

The BULGE BUGLE

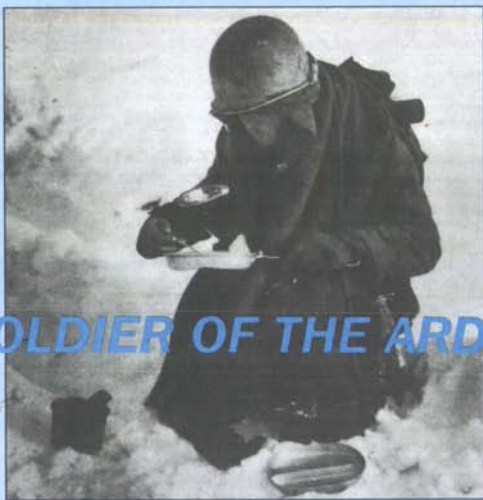
THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION • VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE, INC.

VOLUME XVII NUMBER 3

THE ARDENNES CAMPAIGN

AUGUST 1998

The hidden face could be that of anyone who was there



THE SOLDIER OF THE ARDENNES

On December 16, 1944, just when it looked as if the war in Europe was all but finished, 30 German divisions roared across an 85-mile Allied front. By Christmas, the German offensive had opened a bulge some 50 miles into the Allied lines. Across the rolling hills and frozen dark forests of Belgium and Luxembourg, more than half a million young men were pitted against the German onslaught. The Battle of the Bulge or Ardennes Campaign, as the US Army referred to it, became the largest land battle ever fought by American troops.

Thomas O'Brien, Middleboro, MA eats cold rations in snow somewhere on the western front, 26th InfD, 101st Inf, 12 Jan 45. Photo by Pvt. Herg, 166 Signal Corps Coll. Submitted by Laurie B. Kacalek, 94th InfD 94 QM.

CALIFORNIA! HERE WE COME - Page 8

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



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

There's one thing you can say about being President of VBOB. You certainly do get around. These past months, Betty and I have been on the road and in the air around the country and back to Europe. One thing that makes it all worthwhile is that you get to meet so many great people. People that I hope I'll meet again at our annual reunion September 3 to 7 in San Francisco.



George C. Linthicum

Having been a member of the "YD" Recon Troop, I "reconned" the "City by the Bay" again recently and spent some time with Reunion Chairman John Sullivan and his hard-working committee from the Golden Gate Chapter. We heard that many of you have already made your reservations at the headquarters hotel, the Airport Marriott. I think we are on the way to a record attendance since San Francisco is right up there on the list of places to visit, and we have an exciting program planned. Plans are finalized for an outstanding reunion so if you haven't made up your mind yet, please "read all about it" in this issue of *The Bulge Bugle*.

Earlier in May I had the pleasant honor of joining members of our Mohawk Valley Chapter for the dedication of a plaque in Utica, New York's, Memorial Auditorium. The auditorium pays tribute to veterans of all wars, and Mohawk Valley VBOB's first president Adam Adams played a key role in making it happen. The present President Francis Chesnik was joined by a great group of members, and for all of us it was a proud and memorable day.

It was one of those days that made us all proud of the great work you are doing in keeping the heritage of our battle fifty-four years ago alive in the minds of our children and grandchildren. We can't let the American people forget the sacrifices you made in the Ardennes in 1944-45.

The people of Belgium and Luxembourg haven't forgotten as you know. I had that impressed on me in March when a group of VBOBers and families returned to visit our friends there. We started off visiting the World War I battlefields in France: the Marne, Chateau Thierry and the Meuse Argonne where so many of our fathers and uncles had fought. One of the most moving afternoons was our visit to Meuse-Argonne Military Cemetery, the largest in Europe, with over 14,000 markers of Americans who died in both wars.

Before moving into Luxembourg we paid a visit to the "Surrender Room" in Rheims, and we can report that it is preserved in the same setting as in May 1945. The trip was an opportunity to renew friendships with Camile Kohn, president of CREBA and his members in Luxembourg; with Andre Huart, president of the Belgian 4th Fusiliers, and Chris Kraft, president of CIBA, whose members were with us in Bastogne where we were all honored at the Town Hall, with our U.S. Ambassador in attendance. It was quite a trip, and though we might have been strangers at the start, our shared memories made us all close friends when our tour ended.

As I am writing this, the thought comes to me that we want to know what you are doing in your communities---parades,

monuments, educational programs, special parades on our national holidays. Please tell us about them. Please send the details to Richard Schlenker, Vice President of Chapters, at National Headquarters, so we can tell everybody about them in *The Bulge Bugle*. Please don't be shy about your activities. You can give other chapters ideas that they can use.

This is a good point to note that your national headquarters has ideas that we are anxious to pass along to you. Brochures are available that contain tested successful programs for schools, civic groups and other occasions where you can spread the word about our battle and our organization. When you carry them out, please tell us about them.

As I close this message, I want to stress we all have a special job to do. That is to let other men and women who fought in the Ardennes know about VBOB. Too often after a parade or a wreath-laying ceremony, many of us have had Ardennes veterans, or members of their families, approach us and ask how they, or a relative can become a member. I would guess that the numbers of veterans of the Bulge who are out there now number in the hundreds of thousands.

If each member could get one more member each year, it would be a spark not only to your local chapter, but also to our national organization. And remember it is important that all chapter members be members of the national VBOB. Just as in that battle fifty-four years ago, we all joined together to win a great victory. Let's keep that unity for now, and for VBOB's future.

"Golden Gate Here We Come."

MEDAL CLARIFICATION

There has been so much confusion on the subject of medals, who's entitled to what, where to get them, etc., etc., that we are having a special article prepared which may help clarify some of the questions. When it is finished, it will appear in *The Bulge*.

GENERAL OMAR BRADLEY MEMORIAL

You may not know that there is a memorial/museum in honor of General Bradley in Moberly, Missouri. The memorial in Rothwell Park can be viewed at any time and the museum (corner of Coates and Clark Streets) is open Monday, Tuesday, and Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Special tours can be arranged by calling 816-263-3345.

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ARE YOUR DUES DUE?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

WALL OF LIBERTY PUT TO REST

When I learned that Pierre Salinger was president of the Battle of Normandy Foundation (of which the Wall is a part), I managed to track him down—it wasn't easy! Note his response, attached. Publish it if you like.

Though the Wall itself appears to be 'kaput,' interested *Bugle* readers should know that the Museum whose construction they contributed to has been built, according to Salinger, and they are encouraged to visit it should their travels take them to Normandy. [Salinger's letter follows.]

"Dear Mr. Mooney

"I have returned from a long trip to Europe and Asia and have found your letter on the Wall of Liberty and the Memorial Museum. The Museum has been built and was actually inaugurated on D-Day in 1988. It is the best World War II museum in the world. But we are in trouble on the Wall of Liberty which has not yet been built.

"It is true that the project has gone into deep trouble, but I am continuing to work to make sure the Wall is built.

"When I took over the Foundation two years ago, it was in a \$3 million debt created by the former President, Anthony Stout, who overspent money of the Foundation in a serious way. Since then, raising money to get the Wall built has been very difficult. But now, we are negotiating with the Congress to pass a bill that would help us build the Wall of Liberty. We have strong support from Republicans and Democrats in both houses. Obviously, this year could help us pass the bill.

"If you are going to Normandy this year, go to the Memorial Museum in Caen. The land that has been given us for the Wall of Liberty is near the Museum. Also next to the Museum is the famous Memorial Garden that was built for US Veterans and dedicated on D-Day in 1994. Also in the Museum there is a data base with the names of the Veterans who have signed up for the Wall.

"Sincerely yours,"
/s/ Pierre Salinger

Ed Mooney
3626 QM TK CO

[Thanks so much, Ed, for this information and for your perseverance on this matter. I'm sure many of our readers are glad to know that "something" has been done with their money.]

NOTHING STOPS A BOBER

I have obtained a mailing address for the Wall of Liberty Foundation and am enclosing it herewith:

The WWII Wall of Liberty Foundation, Inc.
c/o Al Ungerleider, BG (Ret.)
5254 Signal Hill Drive
Burke, Virginia 22015-2164.

Albert W. Fischbeck
80 INF D 318 INF H

[Thanks, Al, we'd looked everywhere.]

MORE ON CITIZEN SOLDIER CORRECTIONS

Reference: Letter by R. L. Reiman (May edition of *The Bugle*).

I too wrote Stephen Ambrose concerning a major error in his book, *Citizen Soldiers* and did not receive a response.

See page three of my letter, charts on pages 280-282 of his book are in major error. [Cited portion follows.]

"Item. I have a problem with the casualty chart on pages 280-283.

First of all neither the 82nd nor the 101st ABD are listed; and several divisions, the 1st, 3rd, 36th, 45th and 2nd AD hit the beaches in Sicily and Salerno almost a year before D-Day. Moreover the 3rd ID and others landed in North Africa in November of 1942. Without proper notation these units would appear to the casual reader to be 'fresh off the boats' from America. The 3rd ID and the 45th ID were paired from Sicily through to the end of the war and accumulated the longest list of days in combat than any other divisions. The 3rd ID accumulated 533 days of combat during ten campaigns and sustained 24,324* casualties vs 13,101 listed; the 45th ID

accumulated 511 days of combat through eight campaigns and sustained 18,521* vs 10,458 listed. (*Source: *Order of Battle, U.S. Army World War II*, by Shelby L. Stanton.)

James R. Bird
45 INF D 160 FA BN

NATIONAL D-DAY MUSEUM

[Re: Page 18 of May, 1998, *Bugle Bugle*]

I received a letter from Stephen E. Ambrose (now retired) which outlined the subject museum to be outfitted in an old four-story beer brewery (shades of Diekirch) on Magazine Street near the Convention Center and other museums. It is being established in conjunction with the Eisenhower Center for American Studies of the University of New Orleans. The present administrative office is located at: 923 Magazine Street, New Orleans, Louisiana 70130. The intent is to put together a museum similar to what was done for Ellis Island a few years ago.

The scope of the museum is all the D-Days of WWII in North Africa, Sicily, Italy, Normandy and the D-Days in the Pacific starting with Guadalcanal extending to Okinawa. A full-sized replica of a Higgins boat, which was built in New Orleans and used in most invasions, will be a featured item.

The Eisenhower Center is expanding its archives to include the Pacific as well as the Atlantic theaters. Artifacts are welcome!

Bill Leesemann, Jr.
26 INF D 101 ENGR CMBT BN

740TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION

The 740th Field Artillery was code named "High Time." We were attached to the XII Corps—all armies 1, 3, and 9.

We watched a piper cub plane being towed. They were trying to save it even though it had no wings.

We watched members of the 106th Division in the dead of night with lights on and blaring of music come into our sector. We sure were green. There were no signs to let them know it was a war zone.

The 740th FA Ardennes arrival early in September, set the stage for December 16th. We had no shells to shoot—ammunition was rationed. Our remaining artillery pieces were used as road blocks.

You have to admit, December 16th you couldn't see your hand in front of your face.

I never see stories about the 740th Field Artillery.

Time heals nearly everything. Some times the whole thing was like a dream, but not all bad either. Life is life. It was an experience with some wonderful men. Never will there ever be any more closeness in our life time than that experienced by men in war.

James Lendrum
740 FA BN HQ

MUSEUM IN THE 'BIG EASY'

In the May 1998 issue of *The Bugle Bugle*, page 18, you report the partial address of The National D-Day Museum in New Orleans. By now you probably have the complete address: 923 Magazine Street, New Orleans, Louisiana 70130.

According to a notice I received from Dr. Stephen Ambrose, retired founder of the Eisenhower Center and retired President of the National D-Day Museum, the scope of the Museum is all the D-Days of WWII in North Africa, Sicily and Italy, as well as Normandy in the Atlantic and the D-Days in the Pacific starting with Guadalcanal and extending through Okinawa. Donations of items of the period are being accepted by the museum. Opening date is scheduled for 6 June 2000.

The Eisenhower Center for American Studies, located at the University of New Orleans, New Orleans 70148, meanwhile, is expanding its archives to include the Pacific as well as the Atlantic theaters. Director Douglas Brinkley is hoping many will deposit their memoirs, oral histories, diaries and letters, and any other documents.

In defense of Dr. Ambrose's book, *Citizen Soldiers*, as related to Mr. W. L. Reiman's (7 ARMDD 23 AIB C) letter to the editor, I offer a partial statement from the author's "Introduction and Acknowledgments": "It is not a comprehensive history of the campaign in Northeast Europe that began on D-Day and ended with Germany's surrender eleven months later. ...it is not a book about the generals. (continued on next page)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

It is about the GIs, the junior officers and enlisted men of ETO...who they were, how they fought, why they fought, what they endured, how they triumphed. ...My job is to pick out the best and most representative (stories, memoirs, interviews), the ones that illuminate common themes or illustrate typical actions."

Given this preamble it is understandable that all materials available through Dr. Ambrose's vast collections of memoirs, histories, and interviews would not have been used. I was with Task Force Jones, named after the 814th Tank Destroyer Battalion's commander, Lieutenant Colonel Robert Bruce Jones, during the Battle at St. Vith, and the subsequent withdrawal of the 7th Armored on 23 December 1944. With elements of Task Force Jones fighting a rear guard action, and my crew losing an M-8 armored car in the process, I, too, could well have wished that more had been included in Dr. Ambrose's fine book about the 7th Armored's valiant and critical stand at St. Vith.

Calvin C. Boykin, Jr.
814 TD BN RCN

A REWARDING EXPERIENCE

[The enclosed] sheet tells you that I have been speaking to high school classes. Their response is most gratifying. I do as much of it as I can and stress that the whole country was at war--the home front, etc.--with little emphasis on shooting and killing--just enough to make them conscious of price paid in casualties and sacrifices.

I'm scheduled to speak to my three grandsons' elementary classes on May 26th. My grandsons are anticipating and will be thrilled. I will show some artifacts, i.e., steel helmet and liner, canteen and mess kit, and some photos, etc.

[Space doesn't permit us to print both sides of the wonderful 'thank you' from the kids at Mounds View High School, but we do have a page of them elsewhere in this issue.

Laudie B. Kacalek
94 INFD 94 QM

THE FOURTH WAS THERE

I see by the news from Thomaston, Georgia (February *Bulge Bugle*) that my division, the U.S. Fourth Infantry (Ivy) Division, was listed among those memorialized as participating in the Battle of the Bulge. I have read nothing else in the VBOB newsletter about our presence there, so I'd like to summarize our role.

And who better to do it for me than General George Patton, who wrote to our CG after the Bulge about our role: "A tired division halted the left shoulder of the German thrust into American lines and saved the City of Luxembourg." Note that "...halted the left shoulder..." and "...saved the City..." Pretty impressive for a bunch of tired infantrymen.

In fact, they were much more than tired. We had come to Luxembourg four days before at about half combat strength. We were bled white from 4,000 casualties in a month in the Hurtgen Forest, a grisly tactical mistake planned to cover the ill-conceived "Bridge Too Far" misadventure of General Bernard Montgomery (thankfully, no relation). It was our bloodiest battle since we had hit the beach on D-Day.

Then came the Bulge. But we went on from Luxembourg to help roll back the Germans, and wound up in the same area where ours had been the first American infantry into Germany the previous September 11th. (My company occupied the same farmhouse we had been in six months before! The division had spent 199 consecutive days on the line.)

Thanks for letting me add this information to the complicated and fascinating story of the Battle of the Bulge.

William C. Montgomery
4 INFD 4 MEDICS A

FORT MEADE MUSEUM VISIT

I recently had the pleasure of visiting the new wing at Fort Meade, Maryland, while staying with my daughter and son-in-law in Sykesville, Maryland. I am a resident of Tucson, Arizona, my home of 10 years after leaving the Pittsburgh area.

I was really impressed with the set up of the wing. It brought back a lot of memories, some sad. I would like to see it mentioned more in *The*

Bugle, maybe as items are added to the room. I myself had a difficult time remembering that it was located at Fort Meade, as it was only mentioned in *The Bugle* once quite a while ago.

Only a few of us realized that we were making a big part of history. We only wanted to get home. Everyone, veteran or not, should make a point of seeing the room dedicated to the Battle of the Bulge. There is a welcoming committee there more than happy to have you, and share some interesting stories with you.

Once again I am very happy I was able to see it, and I hope to hear more about it.

William R. Shores
28 INFD 109 BN C

[Editor: For those who don't know, William is talking about the room dedicated to the Battle of the Bulge at Fort Meade--through the many efforts of the Battle of the Bulge Historical Foundation. We have over the years, carried many articles regarding this lovely room and the efforts of those who worked so tirelessly to see it accomplished.]

I WALKED WITH HEROES

To all you BOBers,

I am writing to thank you after all these years.

I am not, nor have I ever been, the hero type. But in 1944-45 I had the privilege of walking with heroes.

Thanks for putting up with me.

C. A. Blaque Culp
26 INFD 101 INF C

KEEP THE BULGE ON THE FRONT BURNER

I read the President's message in May's issue of *The Bulge Bugle*, about keeping our Battle of the Bulge educational objective on the front burner. My granddaughter's class was studying about the 1900's and she picked WWII as her project. She told her teacher that her grandfather was in WWII and the teacher called me to see if I would talk to the 4th graders about my experiences.

On May 1st, I spent about one hour in front of 96 fourth graders plus five teachers and it turned out to be one of the best times I've spent. These kids were so well behaved and polite it was hard to believe. They sat without a peep until I finished talking and then asked questions. Since time ran out I couldn't answer all their questions and I would have liked to.

A week later, I received an envelop with 96 letters from the fourth graders that attended my talk plus from the teachers--all asking me to return and talk more about WWII and how much they learned that wasn't in the books they were reading. Those who asked questions in their letters, I answered and sent to their school. Probably will go back some day to talk to the next group of fourth graders. Shortly, I'll be going to Mansfield, Ohio, to talk to a troop of boy scouts that I have been invited to.

I wish more vets would get involved in telling of their experiences to our young people. They really want to hear about the wars--doesn't have to be WWII only. Personal experiences are more valuable than many books written about it.

Floyd G. Rzonca
705 TD BN

ALTERNATIVE TO RECORDS CENTER

I have noticed for some time that members are having trouble getting information about their service and acquiring medals due them through the U.S. Army Reserve Center in St. Louis. I have had some success in completing the paper work for veterans but there is alternative to St. Louis.

In any case, the paper work must be accompanied by a photo copy of the DD-214 or back side of the discharge or a Standard form 180, but the reason for the request must be fairly detailed. These details should show that the request is made to complete family records, to replace medals lost or stolen, or that originals were never issued.

In the case of never issued, this could be the veteran was discharged from a military hospital before or at about the same time that the medals were authorized and not yet made

(continued on next page)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

available at the particular point of discharge.

If you believe that the records center is taking too long or you hear that your records were burned (they were duplicated and are available, it just takes a while to dig them out--remember, Congress is giving less and less money to veterans affairs) try another way, the National Archives are available and your records are there. You will need to invoke the "Freedom of Information Act." As a matter of fact your unit after battle reports, rosters are also available.

Kent Freeman
75th INF 290 INF MEDIC

RETURN TO SENDER

The February 1998 issue, page 30, contained some information on a medal with neck ribbon that commemorated the 50th anniversary of the landings in Normandy (and Southern France) in 1944. The information given indicated that the American Order of the French Croix de Guerre, Inc., was the organization to contact for this medal. This information was not correct. The Medal and Diploma is offered by the Federation of French War Veterans, Inc., whose address is 118 East 41st Street, Suite 401, New York, New York 10017.

Any letters addressed to the American Order of the French Croix de Guerre at 141 East 44th Street, Suite 604, New York, New York 10017, will be returned to the sender as not forwardable under a postal expiration period. We share the same address with the Federation of French War Veterans, Inc., that is, 18 East 41st Street.

The American Order of the French Croix de Guerre, Inc., is an association of American veterans who served in the European-African Theaters of Operation during World War II. The Federation of French War Veterans, Inc., is an association of French veterans.

We would appreciate it if you would publish the information contained...in a future issue of *The Bulge Bugle*.

Steven F. Kovach, President
American Order of the French Croix de Guerre, Inc.

ANOTHER TIME, ANOTHER PLACE

As a member of VBOB since 1995, I have read with great pride and interest the articles and letters published in *The Bulge Bugle*. The articles brought back many important memories I had experienced in the Ardennes in 1944 and 1945.

Bastogne was just another place and name on a map where we had fought; places like Trier, Merzig, Saarbrücken, Ulms, Heilbronn and the river crossings which were just as frightening. It seems like most of the things I remember, tend to make me smile or laugh at some of our actions; how unwise we were in our young years. I have gone through a lot of the photographs I had taken during or after combat, and I plan to put them together and send some of the photos to some of the buddies who would like copies. After we would take a town, I would generally raid the photo shops for film, so I did take a lot of pictures.

Dustin M. Aughenbaugh
10 ARMD CCB 55 ARMD ENGR BN C

[See Dustin's story in "Bulge Incidents" section.]

FIRST DEFEAT

While researching the Battle of the Bulge, I came across this statement in the History of the 82nd AIB, 504th PIR, "The Devil's in Baggy Pants' motto Strike Hold. "The 504 suffered heavily in this attack, but annihilated an enemy SS battalion and handed German forces the first defeat they had suffered in the Battle of the Bulge." The book was compiled by Lt. William Mandel and PFC David H. Whittier, regimental correspondent. This statement related to an attack on the Hamlet/Town of Cheneux, Belgium, 21st of December, 1944. Troops of 1st Battalion Companies B&C along with 3rd Battalion Company G took the town by mid-morning from enemy troops of 1st SS Panzer led by Jochen Peiper, spearhead for the German offensive through the Ardennes. I had not considered that point before--"the First Defeat"--but if it proved true or shown to some degree of certainty, it would be a deserving tribute to the men who accomplished this feat to be recognized, remembered and honored. The establishment of this event and proof of it, is to be taken in the context of

an historical fact only and not to embellish or detract from the sacrifices of other units or individuals. I'm sure a healthy debate will follow.

All contributions will be helpful by defeat (i.e.) to overcome in any conflict or competition--vanquish. I'm trying to establish at what a point in time and place were the Germans first forced to retreat in defeat from ground previously taken and held by them until forced backward/out not to return and continued their retreat. The key words I believe are engaged, forced, retreat, defeat. A result brought about by men not other means of warfare, men on the ground!

I believe Cheneux, by its early date of victory, would have to be a candidate. I have read and studied and talked to men who were there. I also contacted Michael Reynolds, author of "The Devil's Adjutant"--Jochen Peiper Panzer leader (a very good book) to get his opinion on "the first defeat" at Cheneux. He said he could not agree with that statement. His take on the action at Cheneux, 21st December, 1944, was that the Germans withdrew from Cheneux on Peiper's orders, so "they had not been defeated in the strict sense of the word." Well! The men who were there said they fought their way into Cheneux and forced the Germans out.

The German's 1st SS Major Wolf and grenadier troops did not voluntarily leave the town. They were there in force defending their position at Cheneux. Forced to retreat by direct engagement by troops of the 82nd Airborne Division. Mr. Reynolds suggested "men of the 12th SS Panzer Division had been defeated before December 21st and forced to withdraw at Krinkelt, Rocherath and Dom Butgenbach." The northern shoulder area. I read about the twin villages and that area in "A Time for Trumpets" by Charles B. MacDonald and other accounts of that action. I do not reach the same opinion as Mr. Reynolds relating to the criterion earlier stated of defeat. The northern shoulder Eisenborn Ridge, etc., took everything the Germans could throw against it and held--no question. But the German high command redirected their efforts toward the west as a result of the north shoulder. Would that be considered a defeat? Also Peiper forced his way through Stavelot, Belgium. But was this town ever held by German forces or was it always being contested for control. As was the case in many areas. Bastogne, would that be considered a defeat or a defensive holding action on the American side. A defeat of the Germans for failure to take the position. These are questions that need to be sorted through to arrive at the answer to "Who, where and when imposed that "first defeat."

Maybe someone can explain some basic different terms, strategic defeat or tactical defeat, etc. Maybe my criterion is flawed. Please help if you can. I think it's a very important historical fact to be established if you have any information about Cheneux, Belgium, or any information you would like to submit it would be very helpful to resolve this and salute those who participated in this historic event before it is too late.

Please carefully check your events and time/date and definition of defeat.

D. L. Kennedy
5720 Elliott
Sylvania, Ohio 43560

CLAIM TO FAME

My outfit, the 776th Field Artillery Battalion (155 howitzers) has a modest "claim to fame" which may be somewhat unusual. The popular perception, based on the early accounts by historians, seems to be that Bastogne was the crucial engagement of the Battle of the Bulge. More recently, however, with the benefit or reflection and additional research, many writers have asserted that the defensive stand on the northern shoulder by the 99th and 2nd Infantry Divisions was even more decisive. Suffering heavy losses, the relatively inexperienced 99th Division's stubborn resistance brought one key element of the main German attack force--the 12th SS Panzer Division (Hitler Youth)--to a complete stand-still. By the time the 12th SS Panzer Division was forced to discontinue its assault in the area of the twin villages of Krinkelt-Rocherath and moved south and west through Bullingen, the impetus of its attack was lost.

It is not my intention to come down on one side or the other in this controversy as my battalion was heavily involved in both battles. From December 13 to December 19, we provided general support to the 99th Division, firing from positions about 2,000 yards north of Krinkelt until December 17, and after that from the outskirts of Sourbrodt.

On December 19, we were ordered south to aid in the defense of Bastogne. Apparently because our approach route was already cut by the advancing German forces, we were

(continued on next page)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

diverted west and south all the way to Matton, France, before returning to firing positions near Fauvillers, south of Bastogne, on December 23. From then until December 31, we were in general support of CCB, 4th Armored Division; from Fauvillers until December 27 and from Burnon until December 31. We then provided general support to the 6th Armored Division until moving into Luxembourg on January 20.

I would like to know whether any other artillery battalions participated in both of the key engagements in the early days of the Battle of the Bulge--the northern shoulder and Bastogne. Please write to me at 822 Forlines Road, Winterville, North Carolina 28590.

Robert H. Franke
776 FA BN SVC

NO BATTLE STAR FOR REPLACEMENTS

There were several hundred men who were replacements for the division between 25 January 1945 and 31 January 1945. These men suffered with the winter temperatures with sleeping in the ice and snow without shelter and some were also casualties. These men were not credited with a battle star for the Battle of the Bulge. If these men were included there would be more members for the organization.

Melvin F. Thomason
84 INFD 335 INF 2 BN G

EDITOR'S SUMMARY

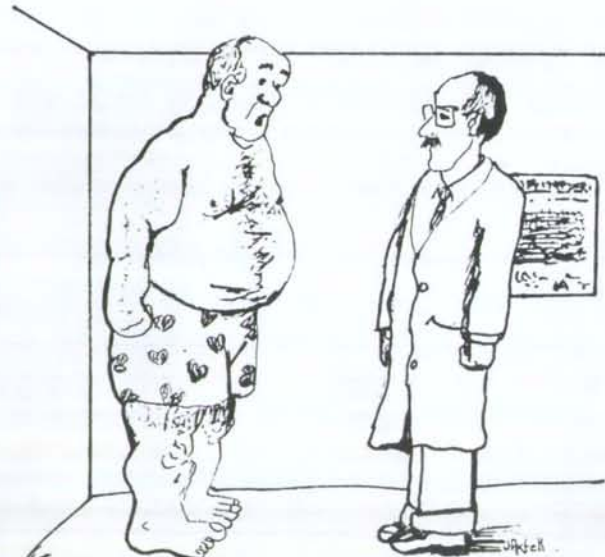
Many, many people wrote to us regarding the picture which appeared on page 19 of the May *Bugle*. They even sent in enlarged pictures of the fellow who appears in the lower right-hand corner, which clearly show that he is a German soldier. No doubt about it.

CORRECT PROCEDURE?

Today I attended a Memorial Day parade. As the flag passed by, I gave a hand salute to my cap--the VBOB one. I noticed the only other man who saluted (out of about 50 sitting or standing) removed his cap and held it over his heart. Could you tell me if I was wrong? Or were we both right?

Henry T. Smith
292 ENGR CMBT BN A

THE VA WAY by J. Axtell



"I wish I was the same age when I fought the first Battle of the Bulge!"

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VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE, INC
Reunion at Airport Marriott Hotel
San Francisco, California
September 3-7, 1998

ADDRESS: 1800 Old Bayshore Highway, Burlingame, CA 94010

PHONE FOR RESERVATIONS: 1-800-228-9290

REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____

Address: _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Wife/Guest Name: _____

Division: _____ Regiment: _____ Unit or Company _____

Signature _____

	Number of Persons	Cost per Person	Total
Thursday, September 3, 1998			
Registration Fee (All attendees must register)	_____	\$28.00	\$ _____
Friday, September 4, 1998			
City Tour and Golden Gate Bridge	8:30 am - 12:30 pm _____	\$18.00	\$ _____
Saturday, September 5, 1998			
VBOB Trail Dedication At Memorial Site	12:30 pm - 4:30 pm _____	\$ 9.00	\$ _____
Sunday, September 6, 1998			
Ladies Continental Breakfast and Fashion (Transportation \$1.00 each way payable upon boarding)*	8:30 am - 12:00 noon _____	No Charge	
Banquet and Dinner Dance	7:00 pm - 11:00 pm _____	\$35.00	\$ _____
(Please indicate how many prefer: Top Sirloin Steak _____ or Swordfish _____)			

Total Amount Enclosed: \$ _____
-

Mail this registration form and check payable to "VBOB" to:
 Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, P.O. Box 11129, Arlington, VA 22210-2129
 (Refunds for cancellations, will be honored in whole or in part, depending on availability of funds)

*Special arrangements have been made with transit authorities for bus service from hotel to Nordstrom's. First articulated bus arrives 8:30 am across from hotel.

VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE, INC.
REUNION PROGRAM
Airport Marriott Hotel, San Francisco, California
September 3-7, 1998

Thursday , September 3, 1998

- 12:00 noon - 5:00 p.m.** **Registration** - The registration desk will be open the majority of the day.
- 7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.** **Welcome, Wine & Cheese Reception**

Friday, September 4, 1998

- Registration** **As needed** - The registration desk will be open the majority of the day.
- Breakfast** **On your own.**
- 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.** **City tour and Golden Gate Bridge.**
Approaching San Francisco, a sweeping vista of the skyline will be seen before dropping to ground level at the Embarcadero where we will stop at Pier 32 to view the last of the Liberty ships the Jeremiah O'Brien and the San Francisco/Oakland Bay Bridge. We will proceed along the waterfront by Pier 39, Fisherman's Wharf, Coit Tower and cross the Golden Gate Bridge to Vista Point. From there we will proceed to other points of interest.
- Lunch and Dinner** **On your own.** As people will be coming and going all day, no other functions are planned. Suggest review brochures on independent tours available that you may wish to use during Saturday/Sunday free time periods.

Saturday, September 5, 1998

- Breakfast** **On your own.**
- 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 pm** **Early lunch.** If you are going on the tour for the VBOB Memorial services
- 12:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.** **Tour en route to VBOB Memorial.**
VBOB Trail dedication ceremonies scheduled to begin at 2:00 p.m. Time is being allowed before and after for the taking of photos. Route to and from the Memorial includes sightseeing.
- Dinner** **On your own.** Suggest review independent tour brochures for Saturday evening or Sunday afternoon events.

Sunday, September 6, 1998

- 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon** **Shopping Tour at Nordstrom's.** Nordstrom (an upscale department store) will furnish a complementary continental breakfast and a ladies fashion show. Public transportation specially arranged from in front of hotel direct to Nordstrom's. One dollar each way.
- 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon** **Annual Membership Meeting.** All are welcome to attend.
- Lunch** **On your own.** Free time until start of evening festivities.
- 7:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.** **Annual Banquet** with speaker followed by dancing. Cash bar. Dinner consists of soup, choice of salad, choice of top sirloin steak or swordfish, dinner rolls, choice of desert and tea or coffee.

See page 28 for Honored Guest list.

ARE YOU DOING YOUR PART TO HALT REVISIONISTS?

As you will recall, the *Bugle* persistently relates to you the importance of educating the public and particularly the school children, regarding the trials and tributes of war. The following is an excerpt from an article which appeared in the June issue of *SHAEF Communique #45*, and further points to the need for all to exert effort to see that World War II is not changed in the history books.

"Revisionists of history are 'waiting for the [more than 6,000,000 living] veterans to die so revisionism can rule' writes *Boston Globe* columnist Martin F. Nolan in an article widely distributed via press wire services.

"Mr. Nolan's column described the lack of knowledge about the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. 'More and more Americans ask: What's the big deal about December 7th?'

"After the bombing 2,403 Americans were dead, 1,178 wounded, 149 planes and six battle ships were destroyed.

"President Franklin D. Roosevelt the next day asked Congress to declare war, describing December 7th as 'a date which will live in infamy.' Mr. Nolan notes 'whether the date will live in infamy, or at all, depends on history. About 75% of Americans have no memory of Pearl Harbor.

"Mr. Nolan points out that the heroes of WW II 'will live forever thanks to Stephen E. Ambrose. His saga of the Europe between D-Day and V-E Day, *Citizen Soldiers*, salutes the privates, sergeants and lieutenants who defeated the Nazis. Every page lists more examples of inspiration, courage and caring than appear in an entire season of network TV.

"One of the problems in keeping history accurate lies with some baby boom history professors who ache to revise what happened. They demonize Harry Truman, want to prove that Tojo was misunderstood and that 'Hitler could have been placated.' In 1998 a Japanese movie is presently making a hero of Tojo. The Smithsonian has put down the Enola Gay and crew for the bombing of Hiroshima."

"So long as veterans can raise their voices they should confront revisionists of history with the immortal words of Baron Munchausen: 'Was you there, Charlie?'"

So, if you're at all able, contact your grandchildren's school or, for that matter the school nearest you to see if they would be interested in having you address one of their classes. Many of the children in school today have no one in their family who has served in any war and your experiences would be totally new to them. They will remember it always.

The Headquarters Office has a little package of information that may be helpful to you in preparing your presentation, so write to us and we'll send you a copy.

No one should ever be allowed to change history...the sacrifices have been too deep. So please, do your part. ■

HAVE YOU PAID YOUR DUES? CHECK YOUR MAILING LABEL!

The date your dues were dues is just above your last name on the mailing label. We need your support.

...IN APPRECIATION

The attached open letter was sent to us by **WILLIAM T. TULEY, 87TH INFANTRY DIVISION**. The letter was written by Barry Veden, the son of one of the members of the Northern Indiana Chapter, after he attended a chapter function.

Outside the snow was falling and a cold north wind gusting across the waters of Lake Michigan made its way south through town. Despite the Yuletide decorations and a hint of Christmas spirit in the air, it was an Indiana winter night to be spent indoors. Inside the Michigan City Holiday Inn, there were remembrances of another snowy, cold December, a half-century earlier and half a world away.

They gathered in the room amid family and friends and remembered a battle lasting forty-one days. A battle involving 600,000 thousand Allied troops, their program guide noted, of which 81,000 American troops were killed, wounded or captured--all in 41 days. Those 41 days, and the memories of them, would shape the lives of the men gathered in the room forever. But you don't have to be told that. If you are reading this, chances are you are one of the many who already know about the Battle of the Bulge and the dates of December 16, 1944 to January 25, 1945. Those 41 days probably mean more to you than to any other American. They now mean more to me as well.

Those of us who were attending as guests that evening sat spell bound as battle-scarred veterans interacted with one another and spoke of an occurrence in their lives as significant as any other. Humility, honesty, and friendship were the orders of the day as men who might not have known each other during the hard-fought battle, and have only recently bonded together as a group, displayed a camaraderie probably known only to those who have faced death and survived when others did not. Their's are truly kindred spirits.

The men gathered on the evening of December 5, 1997, to enjoy the kinship of fellow veterans and to raise a glass in homage to life, freedom and democracy. But, they also set an example that evening for all that have and will follow their footsteps in battle. There is a way to remember the horrors of war, they seemed to be saying, and still retain one's dignity and humanity.

There were other, younger veterans in the room, myself included, and we watched with pride as our fathers, or friends spoke of the roles they had in that 41 day battle. Fortunately, I never fired a shot, or slept in a foxhole, wondering what the morning would bring, or lost a friend to an enemy's bullet, and I think God often for that blessing.

Thank you, men of the Battle of the Bulge, for the freedom we all enjoy, for answering your country's plea for help, and for showing other generations the graciousness of yours. I don't know the true definition of a hero, but somehow I have the feeling I was surrounded by a roomful of them one cold, snowy evening in December, and I, for one, will never forget.

Barry noted that he is the very proud son of **EDWARD W. VEDEN, 28TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 112TH INFANTRY, 3RD BATTALION, COMPANY C.** ■

MEMBERS SPEAK OUT

Associate Member Stan C. Bellens is trying to help members of the 474th Fighter Group Association with the preparation of a documentary by the Belgium TV Channel RTL. Do any of you have information regarding a young girl named Yvonne Sytner who was adopted by pilots of the 9th U.S. Air Force who were living in Flavien Castle, which was near Florennes Air Base? The young girl's family had died in a German concentration camp. When the 474th shipped out the young girl went with them. If you have any information, please write to Stan at: Rue de la Trompette, 4; B4680 Herme; Belgium.

Lt. Col. Richard K. Burchnall, USMC, son of Sgt **RICHARD A. BURCHNALL, 101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION, 506TH PARACHUTE INFANTRY, COMPANY D**, would like information concerning his father who fought in the Ardennes as a PFC and finished WWII in Berchtesgarden. Also interested in pictures of the 506th during this period. Please write to him at 40 Charleston Court, Stafford, Virginia 22554.

ALFRED W. TIRELLA, 4TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 22ND INFANTRY, COMPANY B, would like to hear from anyone who might have served with him during December 1-10, 1944. Write to him at: 87 Romaine Avenue, Jersey City, New Jersey 07306-5301.

Associate member Joseph Pothén is searching for **LAWRENCE C. COFFEE, GEORGE FAYENSA, and "CHIEF" SOLDANA**, all of whom were in the 1ST ARMY. They were all cooks and were stationed for a while at Battice, Belgium, in the home of one of Joseph's aunts. Write to Joseph at: 8 Sur les Roches; B-4960 Malmedy, Belgium.

JoAnn Maes is looking for any information regarding her father and/or his unit: **JOSEPH E. MAES, 423RD SQUADRON, 390TH BOMB GROUP, 8TH U.S. AIR FORCE**. Write to her at: P.O. Box 114, Westminster, Colorado.

The Historical Circle of Werm would like to hear from veterans who were in any of the following villages from September 1944 until May 1945: Alt-Hoeselt, Berg, Beverst, Bilzen, Diets-Heur, Diepenbeek, Eigenbilzen, Genoelselderen, Grote-Spouwen, Guigoven, Heis, Heukelom, Herderen, Hoeselt, Ketsingen, Koninksem, Klein-Spouwen, Lauw, Mal, Martenslinde, Membruggen, Millen, Mulken, Mopertingen, Munsterbilzen, Nerem, Neerrepen, Overrepen, Piringen, Riemst, Rijkhoven, Riksingen, Rutten, Romershoven, Schalkhoven, Sluizen, 's Herenelderen, St. Huijbrechts-Hern, Tongres, Tongeren, Valmeer, Vliermaal, Vliermaalroot, Vrijhern, Vreren, Waltwilder, Werm, Widoöie, or Zichen-Zussen-Bolder. Write to: Pierre Baerten, Bronstraat 6, 3730 Hoeselt, Belgium.

RALPH M. BENDER, 299TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION, would like any information regarding the **247TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION**. Ralph was with the 247th before being transferred to the 299th. Write to Ralph at: 1913 Cheryl Street, Goshen, Indiana 46526-1107.

ROBERT F. GILL, 17TH AIRBORNE DIVISION, 513TH

REGIMENT, 2ND BATTALION, HEADQUARTERS, would like pictures of the Towns on Monty and Hosingen (past and present). He will gladly pay for any costs involved. Contact Robert at: PO Box 1183, Colfax, California 95713.

WILLIAM E. STEWART, 106TH INFANTRY DIVISION, encourages all members to write to the Department of the Army to support awarding the Purple Heart to all who suffered Combat Related Cold Weather Injuries. Write to: Department of the Army, U.S. Army Reserve Personnel Center, 9700 Page Boulevard, St. Louis, Missouri 63132-5200.

G. W. "BILL" RAWLINGS, 980TH ORDNANCE DEPOT COMPANY, would like to hear from anyone serving with him in England, Normandy-Omaha Beach, Northern France, Ardennes, Rhineland and Central Europe. Write to him at: 6515 South 1800 East, Spanish Fork, Utah 84660.

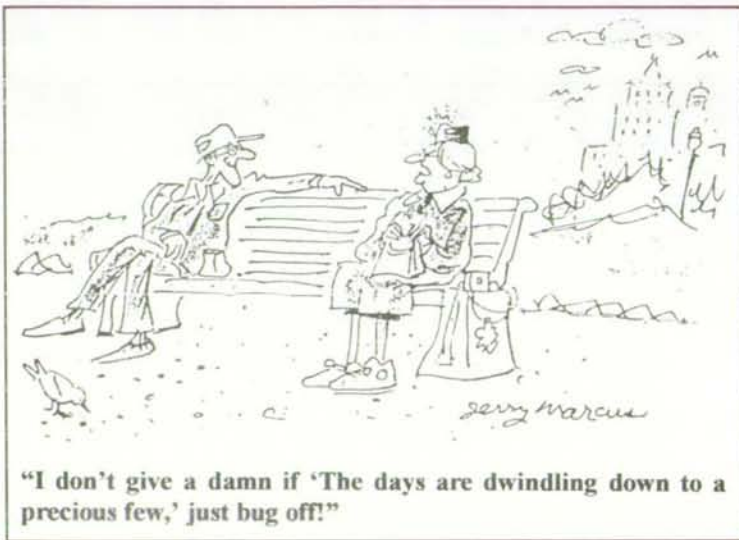
Bernd Schmidt would like to have information about Buchenwald, Weimar and the military government in Weimar in 1945 for a small exhibition. Contact him at: Warschauer Strasse 10, 99427 Weimar, Germany.

GEORGE FISHER, 26TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 328TH INFANTRY, COMPANY K, and LEO WURTZEL, 26TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 328TH INFANTRY, COMPANY I, will be among those dedicating a plaque to their buddies who made the supreme sacrifice. They are trying to find members of the Army Specialized Training Program which was started in the fall of 1943 and terminated in the spring of 1944. There were 278 stationed at Providence College in Rhode Island. After that they were stationed in Tennessee and assigned to various companies within the 26th. If you are one of them or know of one, please contact George Fisher: 516-889-9253.

Karren E. Ellsworth believes that her grandfather, **LANDIS EDMUND McCALLOPS, 80TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 318TH INFANTRY**, was a soldier in the Battle of the Bulge. He died April 2, 1945, in Germany. If you have any details send them to Karen: 97 Old State Road, DeKalb Junction, New York 13630.

Danielle Robertson, a documentary film maker in Los Angeles, is searching for war-time chaplains. If you served in this capacity please contact her. It would be a grand opportunity to contribute to the preservation of the Battle of the Bulge history. Her address is: c/o The Image Maker, 23167 Leonora Drive, Woodland Hills, California 91367.

GEORGE A. HANDY, 84TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 334TH INFANTRY, CANNON COMPANY, sent us a long newspaper clipping regarding the newsletter at Johns Hopkins University's being used to promote the fact that there were no Nazi death camps. He asks that our members write to the universities you attended or in your state and let them know what you saw. Your letter could go a long way toward helping to deter the revisionism being spread and mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter. It's your responsibility to get the word out.



"I don't give a damn if 'The days are dwindling down to a precious few,' just bug off!"

IMPORTANT NOTICE

To comply with the non-profit status issued to VBOB by the Internal Revenue Service, this organization cannot become involved in any political cause. As VBOB chapters must also comply with this requirement, we ask that no political activities be engaged in by any chapter of this organization. This in no way infringes upon any political activity you may wish to become involved with on a personal level. It applies only to chapter and national involvement.

We must exert every effort to insure that we do not jeopardize our non-profit status. As you can well imagine, we could not maintain our activities if required to pay taxes on our income.

SIGEBERT III

In writings of the year 640, at the time of Sigebert III, the Ardenne was described as a land of horrid and vast solitude, swarming with wild beasts.

In 1944, there were no wild beasts any more, but the horror of war and fighting.

Mauldin Meets Patton

Like most soldiers on the front line, Bill Mauldin's Willie and Joe were more concerned with survival than spit and polish. It was this characterization, as real as it was, that got Mauldin into trouble with no less a figure than Gen. George S. Patton, USA.

According to Mauldin in his book *The Brass Ring*, Patton was infuriated with what he perceived to be a lack of respect for authority and the



"Now that ya mention it, Joe, it does sound like th' patter of rain on a tin roof."

military dress code in Mauldin's cartoons. "Now then, sergeant, about those pictures you draw of those god-awful things you call soldiers," Patton said upon meeting the cartoonist. "Where did you ever see soldiers like that? You know goddamn well you're not drawing an accurate representation of the American soldier. You make them look like goddamn bums. No respect for the Army, their officers, or themselves. You know as well as I do that you can't have an army without respect for officers. What are you trying to do, incite a goddamn mutiny?"

Fiercely independent, Mauldin stuck by his guns. He told Patton he was drawing only what he saw. Mauldin was never officially reprimanded, and he continued to draw the war as he saw it, without interference.

Reprinted from The Retired Officer Magazine/June 1998

IT'S R and R IN SAN FRANCISCO... BE THERE!!!

The Sad Sack in V Mail by artist George Baker



AN UPDATE ON THE WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL

By Stanley A. Wojtusik, (106th ID) VBOB V.P. Public Affairs

I suppose it might seem to many of us that the battle to erect the long overdue World War II Memorial on the Mall in Washington is as tough as the battle we fought in the Ardennes 54 years ago. As a member of the Veterans Committee for the memorial I can report that progress is being made. I know, like many of you, I had hoped that the memorial would be ready at the end of this century, but that won't happen. I do hope it can be finished not too long after that.

In the meantime, there have been a number of steps we have had to go through before ground can be broken for the monument. First, and probably most importantly, we have to have the money in the bank before that can take place. One hundred million dollars has been the target set, and Co-Chairmen, former Senator Bob Dole and Fred Smith of Federal Express have been working hard to obtain corporate and foundation support to help meet our goal.

As VBOB's representative on the committee I have been honored to represent our members in a series of presentations before the National Capital Planning Commission and the Commission of Fine Arts. Both of these organizations have to approve the design.

I am happy to report that on May 12, the National Battle Monuments Commission unveiled a revised design for the memorial and had it approved by the Fine Arts Commission. I spoke before the commission that morning and I stressed the fact that time was an important factor in building the memorial on the National Mall.

I told them about a visit to our local Veterans Hospital, and a conversation I had with a member of my division, the 106th, who was a patient there. We started talking about the monument (it was an effort for him to speak), but I did understand him when he asked, "Stan, do you think I'll be alive to see it happen." I encouraged him by assuring him that he would be, but then he stopped me with his next question, "Do you think any of us will be?" To that I could only answer "I hope so."

I say that advisedly because while there are many other worthy monuments to past wars in the nation's capital, the only World War II memorials in the Washington area are headstones in Arlington National Cemetery that mark the graves of World War II veterans.

With your help we can change that. At our National Reunion in Gettysburg last year the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge led the way with a significant contribution from our organization to the national committee. I have been happy to note that many of national veterans organizations are getting behind the fund drive. I know many of our chapters, and individual members have been adding whatever they could to support the monument. If you haven't done so, I urge you to help with whatever your means will allow.

In my mind, World War II was the most significant era in the 20th Century. It was indeed, a World War, with no spot in the world nor any person untouched by it.

I hope that united as we were in the Battle of the Bulge so many years ago, we can inspire others to get behind us and make our World War II memorial a reality in the heart of the US Capital where it belongs.

Contributions should be made out to the World War II Memorial and mailed to Tom Jones, 1837 Venango Street, Philadelphia, PA 19134



L-R: Maj. Gen. John P. Herring, Secretary, WWII Monument Committee, Stanley A. Wojtusik, Vice President, Military Affairs, and Professor Frederick St. Florian, Architect, viewing a model of the proposed WWII Monument to be erected on the Mall, Washington, DC

1998-99 PROPOSED SLATE VBOB OFFICERS

The following were nominated for VBOB Officers for the 1998-99 fiscal year:

President—George C. Linthicum
26th Infantry Division

Executive Vice President—John Dunleavy
5th Infantry—737 Tk BN

VP, Membership—Thomas F. Jones
818 Combat Military Police Company

VP, Chapters & Regions—Richard C. Schlenker
106th Infantry Division

VP, Military Affairs—Stanley A. Wojtusik
106th Infantry Division

VP, Public Affairs—John J. Hyland
84th Infantry Division

Treasurer—William P. Tayman
87th Infantry Division

Corresponding Secretary—Dorothy S. Davis
57th Field Hospital

Recording Secretary—Louis Cunningham
106th Infantry Division

Trustees (Three Years)
Sydney J. Lawrence

Renato Victor Trapani
134th Antiaircraft Artillery Gun Battalion
4268th Quartermaster Truck Company (Heavy)

Robert F. Phillips
28th Infantry Division

These nominations are submitted for your consideration. The election of officers will be held at the Annual Meeting, in conjunction with the Annual Reunion September 3-7, 1998, in San Francisco, California.

Respectfully Submitted
Stanley A. Wojtusik, Chairman
VBOB Nominating Committee

38TH REGIMENT BAGS 78 TANKS IN FOUR-DAY BULGE BATTLE

By Paul Caldwell
Stars and Stripes Unit Correspondent

[The attached was received in our office some time ago and with the passage of time, we have lost the name of the member who sent it to us. The article is reprinted from Stars and Stripes, Liege Edition, Saturday, February 9, 1945.]

With Second Infantry Division--In no sector of the First Army front did battles rage more furiously and savagely than in the mud-bogged Monschau area held by the 38th Regiment when the counter-offensive began December 17.

Doughboys who had punched their way well inside the Ruhr were forced to fight just as bitterly on the way out of the rapidly closing pocket over the same bloody ground they had taken that morning.

Then for three days and nights they beat back vicious thrusts, gave ground reluctantly, threw the German offensive off-schedule, and finally stopped the elite German troops miles short of their goal.

Bags 18 Tanks

Seventy-eight of Rundstedt's tanks, armored cars and trucks were destroyed or disabled in the bitter fighting. His dead and wounded ran well into the four figure mark.

The story of the 38th at Rotherath and Krinkelt is one of unit and individual heroism.

Aiming first at vital division supply and communication lines, the German drive forced Lt. Col. Frank T. Mildren, Las Vegas, Nevada, to pull his First Battalion back three miles, and begin a desperate two-day seesaw struggle.

During the fierce four day battle two officers from battalion headquarters improvised ways and means of dealing with the Germans. 1/Lt. Sidney B. Dane, Chicago, used cattle to effect a road block against enemy tanks, and 1/Lt. Howard Emmrich, Cincinnati, dropped anti-tank grenades from a building onto the turret of an attacking tank.

Americans Rescued

In one of the grimmest battles of the border, two platoons from Capt. Edward O. Rollings' Company C, pushed back an enemy attack led by 11 tanks. In this single engagement 50 Germans were killed, and 25 American soldiers were rescued from enemy hands.

Members of D Company, commanded by 1/Lt. Michel E. Matusko, Hadley, Massachusetts, fought with rifles, carbines and pistols, and seven men who had been captured by the Germans overpowered sentries and escaped to rejoin the fight. So rapidly did houses and barns change hands during the battle that S/Sgt Paul Hepler, Elsie, Nebraska, leader of a 30 cal. machine gun crew, was twice captured and twice escaped within 24 hours.

Company F, commanded by Capt. John W. Dumont, San Antonio, Texas, fought off three attacks within 24 hours. One attack launched by Tiger tanks and two infantry companies overran the company position, but a machine gun squad from H

Company inflicted heavy casualties. The machine gunners stuck to their gun until the entire crew was wounded. This resulted in 35 dead Germans. The second attack against F Company resulted in 40 dead Jerries.

Tanks Knocked Out

Capt. Joseph E. Skaggs, LaCrosse, Wisconsin, commanding G Company, set up a platoon in a perimeter defense around the regimental command post, after a heated firefight with the enemy. Skaggs' men captured a five man patrol, and battled tanks consistently, accounting for five with bazookas. A bazooka team composed of PFC Samuel M. DiStefano, Cannonsburg, Pennsylvania, and PFC Joseph T. Nemec, Chicago, were credited with two tanks. Another team made up of PFC Eugene X. Gillen, Jersey City, New Jersey, and PFC Albert R. Bruner, Evansville, Indiana, fired two rounds and got two more tanks. S/Sgt Alfred L. Maddux, Trio, Georgia, squad leader, disabled the fifth one.

Meanwhile the AT company, commanded by Capt. James Love, Butte, Montana, found itself filling a double role. With their nine 57 mm guns covering important road junctions, and potential tank routes, these TDs fought off an enemy attack spearheaded by 20 tanks and approximately a battalion of infantry.

One 57 knocked out two tanks, as its crew and supporting riflemen caused many enemy casualties amounting to the strength of a platoon.

Fight With Pistols

Fighting desperately to hold one gun position, Cpl. Lewis Turner, San Francisco, and PFC James Sledd, Roanoke, Virginia, although previously wounded, continued to fight the attackers with pistols long after their lines had pulled back. Next morning six dead Germans were found within the shadow of the anti-tank gun.

PFC Isabel Salazar, Houston, Texas, a cook's helper, single-handedly knocked out two enemy tanks with a bazooka at a range of 200 yards, causing a road block on an important road.

All told, the anti-tankers accounted for nine tanks.

Even regimental headquarters was not immune from action. When SS troops infiltrated and enemy tanks lumbered by within yards of the CP, they were engaged by Headquarters personnel, organized by Capt. Ralph H. Stallworth, Richmond, California, CO. ■

GOLDEN GATE in '98

18th ANNUAL

VBOB REUNION

San Francisco

Airport Marriott Hotel

September 3-7, 1998

Your host—the Golden Gate Chapter

HISTORY OF THE 5TH BELGIAN BATTALION OF FUSILIERS

Submitted by Roger Hardy
President, VBOB Chapter XXXVIII
5th Fusiliers of Belgium

1. Creation

A few days after the liberation of Belgium in the Tresignies Barracks of Charleroi on the 7th of October 1944; all the men were war volunteers. The enlistment had taken place in Mons on the 23rd of September 1944 after the call of the Belgian Government arrived from London. The 5th Belgian Fusiliers Battalion was the first unit of the Belgian Army formed on the national territory since 1940. The Tresignies Barracks had been occupied by the German Army from May 1940 until the liberation in the earliest days of September 1944.

Most of the officers, NCO's and men were ex-Resistance fighters originating from the province of Hainaut. Some Belgian instructors who landed in Normandy with the Allies completed the officering.

2. Training and Taking the Field

Rapid but intensive training in the Tresignies Barracks and on the fields around the coal mines around the Town of Charleroi until the 13th of December 1944, date of the transfer of the battalion to the 1st U.S. Army. On the same day the battalion was sent to the Ardennes in Spa, Verviers, Malmedy areas which became the theatre of the Battle of the Bulge (north sector) three days later.

3. Operations (from the Unit Campaign Diary and Reports)

From the 16th of December 1944 the 5th Belgian Battalion of Fusiliers was mixed in the Allied operations against the Germans in the Battle of the Bulge. The unit operated in the areas of Verviers, Remouchamps, Stavelot, and Malmedy and was included in the patrols along the front line; it protected the American anti-tank posts rapidly deployed.

In Malmedy (Baugnez) when passing on December 17 a few minutes before the 285th Field Artillery Observation Battalion convoy a platoon of the 5th Belgian Fusiliers escaped from the massacre of the American convoy by the SS Kampfgruppe of Colonel Peiper. The Belgian platoon was in charge of the protection of the installation and convoys of the 20th U.S. Quartermaster Company supplying the gas to the tanks on the front line.

The same platoon escaped again from the Germans around 3:00 a.m. on the 22nd of December in the forest east of Saint-Hubert and a section of this platoon reached Bastogne with a small gasoline convoy for the 101st Airborne Division. This section then succeeded in avoiding the Germans encircling through the road to Neufchateau in the dark of the night.

A company of the 5th Belgian Fusiliers patrolling along the Vesdre railway captured German paratroops. Germans wearing American uniforms were also captured by the 5th Belgian Fusiliers between Remouchamps and Stoumont when the SS Kampfgruppe Peiper arrived in this area.

On several occasions during the first days of the Battle of the

Bulge, the 5th Belgian Fusiliers operated on the first line before being relieved by American units. This happened namely between Stavelot and Malmedy during the evacuation of the gasoline dumps under enemy fire, also between Remouchamps and Stoumont when Peiper broke through and in Cour and Andrimont where two sections of Fusiliers set up a defensive post when the enemy entered in LaGleize.

In Stavelot late in the morning of the 18th of December, a platoon of 5th Fusiliers set fire to the first gasoline dumps with soldiers of the 526th Armored Infantry Battalion and 825th Tank Destroyer Battalion on the old road to Francorchamps when the SS Kampfgruppe Peiper penetrated in Stavelot.

There are then long guards and patrols in the cold and snow; these are hard trials for the unit until the 25th of January 1945. There will be dead, wounded and sick.

After a short rest period and reorganization in Verviers, Pepinster and Aubel areas, the 5th Belgian Battalion of Fusiliers penetrated into Germany in the first days of March 1945, crossing the Rhine on a boat bridge in Koenigswinter between Bonn and Remagen the end of March. The unit is in charge of protecting the communications lines of the 1st U.S. Army which rushed to the east. The Belgian Fusiliers are namely used for the security along a portion of the south flank of the Ruhr Pocket where a German army was caught.

The 5th Fusiliers maintained their progression with the 1st U.S. Army making a lot of German prisoners and on the 8th of May 1945 when the war in Europe ended the Belgians were spread along the Fulda and Werra Rivers in the southeast of Kassel whereas the Russians have arrived on the other bank of the Werra River.

The 5th Belgian Battalion of Fusiliers returned to Belgium at the end of June 1945 and the unit was dissolved on the 30th of November 1945. Most of the members went back to civilian life.

4. The Royal Association of the 5th Belgian Battalion of Fusiliers War Veterans

The Association has existed since 1946; it is comprised of three regional sections: Charleroi-Centre, Mons-Borinage, and Hainaut Occidental. Each year in the first days of October the anniversary of the unit is celebrated. In 1996, King Albert II granted permission for the 5th Fusiliers Association to wear the title of Royal.

5. Relations with the Americans

For many years the 5th Belgian Fusiliers Association has kept close relations of friendship and esteem with the Americans of SHAPE as these Americans and their families represent for the war veterans of the 5th Fusiliers Battalion their American comrades in arms of 1944-45. In addition, the 5th Fusiliers Association maintains relations with the 1st U.S. Army Headquarters.

In December 1944, at the 50th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge which was celebrated in St. Louis, Missouri, the 5th Fusiliers Veterans Association became regular members of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, Inc., as Chapter XXXVIII.

The 5th Fusiliers War Veterans Committee

LIVING LEGENDS



MEMORABLE

BULGE INCIDENTS

UNEDITED AND HERETOFORE UNPUBLISHED

Accounts of events and experiences in the Battle of the Bulge as recalled and expressed by veterans of the greatest battle ever fought by the U.S. Army in the greatest war ever fought are of much historical significance. These "close-up" combatant accounts are a complement to the study of strategy and logistics and are a legacy of an important battle and victory in the U.S. military annals.

These are priceless first-person recollections by living legends in what General Dwight D. Eisenhower foresaw as our greatest victory and Prime Minister Winston Churchill, in speaking before the House of Commons, characterized as an ever-famous American victory.

AT BASTOGNE: THE FIRST TANK BATTLE

December 16-23, 1994

Dustin M. Aughenbaugh
10th Armored Division
Combat Command B
55th Armored Engineer Battalion
Company C
Rio Rancho, New Mexico

Company C, 55th Armored Engineer Battalion, Combat Command B, (CCB) 10th Armored Division was part of General Patton's 3rd Army advancing in the vicinity of the Saar-Moselle Triangle, prior to the 16th of December 1944. As the divisional engineers, it was our job, with the help of infantry and/or recon units, to see that our armored columns could bypass or breach obstacles in the armored attack; at least that is what I had been trained and taught at the Engineer School at Ft. Belvoir, Virginia, and at the 10th Armored Division training at Camp Gordon, Georgia. We held pretty much to that type of action.

During the early afternoon of the 16th of December, 1944, while our tank column was advancing in the Ardennes we were suddenly pulled out of an attack and started moving north toward Luxembourg. That morning we had heard that something big was happening north of our position so sudden changes like this were normal. I asked the lieutenant, tank commander, what was happening; he replied, "Don't know, we were just ordered to move north; it looks like we are heading to Luxembourg." He suggested I go back to the half-track and take it easy for a while. Generally, one or two of us engineers rode with the lead tanks during an advance, besides I felt a hell'va lot safer up there than in the half track. We traveled the rest of the day and all night with an occasional stop along the way, and to add to the problem it was a bitter, cold and snowy day.

We arrived in the Bastogne area on December 17th, about 36 hours before the main elements of the 101st Airborne began to arrive on December 19th. Combat Command B, commanded by Col. Roberts, consisted of three tank columns (totaling about 70 tanks, 3,500 men with about 18 units of the 609th Tank Destroyer Battalion, our own mobile artillery, armored infantry,

AAA and other supporting units). As I understand, when the 101st Airborne arrived on December 19th, CCB was then attached to Gen. McAuliffe's command of the 101st Airborne.

Our armored column, known as Desbory's Column, took up positions and prepared to defend the approaches to Noville which was about 3 miles (or more) north of Bastogne. The other two columns, known as Cherry and O'Hare, took up offensive positions to the east at Longvilly and Wardin. This way we established an MLD for the area, and about this same time, enemy tank fire started falling near our positions. You could see the German tanks moving over the ridge through the fog or blowing snow. Fortunately, they were either Mark 4's or Panthers, but you had to keep your head down and on that frozen ground it was difficult. Our TD's with their '76' rifles did a very accurate job that first day. As I remember with high German initial losses it forced them to withdraw back over the ridge. I did not see many enemy ground troops with their armor in that attack; however, the Krauts were laying down a lot of machine gun and small arms fire which made preparing the MLD almost impossible. Most of our work was done after dark on the night of the 17th of December. I was a demolition man, so at night we kept busy with preparing obstacles and, mostly, laying mines all of which made life a little exciting. Our 6 lb. mines were so ineffective they couldn't blow dirt off of the enemy tank tracks, so we, engineers and few armored infantry, would generally try to stack the mines or add 6 lbs. or more of additional TNT to the mine to make them as effective as the Krauts telemines, that is if we had time to dig the holes or rig them with prima cord.

On December 19th, our (Desbory's) tank column pulled back west of Noville to form part of the Bastogne circle on the north and east side of Bastogne. In the process of withdrawing to the MLD, Lt. Col. Desbory with most of the command post were wounded and taken prisoner. About this same time the men of the 101st were moving in with our tank teams to help secure the circle around Bastogne. It was years later that I learned that at the same time, CCB of the 9th Armored Division was providing armor on the west and south sides of the Bastogne Circle. To me, it was just another battle in another area. I did not know I

was in Belgium let along the town name which meant nothing to me; of course, later on, while in the hospital, I heard about this big battle of the war and I didn't know I was even involved.



Under enemy machine gun fire while removing mines and obstacles.

I had been wounded by machine gun fire in early November during the Metz offensive; and after escaping from the convalescent hospital, I managed to return to my unit just two weeks prior to the Bulge. Then on the night of December 20th., I was wounded with shrapnel, so I remember very little of the battle conditions after that night; but, I do remember that first clear day when all of our planes were overhead making us feel good.

Gen. McAuliffe later paid us a great compliment when he said, "It always seems regrettable to me that CCB of the 10th Armored Division didn't get the credit it deserved in the Battle of Bastogne. The 10th Armored Division was in there the day before we were and had some very hard fighting. We would never have been able to get into Bastogne if it had not been for the defensive fighting...of the 10th Armored Division."

BOMBS AWAY

December 1944

Warren Thurston
III Corps
Headquarters
Washington, DC

I was fortunate enough to be assigned to III Corps Headquarters during the Battle of the Bulge. This headquarters was assembled in a large stone building, which had been used as a school building.

From the outside of the building very little activity could be seen. On the inside every man and every specialty was busy sending messages or materials to forward units.

Whenever there was a clear day, the Air Force would go out in force with bombs and with reconnaissance planes taking pictures. These were rushed to the units on the line. The snow

slowed movement on both sides. The study of positions was vital. There were some Luftwaffe planes which made a few passes over the III Corps Headquarters. We knew when the bombers were coming because the sirens would sound and the antiaircraft batteries would start firing. One day I was standing inside an open door. Several feet outside of the building a lieutenant was standing. He must have started to move sooner than I did. He dashed across the room and slid under a plank table. I was right behind, but I didn't get all the way to the wall. For a long time after I wore a patch on my chin where I had slid against his boot heel.

When the recon planes came over we did not shoot at them. In the evening they were called Bed-check Charlie. One night we heard a different sound. The AA batteries opened up, I had heard three explosions through the building. I heard several voices say: "He has 4." Very soon I heard the sound of a bomber...very close and then I heard the falling bomb whistle... (I hope you never hear the sound of a bomb near your roof.) I stopped abruptly followed by a crashing sound of the roof and the ceilings of the upper floors being broken. The bomb had not been ignited as it fell, the fuse was knocked off by the heavy tile roof. The bomb disposal squad ran into the basement and began digging it out. As soon as it was inert they put ropes and straps under it and carried it to the next level up and then out behind a stone wall. On the way back into the headquarters I heard one of them say: "Two men can carry a 500 pound bomb stairs, like we just did."

SPREADING CONFUSION

December 17, 1944

Arch C. Jack
28th Infantry Division
687th Field Artillery Battalion
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

C Battery was under small arms fire. Loaded vehicle and took off for return to battalion headquarters. Observed fires burning on hill across valley.

On the way we met a jeep with two lieutenants coming from where we were headed. We stopped them to inquire about the safety of the road back to our battalion headquarters. The driver told me our headquarters (Hotel Du Moulin) was on fire and told me to turn around and report to higher headquarters. We turned around and headed in the direction from which we had come.

At a crossroad Major McKean was directing traffic. We told him about the contact with the two lieutenants and he said, "I think you have just seen the enemy." Thinking back about the contact with the jeep I realized that it was unusual for two officers to be traveling in a jeep without an EM driver and I recalled the one riding as a passenger slowly letting his hand drop to a carbine while we talked.

In all the confusion it did not occur to me that these actions were unusual. In fact we had seen the enemy and those two tore out continuing to create confusion. I proceeded on to our battalion headquarters and it was not on fire. Preparation was in progress to move out. All firing batteries were shooting many missions. Ammo was running low. Communications were out from time to time.

A BULGE GHOST TOWN

December, 1944

Robert Mertens
9th Armored Division
14th Tank Battalion
Service Company
New Holstein, Wisconsin

I had an interesting experience while our tank battalion was fighting in the St. Vith area.

I was in Service Company. We were sent back to St. Hubert for gasoline and ammunition. We had about 10 trucks and knew how much of each kind of ammunition to get and how much gasoline in five gallon cans.

It was quite a long trip. When we got to St. Hubert, it was too late to get the gas and ammo and then return to the battalion without driving at night.

There was a circle at the center of the town and GIs were all over the place. There was a church on the circle so we took our bedrolls into the church and slept there.

We woke next morning and found everything was dead. Not a soul anywhere! We were the only guys left in town! We had no idea why everyone else left the town and I still don't know today.

We found some MPs who gave us directions to where we found ammunition stacked along a trail. We loaded the ammo then went further to get the gasoline which was stored in railroad cars.

There was a 2d lieutenant in charge of the gasoline dump. He said, "There is no way anybody is getting any gas out of here because it is all promised for somebody." He said he had been told that nobody else could have that gasoline.

"Now wait awhile," I said. I then ordered my driver, Rudy Kocurek, to man the .50 caliber machine gun mounted on the top of our vehicle.

"Now," I said, "we'll see whether we get any gasoline. We're not leaving until our trucks are loaded." With that, the lieutenant stepped aside and watched as we loaded the trucks.

On the return trip from St. Hubert to our battalion, we were warned by the MPs that German snipers were in the area but we returned without any problem.

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24 HOURS, A PRISONER OF THE WAFFEN SS

December 23, 1944

Bruce A. Crissinger
823 Tank Destroyer Battalion
Battery A
Mechanicstown, Ohio

Somewhere, perhaps halfway to Remouchamps, Major Hal McCown, CO of the 2nd Battalion, 119th Infantry, pulled up beside me in his jeep and told me I was to attach one platoon to his battalion. I gave him the 1st Platoon under First Lieutenant Art Cunningham. We went through Remouchamps, turned south up the beautiful Ambleve River Valley to Stoumont, and about dark went into very insecure positions. Sometime during the morning, after the Germans had shelled the town with direct tank

fire, the 6x6 trucks which had hauled the infantry into Stoumont were ordered to leave. They came down the hill from the north of town and turned back the way we came toward Remouchamps. The point I wish to emphasize is that never in my life have I seen 6x6 truck engines revved up so fast or take a corner the way they did. And I don't blame them.

After being chased out of Stoumont and losing all the eight towed guns of the 1st and 3rd Platoons, I sent the men back to Remouchamps. Tom Springfield, with his platoon of four M-10s, and Art Cunningham and I stayed where Lieutenant Colonel Robert Hurlong, CO, 1st Battalion, 119th Infantry, had his roadblock at Stoumont Station with an odd mixture of supporting armor. Springfield and I walked back toward Stoumont, approaching an M-36 with a 99mm gun. About that time a Mark V tank came down the hill from the direction of Stoumont. The M-36 fired, the Panther was hit, then slewed to a top in the ditch and was dead. To my knowledge that was the farthest point of advance the Germans made in the 30th Division sector in the Battle of the Bulge.

On the morning of 23 December Stoumont had been retaken by Lieutenant Colonel Hurlong's 1st Battalion, 119th Infantry. His battalion was stopped in the valley west of LaGleize. My 2nd Platoon, with its four M-10s, was supporting Lieutenant Colonel Hurlong's battalion. The 1st and 3rd Platoons had not yet been rearmed. Colonel Hurlong told me that enemy tank fire had knocked out three Shermans and to see what we could do about it. Lieutenant Cunningham and I walked toward LaGleize on a macadam road, under a railroad overpass where a dead German soldier lay, and a few hundred yards farther to a hilltop. From a bank on the left of the road an infantry soldier spoke to us. He said his position was the outpost and that an enemy machine gun had been firing out of his front. There was nothing between him and the enemy. We continued down the hill for perhaps one or two hundred yards when we were fired on by a machine gun--not a burp gun. The bullets came so close that they cracked like Chinese firecrackers. We hit the ditch with Cunningham facing the front and I the other way. Another burst brought dirt from the bank down by my face. Cunningham jumped up, turned around and hit the ditch again. Another burst got him in the arm. He said, "That one got me." Then, shortly afterwards, "I'm going out." From that time on I did not see Art Cunningham again until we met in the States after the war. I stayed where I was and listened to our 105mm shells going over, hoping they would hit that machine gun. After about a half hour heard footsteps on the road, then some one kicked me on the foot. I looked up and there were two German soldiers staring at me. They did not wear the usual coal scuttle helmet but rather tanker or paratrooper headgear. They took everything I had of value, broke the M-1 rifle I was carrying, and we took off down a bank to the south of the road, picking up some German tank ammunition that had been air dropped. We climbed a steep high bank into a grove of evergreen trees and into a rather large bunker, made by digging a pit, then covering it with tree trunks and dirt.

There I was, jammed in with several Germans, some probably officers and the good old American artillery was pounding the grove. I was turned over to a rather small, thin soldier with a hair-lip who was carrying a machine pistol. He took me through various manned positions with machine guns, etc. As we came up a lane into LaGleize a Mark IV tank came out and the tank commander swiveled his periscope around to get a good look at

me. I was turned over to an interrogation officer in a building. He was originally from Chicago and spoke perfect English. He had a shrapnel hole in his helmet and was not very happy. From there I was taken to a cellar under a house. An SS soldier with a Schmeisser machine pistol ("burp gun") sat on guard at the top of the stairs. There were 30 or 40 American GIs in the cellar including four A Company men.

Some time later that evening, maybe 9 or 10 o'clock, we heard fire crackling in the house above us, compliments of the American artillery, probably white phosphorous rounds. We were ordered out by the guard. There was absolutely no panic; everyone went out in a quiet and orderly manner. But the scene in the street beside the house was chaotic; the town was burning, the 30 or 40 GIs were huddled together, our artillery was shelling the town, and a very wild looking SS man was swinging an assault rifle 44 around. He looked at me and yelled, "Offizier, Offizier!" (Officer, Officer!) Since he spoke with an accent it took me several moments to realize he wanted me.

I was then taken to the command post of SS Lieutenant Colonel Joachim Peiper, who commanded a Kampfgruppe (a brigade-sized formation) of the 1st SS Panzer Division. (It was this unit which had murdered the 84 Americans at Baugez, near Malmedy, on 17 December.) The CP was in a cellar that you entered from an outside entrance. I think there was a blanket for a door. I went in and for some reason realized who was in command, and snapped probably the best salute I ever gave. I think he returned the salute. Peiper was wearing a type of coverall and no helmet. He spoke slow, good, but not perfect English. He told me of an SS captain who had knocked out 24 British Shermans with his Tiger in one engagement in Normandy the previous summer.

Shortly thereafter, Major Hal McCown was brought in. He gave me a quick and surprised handshake. After a little conversation, the purpose of the meeting was made clear. (There were several other German officers in attendance.) Peiper's force was surrounded and out of fuel. They were going to slip through American lines that night taking McCown along as a hostage. I was to lead an ambulance convoy, under a flag of truce, loaded with German wounded who were then in the cellars of LaGleize. When this was accomplished McCown would be released. Peiper wrote a note explaining the plan which I later gave to Colonel Sutherland, CO, 119th Infantry. He rightfully ignored it, and anyway McCown escaped during the night march.

I was then taken by a German sergeant to another cellar where there were four or five wounded German officers and a German doctor. Some time during the evening, perhaps in the first cellar, a bucket containing boiled potatoes was passed around. I ate one and it sure tasted good. I spent the rest of the night in this cellar with the wounded Germans and was freed the next morning, 24 December, when the 119th Infantry occupied the town against no opposition. I was surprised at the venom the infantry showed toward the few German walking wounded still in LaGleize. Anyone with American equipment including boots had to remove it. Several were walking barefoot on a very cold morning. I learned later that their anger was because of the Malmedy Massacre. I am glad I did not know about it while I was a prisoner.

I then made my way back to my company and reassumed command, none the worse for wear.

.....

COMRADESHIP

December 15, 1944

**Joseph W. Bulkeley
10th Armored Division
61st Armored Infantry Battalion
Company B
Clearwater, Florida**

I believe that the average American armored division of WWII trained two years before they left for overseas, and because of this Company B, 61st Armored Infantry Battalion, 10th Armored division was my home away from home from the middle of November 1942 to the day when I became a prisoner of the Germans on February 26, 1945. Because of this, comradeship and friendship with your fellow soldier was the very life blood of being away from home and in the army.

My friend and good buddy for a little more than two full years was Hugh A. O'Neill, who became our communications sergeant overseas. When we got orders to pack up and move out about December 17, 1944, one of our combat commands headed for Bastogne while the other (my outfit) headed for Luxembourg where we were close to Luxembourg City and the headquarters of General Omar Bradley.

On Christmas night after we had been in the lines most of the time from December 18 to that time, units of the 5th Infantry Division stole into our forest and took over our positions. In a magnificent moonlit night we marched single file out of our forest and followed a snowy road for about ten miles to an area where our halftacks and other vehicles picked us up and brought us to our Christmas dinner. It was so cold we ate with our mittens on and the cranberry sauce in our mess kits had a thin film of ice over it, but this is a story of a comradeship that can develop when you have known men for two full years. O'Neill was there and we could eat our Christmas dinner together. When I wrote home and described O'Neill to my family I told them: He is my mother and my brother.

DID YOU ENJOY THESE STORIES??

**Well, people would enjoy
your story too!!**

We still have a few stories on hand, but they are rapidly being used up. So, get your story into the mail soon. Be as brief as possible, and confine the contents to **one incident during the Bulge.**

SEND IN YOUR STORY

MEDICS

by Charles R. Connor
87th Infantry Division
335th Field Artillery Battalion

When they pass out those Silver Stars,
Purple Hearts and such
Please don't forget those certain guys
You don't hear about too much.
Their job is nothing quite fancy,
They never gained much fame.
Known to all as "pill-rollers"
But you'd better believe are game.
I'm only a little known "red-leg"
Don't suppose you know of our "rep"
We used to kid this "pill-brigade"
Cause they never kept in step.
This is a war-time story,
In seeing what had to be done.
To change my views, and your's too
Of those living under sights of a gun.
One morning fragments and bullets a "zinging"
In a fox-hole but still very alert.
The shelling arriving, and it's no "jiving"
As tiny dust clouds churning the dirt.
At the time, I wished I were smaller,
How I longed for the comforts of home.
To be anywhere, but there I swear,
From Savannah to hell's catacombs.
My buddy in a hole near me
A hundred or so yards ahead.
It was impossible for me to reach him
I had given him up for dead.
Then arrived two battalion medics
Started out to get him, I know
They never hesitated, their fate awaited
For their mission, so brazen, so "go."
They just hunched their shoulders in the offing
Amid rifle and cannon fire.
They went out and got my buddy,
On a mission could cause them to die.
They saw their duty and did it
Without fan-fare, action or talk
And so professional their actions
As if just going for a walk.
It's alright in facing the enemy
And to have him shooting at you
If you have an automatic weapon
And you can do some shooting too.
But believe me it takes some courage
To look death straight in the eye

But to help someone, who is under the gun
When you're probably the one to die.
Their "Red badge of courage" most evident
Field of white, blazen red cross within
We call then non-combatants
Not only very good soldiers, but also very tall
men. ■

THE REPLACEMENT

By John E. McAuliffe
87th Infantry Division
347th Infantry

I was called to war, and I was just a lad
The battle lines were rent and soldier's hopes were sad.
I was trained to fight, to join the Infantry
The battle lines now fixed, by soldiers just like me.
I became a number, and joined the battle fray
Shells and 88s, were fired to come my way.
I became a 'veteran,' as those before me had
I was called to war, and I was just a lad. ■

"A RETURN TO GLORY"

20,000 Veterans Can't Be Wrong!
They've Done It!

Exaggerations are common in the world of promotions. Everyone's beer or gas—or widget is better than the other—or offers the "eternal blessing" everyone seeks. But this time, the WWII veterans who have returned to "the Bulge" during the past half-century can authenticate the claims. 20,000??? There's probably a lot more—but the number is not the important issue—it is YOU—the veteran of the biggest battle in US history.

JOIN other Bulge veterans and their families who have already registered for the St. Louis Chapter of the VBOB return to Europe on October 15th. It is a marvelous journey—beginning in the Verdun-St. Mihiel-Meuse Argonne sectors of WWI renown...the largest American battles until "the Bulge."

This is truly a "who's who" of the Battle of the Ardennes (the formal name). You will see where the battle started, follow the incredible route of Col. Peiper's spearhead which created "The Bulge" and visit "your own special places" as we cover the sites of action on both the North and South shoulders. YOU will remember the names if not all of the places; Skyline Drive, Bastogne, Clervaux, the Losheim Gap, Elsenborn Ridge, Bullingen, Malmedy, and much more.

The tour is in a "GO" position. Call Galaxy Tours—toll-free—at 1-800-523-7287 for a detailed brochure or contact the "Gateway" (St. Louis Chapter) Kent Stephens at 618-344-1616. It will be "your best call" in a long time—allowing you to do something that most people never have the chance to experience, "reliving YOUR personal history" in the places where it all happened. There is nothing like it!

Who Really Liberated Bastogne?

By Mitchell Kaidy
87th Infantry Division

Fifty-three years after World War II, not even those who spilled blood fully appreciate the 87th Infantry Division's magnificent and decisive role during the largest land battle ever fought by American troops. That was the Battle of the Bulge, or Ardennes campaign, as the U.S. Army referred to it.

We were young, barely battle-tested, yet well-educated—hardly the textbook characteristics of a tough, efficient military unit. Exhausted from a bone-numbing 300-mile road march in open trucks from the Saar Valley by way of Rheims, France, on December 29, 1944, we were thrown against the mass offensive ordered by Adolph Hitler to capture the key highway center of Bastogne and drive on to the Belgian supply ports.

The numerically-superior Nazis, who had caught American troops by surprise, were making headway when a few days before our arrival they boldly delivered an ultimatum to Bastogne, threatening "annihilation" if the 101st Airborne Division and attached troops didn't surrender.

With almost no patrolling to feel out the enemy, we were thrown into the raging battle the way shock troops are flung into a melee. On orders of the bold and implacable Lt. Gen. George S. Patton, both the 87th and 11th Armored Divisions virtually walked into the arms of a waiting enemy—and predictably suffered high casualties.

Why was it done that way? And what did we accomplish of significance to the ultimate victory? Deeply embedded in history, tiny kernels of enlightenment are as difficult to pry out as digging a foxhole during the frigid Bulge. But they are there, in the deeply-researched accounts of Robert F. Merriam, chief of the Ardennes Section of the E.T.O. historical division; plus books written by Maj. Gen. Troy H. Middleton, the 8th Corps commander, the private notes of Third Army Commander Patton, and other histories.

Arriving 13 days after the first Nazi thrusts, we attacked towns outside Bastogne that the Germans had specifically boasted as their strongpoints—the ones they cited in the surrender ultimatum delivered to Brig. Gen. Anthony McAuliffe, evoking the legendary quip, "Nuts."

In one revealing sentence of the softcover volume *The Battle of the Bulge*, Robert Merriam confirms the critical and heroic role of the 87th/11th Armored attacks. On page 153, he writes perceptively: "Their progress was tediously slow, their casualties exorbitantly high; all of them new to combat, they had to fight in the severest cold, on icy roads over which tank movements were almost impossible. These new troops had been moved over long distances, and then immediately committed to action with little time for reconnaissance."

Now appears the assessment that puts the 87th Division's accomplishment into perspective: "But had the attack been delayed long enough for adequate reconnaissance, it is probable the Germans would have launched another attack, and surrounded Bastogne."

Writing in his diary that was published after the war, Gen. Patton sounded a similar theme. On December 29, the two divisions "jumped off west of Bastogne and ran right into the flank of a large German counterattack headed toward Bastogne." This "meeting engagement" or two attacking armies clashing proved to

be fortunate for the Americans, for that day the Nazis launched "probably the biggest coordinated counterattack that troops under my command have ever experienced."

Of his order for the two divisions to attack immediately on arrival, Patton told his diary: "Every one of the generals involved urged me to postpone the attack, but I held to my plan, although I did not know this German attack was coming. Some call it luck, some genius. I call it determination."

Next to Patton, the man who had the most tactical impact on the 87th Division was Maj. Gen. Troy H. Middleton, cited in World War I as the Army's premier tactician whose decision to defend Bastogne was publicly lauded by Patton as "a stroke of genius." In his biography published by Louisiana State University, Middleton discussed how, once the two divisions arrived, he planned to relieve Bastogne. "The 101st was to hold its position at Bastogne, and the other three (divisions) were to swing north, with the 87th and the 11th carrying the main load." The third division was the 17th Airborne, which was delayed in arriving until January 4, 1945.

That was the plan; those were the carefully-plotted objectives. However, because the 11th Armored absorbed heavy casualties and the 17th Airborne was delayed, the plan didn't fully function. Instead of the tanks boldly taking the lead, they faltered, and the 11th's commanding general asked Middleton for permission to drop back one of his three combat commands. "This would leave CCA's vacated area to the infantrymen of the 87th," Middleton reveals in his biography.

Then appears on page 267 this telling statement: "While the 11th's armor had stalled, the infantrymen of the 87th were more successful on the Corps' left... On December 31, January 1, and January 2, the 87th's infantrymen fought well in snow, sleet, and deepening cold. They accomplished their mission of cutting the highway linking the Germans at St. Hubert with supply sources back in Germany." The armored division, according to Middleton, later achieved "some limited success," but ultimately its commanding general had to be relieved.

In popular lore, a battalion of the 4th Armored Division is credited with relieving Bastogne and lifting its siege. There is a cast plaque outside Bastogne that makes this claim. In fact, that battalion accomplished little more than boosting morale in Bastogne. It broke through and made contact with some of the troopers, but if the dictionary definition of "siege" is minimally observed, that battalion did not lift the Nazi threat of annihilation. Bastogne remained subject to attacks on three sides; the tank contact certainly did not alter that stark fact.

A siege, according to the dictionary, is a sustained attempt to capture an objective. After the 4th Armored's tenuous and temporary contact with Bastogne, Hitler ordered his "best divisions" to make unflagging attempts to subdue the city, Merriam and other historians agree. In *Battle: The Story of the Bulge* (page 325), John Toland quotes the following order by General Model to the front: "I don't care how heavy your losses are. The Fuhrer insists you encircle the town and wipe it out."

Initially, Hitler's best divisions were repelled by the 87th Division/11th Armored tandem, plus other units. But while the 11th Armored faltered, the 87th "fought well." Consequently, major credit for lifting the siege of Bastogne must logically go to the division which doggedly drove on to capture the key Nazi strongpoints—Libramont, St. Hubert, Moiryc, Pironpre, and after a week of bloody and sometimes hand-to-hand combat, wrested away the town of Tillet—the final blow that, as Patton put it,

(continued on next page)

"stopped them cold."

Was Bastogne really the key to winning the Battle of the Bulge? Letter writers to the *Bulge Bugle*, as well as otherwise well-informed books, make the case for other phases of the battle. Both Patton and Middleton insisted that Bastogne was the key, but you could accuse them of being self-serving.

Two authorities that could not be accused of partiality or prejudice are German. Gen. Hasso van Manteuffel was the tactical commander of German forces around Bastogne. In *Patton: Ordeal and Triumph*, Von Manteuffel is quoted by author Ladislav Farago as follows: "The importance of Bastogne was considerable. In enemy hands it must influence all the movements in the west, damage our supply system, and tie up considerable German forces. It was therefore essential that we capture it at once."

And on the authority of Germany's second highest ranking official, Reichmarshal Hermann Goering, later tried for war crimes, Bastogne was unqualifiedly "the keystone of the entire offensive."

Other divisions were in the line much longer than the 87th, and some, such as the 4th Armored, Big Red One, and 101st Airborne, achieved fame for their deeds. If, however, as Gen. Patton once said, the 101st Airborne fought well but received too much credit, then the 87th Division fought well but received too little credit.

Libramont, St. Hubert, Moiricy, Pironpre, Tillet... Overcoming inexperience and meager initial patrolling, as well as the fendering of a coordinating unit, those were victories that broke the back of the huge Nazi surprise offensive and liberated Bastogne; and they were critical contributions by the 87th (Golden Acorn) Division toward winning the Battle of the Bulge, America's largest and bloodiest battle in history.

Remember those battles well. Now and forever.



Lull in the battle. GI dances with Red Cross worker.
(US Army Signal Corps photo)

UNIT HISTORIES

You will recall several issues back, we invited all units to submit a unit history to make up a special issue devoted exclusively to the units. Well, we haven't received enough of them yet to accomplish this objective. If you haven't sent your contribution in yet, please do so. We think this will be a very interesting and worthwhile endeavor. Thanks for your attention to this.

ANOTHER MYSTERY

From Associate Member Roger Marquet

[Elsewhere in this issue is an article regarding the Sherman tank in Bastogne. Roger presented us with this and he now offers us another puzzler which he hopes you will be able to help him solve. Let us know.]

On December 24, 1944, the Germans again tried to enter the Bastogne perimeter. In Champs, a village northwest of Bastogne, the 77th Regiment of the 26th Volksgrenadier Division, was repelled by the 502nd Parachute Infantry Regiment of the 101st Airborne Division (especially Company A). In the 502nd area the lines were again in solid by 09:00 on December 25th. No one of the German infantry had managed to escape. Company A counted 98 Germans killed and 78 enlisted men plus 2 officers captured in the Champs action.

George E. Koskimaki's book *The Battered Bastards of Bastogne* recounts these captures and particularly the efforts of Sergeants Asay, Zweibel and Merlano who found many POW's cleaning out houses and hidden in haystacks--a total of over 80. Captain Swanson relates having found an officer hiding under a white sheet as he ascended a church steeple after having been assured all Germans had been captured.

After the battle, Belgian civilians discovered on the blackboard of the community school (close to the church) a poem in German which had been signed "A German Officer."

The poem is believed to have read:

"May the world never see again such a Christmas Eve.
Nothing is crueller than to die from a gun shot, far away
from one's mother, one's wife and one's children.
Is robbing a son from his mother, a husband from his wife,
a father from his children, worthy of a human being?
Life can only be given to us and accepted from us to love
and respect each other.

It is from the ruins, the blood and death that will truly
arise a brotherly world.

A German Officer"

Since the Germans had occupied the school for a while, and since only two officers were captured and no one escaped, it is possible that the German officer captured by Wallace Swanson was the one who wrote the poem on the blackboard. Some people do not believe the poem was written by a German officer, but may have been written by one of the school teachers upon their return to work.

Does anyone remember seeing the poem? Can you provide any further information? If so, please write to Roger at: Fonds de Foret 67; B-4870 Trooz, Belgium.

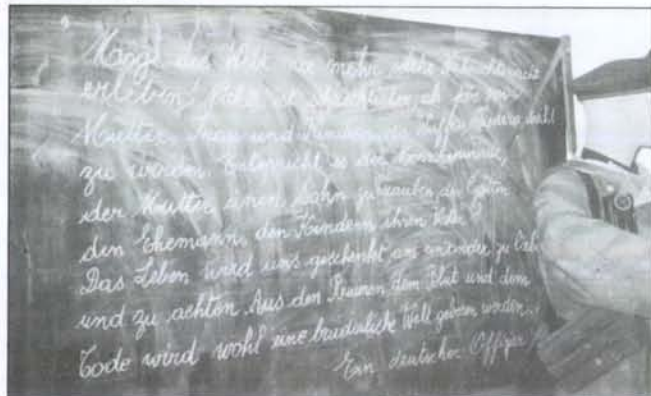


Photo by Jacques Degive depicts poem as displayed at the Maison Matelin Museum in Bastogne in 1994. □

AS ALWAYS... ...A FRIEND IN NEED

Sergeant Floyd Swan, of Shafter, California, greets his dog at the door of his dugout near a village in northern Belgium, where Sergeant Swan has been fighting with his 99th Division of the First U.S. Army. On the northern flank of the enemy salient into the Ardennes, the Americans captured several villages and by January 9, 1945, were reported controlling more than 15 miles of the St. Vith-Laroche road, one of the main enemy supply lines. Lieutenant General Courtney Hodges' men had captured high ground of Thiordument Ridge, near Salm Chateau.



Photo by the U.S. Signal Corps (#WTO-H-45-5967). The photo was sent in by Jean Nickels.

Does anyone know the whereabouts of Sergeant Swan? If so ask him to write to Frank Kieffer, Maison 108, L-9940 Asselborn, Luxembourg. □

FIELD MARSHAL KARL GERD VON RUNDSTEDT

[The following article appeared in the newsletter of the Northwest Chapter of VBOB in March, 1998.]

During the Normandy Campaign the illustrious field marshal was ordered to send his report to Berlin. His abrupt reply was, "Stop the war, you fools." For this Hitler relieved him of his command but eventually summoned him for the last desperate gamble in the Ardennes, which he and his staff were dead against. Said Von Rundstedt, "If Von Molke thought I had planned this offensive he would turn in his grave."

The "Watch on the Rhine" offensive was a monumental failure and revealed his "Bohemian Corporal" as an inadequate military leader grossly underestimating the ability of the Allies against his overestimated forces. When captured and interrogated in 1945 he listed the four major reasons for the defeat of the German forces:

- The most important was the tremendous air superiority of

the Allies which hampered German troop movements.

- The destruction of Romanian oil fields deprived the entire war machine of high grade fuels and lubricants.
- The systematic destruction of German railroads, bridges, and communications.
- The relentless pulverization of Germany's industrial centers. □

5TH INFANTRY DIVISION

[The following is an excerpt from a broadcast February 21, 1945, which was transmitted as indicated over a nation-wide "hookup" in the United States. It was sent to us by LEONARD LOIACONO, 5TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 50TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION, COMPANY A.]

Blue Network: Vincent Sheean, author of "Personal History" - Between the Thunder and the Sun".

...The division was then slated for the Saar campaign, but as you all know, Rundstedt sprang his counter-offensive in the Ardennes and there was a big reshuffle. The 5th made one of those quick changes which characterize General Patton's manoeuvring of troops, and through December and January they were engaged in helping to drive the Germans back into Germany.

In the past month they have made a steady advance which I have been privileged to watch from time to time. It started just about a month ago with a river crossing to Diekirch, and then proceeded on up the skyline drive for a bit before it turned east. The high point of this recent action was the crossing of the Sauer River right smack into the Siegfried Line. You have heard all about that--the high cliffs on each side of the river; the swift current of the stream; the German mortar and direct machine gun fire. How the GI's did it I will never be able to understand, but they did. And having made the crossing, they proceeded to crawl up those murderous hillsides, among the pillboxes, and capture them one by one. Sometimes they did it with dynamite and sometimes machine guns and rifles were enough. The company and platoon leaders, the young second lieutenants, the sergeants, those who lead the smallest groups of men, are probably the reason why these determined assaults succeeded so well. To an infantry GI there is nobody on earth more important than his company commander, and under the conditions of this attack on the Siegfried Line he is absolutely right. If the company and platoon leaders, the lieutenants, had not been very good indeed, we would still be on this side of the river looking across.

... I have been telling you about this one division as a sort of sample or suggestion of what a good infantry division can be. There are lots of others, too. This particular one impresses me as knowing what it is doing--I get that from the top on down, from Major General S. LeRoy Irwin, who commands it, right on through all I have seen of it down to the GI with a rifle. This comes of training, experience and pride. The division insignia is a red diamond. They wear it as a patch on the left shoulder. Remember it--it is a very honorable badge, and you will be seeing it in the victory parade. □

Did you check to see if your dues were due?

DEAD GERMAN FROZEN IN THE ICE OF THE ARDENNES

JOSEPH P. BARRETT, 474TH ANTI-AIRCRAFT ARTILLERY BATTALION, sent in the following article. He explains, "This story was written 50 years after the incident occurred. If I had written it shortly after the war I don't believe I would have included the kind sentiments towards the end of the story. Many years after the war I had a spiritual conversion experience in which I had to forgive my enemies. It was very difficult for me to forgive the Germans and the Japanese. These sentiments flow from that decision."

It was in the dead of winter in the Ardennes Forest when I saw the dead German soldier. We pulled our half track up against a farm house and moved our second platoon command post inside. We set up our radios inside running wires out to the half track.

The road which ran past the house was a busy thoroughfare with all sorts of army vehicles passing by. It was near New Year's Day and we were counter attacking the Wermach. There had been any number of snow storms. It wasn't like living in a row house in Philadelphia where after it snowed everyone went out and shovelled it out in the street. It would snow and pile up on the branches of the trees, like dust on wine bottles in the wine cellar of a French chateau.

During the day when the sun was at its brightest between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., the heat of the sun would melt the snow ever so slightly. Then when the moon came out it gave the snow a slight glisten. Standing guard at say 2:00 a.m., a lonely soldier could look out across the countryside and see the whole place glistening in the moonlight. The only sounds were the rounds of artillery fire going overhead, sounding like bowling balls rumbling down an alley. Don't those artillery guys ever sleep? Or off in the distance one could hear the slow firing of the American 50's answering the more rapid German machine guns.

Then came the dawn and the traffic began and someone said, "Did you see the dead German?"

"No."

"Where?"

"In the road in front of the door."

"Damn." There he was some ten inches below the roadway. Frozen stiffer than a piece of concrete. The repeated snow falls had come down upon him one after the other and turned into ice under the weight of the trucks, jeeps and tanks passing over him.

GI's running in and out of the door. Carrying messages. Going to chow.

He was quite clear in his gray Wermach uniform. Brown hair matted in which had been wet snow on his once sweating head. He was sprawled face down. Arms outstretched. Hands clasping the snow. Legs spread. Hobnails listening in the ice.

But no one notices. No one cares.

"See the dead soldier. Dead kraut. Right in front of the door. Freezing his ass off."

Somewhere in Germany his photograph is on his mother's mantle or in a gold frame on his girl friend's bureau.

Please pray for dear Fraus because no one is saying for him an Ora pro nobis or more appropriately a Segne du, Marie, segne mich, dein Kind (German holy cards).

Thank God dear Fraus that he died face down in the sown and can't see the armor column that is coming through the woods down the little road which runs in front of the farm house and across the fields. ■

DO YOU KNOW THE ANSWER?

[The following was sent to us by JAMES LYNN, 573RD SIGNAL AIR WARNING BATTALION (RADAR). It appeared in the 573rd newsletter "Sawbuck Gazette."]

Joe Newman, 602nd TCS, Jessup, Maryland, has collected extensive historical documents about the 555th SAW Battalion. He found the TWX copied below and sent it to Jim Lynn, author of a history of the 573rd, who in turn sent it to your editor.

The popular conception is that intelligence dried up when the Allied reached the border of Germany in November, 1944; largely because the German Army was able to use secure telephone lines instead of radio, and the natives were uncooperative. The Germans were on the defensive and could not possibly stage a major offensive, especially in the Ardennes. Consequently when the weather was completely rotten and Germans attacked on 16 December, there was almost complete surprise.

The TWX indicates that there was good information available almost a week before the attack. Questions: Were the Allies too complacent? Didn't they have confidence in their intelligence?

"10 Dec 44

IX TAC 253 E

Commanding Officer, 555 Sig AW Bn

THE FOLLOWING NINTH AIR FORCE TWX IS QUOTED FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND APPROPRIATE ACTION QUOTE

RECENT INTELLIGENCE RPTS INDICATE THAT THERE HAS BEEN A SUBSTANTIAL BUILDING UP IN THE ENEMY FTR AND FTR/BOMBER FORCES IN WESTERN GERMANY TO THE EXTENT THAT A PENETRATION TO A DISTANCE OF SIX ZERO MILES BEHIND EXISTING FRONT LINES IS ENTIRELY POSSIBLE PD SUCH AN EFFORT APPEARS MOST LIKELY TO OCCUR IN FIRST AND NINTH US ARMY AREAS AND INDICATIONS POINT TO SUCH AN ATTEMPT WITHIN THE NET TWO WEEKS PD ALL AIRFIELD COMMANDERS WILL BE ADVISED ACCORDINGLY AND TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT POSSIBLE EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES WILL BE DISPERSED AND VITAL INSTALLATIONS DUG IN AND FORTIFIED END

VANDENBERG UNQUOTE PAREN SIGNED QUESADA PAREN

AC OF S A-3

P. MELVILLE, COL. AC

A.S. PETTERMAN

MAJOR, AIR CORPS

ASST ADJUTANT GENERAL"

In spite of a multitude of successes in the ETO Campaign there were some notable snafus which, with 20/20 hindsight, are now clearly visible. It seems that this may be one where the visibility and reaction may have been hampered by more than lousy weather. ■

REUNIONS

3RD ARMORED DIVISION, 32ND ARMORED REGIMENT, COMPANY D, September 10-12, 1998, Chattanooga, Tennessee. Contact: Fred Headrick, 934 Dunsinane Road, Signal Mountain, Tennessee 37377-2017. Telephone: 423-886-1622.

9TH ARMORED DIVISION, 16TH ARMORED FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION, 29 September-3 October, 1998, Ramada Hotel, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania 18702. Contact: Harold Trethaway, 6 Oak Street, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania 18702. Telephone: 717-829-4792.

11TH ARMORED DIVISION, 55TH ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION, COMPANY B, September 10-13, 1998, Amana Colonies, Amana, Iowa. Contact: Gene Foster, 1401 - 17th Avenue, Eldora, Iowa 50627. Telephone: 515-858-2158.

38TH SIGNAL BATTALION, October 15-18, 1998, Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Contact: William D. Foiles, PO Box 5567, Columbia, South Carolina 29250. Telephone: 803-771-6208.

78TH INFANTRY DIVISION, October 7-10, 1998, Clarion International O'Hare, Rosemont, Illinois. Contact: John Herzig, 2832 Dakota Drive, Janesville, Wisconsin 53545. Telephone: 608-756-0094.

78TH INFANTRY DIVISION, TEXAS COHORTS, October 26-28, 1998, Plaza Hotel, Killeen Texas. Contact: Clarence Simank, Route 2, Box 2608, Kempner, Texas 76539. Telephone: 254-547-3282.

83RD INFANTRY DIVISION (Boston Chapter), September 28-October 1, 1998, Parkville, New York. Contact: Pat DiGiammerino, 36 East Border Road, Malden, Massachusetts 02148. Telephone: 781-322-2754.

159TH COMBAT ENGINEER BATTALION, September 10-13, 1998, Chattanooga Choo Choo Holiday Inn, Chattanooga, Tennessee. Contact: Ken Boring. Telephone: 706-226-7625.

216TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION REUNION, September 27-29, 1998, Drury Inn South, Nashville, Tennessee. Contact: Wade Knowles, 4670 Newcastle Circle, Lithonia, Georgia 30038.

264TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION, September 10-12, 1998, Columbus, Ohio. Contact: Bob Latz, PO Box 654, Racine, Wisconsin 53401. Telephone: 414-681-1998.

328TH INFANTRY COMBAT TEAM, October 15-18, 1998, Mansfield, Massachusetts. Contact: Alex Pagnotta, 46 Sandown Road, Audobon, Pennsylvania 19403. Telephone: 610-539-5685.

551ST PARACHUTE INFANTRY BATTALION, September 30-October 3, 1998, San Diego, California. Contact: Fred Hildgarden, 6700 North Euclid, Gladstone, Missouri 64118-3647. Telephone: 816-455-0994.

556TH AAA (AW) BATTALION, September 24-26, 1998, Kings Island Inn, Kings Island, Ohio. Contact: Paul Weaver, 212 Meadowcroft Lane, Media, Pennsylvania 19063. Telephone: 610-876-5327.

643RD TANK DESTROYER BATTALION, October 2-3, 1998, Sheraton Airport Motel, Warwick, Rhode Island. Contact: Mary Little, 241 Mishnock Rd, West Greenwich, Rhode Island 02816. Telephone: 401-397-9873.

687TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION, October 6-8, 1998, Omaha, Nebraska. Contact: Nels Block, Jr., 2306 9th Street, Harlan, Iowa 51537-2136. Telephone: 712-755-5510.

691ST TANK DESTROYER BATTALION, September 11-12, 1998, Holiday Inn Tanglewood, Roanoke, Virginia. Contact: Glen J. Linton, PO Box 6, Paint Bank, Virginia 24131. Telephone: 540-897-5131.

749TH TANK BATTALION, September 23-27, 1998, Dayton, Ohio. Contact: Jack Morris, HC 75, Box 662-B, Locust Grove, Virginia 22508. Telephone: 540-972-1423.

750TH TANK BATTALION, COMPANY D, October 15-18, 1998, Drury Inn, Memphis, Tennessee. Contact: Valerie Brown, 32 Ben Nevis Drive, Mountain Home, Arkansas 72653-8567. Telephone: 870-491-5937.

Omitted by mistake from past issue:

607TH QUARTERMASTER GRAVES REGISTRATION COMPANY had a reunion in April. Please contact the following if you wish information on their activities: George Ciampa, 3304 Whiffletree Lane, Torrance, California 90505. Telephone: 310-539-4345.

WE CAN SAVE YOU \$5.50

...if you order the book *Citizen Soldier* from us. See the order form in the back of this issue and

YOU CAN SAVE US TIME AND MONEY

...if you will check your mailing label (used to mail this newsletter) and above your last name you will find a date. That date is the date your dues were due or will become due. Please send your dues promptly and save us the labor, printing costs, and postage of having to send you a reminder. We thank you for your attention to this matter.

NO TIME FOR SERGEANTS

Chenogne

December 31, 1944-January 1, 1945

By Jack Selsemeyer

11th Armored Division, Company B

Regrouping in a farm yard after being repulsed with heavy fire--coming from a tree line 300 yards in front of us. We were behind a gentle slope which carried itself up to trees. Some one said, "We are to take that woods!"

Three hundred yards across an open field toward an enemy we could not see--just then a tank backed up and went down the slope. So did the other tanks. We followed--our losses were light. Mortar fire came into our ranks in the farm yard. How could they be so accurate? A sergeant from the first squad was killed!

Went on the attack again--in a new direction--and took the high ground along a road into Chenogne--very heavy fire attack--more casualties.

After taking the hill, we were ordered to dig in on the forward slope. I said, "No!" "You don't dig in on a forward slope." You are subject to plunging fire." I dropped behind a bunker along the road and here it came--"Nebelwerfers" plastered the front slope and we were standing up--digging in.

We lost Sergeants Peterson and Fordyce from the 5th squad--machine gun--and Sergeants Benson and Murphy from the 4th Squad (mortar). We only had two sergeants left.

We were ordered to reverse slope and spent the night there. In the morning we attacked down the slope into Chenogne. The Sun was in our eyes. We were olive drab against the white snow and were hit with very accurate rifle fire coming from a large multi-storied stone building on our left. Several killed and many wounded. I saw Sergeant Fraley go down--I ran across the road to help him. He said "It burns--it burns," and he was gone--our fourth sergeant. ■

RESERVATION FORM
"REMEMBRANCE AND COMMEMORATION"
OF THE 54TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE
December 15 and 16, 1998
Washington, DC

Return form and check by December 4, 1998 to:
 Battle of the Bulge Historical Foundation
 P.O. Box 2516, Kensington, MD 20895-0181

Dorothy Davis
 Telephone: 301-881-0356

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Battle of Bulge Unit: _____

Name of Spouse/Guest: _____

I/we will attend the following activities (please complete):

Number Attending

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1998

12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m. Lunch, Cafe Brasserie (Payment is on your own) _____

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1998

11:00 a.m. Ceremonies: Tomb of the Unknown Soldier/VBOB Monument _____

12:00 Noon Reception/Buffer hosted by VBOB, NCO Club, Fort Myer, Virginia _____

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1998, BANQUET

No. Persons Cost/Person Total

6:00 p.m. Commemorative Banquet
 Galaxy Room, Sheraton Hotel
 _____ \$42.00 _____

Please make your selections:

Main Course: Chicken Roulade with Apricot Sauce
OR Sliced Sirloin of Beef with Sauce Merlot

.....

Dessert: Black Forest Cheesecake with Cherry Rum Sauce
OR Fresh Fruit Plate

Total Amount Enclosed (Make check payable to BoBHF Commemoration) \$ _____

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

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

Reminders:

Room reservations must be made by December 1, 1998 (Telephone: 1-800-468-9090)
 Return completed Reservation Form by December 4, 1998 (Telephone: 1-301-881-0356)
 No cancellation refunds after December 5, 1998.

RESERVATION FORM
"REMEMBRANCE AND COMMEMORATION"
OF THE 54TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE
December 15 and 16, 1998
Washington, DC

The Sheraton National Hotel (Columbia Pike and Washington Boulevard), Arlington, Virginia, has been selected as the site for activities commemorating the 54th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge, December 15 and 16, 1998. This hotel is located only a few minutes from Arlington Cemetery and Fort Myer, and will provide accommodations for a reduced room rate of \$69, single or double occupancy. This rate is available for any night(s) between December 13 and December 17. For room reservations, please call the Sheraton National Hotel of Arlington (1-800-468-9090) by December 1, 1998. Mention that you are attending the Battle of the Bulge Banquet and events.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1998

- 11:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Registration/receive name badges (hotel lobby)
- 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Hospitality Room/Exhibits, scrapbooks. John Bowen and Earle Hart, Battle of the Bulge Historians, will be the hosts.
- 12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. A private room in the Cafe Brasserie has been reserved for lunch for the Battle of the Bulge veterans (payment is on your own).

BANQUET IN HOTEL GALAXY ROOM (Beautiful view of city lights)

- 6:00 p.m. Social Hour/Cash Bar
- 7:00 p.m. Color Guard/Drummer and Fifers/Ceremonies
- 7:15 p.m. Dinner Served
- Program, including speaker
- After the Banquet Hospitality Room open

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1998

- 11:00 a.m. Impressive ceremony and placing of wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns, Arlington National Cemetery
- 11:30 a.m. Ceremony of Remembrance, Battle of the Bulge Memorial
- 12:15 p.m. Buffet Luncheon, Hosted by VBOB, at the NCO Club Dining Room, Fort Myer, Virginia
- Swearing in of new VBOB officers. Comments by George Linthicum, VBOB President.
- 2:00 p.m. Farewell

This year, by popular request, there will be a choice of entree and a choice of dessert for the banquet. Please be sure to check your decision on the Registration Form.

BANQUET MENU

National Salad/Choice of Dressing
Chicken Roulade with Apricot Glaze

OR

Sliced Sirloin of Beef with Sauce Merlot
Twice-Baked Potatoes
Stir-Fried Fresh Vegetables
Mini-Baguettes and Butter

Black Forest Cheesecake with Cherry Rum Sauce

OR

Fresh Fruit Plate
Coffee/Selection of Teas
Glass of BlushWine with Dinner

THE ENIGMA MACHINE-- NOT SO 'ULTRA'

The June issue of the *Golden Acorn News*, newsletter of the 87th Infantry Division, contained an article regarding the Enigma Machine and its lack of information pertaining to the Battle of the Bulge. We reprint it here for your information:

In December of last year, your editor had the opportunity to visit the Center for Cryptologic History at Fort George G. Mead, Maryland. A major part of their exhibit is the Enigma Machine used by the German forces during World War II.

In a booklet handed out at the center, a passage in this booklet by Dr. A. Ray Miller, of the National Security Agency, states the following:

"The Enigma cipher machine is one of the best known cipher machines in the world. Initially broken by Polish cryptanalysts, Enigma decrypts from British and later American efforts were given the cover name ULTRA to reflect the value of the information. Today the Enigma stands as a silent sentinel to the folly of those who placed their absolute confidence in its security. But it also stands in renowned tribute to the cryptanalysts who pitted their minds against a problem of seemingly invincible odds and who scaled its lofty heights."

A leaflet handed out at the Center stated the following:

On 16 December 1944, the German Army stunned the Allies with a winter counteroffensive through the Ardennes. Nearly twenty German Wehrmacht and SS units attacked across a front defended by four U.S. divisions. The plan, developed by Hitler, was to take the port city of Antwerp, cutting off the Allied armies to the north from their supply base. Hitler envisioned a sort of replay of the 1940 strike through the Ardennes that had doomed France and forced the British evacuation at Dunkirk. By cutting the Allied forces in half, he could force a stalemate in the west.

Fortunately for the Allies, Hitler's plan was too ambitious for the few forces at hand. The Allied units fought fiercely; German units were understrength, hobbled with insufficient supplies (especially fuel). The plan, code named "Wacht am Rhein," was tied to an unrealistic timetable and relied on poor weather to negate Allied air superiority. By mid-January 1945, the Allies had recovered and driven the Germans back.

In the inevitable postmortems that followed, much blame was placed on Allied intelligence for failing to detect the surprise attack. Even ULTRA intelligence derived from intercepting and decrypting German high-level communications came in for its share of the blame. However, the reason for the success of the German surprise is a complex combination of Allied attitudes, German deception, and an over-reliance on ULTRA as the "ultimate" intelligence source.

In the months preceding the "Bulge," the Allied commanders had come to view the strategic situation vis-a-vis the Germans as one in which both forces were readying themselves for the inevitable Allied thrusts against the Roer region (north of the Ardennes) by the British under Field Marshal Montgomery and the Saar (south of the Ardennes) by General Patton's Third Army. The Allies expected the Germans to make their troop dispositions to meet these attacks. In fact, Allied intelligence summaries often defined German dispositions and intentions on terms of reaction to Allied offensive plans.

At the same time, the Germans developed a deception plan for

the Ardennes attack which reinforced the Allied view of German intentions. The Germans, using a blend of strict operations security and unconcealed troop concentrations in the areas of the expected Allied attacks, convinced Allied intelligence that the Germans were not planning any offensive operations. To further confuse the Allies, the Germans created a series of phony commands across the front, which complicated tracking the real units. ULTRA intercept fell dramatically in the weeks before the attack. There was virtually nothing reflecting Wehrmacht activity. The two armies which spearheaded the German attack, Sixth SS Panzer and Fifth Panzer, disappeared from radio nets in early December. ULTRA intercepts of the Luftwaffe showed the Germans concentrating fighter units in western airfields, though this evidence could be construed as showing defensive moves. There was one discordant note in this: decrypts of German air reconnaissance requirements showed the Germans interested in river crossings some fifty miles behind Allied units in the Ardennes region.

Another source, and a relatively new one at that, was German State Railway communications. Decrypts of this traffic showed an enormous interest in train activity moving German units to the west in the two months prior to the attack. Again, this phenomenon could be interpreted as defensive preparations, even though some German units were detraining at points only fifteen miles from the front lines in the Ardennes.

Some writers have suggested that ULTRA data could be interpreted as preparation for a German attack. This view is easy to take decades later, when one telescopes all the evidence at hand. There simply was, however, no unambiguous ULTRA evidence for an attack. The truth may be that the Allied had come to rely on ULTRA so much that the lack of ULTRA indicating an attack was interpreted to mean that no attack was in the offing. Such was this malaise that intelligence from other sources was ignored. American units in the Ardennes reported heavy night movement of German vehicles. POWs and escapees reported preparations for an attack, and even provided the dates of 16 or 17 December. But only one of these reports ever reached General Bradley's command, which was responsible for the area, and it arrived the morning of the German attack.

As General Bradley stated: "...nothing less than an unequivocal indication of impending attack could have induced me to quit the winter offensive." ■

HONORED GUESTS

The following are the honored guests for the VBOB San Francisco banquet on September 6, 1998:

- The Consul General of Belgium
- The Consul General of Luxembourg
- Lt. General William F. Train, USA (Ret) 28th Div.
Keynote Speaker
- Brig. General Douglas A. Riach (Ret) Infantry Hall of Fame (Normandy)
- Col. Thomas D. Gillis (Ret) 4th Armored Div.
- Col. John H. Roush Jr. (Ret) Historian and Author

Also, two special surprise guests will be in attendance subject to confirmation and health conditions.

It is important to remember that all military guests are Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge and will contribute much to the spirit of the reunion. We hope to see all of you in San Francisco in September.

MARDASSON HILL'S BATTLE OF BULGE CEREMONIES

The sun shone brightly on the March 26th ceremonies at Mardasson Hill's Bulge Memorial in Bastogne.

In attendance were the Honorable Alan J. Blinken, United States Ambassador to Belgium, and Minister Philippe Collard, Acting Mayor for Bastogne. Both laid wreaths at the commemorative bronze plaque in the center of the big star-shaped monument while the Valley Forge Academy Band played the respective national anthems of the United States of America and Belgium.

Also present for the observance were members of the Delaware Valley VBOB chapter, including President George Linthicum, Immediate Past President Stanley Wojtusik, and Vice President for Membership Tom Jones.

A mayoral reception followed the ceremonies where renewal of old friendships took place. All seemed to enjoy the festivities which were followed by some sightseeing of old stumping grounds and reminiscing.

It's understood that Tom directed traffic again at the south corner of General McAuliffe Square as he had done so many times as an MP in 1944. This event was arranged by CRIBA member Henry Register. *[Tom, did the city council offer you a job?]*

NEVER, NEVER, NEVER...

...send in photographs or important documents that you would wish to have returned to you. Hundreds of letters, etc., come into this office every week. Your photo or document may get lost. Take it to your local copy center and have a copy made to send to us. Also, please do not send newspaper articles as time does not permit us to obtain the necessary releases for the copyrighted materials. Many times the newspaper wants a fee for the use of their article and we do not have any funds allocated for this purpose. Your help with these two matters will be very much appreciated.

We try to publish stories and information related only to the Battle of the Bulge. Occasionally, we do make an exception. If you sent us something that wasn't published, that may be the reason.

OLD STAMPS WANTED

The Veterans' Stamp & Coin Club is in great need of good used U.S. and foreign stamps. Will you help the disabled veterans, who are stamp collectors? Send your contributions to: Department of Veterans Affairs, Medical Center, Veteran's Stamp and Coin Club #135, 3601 South 6th Avenue, Tucson, Arizona 85723.

**GOT YOUR RESERVATIONS MADE YET?
IF NOT, CALL AND DO IT.
WE'RE LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU
AT THE SAN FRANCISCO
REUNION.**

CEREMONIES HELD AT MALMEDY MONUMENT

Pictured below a trumpeter wails his mournful tune at the monument in the vicinity of Malmédy where U.S. soldier prisoners of war were slaughtered on December 17, 1944 by members of the German SS troopers. Most of the fallen heroes were members of the 285th Field Artillery Observation Battalion.

The commemorative ceremony was held Sunday, December 14, 1998, to honor those who gave their lives that fateful day of 1944.



The photo was submitted by Belgian Associate Member André R. Meurisse. André said the photo "was taken as the Last Post was trumpeted and the United States flag was raised slowly from its low 'stand-by' position up to the top of the pole, as if it was bringing carefully in its folds the souls of the poor massacred U.S. men up into the sky to be delivered to the good Lord so 'Old Glory' could then wave freely again high in the bleak December sky as to give a proud salute of honor to the memory of those lost ones who had served their country and the cause of freedom in our own country up to such a horrifying price...."

BATTLE OF THE BULGE CERTIFICATE

Certificate Sales have been brisk and a number of questions have been asked which may be of interest to others: **Can certificates still be ordered?** The answer is yes. They make wonderful gifts. Certificates can be ordered at anytime. **Can I order additional certificates for my children/grandchildren?** Again, the answer is yes. **Can I order certificates to give to the widow or off spring of a buddy I served with?** Yes, if you will certify that he/she was entitled to the Ardennes Battle Credit. **What about those who were Killed in Action or Missing in Action?** A specially worded certificate is available for those who made the Ultimate Sacrifice or did not return; however, you must certify the date and location. They are a wonderful tribute to give to the widow or next of kin. **Is there something to mount these on?** Yes, there is a simulated walnut plaque with an acrylic overlay and decorative tacks to mount the certificate. Framing is \$29.95 plus \$8.00 shipping and can be secured from John D Bowen, 613 Chichester Lane, Silver Spring Maryland 20904-3331, Telephone 301-384-6533. John will mount the certificate, without additional charge, if you send him your certificate or if you order the plaque at the same time as the certificate is ordered. Just check "hold for framing" on the order blank. Checks for the plaque should be made out separately to John D. Bowen.

What others have to say about the Certificates:

"The plaque arrived in perfect condition and it is a beauty. It immediately became a centerpiece in my home. My children and grandchildren all expressed delight over the plaque...." Henry F Tiano, Salem Oregon.

"I received the wonderful certificate. Words can't describe how I feel about it. I am so proud. I want to thank you for the work you put into this...." Bob Charles, New Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

"...Thanks for your persistent effort preparing and distributing this fine item." David H Jones, Denver, Colorado.

"The certificate/plaque came today and its soooo beautiful, and you did such a fine job, we do thank you so much. I have a friend coming from Scotland in a few weeks and can't wait to show the plaque to her...." Linda & Harold Fleming, Temple Hills, Maryland.

"Thank you for the VBOB plaque you put together for me. What a beautiful frame, one anyone should be proud to hang on their wall...." Donald Champlain, Melbourne, Florida.

"This is to advise that our VBOB plaque arrived in good condition Aug 29th! To say that we are delighted would be a gross understatement! You are to be commended for an excellent job, done so graciously. It is on the wall of our study, along with numerous other plaques, etc - and everyone who sees it expresses enthusiasm for the beauty and significance of the handsome certificate.... Congratulations to you and others involved." Wayne E Soliday, Sun City, Arizona.

VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE CERTIFICATE ORDER BLANK

I request an 11" x 17" Certificate and certify that I received credit for the Ardennes Campaign during my military service. I would like the following information on the certificate: Check here if VBOB member ___ (although not required.)

First Name _____ MI _____ Last Name _____ Serial Number _____
Organization: Company, Battalion and/or Regiment, Division _____ Rank (Optional) _____
 Hold for framing information Killed in action _____ Died of Wounds Received _____

MAILING INFORMATION:

Name _____ Telephone Number _____
Street Address _____ Apt No. _____
City _____ State _____ Zip + 4 Code _____
Signature and date _____

Make checks or money orders in the amount of \$15.00 for each certificate payable to VBOB and mail to: VBOB, PO Box 11129, Arlington, VA 22210-2129. ***** Checks for mounting in the amount of \$37.95 should be payable to John D. Bowen, 613 Chichester Lane, Silver Spring, MD 20904-3331 (Telephone: 301-384-6533).



VETERANS of the BATTLE of the BULGE

P.O. Box 11129
Arlington, Virginia 22210-2129

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AUGUST, 1998

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**THEY'RE ON THEIR WAY TO SAN FRANCISCO
HAVE YOU MADE YOUR PLANS?
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Complete details herein**

Detach and Mail

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APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP
VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE
P.O. Box 11129, Arlington, Virginia 22210-2129

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Do not write above this line

Annual Dues \$15

Do not write above this line

New Member Renewal - Member # _____

Name _____ Birthdate _____

Address _____ Phone () _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

All new members, please provide the following information:

Campaign(s) _____

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

Regiment _____ Battalion _____

Company _____ Other _____

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

Applicants Signature _____

RECRUITER (Optional)