frankfurt. After spending one night in Frankfurt, we will be returning to the United States on 19 December.

The tour operator has a lot of flexibility for those who would like to arrive in Paris early to see the city, or stay late for more time in Frankfurt. Just let them know and they will be happy to make the arrangements. They are also ready to assist with air arrangements.



Clervaux, Luxembourg

Price for Non-WWII Veteran Members for the 10-day tour is just \$3,495!
For more information, go to: www.boba75tour.com, enter password: boba75
Call: 844-276-1611 or email: info@ddmtusa.com



WELCOME TO NORFOLK, VA

BATTLE OF THE BULGE ASSOCIATION 38th ANNUAL REUNION

October 11 - 16, 2019

HIGHLIGHTS AND SCHEDULE INFORMATION

REGISTRATION FEE: All attendees must pay the registration fee (see Registration Form). The fee covers the expenses of name tags, programs, table decorations, hospitality room, etc.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2019

Registration opens in the afternoon. Complimentary Wine and Cheese Reception in the Claremont hospitality room in the evening.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2019

Board the motor coach with your tour guide to get acquainted with the Coastal Virginia area! Enjoy beautiful views of the Atlantic Ocean and the Chesapeake Bay, as you learn about the history of Virginia's largest city, Virginia Beach. See the first **Landing Cross at Cape Henry** where the English colonists first came ashore in 1607, prior to settling at nearby Jamestown. Walk out on the overlook to see where the bay and the ocean meet, and where the famous Battle of the Capes took place during the Revolutionary War. View the **Old Cape Henry Lighthouse**, built in 1792, and ride down the resort strip to see the historic **Cavalier Hotel** as well as the **Tidewater Veterans Memorial**.



Cottbus Hangar, the Military Aviation Museum

Visit one of Virginia Beach's most revered attractions, the **Military Aviation Museum**, and explore the rich history through an in-depth guided tour. See one of the largest collections of WWII and Korean War era planes in the world. Feast on a BBQ lunch with all the fixins' as you sit back and enjoy the mellow sounds of a live tribute to "Ol' Blue Eyes" Frank Sinatra!

Following lunch, **One Lucky Veteran** will be treated to a ride in a vintage airplane as the rest of the crowd cheers them on. Who will

hold the winning ticket for this once in a lifetime experience?

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2019

Our annual membership meeting will be in the morning at the hotel, with the banquet in the evening. The afternoon is free to explore Norfolk on your own. Adjacent to the hotel is the new **Waterside District**, Norfolk's premier dining and entertainment venue.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2019

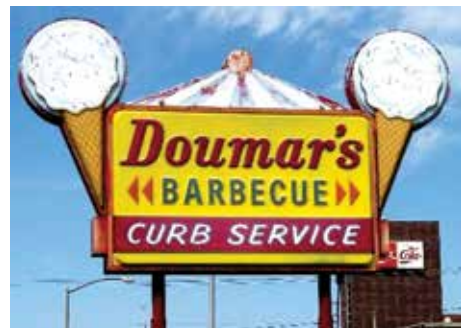
Join your tour guide and visit the **Norfolk Naval Base**, the largest naval installation in the world. It is home port to 59 ships, ranging in size from aircraft carriers to submarines, 18 airplane squadrons and headquarters of the Atlantic Fleet. Navy personnel will board the coach and take you past the 14 piers, through the Naval Air Station and the historic homes built for the 1907 Jamestown Exposition on "Admiral's Row," which now house the flag officers.

Next, enjoy an overview riding tour of the City of Norfolk! Learn about Norfolk's colorful history over three centuries as you ride through the lovely historic district. View the homes along The Hague, Old St. Paul's Church, the Moses Myers House, the Chrysler Museum of Art, MacArthur Memorial, the historic Freemason District, Nauticus, the *Battleship Wisconsin*, and the restored waterfront area, as well as many other points of interest.

Enjoy a delicious meal at the charming **Freemason Abbey Restaurant**, housed in a 135-year-old renovated church. The décor is reminiscent of English style pub houses and has a warm, casual yet elegant tavern atmosphere.

Board the **Victory Rover** for a delightful cruise through the bustling Hampton Roads Harbor, one of the largest in the world. Enjoy fascinating and entertaining commentary during the two-hour excursion aboard this naval-themed vessel, including the Naval Base ships as seen from the water.

No visit to Norfolk would be complete without a stop at **Doumar's**, home of the world's first ice cream cone machine. Abe Doumar created it at the World's Fair of 1904 in St. Louis. While at Doumar's, guests will be given an



introduction and history, and everyone will be treated to an ice cream cone.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2019

Board the coach with your guide to visit the **MacArthur Memorial** for a **Wreath Laying Ceremony**. Following the ceremony, view the outstanding collection, housed in Norfolk's historic city hall, which traces the life and achievements of five-star General Douglas MacArthur. The General and Mrs. MacArthur are entombed in the rotunda.

At **Nauticus**, experience a unique campus of visitor attractions that explore the economic, naval, and natural powers of the sea. Also housed here is the Hampton Roads Naval Museum, one of ten museums officially operated by the U.S. Navy. The group is to have lunch on their own at Dockside Café.

A true highlight of this visit is a self-guided tour of the *Battleship Wisconsin*, one of the famous Iowa-class ships. This great ship saw action in WWII, the Korean War and most recently in the Persian Gulf War.

Visit the **Norfolk Botanical Garden**, which dates back to 1938, and is considered a premiere example of horticultural excellence. The garden represents 175-acres of colorful landscapes, unusual flowers, mature forests, and seasonal plantings, and features one of the largest collections of azaleas, camellias, roses and rhododendrons on the East Coast. Enjoy a relaxing trackless train ride—the roses should be in full splendor during our visit!

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2019

Stay for additional days to see the rest of the Norfolk area, or depart for a safe trip home.

BOBA REUNION REGISTRATION FORM

DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION FOR REUNION: **Friday, September 13, 2019**

There are two options for registering for the reunion: Complete this form OR register online at www.battleofthebulge.org (Click on the "Attend Reunion" and complete the Registration Form.) Registration for the reunion must be received no later than **September 13, 2019**. There is no penalty for canceling up to the day of arrival. Go to page 19 for the hotel registration information (Hotel reservation cut-off is **September 20, 2019**; cancellations must be made 48 hours before arrival date.)

BOBA registration desk at the hotel (in the Claremont room on the 4th floor) will be open on Friday, October 11, 12:30 PM - 5:00 PM; and Saturday, October 12, 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM. Birthdate and residency required only if attending Naval Station Norfolk tour*.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Birth Date _____

Email _____

Division, Regiments, etc _____

Signature _____

For Naval Station: Guest(s) names, birthdates and residency (country, if not U.S.)* *please print:* _____

Check here if you need a wheelchair ☐ Check here if you will be using your own wheelchair ☐ If so, is it motorized? ☐ yes ☐ no

IMPORTANT: Please indicate No. of Persons attending *free* events as well!

Registration Fee (*all attendees must pay the Registration Fee*)

Adult (21 and Over)

Child (20 and Under)

Late registration fee after September 13 - add \$20 per person

No. of Persons

Cost per Person

Total Cost

\$50

\$25

\$20

Friday, October 11, 2019

Evening Wine & Cheese reception in the Hospitality Room

free

Saturday, October 12, 2019

Welcome riding tour of Virginia Beach and Military Aviation Museum Experience
(bus, tour guide, and BBQ lunch included)

\$102

Sunday, October 13, 2019

Cocktail Hour

Banquet (*choose entrees*)

Chicken Piccata

Roast Sliced Sirloin of Beef

Wild Mushroom Ravioli

(Cash bar)

\$45

\$45

\$45

Monday, October 14, 2019

(*Full-day tour*) Naval Station Norfolk*, Freemason Abbey Lunch (*choose entrees below*),

plus Victory Rover Harbor Cruise, Doumar's Ice Cream

\$82

(*Half-day tour*) Naval Station Norfolk*, Freemason Abbey Lunch (*choose entrees below*)

\$62

Choose Lunch entrees (included in either tour):

Seafood Quiche with fresh fruit

Waldorf Chicken Salad with Kettle chips

Abbey Club Sandwich with Kettle chips

Include a cup of award-winning She Crab Soup

included

included

included

\$6

Tuesday, October 15, 2019

(*Full-day tour*) MacArthur Memorial Wreath laying, Nauticus/Battleship Tour,

Lunch on your own, plus Botanical Gardens

\$69

(*Half-day tour*) MacArthur Memorial Wreath laying, Nauticus/Battleship Tour,

Lunch on your own

\$59

TOTAL

Mail this form and check (payable to BOBA) to: Battle of the Bulge Association, Inc., PO Box 27430, Philadelphia, PA 19118

Or, to pay with a credit/debit card or PayPal account, register online at www.battleofthebulge.org, click on "Attend Reunion"

** See page 18 (bottom) for additional notes about requirements for attending the Naval Station Norfolk tour.*



2019 BOBA REUNION • NORFOLK, VA

Friday, October 11 – Wednesday, October 16, 2019

REUNION PROGRAM

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2019

12:30 PM – 5:00 PM	Registration open (Claremont Room, 4th Floor)
12:30 PM – 11:00 PM	Hospitality Room open (Claremont Room, 4th Floor)
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM	Wine and Cheese Reception in the Hospitality Room
	Dinner on your own

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2019

8:00 AM – 11:00 PM	Hospitality Room open (Claremont Room, 4th Floor)
8:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Registration continues (Claremont Room, 4th Floor)
8:45 AM – 9:00 AM	Bus loads (Entrance on Waterside Drive)
9:00 AM – 4:00 PM	Virginia Beach, Military Aviation Museum Experience and BBQ lunch
	Dinner on your own

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2019

8:00 AM – 11:00 PM	Hospitality Room open (Hospitality room is closed during the Cocktail Hour & Banquet)
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Membership Meeting (Eppington Room)
	Lunch on your own
5:45 PM	Veteran Photograph (outside Riverwalk Ballroom)
6:00 PM – 7:00 PM	Cocktail Hour (Riverwalk Ballroom – cash bar)
7:00 PM – 10:00 PM	Banquet (Riverwalk Ballroom)

MONDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2019

8:00 AM – 11:00 PM	Hospitality Room open (Claremont Room, 4th Floor)
9:15 AM	Bus loads (Entrance on Waterside Drive)
9:30 AM – 1:15 PM	Naval Station Norfolk*, Freemont Abbey Lunch
1:30 PM	Bus returns to hotel (for those not continuing on the afternoon tour)
1:30 AM – 5:00 PM	Tour continues for Victory Rover Harbor Cruise, Doumar's Ice Cream
6:30 PM	Dinner on your own – or join group to walk next door to Strippers at the Waterside (sign up in Hospitality Room by Sunday afternoon)

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2019

8:00 AM – 11:00 PM	Hospitality Room open (Claremont Room, 4th Floor)
9:00 AM	Bus loads (Entrance on Waterside Drive)
9:15 AM – 1:30 PM	MacArthur Memorial Wreath laying, Nauticus/Battleship Tour (lunch on your own)
1:45 PM	Bus returns to hotel (for those not continuing on the afternoon tour)
1:45 PM – 3:30 PM	Tour continues to Norfolk Botanical Gardens
	Dinner on your own

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2019

Depart or stay longer and enjoy the beautiful Norfolk area

See Highlights and Schedule Information on page 16 for more details.

***PLEASE NOTE:** All guests visiting any military installation **MUST** have a picture ID (driver's license, military ID, passport) and no bags other than pocketbooks or camera cases will be allowed on base. Please ask your guests not to bring any pocket knives, scissors, or nail files with them on tour. All persons are subject to personal search.

Guests from Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Georgia, Alaska, California, Montana, North Dakota, Minnesota, Illinois, Oklahoma, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Maine: These states are not compliant with the congressionally mandated REAL ID Act of 2005. Therefore, guests seeking base access from these states will require a secondary form of identification such as a passport, state or local government ID, copy of birth certificate issued in US, Social Security card without restrictions, or Medicare card.

All guests who have medical devices (pacemakers, stents, etc.) which cannot go through a security scanner must produce their medical card related to those appliances or they will not be allowed to continue on the tour.



SHERATON NORFOLK WATERSIDE HOTEL

777 Waterside Drive
Norfolk, Virginia 23510
Website: <https://www.marriott.com/orfsi>
Toll-free: 1-800-325-3535
Direct Line to the group housing
coordinator: (757) 640-2752

RESERVATION DEADLINE FOR GROUP RATE OF \$119 PLUS TAXES: Friday, September 20, 2019

Hotel Information

Norfolk's only waterfront hotel, the Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel recently completed a \$13 Million revitalization. Located in the heart of the beautiful Hampton Roads region of southern Virginia, Norfolk, it is a dynamic destination with the best of both worlds: a beautiful waterfront coastline and a bustling downtown area.

ROOM RATE: \$119 single/double/triple/quadruple occupancy plus state and local taxes (current 14% + \$3).

Our group rate is available for up to 3 nights prior to our Reunion and 3 nights following subject to availability. If you want to extend your stay in beautiful Norfolk, please book your rooms early.

If you need an ADA room, please book early. You can cancel without penalty up to 48 hours before your scheduled arrival.

RESERVATIONS

Individuals must make their own reservation by calling 800-325-3535 or through the group housing coordinator directly at 757-640-2752 and mention that you are attending the Bulge Association (BOBA) 2019 Reunion.

To reserve your hotel room online, go to our website: **battleofthebulge.org**. Then go to "Attend Reunion" page, and find "Click here to book your hotel room at group rate for Battle of the Bulge." You must provide a major credit card to guarantee rooms.

HOTEL AMENITIES

- Complimentary high-speed internet
- Reduced rate of self-parking of \$8/per car, per day with in/out privileges (persons displaying a disabled parking tag may park in the valet lot at the self-parking rate)
- 15% discount in Waterside Seafood Company restaurant on published food and non-alcoholic beverage prices
- Outdoor, seasonal swimming pool, 24-hour fitness facility, and located on the Cannonball Trail, perfect for walking or jogging along the Elizabeth River
- Complimentary lobby business center featuring internet workstations, printing services and access to complimentary wireless via guest laptops
- Marriott Bonvoy Events Rewards

DIRECTIONS TO THE HOTEL

From the Norfolk Airport (ORF):

Depart the airport and turn left onto Norview Avenue. Turn left onto Azalea Garden Road. Turn left onto North Military Highway/VA-165. Merge onto Interstate 264 West towards Downtown Norfolk/Portsmouth. Exit left at Exit 9 onto Waterside Drive. Turn left onto Water Street. The hotel will be on your left.

This hotel does not provide airport shuttle service, but can recommend one through one of the many transportation companies.

One such company is James River Transportation, located at a counter in the Baggage Claim area (beside door #3) inside the Norfolk International Airport. Website: <https://jamesrivertrans.com/norfolk-airport-shuttle-service/>. Toll-free phone: 866-823-4626.

Driving from East

I-64 East toward Richmond. Bypass Richmond with I-295 South (toward Norfolk/Virginia Beach). Take I-64 East to I-264 West to Exit 284A (toward Norfolk). Follow Exit 9 to Waterside Drive into downtown Norfolk. Turn left at first light on Water Street. Proceed to hotel on right.

Driving from North

Interstate 95 South toward Richmond to I-295 South (toward Norfolk, Virginia Beach). Take I-64 East to I-264 West to Exit 284A (toward Norfolk). Follow Exit 9 to Waterside Drive into downtown Norfolk. Turn left at first light on Water Street. Proceed to hotel on right.

Driving from West

Interstate 95 South toward Richmond to I-295 South (toward Norfolk, Virginia Beach). Take I-64 East to I-264 West to Exit 284A (toward Norfolk). Follow Exit 9 to Waterside Drive into downtown Norfolk. Turn left at first light on Water Street. Proceed to hotel on right.

Driving from South

I-95 North to Route 58 East (toward Norfolk). Take Route 58 East to I-264 East (toward Norfolk). Take the Waterside Drive Exit into downtown Norfolk (Electronic Toll Fee). Turn left at first light on Water Street. Proceed to hotel on right.

FOLLOWING OUR FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS: THE FIRST STEP

by Sam Schwartz Landrum and Zach Allen Ferdana, Members



Allen Schwartz, 11th Armored Division, 778th Tank Battalion, Headquarters Company (left), with an unidentified Chaplain.

Our journey began with a cup of coffee at Le Select, our father's favorite cafe on Montparnasse in Paris, the city he lived in for 7 years after the war. Allen Schwartz is believed to have landed in Cherbourg on November 2, 1944 and joined his unit, the US 3rd Army, 11th Armored Division, 778th Tank Battalion, Headquarters Company as a reconnaissance scout, in time to leave for Metz to engage in the battle for that city. He was 21 years old. We, his two sons, arrived in Paris on April 5, 2018, more than 73 years later and 25 years to the month after his passing, to begin the first steps of his war journey across the continent. Our plan: to cover the same ground from the coast of Normandy through the Ardennes Forest to the Rhine River, using his unit's history and simple hand drawn map marked with his notes.

Like many war Veterans, our father spoke little about the war in the days of our childhood, each of us carrying a cloudy memory of half told war stories. However, we can substantiate his presence between the English Channel and the Rhine River during the war in two places: Terville, a small French town north of Metz, on Christmas Day, 1944 and 3 days later, in Ueberhorn, Germany. Our evidence consists of only two photographs of him during the war itself, from his war scrapbook.

Normandy and Cherbourg: The start of it all

The day after our arrival in Paris, we left for Normandy and moved through history at Sword, Juno, Gold, Arromanches, Omaha, Pointe Du Hoque, and Utah. We also visited Cherbourg, the deep-water port that General Eisenhower intended to capture quickly by adding Utah Beach to the D-Day invasion. It was here that we believe Private Allen Schwartz first landed on the continent on November 2, 1944. He never told us this, but the 778 Tank Battalion landed here in September 1944 and his discharge papers indicate his tour of Europe began on that day in November. Looking out across the port and next to a plaque that acknowledged the port's "fraternity of arms" from 1914-1918 and 1940-1945, we imagined our father's first steps of the war, almost 5 months after D-Day. His presence intangible, was it filled with fear and in anticipation of the terror awaiting him?

Metz: "reconnaissance was used for routes and bridges"

From Normandy we headed to Metz in eastern France, the city where the 778th Tank Battalion first entered combat. Along the way we stopped for the night in Reims to visit the room where World War II Europe ended and surrender papers signed. In Metz we found a lively, industrialized city, our experience and connection to our father increasingly more visceral. Walking the town, it was on a small bridge on the Moselle River that we were struck by our father's experience somewhere in this city. We pulled out our copy of the "History of the 778th Tank Battalion" we obtained from the US National Archives in Washington DC and read that the battle of Metz in November 1944 was where "reconnaissance was used for routes and bridges." Moments later, standing on that bridge, we spotted a small plaque commemorating the bridge's liberation by French forces on November 20, 1944. Was our father, Private Schwartz, here or near here? From the very few stories he told us about the war, he had mentioned being in a reconnaissance unit clearing the way for the tanks of the 778th. He had been in this city, clearing routes and bridges, fighting for his life and the liberation of Europe. Now, on this bridge, we found ourselves closer to his experience decades earlier.

The simple hand drawn map from our

father's war scrapbook was accompanied by the "Vest Pocket History of the 778th Tank Battalion," a type written listing of the 778th's war itinerary, dated July 6, 1945. A handwritten note in our father's writing said that he returned to Paris for a week in late November/early December. We can only wonder what happened and why, after only a few weeks in combat, he went back to Paris and was reassigned as a chaplain's assistant and driver.

Terville: the search for a school basement

From Metz we drove a half an hour north to Terville to try to find the place where our father's scrapbook photo was taken on Christmas Day, 1944. Standing beside a Christmas tree with other US soldiers, and French civilians, our father's handwritten caption is our only clue: "Noel in a school basement. 25 December 44. Terville, France."

In Terville, we found two schools that survived the war: the Ecole de Musique de Terville and the Ecole Primaire le Moulin. We were encouraged to contact the Mayor's Office to find out more. Because the day was over, we drove to Luxembourg City for two nights to explore and experience the ground of the Battle of the Bulge. Our father wrote that he fought in Luxembourg and Belgium in December 1944 and January 1945. He used to say he fought in the Battle of the Bulge, exactly where and with whom, we do not know. So, we visited the Luxembourg American Cemetery and General Patton's final resting place, the National Military Museum in Dierkirch, ran a circuit in the hills around Bettendorf and through the southern shoulder of the Bulge marked with old fox-holes and GI tree carvings. We also stopped at the General Patton Monument in Ettelbruck, noting that as we follow our father's footsteps, we follow General Patton's as well.

The next day we returned to Terville for a meeting at City Hall, where city officials looked at the photo and whisked us into their vehicle to take us to the Ecole Primaire le Moulin. They knew instantly which school was the site of the Christmas Day photo. There we met Gilles Leleux, the school's principal, who welcomed us and led us to the basement where he shared his understanding of the American presence and activity in and around this school during the war. He told us that the school courtyard was filled with American military trucks,

and that this basement was where people came when bombs dropped on Terville. Then, what happened next was truly remarkable.

Inspired to learn more, Mr. Leleux made several phone calls and was able to locate a woman who was alive during the war, and she happened to live just two doors down! We entered Ms. Nicolette Zullo's house with several city officials, the city photographer and Mr. Leleux. She sat on her bed having recently broken her leg. Now in her 90's, Ms. Zullo looked at our photo, and without hesitation, immediately identified the French civilians as members of the Aime family. She was 17 in 1944, learned to dance from American GIs, told us about how American soldiers first came to Terville, had to leave as the Germans pushed back in, and eventually returned to stay. American soldiers gave the local children candy and gum, she said, and she told of their setting up food lines to feed the local people. She also confirmed that when bombs were dropping, everyone in Terville went to this one school, now the Ecole Primare le Moulin. She did not recognize our father, but remembered Christmas Day in 1944, the lack of food and the miraculous appearance of a turkey in their yard that they captured and ate.

After our visit with Ms. Zullo and our identification of the Aime family in the photo, Mr. Leleux was able to locate and get the youngest daughter of that family on the telephone: Ms. Bernadette Aime, a resident of nearby Thionville. Although she herself was not in the Christmas Day photo, connecting with her brought new life and curiosity into the story behind this photo.

Into Germany: Uberherrn and the Rhine at Oppenheim

We left Terville as Mr. Leleux worked on setting up a meeting with the Aime family, crossed into Germany and stopped where our father did, in Urberherrn, long enough to pose for a photo much like he did with the chaplain he was assisting. We drove further on, our goal to reach the Rhine and found our home for the night where General Patton and his men first crossed it, at Oppenheim. "The Vest Pocket History" said the 778th arrived at GauOdenheim on March 23, 1945 and crossed the Rhine somewhere close, quite possibly at Oppenheim, on March 25, 1945. We put our feet in the water of the last major barrier to the heart of Germany, watched barges and kayaks float by, imagining American soldiers, and perhaps our father, crossing here. That night Mr. Leleux emailed us to confirm that he had arranged a meeting the very next day back in Terville with Ms. Bernadette Aime, and her granddaughter who



Allen Schwartz (back row, second from the left) with the Aime family and other unidentified soldiers.

spoke English, to look at our Christmas Day 1944 photo.

Terville revisited: meeting Ms. Bernadette Aime

We arrived early for the meeting at the Ecole Primare le Moulin. Mr. Leleux greeted us then took us down into the basement and its most finished room, the room where he and others identified the door in the corner of the 1944 Christmas Day photo. He put us in front of the very wall that our father stood during the war. Chilled by this, the photo's story suddenly had a sequel.

This former bomb shelter now vibrant classroom, had a table in its middle, with a white tablecloth, a few bottles of champagne, and hors d'oeuvres. This was not just an event or even a strange reunion. It was a commemorative ceremony. The regional press from Thionville arrived, as well as Ms. Frederique Munerol, the Communications Director for the City of Terville, who presented each of us with a handmade ceramic bowl on behalf of the Mayor of Terville. Finally, Ms. Bernadette Merz, formerly Bernadette Aime, and her granddaughter Karin, arrived. Mr. Leleux formally introduced the Aime family to the Schwartz family, a reunion indeed, 73 and half years later. Everyone stepped back as Ms. Merz was presented with the photo. Her face brightened, as she identified her family: her sister Felie, age 10, her brother Adolph, age 17, sister Therese, age 22 and her mother, Madeline, age 46. Ms. Merz herself was 7 at that time but was 2 hours away with other family members, she returned to Terville

in September 1945. As we talked through translation about the photo and that time of the war, she did not remember hearing about Christmas Day in 1944 and why her family was there in the basement. She then pulled out two photos of her family after the war, including her father and sister Odile, neither of whom were in the Christmas Day photo but all of whom survived the war. Champagne glasses were filled, all three of us stood before the very same wall of the photo, toasting the coming together of our families once again.

Ms. Merz went on to tell us the story of her family and their lives after the war. She is now 81 years old, was married in 1957 and raised 3 children in nearby Thionville. Her older sister Odile was living nearby, but unable to join us on this monumental day. The both of them are the only family members still alive. She then described, in amazing detail, the rest of her family and their lives after the war.

A journalist from the regional newspaper, *Le Republican Lorraine*, asked about our father's life, his experience of the war, and his life after the war, including his years in Paris and Europe in the late 1940's and early 1950's. We remarked about his reluctance to talk about the war, and our current journey in his footsteps. Like a circle where a different artist begins and another completes it, a loop had been closed that we didn't think was possible just hours before. We took photos in front of the school and said our goodbyes, aspiring to meet again. The next morning, our basement reunion was *Le Republican Lorraine's* front page story.

(continued on next page)

FOLLOWING IN FOOTSTEPS (continued)

More photos and footsteps to go

We left Terville for Bastogne, to the center of the Bulge to complete this phase of our journey. There are more photos in our father's scrapbook, all from the post-war liberation and Allied occupation period. This first part of our journey in our father's footsteps through the war has given us the opportunity to experience a component of an intangible aspect of our childhood upbringing: the impact the war had on our father, and subsequently on us. As we learned about and experienced these places of history and markers of time, some questions were answered but many more were generated. Why did our father go back to Paris so soon after Metz? Why was he assigned to assist a chaplain, where did they go and what did they do? Why was our father in Terville

and what was he doing at the school on Christmas Day? What function did the Ecole Primare le Moulin serve for the US Army at that time? Where was he and who did he fight with during the Battle of the Bulge?

After our return home, Mr. Leleux discovered from the French archives that the governor of the Moselle region sponsored a Christmas tree project in each town of the area for the local children in 1944, the first Christmas since 1938 that France was free. His hypothesis is that our father, in his role as chaplain assistant and driver, was in Terville to support and perhaps participate in this project.

The 778th Tank Battalion's journey across Europe, after having crossed the Rhine, twisted through southern Germany and stopped in Austria. Our father's notes mark several of his experiences along the way, and his scrapbook includes photos of Nazi atrocities. After the

war ended, he stayed in Europe until March 1946, having spent time in Czechoslovakia, Germany and Austria. With the scrapbook photos, map and Vest Pocket History of the 778th Tank Battalion as our guide, we hope to complete the journey of our father's path through the war to Ulrichsberg, Austria, where the war for him ended and the occupation began.

As Rick Atkinson said in "The Guns at Last Light," World War II Europe was over at the signing in Reims on May 7, 1945, but it was not finished. The war in Europe finished the next day, on May 8, at a second signing ceremony led by the Russians in Berlin. We believe our father never set foot in Berlin, the headquarters of the catastrophic delusion that drove this war, but because this is where it was finally finished on May 8, 1945, it is where we hope to finish as well.

Battle of the Bulge Association, Inc.

FINANCIAL REPORT *

ASSETS

As of February 28, 2019

Checking	\$7,144.66
Savings.....	\$2,110.49
(4) CDs Totalling	\$101,001.63
Total Assets	\$110,256.78

INCOME AND EXPENSES

January 1- February 28, 2019

Income

Donations	\$435.00
Interest	\$1.31
Membership Dues	\$960.00
Quartermaster Sales	\$69.50
Total Income	\$1,465.81

Expenses

<i>Bulge Bugle</i> Publication	\$3,830.78
December Event.....	\$809.36
Postage, Mailing Services	\$232.54
Accounting.....	\$500.00
Office Administration.....	\$342.00
Telephone and Website.....	\$70.65
(Credit from Doubletree Hotel).....	(\$1,277.09)
Total Expenses	\$4,508.24
Net Income	(\$3,042.43)

[*unaudited] For more information, contact BOBA Treasurer
Duane Bruno by email: dubru1950@gmail.com



ALL-ERA 3RD ARMORED DIVISION MONUMENT DEDICATED

FORT BENNING, GA, NOVEMBER 17, 2018 — Over 200 soldiers, veterans, and friends attended a dedication ceremony for the all-era 3rd Armored Division "Spearhead" Monument at the National Infantry Museum Memorial, Patton Park. Held in conjunction with an annual reunion of the Association of 3d Armored Division Veterans (A3ADV), the dedication was the culmination of a 3-year project by the Association to design, fund, and have built a unique, imposing monument and to include sections for engraved paver stones. The site honors all Spearhead soldiers who served during the Division's famed 50-year history (1941 - 1992) that included WWII in Europe, the Cold War in Europe, and Gulf War I - Operation Desert Storm in Iraq.

—Submitted by Doris Davis, President of the Golden Gate Chapter, on behalf of the 3rd Armored

U.S. Army photo by Mark Keith Horace, Fort Benning Maneuver Center of Excellence photographer

FATHER'S WWII LETTERS SELECTED FOR WWII-ERA MUSICAL IN OREGON

by Jim Mockford, Member



Battle of Bulge Veteran Hap Baldwin (left) with Jim Mockford portraying his grandfather, Rev. A.J. Mockford.

On March 9, 2019 I stepped on to the stage of The Ralph Radio Theatre's presentation of "Variety for Victory" a vintage radio experience of "1944 Mirth, Music and Memories" created by Producer Kimberly Poe for the charity benefit dinner program of Al Kader Shriner's in Portland, Oregon. Ralph Radio Theatre presents an annual "Christmas from Home" holiday musical with talented actors, singers and the Dreamfire Express Band. I am not a member of the theatre troupe, but I was invited to join as a special guest, to read selected excerpts from my father Private Roger Mockford WWII letters home in 1944. I also prepared an exhibit of some of the letters and V-Mail that Dad sent to his parents, Rev. A.J. Mockford, Rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Oregon City and his mother, Frances, and family. My appearance on stage was in the role of my grandfather, and I wore a clerical collar to portray him. He would have been about my age at the time he received those letters from his son from ASTP at the University of Oregon and Camp Cooke in 1944, before shipping out to England, France and finally to the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944.

After Dad passed away in 2015, I found a collection of about 200 letters and V-Mail that he had written home during WWII. I began an inventory in preparation to send them to the Veterans History Project, but as I read them, I decided to delay the submission until I could draft a manuscript about his experience in the Battle of the Bulge. In 2016, we toured Bastogne and the Ardennes battlefields, thanks to the wonderful Belgian historian and guide Roger Marquet and his wife Monique, who drove us along the trail of the 11th Armored Division's 55th Armored Infantry Battalion C Company that my father had traveled in 1944-45. He was on foot and in combat from Margarotte to Acul, and in the snow covered fields and forests. We traveled on country roads to many of these sites, towards Bois Jacques and back to Bastogne. I knew of some of these places from Dad's stories told at home and at the reunions of the 11th



Armored Division and Battle of the Bulge Association meetings, but after finding the treasure trove of his written letters, I had a chronology with details that corresponded to the stories he had told, and some new stories to share.

When I talked about this opportunity to travel through the letters, back into the time before Dad and his generation turned 20 years old, with Kimberly Poe, she was not only interested in the content to include in Ralph Radio Theatre, but surprised me with an invitation to play a role in the "Variety for Victory" program. It was a meaningful way for me to share a short part of Dad's story with an audience who loved the vintage radio format with its period advertisements, radio host jokes and banter, and comedy sketches, as well as the classic songs and tunes from the 1940s. "Variety for Victory" traveled back in time for ninety-minutes, but it is too much to try to describe the entire show here. Visit Ralph Radio Theatre online to get an idea of the annual Christmas From Home musical at: ralphradiotheatre.com.

In one of the letters was a poem that Dad liked, and it captured the spirit of families at home, with loved ones afar, so I read it as part of my script in the program:

*We'll keep thumbs up with pride in you
Though there's tough time to weather
So on to Victory, Old Pal!
We're in this fight together*

Among the Shriners in the audience enjoying the program and dinner was 93-year-old Hap Baldwin, whom I was surprised and most delighted to find out was a Battle of the Bulge Veteran in the 76th Infantry Division, and we talked about the war years that my Dad and Hap had experienced 75 years ago. I am still working on the manuscript about the letters, but I am so happy to have had the chance to share a small part of that story with Ralph Radio Theater to a local audience, and find in that audience someone who knew was it was really like to be in the Battle of the Bulge!

Jim Mockford's father Roger J. Mockford (born December 7, 1924) was a member of Patton's 3rd Army 11th Armored Division 55th Armored Infantry Battalion C Company 2nd Platoon 2nd Squad in the Battle of the Bulge. He was the last President of the Northwest Chapter of the 11th Armored Division Association and attended the last national convention of the 11th Armored Division at Louisville in 2010. Roger and Jim travelled on the Honor Flight to Washington D.C. in May 2015, just six months before Roger passed away, a few days before his 91st birthday in December 2015.

FROM FARM BOY TO FIGHTER PILOT

by Col. Walter Hedges (Ret.)

My association with the 8th Air Force is through the 361st Fighter Group where I was assigned as a P-51 pilot from October 1944 to July 1945. The 361st Fighter Group was credited with participation in the Battle of the Bulge. When I was young and picking strawberries on our Delaware farm, I once saw planes flying in formation, and knew they were having more fun than I was. Since then, I always wanted to fly.

On the 4th of June 1942 my sister Theresa and I graduated from Laurel High school in a class of 31. Of the fifteen boys that were in the class I can think of only three who did not enter one of the military services.

My older brother Nathan had requested two letters of recommendation so that he could volunteer for aviation cadet training. So I asked my parents to get two letters for me. With my two letters, I went to Wilmington and put in my application. In a few days I got a letter telling me to report to Fort Dix, New Jersey.

Having passed my physical, I got a letter telling me to report to the Post Office in Camden, New Jersey. There, on November 30th 1942, I was sworn in as an enlisted Private in the Reserve Corp.

After completing our six weeks of college classes we were again loaded on a train; this time with Pullman cars, which I guess does prove that a college education pays off. At the San Antonio Aviation Cadet Center, we were to go through classification and, if qualified, on to preflight training. Our classification consisted of many written tests, motor skill tests, and a visit with a psychologist or psychiatrist (I don't know which.) All of this testing and evaluation was to determine whether you should enter pilot training, bombardier training, or navigator training. I had to go see the psychologist a second time, and he asked me why I was so nervous. I told him it was because I was afraid that he wouldn't let me go to pilot training, and he said, "Well, if you don't, you know it's for your own good!" I told him, "Well, it might be, but that isn't what I enlisted to be. I want to be a pilot." I guess he believed me, because he passed me for pilot training, which took place at Corsicana, Texas, where we were assigned for primary flying school.

Near the end of the basic flying course you were asked to make a choice as to where you wanted to go for advanced training, and I chose pilot training. For advanced training I was sent to Aloe Field at Victoria, Texas, where I flew the AT-6. I also flew the P-40. After completing the 15-20 hours of flying time in the P-40, I finished my 200 hours of flying time, and on the 15th of April 1944, I graduated as a pilot and was promoted to Second Lieutenant. We were again loaded up on the train and took a long ride to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, which was a staging area for the port of New York.

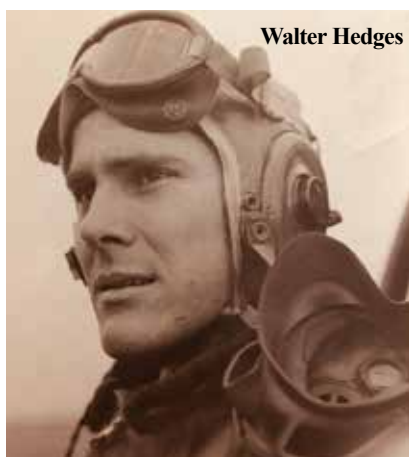
Meanwhile my brother, Nathan, had been eliminated from the flight training in the cadet program and had gone to gunnery school, training for the B24 prior to going to Europe. Nathan and I were later to fly several missions together for the 8th Air Force.

After 5 days of crossing the Atlantic, we arrived in Liverpool. Due to the speed at which the *Mauritania* could travel, we did not have an escort going across the Atlantic until we were close to the English shore. We then had some escort ships pick us up with some aircraft overhead. From Liverpool we boarded one of the quaint little trains for a trip to Goxhill, which was located on the northeast coast of England, a few miles south

of a port city of Hull, where shipyards and dry docks were located.

After completing our training at Goxhill, it was time for the pilots to be reassigned to the fighter units. We were told that if a group of us wanted to go together, we could match up our number of pilots with the number that is required for a Fighter Group, and then we could get assigned together to that unit. Some of my buddies and I were sent to the 361st fighter group.

On November the 25th 1944, I flew my first regular combat mission. It was escort to Lutzendorf. I don't remember exactly where that is, but it was a deep penetration mission, because we logged 5 hours 35 minutes flying time. It was our commander's practice (Major Rew) to take the first mission for new pilots and fly them as his wing-man. I doubt there were many other squadron commanders who would trust their protection to a first mission pilot. I flew again the next day, and again the mission



was escorting a radio relay ship. While we were escorting the relay ship, the fighter escort for the bombers encountered a large number of German fighters: ME 109s and FW 190s. The Group had their best day of the war destroying 23 German airplanes, probably destroying 2 others and damaging 9. We had no losses during this encounter—however, one pilot had to crash land in Holland on his way back home. Thankfully, he survived. Among those claiming victories in this encounter was my flight commander John Wilkinson and my good buddy Richard Chandler. Also claiming victories among the fellows who came from Waycross, Georgia were Robert Farney and Delmar Ford. Ford was killed later in the war, while strafing an aerodrome.

The next mission I flew was on November 30th. We were escorting B-17s that were bombing an oil refinery area north of Munich. The weather was clear, not a cloud in the sky, when the first bombers came to the target area. They were all making contrails, and before the middle of the bomb stream had passed, the clouds had completely covered the area with nothing but contrails. There was more than 1,000 B-17s on the one target. The target area was covered with a cloud of black smoke from the anti-aircraft fire. It looked like a thunderhead that was totally black. The B-17s would fly into this cloud and then they would be streaming out from the bottom or the sides, some planes on fire and some upside-down. I believe there were 49 B-17s lost on this mission. We also had about the same number of fighter plane escorts, and did not see a German airplane in the area. We did see one P-47 that came towards our formation and appeared that he wanted to join up. However, we turned towards him and he turned away. After he had gone, I realized that he did not have an external tank on the airplane, so I don't know how he could have made it back to friendly territory with no external fuel. There was some speculation that it might have been a German flying the P-47, to pass information back to the defense units there.

My next mission was an escort of B-17s to Berlin on the 5th of December. As we approached the target area, we followed the usual practice of not being close to the bombers when they entered the flak barrage. We were well to the south of the bomber track and flying east, which gave us a good tail wind. Suddenly, three rounds of German anti-aircraft fire burst between me and the lead ship, and three more burst between the lead ship and the plane flying in the number three position. The second

volley of six rounds scored hits on two of our aircraft, but not enough to cause them to discontinue the mission. When the first rounds went off, we all broke in different directions like a covey of quail. I broke to what appeared to be the thin area of the barrage, that later turned out to be further eastward. My other flight members had broken to the other direction. When the shooting stopped and I looked around, I was on the east side of Berlin and my other flight members were on the west side, and were heading westward to escort the bombers home. I had two choices. I could go to the south and go around the area where the flack was coming from, but I figured this would put me so far behind the other planes that I'd not be able to see them. The other choice was to go straight across the area and then catch up with them. I opted to do the latter. I revved up the airplane to nearly full speed, and dove down toward the cloud cover, and started across the southern part of Berlin. As soon as I reached the city limits, they started shooting at me. They were using radar-directed flak and they were firing behind me and on the right, so I started a turn to the left. They were now chasing me around in a circle. I soon figured I couldn't keep doing this, so the next time I came out on a westerly heading, I dove down to the top of the clouds. As I pulled out on the cloud deck, the engine quit. I had run an external tank dry. Without even pulling back the throttle, I reached down and switched the fuel selector valve to an internal tank. The engine started and I went full speed after my friends and did not look back any more.

We returned to the base. After the debriefing, I approached Major Rew, who was also flying that day and leading the squadron. I said, "Major Rew, I don't have much experience in this, but it seems to me that was pretty good shooting the Germans were doing today." He replied, "You're damn right it was! I think we got into instructor school on demonstration day."

I again flew on target escort to Minden on December 6th, another escort mission to Bingen on December 10th, and again on December 12th to Hannau. The next day, the very bad winter weather, for which the Battle of the Bulge was to become famous, began. My next combat mission was on the 18th of December, when I flew a fighter sweep at the Laacher Lake Bonn-Aachen area. The weather was so bad over Germany that I don't think the bombers flew their scheduled bombing mission. There was no activity in the vicinity, so near the end of our mission, someplace in the south of Aachen, we let down through the clouds and broke out below at 6,000 to 8,000 feet. We could see the ground from there and when a group of flashes appeared, one of our pilots, I believe it was Herbert Dixon, said, "Hey, guys, look! See the flashes—they're bombing through the clouds." The rest of us knew what the flashes were, and we started our evasive maneuvers, but Dixon was on the radio talking, and nobody could tell him that it was not bombs but 88 millimeter anti-aircraft guns that were shooting at us. Dixon got a piece of shrapnel through his canopy, and we quickly went back into the clouds and departed the area. That was only the third day of the Battle of the Bulge. Normally the 88 millimeter anti-aircraft would not have shot at us at that altitude, because the fighters, with a dispersed formation and frequently changing directions and altitude, were not a good target. However, with the Battle of the Bulge just starting, I could think they probably wanted to shoot and chase us away, which they did.

During the last half of December, 1944, and most of January, the weather was terrible. We had a large snowstorm, large for English standards, and several days of ice and fog. Whenever the weather was suitable, we flew only to check out new pilots or fly some test flights that needed to be flown after major engine work. We had Lyle L. Jewel from Michigan join our flight in December. The squadron got three new replacements in the first week of January, and two of those were killed

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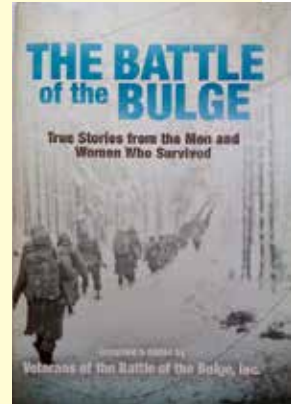
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on the first flight. Both deaths were attributed somewhat to weather conditions.

About the first of February, we all moved from Little Walden over to our new base in Belgium at Chièvres. On the 6th of February I flew my first combat mission from Belgium, and during the month flew a total of seven missions. The mission I remember the most was on February the 22nd, when the group went out in two sections. One section was escorting B-26s that were attacking communications centers and rail yards. The other section was strafing the same targets. I was in the section escorting the B-26s. However, I was also on the same radio channel with the fellows doing the strafing. I heard—midway through the mission—my friend Chandler call his flight leader as he came off a target, and he was said, "Hey, Latimer, I'm having trouble keeping up. Slow up a little." The flight leader replied, "Okay, I'll throttle back." A few seconds later, Chandler said, "I still can't catch up with you. There's something desperately wrong here!" That made me chuckle, because I had seldom heard Chandler use a three syllable word—however, I knew he was in trouble. One of the other members said, "Hey Chandler, I think you'd better check. I think you're on fire." He checked his gauges and said, "Yeah, I believe so." The flight leader exclaimed, "You'd better bail out, Chandler!" He replied, "Well I don't know how I'm going to get out, but I'm going to try!" From about 12,000 feet, he rolled the plane over on its back, jettisoned his canopy, fell out, and delayed opening his parachute. When the chute opened, he made one swing and hit the ground. He picked up the parachute in his arms and ran into the woods nearby. Chandler later told me that by hiding in the woods during the daytime, and walking at nighttime, he evaded capture for three days. However, he spent the rest of the war in prison camp.

Sometime in February, our flight leader John Wilkinson, who had now been promoted to Captain, finished his tour and rotated home. Since I was now the senior pilot in the flight that did not have an assigned airplane, I was assigned to fly his plane, "Pretty One the III." I don't know how that name came to be, but I didn't want to change the name, because it was sometimes considered unlucky if you changed the name of an airplane. The crew chief on the plane was Ross Benson from Idaho. He not only kept the plane performing perfectly, but it was also spotlessly clean. Having confidence in the airplane, and having a clean canopy and windshield, made flying combat missions much easier.

When we went to a briefing for a mission, we were given a 3" x 4" preprinted form, on which we entered much of the data we would need to complete the mission. After the flight, starting about the first of March,

(continued on next page)

FARM BOY TO FIGHTER PILOT *(continued)*

I wrote notes on the back of the form as to what went on during the mission. I still have eight to ten of those forms.

I had learned that my brother Nathan was also in the 2nd Air Division, and was a gunner in the 392nd Bomb Group at Wendling. As it turned out, Nathan had finished his tour of 30 missions on the lead crew, and had rotated back to the states before we knew that we had flown some missions together. I have an account of his last mission on March 3rd, when we were flying escort for his group. For that mission, we had a briefing at 7:00 for a 7:41 takeoff. It was snowing a little, with some low cumulus clouds. On takeoff, Young's engine quit, but he was able to stop on the runway and he was not hurt. After takeoff, Rizzio joined the flight to replace someone who had aborted. After a late takeoff, we went north like the "hammers of hell" and overshot the rendezvous with the bombers. When there was a break in the under cast, we were over the Baltic Sea, in sight of the mountains of Sweden. Finally, we caught the bombers, Silvertail B-24s, a few minutes before target time. There were German jet aircraft in the area that Mac and I chased but couldn't catch, even while going 400 MPH! I fired on two from well out of range and didn't observe any results. During the mission, I saw two bombers collide and one spinning down over the target. This was the first time I saw parachutes from bombers going down. The flak was described as better than yesterday, meaning that it was better from the German point of view.

Several days later, I received a letter from my brother Nathan saying that the March 3rd mission to Magnaburg was his 30th and final mission of his tour. The public information people made a newspaper story of it, in which they described it as Nathan having his big brother flying escort. They missed the point: that Nathan was nine years older than I. Magnaburg was considered about the second most difficult target, with only Berlin being a more difficult one. I have recently talked with Willis Miller, who was the pilot of Nathan's crew, and from his description of the Magnaburg mission and other missions, I'm convinced that my decision to become a fighter pilot was one of the smartest decisions that I have ever made.

During March, I flew 17 missions. Among those was on the 14th of March when Dixon, Waldusky, and I were scheduled to fly combat air patrol over the Remagen Bridge. We briefed at 5:40 in the morning expecting to have a sunrise takeoff. However, the fog was so thick that we could not take off until 10:20. We took off with about 800 yards of visibility, and climbed through the fog to 3000 feet, where we were in the clear. We were under Nuthouse Control, which was the radar controller for the area, and he directed us to the Bridgehead area. Whenever they detected an unidentified aircraft, we would be directed to intercept them. In all cases, it was one of our own aircraft, usually a P-47. We flew at 10,000 feet, while below us were P-38s, which were in close because of their unusual configuration, so they would not be mistaken for German aircraft. Part of our mission was to protect the P-38s, which the Germans would attack—whereas they would not provoke a fight with the P-51s. The Germans were also trying to sneak aircraft in, to bomb the bridge that had been captured, and also the pontoon bridges that, by this time, had been placed across the Rhine River.

On the 22nd of March, we had a mission to escort about 200 British Lancaster Bombers on a daylight raid, to bomb marshalling yards in the town of Hildersheim. It was a perfectly clear day, and they were flying in their typical British gaggle of individual planes, following a pathfinder at about 8,000 feet. The British theory of bombing was: if you wanted to destroy the marshalling yard that was in a town, if you destroy the town, you'd probably destroy the marshalling yard—which they proceeded to

do. There was such widespread destruction from 10,000-pound bombs and a mixture of small incendiaries, that by the time the last 30-40 bombers came, there were no military targets left. The fires were so widespread that when we dropped escort in the vicinity of Brussels, which was about 200 miles away, we could still see the smoke rising from Hildersheim, and the next day, the place was still burning.

Whenever we flew escort for our bombers, we would have one squadron flying on each side of the assigned box of bombers, and one squadron flying top cover. The B-17s usually flew an altitude of 27,000 feet, and the squadron on either side would be about 27,000-28,000 feet. The top cover would fly from about 30,000 feet on up.

Whenever the Group Assistant Operations Officer flew, he did so with our flight. The more experienced pilots in our flight considered his decision-making and leadership skills somewhat questionable, and they did not like to fly with him. So I usually got the job to fly wing-man for him. One day when he was leading the squadron and we came to the target area, where we usually circle wide and pick up the bombers after they bombed, he flew right through the flak barrage. After we returned home, and at the debriefing, one of the pilots said, "Major, why did you lead us through that flak barrage?" He replied, "Oh, I thought it might raise the morale of the bomber boys if they saw us in there with them."

While stationed in Belgium, our escort missions were usually about one hour shorter than they were from England. So we would have plenty of time, after dropping escort, to go back into Germany and look for targets of opportunity on the ground. One day when our good Major was leading us, we did this, and going across the countryside, we spotted six or eight box cars on a railroad track. He flew across the train, made a right turn, and set up a traffic pattern like we would have done at Waycross when we were doing ground gunnery, and then proceeded to come around and make a strafing run from across the open field. I was #4 in this formation, and I figured if there were anything around to stir up, they would have it stirred up good by the time I got there. So when I made my turn for the target, I sprayed the wooded area behind the train from well out of range, and when I got into gunnery range of about 300 yards, I concentrated on the box cars. As luck would have it, it was not a flak trap as the Germans were famous for setting up.

Sometime in March, Col. Rew was replaced by Major Charles Bergman, whom I believe came from Texas. In March, I was promoted to First Lieutenant, but there were no silver bars available anywhere. So I peeled the foil off chewing gum wrappers, and wrapped it around my gold bars. That served very well, unless you scraped against something—then you would have to replace it. During March, I was very busy, as I flew 17 missions in the month. By the beginning of April, spring was arriving in Belgium. The weather was good, and the war showed signs that it would soon be over. There were very few targets available other than airfields, which were crowded with airplanes. Apparently the Germans had to retreat from airfields on both fronts, and brought their airplanes back into Germany. But they did not have fuel or pilots to fly them.

On the 9th of April, we flew an escort mission for bombers bombing the Lechfeld Airfield and recovered back at Little Walden. We went back to the poor visibility and bad weather in England, just when things were getting good in Belgium.

On the 11th of April, I flew my last mission, which was a target support in the Regensburg area. This mission made my 7th in April and made a total of 40 for the war.

NOTE: This recollection was excerpted from a much longer story of Col. Hedges' life. He is a member of BOBA, South Carolina Chapter 7.

—Submitted by Rick Hurst, Chapter 7

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HOLD AT ALL COSTS

by Douglas Harvey, 84 INF 334 REG 1 BN HQ CO



The afternoon of December 24th, Bob Davies and I were ordered to make up a daisy chain. We used eight mines from the stock carried on our Dodge 6 x 6 truck and a commandeered Belgian rope. Our squad leader led us to a position, before the first switchback on the road leading up a hill toward woods to the northeast, to the forest and the villages of Verdenne and Marenne. The hillside was too steep a road to go straight up. The rather small dirt road angled up to a switchback that further angled up to a woods. Later, I found the forest up the hill was between

villages of Bourdon, Verdenne, and Marenne was the location of the 116 Panzer infiltration on the east side of Verdenne. It should have been known by our Platoon leader that, at that time, the Germans of the 116 Panzer Division had breached our front line, taken Verdenne, and occupied some of the area around the village. A correct response would have been a more extensive defense involving the entire platoon. More mines and a deployment of our antitank guns would have been appropriate. I have no way of knowing what knowledge the squad leader had of the Verdenne attack. However, someone in Battalion or Regiment must have known something, as Davies and I were suddenly put on the defensive position. Our roadblock was only a short distance from the comfortable barn hayloft billet where we spent the previous night. I think the rest of the platoon was still in the barn, with a single guard posted. Davies and I had orders: if attacked, let the first two tanks go by, and pull the mines in front of the third tank. The position was in the open, with no possibility of any cover. The hillside was totally bare, not even a small bush. This was truly a mission impossible. There were no ditches or structures within 150 yards. Any enemy tank coming down the road would see us immediately, on turning the upper switch back 300 yards away. It was possible they would have been so startled by our pluck or stupidity that they would have backed off, thinking it was a trap of some kind. All we could do is stay there and wait for something to happen.

In reality, the two of us were the only defensive position between the 116th Panzers and their assigned objective of the Marche Hotton road. The Division Headquarters of the 116 Panzer Division was in Grimbiemont, a few miles to the southeast. Heinz Guderian gives a reasonably accurate description in his book "From Normandy to the Ruhr" of actions from December 23 to 28. The attack on Verdenne began at noon of the 24th. Verdenne and the forest, 1500 feet up the hill and to the southeast of Bourdon, were captured and occupied by German tanks and troops. The forest uphill from our position was occupied by Bayer's combat group. Guderian p. 331 indicates there were 13 Panzer fives and 2 Panzer fours in the forest. Guderian also relates that a patrol crossed the Marche Hotton Road. A false report must have been made, as we were on the only route from the woods to the road, and saw no Germans.

Approximately a half-hour before dark, a M8 "Greyhound" armored reconnaissance vehicle appeared from the direction of Bourdon. Markings on the vehicle indicated that they were a cavalry unit. Our division history indicates that we had no attached cavalry units at the time. However, the 771 Tank Battalion, part of the 4th Cavalry Group, was attached December 20, just before we arrived in Bourdon. An officer was waist-high out of the turret hatch, as if he might be going to a parade. The

vehicle passed us, and disappeared around the first switchback and up the hill. An M8 Greyhound is a six rubber-tired armored vehicle with a 37-mm gun turret. They are no match for a fight with a tank. Our 37 mm antitank guns were replaced by 57s during training in Louisiana. A 37mm would not be much better than an M1 rifle against a tank of any kind. We wondered where the M8 was going, and why. Anyway, we had no information to give the officer, had he asked. The vehicle did not even slow down as it passed us and disappeared around the switchback. Within a minute, the vehicle came back down the hill with the throttle wide open. No one was in sight, and when it reached our position, the vehicle stopped, sliding all six tires. A small part of the officer's head appeared in the turret hatch, shouting, "There are ten German tanks coming down the road—hold at all costs!" Gears clashed, and the engine roared, as the vehicle disappeared down the road into Bourdon. We never saw it again. If the M8 was from the tank unit, perhaps they were the tanks that were to support K 333, to attack Verdenne later that night. They may have been lost, or at best it was a reconnaissance mission. It is an interesting irony that the M8 Greyhound vehicle met tanks of the German 116 Panzer Division, which was known as the "Greyhound" Division. How they were able to count ten tanks on the road in the woods is a mystery. The officer was so shook that perhaps 10 was the first number that came to mind.

I learned later that the Germans were using captured M8 vehicles to lead some attack columns. This possibility never entered our minds when we saw the vehicle going past us. We only had a vague idea of which way the Germans might come from. At the time, I felt Bourdon was south of Verdenne, when it is really north. I had been given no map or compass, as a private's only responsibility is to take orders and follow your leader. After the report and order from the Cavalry Lieutenant, there was no doubt as to the direction of the Germans. I have determined since then that we were in the exact center of enemy's main attack. Orders to the 116 Panzers were to cut the Marche Hotton Road that was to the north of our position (Guderian, p. 332). In fact, this road, less than 200 yards away, could be easily seen from our elevated position on the side of the hill. With heavily defended Marche on one end, and Hotton on the other, Verdenne and Bourdon were the logical points to attempt a breakthrough. Hotton had been attacked repeatedly for several days, but the brave Engineers, with little help from anyone else, held out. The resistance at Hotton directed the 116 Panzers toward Verdenne and Bourdon. Hotton was 3 miles to the east. We probably should have reported the officer's information to our squad leader, but we could not leave the position until relieved. Also, I don't think we really believed the Cavalry Lieutenant. We were not terrified by the possibility of 10 German tanks coming down the road, although we should have been. Sometimes it is better not to know.

I have attempted to find an origin for the phrase "hold at all costs." I could not find any authority that traced the history of the statement. It was used in the American Civil War and in the First World War. It has probably been used in every war. The order or its equivalent was probably used in many combat situations during a retreat, when faced with overwhelming forces. I feel that virtually all Officers that gave this order immediately left the area, away from the enemy's direction.

It is positively un-American to accept a suicide mission. Suicide missions generally involve religion. Persons volunteering for these missions feel they will get some reward in an afterlife. Not wanting to disgrace their family or let the Emperor down was the motivation for the Jap Kamikaze pilots in the Pacific. I had already shown during the previous

month of combat that I was not a coward, but none of the factors leading to a voluntary suicide mission applied. *I was not going to hold at all costs if my life was the currency.*

After the M8 armored vehicle passed, I quickly scouted the area for some cover. Digging a foxhole in the possibly frozen and hard ground, in the time that seemed available, was out of the question. The soil in the area was hard clay, not like the sandy soil we had just left in Germany. In Germany, we could dig a good hole in less than an hour. I never made a complete foxhole in Belgium, but it reportedly took at least 5 hours. The nearest good cover was down the hill, in a railroad track siding 100 yards away. There was a railroad car weighing scale pit. One could enter the covered pit by opening a hatch. The pit was around 3 feet deep, and filled partially with the beams, levers, and other parts of the mechanical weighing scale. Not really good cover, but the best within running distance. Our rope was too short to reach the pit, so we just stood by the side of the road and hoped for the best. If we pulled the rope ahead of the first tank, I think we would have had at least a 5% chance of one of us making the railroad pit. If we waited for any tanks to pass, the first one would have used its machine gun on us. We were just standing by the side of the road, like onlookers at a bicycle race.

It was so quiet that we felt the reconnaissance officer may have just been seeing things. We stayed on this position until well after dark, but heard no tank engines, and no tanks appeared. I knew from my experience in Leiffarth, Germany, that tanks could not sneak up, as the noise of the engine and the flop-flop of the treads could be heard from some distance. We easily heard the recon-vehicle as it approached from up the hill above us. The road may have been too small, and with the switchbacks, too difficult for the large German tanks. The tanks may have been trapped by a road that was inadequate for their size and weight. I believe the hill was too steep for a tank to leave the road and go straight down.

The tanks were there all right, in the area now known as the "Verdenne Pocket." It is also reported in Guderian's book, "From Normandy to the Ruhr With the 116th Panzer Division World War II," that their orders were to cut the Hotton Marche road, which was down the hill and across the railroad track from our position. Our two-man roadblock was the only defensive position in the way of this objective. Since that time, I have pondered reasons why an attack was not made down the hill. The most probable is Commander Johannes Bayer did not want to sacrifice his men for what he knew (although unspoken) to be a lost cause. Fuel and other supplies were also a problem for the advanced and somewhat isolated group. The Germans in the pocket were short of food and fuel. I learned later that they had broken through our thinly manned foxhole line between Marche and Hotton to occupy the woods. Also, the 116 Panzer Division had driven our troops out of Verdenne.

A rifleman from one of our units described this attack on Verdenne to me a few days later. Our heavy 30-caliber water-cooled machine guns were able to each fire only one shot. Water in the cooling jackets had frozen, so the mechanism could not function. The rifleman escaped down the back yards of a street in Verdenne, with an enemy tank following him. He vaulted over the back yard fences, which the tank was easily knocking down behind him. It was not dark, but he felt that the occupants of the tank did not see him. If he had been seen, the tank would have fired the forward-pointing machine gun.

The foxholes on the line defending Verdenne, containing men of our 3rd Battalion, were 50 to 100 yards apart. There was no way that the riflemen could stop the tank attack. Why the Germans holed up in the woods is a mystery. The most probable explanation is they wanted to hide from our aircraft, which were operational that day. Previously,

the weather had kept them on the ground. Trees also seem to give a feeling of security. Of course, trees cause artillery shells to explode above, sending shrapnel down. Tree bursts are effective against men in foxholes. The December 23rd directive to the 116th Panzer Division quoted from p.329 of Guderian's book: "It is important for the Division to achieve a quick breakthrough toward the north, between Hotton and Marche, to prevent reinforcement of the opponent in his position." Our two-man roadblock, up the road from Bourdon, was the only obstacle in their way on the night of the 24th. Guderian reported that after the capture of Verdenne, "reconnaissance elements were deployed across the Hotton-Bourdon-Marche road." This cannot be true, since the only road available was past our position. The German unit must have made a phony claim. I think the Germans, for the most part, had no stomach for coming down the hill toward Bourdon. They must have known our Division was there and heavily supported by artillery. The 116 Panzers had already suffered heavy losses during the 7 days of almost continuous enemy contact. When the weather cleared on the 23rd, daylight travel in the open was difficult, if not impossible.

Chapter 25 Company K 333 Attacks the Pocket

After being replaced on the roadblock, we reported the incident of the recon-vehicle to our squad leader. As usual, he did nothing. I will probably never know if whoever was directing our movements in this area received a report from the officer in the reconnaissance vehicle. However, the action of Company K 333 described below indicates they didn't know. As usual, the so-called fog of war was very thick. I also do not know whether anyone was on our position when Company K, 333 took this road up the hill, thinking it was the way to Verdenne. I feel sure that our antitank squad members would have told them about the reported enemy tanks up the road. Communication between lower level units are not encouraged or even allowed. Communications are required to go way up, then back down, if at all. Of course one may talk to a GI from another unit if he is next to you. If I had been on the road when K 333 started up the hill, I would have passed on the tank sighting report the officer in the M6 armored vehicle had given us.

The excursion of K 333 past our position is covered in the Leinbaugh/Campbell Book, *Men Of Company K*, pp 134-137. I have excerpted these pages below.

From Leinbaugh's book: "*When we unloaded from our two and a half, the battalion operations officer was waiting. He told us we were in Bourdon, a couple of miles east of Marche.*

The platoons formed up along the village's main road while the officers and platoon sergeants crowded into the battalion CP in a school building for orders. The meeting was short, lasting less than five minutes. The only available map of the area was a badly printed, smudged black and white copy with roads and trails barely distinguishable.

The sky was clear, but the feel of snow was in the air, the ground lightly frozen and covered with frost. To us, the night was ominously quiet, the only sound the distant mutterings of heavy artillery. The sergeants were briefing their squads when the colonel hurried out of the CP and told us to get moving - the attack was already behind schedule. Seeking some means of identifying each other in the dark, we tried tying handkerchiefs around our right arms, but their olive drab color blended too closely with the dark brown overcoats to be of help.

We'd learned this much in the briefing. The 334th's Third Battalion had been defending a series of villages and strongpoints to the east of Marche, and some hours earlier German tanks had overrun the lightly held village of Verdenne. Heavily outnumbered, the GIs pulled back
(continued on next page)

HOLD AT ALL COSTS (continued)

in good order, setting up new defensive positions along a woods line between Verdenne and Bourdon.

A sergeant from the 334th came down to lead K Company up the hill and point us toward the objective. According to the last radio message, four or five tanks were with the riflemen in the woods. They were to follow behind us in the attack, but details would have to be coordinated on the spot with the tank commander. Our battalion staff lacked precise information, but they thought at least a company of German infantry and several tanks were defending. The tanks were our big concern. The colonel told Leinbaugh our regiment's attached artillery battalion would lay down a barrage on Verdenne just before the final assault which was to begin at midnight. L Company, in reserve, was to follow behind K and help consolidate.

As the company moved out, Brewer was setting up a CP in the village. He called a quiet greeting to Phelps. "Merry Christmas, Don. Take care of yourself."

"Don't worry," Phelps replied, but he had a feeling that it was his turn, that he was going to get hit that night.

The company column crossed twin railroad tracks to begin a gradual ascent toward the ridgeline then stopped as the road forked. Which road? The main road to the left, or the secondary road, a half right? Our guide from the 334th hesitated, then pointed to the left. Pulling the map from his field Jacket, Leinbaugh, shielded by a raincoat, struck several matches but he was unable to pinpoint the road junction in the brief flares of light.

"What's the name of that goddam town?" "Verdenne," Campbell answered. "I'm pretty sure that's it, about a mile I'd guess."

"Yeah..... Well, as long as we're going up we're okay."

Heading left and uphill, the company moved on, traversed a horse-shoe curve the direction seemed right and after a hundred yards entered a dense forest.

(The horseshoe curve was the position of Davies and myself with our daisy chain of antitank mines.)

Just ahead a tank loomed out of the darkness, its huge bulk nearly filling, the narrow road, branches pressing in on either side brushing its steel plates. The men at the front of the column stopped several feet away and passed back word to hold up.

The ground mist had thickened after entering the woods, so it was impossible to see more than a few yards. The time was exactly midnight. As the column halted, Leinbaugh turned to Phelps. Tell the tankers to follow the tail end of the company through the woods. We'll work out details for the attack on the far side."

Phelps felt his way slowly along the side of the tank and called out, but there was no answer. Pounding on the side of the hull with the butt of his M 1, he yelled louder: "Hey, you guys open up!" He pounded again.

The hatch opened slowly, a creak of metal, and the head and shoulders of a man appeared. "Was ist los?" the man demanded. Again, peering over the side of the turret, "Was ist los?"

It took awhile, more seconds than necessary but suddenly as we hit the ditches, we realized K Company's first full-fledged night attack was getting off to a bad start.

Compiled shortly after the war, the 84th Division's history noted that the enemy's salient beyond Verdenne was discovered in a curious way."

The first man in the company to grasp what was happening, Phelps stepped back two steps and fired a single shot at the dark form in the turret. The man screamed and collapsed from view. Seconds latter the hatch clanged shut."

In the fight with the German tanks and infantry, several of the men from K 333 were wounded. However, most of them got back down the hill alive.

Of course, the tanks that the reconnaissance officer told us about at least six hours before, were the ones found by K 333. Why there was not better transfer of information was probably due to military protocol. The reconnaissance officer was from some attached cavalry unit (probably the 771 Tank Battalion). He would have reported to his unit commander, who would report to someone in division headquarters, who might possibly pass it down. Davies and I reported it to our squad leader—we had no other possibility, or responsibility. According to our Division History, we had no Cavalry attached between December 20 and January 2nd, but the 771, which was attached at the time, was part of the 4th Cavalry Group. I will possibly never know positively why or who were the men in the armored vehicle that passed our position Christmas Eve 1944.

We left the position when relieved by two others from our platoon around ten. We told them about the reported tanks. I feel they must have left the position, as they would have reported the possibility of German tanks up the hill. We were relieved around two hours before K 333 men passed. The first time I learned of the Company K 333 venture up the hill was when reading Leinbaugh's book more than 50 years later.

After a little sleep that night, we were awakened around midnight to prepare for the recapture of Verdenne. We did find the correct road, and entered around 0200 December 25 1944. This road went up the hill, with the woods on the left that were the location of the pocket (referred to in Guderian's book as "the hedgehog.") The road (trail) we took into Verdenne is no longer in use, and was smaller than the one taken by K 333.

Guderian also reported that General Hasso Eccard von Manteuffel, head of the Fifth Panzer Army, was in Grimbiemont a few miles to the southeast on December 24, 1944. He was there to order an attack on the Marche Hotton Road. This attack, if made, would have of course gone through our roadblock. This was the only road of any size between Hotton and Marche. Again, I'm sure we were saved by the Germans lack of supplies and their probably hidden, at least unspoken, feeling that Hitler's big offensive into Belgium was totally futile. They may at the start had some enthusiasm, but now out of food, gasoline, and artillery support, they were ready to go defensive. Also the weather had cleared, and any daytime movement was open to air attack. New Allied forces had moved into defensive positions, and were well supported by artillery. The Germans had underestimated our motorized mobility. Hitler and his generals overestimated the time required for our response, with troops to set up defenses in the path of the advancing German units. Hitler also counted on a much faster advance of his units.

Guderian complained about their lack of air support. It was promised but never came. I am completely sure that the ten tanks (at that time there were at least 20) with attached foot troops could have gone through a 2-man roadblock. We did have mines, a bazooka, and side arms, but they are not much against Panther tanks. If they had been supplied, they could have easily made their objective, the Muse River. However, on that narrow road, down from the woods, a single disabled tank might have stopped them all, for at least a while. Roads in the Belgian Ardennes are at best narrow and winding, and may not be paved. Yes, the attack in that area was unexpected, but probably a bad idea. The roads were easily jammed with traffic, especially when two-way movement was attempted. One can only speculate on what might have happened if the Germans had tried to move down the hill toward the Marche Hotton road.

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