

❖ WWII MUSINGS ❖

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◆◆◆ SMITHSONIAN'S REVISIONIST HISTORY

by John D. Bowen

For those of you who have been following the news of late, you will note the attempts on the part of the Smithsonian Air & Space Museum to try to rewrite history regarding the dropping of the Atomic Bombs on Japan.

Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge should take particular interest in this since many of your units or yourself as individuals were being pin-pointed for service in the Far Eastern Theater to be part of the invasion of Japan. Members of the 87th Infantry Division, who fought in the Bulge, can particularly relate to this for they were home on recuperation leave prior to massing on Fort Benning Georgia to begin reoutfitting and training to be part of the invasion force to attack the Japanese mainland.

The Smithsonian has been preparing an exhibit for the 50th anniversary next year of the dropping of the Atomic Bombs and had planned to use part of the fuselage of the Enola Gay, B-29 Bomber, which dropped the bomb. The text however that was to accompany the exhibit has tended to downplay the atrocities of the Japanese and minimize the number of potential American GI's that would be killed in an attack on the Japanese mainland. The estimates were put as 25,000 to 50,000. However, would a minimum of research one can easily establish that the estimates of Americans killed would be 250,000 to 500,000. The verbiage would make the United States look like they were the aggressors in dropping the Bomb and in minimizing the atrocities that the Japanese committed prior to the

50th ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION END of THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE REENACTMENT 26-29 January 1995

Fort Indiantown Gap, PA

The Federation of Reenactors invites all Bulge Veterans to their commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge and the victory of the Allies in crushing the German Counter offensive, at the end of January 1995. Reserve this weekend so as to be there for this special event. It will also allow you to attend the 50th anniversary National Commemoration of the start of the Bulge at St Louis, 15-18 Dec 94. Costs for the Reenactment will again be \$35, for veterans, to stay in the barracks on Friday and Saturday evenings and receive Breakfast and Dinner on the Saturday, 28 January 1995. If you are interested in receiving a registration form and further details for this event please send a stamped self addressed envelope to John D. Bowen, 613 Chichester Lane, Silver Spring, MD 20904-3331. Tel 301-384-6533 and a copy will be sent to you. This 50th Anniversary event will include bleachers to observe the reenactment, a warm-up tent, at the site, for those that need it, static displays of both WWII period and modern military equipment provided the Military Vehicle Preservation Society and the 28th PA National Guard, restored barracks outfitted in WWII gear for both Allies and for the Germans and a flea market. The PA National Guard is providing additional support to make this the most significant Bulge Reenactment yet. Of course the best part of the event is the overnite stays in the barracks, mixing with fellow veterans and reliving those early days of Army life in basic training or before being shipped over. The comraderie and good cheer is outstanding. The barracks have been rehabilitated with new latrines and improved interiors though basically they are your original WWII barracks.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW!

War and throughout the war.

The Smithsonian, as late as 6 September 1994, when this issue of the Musings goes to press were publicly complaining that the veterans were over reacting in complaining about the exhibit. It is apparent that the Air Force Association went public with this controversy because they were

getting no where with the Smithsonian in correcting the erroneous picture being presented. Every veteran should write or call their Congressperson and complain about this revisionist history.

I recall about ten years ago when I was attending a family reunion on Block Island and met

Continued on Page 4

17 September 1994, A Day of WWII Commemoration, Leesburg VA Municipal Airport. Contact 703-777-1262. Period entertainment, vehicles, displays, battles, warbirds.

17 September 1994-Operation Market Garden-Son, Nijmegen, Holland. Contact see 04 Sep 1994.

18 September 1994,-Houffalize, Solemn Mass and unveiling of memorial to the children.. Exhibition on the Battle of Ardennes and concert of military music.

23-25 September 1994, Bastogne, Welcoming of the Veterans of the 101st Airborne Div and 501st Parachute Infantry Regt.

7-11 October 1994-Rechristening USS Torsk, Exhibit Opening and Veterans Reunion, Baltimore Maritime Museum, MD Contact Mike Waller 410-922-9122

12-16 October 1994-WASP Reunion & Wreath Laying Ceremony at Arlington Cemetery. Contact Mary O'Rourke 703-521-1996.

20 October 1994-50th Anniversary of the Battle of Leyte Gulf and MacArthur's Return to the Philippines. Joint US Army/US Navy Commemoration and Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Navy Memorial, Pennsylvania Ave between 7th and 9th Streets NW, Archives Metro Stop. Contact Tom Groppe 202-475-1444

23 October-2 November 1994, VBOB Battle of the Bulge Tour of Belgium, Luxembourg & Paris. 2-6 November, optional Normandy Extension. Call Galaxy Tours 1-800-523-7287, ask for Alison Dodge. Time is short, a good group is going.

11 November 1994-Veterans Day Ceremonies, Arlington National Cemetery, Nation's Capital

11 November 1994-New York City Veterans Day Parade sponsored by the United War Veterans. Contact Michael Kovalevich 212-283-3421.

12 November 1994, Battle of the Bulge Monument Dedication, Valley Forge Military Academy, Wayne PA. 10AM, Memorial Service, Parade and reception. (Note change in date) Delaware Valley Chapter VBOB Contact Stan Wojtusik 215-637-4191

15-18 December 1994,-Official National 50th Anniversary Commemoration of the Battle of the Bulge, St Louis Missouri. Reception, National Flag Exhibit, Plaque dedication, VBOB parade, Ecumenical Memorial Service at the Great St Louis Cathedral, Belgium Symphonic Band and Concert, 50th Anniversary Banquet, US Army Field

Band Production featuring scenes and musical numbers from WWII. A grand event. Contact VBOB Hq PO Box 11129, Arlington VA 22210-2129, Tel 703-528-4058

16 December 1994,-Bastogne, Official Memorial Day of the Battle of the Bulge Memorial ceremony in the presence of the civil and military authorities, with the participation of the veterans of the 101st Airborne Division. Historical Reconstruction (Reenactment?) of the siege of Bastogne. Concert of military music. Foire aux Noix and street markets.

18 December 1994,-Baugnez, Concelebrated Mass and Memorial ceremony in memory of the US victims of the massacre at Baugnez by the SS troops.

27-29 Jan 1995-Reenactment 50th Anniversary Battle of the Bulge-Fort Indiantown Gap PA. Contact John Bowen, 301-384-6533

12 February 1995-Vianden Luxembourg. 50th Anniversary of the liberation of Vianden, the last town to be liberated in Luxembourg during the Battle of the Bulge. Plaque dedication honoring the US 1255th Engineering Combat Bn.

8 May 1995-V-E Day Commemoration, Washington DC, Offut AFB, Omaha NE and Salt Lake City Utah. Further info to follow.

June/July 1995-Encampment on the Mall-A living history display/exhibit focusing on the WWII period. Contact Diana Parker 202-287-3424, Center for Folklike Program and Cultural Studies, Smithsonian.

2 September 1995- V-J Day Commemoration, Washington DC

CAPTURED DOCUMENTS

All captured German documents should be turned in. It is from these documents that we learn about Jerry's plans and operations. A simple minefiled diagram might save the lives of several Engineers by telling what kind of mines the minefield contain, where the mines are found and if there are trip wires or anti-lifting devices present.

According to captured German minefield diagrams, Jerry is booby-trapping the following:

automobiles, cellar doors, front doors, oven doors, china closets, articles in the garden, and he puts trip-wires under the house. Most of the booby-traps employ two igniters, the 3Z 35 and the ZZ 42. All pressure type booby-traps use the DZ 35 igniter. Spend a little time each day studying German igniters.

So far booby-traps are found in bunches. Jerry usually booby-traps a village completely or not at all. There are few exceptions to this rule. (Source: National Archives-Engineer Technical Intelligence Summary 11 Dec 1944, Bulletin No.

CASUALTIES

"World War II probably 'saved' over 50,000 American lives because the rationing of gasoline and the drafting of so many dangerous drivers led to a reduction in traffic casualties to levels significantly below pre- and postwarmones. (Source John Mueller, *Retreat from Doomsday* 1989)

**SEE YOU IN ST LOUIS
15-18 DEC 1994
50th ANNIVERSARY**

50 YEARS AGO THIRD U.S. ARMY OPERATIONS

The period 25 Sep - 7 Nov was marked by little aggressive action. For the greater part of the period the various front-line units outposted their lines and patrolled aggressively. Designed as a means of supplying vehicles to haul necessary materiel from rear areas to other advancing Armies, and as a period of rest and training for Third US Army units, the plan was carried through to fruition.

XV Corps passed to the control of Seventh US Army on 28 Sep at which time XII Corps expanded its efforts to take over part of the vacated XV Corps Zone. The inter-Army boundary was moved north so that Third US Army had a slighter shorter front than when functioning with three Corps abreast.

XII Corps, composed of the 35th and 80th Inf Divs, 4th and 6th Armored Divs acquired the 26th Inf Div which began movement into the Corps Zone on 5 Oct. The Corps successfully made several limited objective attacks against heavy resistance in the first week of Oct, while repulsing several strong counterattacks. Then, on 7 Oct an attack to the Northeast was made by the 35th and 80th Inf Divs and the 6th Armored Div. FOSSIEUX, MOIVRONS and AARRAYE-ET-HAN were captured in this attack which enlarged the northern portion of the Corps bridgehead over the MOSELLE River. There were no further changes in the disposition of the Corps until 21 Oct when the 26th Inf Div launched an attack in the BEZANGE-LA-GRANDE - COINCOURT area and, against heavy resistance, gained two miles. On 1 Nov a limited objective attack by the 80th Inf Div captured BAUCOURT and LETRICOURT.

For the remainder of the period XII Corps did not make any other attempt to advance, but patrolled aggressively and prepared for resuming the offensive.

XX Corps was somewhat more active during the same period. Its 83rd Inf Div struck to the Northeast from the neighborhood of ESCH on 25 Sep and occupied positions in the vicinity of GREVENMACHER, northeast of LUXEMBOURG, maintaining contact with VIII Corps (Ninth US Army). Elsewhere, the XX Corps was sending out patrols. On 2 Oct the 5th Inf Div launched as attack, preceded by a heavy air attack, on FORT DRIANT, before METZ, while the 90th Inf Div was holding the high ground west of MAIZIERES - LES-METZ, and was preparing for an attack against that town. FORT DRIANT was

entered by elements of the 5th Div on 3 Oct, but little penetration was made through the maze of corridors in that strong fortification.

On 5 Oct Task Force DRIANT, consisting of one regiment of infantry, one company of engineers and one company of tanks was organized by XX Corps to continue the attack against FORT DRIANT. This TASK FORCE gained control of the northwest and southwest corners of the fort, but could not enlarge upon these positions. On 9 Oct the composition of the Task Force was changed, and it assumed the name "Task Force WARNOCK." Then, on 12 Oct the XX Corps was directed to withdraw the forces from FORT DRIANT, as the attack within the fort was proving too costly for the results obtained.

During this same period the 83rd Inf Div, fighting on the north flank of the Corps zone, was moving from its positions near GREVENMACHER in a northerly direction to take the border-town of ECHTERNACH, and also made a drive to take GREVENMACHER. On 6 Oct WORMELDANGE was occupied, and on 7 Oct other elements of the Div cleared the enemy from ECHTERNACH and GREVENMACHER, and continued to hold these positions along the German border until 10 Oct when it was relieved from assignment to Third Army.

The 90th Inf Div was in the vicinity west of MAIZIERES-LES-METZ (due north of METZ) as the month began. The Div sent out aggressive patrols to the east, and prepared for a frontal attack on the town. This attack got underway on 6 Oct with elements of the Div reaching the outskirts of the town. Elements of the Div inside MAIZIERES-LES-METZ fought vigorously against an enemy determined to hold the town. The Div did not utilize all its strength in this attack, having a good part of its forces fighting to the south near METZ. By 15 Oct MAIZIERES-LES-METZ was still holding out but elements of the 90th Inf Div had occupied a good part of the town, and were fighting fiercely to complete the occupation.

The 95th Inf Div was assigned to Third US Army effective 10 Oct by Twelfth US Army Group, with elements of the Div arriving in XX Corps zone on 11 Oct, at which time they assembled in an area near NORROY-LE-SEC. The Div completed closing into its assembly area on 14 Oct, and began relieving elements of the 5th Inf Div in the vicinity of METZ.

Another unit which was active under XX Corps during the first half of Oct was Task Force POLK, composed of the 3d Cavalry Gp and 135th Engineer Combat Battalion. It relieved some elements of the 90th Inf Div on 5 Oct, and continued the fight in the vicinity of MAIZIERES-LES-METZ during the entire period. When the 83rd Inf Div went to control of Ninth Army on 10 Oct, Task Force POLK (3d Cavalry Gp reinforced) assumed protection of the Corps north flank.

XX Corps had elements of the 90th Inf Div fighting in MAIZIERES-LES-METZ as the second half of Oct began, while the 95th Inf Div was preparing to relieve the 5th Inf Div in the vicinity of METZ. As elements of the 5th Inf Div were relieved, they went to an assembly area in the vicinity of AUDIN, west of METZ, completing movement to this area on 23 Oct. The following day advance elements of the 10th Armored Div began movement into another concentration area, closing in the Corps area on 30 Oct, preparing at the same time to be employed in action around METZ.

In the north part of the Corps zone the 90th Inf Div had one battalion fighting inside MAIZIERES-LES-METZ, while other units were guarding approaches to the city, and acting as north flank guard. One battalion inside the city fought bitterly until 28 Oct when the Div opened a major attack on MAIZIERES-LES-METZ. The city capitulated two days later, and at the end of the month the Div was consolidating its positions.

There was no other heavy activity in the XX Corps zone prior to the launching of the coordinated attack on 8 Nov.

(The above report is "A Brief Summary of Third US Army Operations for the Period Sep-Dec 1944, entitled Forcing the Line of the Moselle 25 Sep-7 Nov 1944." To be Continued with "The Capture of Metz and the Saar Campaign 8 Nov-18 Dec 1944," in subsequent issue. Source: National Archives & Hq Third US Army Report dated 10 June 45. The material herein is written from the Army point of view. Details to be added by Corps and Divs. By command of General Patton)

(To be Continued)

REVISIONIST HISTORY

Continued from Page 1

the husband of a cousin who was staying in the motel room next to us. As we sat outside and became acquainted I learned that this "cousins" husband was the former mayor of Independence Missouri and the architect of the Truman Library. As the conversation ensued I also learned that he was a personal friend of Harry Truman's. Eventually the conversation turned to Truman taking over the Presidency upon the sudden death of Roosevelt at such momentous period. I asked if he knew what President Truman's reaction was when he learned of the Atomic Bomb and had to approve its use. Bob Whetherford told me that he likewise was curious and had asked Harry Truman if that was a tough decision to make. Bob relates that Truman told him that the decision was quite simple and did not take him long. When he had been given the estimates of hundreds of thousands of American boys killed in invading the Japanese mainland and maybe a million wounded Bob said that President Truman said that his decision was quite easy and the choice was to save the lives of so many of our boys. Many of you who are the senior citizens of today .

Anyone with the slightest amount of research would quickly establish how tenacious the Japanese soldiers were fighting as we started to approach their homeland island by island. With the Kamikaze pilots and the pledge to die for the Emperor it was requiring the American GIs to dig the Japanese defenders out of their caves and trenches hole by hole.

One of the statements that the Smithsonian wants to use is that we would never have dropped the Bomb on the Germans because they are of the white race. I believe that we would have dropped the bomb on the Germans had the war with Germany lasted any longer. The problem was that both we and the Germans were working on an Atomic Bomb We were fortunate in being able to produce one first. Had the Germans produced one first there is no doubt that they would have used it. We do know however the devastating power of one of those bombs and we have spent fifty years controlling the non-use of the bomb again. As someone once said, War is Hell and if you plan to survive it then you better fight to win it. It is easy for the revisionists to forget the atrocities in Nanking and in Korea where women were induced into slavery as comfort women for the Japanese Army.

So I think it is appropriate that you let the Congress know how you feel and use that freedom of speech that you fought so hard to preserve. You have a legacy to leave and that is the facts as you knew them.

Famous Last Words

**As I get older, I see things more clearly,
that never were.**

Col. Bill Hemphill, Past VBOB President

HENRY LEJOLY MALMEDY MASSACRE

In our last issue we discussed the role that Henri Lejoly played as an eye witness to the massacre. As this issue goes to press information is still being sought. It is mysterious how there is reference to his testimony in the Archives but the actual records cannot be located. Contacts have been made with Belgium researchers, however information has not been received to date. More information on this will be forthcoming in future issues.

THE WRONG HOLE

A doughboy crouched in his foxhole in the front lines. All around him shell fragments were flying. A few German hand grenades were tossed over his hole. One fell on his stomach and bounced off—it was a dud. The doughboy crawled out of his foxhole and crept into another one.

Protruding from his previous foxhole was a stick with a note attached. It read "Old Latrine."

TACTICS OR TREACHERY

Another example of enemy treachery was revealed to 1st US Inf Div troops on 26 Dec. A 3-man enemy patrol came into 16th Infantry positions during early morning 26 Dec, gave the appearance of wanting to surrender. However, it was quickly discovered one of the enemy was carrying a machine pistol behind his back. Result of this incident;: Three dead Germans. (1st Inf Div)

REMEMBER THIS

PW Max Denisch of the 12th SS Panzer Regt, SS Pz Div "Hitler Jugend" volunteered the following information at the First US Army cage: Just prior to their commitment in the present attack, the Division Commander Diese or Wiese (rank not yet established) made the following statement to his troops:

"I ask you and expect of you, not to take any prisoners with the possible exception of officers, who might be kept alive for the purpose of questioning."

(This division of young SS troops was responsible for the shooting of a group of Canadian prisoners in Normandy. It is also possible that this unit was involved in the massacre of 150 US prisoners in the Malmedy - St Vith sector on 16 December) (Source: G-2 Periodic Report, Hq XIX Corps 23 Dec 1944)

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. Where noted 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, the citation and this researcher. It is distributed for the benefit of VBOB Chapter members & other veteran organizations.

FINAL PUSH

As in the Bulge, your contribution is needed for that final push to put the Battle of the Bulge Memorial over the top. The Delaware Valley Chapter, VBOB which has been spearheading this Memorial to be dedicated at Valley Forge Military Academy on 12 Nov 1994 is asking that if each member was to send in a five dollar contribution the project would be completely paid. The Delaware Valley Chapter is to be commended for raising the funds to build this memorial to all Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge without the aid of professional fund-raisers. If you can't afford a five then send a buck or two to George Linthicum, Del Valley Chapter, 2605 Orchard Dr, Broomall PA 19008, 215-356-9552. Another contribution is always welcome to end their worries. Do it now while you are thinking about it. Help push

Patton

"Courtney Hodges and Omar Bradley both received Distinguished Service Medals for their unsuccessful defense of the 'Bulge.' I did not receive one for successfully

"Take this 5-gallon gasoline can to Montgomery with this message: "Although I am sadly short of gasoline myself, I know your admiration for our equipment and supplies and I can spare you this 5 gallons. It will be more than enough to take you as far as you probably will advance in the next two days."

"Bradley wanted to get Lt Col Darby to command the 180th Regt Combat Team of the 45th Div with the rank of Colonel. Darby preferred to stay with the Rangers. This is the first time I ever saw a man turn down a promotion. Darby is a great soldier. I gave him the Distinguished Service Cross."

"The Third Army starts attacking in the morning, but we will go slow so the others can catch up."

One of our American officers the other day began copying the British and started putting the initials of his decorations after his name; so today I wrote him a letter, adding the simple initials 'S.O.B.'"

"It is noticeable that most of the American officers here are pro-British, even Ike. I am not, repeat not, pro-British." (Patton Quotations, The Unknown Patton by

Upon meeting General George Patton during the Second World War (John) McCloy had asked the celebrated military hero if he had ever read the leather-bound volumes of Clausewitz and Jomini that were conspicuously displayed in his command tent. "Hell, no," Patton had answered. "But it impresses the hell out of the war correspondents."

March to Victory

An excellent book, The March to Victory has been revised this year and is available for anyone going to Europe. It is a Guide to WWII Battles & Battlefields from London to the Rhine. It includes maps, directions, times, background, etc. If there is enough interest I will secure copies at \$14.00 +.70 MD Tax for MD residents and 3.00 for shipping & handling for this 293 page, softcover book. Please write to me, John D. Bowen, 613 Chichester Lane, Silver Spring MD 20904 with your check.. Even if you don't plan to visit the stories & maps accompanying the directions are worth it. It gives the trail of Kampfgruppe Peiper in the Ambleve Valley & the spot where the 740th Tk Bn & 1st Bn 119th stopped Peipers column. Martin Blumenson says "This handbook is indispensable for those who want to see the places where fighting occurred as well as the museums and memorials of the combat."

BATTLE OF THE BULGE

Memory Routes Book

\$8.00 plus \$2.00 Postage & Handling

This 153 Page soft cover book was produced by the CRIBA & CEBA Organizations of Belgium & Luxembourg respectively to commemorate the Battle of the Ardennes by listing and describing the monuments, museums and locations with a description and photo. It gives museum times also. John Bowen, 613 Chichester Lane, Silver Spring, MD 20904-3331 is handling sales for them. It can be picked up at the 21 August picnic

"In my opinion, we will only win this war through blood, sacrifice and courage. In order to get willing fighters, we must develop the highest possible "Esprit de Corps." Therefore, the removal of distinctive badges and insignia from uniforms is highly detrimental. To die willingly, as many of us must, we must have tremendous pride not only in our nation and in ourselves, but also in the unit to which we belong."

USE OF THE BAZOOKA

The purpose of the Bazooka is not to hunt tanks offensively, but to be used as the last resort in keeping tanks from over running infantry. Since the Bazooka is unarmored, and always discloses its position when fired, it must get a hit on the first shot. To insure this, the range should be held to around thirty yards. When thus used, the Bazooka will hit and penetrate any tank that I have yet seen and will probably stop it. If used at longer ranges, it will probably miss and its operators will then become targets for the tank's machine guns. (Source: General Patton's Letter of Instruction No 3, Hq Third US Army, 20 May 1944)

