

# ❖ WWII MUSINGS ❖

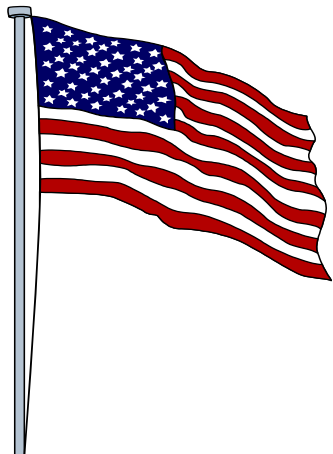
Volume 8 Issue 3

John D. Bowen, Editor

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## FLAG DAY, 14 June 2000



### BRADLEY'S THOUGHTS

*The following is an excerpt from General Omar Bradley's papers at the US Military History Institute Manuscript Archives, Carlisle Barracks PA. This excerpt is in his own handwriting and was found in Box III (Folder) B.*

After our destruction of the German Armies in our breakout, on July 25th, we were able to advance rapidly across France to the German border. It was wonderful to be able to liberate the rest of France with a minimum of fighting and comparatively few casualties.

However, with the railroads so badly crippled we were unable to move supplies forward fast enough to maintain our momentum and after reaching the Siegfried Line we had to pause and revamp our supply lines. This gave the Germans a chance to reorganize and be in a position to offer stubborn resistance when we were able to resume the attack.

By the middle of October our supply situation indicated that within another month we would be in condition to renew the attack.

General Eisenhower called a strategy conference to draft plans for an offensive in November. He could choose one of two courses.

1. He could dig in with his 54 divisions along the 500 mile front that extended from the North Sea to the Swiss border, and wait until the following Spring,

2. Or he could start a November offensive.

Almost all arguments favored a winter offensive. A delay would favor the enemy much more than it would us. My

*(Continued on page 6)*

### FLAG DAY

This coming June 14th will mark the 223rd birthday of our American Flag. Flag Day like Patriots Day (April 19th) is not a holiday but is a time to fly our nation's colors. As former soldiers, this beautiful red, white and blue emblem has led this nation in peace in war. On Memorial Day it is fitting that the 3rd Infantry places this flag beside each deceased military persons grave in Arlington Cemetery to remember the many who gave so much in their service to our country.

It was not until 1777 that the Continental Congress adopted the Stars and Stripes pattern for our nation's flag and it took 100 years to first celebrate this flag and in 1949, President Harry Truman signed legislation making Flag Day a day of National Observance.

The current design has not changed since 1960 when the 50th star was added for the admission of Hawaii as a state. Each of the thirteen, alternating red and white stripes represent one of the 13 original colonies.

If you haven't an American flag they can readily be purchased at hardware stores and the VFW and American Legion. It should not be displayed after dark unless lighted.

The dry cleaning industry will generally clean your flag for free. Check with any cleaners and ask if they clean American Flags for free.

When the flag gets tattered and worn or cannot be cleaned it should be properly disposed of. It should be thrown in the trash. The Code suggests that "when a flag has served its useful purpose, it should be destroyed, preferably by burning." For individual citizens this should be done discreetly so that the act of destruction is not perceived as a protest or desecration. Many American Legion Posts hold Flag Disposal Ceremonies on June 14th, Flag Day, each year. This ceremony creates a particularly dignified and solemn occasion for the retirement of unusable flags. Those having 48 star flags should call the Editor for disposal information (301-384-6533).

Each honorably discharged veteran is entitled to a flag from the VA for their casket. A copy of your discharge is necessary and should be placed among your personal papers for your family to use at the time of your death. There is a certain honor and beauty to a flag draped casket and one should not hesitate to have it draped on a casket in lieu of those expensive flowers sitting on casket half.

Information for this article from a number of sources including Flag Etiquette by the American Legion and Sun Tzu org web site.

## EDITOR'S CORNER

Mary Ann & I were privileged to attend two Holocaust Remembrance ceremonies during the first week of May. The first on the evening of 3 May, at the Holocaust Museum for the recognition of a Japanese Diplomat and a Dutch Consular/Businessman who helped Jews to escape the Nazi Tyranny in

1940 and the opening of a new exhibit related to this action. Then the following day in the Capitol Rotunda, the ceremonies recognized all of the Army Divisions that liberated Concentration Camps and remembered the over 6 million Jews, Romans, Homosexuals and Handicapped individuals which were put to death by the Nazis in their plan to create the master-race.

This day to remember was more a day to not forget how fragile a society that we live in and how easy this type of intolerance attempts to rear its ugly head. We have recent cases of it in Bosnia and the Middle East, the same kind of mass extermination of people by others due mainly to their ethnic background or religious beliefs. We have the rise of neo-Nazism today in Europe and in our own country. We have an uneasy peace accord between Irish Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland. In all cases it is intolerance of others. It seems that the old adage that "Those who fail to learn the lessons of history are damned to relive them," is appropriate here, as it appears that each new generation generates its own leaders of intolerance. Thus, it requires continual vigilance on the part of peace loving peoples to stamp out this intolerance before it blooms, wherever it blooms.

The survivors of the Holocaust are forever grateful to the units that rescued them and I have listed below the units with the camps that they liberated and placed a star after those units that were in the Battle of the Bulge also.

1st InfD O	Falkenau a.d. Eger	7 May 1945
2nd InfD O	Leipzig-Hasag	14 Apr 1945
4th InfD O	Dachau subcamps	28 - 29 Apr 45
8th InfD	Wöbbelin	3 May 1945
29th InfD	Dinslaken	3 Apr 1945
36th InfD	Kaufering camps	30 Apr 1945
42nd InfD	Dachau	29 Apr 1945
45th InfD	Dachau	29 Apr 1945
65th InfD	Flossenbürg subcamp	20-21 Apr 45

**WWII Musings is published for the enjoyment of WWII Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge. It is based on the research of John D. Bowen, 613 Chichester Ln, Silver Spring MD 20904-3331 in the Unit Records maintained at the National Archives and Records Administration. Proper credit should be given both to the researcher and to the National Archives. Your comments are welcome. E-mail [jdbowen@gateway.net](mailto:jdbowen@gateway.net)**

69th InfD	Leipzig-Thekla N42	19 Apr 1945
71st InfD	Gunskirchen	5-6 May 45
80th InfD O	Buchenwald	12 Apr 1945
	Ebensee	4-5 May 1945
82nd AbnD O	Wöbbelin	3 May 1945
83rd InfD O	Langenstein	11 Apr 1945
84th InfD O	Hannover-Ahlem	10 Apr 1945
	Salzwedel	14 Apr 1945
86th InfD	Attendorn	11 Apr 1945
89th InfD	Ohrdruf	4 Apr 1945
90th InfD O	Flossenbürg	23 Apr 1945
95th InfD	Werl (Prison/labor camp)	2-8 Apr 1945
99th InfD O	Dachau subcamps	3-4 May 1945
101st AbnD O	Dachau subcamp	28 Apr 1945
103rd InfD	Landsberg	27 Apr 1945
104th InfD	Dora-Mittelbau	11 Apr 1945
3rd ArmDD O	Dora-Mittelbau	11 Apr 1945
4th ArmDD O	Ohrdruf	4 Apr 1945
6th ArmDD O	Buchenwald	11 Apr 1945
8th ArmDD O	Halberstadt-Zwieberge	12-17 Apr 45
9th ArmDD O	Falkenau a.d. Eger	7 May 1945
10th ArmDD O	Landsberg	27 Apr 1945
11th ArmDD O	Gusen	5 May 1945
	Mauthausen	6 May 1945
12th ArmDD	Landsberg	27 Apr 1945
14th ArmDD	Dachau subcamps	2-3 May 1945
20th ArmDD	<del>Dachau</del>	<del>29 Apr 1945</del>

### D-DAY

It is appropriate to remember again all those who participated in one of the greatest invasions of all times, and which began the final downfall of Nazism in Europe. In less than a year the Germans would be driven back into their homeland and the war ended. It was the courage and sacrifice of those who landed that day, on the 6th of June 1944, that established the beachhead from which victory was to ensue. Many of those units and men that landed on D-day and D-day + would later join together in one other great battle, the Battle of the Bulge, the final gasp of Hitler's Armies. We salute each of you and remember your Triumph of Courage.

### KOREAN WAR

Fifty years ago, this June 25th, just a little more than five years since the end of the war and Europe and not quite 5 years of peace in the Far East, North Korean Communists launched its attack on South Korea. Though an armistice was signed on 27 Jul 1953, this war has never been ended and still continues today with a continuous presence of our finest fighting men on the DMZ.

Many of our WWII veterans were called up in the initial phases of the war, as we once again entered onto a war footing. These veterans, their careers interrupted again, who survived the conflict often decided to stay the course and put in 20 or 30 total years in the Army. You can tell them by their star on their CIB, if they were Infantry. Again, over 50,000 gave their lives.

Though some think the Communist menace is over with

## COMBAT INTERVIEWS

### 2nd Infantry Division

*The following report was found by the Editor in the Combat Interviews in RG 407, Box 24016, Folder 18. It gives a detail by detail account of the planning and execution of a Combat Patrol. Surely the infantrymen in our association can relate personally to the narrative and for those that weren't infantrymen can relate to the experience. The writer states: "The following narrative was obtained by discussions with some 15 soldiers who were on patrol. The discussions took place on October 12th and 13th (1944), in a German pillbox near Brandscheidt, which was being used as a command post by Company C, 1st Battalion, 38th Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division. The narrative begins in the words of 1st Lieutenant Edward V. Rollins, C Company Commander."*

### COMBAT PATROL

Company C moved into position 2000 yards northeast of Brandscheidt, Germany, in the Siegfried line, on 4 Oct 1944, relieving elements of the 4th InfD. From the 4th InfD, and from our experience, we learned that we were in a fluid situation. There was no solid continuous front. Patrols could infiltrate without difficulty into our positions. We therefore set up a defense based on the location of elements in strong points and the employment of combat patrols which were constantly sent into enemy territory to probe the German positions, and in so far as possible to keep the Germans too busy to become aggressive.

The Germans operated in a similar manner. They used fortified blockhouses for living quarters, command posts and strong points, supplementing these with outposts. The outposts were built around machine gun nests, with the guns dug in, fox holes for crew members, and with riflemen deployed about to cover the position.

On 6 Oct our patrols found such a German position near our lines, 180 yards southwest of Schneifelhaus, shown on the attached sketch. On the seventh and eighth, patrols reconnoitered and felt out that strong point, securing information on the pillboxes, type of terrain, obstacles and route of approach. The position, located in a wooded area, was reported to consist of four pillboxes and two machine gun nests. The pillboxes were rectangular, some thirty by forty feet in size, constructed below ground level in such a manner that from a short distance they appeared to be inconspicuous earth mounds rising some four feet above the earth surface. Firing slits and entrance tunnels were carefully concealed. The whole thing was well camouflaged, blending into the irregular terrain and being extremely hard to locate. The machine guns were located in places having natural concealment and fields of fire, were dug in, and camouflaged with brush. It turned out that there were also three pillboxes and two machine gun nests that the reconnaissance patrols overlooked.

It was decided to send out a 29 man combat patrol to attack this position, with the specific mission of knocking out the machine gun in position 1 and killing or capturing its crew and protecting riflemen. A sketch was prepared from patrol and aerial photographs. The C Company second platoon was in company reserve, so personnel were drawn from it. The patrol was divided into six groups, each group was given a sketch and assigned a mission.

Group 1, was composed of three riflemen led by S/Sgt Andrew W. Paull. They were to deploy along the eastern edge of the woods north of D and protect the east flank of the patrol.

Group 2, made up of two submachine gunners and two riflemen led by T/Sgt William B Kelley, was to take positions in a draw north of D and watch pillbox 5, preventing anyone in that pillbox from firing on the main patrol. Rifle anti-tank grenades were provided for use against the steel doors of that pillbox.

Group 3, consisted of three riflemen led by S/Sgt Henry G Gonzales. They were to establish themselves around pillbox 4 and prevent anyone in this pillbox from firing on the main group.

Group 4, was the command group. Two riflemen, one aid man and one SCR 300 radio operator were led by 1st Lt James E Moylan, and were to take up positions in a ravine at D, where Lt Moylan could observe and control Groups 1, 2 and 3.

Group 5, the assault group, was led by S/Sgt Floyd H Cannon, Jr. This group, armed with one submachine gun, one BAR and four rifles, was to destroy machine gun 1, signal completion of the mission by green flare, and then withdraw north into our lines.

Group 6, composed of four riflemen led by 1st Lt Neil W Hall was to fire on machine gun 1 from the north, diverting the attention of the gun crew and supporting riflemen from the direction of the main attack.

Company B was to provide a patrol (Group 7) of one BAR rifleman and three riflemen, led by a Sgt, to engage machine gun 4 in a fire fight and prevent it from firing on the assault group. Gun 4 was located near B Company lines. It did not fire during the patrol action, and apparently had been withdrawn prior to the engagement.

Preparatory artillery fires were arranged, with one battery of four 105mm guns on area D at 0730, one battery of four 105mm guns to fire on machine gun 4 at 0745, and thirty rounds of 81 mm mortar fire to be placed on machine gun 4 at 0745. An emergency box-in barrage was arranged in case of enemy counterattack. This barrage was to be called for by the patrol commander's radio. This fire was to be placed on the east and south flanks of the attack area by 60mm mortars, 81mm mortars and artillery. Artillery was supplied by the 38th Artillery Bn, which was attached to the 38th Inf Regt. We have mortars in the company and in the Bn.

All groups were to be in position by 0800 on 9 Oct. Groups 6 and 7 were to open fire at 0800. Group 5 was to attack machine gun 1 at 0805. Groups 1, 2, 3 and 4 were to remain in position for twenty minutes, protect the withdrawal of Group 5, then fire a yellow flare and withdraw to a rallying point in the woods north of C. When the yellow flare went up, group 3 was to throw white phosphorous grenades into pillbox 4. When Groups 1, 3, 3, and 4 were assembled, the patrol commander was to fire a green

*(Continued on page 5)*

**PRESS CONFERENCE**  
**Secretary of War with**  
**General George S. Patton**  
**14 Jun 1945**

*The following are some interesting excerpts from the weekly press conference that was held at 10:30 AM with the Secretary of War and the Press. This transcript was found among the unit records of the Third Army at the National Archives II, College Park MD in Record Group 407.*

**SECRETARY:**

"...Tomorrow is Infantry Day, the day for special recognition of the doughboy, the GIs, who have borne such a large share of the war. Both in Europe and the Pacific. Cold and heat, mud and snow, constant strain, utter weariness and continuous danger have been their lot. But with the men of the Air Corps fighting just as gallantly above and ahead of them, they have taken the territory which has spelled Victory.

In particular, we solemnly remember the 116,912 Infantry enlisted men and officers who have been killed in action or died of wounds, according to individual reports received up to 1 May. (1945). The total Army personnel killed in action or died of wounds, as reported through that date was 174,656.

United States Army casualties as compiled in Washington on the basis of individual names reported through 7 Jun 1945, and reflecting fighting through the first half of May, follow: killed 187,369, wounded 558,611, missing 42,710 and prisoners (total before liberations) 111,262 – a total of 899,952. Of the wounded 324,819 have returned to duty...."

**SECRETARY:**

"...Well now, gentlemen, we have the great pleasure and honor here of having two distinguished Cavalrymen present. They started in the horse Cavalry when that was the Cavalry and they have gone on into the tank Cavalry since, and to the extent that horses have been replaced. Both of them have had the anguish and trouble of being associated with me during their lives and they are both my very dear friends. One of them is General Patton; the other is BG Eugene A Regnier.

Now, General Patton is willing to talk a little to you on the things that he knows well, and after spending a long and very interesting evening with him last night, I am going to take the liberty of asking him certain topics that I think will be very interesting to you.

General Patton is, as you all know, an outstanding tank commander among his other honors. I think you will be interested in hearing first of all what he thinks of modern tank tactics and the tanks which he had been using – the American Army tanks which he has been using in these last operation in Europe.

I can't shackle him to that particular subject. I think, perhaps, you would like to hear afterwards what he thinks of his past service; of the possible use of horse Cavalry still, and possibly you would like to hear how he crossed the Rhine because I know he took me by surprise on it. He took the Germans by surprise, too.

**GEN PATTON:** We fooled ourselves.

**SECRETARY:** Gentlemen, this is General Patton.

**GEN PATTON:** ... Tanks are nothing but armed and armored groups of fighting men. In the Infantry we have a squad

composed of 12 to 14 men; in a tank, a medium tank, you have a squad composed of 4 men – but it is the employment of these squads, whether they may be on foot or in tanks, in groups in team-plays that wins.

The advantage of the tank – if one can say it has an advantage – over the man on foot is that the soldier arrives at the point of fighting frequently less fatigued. Furthermore, he has the capacity of carrying more comforts with him; that is, he can carry two blankets instead of one and he doesn't get his feet wet so much. If he does, he can always put his extra pair of socks over the exhaust and that dries them.

There are many places where tanks cannot fight. We have always tried to utilize, as Napoleon said, "The means at hand for the accomplishment of the end." If we wanted to get across a river or through a mountain pass, we would make the breakthrough with Infantry; then develop the breakthrough with armor because it can go faster, and because once having gotten through the crust, or the skin, it is very appalling to the troops in the rear.

I think, personally, we have racial instincts, like when we were pursued around the bush by saber-toothed tigers. In this racial instinct, when a man sees a tank heading at him, it becomes a saber-toothed tiger or elephant and he gets out of the way. Unquestionably, it has that effect.

In order to make these breakthroughs, you have to take losses. Whether you take them all one day or spread them over a length of time is, in my opinion, a very important decision. It is much better, in my opinion, to lose 10,000 men in one day than to lose 5,000 men for 20 days. That is usually the choice you have to make.

**SECRETARY:** You mean 5,000 a day for 20 days?

**GEN PATTON:** Yes, that is correct.

If you were a prize fighter – and General Surlles and I weren't in very bad form at one time – you know that when you get a man on his heels, if you can keep him on his heels you can lick him. That is the idea of the breakthrough. If you let him get back on his toes again, he can absorb a much harder punch. That is where prize fighters have an advantage over armies, because in prize fighting you have a bell and you can fan a fellow, put lemon juice in his mouth and ice on his head and he is back on his toes. If you can get a German back on his heels, he stays there and eventually he keeps on going further and further until you bury him.

With reference to horse Cavalry, it is my considered opinion that had the 2d Corps in Tunisia, or the Seventh Army in Sicily – I happened to command both those units both times – possessed either a brigade, or better a division of horse Cavalry, the bag of Germans would have been much bigger. It is simply a question of relative speed. If a man carrying a pack can go N miles an hour over the hills pursuing another man who is going N plus one mile an hour – you can always go faster when you are leaving – you can never catch him, but if you put the man on a horse with the guns and he can go N plus three miles an hour he will catch the N plus one boy and then the N boy coming up on foot can squash him. It is just like holding a man by the back of the head and then punching him in the nose. Had we had the horse Cavalry there, those two operations would have been successful **TO BE CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE**

*(Continued from page 3, COMBAT PATROL)*

cluster and thereupon groups 6 and 7 were to withdraw.

We got all members of the patrol together on the 8th, gave each group leader a sketch and oriented and briefed everyone on the mission, terrain, obstacles, routes and all details of the plan. The patrol slept in one group on the night of the 8th and left the company area at 0630 on the 9th.

The patrol was led through a mine field in front of our company by Lt Moylan and everyone was told to keep in single file. Pvt Irvin C Manne, however, became separated from his group, forgot the instructions, and ran out of column toward his group. He tripped the wire leading to an M-3 mine, which exploded, injuring him and killing Pvt Mike Mano. The patrol commander halted the patrol while he sent back for two replacements. Private William Brown, the aid man, stayed with the injured man. The patrol was delayed for twenty-five minutes, and at 0800 was in the woods north of C, short of its objective.

At 0800 Group 6 began firing on machine gun 1, which promptly returned the fire. Newly discovered machine guns 2 and 3 began firing at Group 6, and enemy mortars, both light and heavy, began laying down a barrage near Group 6. At this instant Sgt Cannon, at the point of Group 5, saw some forty German soldiers 200 yards south of C, moving along the edge of a clearing toward A. The patrol commander, informed of the 40 Germans, altered the plan to place Group 2 as shown, where it could cover pillboxes 4 and 5; and, apprehensive about his right flank and the 40 Germans whom he could not yet see, placed Group 3 as shown on the sketch. *(Editor's Note: Unfortunately the sketch was not included in the file.)*

As Group 5 was approaching the hwy, Sgt Cannon discovered pillboxes 6, 7, and 8, and saw 4 Germans at the entrance of pillbox 8. These Germans dove into the pillbox and stayed there. Machine guns 2 and 3 were firing into the woods north of B. Sgt Cannon sent the 3 riflemen to 5-c to hold the Germans in Pillbox 8; Pvt Raymond L Hunter with the BAR to 5-b to take care of machine gun 2; and Cannon and Pvt Henry F Graber with the submachine gun moved from 5-a to within 35 yards of machine gun 1. Cannon scored a direct hit on the receiver of the machine gun with a rifle anti-tank grenade. Graber opened up on the gun crew as they jumped for their foxholes, firing 135 rounds. Two of the Germans were hit and fell. Hunter fired 80 rounds from the BAR at machine gun 2, from about 40 yards, and this gun ceased firing and remained silent. Cannon then threw two hand grenades into Pillbox 8 and withdrew. None of the flares worked, so all signals were given by voice and hand signals. By 0930 all of the Groups had returned to the Company. The mine victims were the only casualties suffered. The mission was accomplished, the machine gun was destroyed and two of its crew were killed or wounded.

Lt Rollins made the following general comments:

We are now operating in very dense pine forests, and at night in the forest the darkness is intense. The forest is scattered with brush, and German positions are surrounded by mines, booby traps, trip wires, and all kinds of warning devices. At night, in the forest, sound travels far. For these reasons we have found it impractical to attempt night patrols in the forests. We place mine fields, tin cans and other warning devices around our positions, and then do no moving around whatsoever at night. The Germans, also, stay put at night.

We send out at least two reconnaissance patrols a day, to find out what the enemy is doing, to keep him aware that we are active, and to keep him from taking the initiative. We draw personnel for these patrols from the platoon which is kept in company reserve while the other two platoons are in the line. Combat patrols like the one described require very careful planning and preparation. Everything must be worked out in detail and the leader must be prepared to cope with unexpected and unpredictable occurrences.

Sgt Cannon offered the following remarks: Our reconnaissance patrols are usually made up of 6 or 7 riflemen and a BAR rifleman. I usually carry an M-1 rifle and four anti-tank grenades and take the point position in the patrol. The German machine guns are the most troublesome weapon we encounter, they may have many of them and they fire very rapidly. On this patrol we had eight flares, but not a one exploded. It was a damp day, and had been raining for days, and they were probably damp. On patrol we always travel in a circle, never retrace our route. When someone is hurt we do our best we can under the circumstances – if possible we send him back to the company.

Lt Hall agreed that the German machine guns are very effective and said mortar fire was often encountered also. He said the large German mortar, about 81mm, is dangerous, but that the Germans also employ a small so called "knee mortar" of about 50mm, which is not effective because of the small radius of the burst.

Everyone agreed that the M-1 rifle is very effective and that the Germans use rifles less than our troops, using them almost exclusively for sniping. Lt Hall remarked that one could tell when the situation was hot because everyone carried M-1 rifles then, whereas when everything was quiet the NCO's all carried pistols. The German machine pistol was not highly regarded. The SCR 300 radio is used on combat patrols to inform the company of any important developments in the situation and to bring in mortar or artillery support. The men concurred with Sgt Kelley that the SCR 300 is all right if you keep moving but draws fire if you transmit from a stationary position.

*(Continued from page 7) 84th Infantry Division Fact Sheet*

*These Army Ground Forces Fact Sheets were prepared at the end of the war (1 March 1947) by The Information Section, Analysis Branch, Headquarters Army Ground Forces on each division. They may be found in Record Group 407, Unit Records, for each division, under the file number 3 (Division #) - 0 at the National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Rd, College Park MD.*

(Continued from page 1)

group of three Armies of 31 divisions occupied a front of 230 miles. In order to concentrate enough strength at our points of attack, it was necessary to hold the 90 mile Ardennes sector with a minimum of troops. We knew that we were taking a chance of the enemy launching an attack through that sector but after considering the problem from all angles we decided to take the risk. In the first place we did not think the Germans possessed the capability to launch a decisive attack. The fact that the offensive failed, seems to prove that we were right.

An offensive should be launched for the purpose of either destroying the opposing army, or to secure some key terrain feature. We did not think that an attack into the Ardennes would accomplish either.

I rode over the area with Gen. Middleton, the VIII Corps Commander, who commanded the sector, and we decided that if an attack should penetrate all the way to the Meuse River, the enemy would secure nothing worth while. We had carefully avoided the placing of any large gasoline or food dumps in the area and the roads are in general not suited for large operations.

Some people point out that when the Germans overran France in 1941 they used the Ardennes for the breakthrough. However they were then operating against a French Army which had much less mobility than ours, and which was committed to the Maginot Line defensive concept. We counted on our ability to move quickly and hit any penetration in the flanks.

As an example, within less than a week, Patton switched the bulk of his Third Army, with its guns, supply, and equipment, from 50 to 75 miles into the new offensive. In the first nine days, Hodges' First Army moved 248,000 troops to meet the changed situation. The German attack was launched by four armies of 36 divisions, seven of 24 in attack which were armored.

Of course our front was overrun, but our front line divisions fought stubborn delaying actions and slowed up the advance. One of the most important of these actions was at St Vith. Here the 7th US Armored Division and a regiment of the 106th Infantry Division held up the 6th SS Panzer Army for three days. On the north flank, Hodges' First Army held the shoulder near Malmedy and Stavelot and refused to give a yard.

The key points became the two shoulders and, in the middle the road center at Bastogne which was held by the 101st Airborne, a third of the 9th Armored Division and a third of the 10th Armored Division and some extra artillery battalions – approximately equal to two division in strength. Orders were issued by me and by Gen Middleton that Bastogne would be held even though it were surrounded. It held until one of Patton's divisions fought their way to its relief.

The point of the German advance was finally stopped by our 2nd Armored Division which met the 2nd Panzer Division in woods and fog and in three days fighting practically destroyed it. It retreated behind the Rhine with some 1500 men and five tanks out of an original strength of 11,000 men and ninety tanks.

In fact all of the German divisions suffered such great losses that they were practically ineffective afterwards. Where as we had previously been attacking against strong prepared positions, we had had a chance against them in the open where they suffered tremendous losses.

in my opinion the battle of the Bulge shortened the war materially and saved us casualties later. For example eleven of

their depleted divisions were thrown against four of ours in the Remagen Bridge Head and were entirely ineffective.

To me the outstanding things about the Ardennes battle were the fighting abilities of our American soldiers, the excellence of our leadership all the way down to the squad leaders, and the excellence and dependability of our equipment furnished by American industry.

The Battle of the Bulge was a phase (sic) in the whole battle of Europe. For a short period we lost the initiative but we regained it in less than a month. Our casualties were high but the enemy's were higher. Holding the Ardennes lightly while we attacked elsewhere was a calculated risk. This calculated risk was mine and I have never regretted having made it. Indeed were I to live through that decision again, I would make no other. To be sure it was not the safest choice but had safety been the byword of our generalship in France, we might have wintered on the Seine within sight of a charred skeleton of Paris.

### Military Internet

Listed below are some additional web sites of interest on Military matters Please e-mail any recommendations to [jdbowen@gateway.net](mailto:jdbowen@gateway.net) for future issues. All addresses start out <http://>

**1st Armored Division Museum, Baumholder, Germany**  
[www.baumholder.army.mil/museum/museum.htm](http://www.baumholder.army.mil/museum/museum.htm)

**70th InfD**  
[www.trailblazersww2.org/](http://www.trailblazersww2.org/)

**100th InfD – Excellent TO&E Charts of an Infantry Div**  
[www.100thww2.org/](http://www.100thww2.org/)

**103rd InfD Assn**  
[www.eastmill.com/103rd/](http://www.eastmill.com/103rd/)

**351st FA Bn**  
[www.coax.net/people/lwf/menww2.htm](http://www.coax.net/people/lwf/menww2.htm)

**504th PIR, 82nd AbnD**  
[www.geocities.com/~the504thpir](http://www.geocities.com/~the504thpir)

**Battle of the Bulge – CRIBA Belgium**  
[users.skynet.be/bulgecriba/](http://users.skynet.be/bulgecriba/)

**Battle of the Bulge – Northern Shoulder**  
[home.wxs.nl](http://home.wxs.nl)

**Battle of the Bulge – Timeline**  
[www.cs.tcd.ie](http://www.cs.tcd.ie)

**Military Service Records**  
[www.nara.gov/regional/mpr.html](http://www.nara.gov/regional/mpr.html)

**Patton Museum of Cavalry & Armor, Ft Knox, KY**  
[www.147.238.100.101/museum/](http://www.147.238.100.101/museum/)

**West Point Museum, West Point, NY**  
[www.usma.edu/museum/](http://www.usma.edu/museum/)

**Women's Army Museum, Fort Lee, VA (Opens Oct 2000)**  
[www.awn.lee.army.mil/](http://www.awn.lee.army.mil/)

**World War II (1939-1945)**  
[www.cfcsc.dnd.ca/links/wwii.html](http://www.cfcsc.dnd.ca/links/wwii.html)

## Fact Sheet of the 84th Infantry Division

**TYPE OF DIVISION:** Organized Reserve.

**NICKNAME:** Railsplitters. (In WWI the division was known as the "Lincoln Division" because it first trained in KY, and because it drew much of its personnel from KY and IL, in which states Lincoln began his political career. The name was changed to Railsplitters in this war as the shoulder patch symbolizes this occupation of Lincoln as a young man.

**SHOULDER PATCH:** Patch consists of a red disc on which, in white, an axe is shown splitting a rail. The original insignia was a red ax on a white background within a red circle, with the name Lincoln above and the number 84 below the ax

**HISTORY:** The division was organized in August 1917, at Camp Taylor, KY. The division was depleted from time to time to fill up other organizations. In June 1918, however, it was transferred to Camp Sherman OH and was brought up to authorized strength. The 84th went overseas in Sep and Oct 1918 where it was broken up to provide replacements for combat units at the front. Headquarters of the 84th and the permanent cadres were returned to the US in January 1919, at which time the division was demobilized.

**ACTIVATION DATE:** 15 October 1942.

**INACTIVATION DATE:** 24 January 1946, Camp Kilmer, New Jersey..

**COMPONENT UNITS:** 333rd, 334th and 335th Inf Regts; 84th Cav Ren Tp (Mecz); 309th Engr Combat Bn, 309th Med Bn. Div Arty: 325th, 326th and 909th FA Bns (105 How) and 327th FA Bn (155 How). Sp Tps: 84th QM Co, 84th Sig Co, 784th Ord Co (LM), Hq Co, MP Plat and Band.

**TRAINING UNDER ARMY GROUND FORCES:** The division trained first at Camp Howze, Texas coming under the X Corps of the Third Army. In September 1943, it went to the Louisiana Maneuver Area to take part in eight weeks of large-scale war games under the Third Army. The 84th was transferred to Camp Clairborne, Louisiana in November 1943

**DEPARTED U.S. FOR FOREIGN DUTY:** 20 September 1944.

**OVERSEAS TRAINING:** Division trained in England for a month prior to going to the continent. Use and detection of land mines was emphasized.

**DATE ENTERED COMBAT:** DIVISION 18 November 1944 **FIRST ELEMENTS** 9 November 1944

**COMBAT DAYS (DIV):** 152

**BATTLE CREDITS:** (Division) Rhineland, Ardennes, Central Europe.

**RETURNED TO US:** 19 January 1946.

**SUCCESSIVE COMMANDING GENERALS:** Major General John H Hildring from Oct 192 to Feb 1943; Major General Stonewall Jackson from February to October 1943; Major General Robert L Mc Clure from Oct 1943 to March 1944; major General Roscoe B Woodruff from March to June 1944; Major General Alexander R Bolling from June 1944 to inactivation...

**DISTINGUISHED UNIT CITATIONS:** .326th FA Bn, Cannon Company, 334th Inf, 3rd Bn, 334th Infantry, 1st Bn, 334th Inf for 23 Feb - 5 Mar action in Germany; Company G, 334th Infantry for 23 - 28 Feb 1945 for action in Germany; and Company K, 335th Inf for 29 Nov - 2 Dec 1944 action at Siegfried, Germany.

**CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR WINNERS: FOREIGN AWARDS:**

**COMBAT HIGHLIGHTS:** The 84th landed in France in November 1944 and was immediately sent into Holland. Jutting out into allied lines was the enemy salient at Geilenkirchen, an anchor of the Siegfried Line. The 84th fought its way into Geilenkirchen by November and then went on to take Lindern and a succession of towns which were stubbornly defended by the enemy. By 18 December the 84th had captured both Wurm and Mullendorf, two strong points of the Siegfried Line defenses. On 21 December the division turned its attention to Belgium and the job of halting von Runstedt's winter offensive. The 84th gathered in and around Marche and began bitter days and nights of fighting in sub-zero weather. The enemy was strong and this was his all-out effort, but the 84th held, secured its ground and then lashed out against the Germans. On 3 January 1945, the division, along with the 2nd Armored Division, attacked the enemy in the snow, sleet and rain. Where tanks could not get through the Infantry had to push on alone. By night the woods above Odeigne had been cleared out. On 4 January, Deffe fell to the 84th and then Devantage and Magoster. The 84th couldn't be stopped; it smashed on. Early in Feb the division took up positions along the Roer River crossing the river on 23 Feb. Kerrenzig fell and then in rapid succession, Baal, Matzerath, Hoven and Gelkrath were taken by the division. Rolling on the 84th cleared up Krefeld and then started the drive to the Rhine. The division moved from the Roer to the Rhine in ten days. In Mar it began to assist the XVI Corps in preparations for the Rhine crossing. The crossing came the later part of Mar and in Apr the division began driving ahead once again, this time with the Elbe River as its objective. On 10 Apr, the division took Hannover and 4 days later broke through German resistance to reach the Elbe. Climax of the drive was the meeting with Russian units across the river. In 128 days of combat the 84th took more than 70,000 prisoners. The division remained in Germany after V-E Day, and was inactivated upon its return to the United States in Jan 1946.

*(Continued on page 5)*

## BULGE UNIT REUNIONS

1-4 Jun 2000, 26th Inf "Yankee" Div, Hampton Inn, Westport MA. Contact George Linthicum, 2605 Orchard Dr, Broomall PA 19008, 610-356-9552

6-10 Jun 2000 750th Tank Bn, Louisville KY, Contact John R. Walker 817-926-0925.

1-3 Jun 2000 94th InfD, Sheraton Norfolk VA. Contact Harry Helms, 610-363-7826.

28 Jun - 2 Jul 2000, 526th Armd Inf Bn, Boise, ID Contact Glenn Damron.

2-6 Aug 2000 612th Tank Destroyer Bn, The Continental Inn, Lexington KY 40505. Contact Jack Flanagan, Secretary, 139 St Andrews Rd, Severna Park

MD 21146, 410-987-1701.

23 -26 Aug 2000 31st InfD, Radisson Inn, Colorado Springs North, CO. Contact Leo Logel, 2060 Fox Run Road, Dayton OH 45459-3416, 937-435-1679.

26-29 Aug 2000, 84th InfD, Marriot Hotel, Albuquerque NM. Contact Max Liebers, 142 Pumice Loop NE, Rio Rancho, NM 87124, 505-891-0981  
31 Aug - 4 Sep 2000 National VBOB Reunion, Colorado Springs CO. Contact: Nancy Monson, PO Box 11129, Arlington VA 22210-2129, Tel 703-528-4058.

1-5 Sep 2000, 1st Inf Div Society, Philadelphia PA, Contact Ed Burke 215-661-1969.

6-10 Sep 2000, 83rd InfD Assoc., Friar Tuck, Catskill NY. Contact Pat Di Giammerino, 36 Border Rd, Malden MA 02148-1104, Tel 781-322-2754.

7-11 Sep 2000, 106th InfD, Airport Marriot, St Louis MO. Contact Armed Forces Reunions, Inc, PO Box 11327, Norfolk VA 23517

10-17 Sep 2000, 87th Inf Div, Fairview Park Hotel, Arlington VA. Contact Earle Hart, Div Commander, 610-366-9079 or Dorothy Davis, 301-881-0356.

13-16 Sep 2000, 28th InfD Pennsylvania National Guard Heritage Assn, Fort Indiantown Gap Annville, Hill Top Club. Contact Raymond P. Perks 215-632-

3403

20-22 Oct 2000, 167th Signal Photo Co, Houston TX. Contact Steve Baldwin 281-452-3425.

20-24 Sep 2000, 30th InfD, Adams Mark, Winston Salem NC. Contact R M Mann, Jr, 2417 Bitting Rd, Winston-Salem NC 27104, 336-724-1472

15-16 Dec 2000, 56th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge, by BOB Historical Foundation and VBOB, Arlington VA and Arlington Cemetery, VA. Hotel accommodations at Sheraton Park Hotel, Arlington VA. Contact Ms Dorothy Davis, 301-881-0356.

**The WW II Memorial needs your help to raise the final 40 million dollars. Send your check or an additional check to American Battle Monuments Commission, PO Box 96766, Washington DC 20090, before 11/11/2000. Note you are a VBOBer.**

Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, MD/DC

John D. Bowen, Editor

613 Chichester Lane

Silver Spring MD 20904-3331

### MARCHER & WWII MUSINGS

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### NEXT CHAPTER MEETING

**Sunday 11 June 2000**

Ft Meade Golf ClubHouse  
Off of Mapes Road

**Contact Neil immediately!**

# FIRST CLASS