

The UB

PUBLISHED BY AND FOR

*The Veterans of the
106th INFANTRY
DIVISION*

of the
GOLDEN LION

Vol 53— No. 4

JUL - AUG - SEP 1997



*Adda, in the 1997 Memorial Services at Henri-Chapelle
standing by the grave of Captain James Hardy, M Co.
423rd Combat Infantry Regiment*

Adda RIKKEN
Gouvy, Belgium
Friend of the
106th Infantry Division
Who looks over our
comrades in
Henri-Chapelle.

Adda RIKKEN, in 1995, received an American flag that was flown over the United States Capitol on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of WWII in appreciation for her 20 years of devotion to adopted graves of American Servicemen in the Henri Chapelle Cemetery and for the maintenance of the Lt Eric Wood Memorial near Meyerode.

Thanks Adda.

The 106th Infantry Division
Association
Salutes you.

Vive le Belgique!!!

The CUB

*A quarterly publication of the
106th Infantry Division Association, Inc*
5401 U. 147th St. West, Apple Valley, MN 55124

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As my last of the year's "President's Views" I reviewed some of the contents of my previous messages and will dwell on them briefly.

Our continuing concern is, of course, the constant quest for sustaining membership and adding new and re-upping. This is vital to the Association. Please use every means for this purpose. If every member brought in and/or re-up's we would be in very good shape for the future.

The year has gone quickly and some of my objectives have been accomplished, and alas some have not. A combination of unanticipated personal problems have cut progress short of completing my personal goals.

I wish to thank those that did succeed in their endeavors.



**President Major H. Hill 1996-1997
106th Infantry Division Association
"B" Company, 424th Infantry Regiment
(941) 945-4087**

Now is the time to get your mini-reunion for this year, in place, so all can participate. Our new mini-reunion here at Fort Myers area is taking shape and we are looking forward to a good attendance. Four have already signed on, and I hope there are more. If any of you in the Cape Coral, Florida area have interest in meeting, please call me at 941-945-4087.

The last item to be reviewed and hopefully to come to an acceptable solution, is the way to handle the method and the timing for the ultimate dissolution of the Association. This will take a great many thoughts and ideas and I suggest you make your thoughts known so those who will make decisions have the benefit of your thoughts and ideas.

In closing, this has been a memorable experience for me this year and I sincerely appreciate all the guidance and help that has assisted me in performing my duty as your president. Thank you one and all.

*Major Hill, President 1996-97
106th Infantry Division Association*



Rev. Ewell C. Black Jr., Chaplain
Order of the Golden Lion 1995
"A" Company, 422nd Inf. Reg.
212 Ridge S, Bishopville, SC 29010
803-484-6861

At this time in life, it often seems that days move like hours! However for most of us that was not always the case. When I look at the span of days from December 10, 1944 until April 13, 1945 I find it hard to believe that so much too place in so short a time. Yet, the reason is clear, In those days of combat and prison, I lived my life not by days but by minutes and hours. I suspect that the same was true for many of you.

Hours on guard duty —only a couple of hours— seemed to stretch through the whole night. This was particularly true in my case because the trees and bushes which I knew so well in the light took on lives of their own and began moving around and it was hard to keep my finger off the trigger of my BAR. Out each night did come to a peaceful end for me as it did for others. The one exception was the morning of December 16, 1944. That morning —as we all remember— everything exploded and I was on guard when it happened, that proved to be a very long day for all of us.

After capture on December 19th, the days and weeks got even longer. Sitting in a railyard while our planes dropped bombs seemed an eternity as did other times when we were bombed. What made it worse was knowing that these were not the German's doing but our "friends." Eventually those long days ended for all of us as the War came to a close. Now we could take up our lives where we had left off but that proved to be a false hope. Never again would we be the carefree young men we had been. As the days had seem so slow in passing, we found that the years had speeded up and we are older than our actual years.

Each year's Memorial Service reminds us that many who were young with us have not been able to enjoy life as we have. Some died in battle, some as POWs and many since the War. May we thank God for our long life and determine to make ever remaining hour and day count. Try each day to make someone's day a little brighter because you passed their way. I see so many who are rude to salespersons, servers, etc.

PLEASE GOD LET US BE A RAY OF SUNSHINE IN WHAT RIGHT OTHERWISE BE A VERY HARD DAY FOR SOMEONE.

"FATHER GOD, MOST OF US ARE NOW ENJOYING THE 70 TO 80 YEARS PROMISED IN PSALM 90. OUR LORD AND OUR GOD TREAT US WITH KINDNESS AND ALLOW US MORE YEARS TO WORSHIP AND SERVE YOU. PLEASE, FATHER, LET ALL GO WELL WITH US AND OUR LOVED ONES. Amen."

My recent mail included a letter from the widow of a long-ago pal, George Meminger, who trained with the 106th at Camp Atterbury and shared my blanket in a bleak churchyard the night of Dec. 19, 1944.

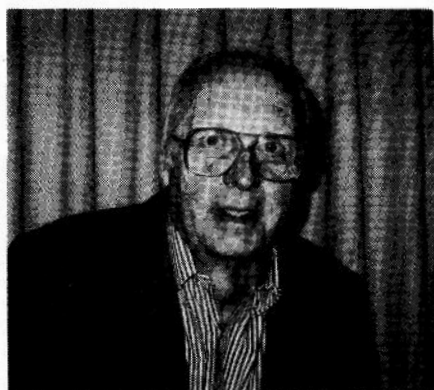
I hadn't seen George since "the Bulge" but exchanged some notes with him in recent years. One of his Christmas cards included mention of his wife, Sally, who wrote to tell me George had died of a stroke. "I'm busy looking for his discharge papers," she reported. "I have a copy but can't find the original. This is all I can say for now." I sent a sympathy note and a check for George's memorial, "or whatever."

There were better times. George and I quaffed suds at the PX more than once. We shared a room three nights in the Piccadilly Hotel, then one of London's finest, a few weeks before crossing the English Channel. I can recall the buzz bombs, the V-2 rockets and the jammed sidewalks on Piccadilly Circus, of course, just like yesterday.

George, who was so quiet we couldn't resist calling him "Lippy," was a swell guy. We had nearly everything in common during World War II. I don't have any idea what he did over the years, but was saddened to learn of his death. I lost a good friend, Sally confirmed. My parents drove to Camp Atterbury in September of 1944, spending two nights on post before we left for Camp Myles Standish and, eventually, the bowels of war-torn Germany.

"I might not get back," I told them. "If I get killed I want to be buried in Europe with my friends. Don't have me brought home."

My words might have startled my mother. My older brother had been killed in the spring of 1943 and all we got was his ashes in a small box.



Dan Bied "A" Co., 422nd Infantry
108 Leffler Street, West Burlington, IA 52655
Tele: (319) 752-5708

I was a kid, just 18. But my burial choice was made with deliberate care, not blurted off the top of my head. The guys I knew in the 106th were "special," I explained, I'd never been through an ordeal any worse than final exams or volleyball with my high school pals. The soldiers I bunked with at Atterbury were VIPs.

The men in the other barracks were important, too. But I never shared personal thoughts with them or looked at photos of their girl friends, wives and kids. I never heard them cuss when tripping over their footlockers. I didn't hear them snore, belch, wheeze and fart.

My mind was fixed on combat all the time I was in the infantry. I looked forward to action and felt cheated when, after just a few days on the line, the 422nd was ordered to surrender.

A recent item in my hometown paper told about a guy whose most important souvenir from the Korean War is a knife he used to dispatch an enemy sniper. It hangs on a wall in his home and appears in a prize-winning picture titled "Faded Glory" that depicts a war vet and a discolored US flag.

One of my present-day friends, who was too young for World War II, told me he thought displaying the knife after so many years is morbid or, at least, in bad taste.

I disagreed. "That's the way it was," I said. "Survival is the main thing on anyone's mind when he's fighting in a war."

Snipers, I pointed out, were a special kind of enemy. "You might be walking along with your best pal," I explained, "when the top of his head gets blown away by a sharpshooter hidden in a tree, an attic

or behind a barn."

Such thinking is still defensible, I believe, when considering the mind-set a GI had to have to stay alive in the infantry. If a sniper had killed George Meminger, or another pal, and I'd been able to nail him, I would have figured I was doing my duty and been proud of it.

"The only unforgivable sin in war," Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower told his son in a 1943 letter, "is not doing your duty."

Dan Bied

THE POET

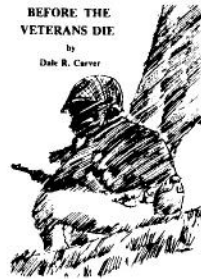
*With clinical eye and mind alert
he watched the ebb and flow,
saw in live bodies beyond all hurt
dead eyes; saw blood on snow.*

*He walked with death ever near
beneath an indifferent sky,
knew the sickening taste of fear,
watched the valiant die,*

*watched the cowardly live on,
knew anguish at broken trees,
saw the mine-slain forest fawn
and proud men on their knees.*

*He recorded minutely in memory
all that came to pass,
then, ill of soul, wrote poetry
as a sick cat eats grass.*

BEFORE THE
VETERANS DIE
by
Dale R. Carver



BEFORE THE VETERANS DIE

Book of poems from
World War II memories.
28 pages - \$8 ppd

by: Dale R. Carver
Silver Star recipient
424th Headquarters
A&P Platoon Leader
742 Druid Circle
Baton Rouge, LA 70808

The 106th Infantry Division Home Page that I installed on the World Wide Web 3 April 1996, still continues to draw interest.

Over 11,000 visitors have viewed my Home Page, as of mid-July. Many new members, relatives and interested historians have been contacted through this media.

FEATURE STORY IN THIS CUB

This CUB contains an interesting story on the I&R Platoon (Intelligence & Reconnaissance Platoon) from Headquarters Company, 423rd Infantry regiment. Dick Sparks, 423/HQs I&R Platoon, has prepared a well written story explaining the actions of that Platoon.

COMING UP IN FUTURE CUBS

Time and space control the placement of feature articles in The CUB. Recent issues have had some very interesting and well received stories.

Stories that should be heard, or read..

Stories that need to be saved for history.

Interest sparks interest, so I have been blessed with several feature articles for future issues to come.

November 1997 CUB: I have Col. Puett's *PUETT'S WAR, 423rd Infantry Regiment, 2d Battalion in The Ardennes Battle*. In connection with that story, Brig Gen Oliver Patton (USA Ret) has furnished important and supportive supplemental information. By using personal documentation of their personal experience of the the action,during the first days of the battle, a clearer picture evolves of those dark days of the Ardennes Offensive, later to become known as the *Battle of the Bulge*.

February 1998 CUB: I will feature information on the 424th Combat Infantry Regiment using personal information from veterans of the 424th Combat Infantry Regiment in combination with a US Army "After Battle report of that period of time. If you 424th vets have any personal stories you would like to see in print, please forward them to me for consideration. I will use what space permits. Usually doing this by presenting "glimpses" or "capsules" of information from each veteran. J. Kline, editor



John Kline, 423/M, editor, The CUB

e-mail: jpk@mm.com

Home Page: <http://www.mm.com/user/jpk>

PLEASE NOTE Change of Address

after October 1, 1997

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Note: In this column on page 5 of the May 1997 CUB, Larry Nelson, should have read, In memory of Larry Walden. my apologies J. Kline....

Bulge Reenactment, Indiantown Gap, PA January 30, 1998

by Richard Rigatti, 423/B, Past-President

UPCOMING REENACTMENT!

A Reenactment of the *Battle of the Bulge* will be held by the World War II Historical Preservation Federation on the weekend starting Friday January 30, 1998 at Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania.

A group of twelve 106th Inf Div veterans were spectators at the one held in 1997. Refer to pages 10-14 of the Apr-May-Jun 1997 CUB magazine for story and photos. We had an immensely enjoyable time (good therapy also) at a "startling" cost of \$30 per head, which included two nights in a heated barracks, breakfast and dinner Saturday and entrance to the reenactment. If you do not stay over, you are still invited to the reenactment free of charge.

Indiantown Gap is an Army Reserve Post close to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania who also houses the reenactors in barracks which you are entitled to visit and talk to them about their weapons and equipment, etc. There will be tanks, armored personnel carriers, motorbikes, jeeps, trucks, etc. There were four barracks full of memorabilia for sale.

In early October 1997 call or write John Bowen at (301) 384-6533. His address is 613 Chichester Lane, Silver Spring, MD 20904-3331. For Registration Forms, write the Federation at: Box 1360, Leesburg, VA 20177-1360. The VBOB were hosts last time and will probably be this next year. You may also check their Bulletin for details.....

OLD CUBS, Memorabilia

I receive requests for copies of old CUBs often. I appreciate those of you that have sent me your old ones. It is also nice to receive CUBs and memorabilia from one of deceased members family, for you know that he had given instructions to his survivors to pass along his treasured books, CUBs and service connected trinkets.

Area Code, Telephone Numbers

If you have had an area code change please send it to me when you have an opportunity. For several years I have been entering telephone numbers of incoming new members in the roster database. There are many of you that are not listed, since your telephone number was not in the old lists. Next time you write please include your area code and telephone number, especially if your area code changed in the last year. J. Kline

424th Vets - Listen Up...

The February CUB will be featuring the 424th Combat Infantry regiment. If you have something to say in The CUB, send it now.

Notes to Sherod Collins

Sherod Here are my dues. I am happier belonging to the 106th Infantry Division Association than all my past memberships in all the National Vets organizations. Here are my LIFE MEMBERSHIP fees. The real friends are found in the 106th Inf Div Association.

signed **Humberto Aponte**, M Company 424th Combat Infantry Regiment.

Sherod please accept the annual membership fee for former 589th Headquarters Battery, **Robert Slattery - Colonel Kelly's** driver. I contacted the Colonel after reading his story in The CUB a few months back. Received a nice letter back and a copy of his letter to his driver, Slattery.

Slattery has been a patient in Iron County Nursing Home for the past ten years. **Kelly's** letter made Slattery's Day, when he called him "The best dam driver in the 106th Inf Division."

I've known Slattery since we both meet in March 1943 when the Division was activated.

"**Sparky**," Slattery's nickname, has numerous health problems, but is still alert and able to remember the "old days." He would like to hear from some of the 106th veterans.

Address: Robert Slattery
Iron Cty Medical Care Facility
1523 W - US 2
Crystal Falls, MI 49920



Informal Breakfast get-together of 106th Infantry Division Association Past-Presidents

Pete House, a few years ago, thought it would be nice that the past-presidents should gather together in friendship at an informal breakfast meeting, just to talk, and enjoy breakfast together, under a common bond.

This year, as in the past few years, there will be another informal breakfast for Past-Presidents in the Sheraton Music City Hotel's "TWO Rivers" Room at 0800 hours on 30 August 1997.

The above photo, taken last year and finally retrieved from one of the editor's many wire baskets, shows the men that gathered together at Roanoke. They are: (Note- the dates indicate the year that they were in office as "President of the 106th Infantry Division Association.")

Front Row/r: Pete House, 1969-70; Kenneth Bradfield, 1980-81; Sherod Collins, 1975-76; Guest Richard Rigatti, current president 1995-96; James Wells, 1952-53; Dr. James I. Clark, 1975-75

Back Row l/r: Russell Villwock, 1981-82; Robert Gilder, 1971-72; Thomas J. Riggs, Jr, 1994-95; John Gilliland, 1990-91; Robert Walker, 1976-77; Gene Saucerman, 1973-74; Benjiman Britton, 1977-78

To Clear The Records

John B. McCrery, 1st Platoon, "F" Company, 423rd Combat Infantry regiment wishes to clear the records, once and for all. **General Orders #48, Department of the Army, dated 25 July 1948 awarded the "Presidential Citation" to CCB B, 7th Armored Division** consisting of twelve units: Headquarters and Headquarters Co; 17th Tank Battalion; 31st Tank Battalion; 23rd Armored Inf Bn; 38th Armored Inf Bn; 87th Cav Recon (less Troop D); 275th Armd FAB; 434th Armd FAB; 965th FAB; 168th Engineer Combat Battalion; Company B, 33d Armd Engineer Bn; Company A, 814th Tank Destroyer Bn (SP) and **3d Platoon, Company F, 423rd Infantry Regiment.**

In After Battle Reports the 423rd Infantry Regiment Unit was correctly designated as (1st Platoon/F Co./ 423rd Inf Reg) "1/F/423" as denoted on various maps and reports.



Stalag III-A, Luchenwalde - From US Signal Corp release - Facilities for the British and American prisoners at this Nazi Camp included an athletic field and air raid trenches. The prisoners were first released by the Russians and then evacuated to the Allied lines by the 83rd Inf Division of the U.S. Ninth Army 4 May 1945
U.S. Army photographs furnished by Albert C. Oelschig, Jr., 423/HQ 1Bn
who was incarcerated there along with other 106th Infantry Division soldiers.

Jack Sulser, 423/F - On a new book release (POW related)

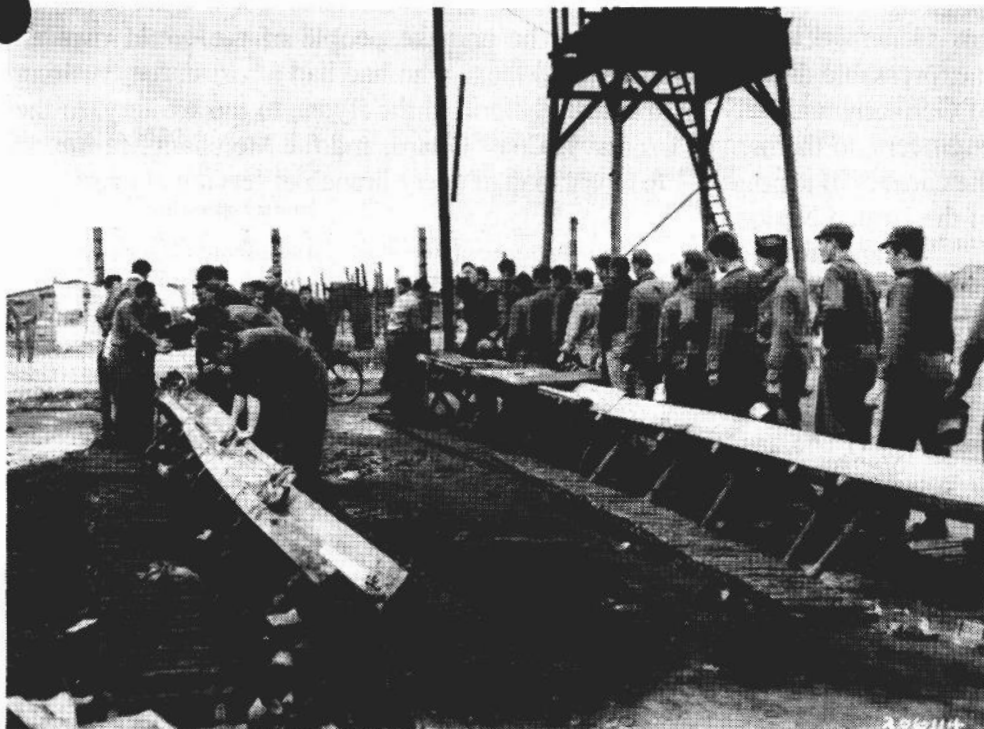
The Washington Post book review section last weekend carried a brief review of a new book that many of our members would find interesting: "WE WERE EACH OTHER'S PRISONERS, An Oral History of World War II" by Lewis H. Carlson, published by Basic Books. 259 pp. \$25. A photo accompanying the review was of liberated POWs surging out of Stalag IX-B to greet their liberators. Swett and thousands of other 106th Division GIs were at IX-B (Bad Orb) when the camp was liberated, and thousands of others (including me) had been there earlier before being sent off to Hammelburg (officers), Ziegenhain (noncoms) or Berga am Elster (Jews, "troublemakers," or innocents needed to fulfill the 350-man quota).

The review follows: "'To survive as a prisoner of war,' states Lewis Carlson flatly, 'is an act of heroism.' Carlson, a professor of history at Western Michigan University, interviewed more than 150 of the 95,000 Americans and 380,000 Germans held prisoner during World War II. He used 34 of their stories in his book." "Films such as 'Stalag 17' and 'The Great Escape' showed camps filled with camaraderie, mutual support, and heroic Americans resisting often dimwitted captors. The truth was far more harrowing. While living conditions varied from camp to camp, life was an often passive struggle to endure humiliating conditions, and later the ex-prisoners experienced long-term problems in readjustment." "Many of the accounts are subject to self-invention as survivors report not only what happened but also what they thought happened based on what society regards as acceptable conduct. Accounts that begin in the dry style of a debriefing often break down as memories flood back. Often the recollections are filled with anger and resentment, along with the depression and nightmares that, in the post Vietnam/Gulf War era, have come to be known as post traumatic stress disorder." "These stories, however, allow the men to recover a dignity and importance that their experience undermined. A 16-year-old German tells of his fear of being executed; a black flyer compares the racism he encountered in his own country with the Germans' relative indifference to color." "Predictably, many of the same themes are sounded from account to account, but each voice remains a distinctive offering of decency and self-worth. Collectively they compose a searing picture of mankind's capacity for inhumanity, but also for courage and the will to survive." *Jack Sulser*

(More photos on following page)



Interior of tents which housed Americans and Russians interned at Luchenwalde were crowded and unsanitary. All these US Signal Corps photos furnished by Albert Oeschig, 423/HQ 1Bn



Sanitary conditions were very poor at Stalag III-A, Luckenwalde. British and American prisoners were liberated by the Russians 4 May, 1945 then released to the Americans by the 83rd Inf Div, Ninth Army.

The War in Europe has ended;

A LETTER HOME FROM A GI IN THE PHILLIPINES

The following letter received by Sherod Collins, 423/SV, from his brother, "Speir."

Somewhere in the Philipines

9 May 1945

My dear brother,

Last night we heard the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of England announce the end of the war in Europe. At last, victory over the forces of darkness has been won - at what cost, only those of you who were there can know.

We heard the broadcast here at 10 p.m. May 8th. At that moment it was 9 a.m. in Washington, 2 p.m. in London, on May 7th. Throughout our bivouac area, we huddled around what precious few radios were available, straining to catch a word.

There was no celebration out here, although I imagine it was happy times back home. Most of us here received the news calmly, and with thankful hearts. It was as if we had just laid down a heavy load, or as if a sore tooth had suddenly stopped throbbing. As I walked among the tents last night, everywhere the tone of conversation was the same: "Now, we can finish this part of the job quicker!"

General Eisenhower said that he and the people of the world owe an inexpressable debt of gratitude to all those who had had a part in the crushing of Germany and Italy — to the doughfoot, to the flyers, to the artillery, to the engineers, to the men of the Navy, Coast Guard, and the Merchant Marine, to the carriers of supplies — to every man of every branch of service of every one of the United Nations.

We are proud of all of you. Now that we can concentrate our power on smashing what is left of the Japanese Empire, our unanimous feeling is "It won't be long now!"

May God watch over and keep you and all those with you.

Love

Speir

Sgt James S. Collins

1559 AAFBU, SWPW, PD, Air Transport Command

APO, San Fransisco

A Son Looking for his Father's History

(Editor's Note - in early December 1996 I was contacted by Patrick J. Emons, son of William M. Emons, ASN 31 279 190. As you will read, he is searching for information about his father. I need to know the UNIT he was in before I can send the son a list of current Association members that belonged to his father's unit. PLEASE, IF YOU KNOW the soldier in the Photograph, let me or Patrick know- parts of our e-mail correspondence follows:J. Kline, editor)

9 Dec 1996: Please allow me to introduce myself, my name is Patrick Emons. I had found your name, address, phone etc... on the Internet under U.S.ARMY and the 106th Division Alumni Association. You see, my father was in the 106th (Golden Lions) and knowing this coming Monday (16 December 1996) is the 52nd anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge, I wanted to know if there was anyone else out there who was part of the 106th. My father's name is **William Michael Emons Jr.** and I wanted to know if you remember him or even know him. He was a PFC and was in the campaign at St.Vith.

I myself served in the U.S.NAVY from 1978-1982 (active duty), U.S.Naval Reserves (1985-1987), and the U.S.ARMY National Guard (1989-1990). There has been a curiosity for years about the 106th, because every time there is documentary (on TV) about the Battle of the Bulge, or reading about the campaign, the 101st, and Patton are always mentioned and nothing about the 106th. Further it seems, that Bastogne is the main topic and nothing else, like St.Vith.

10 Dec 1996: I had heard him mention the 422nd and 423rd which I see you were attached to the 423rd. The exact unit, I don't know. He visited Europe back in the late 80's and took my mother. One of their stops was Belgium. They went to Bastogne and St.Vith. My father talked about a tower just on the outskirts of St.Vith and that he and another friend (soldier) of his were up



If you know this deceased 106th soldier
contact his son
Patrick Emons,
11030 Ascot Circle
Fredricksburg, VA 22407
540-786-9496

in this tower keeping a watch out for the Germans. No doubt they showed up. When he returned on his trip, he told me it took him a good part of the day to find that tower and he did.

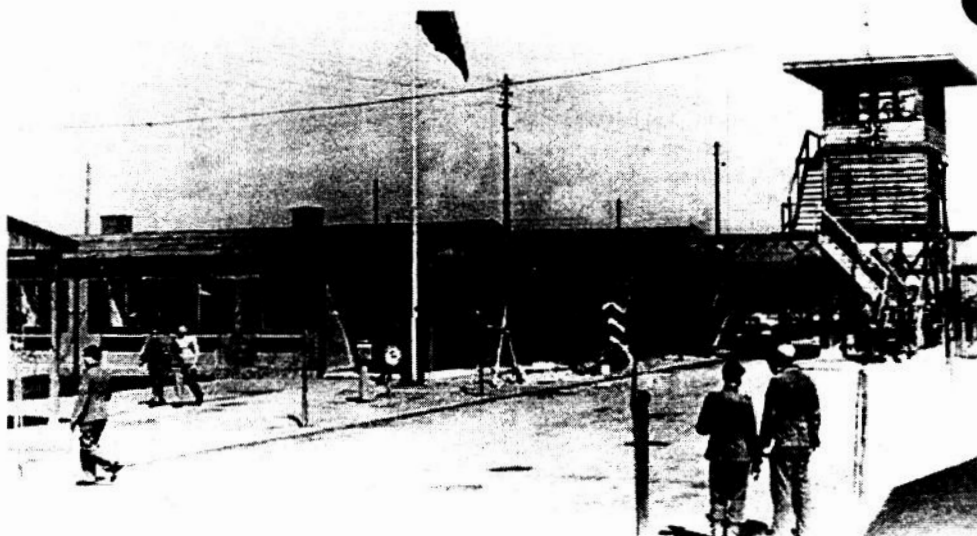
December 16, 1996: I wanted to send you a message of prayer for this day. I don't know what you are feeling and can't even imagine, but know that a fellow Vet is remembering you and your fallen soldiers of the 106th.

I haven't been able to acquire my father's discharge papers and I greatly appreciate the effort you have helped me with and hope that you can find out any other information for me.

May you have and your wife have a wonderful Christmas and Happy New Year! Anything I find out, I'll pass it on to you.

Sincere regards,
Patrick Emons

(Note: There have been eighteen e-mail letters pass between Patrick and me since 9 December 1996 through 24 June 1997.... J. Kline)



German Prisoner of War Camp World War II - Look familiar? see bottom of next page.

HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS -FOREIGN CLAIMS SETTLEMENT

COMMISSION REPORT Stalag Time Does Not Count, by *Pete House*

The German Government agreed to provide 2.1 million dollars to certain Americans who survived the Nazi concentration camps. The United States Foreign Claims Settlement Commission was to determine the validity of claims under this agreement. The German Government provided a list of the of their "concentration" camps.

The Commission spent months reviewing claims, evidences, and places of persecution under the Germans. According to Attorney William Marks, they made their ruling on June 16, 1977

After considerable research the Commission ruled that no Stalag including 9-B would be eligible. They proposed that only those POWs who were held in "recognized concentration camps or sub-camps," whether or not they were ever interned in Stalags will be eligible for compensation. This ruled out all Stalags and numbered camps. It also ruled out men who made the long marches.

The 350 men sent from 9-B to Berga am Elster are eligible. If any have not been in contact with either the commission or William R. Marks they should do so immediately. I have sent a list of known Berga Survivors to Marks, the commission, and EX-POW Washington Office.

If you were sent to a work camp from a Stalag you might be eligible. It depends upon whether your work camp is on the German Government list. See the Commission's Holocaust Survivors Claims Program Report for full details.

You may contact **Attorney William R. Marks at 202-624-7207**. He is representing our class action suit. The commission's chief council is **David E. Bradley at 202-616-2765**. Both are in Washington, DC.

An appeal process was set up and probably all who had contacted either the commission or Marks were so advised. Claimants had 15 days from the time they received notification from the commission to apply. After discussing the chances with Mr. Marks, I decided it was not a valid option for me at this time.

According to Marks, the commission had received so much material about some of the horrific conditions in the Stalags that there is a possibility that some further action may take place. Meantime, all of the men who were held in the Stalags are not eligible for the claims. *Pete House (SEE NEXT PAGE)*

"Holocaust Survivors Claims Program ..."

(continued from last page)

Note from editor.

About the same time I received the featured article from Pete House, I received a packet from Vernon E. Brumfield, Battery C, 589th Field Artillery Battalion, who was sent to a **Work Kommando at Leipzig** - one of the named work camps- which included a three page personal history containing three sections entitled, **I. Prisoner of War Confinement; II. Physical Condition After Liberation; III. Medical History Since Discharge** and a final **Summary**. Included with the personal history were 18 pages of information from the U.S. Department of Justice, Foreign Claims Settlement Commission of the United States. RE: Holocaust Survivors Claims Program. The cover letter subject matter is similar to Pete House's dissertation above. I may repeat a little of what Pete wrote, but think I should include the key paragraphs from the commission report.

June 16, 1997

Re: Holocaust Survivors Claims Program

Dear Sir/Madam:

Enclosed is a copy of the Commission's Proposed Decision on the Scope of the Holocaust Survivors Claims Program. The purpose of this Proposed Decision is to inform potential claimants of the Commission's initial determinations as to which places and types of internment are covered by the Holocaust Claims Program, under the applicable legislation and the underlying U.S.- German agreement.

In general, the Proposed Decision rules that the Holocaust Survivors Claims Program covers Prisoners-of-War (POWs) only if they were held in recognized concentration camps or sub-camps (listed on pages 11 to 13 of the Proposed Decision). In addition, it covers (1) civilians who were interned in recognized concentration camps and sub-camps, (2) civilians who were interned in "forced labor camps for Jews" and (3) civilians who were subjected to forced labor while on a forced march. The Proposed Decision finds that other places and types of internment are not compensable under this claims program.

Please read the Proposed Decision carefully to determine whether your claim is covered by the Holocaust Survivors Claims Program. If you disagree with the Commission's conclusions, you are entitled to file an "Objection" to the Proposed Decision. However, you must act quickly. Detailed instructions for filing an Objection are provided below.

Objections: If you believe that the Commission made mistakes of fact or mistakes of law in this Proposed Decision, you may file an Objection, asking the Commission to reconsider. If you wish, you may also request an Oral Hearing to present the Objection to the Commission. Oral Hearings are held in the offices of the Commission, at 600 E Street, NW, Suite 6002, Washington, DC. Objections (including requests for Oral Hearings) must be postmarked no later than fifteen (15) days after receipt of the Proposed Decision (which is presumed to occur no more than five days after mailing).

Pages 11 to 13 contain a total of 135 concentration or sub-camps recognized by ITS or listed in BGBI, all of which are within the scope of the Holocaust Claims Program.

I suggest, if you are interested in the list that you write the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission, 600 E Street, N.W., Suite 6002, Washington, D.C. I do see a few familiar names, but cannot be sure 106th soldiers were there. Some sound very familiar -they are - Altenburg, (Berga am Elster-which we know applies), Leipzig, Dresden, Torgau and Zeitz. I suggest you contact the attorneys Pete House mentions in his article to see if you may be in line. Pete promises to keep us informed if he hears any new decisions relative to some of the Stalags, or other work camps that our men were in....



The photo on page 13 shows Stalag 9-A, Ziegenhain, Germany - which I do not see on the Commission's list.... JK

New Members ...

CASHMAN, TOM ASSOCIATE

PO BOX 1724
HEALDSBURG, CA 95448

DONNINI, JAMES M 423/HQ 2BN

87 OAK ST
CRAWFORDSVILLE, FL 32327
850-926-5269

E-mail address: jimdon@freenet.tlh.fl.us

DALE, JOHN L. 423/B

4639 SO. LINDHURST
DALLAS, TX 75229

DIMEGLIO, JOHN P. 424/I

118 POTOMAC DR
BASKING RIDGE, NJ 07920

FALCH, CARL INDIANA

5210 E COUNTY RD 900 SOUTH
CROSS PLAINS, IND 47017-8970

FRIEL, MYLES B. 424/HQ 1BN

483 KARL DRIVE
ZANESVILLE, OH 43701

I was discharged from HQs Co, 15 February 1946. In 51 years I had not heard a thing about the 106th until June 24th. I got a call from my Squad Leader, Sgt Bob Logan, Carlisle, PA. I was elated to hear his voice. Two weeks later I got a call from CPL Harold Bratton, who was also in my squad, and he told me about "The Association." He sent applications for the Nashville Reunion, plus a copy of The CUB. I will be attending with my wife.

ISENSEE, LYLE H. 590/B

1009 UPLAND BLVD
LAS VEGAS, NV 89107

E-mail address: LKisensee@aol.com

JANECKI, BERNARD J. ASSOCIATE

5625 W 88TH ST
OAK LAWN, IL 60453
708-424-2208

E-mail address: magres@webspan.net

LICHTENFELD, DR. NORMAN E. ASSOCIATE

609 SHENANDOAH RD W
MOBILE, AL 36608

E-mail: normlichtenfeld@prodigy.com

Norman is the son of Sy Lichtenfeld, 423/B and is active on the Internet with other 106th veterans. See page 7 of the May 1997 CUB. He is seeking WWII weapons.

LIVELY, LEE R. 591/HQ

1891 TERRACE DR E
LAKE WORTH, FL 33460
561-588-3558

Mr. Collins, Enjoyed talking to you the other night. Enclosed, for me and my wife Martha, is our check to join the 106th Infantry Division Association.

O'HARE II, PIERRE F. ASSOC.

1009 ZODIAC AVE
GAHANNA, OH 93230
614-855-3786

I am the son of Pierre F. O'Hare, 424/HQ 1BN. My father was a graduate of Purdue University in 1948. In October 1950, he died of Cancer. Thanks to John Kline I received information to be an Associate Member. Frank's E-mail address is: PFOH@aol.com

Here is a transcript of Frank's first contact with me through the Internet:

From: PFOH@aol.com

Organization: 106th Inf Div Assoc

To: John Kline <jpk@mm.com>

Dear Sir, My father, Pierre Francis O'Hare was part of the 106th during WWII. He passed away in 1950. He is buried in the National Cemetery at Baltimore, Md. I am is only son. The stories that have been handed down to me by my family are still chilling. When the Germans attacked, he was behind the enemy lines with a Lt. on an intelligence mission. In order to get back to the American lines they had to walk for days in the snow and freezing temperature. He was treated for frostbite and sent back to the states. Do you have any records of my father being in the 106th? Sincerely, P. Frank O'Hare, Gahanna, OHIO

My answer via E-mail:

We are in luck Frank:

I was able to find your father's name in the 424th Combat Infantry Regiment Orders for the awarding of the Combat Infantry Badge, dated 4 January 1945. Order #4.

He was in the 1st Battalion Headquarters

Company, 424th Infantry Regiment, as Staff Sergeant Pierre OHare (ASN) 33726598.

I am listing below the names of fourteen 106th Infantry Division veterans that belonged to the same unit. They are current members of our 106th Infantry Division Association. We have currently over 1,600 members. Relatives of former 106th veterans are eligible to join the Association as ASSOCIATE members. We have over 100 Associate Members.

The Association has been in existence since 1944, Has held annual reunions, every year, since 1947 and has published a quarterly magazine since 1947. I took over the editing of that magazine in 1987. It is named THE CUB of the GOLDEN LION (short name = THE CUB), because we were known as THE GOLDEN LION DIVISION and our unique shoulder patch was a Golden Lion's head, as you see in my web page contents.

I will send you the latest CUB magazine - November 1996 (52 pages) and some other information.

It is always a pleasure to find relatives of former members of the Division. You will note when you read the new member list of the November CUB that I have acquired several new ASSOCIATE Members through this media. I also have some interesting stories coming in the February CUB due to the Home Page attracting relatives and historians.

I hope we can keep in touch. If you have any questions - fire away....

Editor's Note - Frank, It has been nice visiting with you via the Internet E-Mail. Thanks for joining as an Associate member, in honor of your father.

See you on the Internet....

John Kline, editor (jpk@mm.com)

ORD, CHARLES R. 423/E

PO BOX 187
NEW HAVEN, WV 25265

SHEANER III, HERBERT MICHAEL
ASSOCIATE

5722 VELASCO
DALLAS, TX 75206

E-mail address: sheaner1@airmail.net

Son of Herbert Sheaner, Jr. 422/G.

Thanks Herbert III for joining....

Herbert Jr, 422/F writes through his son's e-mail, as follows;

John, really do enjoy the webpage! I was 106th, 422nd, Co G. Captured 12/21/44, went to Stalag IV-B for a short time and then to work near Merseberg.

Would you know the whereabouts of two 106th men Frank Colombole, hailin from Pittsburgh PA, last known hometown of Steubenville OH, or Frank Scarca, Co. G runner, from Springfield MA? It would be great to know their address if they happen to be members of the 106th Inf Div Association.

Frank Scarca and I where Co. G runners for Capt Keilmeyer. I heard from Lt. Bob O'Neill that Capt. Keilmeyer passed away November 8th 1996 of natural cause. *Thanks, Herb Sheaner - 422/G*

Contact Herb if you the whereabouts of any of the men he wrote about.....

My Answer to Herb's inquiry

Nice to hear from you. I do not know of the whereabouts of Colombole or Scarca. I do have a telephone directory on CD Rom disks. When I get back home at noon (I still work four hours a day) I will run them through. Do you know what part of the country they came from? Would be interested in sending Bob O'Neill some data also. Herb

As you can see, you don't have to be young to **ENJOY the INTERNET... J Kline.**

SLATTERY, ROBERT 589/HQ

1523 WEST US 2 MED FAC
CRYSTAL FALLS, MI 49920

VISCUSO, GENNERO J 424/M

3A TOWNSEND AVE
NEW HAVEN, CT 06512
203-468-6827

NOTICE UPDATE FOLLOWING

From the Reunion Committee Chairman, John O. Gilliland: Members driving to Nashville should refer to their programs for directions to the hotel. Programs were mailed to each member earlier in the year.

In addition to the published directions, the following additional information should be noted: After exiting Briley Parkway onto Elm Hill Pike, **GO** to the 3rd traffic light on Elm Hill Pike and turn right onto **McGavock Pike**, at large water fountain marked "**Century City**," then 8 tenths of a mile on left through the gates up to the hotel "**Sheraton Music City**." See ya all in Nashville, ya hear!

NEW TAPESTRY "WALLHANGING"

See following page for order blank for our new "Tapestry Wallhanging." It is the same design as the original AFGHAN, but is smaller in size. It measures 30 X 36 inches with hemmed borders instead of fringes. It comes with two brass plated rods and hardware for wall mounting. Several members have requested the smaller heirloom which can be shipped in 4 to 6 weeks, after the receipt of \$50.00 (for delivery in the USA. If insufficient orders are received, your money will be refunded.

John O. Gilliland, Nashville Reunion Chairman

605 Northside Drive, Enterprise, Alabama 36330-1024 (334-347-7730)

PLEASE SEND IN YOUR REUNION REGISTRATIONS

For those of you who have not paid your \$105.00 Registration Fee (\$105.00 per person) do so now - it is vital that we receive your registration before August 1.

More members are registered at the host hotel, than with the Association.

ALL persons attending **official** functions at the Association Reunion must be registered with the Reunion Committee. The cut-off date was August 1 for REUNION REGISTRATIONS (do not confuse with hotel registrations). The cut-off date for TOURS was June 1, 1997.

Meals as well as other logistics must be planned 72 hours prior to the function, therefore your registration money should have already been in the hands of the Reunion Committee. If you have not sent in your \$105 Registration fee (per person) then call me **NOW!** at 334-347-7730

Read the registration papers we sent earlier, or read page 23 of the Jan-Feb-Mar CUB magazine where registration fees are explained...

THE 106TH INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION PRESENTS

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- .P.O.W. Camp
- .The Battle Of The Bulge
- .The Ardennes, The Rhineland & Central Europe Campaigns
- . St. Vith Memorial
- .Camp Atterbury Memorial
- .Major Unit Designation

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Thanks For Your Order

The Defense of the St. Vith area and its impact on the German Offensive

by General Hasso von Manteuffel, 5th Panzer Army -Commanding Officer.



General Manteuffel inspecting troops - December 1944

This is a speech prepared by General Manteuffel, for presentation to a group of former 106'ers at the 23rd Annual Reunion of the 106th Infantry Division Association at St. Vith, Belgium, July 1969. He did not appear at the reunion, but his speech made it's way to the 106th Infantry Division History archives. (Note- In translation some meaning, emphasis, may be lost. editor

July 20, 1969

I feel obligated to you for the invitation to your reunion - it is a great honor for me, but also a pleasure, because this meeting can help make our acquaintance and to help an understanding that we have in our times the same mission, "on the same side of the hill." That is to maintain and defend peace and freedom for everybody in this so called, Free World.

With your permission I wish to reflect on and bring up questions that are about things of the past, which for we are here assembled at St. Vith.

Whereas Bastogne had an honorable place in American military history, St. Vith is hardly mentioned. The heroic defense in the St. Vith area has suffered depreciation and a strange denigration and the hand of the popular media. *The Battle of the Bulge* was not fought ONLY solely in Bastogne or by the admirable coming into action of Patton's Third Army. Here around St. Vith were all elements of tragedy, of heroism and self sacrifice which make up the human experience at its most acute phase, when it is under the strain and stress of War!

As the one who "from the other side of the hill" could estimate the value and influence of the overall action and events of these cruel days in December 1944, Bastogne was in the scope of my Army, the 5th Panzer Army, and in the area of my command. I made, before, and make it clear now, in the United States, In Belgium and in Germany, that the actions around St. Vith exerted a great influence on the issue/result of the German intentions. That in manifold regard briefly; the schedule of the right wing of my Army, a whole Army Corps was delayed by your defense around St. Vith, in spite of the ill-fated elements of your Division in the Schnee-Eifel, you held up this Corps, 66th Army Corps, five days longer than our time-table allowed. You forced to detour the attacking forces so much more as my right neighbor, the 6th Panzer Army, had no success of the attack.

The after effect cast me an effort to put into action one of my best reserve units - *The Fuhrer-Escort-Brigade*. This unit was destined/intended for another very important place! They and other parts of the attacking Corps could have gone to the aid of the 6th Panzer Army on my right flank- and probably, again, open a hole for the on-rushing Panzers as the 6th Panzer Army's attack to the north was bogged down in the first few days of our offensive by the brave soldiers on the 106th Infantry Division's left.

All things considered; the flanks of my Army grew weaker as its spearheads penetrated into the American lines- and now I had to dispatch troops to my spearheads to reinforce those long flanks! Under those circumstances the energy and momentum of my attack in this area was diminished - decisively!

That is the great importance of the honorable and brave defense of St. Vith by parts of your division and by the gallant attitude of the men of the CCB/7th Armored Division under General Bruce Clarke. Important, also, regarding the influence of the other Corps of my Army, especially in the middle sector of the attacking forces. In this respect, the actions around St. Vith are in my opinion and from the German side - equivalent to the defense of Bastogne!!

But, this alone won't do to remember on this meeting, and I wish to say -as I have always said, after the surrounding of the units in the Schnee-Eifel, the Germans, and myself, supposed that the way to St. Vith - that important crossroad - was free! But, it changed and this fact verified my experience in a long time in practical military service on the front line, in peace, and in war, that battles are won in the hearts of men! Not only by the combination of fire, movement, but the working together teamwork. This combination is effective as it was shown here in the St. Vith area. St. Vith and Bastogne are fundamental (prime) examples of that. The fact that this area around St. Vith was obstinately and successfully defended, was the result, as demonstrated by the gallant men of the 106th Infantry Division and the CCB 7th Armored.

I am in flagrant contradiction to some records, some magazines, publications that they think to blame the units which went out of their positions in the Schnee-Eifel, in that last analysis for their surrender.

I say to you, veterans of the 106th Infantry Division, in order to tell the truth, that happened to ourselves the same fate or analogous to that, and the like in Russia. Such judgement, I mentioned, demonstrates - in my opinion - a lack of comprehension for what happened, in reality, in those days of December 1944 in the Schnee-Eifel. The attack of the Germans on both sides of

the Schnee-Eifel outflanked these units, parts of this "green division," (that means inexperienced soldiers without combat experience), in that "rest-camp" as the departing veterans quipped.

The units were encircled! While they marched and fought through that terrible terrain, in winter time, fire came from the left and fire came from the right, and from the rear also. These units suffered heavily. Further, they did not know what was happening on their flanks and in the rear, the sources of communication with the rear was destroyed. These units were "surprised" without their own guilt the excellent regulations for the deception of their real intentions by the German forces.

The Cavalry on their flank made no attempt to put up a fight and drew back. The visiting patrols were shot or captured. The ammunition was gone with except for a few rounds per gun for their machine-guns. No help or assistance came by the artillery, no supplies came in. Most of the men had not had a drop of water or a bite of food. These units were overwhelmed, in a real sense of a word - by powerful German forces, superior in numbers and arms - with great intensity - the Germans fired into their massed ranks with every cannon they had. It was a rain of steel, no tank destroyers were available, there was confusion and temporary panic spread out. All of that with the blood, dirt, cruel weather, deep snow with fog, cold and confusion was what happened in those days in the Schnee-Eifel.

I agree with my Chief of Staff, General Wagener, who said, with reason, "Possession of the ground or the capture of ground does not guarantee a victory! Loss of ground does not mean defeat! Withdrawal is not a disgrace, but a method of fighting!" We experienced quite the same in Russia. The decisive element is the fact that individuals and parts of your division that were engaged in this undeserved disastrous situation, once they recovered from the first shock, gallant men, small combat units, engineers, were told to hold fast to whatever they could, as hard as possible. They did not weaken, they broke into small groups, they formed im-

provided perimeter defenses, even though they did not know what was happening on their flanks and in the rear -their unbreakable will to fight, thus indestructible "esprit de corps," was well the unshakable confidence they had in military leadership. These surviving elements of the 106th Infantry Division joined by the very brave men of the CCB, fell back to the crossroad east of St. Vith and stayed and fought until they were wounded or captured.

They mastered the situation, they threw back the Germans by these small groups. The German attack in this area came to a halt for two days - it deployed "a war of the small men soldiers" until General Bruce Clarke came to organize and to coordinate the defense in this area east of town, under a unified command and control!

Chester Wilmot wrote, and I agree, "Faith and pride made them reluctant to execute any withdrawal. Every yard the Germans were allowed to gain was a reflection on American honor!" Later on we met with the 106th Infantry Division, on the vital crossroads at Baraque de Fraiture (*Parker's Crossroads..editor*) where they fought too!

Honor to whom Honor is due - to these brave men of all ranks and of various services grade in these days. My unlimited regard as a front line

soldier for these soldiers in their self-sacrifice, stubborn and heroic defense around St. Vith. Thus the action made a valuable contribution to sealing off the breakthrough area both to the north and to the south within *The Battle of the Bulge*.

The official U.S. military history of this battle acknowledges this vital role that St. Vith played, in spite of the most tragic fate of some parts of the 106th Infantry Division. Together; my very deep respect and high esteem for those soldiers who have settled the battle around St. Vith to your own advantage by the outstanding bravery - in spite of the pass over loss of this town (St. Vith). Remember please, what I say from General Wagener.

I bow to all these soldiers, I dare say you are allowed, in my opinion, to be proud of your participation in *The Battle of the Bulge*!

My condolences and sympathy applies also to the sacrifices and pains of the inhabitants who were pressed in the war-events.

I hope the fate may be favorable to us to be spared from all we suffered- that is my wish for all of you! I thank you, gentlemen and veterans of the 106th Infantry Division.

General Hasso van Manteuffel, former commander of the German 5th Panzer Army.



Prisoners taken in the Battle of the Bulge. Photo from German Archives

They Broke Through First



The first group of Lionmen to break through the German encirclement in December were members of the I & R Platoon, 423d Inf. Their first rest after six days of travel through enemy lines came at St. Vith, Belgium, location of the Division CP.

Correspondents Briefing

ST VITH - DECEMBER 21, 1944

Center Back - Morris, Casenhiser Center - Long

INTRODUCTION

In the Jul-Aug-Sep 1996 issue of the CUB, Col. Alan W. Jones, in his detailed account of the 423rd Infantry Regiment during December 16 - 19, 1944, mentioned, on page 27, that the Regimental I&R Platoon maintained a roadblock south of Radscheid on the night of December 18. He shows the location on Map I on page 28. When the Regiment had to surrender on the 19th, the story of what happened to the I&R has never fully been told.

In 1991, Dick Sparks, a member of the Platoon, wrote an account of the Platoon that started with training in Camp Atterbury and recounted their activities until the

end of the war. The following are excerpts from his book entitled "*A WALK THROUGH THE WOODS*" and cover the period of December 16 - 31, 1944 and the escape from the encirclement that led to the ultimate surrender of the Regiment.

The Platoon was commanded by 1st Lt. Ivan H. "Ike" Long with T/Sgt. Bob "Casey" Casenhiser as Platoon Sgt. The 1st and 2nd squads were led by Sgts. Bill Morris and Bob Jones respectively. Eighteen of the twenty-four man platoon took part in this adventure. The others were on detached duty to Regimental HQ in various capacities. Two of them were captured with the Regimental contingent.

A WALK THROUGH THE WOODS

The I&R Platoon, as part of HQ Company, moved into Buchet and occupied a small four room two story schoolhouse on the southern edge of the village. In the days before the 16th, the platoon manned two observation posts and conducted sporadic patrolling toward the German lines. These patrols were among the first to report sounds of German vehicles. On the 16th, the platoon along with other troops of HQ Company, were moved to the vicinity of Bleialf. After Bleialf had been secured by the provisional battalion under Lt. Col. Nagle, the headquarters contingent was recalled to Buchet to resume their regular duties in support of Regimental Headquarters. The I&R returned to the schoolhouse as part of the security forces for Regimental Headquarters throughout the night of the 16th.

DECEMBER 17

Along about 1200 on the 17th, Ike came back from S-2 at headquarters and reported that Col. Cavender had requested an airdrop of food, ammunition and medical supplies be made in a field in the vicinity of Halenfeld. He was assured that this would happen the following day. He was also told that an armored column would be attacking from St. Vith to relieve the regiment. These two events never occurred.

The platoon got in their jeeps and moved to the outskirts of Buchet to take up their assigned position as rear guard for the company that was beginning their move to Oberlaschied. Headquarters started their move about 1600, but by that time, the Colonel had decided the I&R should stay in Buchet for the night, as a security platoon. Back we went to the schoolhouse and, after scrounging around in the village, found enough food to have some sort of an evening meal.



**Dick Sparks, Author
A WALK THROUGH THE WOODS
423rd Headquarters I& R Platoon**

DECEMBER 18

The I&R posted sentries around the schoolhouse and, throughout the night, kept in touch with the small security force that had been left in Buchet proper after the headquarters started their move to Oberlascheid.

We struggled out of our sacks at dawn. Packs, weapons and ammunition were checked and our barracks bags were stacked in the command post on the first floor. In the meantime, Ike had taken off for headquarters to find out what the situation was.

Our combat packs, usually carried in the jeeps, had the bare minimum for survival for a couple of days. They contained a blanket, a change of socks and underwear, what food we could locate - an occasional K ration or extra chocolate bar - a small first aid kit and any extra ammunition we could pack in. Our weapons consisted of M-1 rifles or .30 caliber carbines, two jeep mounted .50 caliber machine guns, and two .45 caliber "grease guns". Overcoats were packed in the barracks bags - they were too

"The Story of the 423rd I&R Platoon ..."

cumbersome for fighting. We had not yet been issued overshoes.

By the time Ike returned, we had all the jeeps loaded and ready for whatever we had to do. The I&R was to fall in as rear guard at the end of the regiment to protect against any German attacks from the rear. We found the end of the column about three quarters of a mile outside Buchet on the road to Halenfeld. We could hear that the fighting had intensified over near Skyline Drive and the column had ground to a halt. We were told to hold our position and be alert for any enemy movements in our rear. And hold we did — for five or six hours. During our wait, Hank Iverson had found an abandoned 2 ½ ton truck and, taking three of the fellows with him, went back to the schoolhouse and loaded up all our barracks bags rejoining us a short time later. We had hated to leave all our possessions and were bound and determined to get them if we could. Some of the second squad also went back into Buchet to check out the headquarters buildings for any classified material that might have been overlooked when they moved out. They found quite a lot of papers laying around and, to be safe, had quite a bonfire.

Late in the afternoon, the convoy got moving again. The 1st Battalion had been nearly wiped out with the exception of A Company that was serving as their rear guard. Lt. Col. Nagle came to Ike about this time and told him to have the platoon establish a roadblock at the crossroads south of Radscheid. Half of our little force was to hold the roadblock at all costs and the other half were to occupy a hill overlooking the Ihren valley. The 1st squad, in charge of the roadblock, had a backbreaking job during most of the night. We succeeded in felling one tree across the road using a rusty hatchet we found in an abandoned truck and one or

two entrenching tools from our jeeps. We would work two or three at a time while the others kept watch at our rear.

During the night, the fighting continued, more intense than before. Ike, trying to keep in touch with headquarters, found that Col. Cavender had moved the headquarters contingent to 3rd Battalion CP on a hill overlooking Schönberg. Ammunition was extremely scarce, food and medical supplies had run out and the regiment was only at about fifty percent of full strength.

Considering what the line companies were going through, the I&R were comparatively lucky. The Germans had not tried to come down our way and had not, obviously, spotted our positions so we received no artillery fire. Toward daybreak, spelling each other, we were able to get a few winks of sleep.

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As dawn arose, the squad holding the hill overlooking the Ihren valley, were relieved by remnants of Fox company of the 422nd, who had somehow wandered out of their assigned area in all the confusion. The squad returned to the roadblock and reinforced our small group that had been there throughout the night. The weather continued snowy and foggy, the fighting continued in the valley to our west and it was evident that the troops were being severely battered.

Shortly, we moved our jeeps and the 2 ½ down the hill a few yards and lined them up on a small dirt road within sight of the fighting, all the while maintaining the roadblock at the crossroads. In an attempt to establish communications with Division, Ike sent two of the radio jeeps up onto Skyline Drive to try to get a message through to Division. Skyline Drive was under direct observation by the Germans and was zeroed in by mortar and .88 fire.

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One at a time the jeeps would go down the road for a few yards and stop to try to key the message on the radios. Usually the message could not be completed before shells started dropping around the jeeps. Then it was down the road for a few more yards and try again. After a couple of passes back and forth, it became impossible to make any more attempts. Both jeeps came back to the platoon position with holes in the back of the radios and one of the drivers had a nice dent in his helmet from shrapnel. We assumed that the message never got through.

Meanwhile, Ike had headed out to find Regimental headquarters to see what the situation was. From our semi-concealed positions on the road, with the valley on our left and a hill and tree line on our right, we saw, at about 1000 yards, a group of American soldiers of about company strength under a white flag of surrender. So far the I&R had not been spotted in our position on the hillside and we had not been fired upon. Ike returned about 1200 and said Col. Cavender had indicated that he would be surrendering the Regiment to the Germans at 1600 and that any troops who wished, had permission to take off and try to work their way back to American lines. There was no question of what the I&R would do. As we started to move the jeeps and the 2 ½ further along the road, a barrage of .88's landed all around us. We had been spotted. We hit the ditches, and, between shell bursts, we'd pop up and grab any ammunition we could, fired rounds into the radios, threw grenades under the hoods of the jeeps and took off over the crest of the hill to our right. The last thing we did was to throw an incendiary grenade into the back of the 2 ½ and, from the top of the hill, looked back and saw the truck and all our personal belongings enveloped in flames and black smoke.

After reaching the crest of the hill, we

proceeded rapidly eastward across Skyline Drive, skirted Oberlascheid, then across open fields for about a mile, crossing a small stream on the way. We assembled in some heavy woods at the top of a small hill and stopped to rest and get organized. We had escaped the .88's with just the clothes on our backs - field jackets - no overcoats or overshoes. We were in good shape as far as ammunition was concerned since everyone had grabbed all he could carry from the jeeps. All cartridge belts were full. Sparks, who was carrying a "grease gun" had about ten magazines stuck in the pockets of his field jacket. Mowery, who had the other one, had a similar amount. "Irish" Sheehan, in his inimitable fashion, had removed his gas mask and had stuffed the carrier with a dozen or so K ration bars, our only source of food.

As we rested, Ike and Casey went back to Oberlascheid to reconnoiter and so called us down to the village. Assembled there were about 150 - 200 American GIs, the remnants of various units, under the command of Major Helms, Regimental G-3. In the bunch, was a Lt. who had his jeep loaded with all his Officer's gear and other booty that he was bound and determined to get out. It took a direct order to get him to abandon his precious possessions. Capt. Nauman was there with what was left of the men from A Company, and also Lt. McKinley with men from A & P Platoon plus a few other stragglers. What a motley looking crew we were - dirty, wet, tired - with some that only could be classified as walking wounded. Major Helms insisted that we try and mount an attack on Schönberg. Ike tried his best to convince him the it would be far better to abandon the few vehicles and try to infiltrate through the German lines back to St. Vith. The major would have none of this and ordered the

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I&R, along with Nauman and McKinley's groups, to fall in as rear guard for the attack. The column had no sooner started out than .88's started to hammer the column. The I&R and the other two groups in the rear, dropped down into a small ravine and made their way into a patch of woods out of sight of the enemy. Here we reorganized with Capt.. Nauman and A company in a column on the right, and the I&R and McKinley's group on the left. Ike designated Sam Bordelon as lead scout because of his knowledge of French. Ozzie Spier, who spoke fluent German, was to follow Sam. Bill Morris' 1st squad was next in line, with Sparks and his "grease gun" near the head of the column to provide covering fire if necessary. Bob Jones and the 2nd squad followed, with Mowery near the end providing for the same covering fire to the rear. Irish took up position as rear scout. Ike and Casey moved along the column to where ever they were needed. Thus, in that single file fashion, the I&R started their little hike.

We moved out in a easterly direction into a patch of woods to get out of sight of the enemy. Directly in front of us, we saw a small German village, probably Schlausenbach. For some reason, Capt.. Nauman and A Company immediately took off to attack the village that seemed to be swarming with Germans. Knowing that to try and to help A Company would be futile, Long and McKinley's groups made a hard swing to the northwest away from the village and pulled up to the edge of the patch of woods.

[Sam Bordelon] - *"As I went to the edge of the woods to reconnoiter, I saw a farmhouse across a field and about a quarter of a mile away. Standing outside the house was an elderly German couple talking to two German soldiers. Our only recourse was to go ahead since, obvi-*

ously the Germans were coming right behind us and we had nowhere to go. I started across the field thinking any moment I would hear the clatter of machine guns from the farmhouse. Immediately the German couple went into the house and the two soldiers ran around the back. I kept going. When I finally reached the house there was no one there. I motioned for the men to come forward and join me at the house."

By this time it was probably about 1600 and growing dusk, making visibility in the fog even more impossible. We could hear German vehicles in the distance, and coming soon to the main highway from Auw, we cautiously crossed it one by one before the Germans came into sight. In the ever increasing darkness, we could see, off to our left, another small village, probably Laudesfeld. We had no intention of blundering into the village in the dark. This territory was too busy for us to hang around in. We were next to a fast flowing stream and in we went as quietly as we could, wading across it in water up to our waists, ultimately gaining the woods on the other side. The shock of the cold water was almost enough to do us in, but we continued moving in the woods parallel to the stream until we had passed the village on the other side. We could clearly hear German voices. We moved on about a quarter of a mile, to the top of a nearby hill, where Ike called a halt. We were in bad shape. We could go no further without rest.

Looking to our right, we could see the glow of the German fires 800 to 1000 yards away. Hoping that the Germans would mistake us for some of their troops, Ike gave us the OK to scoop out three or four pits about a foot deep in the frozen ground and start small fires so we could try to dry out. As the fires were lit, we huddled

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around them trying to hide them from the German view. We melted snow in our canteen cups, shaved some of the K ration bars into the water with our trench knives and got a little warm liquid in our bellies.

The small fires didn't do much to warm us up. We didn't dare build them up too much for fear we would be seen. We huddled together in small groups hoping the shared body heat would allow us to rest. A couple of the fellows took off their boots to try to rub warmth into their feet but found they could barely get them back on. Their feet were too badly swollen. One of the guys had managed to grab a blanket when we left our jeeps, and we cut it up in strips to wrap around our hands. And so we sat, leaning against the tops of trees knocked off by artillery fire, and tried to rest for a few hours. Our minds were foggy with fatigue. Our only thoughts were of survival.

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At about 0300, we painfully got on our feet again and started moving out. To rest any more would be dangerous, not only because of the presence of the Germans, but because our physical condition was deteriorating more all the time. If we didn't get our blood circulating, the continued below freezing weather would seriously impede our ability to move.

We proceeded north for about half a mile until we saw a road ahead of us at the bottom of the hill. Sounds of tanks and trucks indicated this was a main road for the German advance. We veered west, parallel to the road, along the forward slope of the hill that was covered with scrub growth, looking for a place that would be safe to cross the road. The fog still hung over the area and helped shield us from any German eyes that might be on the lookout. The road below us made a sharp bend to the south

following the contours of the hill. At the bend, we could see the lights of another small town, probably Andler. Another 500 yards beyond the bend, we stopped while Sam Bordelon went forward to scout out the chances of crossing the road at that point. At the road, Sam came upon a Belgian civilian walking down the road away from the village. Sam questioned him in French and was told that there was a heavy concentration of Germans in the village and that we should try to cross the road and get into the woods on the other side.

It was getting on toward 0600 and dawn would soon be upon us. The platoon joined Sam at the edge of the road, crossed a barbed wire fence and crawled into a ditch along side the road. No sooner had we gained the ditch than a convoy of German tanks and trucks started to leave the village and come down the road toward us. Since it was dark they were traveling under blackout conditions with only small slits of light showing as headlights. They were spaced about twenty five to thirty five yards apart and moving at a fairly slow pace.

After the first tank passed, Irish dashed across the road and dove into the ditch on the far side. A swift flowing stream ran parallel to the road a few yards from the ditch and Irish discovered a log, eight to ten inches in diameter had been felled across the stream to form a crude bridge. As each tank passed, Casey would send another man across the road and into the ditch to join Irish. One by one, we ran the gauntlet between vehicles with the last three men making a dash all at the same time. As the platoon was crossing the road, those that were first across were tightropeing the log and hitting the ground at the far side of the stream. As the last man crossed the stream and dawn was beginning to break, we looked back toward the road and saw a

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number of German troops coming down the road and along the bank of the stream. We had probably made some noise in our crossing and they were out looking for some "ghost men." We immediately got to our feet and ran the few yards to the dense woods and made our way quickly to the top of a very steep hill. The Germans came down the stream, going as far as the edge of the woods and then gave up the search.

Lt. McKinley's group had crossed the stream slightly below us and we could hear them coming through the woods on our left. They were making too much noise to suit us and two or three men went back to quiet them down. Most of the bunch had not been trained in patrolling as we had and didn't appreciate the need for absolute silence. The exception was their 1st scout, a corporal by the name of Willard Roper from F Company. The group immediately took off in a slightly different direction.

[John Califf] - *"Towards morning, Sparks and myself became separated from the I&R and found ourselves with McKinley's group. Finally we had to stop for a few hours rest. As it began to get light, we could hear Germans talking all around us. Luckily they moved off and so did we. We traveled all day in the woods at top speed for we knew that if we didn't reach our lines, the German advance would completely engulf us. We could hear artillery barrages all around us. Once, while in the woods, we thought we heard American 2 1/2 ton trucks on a road nearby. They were 2 1/2 all right but loaded with German SS troops followed by tanks, assault guns etc. We had to drop quickly and I happened to be on the edge of the woods. One German with a machine pistol came up to within 10 yards of me, but apparently thought I was dead due to the battered helmet I had on."*

Meanwhile, the I&R also decided that it would be best to travel during daylight hours. There was obviously a lot of German activity around and, by the sound of the artillery bombardments, the front lines couldn't be too far away. To wait for nightfall would be too risky.

Jim Mowery's feet were in very bad condition and he was having a hard time keeping up with his load of "grease gun" ammunition. Bob Jones, sensing this, moved him forward in the formation. Irish swapped his rifle for Mowery's "grease gun" and ammunition and moved to the front of the column to take over Sparks place when he and Califf became separated from the group.

The forest, in this section, was very dense and since it was so hard to see, Sam and Irish ranged out ahead for greater distances than usual while the platoon waited for the signal to move ahead. After an hour or two, they came to the edge of the woods bordering a broad valley, about 200 yards wide. A small road ran down the middle and it looked like it had been used to recently move vehicles. While Sam cautiously went down the hill, crossed the road and continued to the tree line on the opposite hill, the rest of the platoon came up to join Irish on the near side. On Sam's signal that all seemed clear, the platoon moved out and crossed the valley without incident. Irish waited until the last man was over and then started down the hill himself.

[Irish Sheehan] - *"As I started down the hill and across the valley itself, the pack of "grease gun" ammunition on my back kept bouncing up and down and eventually knocked me face first into the mud. Just as I started to get up, a German tank came around the bend. I could see the machine gun turret swinging toward me. Just as that happened, an artillery*

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shell landed on the hill we had just left. The German tank closed down and backed down out of the way. I got up and made my way across the valley and joined the rest of the guys at the tree line. The artillery kept falling on the opposite hill, and we decided it was time we got going and head for St. Vith."

Again Sam and Irish ranged out ahead of the platoon to scout out the territory. As they approached a small foot path in the woods, Sam spotted what looked like a Belgian civilian coming down the path.

[Sam Bordelon] - *"Irish and I hid behind some trees bordering the foot-path the Belgian was using. As he came closer, I stepped behind a tree and spoke to him in French. I told him who we were and what our problem was. This was risky because some of the Belgians near the German border, were pro-German. He told us we were in the midst of a group of Panzer divisions and even gave us the names of those divisions. He also knew the name of the General of one of them. ... As we left the Belgian and started back to the platoon, we heard vehicles approaching through the forest along a small dirt road. We dropped behind some bushes about fifty yards from the road and along came two touring cars, the open convertibles that German officers liked to ride in. For some reason, they always loved to ride standing up holding on to the windshield. In the first vehicle, was a tall German officer, probably in his forties. I could easily have picked him off at that distance but decided to leave well enough alone. He drove on by. Later on, after the war, I recognized his picture from a newspaper photo. He was the Commanding General of the Panzer division the Belgian told us about."*

By this time, it was somewhere in the neighborhood of 1300. The platoon continued to head in a westward direction and, after about an hour, again heard more vehicular traffic nearby. Cautiously, they moved up to the edge of the trees, a short distance from the road, to observe. To the left, the road made a swing to the south about fifty yards from where the platoon was hiding. The traffic was moving to the north, left to right, with two or three vehicles of various types in a group and a spacing between groups of about 100 yards. Other tank noises could be heard to the rear and it was evident that the platoon had to get across the road or get trapped. So, using the technique of the night before, they would wait until one group had passed. Even though they were not completely out of sight, two or three of the guys would tear across the road and into the trees before the next group could nose around the bend to the left. Everyone got across. No one was seen, even though it was broad daylight.

Moving on again west, following the noise of the buzz bombs that were constantly flying overhead toward Liege, one of the men heard the sound of foot soldiers in the woods off to the left. Everyone hit the ground. It was McKinley's group led by Will Roper, that emerged from the trees. Califf and Sparks were with them. The I&R had not known what had happened to the two of them. As the men rested and the officers and non-coms were talking things over, Sam had found a patch of short evergreens roughly fifty yards square. They formed a dense thicket and the lower branches came to within eighteen inches of the ground. Since it was then about 1600 and the activity around was intensifying, it was decided to crawl under these trees and rest until dark before trying to proceed any further.

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[Dick Sparks] - *"Both McKinley's group and the I&R moved in under the trees leaving as little evidence as possible that we were there. Roper and I moved up to the edge of the northern boundary so we could observe any activity coming from that direction. We were no more than a foot back from the edge and burrowed as deep as we could into the snow. Our weapons were in front of us and we lay with our heads on our arms to try and get a little rest. The rest of the men were spread out throughout the patch of woods, disbursed, but yet close enough to reach out and touch a buddy near them, for this would be our only means of communication.*

Soon after we had gotten settled, German tanks and troop carriers began to move into the area next to our "home" and proceeded to establish a night bivouac around three sides of the patch of trees. As we lay there, a detail walked up the side of the woods where Roper and I were laying and dug a latrine just beyond the boundaries of our woods patch. Throughout the gathering dusk, German officers in two's and three's strolled down this path, deep in conversation. They were close enough that I could have easily reached out and tripped them up. Luckily, they never looked down and we were not spotted. As darkness began to arrive, a couple of the guys fell asleep and one even began to lightly snore. A sharp jab in the ribs soon put a stop to this.

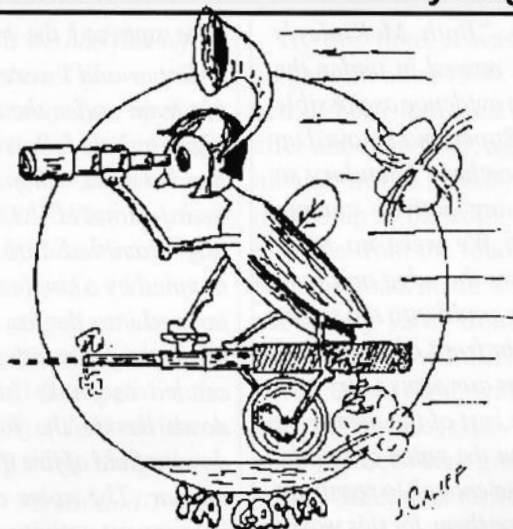
After about four hours of lying virtually motionless, the German encampment seemed to be settling down for the night. I soon felt a tug on my boot, indicating that we were pulling out to the rear away from the main encampment. As I started to slide back, I found that my right arm, which had been holding the "grease gun", had fallen fast asleep and was completely numb. I couldn't

have squeezed the trigger if I had to.

Roper and I were the last ones to slide out from under the trees and were starting to quietly follow the other men as they headed west, when, all of a sudden, we heard a loud HALT! We had almost literally stumbled into a German outpost manned by a single sentry. Roper quickly jumped into the fox hole, hitting the sentry in the face with his carbine and proceeded to choke him to death. I knelt down beside the fox hole ready to lay down a field of fire if any Germans should appear. The noise of the challenge and subsequent activity alerted both the Germans and our group up ahead, and we all took off, running as fast as we could through the dense, black woods. We could hear the Germans mounting a search, shouting at the top of their lungs and crashing through the underbrush in pursuit. Thank God the Germans were afraid of night fighting and made a lot of noise shouting orders back and forth as they searched. Our group, because of their training, moved more quietly and as rapidly as possible for a half mile or so and, surprisingly, found each other. We formed a defensive perimeter and stayed low for about a half hour until we could hear the German troops moving back to their bivouac area."

Ike and Casey called the men together. McKinley's group had taken off in a different direction. We took a head count and found that Ozzie Spier and Bob Brendlinger were not with us. We waited a few more minutes and then moved out in our usual formation with Sam and Irish out in front.

[Irish Sheehan] - *"Sam and I were out in front scouting our way through, working about ten yards from each other, when, all of a sudden I stumbled right into a German machine gun nest. The two men manning the machine gun were as star-*



A logo representing the 423rd Headquarters Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon was sketched by John W. Califf, Jr. at Camp Atterbury, 1944.

tled as I was. I stood with my "grease gun" pointing at them and they were looking at me with their machine gun pointing at me. I let out a discreet yell for Sam and he quickly came over. He spoke to them in French. He told them we were a heavy combat patrol returning to St. Vith. He told them to move away from their gun, and amazingly they did. They were just kids, younger than I was. Sam went back and got the platoon while I stood guard. The platoon came forward, passed the machine gun nest and headed on to St. Vith. As Sam and I got ready to move out, one of the German kids said, "Look out for the mines," and told us where we might find them."

It was near midnight by this time and we were about on our last legs. We could hear the distinctive sound of German .88's firing from our left rear, and the answering fire from American artillery from our right front. We were caught in the middle. Nobody knew we were out there and we realized that the most dangerous part would be

getting back into American lines.

We soon came to a major secondary road. Sam started to scout it out in a southerly direction, when we heard him challenged by a loud **HALT!** That word sounded the same in both German and English and we didn't know what we had run into. We froze, and when Sam didn't return in a reasonable amount of time, we took off along the edge of the woods in a more westerly direction. Ike took over the point.

We were at the edge of a large, fairly level plain that stretched as far as we could see in a southwesterly direction. The ever present fog obliterated any landmarks and our only guidance were the flashes of the American artillery in the distance. A few hundred yards along the edge of the woods, we came to a slight depression that seemed to bisect the vast expanse ahead of us. Ike decided that this would provide us with some minimal cover and, single file we headed down it. Hank Iverson, who was about the fifth or sixth man in line, suddenly stopped. His boot had nudged a trip

wire. Reaching down and carefully exploring it with his fingers, he cut it with his radio pliers. No sooner had we moved on again than the night was suddenly lit up with the brilliance of star shells that turned the night into day. As we had been trained, we froze in place until they had burned themselves out in two or three minutes.

In the bright light, however, we could see what looked like some sort of object on the horizon at the far edge of the plain. Not knowing what it was, Ike told us all to get down as low as we could and wait for him to scout it out. As he moved nearer to the far edge of the plain, he thought he heard sounds of some kind of movement. Taking a big risk, he stood up at full height and yelled, "Ya, Ya!" - or "Ja, Ja!" - since both sounded the same and would serve to call attention to him. What a wonderful sound it was when an American voice asked him for the password. Of course he had no idea what the password was and so he waited, spouting English phrases, until a squad of men came and "captured" him and took him to a Lt. who was manning a dug-in tank with his squad of men. It took him quite awhile to convince them who he was and that those of us, still out in the ditch, were American soldiers. He, of course, wasn't aware that Germans dressed in American uniforms, had infiltrated the American lines the past few days. After convincing them, he signaled for us to come up to his location. As we moved up along side the tank, we passed through a gauntlet of GIs, standing with weapons pointed at us, still not quite sure that we weren't the enemy. It was 0200, December 21, 1944.

The Lt. radioed back to his battalion command post and asked that a truck be sent to take us back to the CP. While we were waiting for the truck to arrive, the Lt. told us that it seemed impossible that we

had come across that plain without setting off a mine or trip flare. During the past two days, the plain had been solidly mined with anti-personnel mines leaving only one path open for purposes of counterattack. Orders had come down in the early evening that, if any mine or trip wire was kicked off, the battalion was to fire all it's weapons at that spot. We had hit that one path. We knew that someone "up there" had been watching out for us.

The truck soon arrived and deposited us at the CP of one of the 7th Armored Battalions which was located in a house on the edge of St. Vith. We almost literally collapsed on the floor. Most could barely hobble and some fingers were turning white at the tips. While Ike and the non-coms were being debriefed, the rest of us were given part of a K ration and immediately fell asleep in whatever space we could find. We were home again!

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At daybreak, we again were put in a truck and moved to a large schoolhouse in the middle of St. Vith known as "St. Joseph Kloster." This building had become the headquarters of the defenders of St. Vith, under the command of Brigadier General Bruce Clarke, Commander of Combat Command B, 7th Armored Division. We had expected to find the 106th Division Headquarters there, but were told that they had moved back to Vielsalm on the evening of the 18th. But we did find McKinley's group who had come into the American lines within a couple of hours of our arrival. And, also to our delight, we found Sam Bordelon, Ozzie Spier and Bob Brendlinger.

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After Sam had been challenged back at the woods road, he was taken to a tank stationed in the woods. He, too, was taken to a unit headquarters and interrogated, having quite a time proving he was not an infiltrating German. After spending the night there, he was taken to the schoolhouse in the morning.

Ozzie and Bob, realizing that they were lost from the group, knew they had to make their way to the American lines by themselves. Using their imagination and good old I&R ingenuity, they decided to try to pass as Germans. They turned their helmets around backwards and slung their rifles upside down in order to look more like German troops. Soon after they started out, they came upon a German outpost, and, in the dark and in his fluent German, Ozzie, in a very convincing Prussian manner, told the sentries that they were spies ordered to get behind American lines, that he outranked them, and they were to let them pass.

We were taken inside the schoolhouse while the officers were debriefed. This was the first concrete evidence known to the higher echelons, that the 422nd and 423rd had surrendered. As we stepped back outside the schoolhouse, we were met by reporters and photographers from Pathe News, Fox News and an assortment of still photographers. We were heroes that day - one of the greatest stories to come out of the Bulge to date. But soon there was Bastogne!!!

Of course we were in bad physical shape. Any of us could have passed as Bill Mauldin's "Willie" of cartoon fame. We were sent to the field hospital nearby, which had not been evacuated, and the medics tried their best to help us out. They

arranged for us to be fed, and given new boots and clothing if they were available. There weren't enough to go around and the fellows in the worst need got them. At least there were enough dry socks and everyone was happy to get them. As we pulled our wet ones off, a couple of guys found that the skin was coming off with the socks. Everyone had a good start at frostbite or frozen feet. The medical supplies were limited and about the best that could be done was to sprinkle sulfa powder on the worst cases and give the rest of us some foot powder or salve to use.

We didn't spend a lot of time at the medics. More serious casualties continued to stream in and they took priority. At least we were still on our feet, even though some were barely able to walk. By this time, it was approaching 1200 and we were told to go up to the third floor of the schoolhouse and get some sleep. We knew we would need to fight again before the day was over.

At about 1500, "screaming meemies" and .88's started hitting the schoolhouse. We tried as best as we could to scramble into our boots and rushed to the basement, half dressed and lugging our gear with us. Soon the shelling let up somewhat, and we tried the third floor again, only to have the same thing happen. We stayed in the basement after that.

Around 1600, we were told to go to the basement of a building down the street, where a kitchen had been set up, to get a hot meal. It was decided that McKinley's group would go first and, when they were finished, the I&R would follow. The shelling was intense, and we ducked between shell bursts and in and out of doorways on our way to the hot meal. Again, surprisingly, no one was hit. The hot meal consisted of beans and franks, garnished over

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with, of all things, canned fruit salad. But it sure tasted good. While we were eating, word came down that the Germans had broken through the defenses outside the town and were starting to come down the streets toward the main square at it's center. McKinley's group, who had finished their meal, were immediately ordered out into the streets and sent down to meet the enemy.

Before we had a chance to finish our meal, the I&R were called out and deployed around the main square. There we found four or five tanks and a tank destroyer assembled and, one by one they were sent out in different directions on streets emanating from the square. Ike made a deal with a tank commander that if he would provide protection from German tanks, we would keep the German infantry off his tanks. Soon, it was reported that a German Tiger tank was seen coming down street heading for the square. The lone tank destroyer left in the square, was sent out to stop it. Jones' second squad was positioned on the right side to protect it from accompanying infantry.

They had barely gone a hundred yards, when the Tiger was spotted about a hundred yards away. The TD stopped and fired first, but only by a split second. The TD shell, luckily made a hit on one of the tracks on the Tiger, making it impossible for it to proceed any further. The shell from the Tiger hit the TD a glancing blow, scattering shrapnel all around. The resulting concussion of the two near simultaneous shots, almost literally blew Jones' squad over a hedge between two of the houses. It left most of the guys somewhat deaf for a period of time. Picking themselves up and with Irish in the lead, they hightailed it through back yards, and, in the pitch dark, straight into a chicken coop, each man piling in on top of the man in front of him like

a row of dominoes. Finally the squad found their way back to the square and joined the rest of the platoon.

As we were crouching in doorways around the square, word came to Ike, at about 2200, that all the other defenders of St. Vith that were able, had left town and would try to form some sort of a defensive line to the west. That left the I&R as the only organized infantry unit in St. Vith together with a dozen or so stragglers. The tank commander started to move one of his tanks down a side street when, from a second story window, a grenade was lobbed into the open turret. The tank came to a sudden stop. Who threw the grenade? An infiltrator? A German sympathizer? We never knew. Casey crawled up on top of the tank and dropped down inside. All he found were dead bodies. After he crawled out, the remaining three tanks, with the I&R along side, proceeded cautiously down another street that led to the northwest. When we got to the edge of the town, the tanks and the I&R took off in the midst of a murderous cross fire coming from either side of the road - a cross fire marked by machine guns firing red tracers, scaring the living hell out us. Luckily the Germans were firing too high and the tracers criss-crossed safely a few feet above our heads. At the top of a small hill about a mile to the west of town, we pulled off the road. The tanks took up position at the edge of a small patch of woods. The I&R moved down the forward slope of the hill a few yards, spread out and dug in as best we could.

Ike, Casey, Morris and Jones went up and down our meager lines all night long making sure we were awake. The temperature had dropped significantly during the evening and it was snowing hard. We expected a German attack at any time. Why they didn't come after us, we never could figure

"The Eyes & Ears of the 423rd Infantry Regiment ..."

out. They didn't do us in, but the weather almost accomplished the same purpose. We never knew "hell" could be so cold!

St. Vith was in German hands that night. We had accompanied the last three tanks out on the last road that was barely open - the last troops to leave St. Vith.

And yet, the unit was still intact! We lost no one! We were still the I&R!

DECEMBER 22

The sound of American tanks moving in the patch of woods to our rear in the early hours before dawn, alerted us that something was up. We found that all the tanks that had left St. Vith with us, had been ordered to pull out and move to the rear. Those in charge of the tanks obviously never thought to let us know - we who were supposed to be their supporting infantry. When Ike made contact, he was ordered to enlist us as rear guard for the retreating

tanks. In no uncertain terms, he told them where to go and, from now on we would fend, once again, for ourselves.

We crawled wearily out of our makeshift foxholes and gathered together in the edge of the woods. Some of the guys had to be supported as they tried to stand, and to a man, walking was painful. Our legs had stiffened up over night and our near frozen feet had become more swollen as we crouched in our defensive positions.

As we approached the edge of the woods about 1000 yards away, the sky began to lighten somewhat and we could see open fields ahead of us and hear intense fighting in almost all directions with the heaviest concentration to our northwest around a small town, probably Sart-lez-St. Vith. Taking advantage of scrub growth and the ever present fog, we made our way further southwest passing to the north of what we believed to be Crombach, then over cou



ST VITH - 21 DECEMBER 1944
Sheehan, Bordelon, Long

by lanes heading northwest, skirting Hinderhausen to the east, and finally making the St. Vith-Vielsalm road a couple of miles west of Poteau. By now it was about 1000 hours.

It was almost unbelievable the amount of traffic on that small two lane road. Tanks and trucks carrying the men that were pulled back from the St. Vith perimeter were lining the sides of the road all heading west. Trying to head east down the center of the road, were the tanks and men of the 7th Armored moving up to fight the Germans surrounding St. Vith. Even in our pitiful condition, we knew we could make better time walking, so down the road we went, cheering the advancing troops as best we could.

As we approached what was probably Poteau, we crossed a small bridge and came to a scattering of farm houses at the edge of village. As we were leaving the village, ran into some artillerymen and piled into their trucks. We were again with American troops.

Between 1800 and 1900 that night we finally pulled into Vielsalm. Much to our disgust, we found that division had again moved back another fifteen miles to a small town of Ferrieres. There were one or two liaison officers from the 106th in Vielsalm and they arranged for us to be put up in some Belgian army barracks in the town. We were given some warmed up beans to eat and some warm water so we could scrape off some of the dirt and grime we had accumulated over the past few days. There were cots and blankets and we were soon dead to the world, feeling that maybe we had outrun the Germans at last - after all we were at least twelve miles back of St. Vith.

DECEMBER 23

Near 0200, we were suddenly awakened and told to again get into the trucks of a convoy heading west. The German forces were approaching the outskirts of the town. When could we ever get a rest?

We spent a good share of that day getting to Ferrieres and when we arrived in mid afternoon, we finally caught up with division headquarters. We found some of the guys from the company there - only a few. Eddie Shannon from the I&R first spotted us. He had been sent back on an errand to division on the 16th. Charlie Sartori, a staff driver was there, along with Herb Heidepriem and Eliot Annable from the Communications Platoon, who had separately made their way back through the lines, Joe Curtis, Company Clerk, and Sgt. Maj. Dave Givens.

The rest of the men from the company were either presumed Missing in Action or Prisoners of War. All told, only about sixty men from the 423rd were accounted for out of the full regiment of three thousand.

After hot coffee and donuts courtesy of the Red Cross, we were assigned to a little convent at the edge of town run by two Catholic Sisters. They couldn't have been more caring. They turned the large school-room over to us, started a fire in the pot bellied stove, and helped us bring in some straw to put under the blankets that we had been given. We hung our few grenades, our cartridge belts and other gear, in the hallway on pegs meant for children's coats and caps. We were told to get settled in and then, as the first order of business, disassemble and clean our weapons. After our experiences of the past couple of days, it seemed like the smart thing to do.

During that afternoon, in a tragic accident, Bill Morris was killed and Felix Hendrickson was wound. Why did this have to



**RECONSTITUTED I&R CADRE - MARCH 1945
RENNES FRANCE**

**Back I/r - Shannon, Sparks, Hirst, Spier, Sartori
Front I/r - Slaby, Casenhiser, Jones, Zorovich**

happen after all we had gone through? We had no real answer. One of the division Chaplains tried to help. "Bill has served his purpose on this earth," he said. "God needs him now more than you do."

DECEMBER 24

At first dawn we heard the sound of planes and, at the same time, a brilliant sun came up over the hills, shining on a day with no snow or fog. Soon the sky was filled to the horizon with planes of every description - B-17s, B-24s, P-38s. We could hear bombs dropping on the German positions in the distance and the clatter of machine guns as the fighters strafed the German columns. A few German Luftwaffe were in the air and we watched numerous dog fights as our fighters took them on. Some of our planes were hit by anti-aircraft fire and

small specks, with parachutes above them, floated to the ground. What a sight it was.

During the day we visited the medics, were issued new clothing and, for the first time in days, had three hot meals. Most welcome of all, we were able to take quick showers. That day, we were told that we were now attached as an excess platoon to the 424th. We would be together.

That evening there was a Christmas Eve service outdoors under a starry sky. We felt secure.

DECEMBER 25 - 31

We joined the 424th Regimental Headquarters Company at the small crossroads town of Harre, about three miles from Manhay, where the line companies were fighting. We were an excess platoon - no one seemed to know what to do with us - and for the next few days, our duties consisted mostly of guard duty with occasionally one or two men designated as messengers or liaison with the various commands of the regiment. We were billeted in the homes of Belgian civilians, two or three to a billet, and had a chance to rest up. We continued to hear rumors that we would soon be broken up as a unit and assigned to various commands of the 424th. Ike spent a lot of his time trying to find reasons for us to stay together and defined all sorts of missions we could perform as a platoon. Yet the rumors persisted.

On about December 30, 1944, the 424th was pulled back to reorganize and we found ourselves in the small town of Ohey, some ten miles west of Ferrieres. As usual, we were on our own, and soon located a large two storied barn where we set up headquarters for the platoon.

Rather than depend on the company kitchen, we proceeded to scrounge our food from a wide variety of sources and came up with a few K rations and a couple of cans of grapefruit juice. We also quickly made friends with the family in the nearby farm house and, with the basics we had "requisitioned" from company supplies, they kept us supplied with delicious Belgian waffles.

The next night was New Year's Eve, and Ike determined that we just had to have a typical I&R party to celebrate. But our eating and drinking supplies were meager - no fit fare for the I&R. So he called on Irish and set out to find suitable supplies.

[Irish Sheehan] - *"We went out and walked about a mile down the road to a supply depot. We went in and Ike requested two cases of C rations from the Corporal in charge. The Corporal told us he couldn't give us any C rations, or any other supplies, without a requisition form. Ike slapped his carbine down on the counter pointing at the Corporal and said, 'This is my requisition form!' The C rations miraculously appeared. Then, as an afterthought, Ike said, 'And where is my officer's liquor ration?' -and suddenly he had two bottles of gin."*

What a party it was - maybe not quite as sophisticated as some in the past, but surely in the spirit of the I&R. We had C rations, Belgian waffles with jam and jelly that we had been hoarding from our ration packages, some cheese, and grapefruit juice liberally spiked with Ike's gin.

And then Ike broke the news. He told us that the next day we were to receive our individual assignments to units of the 424th. We could no longer stay together as a unit - a big, but not unexpected disappointment.

The next morning, January 1, 1945, we moved to Louveigne and into a chateau a few miles southeast of Liege, right in the middle of "Buzz Bomb Alley." Ike brought us our assignments that afternoon and told us we would be dispersed the next morning.

The majority of the guys were assigned to 1st Battalion. Ike was made Battalion S-2 and Casey went with him. Most of the others were sent to 1st Battalion Headquarters and Company A where many were quickly made squad leaders. Bob Waddail was assigned to the 2nd Battalion. Dick Sparks and Bob Jones found homes in 3rd Battalion Headquarters.

During the fighting around Coulee, Irish Sheehan, Johnny Johnson and Johnny

"The Eyes & Ears of the 423rd Infantry Regiment ..."

Califf were wounded and sent back to the states. Hank Iverson received a battlefield commission in that same campaign.

In the morning came the "good-byes" and "good lucks" and "see you in the States." The I&R saga had ended - the I&R as we knew it.

On April 6, 1945 the Division was moved back to Rennes on the Brittany Peninsula. On April 15, in a very solemn ceremony on the airstrip, the 422nd and 423rd Regiments were formally reconstituted. The sixty or so of us from the 423rd were lined up, almost in single file on one side of the runway facing the newly arrived replacements at full regimental strength on the other side. On command, we marched across the runway carrying our company

guidons and the regimental flag, thus formally inducting the men into the new outfit. The I&R had the greatest number in line and were the cadre for the "new" I&R.

After the war had ended, because of their fighting in St. Vith with the 7th Armored on December 20-21, the platoon was deemed entitled to wear, on an individual basis, the Presidential Unit Citation awarded to the 7th Armored.

All members of the platoon have now been accounted for. Of the original twenty four that left the states together, seven are deceased. Fourteen of the remaining seventeen attended the 106th Reunion at Columbia in 1993. We are constantly in touch with each other and the spirit of the "old days" is still with us.

Richard D. "Sparky" Sparks



423rd I&R Platoon Members at the 1993 COLUMBIA, S.C. REUNION
Back l/r - Califf, Prater, Hirst, Johnson, Slaby, Brendlinger, Zicker, Shoffit
Front l/r - Sparks, Casenhiser, Jones, Sheehan



SPECIAL UPDATE ON WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL

Bad News Memorial Put On Hold

From Jack Sulser, 423/F: As I mentioned in the issue published in the last CUB, the winning design for the WWII Memorial announced by the President in January after being the unanimous choice of two expert panels of judges (one for engineering, the other for architecture), still had to be approved by the Commission on Fine Arts, the National Capital Planning Commission, and the Secretary of Interior, all of which was to be completed before May 2000. On Thursday, July 24, the Fine Arts Commission held six hours of hearings which, reportedly at times, were very emotional. The members of the Commission then rejected the winning St. Florian design, sending the project back to the American Battle Monuments Commission, which now has to decide whether to start from scratch or attempt some modifications of the existing design. The St. Florian design proved controversial from the moment it was announced. Several architectural commentators and artists, architectural magazines, etc. criticized its scale as overwhelming the atmosphere or sightlines of the Mall between the Washington and Lincoln memorials or specific aspects of the design, such as the sunken plaza at the center (14 feet below the ground), which could collect rainwater or snow or obscure the view of the other memorials when a visitor was at the bottom, or the topless columns in semicircles on both sides, or the earthen berms be-

hind them, which enclosed exhibit rooms. Seventeen Senators (none of WWII generation, of course) signed a letter urging a less prominent location on the ground that a war memorial would conflict with the "peaceful" memorials that dominate the Mall, forgetting apparently that GENERAL Washington led us through the War of Independence and that Lincoln, a veteran of the Black Hawk War, led us through the War of the States (otherwise known as the Civil War) to preserve the Union. (The Vietnam and Korean War memorials, although on the Mall, are in relatively obscure sites.) Perhaps the most dramatic testimony at the Fine Arts Commission hearings came from Congresswoman Marcy Kaptor of Ohio, who had introduced the bill in 1987 (10 years ago!) that finally authorized the construction of a WWII memorial and resulted in the dedication of the 7+acre site at the east end of the Reflecting Pool. She urged in vain that the Commission approve the St. Florian design to keep up the momentum toward completion, pointing out that "we are losing WWII veterans at the rate of 30,000 per month." The one positive result of the Fine Arts Commission decision: it reaffirmed the site dedicated on Veterans Day 1995 as the last act of the WWII 50th Anniversary celebrations as the most appropriate location for the memorial. Stay tuned for the next development on design and projected date of construction. In the meantime, the fund raising goes on.

Best regards

Jack Sulser

In Memoriam

Aspinwall, Francis 589/HQ 32 Lamont Circle, Cortland, NY 13045

Francis joined our Association July 1979. He was active in researching the history of our division in its struggle against the German Offensive. A late report of death was received Memorial Day 1997 from Samuel Feinberg, 589/HQ, who had just learned of Francis' death. He said Francis died August 23, 1996 and that he called Beverly, Francis' widow. Sam relates his close friendship with Francis, who he met when he was assigned for basic training at the Field Artillery Replacement Training Center. They were both then assigned to the 589th FA HQ Battery. Sam says, "he was a fine soldier and a great human being. I shall miss him."

Brown, Arthur 589/B 1235 Lynnbrook, Charlotte, NC 28211

Captain Brown died July 31, 1997. He joined the Association December 1993. A prominent officer at Parker's Crossroads and along with Captain Huxel and Cpl John Gatens, commanded one of the three 105mm howitzers that defended the crossroads. He and Huxel were second's in command after Major Goldstein who took command after Major Parker was wounded and removed from the scene.

Bagby, Howard O. 424/M 560 East Blvd Davenport, FL 33387

Howard joined the Association July 1982. He died May 12, 1997 from a massive heart attack during the night. He and his wife, Agnes, were with a group of 15 Americans who visited the Ardennes in December 1995. He was so proud to have re-visited the 424th Memorial at SPINEUX, Belgium, since he was part of that action in those dark days of 44'-45'.

Bottcher, Reme D. 423/H 231 Hickory Ridge Road, Sebring, FL 33870

Bill Lawson reported Reme's death (September 28, 1996). Reme joined the Association July 1990. He was seriously ill during the Orlando reunion, then made a good recovery and was himself at the Roanoke Reunion, but died less than a month later. Bill was in contact with Reme's widow Dorothy.

Calhoun, Robert 106 Signal 1011 St. Charles St. Rapid City, SD 57701

A member since June 1991, Bob was a vital person in the development and conduct of the Rapid City, South Dakota Reunion. We will always remember all the efforts he made for the good of the organization during that time. He passed away, due to complications of a bad heart, April 17, 1997.

Goodwin, Joseph N. 424/D 850 Abbey Drive, Glen Ellyn, IL 60137

Joined us December 1995. His death of June 13, 1997 was reported by Marion Ray, 424/D in a letter to his 424/D comrades. Marion wrote, "Sorry to inform you of the death of one of our good friends and "Buddy." His burial took place at the Assumption Cemetery, Wheaton, IL..... Joe leaves thirteen children (his and her's) and thirty three grandchildren. Those of you who met Joe and Gay at the Roanoke Reunion will remember, I Know, will always remember them with a warm heart.

Libera, Henry F. DIV/ARTY RR#1 Box 29, Abbott, ME 04446

Henry joined the Association July 1986. Marie, Henry's widow reported his death by a letter written June 6, 1997. She stated, "He enjoyed the CUB very much." She included a letter written to Henry's mother July 18, 1945 which in part read, "A short time ago your son, Tech 4 Frank Libera was sent back to the United States, suffering from an ailment that required hospitalization.. I know a month or two in the hospital will correct his problem. Your son has been one of my drivers since I took command of this organization in December 43 at Fort Jackson. He is a fine young man and made a fine record. He has been under direct fire of German troops, has driven me in all sorts of weather, over all sorts of roads, in Belgium, Germany and France. I regretted very much to see him go. He is a man of fine habits, attended church regularly and is a credit to his parents. You can be proud of him, as I am. Signed LEO T. MCMAHON, Brig. General, HQ 106th Infantry Div. Arty, U.S. Army, Commanding."

Rest in Peace

In Memoriam

McMahon, Wilda M. Honorary Life Associate

Wilda was the devoted wife of the late General Leo T. McMahon, Commander, 106th Inf Division Artillery. She passed away, May 24, 1997 at the age of 89, in a nursing home. Her death was reported by her son, Leo McMahon, Jr, who is also an Associate member of our organization. *(If I may, allow me to indulge in an editor's note - the first CUB magazine that I published was Volume 44, No. 1, Nov-Dec-Jan 1987-88 which announced the death of General McMahon (28 Sep 1987), and showed a photo of the General and his wife, Wilda - I often look back to that edition to see and feel the start of a new life for me, as your editor, and the passing of a great gentleman who commanded the respect of all of his officers and men. God Bless you, General McMahon and your fine lady, Wilda- you are now together again... J. Kline)*

Pretty, Emor C. 4 23/H 12222 Paradise Village Pkwy South 220A, Phoenix, AZ 85302

Emor joined the Association July 1989. Linda, daughter of Emor, write, "It is with great sadness that I notify you of the death of my father, Emor C. Pretty. Dad passed away Sunday evening, April 20, 1997, after complications with surgery. He passed comfortably with his family at his beside. My mother, Clara, will remain in Phoenix."

Shaw, Robert M. 424/H 740 St Andrews LN Apt 41, Crystal Lake, IL 60014-7044

Robert died at his home on 16 June 1997. He served his unit as a first lieutenant and was later commissioned a captain. Survivors are his second wife Elaine M. Shaw nee Jagier, three children, three stepchildren, six grandchildren and six step-grandchildren, a great-grandchild, a sister and many friends. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Fern Pace Shaw.

Included in the death notice was a writing by Elaine, his wife. I think it will be inspirational to us all.

"Shaw's courage is inspiring"

Robert M. Shaw, Sr. is an "Everyday Saint," an ordinary man with flaws, whose optimism, in the face of death, duds him a hero. His ever-present smile has had a positive effect on many lives for many years.

During World War II, Roberts heorics matched the drama of the time, and the men under his command respected and admired him. After the war, he slipped quietly into the role of devoted husband and father, later a comminity and church leader.

For more than a year now, he's been fighting an internal time bomb - a huge aneurysm that dominated the trunk of his body, causing almost constant pain. He finds relief by lying in bed most of the time. This change has been really tough for Robert, an active man, who enjoyed working with long-standing clients-helping and encouraging them as well.

However, Robert's great faith has given him the courage to accept what he must, to change what he can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

As Robert's wife, I especially appreciate his faith, courage and optimism. Those qualities help me, along with his family and friends, to smile and accept to.

Spayd, Norman S. 423/H 1518 Schuylkill Ave, Reading, PA 19601

John Gallagher, 81st ENG/C wrote, "Norman was somewhat older than most of us were in Germany, but he was young at heart. He attended our Memorial Dinners regularly. He loved to tell stories of his experience as an Army cook. Norman's wife Lorena died December 1989. Spayd was employed for 32 years as a full-fashion knitter by the former Oakbrook Hosiery Mill, until he retired. He is survived by two sisters, May Spayd, Reading and Fern, wife of George Tobias, Bernville.

Rest in Peace



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