

Victor C. Rauch
C Battery
592nd Field Artillery Battalion

December 16, 1944

106th Infantry Division
Loudonville, New York

A cadre sergeant at Ft. Bragg told us newly arrived recruits that you have it made. You're in the artillery and that's practically rear echelon. The enemy has to go through the infantry to get to you and that just doesn't happen. Well, that Sergeant never envisioned anything like the Battle of the Bulge.

The most memorable event that I can remember has to be the very first day. It would shatter the idea of artillery being safe in the rear. As members of [C Battery, 592nd FA BN](#), [106 Infantry Division](#), we found ourselves isolated from our infantry. No longer in the rear, we were now in the front line.

The shelling of our batteries had long since stopped. Our howitzers had stopped firing. It would only be a question of time before we would be visited by German infantry. We would have to leave this hot spot but would need an infantry screen to accomplish it. At this time, it was out of the question.

Day had passed, night was falling and our situation grew more acute. Finally, late at night, a reserve infantry unit was able to provide a screen at Aux. We got the order to march. The only problem was my particular howitzer (155 MM) was stuck in the hole. The arrival of a German burp gunner was harassing our effort. Finally, we did get it out and we joined the column.

We exited Laudesfeld against the firing of German burp guns and headed down Skyline Blvd., not realizing that the Germans were waiting for us at the roadblock. We were able to turn right at the engineer cut off--avoiding the trap. Unfortunately one of our other batteries missed the turn off and lost 32 men to that roadblock.

I don't believe that I will ever forget that first day.



Page last revised
James D. West
www.IndianaMilitary.org
iimdwest@centurylink.net