

❖ WWII MUSINGS ❖

Volume 3 Issue 2

John D. Bowen Editor

April 1995

◆◆◆ POW's

If you were a POW chances are that there are some records on you at the National Archives in Washington, DC.

The Office of the Provost Marshal General was responsible for maintaining information about US Prisoners in enemy custody during WWII. The Germans were also very good about fulfilling their obligations under the Geneva Convention on reporting information on captured prisoners of war under their control. This information generally would come through in a month to 6 weeks.

Also the German Central Records Office at Meiningen and Saalfeld were captured, fifty years ago, in April 1945 "complete with all records and operating personnel." As a National Archives Reference Information Paper on American Prisoners of War and Civilian Internees describes "These captured German records which were posted up to date ... were transferred to Washington DC where they were invaluable in clearing up many cases of personnel who had died since the German government stopped reporting to Geneva." The RIP states that there "are four categories of records regarding POWs and internees. These are:

I. **Wartime POW Records.** Created in the process of collecting information about or keeping track of POWs and internees during or immediately after the war.

II **Wartime Related Records.** Created during or immediately subsequent to the war in the process of gathering information, not about POWs but about specific classes of individuals or events to which POWs were in some way related.

III. **Postwar POW Records.**

EDITORIAL NOTE:

This newsletter is based on the research of John D. Bowen, 613 Chichester Lane, Silver Spring, MD 20904-3331 in the National Archives in the World War II Unit Records. The information provided is from the actual After/Action Reports, G-2 and S-2 Intelligence Reports and Journals. These are reports as they happened. The information may have been found to be different with fifty years of history. It is presented here as it actually was written. Comments are welcomed. This information is in the Public Domain. Credit should be given to the National Archives Military Branch. It is distributed for the benefit of VBOB Chapter members.



Created well after the war to account for all POWs and civilian Internees.

IV **Other Records.** Such as photographs, publicity material and press releases."

In the POW Information Bureau, General Subject File 1942-46 there are files consisting of correspondence, camp reports, diaries, rosters and other records relating to Americans interned by Germany and Japan during the war."

"Information about American POW's and internees who were in German or other enemy hands in the European Theater of Operations (ETO) during the war is generally more accessible"

Two important files in the "IBM Cards" are Deceased POWs (Germany) and American POWs Returned to Military Control by the Germans.

In Record Group 331-Records of Allied Operational and Occupation Headquarters, WWII, there are a set of maps

See POWs, Page 3, Col 2

10 DIVISION ARMY

The new look of the US Army and the official unit designations that will exist will be as follows:

1st Infantry Division (Mechanized) - Hqs and 2 Brigades in Germany and 1 Brigade at Fort Riley KS

1st Armored Division - Hqs and 2 Brigades in Germany and 1 Brigade at Ft Riley KS.

1st Cavalry Division - Hqs and 3 Brigades stationed at Ft Hood TX.

2nd Infantry Division (Mechanized) - Hqs and 2 Brigades in Korea and 1 Brigade at Fort Lewis WA.

3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) - Hqs and 2 Brigades at Ft Stewart and 1 Brigade at Ft Benning GA.

4th Infantry Division (Mechanized) - HQs and 2 Brigades at Fort Hood TX and 1 Brigade at Fort Carson CO.

10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry) - Hqs and 2 Brigades at Fort Drum NY and the 1st Brigade, 6th Infantry Division (Light) at Fort Richardson AK.

25th Infantry Division (Light) - Hqs and 2 Brigades at Schofield Barracks, HI and 1 Brigade at Ft Lewis WA.

82nd Airborne Division - Hqs and 3 Brigades at Fort Bragg NC.

101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) - Hqs and 3 Brigades at Fort Campbell KY.

See 10 DIVISIONS Page 3, Col 3

◆ EDITORIAL

Editor's Desk

My intention to provide you with some actual reports on the events of 50 years ago may have started some inter-army rivalry which was not my intention or wish. Some comments have been made to me about using the write-ups from the Third Army and having nothing on the First Army. This was not intentional but in order to publish the historical events from the record the Third Army's Reports were the only well written ones available.

It appears that Patton unlike some of the other Commanders insisted that his units write their historical reports and After-Action Reports and thus their is an excellent record of the Third Army in the National Archives and at the Military History Institute at Carlisle Barracks. As editor's lament the saying is you use what you have available. However in order to bring some balance to the last few issues I am looking for information from the First US Army and Divisions within it.

I am including in this issue the G-2 Reports from the Twelfth Army Group on First US Army for the days 15, 16 and 17 December. I call your attention to the end of the Sixteenth day's report (which ends up on Page 5). After fifty years we can look at that and say 'If the writer only knew.' Of course what you are reading are the words of the actual documents and reports that were made at that time. Whether it was too much reliance on Ultra or just a case of not wanting to believe the enemy had anything left, the report speaks for itself in how on the end of the 16th of Dec our top intelligence unit was still deceiving itself as to whether this German attack was anything to be concerned with. I am not including the Third US Army Reports that Twelfth Army Group G-2 wrote but they also doubt the enemy activity means much.

Before I get complaints from the Ninth Army folks I want to put in perspective that when your units fought in the Bulge they were

**MORE ARLINGTON
BURIAL LAND**

The US Army has begun the acquisition of 12 acres of land for Arlington National Cemetery which will add more than 10,000 gravesites. the land is being acquired from the Department of the Interior in Section 29.

It is ironic that the Cemetery had declared this land excess in 1975 and transferred it to the Interior Dept back then. It signed an interagency agreement with the Interior Dept on 22 February 1995 as the first step in reacquiring the land. Congressional legislation is the second step which must be completed. This will extend the use of the cemetery for burials until the year 2030.

As a point of interest the Cemetery is on summer hours from April to September and is open from 8 AM to 7 PM.

Based on Pentagon article 17 Feb 1995

TRY AGAIN

The Department of Veterans Affairs has discovered some 10 million duplicates of 20th century military records thought to have been destroyed in the 1973 fire. If you were previously told that your records were destroyed you may want to send them another Form 180 and ask them if anything has been found. Write to National Personnel Records Center, Military Personnel Records, 9700 Page Blvd, St Louis MO 63132. Ask them if your records have shown up in the VA duplicates?

assigned to either the First or Third US Armies. Though the WWII Musings is not restricted to the Bulge period that is where most of the material has been coming from lately. If you have information on units, that is not copyrighted, I would be glad to print it in the WWII Musings as space and events permit.

WOMEN IN WWII

The Women in World War II Seminar that was held at the National Archives at College Park MD in March was a huge success. It was interesting to note many of the leaders of the various woman services from WWII including the Women Air Service Pilots (WASP) who flew the military planes overseas from the production plants to the air bases.

Of significance also was the presence of Mary A Hallaren who did more to mold the Womens Army Corp into the elite unit that it became. Colonel Hallaren long retired was probably the single most important person to lay the foundation of the organization during WWII then to build upon that foundation in 1947 when she became the Third Director of the WACs and served in that capacity for six years, the maximum period allowed, until 1953.

**PERSONAL
ACCOUNTS**

A WWII exhibit by this name will be opening at the National Archives Rotunda Gallery after touring the country for the past few years. A special opening day for WWII Veterans has been set aside on Friday, 5 May 1995 before the formal opening for the public the following day. The exhibit includes three personal accounts of Bulge Members and various photos and items relating to the Bulge. You are personally invited to attend on 5 May 1995 from 9 AM-9PM. Your Editor will be there as a guide all day and will be expecting to see you. Other members of VBOB will also be there to answer questions. Take the Metro to the Archives stop if you do not want to drive downtown. See you there!



BOOKS

An old but good book on the Hurtgen Forest and the 28th InfD is *Follow Me and Die* which was written in 1984 and which is still in pocket book on the paperback stand. It describes the unfortunate travesty on the 28th InfD in the Kall Valley near Schmidt in the Hurtgen Forest Region of Germany. It is here that the Keystone Division earned its nickname "The Bloody Bucket" in the Fall of 1944 and was sent to the Ardennes to rest and lick its wounds when Hitler's Counter-offensive struck them. The book brings out the reports of the leadership and describes their insistent drive of the front line units against the Germans, while they are sitting back behind the lines.

Another book that should be investigated is *CLOSING WITH THE ENEMY: HOW GIs FOUGHT THE WAR IN EUROPE 1944-45* published by University Press of Kansas

For those of you who served with the 99th Infantry Division there is a new official history book of the 99th Infantry Division called "Dauntless." It is one of the better unit histories that I have seen published and has excellent photos and maps. The book may be purchased for \$52 which includes a dust cover and postage and handling. Make a check out to the 99th Inf Div Assn and mail to

Roger Foehringer
1449 Holmes Rd
Elgin IL 60123

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I must tell you how much I enjoy the *Marcher* and your WWII Musings. It has brought back many memories. I particularly enjoyed Gen. Patton's Prayer. I made copies and gave them to my family & friends and all were fascinated by his expressions.

Keep up the good work and my best regards to you,

POWs

Continued from Page 1

there is a set of maps entitled "Location of PW Camps. The first is dated 1 Nov 44; the second is Amended 1 Feb 1945 and the third is amended 1 Mar 1945. Symbols are used on the maps to indicate locations of camps of different classes as well as hospitals and [prisons. There are also two lists: 1. "Location of known and Possible Prisoner of War Installations in Germany and Occupied Countries as Known to PW-G1-Division SHAEF, at 18 March." this list has columns for camp serial number, latitude and longitude of the location, sheet number, map referenced, type of camp and notes. The second list is the "Location of P/W Camps in the British and US Zones," dated 15 Aug 1944.

Another interesting collection is in Record Group 242-National Archives Collection of Foreign Records Seized 1941- . There are about 25 feet of Carded Records of American POWs held by the Germans and consists of forms maintained by the German Armed Forces High Command..." They contain information on individual POWs who are listed alphabetically and contain such information as father's name, mother's name, date and place of birth, religion, service number, place and date of capture, general health, home address and occupation. Some of the cards include a photograph of the individual."

Another interesting Record Group is that of RG 153-Records of the Judge Advocate General (Army) which has a collection of "Reports of Interviews with American servicemen who were prisoners of war, 1943-47. There is information also in Record Group 247- Records of the Office of the Chief of Chaplains. This includes an index of funerals of deceased POWs. In the Records of the Adjutant General's RG 407 there are 26 bound volumes completed in the early 1950's that list personnel who were POWs or MIAs during WWII.

Source National Archives and Records Administration, Publication Reference Information Paper (RIP) 80, Compiled by Ben

10 DIVISIONS

Cont'd from page 1

The restructured Army will have four light divisions (light-infantry, airborne and air-assault) and six heavy divisions (mechanized-infantry and armored) all stationed at existing installations.

Based on Pentagon article 17 Feb 95 submitted by Dick Schlenker.

FIRST US ARMY

The Department of the Army has announced the deactivation on 30 September 1995 of the First United States Army, according to Lt. Gen. John P Otjen.

The First Army no doubt will have a deactivation ceremony at Fort Meade about that date and we will post further details when known. It is one of 57 military units and federal agencies at the post. According to the Washington Post 10,000 military and 28,500 civilian personnel work at the fort.

CROSSING OF RHINE REENACTMENT

A reenactment of the crossing of the Rhine will be presented 25-28 May 1995 in historic Chestertown MD (on Maryland's Eastern Shore, approximately 30 minutes east of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge on Route 213 North. The event is composed of two parts. First a two-day Living History Re-enactment of Operation VARSITY-PLUNDER (Rhine crossing involving 30th & 79th InfD and 17th AbnD), will take place beginning Friday at noon. It will continue until 4:00 PM Sat and will feature an estimated 600 reenactors and vintage vehicles and equipment. Public may watch and explore field bivouacs & mock aid stations. Sunday there will be full displays open to public from 10AM-6PM at Guard Armory. Billeting will be in field tents and a German Soldiers Tavern will be featured. Contact Kirk Ross, event organizer at 410-778-2605

EVENTS

14 Apr 95 - War Requiem in Honor of World War II Veterans by the Washington Oratorio Society at the Kennedy Center

21-23 Apr 95 - Salute to WWII Veterans, McDill AFB & Tampa/St Petersburg Community. Contact Col Robert E Pilnacek 813-828-4600.

25 Apr 95 - Link-up on the Elbe River at Strehla and Torgau Germany

27 Apr 95 - Days of Remembrance, a reflective memorial svc in honor of the Holocaust Victims of WWII and those who liberated the camps., by invitation only. US Capital Rotunda, Wash DC Contact Linda Lazar 202-488-0400

6 May 95 - Sep 95 - Personal Accounts - An exhibit in the Rotunda Gallery of the National Archives, Constitution Ave NW and 7th Ave NW Wash DC of Personal Accounts of WWII Members.

May 95 - Jan 96 - Forward Fuselage of the Enola Gay Aircraft which dropped the Atomic Bombs on Japan will be displayed at the National Air & Space Museum, Wash DC Contact 202-357-4487.

6-30 May 95 - US Armed Forces 50th Anniversary of WWII Reunion, Atlantic City NJ Convention Center. Contact Richard Nader 516-365-9880.

5-8 May 95 - Truman Week - V-E Day Commemoration and President Truman's Birthday (May 8) Commemoration, wreath laying, Public Service Awards, all night vigil, Truman Library, Independence MO. Contact Dr George Curtis 816-833-1400.

8 May 95 - 0900 hrs - V-E Day Commemoration, US Holocaust Memorial Museum, 15th & PA Ave SW Wash DC. Contact Linda Lazar 202-488-0400

8 May 95 - 1100 hrs, National V-E Day Commemoration, Arlington National Cemetery, Wash DC. Contact Maj Dan Ryan, 703-604-0820/24

8 May 95 - V-E Day Commemoration, USS Intrepid Sea, Air, & Space Museum, West 46th and 12th Ave, New York NY. Contact John Faigle 212957-7020 or 212-788-9394.

8 May 95 - V-E Commemoration, Battery Park, New York NY. Contact Maritime Assn of NY/NJ Art Tuttmann, 212-425-5704.

5-8 May 95 - V-E Day Commemoration, Kansas City MO, city wide commemoration, Big Bands, displays, USO style shows, vintage aircraft. Contact Diana Duff National Archives Central Plains Region, KC MO 816-926-6272.

8 May 95 - V-E Day Commemoration, Cambridge American Cemetery, England

8 May 95 - V-E Day Commemoration, Reims France at SHAEF HQ

8 May 95 - V-E Commemoration Germany, exact location to be determined.

9 May 95 - End of WWII Parade & Link-Up at the Elbe River, Moscow Russia. Contact LTC Allan Green 703-604-0820/24.

11 May 95 - Danish Veterans Plaque Dedication, Arlington Cemetery. Contact Maj Dan Ryan 703-604-0820.

19 May 95 - Salute to WWII Veterans, Andrews Air Force Base Maryland in conjunction with Base Open House and USO Show. Contact Mike Beaman or Capt Julie Shively 301-981-7347.

26-28 May 95 - Pittsburgh PA

Founders Council 1995 Memorial Day Weekend Celebration, Point State Park, Pittsburgh PA. Static Displays of WWII Military Equipment set up in living displays, stage shows with period music, Home-Front displays, fireworks. Contact Richard W Tenney, 412-281-7930.

29 May 95 - Memorial Day Concert - West Side of the US Capitol, Wash DC.

29 May 95 - Week of National Observance of WWII - Proclamation signing and unveiling of the 1995 WWII Postal Stamp Designs at the White House Contact Maj Dan Ryan 703-692-2118.

29 May 95 - Memorial Day Wreath Laying and Commemoration Ceremony. Tombs of the Unknowns and Amphitheater, Arlington National Cemetery. Contact Tom Groppe, 202-475-1444

29 May 95 - Fleet Week/Memorial Day commemorations -USS Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum at West 46th and 12th Avenue, New York City NY. Contact John Faigle 212-957-7020

1-3 Jun 95 -26th Inf "Yankee" Div Convention at Valley Forge Hilton, King of Prussia PA. Contact George Linthicum, Rcn 26th Div at 2605 Orchard Dr, Broomall PA 19008, Tel 215-356-9552.

8-12 Jun 95 - 30th Inf "Old Hickory" Div Reunion, Melville Marriot Long Island NY. Contact Warren Cadiz, 154 Montgomery Ave, Oceanside NY

27 Jun-2 Jul 95 - 99th Inf " Battle Babies" Div Reunion at Pittsburgh Hilton Contact Paul Suchko, 922 Plumer Rd, West Newton, PA 15089, tel 412-872-5806.

1-5 Sep 95 - VBOB National Reunion and V-J End of War Gala at San Antonio TX and the Admiral Nimitz Museum Fredricksburg TX. Info forthcoming in next Bulge Bugle

Note: if you know of a reunion not listed coming up in the future please drop a postcard or letter to the editor with the dates and contact person

P-38

I was inspired to write this article while attending a meeting in the Archives with Bill Hemphill, VBOB Past President, and he had his dog-tags and a P-38 attached. Bill indicated that the essential items of combat were a spoon and a P-38, one of the handiest gadgets ever. It is ironic that as I began this article, I received a copy of the 99th Infantry Division Newspaper The Checkerboard in the mail and I was surprised to see almost a full page article on this very subject.

Now you say you sent a P-38 home as a souvenir and you had a brother who flew P-38s, well, the P-38 that I am talking about is that ingenious little can-opener that came with C-Rations. According to Major Renita Foster, USAR, in his article in The Checkerboard newspaper, this little gadget took just 30 days to develop and it was developed in the summer of 1942 by the Subsistence Research Library in Chicago. This little device, though small, is powerful in design and in use. Though designed to open cans this foldover hinged device had a thousand and one other uses.

How many of you kept it on your dog-tag chain? The small hole in its corner made it the ideal device to get it close to your heart and that is exactly where Col Hemphill had his. Ask any GI who ate C Rations about this little device, from WWII to Vietnam, and he will often relate a love affair with this ingenious device. Major Foster in his article states "Information about the actual inventor of the P-38 has faded with the passing of years. So perhaps it's best to fantasize about a 'patron saint of Army inventions' who's been responsible for creating devices empowering a soldier to survive in war and peacetime. There were the steel helmets designed for head protection, but proved ideal for washing, shaving and cooking; the faithful, trustworthy jeep, guaranteed to go anywhere in any

kind of weather; and the TA-50 ammunition pouch for storing those personal items soldiers just couldn't leave behind.

The P-38, however, remains the saint's finest work. As one of the most perfectly designed tools in history, the saint counted on soldier imagination to spiral the P-38 into even greater heights than just opening cans. The P-38 was an item the saint knew a majority of service members would come to possess and share, and thus promote the kind of comraderie and bonding all soldiers need and depend on. Perhaps this is what the patron saint of Army inventions had in mind all along.

Also in the Checkerboard newspaper accompanying this article were 38 Ways to use the P-38 by MSG Steve Wilson. It is outstanding and I would ask readers of this article to send me their nostalgic stories about the P-38 and additions to this list of 38 ways to use the P-38, which I will publish in future issues.

Source: Col Bill Hemphill, Ret., Maj Renita Foster, USAR, The Checkerboard, 99th Infantry Division Newspaper, Third Issue 1995, and MSG Steve Wilson, Office of the Chief of Chaplains.

First US Army Reports Continued from Page 6

seem to limit the enemy's threat. More Exactly, the enemy appears to be launching a major diversionary attack to force the hurried withdrawal of our divisions from the vital Colgne and Saar River areas to meet the Eifel threat. Until the magnitude of the enemy's attack increases in more cohesive action or until one or more elements of the 6th SS Panzer Army are committed on the VIII Corps front, the day's events cannot be regarded as a major long term threat.

Proceed to Page 7

38 Ways to Use the P-38

By Steve Wilson, MSG
Proponent NCO
Dept of the Army
Office of the Chief of Chaplains
The Pentagon

1. Can Opener
2. Seam Ripper
3. Screwdriver
4. Clean Fingernails
5. Cut Fishing Line
6. Open Paint Cans
7. Window Scraper
8. Scrape Around Floor Corners
9. Digging
10. Clean Out Groove on TupperWare Lids
11. Reach in and Clean Out Small Cracks
12. Scrape Around Edge of Boots
13. Bottle Opener
14. Gut Fish (in the field)
15. Scale Fish (in the field)
16. Test for 'Doneness' When Baking on a Camp Fire
17. Prying Items
18. Strip Wire
19. Scrape Pans in the Field
20. Lift Key on Flip Top Cans
21. Chisel
22. Barter
23. Marking Tool
24. Deflating Tires
25. Clean Sole of Boot/Shoe
26. Pick Teeth
27. Measurement
28. Striking Flint
29. Stirring Coffee
30. Puncturing Plastic Coating
31. Knocking on Doors
32. Morse Code
33. Box Cutter
34. Opening Letters
35. Write Emergency Messages
36. Scratch an Itch
37. Save as a Souvenir
38. Rip Off Rank for On-the-Spot Promotions

Source: The Checkerboard, 99th Infantry Division newspaper



FIRST US ARMY REPORTS

When the Bulge Began

**G-2 PERIODIC REPORT
ENEMY OPERATIONS AND
UNITS IN CONTACT
FIRST US ARMY
152300 December 1944**

Progress in the VII Corps zone continued, hotly and bitterly disputed by determined enemy troops. A counter-attack was launched by the enemy northeast of Guerzenich (F 0844). Strong opposition was met by the 83rd US InfD southwest of Berzbuir (F 1041); but the 5th US ArmdD Div met only light resistance as Kufferath (F 1040) was cleared. Three bridges were blown by the enemy during the day: at F 1047, east of Hoven (F 0848) and East of Pier (F 0753). Pillboxes, mines wire and constant artillery fire slowed the advances considerably in the V Corps zone in the Siegfried Line defenses. Fighting in Kesternich (F 0024) continues as our troops continue to attack pillboxes one by one. Quiet prevailed in the VIII Corps zone during the period. Prisoners of war report that troops of the 1 SS Panzer Division were seen in Wollersheim (F1731) on 2 December and in Vettweiss (F 2038) on 7 Dec.

**German Air Activity
14/15 December 44**

An increase in enemy fighter activity was noted as an estimated 200-225 sorties were flown, apparently on defensive patrols and the interception of Allied fighters and bombers. Shortly after noon a formation of about 60 German fighters operated against Allied planes in the Euskirchen-Cologne area, followed by 50 Me 109 and Fw 190 enemy planes in the Duren-Aachen-Cologne sector. Late in the afternoon 25-30 fighters flew a defensive patrol over Duren, Aachen and Bonn; and 20-50 Fw 190 aircraft were reported in the Bonn area at 1500 hours. Night fighters were abroad over the

Frankfurt-Rhein-Mainz sector.

**Estimated Enemy Casualties
First US Army**

Enemy PW Captured 24Hr pd to 142400 647.

PW captured during current offensive 12411.

Cumulative enemy PW captured to 142400 213,511

**G-2 PERIODIC REPORT
ENEMY OPERATIONS AND
UNITS IN CONTACT
FIRST US ARMY
162300 December 1944**

VII Corps troops pressed on to occupy Guerzenich (F 0844), Berzbuir (F 1041) and Kufferath (F 1040). The later two towns as well as Mariaweiler (F 0447), were subjected to increased artillery fire. In the V Corps zone, an enemy counterattack late in the afternoon in the southern part of Kesternich (F 0024) was broken up before any penetration was made. The 1st Bn of the 753 Inf Regt (326th Inf Div) was identified by prisoners of war during the fighting. According to the prisoners of war, the battalion came from Einruhr (F 0421) to make the attack. the regimental CP of the 752nd Inf Regt (326 Inf Div) was reported by prisoners of war to be at F 0219. The Bergstein (F 0633) area received heavy artillery concentrations and the enemy exerted considerable pressure throughout the period.

The VIII Corps front sprang to life with sudden vigor as enemy troops launched a series of jabbing attacks of battalion strength or less from Kronenburg (L 1097) to Echternach (L 0535). Early this morning enemy artillery opened up along the whole Corps front, followed by an attack in company strength at Krewinkel (L 0493). One tank and 75 infantry followed up the unsuccessful attack with another, equally unprofitable. Three tanks supported a company of infantry in a move toward Roth (L0490); and a

battalion attacked Heckhuscheid (P 9277) with local success. The capture of two prisoners of war from the 27th Inf Regt (12th Inf Div) suggested that elements of the division were west of Kronenburg (L 1097). The division had previously been operating on the VII Corps front and was believed to have incorporated the remnants of 47 Inf Div. All three regiments of the latter have been identified on the VII Corps front, but they are believed to be only remnants. The 2 Bn of the 156 Panzer Grenadier Regt (116 Panzer Div) was identified by prisoners of war who stated that 3 combat patrols of 50-60 men each from the Bn had the mission of attacking in the general area of P9873. To the south at P 8062, 38 Pz Eng Bn and 304 Pz Grenadier Regt (2 Pz Div) attacked during the morning and made some limited progress. In the vicinity of Berdorf (L 0038) and Echternach (L 0535) an estimated two companies of infantry attacked across the Sauer River but the 4th US Infantry Division reported the attack contained. Attempts by the enemy to throw a bridge across the river was frustrated by our artillery fire. The capture of prisoners of war at Echternach identified elements of both the 986 and 988 Inf Regts (276 Inf Div), last reported reforming in Dresden. As if these identifications were no sufficient, the 1130 Inf Regt (560 Inf Div) was encountered generally northeast of Echternach and one prisoner of war was captured from the 62 Inf Div in the area North of Prum (L0679).

The sudden attacks and seemingly overpowering array of six enemy divisions identified within twelve hours should not be misinterpreted. The quality of divisions involved, the piecemeal efforts to launch small scale attacks and the apparent lack of long range objectives would

Continued on Page 5 Column 2

Continued from Page 6

First US Army Reports

**G-2 Periodic Report
HQ TWELVE ARMY GROUP
172300 December 1944**

An attack by 150 infantry and several self-propelled guns in support followed the heavy shelling of Derichweiler (F 0745) and Guerzenich (F 0844) in the VII Corps zone. Upon receiving many casualties from our artillery the attack turned toward Birgel (F 0942) but with equal lack of success. Another small attack at Mariaweiler (F0947), in which the 103 Infantry Regiment (47 InfD) was identified, was easily contained. The 83rd US InfD reached the banks of the Roer River at F 1045 this morning against little opposition entering Rolsdorf (F 1044) and Lendersdorf (F 1142). The small number of enemy parachutists appear to have dropped from two enemy aircraft gone astray; and a German NCO gave his mission as the disruption of communications and the prevention of reinforcements moving south. Preliminary interrogations reveal that the major or only parachute unit involved was Kampfgruppe VON DER HEYDE with an estimated 400 parachute troops. Von der Hyde was formerly commanding officer of 6 Parachute Regiment; and prisoners have reported that he was in charge of a Kampfschule in Aalten, Holland, where many parachutists of 6 Parachute Regiment were assigned before the unit's commitment on the VII Corps front. An estimated 40 places were involved in the landings, principally over the V Corps lines.

In the northern and central V Corps zone the enemy attempted three counter-attacks north of Kesternich (F 0024) during 16 December, succeeded in making a penetration to Monschau (K 9418), and in general exerted strong pressure on our troops. But his main effort was on the southern flank of the 99th US InfD where, during 16 December, repeated attacks of company and battalion strength were launched between F 0303 and L 0198, succeeding in making some infiltrations and penetrations that were later restored. Early this

morning, however, enemy tanks overran our positions in Honsfeld (P 9699). By 0900 hours, 30 enemy tanks were reports moving between Butgenbach (K 9104) and Bullingen (K 9502) while enemy infantry infiltrated to Hunnungen (K 9700) and Krinkelt (K 9704). A heavy concentration of infantry, at least 30 tanks, half-tracks and horse drawn vehicles; all bumper to bumper, were moving northwest from K 9502 to 9104. They were attacked by our fighter-bombers. Enemy vehicles were marked with white circles which, from the air, resembled our stars. One significant identification however, was made during this strong German thrust: 3 Company of the 25 SS Panzer Grenadier Regiment (12 SS Panzer Division), the first unit identified in contact of the Sixth SS Panzer Army, at F 0104. Prisoner of war statements emphasized that 1 SS Panzer Division was also ready for commitment in this area, indicating that at least one SS Panzer Corps is involved in a major thrust.

It appears that a strong counter-offensive has been launched by the enemy, the 12 SS Panzer Division moving toward St Vith (P 8687) and Malmedy (K 7805) from the north and east and 116 Panzer Division moving toward St Vith from the Southeast. Captured documents indicate that ST Vith is the first objective in this area to be followed by exploitations to the west and northwest, possibly with Liege (K 4739) in mind. The secondary intent appears still to be the relief of our strong pressure in the Colgne and Saar River sectors and the continued threat of steady pressure on the central VIII Corps front. Should the enemy believe that he is succeeding in his counter-offensive, it is not impossible that the other half of the Sixth SS Panzer Army will attempt a drive to the southwest along the Meuse River from the general area of Erkelenz (F 0177).

Enemy troops converged from the north and south on Schonberg (P 9589), attempting to cut off our forces to the east in the Schnee Eifel. Infantry and tanks of the 116 Panzer Division pushed to P8982 and to P 8987, overrunning several batteries of our corps artillery in this area. So far only the 156 Panzer Grenadier Regiment has been identified, but

documentary evidence indicates that 60 Panzer Grenadier Regiment is also present. Prisoners from the 2nd Battalion of the 304 Panzer Grenadier Regiment (2 Panzer Div) , captured at Marnach (P 8602), say the division arrived two days ago. The 15 Parachute Regiment (5 Parachute Div) was identified in the area west of P 9547 and the 916 Infantry Regiment (352 Infantry Div) on the 28th US InfD right flank. Prisoners from 5 Parachute Div say the regiment left Holland recently for Aachen but were committed un their present sector instead and that the main purpose of the present offensive was to force us to withdraw troops from the Aachen area. Echternach (p 9835) is still surrounded by the enemy with fighting raging in nearby towns.

The 164, 183, and 190 Infantry regiments (62 Inf Div) were all identified by prisoners in the vicinity of P 9379. The division was organized in Neuhammer, near Berlin, according to the prisoners; left on 27 Nov and arrived two days ago at Wittlich (L 3954); and came into the line the night of 15-16 Nov.

Estimated Enemy Casualties**First US Army:**

Enemy PW Captured 24 Pd to 162400 Dec 1,059.

PW Captured during current offensive 13,899.

Cumulative enemy PW captured to 162400 214,999.

Source: The above reports are from the Unit Records in the National Archives and Records Administration, RG 407, US Army, WWII, for the Twelfth Army Group, G-2 Periodic Report presently at their Suitland MD Facility and part of the permanent records of the United States.

COMMENTS

Your comments about these Musings are welcome. Responses about any of the articles should be directed to your newsletter editor or to John D. Bowen, 613 Chichester Lane, Silver Spring, MD 20904-3331. They will be printed as space permits.



IF YOU LIVE, WHAT YOU MUST EXPECT AT THE HANDS OF OUR ENEMY IN THIS "GENTLEMEN'S WAR"

(The following are the experiences of PFC Edward Snyder, 35607477, Co H, 517th Parachute Regt who was captured on 27 Dec by seven Germans dressed in complete GI uniforms).

On 27 Dec, one day after Companies "G" and "H" of 517th Parachute Regt had taken Manhay, Pfc Snyder returning from an aid station in Vaux Chavaux was approached by what he believed to be an American patrol coming from the Southeast. Nothing in their dress or weapons would have aroused the slightest suspicion. When they came abreast of him the one with sergeant's stripes asked, "Where are you going?" Snyder told him he was going into Manhay. Meanwhile, two others go behind him and stuck a rifle in his back and relieved him of his weapon. At least four of the seven spoke flawless English.

Snyder was taken to Malempre where he was questioned by an SS officer. He was asked his name, rank, serial number and regiment. He refused to give his regiment, whereupon the officer told him what it was. By various questions such as "Do you get along all right with the Armored troops?", the interrogator tried to learn what units were on the right and left of 517th Parachute Regt. He was very persistent in this effort and spent sometime asking questions of a similar nature along the same vein.

After the interrogation was over Snyder was herded together with other American PWs from the 7th Armored Division. The Germans took whatever parts of clothing the PWs had that they wanted. An overcoat, two sweaters and one pair of socks he was wearing were taken from Snyder. Others lost boots and various other items; all identification tags were taken. Each PW was given a blanket and compelled to sleep outside, under guard, alongside the buildings where American Arty was falling. With the exception of the guard, all Germans were in the cellars.

During the day, Snyder was compelled to clean the mess kits of the Germans as they finished eating; he had to clean up the rooms of the officers as well as the quarters of enlisted men. Whenever a German was killed or wounded by American fire PWs would be kicked, slapped and spit on. This treatment was meted out by both SS troops and Volksgrenadier personnel.

When Snyder was first brought to Malempre on 27 Dec it was occupied by SS troops. He does remember the number 12. (This was probably 12 SS Div which was in the line vic of Manhay on 27 Dec). On the night of 29-30 the SS troops were replaced by a Volksgrenadier unit. All PWs were turned over to this unit and the same treatment was received.

In the afternoon of 3 Jan, just before our tanks entered the town of Manhay, Snyder and other PWs managed to escape.

It is significant first of all that these PWs were

permitted to live. Secondly international rules of warfare are not only violated by SS Troops but by the venerable Volksgrenadier Divisions. Thirdly, SS troops and the Volksgrenadier Divisions have American uniforms, equipment and rations. Snyder claims many patrols were sent out in American uniforms both by the SS and Volksgrenadier units. One patrol was gone four days operating behind our lines.

There must be no mistaking our enemy. He is a cold blooded ruthless killer who stoops to any level to gain an advantage. The myth of a war being fought in a gentlemanly fashion has definitely been exploded in this conflict. Expect any treatment and any trick from the German and become more alert and suspicious when he shows signs of being humane.

Source: From the records of the National Archives and Records Administration, RG 407, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, Annex #2 to G-2 Periodic Report #119, 10 Jan 1945, which in turn was taken from VII Corps G-2 Periodic Report No. 6, 6 Jan 45.

62 VG Div
G-4

15 Dec 1944

In order to avoid unnecessary waste of gasoline following rules
will be observed:

1. All vehicles that are unserviceable will remain in the motor pool at Seimerath.
2. Field Post Office 162 will be employed in Ordnance Depot in Birresborn. The collection and delivery of mail will cease immediately. Mail arriving from home will be held for later delivery.
3. The two light trucks of the Post Office will immediately be sent to 162 Arty Regt as food trucks.
4. Instead of the previously ordered issue of 3 units of fuel, only 2 1/2 units will be supplied. Attention is again called to the utmost thrift in the consumption of gasoline, (1 unit = 100 kms).

For the Div CG
Chief of Staff

Hq 66 Corps
G-3 - Nr. 2212/44 secret

Hq-CP, 14 Dec 44

Numerous testimonies of prisoners contend that the American
soldier fears most the German tanks in their present tactics, next to the well-directed arty fire. It is noted that the German Panzers attack in flocks of 3-4 and are fighting their goals with concentrated fire. The exact aiming is especially expressed by prisoners. According to prisoner's opinion, the German tank force fights far better in the Aachen sector than in Normandy.

This fact is to be made known immediately to all Panzer troops and assault gun brigades.

Further statements of prisoners showed that houses, adopted for strongpoints, can be successfully attacked by bazookas. Thusly attacked American strongpoint crews surrendered in most instances immediately deprived of sight due to dust clouds caused by explosions, as well as the destructive effect of shelling.

Successful use of bazookas in fighting for strongpoints is to be made known immediately to all units equipped with bazookas.

For the "Generalkommando"
C of S

signed Siebert

62nd Volks-Gren Div
Source for the above two reports are from the First US Army G-2 Periodic Report No. 190, 17 Dec 1944. The later report shows how "loose lips help sink ships" so to speak.

**TRANSLATION OF GERMAN DOCUMENT FOUND 18 JAN
IN SALMCHATEAU BY 75th DIVISION**

1 SS Pz Div LAH
G-2 No 621/44 Secret Be/Ha

Div CP 20 Oct 44

SUBJECT: Instruction of troops about behavior when taken prisoner.

1. From radio intercepts and from Ey and neutral papers, it is obvious that German PWs have given the Ey extensive information about our own troops, their composition, weapons, strength, morale and missions. Through his shrewd and tricky interrogation methods, the Ey has gained valuable knowledge about the disposition of our troops, and even about the war plants inside our country.

2. All soldiers must again be instructed about how to behave when captured. It must be pointed out that information from one individual endangers all our troops. Every German soldier, when captured, must give nothing but Name, Rank, and serial number. Every threat must strengthen his determination not to divulge anything. The Ey will respect his determined and proud behavior. It is a grave mistake to believe that the giving of information will ease the lot of the PW.

3. Captured English, Canadian and American soldiers have shown us how to behave as PWs.

4. Every officer, NCO and EM is again to be warned to destroy all documents when capture is imminent, and to tear page 4, which gives his unit, out of the Soldbuch.

5. Do not try to lie to the interrogator.

Do not talk to other PWs - the Ey has numerous German speaking agents among them.

Do not even speak to your friends when in a room - the Ey uses recorders and listening devices.

The German PW cannot be too careful - the Ey is using the shrewdest and trickiest of interrogation methods.

6. Every soldier is to be reminded that giving information to the Ey is high treason, and spills the blood of his comrades.

7. These security measures are the responsibility of every leader. He is responsible that everyone of his men knows what we are fighting for in the West, and each man knows that he will bring defeat by giving information to the Ey.

For the Div Commander

The Chief of Staff

Source: Annex to G-2 Periodic Report #138 dated 29 January 1945 "Translation of Captured Document."

CO

Feldjagerkommando zbV

Hq 16 Dec 1944

Nothing can be added to the address of the Fuhrer and Comdr-in=Chief of the Wehrmacht made on 111 and 12 Dec 1944. I expect all Regtl and Bn comdrs be informed.

The following is to be especially emphasized:

1. We will march day and night, if necessary, fight all the time. All armored vehicles and even tanks themselves will roll at night. The founder of our arm, General Guderian, says to each tank commander, "Night is the tanker's friend!"

2. Anyone, whether with the inf, armd inf, rcn of engr, who has trouble with his vehicle will march on foot toward his objective. What we are going to lose on sweat during the following weeks, we will save on blood during the next few months!

3. The super-sensitivity as far as enemy aircraft is concerned must be overcome. Remedy: Employ vehicles in width and depth, active AA defense by every soldier, camouflage, digging in of vehicles, weapons and men. Our ground-mission must be continuous. Otherwise, we will not achieve our goal.

4. No tank officer, no tank man dare disappoint us, they must be clear in their minds as to their mission.

"On towards the enemy and go through him."

Regulate your supplies; don't leave anything to chance.

(signed) v. Manteuffel

Gen. Armd Forces

VICTORY IN EUROPE

VICTORY ORDER OF THE DAY
9 May 1945

Men and Women of the Allied Expeditionary Force:

The crusade on which we embarked in the early summer of 1944 has reached its glorious conclusion. It is my especial privilege in the name of all nations represented in this theater of war to commend each of you for valiant performance of duty. Though these words are feeble, they come from the bottom of a heart overflowing with pride in your loyal service, and admiration for you as warriors.

Your accomplishments at sea, in the air, on the ground and in the field of supply, have astonished the world. Even before the final week of conflict, you had put 5,000,000 of the enemy permanently out of the war. You have taken in stride military tasks so difficult as to be classed by many doubters as impossible. You have confused, defeated, and destroyed your savagely fighting foe.

On the road to victory, you have endured every discomfort and privation, and have surmounted every obstacle, ingenuity and desperation could throw in your path. You did not pause until our front was firmly joined up with the great Red Army coming from the East, and other Allied Forces coming from the South.

FULL VICTORY IN EUROPE HAS BEEN ATTAINED/

Working and fighting together in a single and indestructible partnership, you have achieved a perfection in unification of air, ground and naval power that will stand as a model in our time.

General Dwight D Eisenhower

~~In recognition of the unconditional and abject surrender of the Nazi barbarians please~~ accept the fervent congratulations and appreciation of myself and of the American people for the heroic achievements of your Allied Army, Navy and Air Forces by their sacrifices, skill and courage. They have saved and exalted the cause of freedom throughout the world. All of us owe to you and to your men of many nations a debt beyond appraisal for their high contribution to the conquest of Nazism.

I send also my personal appreciation of the superb leadership shown by you and your commanders in directing the valiant legions of our own country and of our Allies to this historic victory.

Please transmit this message to the appropriate officers of your command and publish it to all Allied Forces in your theaters of operation.

Harry S Truman
President

Editor's note: These congratulatory messages you were suppose to have received 50 years ago on 9 & 10 May 1945. They are as deserving today as they were then and are repeated here in case you have forgotten them with time. A Grateful Nation Remembers. Thank you for what you have did. Others messages will be repeated in the next issue.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

As of 8 April 1995 we had 133 current dues payers out of a total of 149 members. Those 16 who have not paid their 1995 Dues are being dropped from the rolls and they are being sent a postcard advising them as such. They may reinstate their membership and resume receiving the Marcher and WWII Musing when they bring their dues current.

HAPPY

BIRTHDAY CORNER

EVERLASTING DUTY

We offer our sympathy to the families of our members who have passed away recently.

Charles H Wells 12/11/94
Francis Patrick Casey 12/23/94
Irwin W Deems 01/17/95

Eternal Rest Grant Unto Them
There Earthly Duties Are Done

Next Meeting
23 Apr 1995
12 Noon
American Legion Post
Rt 214
Mayo MD

Future Meetings:
May 28
Jul 9
Aug 20

APRIL	MAY
George Chekan	Irving I Wolfe
John Wesley Hart	James W Jackson
W Edwin Alter 70	Andrew P Bloom
Irvin W Johnson	Melvin F Kaufman
Lee W Woods	Richard L Elliott Jr
Richard C Schlenker	Leonard J Bridgett
Gordon F Thomas	Henry F Spignesi
Robert B Edge Jr	John A Bladen
Patrick C Mudd	James E Bowman

GET WELL SOON

Our best wishes to Linda Fleming & Ed Radzwich both of whom are recovering from surgery. Also we hope that C Blaquie Culp is getting back to his irascible self.

Feature Film

Assuming there are no problems in using the TV at Mayo we will show the Video from Normandy to the Rhine which is about 60 minutes in length and documents the sweep across Europe..

NEW ARCHIVES II TOUR

A tour of the new National Archives Building in College park MD has been set up for Thursday, 11 May promptly at 10:15 AM. The tour takes about two hours and includes a behind the scenes tour of the building, discussion about the documents and records that are available for research and a film showing. After the tour you may stay for lunch on your own in their beautiful cafeteria. The tour will be conducted by our Editor John Bowen who is a Docent at the National Archives. This tour was recently given to the Del Valley VBOB Chapter. In order to receive a packet of material it is necessary to indicate that you are coming by mail to arrive by 8 May 95. The Building is on Adelphi Road between Metzertott and University Blvd. Take New Hampshire Ave South from I 495 Beltway for two blocks and take a left on Adelphi Road. Follow the Archives Signs. I will Attend _____.

Name _____ Address _____

Send to John D Bowen, 613 Chichester Ln, Silver Spring MD, 20904-3331. Parking is free.

**BATTLE OF THE BULGE HISTORICAL FOUNDATION
MEMORIAL ROOM & TABLE DEDICATION
19 MAY 1995
FORT MEADE MD**

Mark your calendars for this long awaited day of the dedication of the Battle of the Bulge conference Room at the Garrison Library at Fort George C Meade MD. This conference room and table will be used for meetings by the National Executive Council of VBOB and Military and Public organizations. The Dedication affair will begin at 1530 hours with musical selections by the Army Band Combo followed by the dedication of the room at 1600 and the ribbon cutting and visits to the room and exhibits at 1630 hours. This event which is free will be followed by a Social hour and cash bar at the Fort Meade Officers Club where a dinner of Veal Marsala will be served for \$30.00. The dinners at Fort Mead are always a special treat. Send check to the BOB Historical Foundation, PO Box 2516, Kensington MD 20891-0818. Questions can be addressed to 301-881-0356. The Memorial Room will be open for viewing from 0900 to 1200 hours on Sat 20 May. If voming to the dinner indicate that you wish to sit with MD/DC folks or others if you have a group. See Bulge Bugle for further details.

BLESSINGS FOR FRIENDS OF THE AGED

BLESSED

are those who understand the arthritic hands

BLESSED

are those who know the strain of the ears to catch things.

BLESSED

are those who know that eyes dim and wits slow down.

BLESSED

are those who look away when coffee is spilled at the table.

BLESSED

are those with a cheery smile to stop to chat for awhile.

BLESSED

are those who never say, "You've told me that story twice before."

BLESSED

are those who know how to bring back memories of yesterdays.

BLESSED

are those who ease the days on my journey home in loving ways.

Courtesy of Rockford Silk Screen Process, Inc

SPIRIT OF AMERICA

The US Army Military District of Washington presents SPIRIT OF AMERICA 1995 featuring The 3rd US Infantry (The Old Guard) and The US Army Band "Pershing's Own" at the Capital Center also called the USAIR Arena in Landover MD. The Chapter will be attending on Saturday 10 Jun 1995 at 2PM. Free Ticket are required and can be obtained by sending a stamped Self-Addressed Envelope to John D Bowen, 613 Chichester Lane, Silver Spring MD 20904 Cut off this slip and mail. Do not just send an envelope as I have a number of things going that require a self addressed envelope. Include this slip. The arena does charge \$5.00 per car to park at their public built lot. Please send me _____ Tickets.

Name _____ Address _____