

# ❖ WWII MUSINGS ❖

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John D. Bowen, Editor

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## CHOW LINE

By John D. Bowen

The “Chow Line” photo taken during the Battle of the Bulge, shown above, has become famous in its own right. Like the photo of the Raising of the Flag on Iwo Jima this photo attests to the gravity of war and the cold and weariness of the combat soldier.

The men in the photo are from Company I, 4th Platoon, Machine Gun section, of the 347th Infantry Regiment, 87th Infantry Division, and are lined up for nourishment, albeit rations and a moment of rest.

At the 87th Infantry Division Association reunion in Falls Church VA, this September 16th, my wife Mary Ann & I were fortunate to have been assigned to Table 34 at their formal banquet which happened to be the table at which were seated, John A. Olson, of Des Plaines IL, the soldier leaning over to pick up some rations in the photo, as well as the son of Thomas Hewlett, the soldier with the expressive eyes looking directly at the photographer in the picture. The son, Thomas Hewlett, Jr. has the same kind of expressive eyes that his father, now deceased, had. In the above photo, Thomas Hewlett, Jr. and John Olson stand beside that famous photo. Bob Anderson

## EDITOR'S CORNER

The VBOB National Convention in Colorado Springs CO over the Labor Day weekend was a huge success. A number of MD/DC Chapter members were in attendance for the 4 days of activities.

The verse "O beautiful for spacious skies,...for purple mountains majesty, above the fruited plains," must have been written about Colorado for it is a state of magnificent beauty and awesome scenery. Mary Ann and her brother and I actually went out a week and a half earlier and did a great circle tour of Colorado, counter clockwise. We landed in Denver and spent a couple of days in Estes Park acclimated our bodies to the increase altitude before taking the peak to peak drive through Rocky Mountain National Park and on to Grand Junction. Though we passed a number of famous ski locations in Aspen and Vail, it was the beauty of driving Interstate 70 along the Colorado River through the canyons that it has produced over the eons. What made it all the more amazing was that the speed limit on this Interstate is 75 miles per hour. For any senior citizen, the best deal of all is to pick up one of these Lifetime Golden Senior Passports for \$10 at the National Park Service which allows you free entry into all of the National Parks that are charging a fee. A real bargain.

At Grand Junction we spent a couple of days touring the mesa mountains, particularly Colorado National Monument there. These are large outcrops from the land that look like flatten mountains at the top.

From Grand Junction we headed down along the "Million Dollar Highway" for even more exciting scenery and tantalizing driving. One thing I learned in Colorado is that when the speed limit says 20 or 10 miles per hours for a curve you better do exactly that. Things were fine until we got to Ouray CO. A quaint town that still has the charm of its western heydays surrounded with beautiful lush green mountains. However, when you leave Ouray going south you start to wind around the mountain sides. I was not prepared for this. When I saw the wiggle sign for a curve, with three wiggles in it and then looked ahead and could actually see those three wiggles, snaking around the mountain side, I wondered to my self, what have I gotten myself into? The speed limit was 10 MPH and there were no guard rails on the side of the road. I was driving the outer side of this two lane road and you could see straight down of the side of the mountain. Sheer madness, I thought and Mary

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Ann was in the back seat with her head under her jacket saying "O My God." She now refers to this as her "O, My God" trip. I could understand why they had no guard rails as in the winter the plows would just tear them off trying to get the snow off the road and down the cliff, but understanding it and driving it was two different things. When we finally got to Silverton the hair raising but beautiful part of the trip was behind us, but Silverton was really at 9,000 feet of altitude. Silverton was where "Doc" Holliday was hired as Marshal during it rough and tumble days to restore order.

We proceeded on to Durango since the following day we were taking the famous Durango to Silverton Railroad train. This is an outstanding train trip which takes three hours up and three hours back from Silverton and they allow you two hours to visit in Silverton. The scenery is fantastic and often if you are sitting in the end cars of the train you can see the rest of the train and the engine as it snakes along the various curves of the river and mountains in front of you. Though we were sitting all day, we were exhausted that evening probably due to the altitude.

Speaking of the altitude, it is stated that at 6,000 feet there is 25% less oxygen in the air. Being a sea level person all my life, I can attest to the fact that I was well aware of the lesser oxygen and was really happy when we got on the return flight we had pressurized air to breathe. Interestingly, two of our Chapter members, whose will remain nameless, decided to take the Tram to Pike's Peak in Colorado Springs which is over 14,000 feet, right after they got there. When the Tram got to the top, he collapsed and she was having altitude sickness, so they were immediately transported by ambulance down the road from the summit of Pike's Peak. After 4 hours in the hospital he was released with no complications and she had recovered from her altitude sickness. They were very lucky.

At Colorado Springs, in addition to enjoying the camaraderie of VBOB members, there were interesting visits to the Air Force Academy, the Garden of the Gods Park, Circle W Ranch for some Western bar-b-que and entertainment as well as some who visited Cripple Creek, an old mining town, but now all gambling casinos, and the others who visited Peterson Air Force Base and had a tour of Ft Carson. The 7th Infantry Division is stationed there and it was amazing to see the equipment of a modern mechanized infantry division. Having been stationed at Ft Carson for three days in 1954, it was amazing to see that not one of the World War II barracks was standing at this gigantic post (35 miles along one side). Our modern army has some beautiful living quarters here at Fort Carson.

Unfortunately, we will not be at the Oct 8th meeting of the Chapter to show you pictures of some of the stunning scenery of Colorado as we have a wedding in Maine and one in Ohio and a model railroad convention in Altoona PA to attend. We won't be back until late on the meeting day of the 8th. I also plan to fit in some genealogy in Massachusetts and planning for a family reunion in upstate New York next year. We will however bring the Colorado pictures to the December annual meeting.

The enclosed 345th Infantry History of Dec 1944 was located while preparing for a visit to the archives by members of the 87th Division during their reunion last week. I thought the writing of 2nd Lt Gilbert Proctor, Jr., the Unit Historian is one of the better histories I have seen. *JDB*

### History 345th Infantry 1 Dec 44 thru 31 Dec 44

December 1st found the 345th Infantry bivouaced in the apple orchards of northern France. It had been raining quite a bit, and the roads and fields were pretty muddy. The men pitched their tents under the apple trees and did what they could to stay dry.

Regimental headquarters was set up in an old French chateau in the middle of the bivouac area. Six weeks before, Germans had occupied the place. They left a couple of life-size photos of Goering and Von Ribbentrop, which were taken out to the barn and burned, much to the delight of the housekeepers.

Movement orders came down on the 3rd of December. There was much speculation as to our destination and just what was in store for the outfit. The rumor started that we were on our way to destroy a couple of pockets of resistance by-passed by General Patton's Army, in the vicinity of Metz. AS things turned out, it was a pretty accurate rumor.

The truck convoy moved out early on the morning of the 4th, and then along about 1100 the troops were marched down to a little road junction called Critot, about a 45-minute hike from our area. The train finally pulled in, and the troops entrained, 34 men to a car. These were French box cars, and were soon referred to as "40 or 8 cars" - capacity: 40 Hommes or 8 Cheveaux.

It was about a 2-day trip. The last train pulled into Briey at 1730 on the 6th. From this point the men were trucked to their destination under strict blackout. One could hear the artillery firing and occasional machine gun fire as we moved in.

Longeville Les Metz was our destination, a little town about one mile east of Metz proper. Our mission was to contain the four German forts located to the north and west of Longeville. They had been passed by General Patton in his march to the east and were being contained by elements of the 2nd Infantry. The regiment took over some school buildings that the Germans had used a couple of weeks before as an Officer Candidate School. It was obvious that they had left in a hurry, as there was quite a bit of ammunition, hand grenades and Jerry equipment all over the place. Two dead Germans were found in the basement of one building.

the 1st Battalion was the first to arrive, and by 2330 the night of the 6th, A & B Companies had relieved E & f Companies of the 2nd Infantry. These were positions covering Fort Plappeville. An hour and a half later C & D Companies relieved G & H Companies, 2nd Infantry. At 1230 the same day C Company reported Fort Plappeville surrendered unconditionally. It was the first of the four forts to give in. 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry was credited with the successful action, since our troops had just relieved them. It was during this action that the Regiment suffered its first battle casualty — a man from G Company received a shrapnel wound and was evacuated.

At this time the 2nd and 3rd Battalions were preparing to take over positions opposing Ft Jeanne D'Arc and Fort Driant. Jeanne D'Arc was the strongest of the two. It held out after all the others had fallen, and when our movement orders came down, it was still in Jerry hands.

The 2nd Battalion suffered several casualties in action against Fort Jeanne D'Arc. S/Sgt Peele, 2nd Platoon, F

Company fell into a 30 foot crater while patrolling in the vicinity of the Fort. Another F Company man struck an anti-personnel mine and was severely wounded. Most of the action took place at night, when the Jerries would send patrols out to try to get potatoes. Evidently they were getting pretty hungry. Reports from prisoners taken at the other forts revealed that the Jerries were eating horsemeat.

The night Sgt Peele was hurt his patrol had encountered a six-man enemy patrol. After challenging, they opened up on them with automatic weapons and hand grenades. Several Germans were wounded but were able to escape. A couple of weeks after we had left, the Stars & Stripes reported that Fort Jeanne D'Arc had fallen.

The 3rd Battalion had a mission of containing Fort Driant. They completed relief of the 3rd battalion, 2nd Infantry by 1600 hours of the afternoon of the 8th. The fort itself surrendered while the troops were being relieved — at about 0800. The Battalion occupied the fort. I Company sent a platoon over to the second Battalion to assist in some night patrol work around Fort Jeanne D'Arc. German stragglers were reported leaving Jeanne D'Arc, and the platoon assisted in rounding them up.

On the 8th B Company reported Fort St Quentin had surrendered, and the Company occupied the Fort. By 1610, December 8th the relief of all four forts had been completed, and Colonel Sugg assumed command. Fort Plappeville, Fort St Quentin and Fort Driant had fallen and Jeanne D'Arc remained. Cannon Company was in position on the 9th and Colonel Sugg called for fire on the Fort. The 334th FA Bn also fired quite a few barrages.

At 0300 the morning of the 9th the Regiment took its first prisoners. Two Krauts walked up to the guards at the gates of the Regimental CP and turned themselves in. They were from Fort Jeanne D'Arc.

On December 12th orders came down to turn our positions over to the 26th Division and move by motor to the vicinity of Gros Rederching. The 346th and 347th were already up on the front fighting. We were to move up into Division reserve. By 0600 December 13th we were on our way.

The mortar convoy was moving into its new location all during the day of 13 December. The Regimental CP was set up in the field with the three battalions and special units digging in on the surrounding ground. Artillery fire could be heard very clearly. We were not so far from the front line.

The next morning Cannon Company reported having received a few rounds of artillery fire during the night, with nobody hurt. The Regiment received orders to move into a rear assembly area. By 1200 the new CP was established, and the order of the day was "Dig In." Both the 1st and 3rd Battalions were shelled during the night. The same night the 3rd Battalion received orders to relieve the 1st Bn of the 346th. They had been taking quite a lot of punishment up front and were very glad to see 3rd Bn come up. The relief was effected the next day. Our 1st Bn got orders to relieve their 2nd Bn. They had been having a pretty easy time of it over on the right flank. The 2nd Bn followed the 3rd in reserve. The morning of the 15th Lt Col Moran reported the 3rd Bn's first casualty, Sgt Glen Jamison, Recon Sgt from Company M was killed by artillery fire

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while observing from the Regimental OP. Colonel Sugg, Major Bonner and several other officers narrowly escaped being hit.

The night of the 15th Colonel Sugg issued the attack order to the battalion commanders. They were to jump off at 0700 the morning of the 16th, 3rd Bn on the left and 1st Bn on the right. The 3rd Bn's attack was to be coordinated with artillery — three barrages to proceed the attacking companies. Lt Col Moran reports he had received some casualties in moving up to the LD —about 30 litter cases and 20 walking wounded resulting from artillery fire. The first Bn was to protect the right flank. The 2nd Bn was to move up into the reserve position in rear of the 3rd.

The morning of the 16th the attacked jumped off on time. Lt Col Moran reported receiving slight enemy resistance at 0740 — continuing on. All went well until 1500 when the leading elements of I Company hit an enemy outpost. They caught them totally by surprise. I Company was ordered to hold its fire until K Company could come up on the right flank — then to open up with all they had. The plan was successful and jerry was thoroughly routed. An eye witness said "He threw up his arms and started running." The men felt pretty good about it, but the worst was yet to come. Evidently one of the men in the outpost got away and notified his headquarters of the 3rd Bn's location. Before long they were receiving a terrific shelling. At the time I Company was in the woods just west of Medelsheim. They were somewhat hidden from observation, but the other three companies were in the clearing on the right and received a terrific barrage. Lt Col Moran was forced to drop K & L Companies slightly to the rear, leaving I Company to hold the forward line. The men dug in for the night. Casualties for the day were high. The Battalion had accomplished its mission and was holding the ground it took.

The 1st Bn jumped off on time and took its objective by 1045. Little resistance was reported. The same afternoon 2nd Bn was moved over in rear of the 3rd and preparations were made for the 2nd to pass through the 3rd the next morning.

That night Colonel Sugg issued his attack order to Lt Col Lehrfeld. The 2nd Bn was to jump off in the attack at 0930, passing through the 3rd and on to their objective some 2000 yards to the front. Several tanks were attached to the Bn. The 3rd Bn was to revert to regimental reserve, and the 1st was to pull back over and occupy the 2nd Bn area.

It was Sunday morning, 17 December, and the 2nd Bn moved out from their bivouac area at 0700. They were to reach and pass through the 3rd Bn front lines at 0930. The area they were to cover was the heavy woods west of Medelsheim running in the direction of Seyweiler.

Things seemed to be progressing all right. At 0930 they passed through the 3rd Bn. At 1015 no enemy had been encountered, and they had moved 1000 yards beyond the LD. Their formation was a column of companies — E, F & G. But the tanks that were to accompany them in the attack were late in arriving, which was to prove costly later on in the day.

At 1115 E Company encountered two enemy machine guns. Lt Lennon deployed the company and sent Lt Welch's platoon around to flank the position. Lt Col Lehrfeld sent F Company under Capt Butler up on the left flank to assist E Company. While E & F engaged the enemy, two tanks were

reported in the open ground about 300 yards to the front. They opened fire with 88's on our front line troops. Lt Lennon quickly called for artillery fire on the tanks through his artillery forward observer. Several rounds fell short. Then the Jerry artillery began zeroing in on the front lines causing many casualties from tree bursts. It was about this time that the battalion lost its Executive Officer, Major Airoidi, and two of its company commanders, Capt Butler, F Co and Capt Mullins, H Co. Later in the afternoon Lt Col Lehrfeld sent the following message to regimental headquarters: "Heavy casualties E & F Companies. F Company CO killed. Bn Exec O wounded. E Company 49% casualties. Continuing advance — Lehrfeld." The tanks that were to coordinate with the Battalion were reported engaging enemy at 1500. Later in the day Lt Col Lehrfeld withdrew his troops several hundred yards in the rear of his early position. Here the Battalion dug in for the night.

It had been a costly day for the 2nd. Many outstanding officers and men were lost. They encountered anti-personnel mines, tanks and artillery, but pushed on to their objective in spite of all. Only in the late afternoon did they withdraw their front lines, and then only to defend what they had taken from more favorable terrain.

The next morning found the 2nd Bn reorganizing and improving their hasty defenses of the night before. German patrols were active to their front, but for the large part, the enemy had been driven out.

Back at the Regimental CP the Colonel had just received orders to go on the defense and "hold what you've got." The 1st Bn was ordered to send a platoon down into the town of Medelsheim and take over. The General had sent word down to take the Mayor of Medelsheim and hold him as hostage. Capt Ebbers, the Civil Affairs Officer, was elected for the job. He reported entering the town and finding it pretty empty. The mayor had taken off, but the town was in our hands.

Colonel Sugg asked the Battalion Commanders for their recommendations for awards, decorations and promotions. In the last three days' action the regiment had lost a lot of men. They had fought two hard-earned victories and certainly there were plenty of actions and instances in which men had shown themselves deserving of decorations.

On the morning of the 19th the 1st Bn moved up and relieved the 2nd Bn. Snipers were reported from time to time, but no important action took place for about four days. The men busied themselves with improving their positions and looking after their feet. Every precaution was taken to guard against trench-foot. Trench-mouth was given special attention also. The men had been neglecting to brush their teeth regularly and a few cases of trench-mouth had been reported.

The Regiment reported fewer cases of trench foot than either of the other two regiments in the division. This speaks well for our regimental medics who have done a darn good job from the start. Major Frank L. Ramsay, the Regimental Surgeon, received a shrapnel wound in his hand right after the 2nd Battalion made its push forward, and he was evacuated. He was replaced by Capt Crumpton, the Assistant Regimental Surgeon.

The Regimental IPW Team kept very busy interrogating prisoners brought in from the front lines. Lt

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Gottlieb, IPW Officer, was doing an excellent job in getting the regiment information of the enemy.

Cannon Company was set up about 1200 yards in rear of the front line units. They were given missions along with the artillery to cover woods and certain towns before the troops pushed into them. They were subjected to intermittent artillery fire almost every day. Their casualties, however were light.

Anti-tank Company was usually broken down into platoons and employed with the battalions. The Jerries did not spare them from artillery fire either. One afternoon Capt McCann reported three casualties resulting from German 88 fire.

On the night of the 22nd the 1st Bn reported having difficulty getting wire up to their forward OP, which was established at the tip of the woods overlooking Seyweiler. One of their patrols reported receiving machine gun fire from a pill box between our front lines and the OP. Lt Col Bock sent out a ??? Strong outpost in front of the front line and made plans to send a platoon up the next morning to knock out the pill box. Lt German of C Company was sent up with his platoon to do the job. The pill box proved to be a tough nut to crack. It was late afternoon before the report came in that the pill box was out. The Germans had an all-around defense set up, and they were able to fire from their position in all directions. Jerries were also covering the pill box from dug-in positions outside. After considerable maneuvering our men succeeded in silencing the pill box. It was an expensive victory, however. Several wounded and killed were reported, including three officers. The enemy casualties were five dead and four captured.

Division sent down orders the same afternoon that we would be relieved by elements of the 100th Infantry at once. We were to pull out as soon as relief was effected and move to the vicinity of Cutting, France. All elements were to pass the IP before daylight. It began to look as though the men were going to have some warm, dry billets for Christmas Eve.

By 1600 on the 24th the Regiment had closed in. Regimental Hq was set up at Cutting and the three battalions and special units in neighboring towns. It was a Christmas present in itself for the men to have some comfortable quarters to sleep in, with fires and a roof over their heads. Morale improved 100%.

Christmas morning the regiment was in high spirits. All the companies served turkey for the noonday meal. Everyone was pretty happy about it all, in spite of the rough days they had spent back in Medelsheim.

But things were getting pretty warm up north. All the time the regiment had been fighting down around Sarrebrucken and Medelsheim Jerry was busy raising hell in the north. Most of the men were unaware of any action going on up there, but Jerry had driven some 50 miles into Belgium and was still going.

The Division was transferred to the 15th Corps, Seventh Army, and was ordered to proceed at once to an area several miles to the northeast of Reims. Here we occupied a reserve position, providing protection from any possible breakthrough of the Germans to the southwest. So once more movement orders were sent down to the battalions and by 1630 on Christmas Day the regiment was on the move again. Back to the foxholes and shelter halves. The outfit bivouaced along the

road between the small French towns of Epoye and Biene. The regiment closed in at 1500.

For the next three days the men had a comparatively restful time. Reims was only about 15 kilometers to the west. The men were trucked in and given showers and clean underwear and socks. The Christmas mail began catching up with us. Fires were allowed during the day, but they had to be put out before dark. Arrangements were made to get some hay for the mens' foxholes. Shots were given to guard against typhus. Inspections were held to determine any shortages of equipment and Colonel Sugg asked for the number of replacements needed to bring the companies up to T/O strength.

On the 28th another movement order came down from Division. We were to move out on the 29th for a mission up north in Belgium. We were again assigned to General Patton's Third Army for the push from the southern side of the "bulge." The Heinies had stuck their necks out and plans were made to cut in from the north and south and seal off a large part of the spearhead. We were to move about 12 miles to the southwest of Moiricy and await orders.

Once more Major Bonner, S-3, made plans for the regiment to move by motor to our new area. By 1400 the regiment, with all its attached units, had rolled by the IP headed for the "Belgian Bulge."

Belgium was the third country the regiment had fought in during the past 25 days. The action at Metz was brief and not too eventful. Down south the outfit crossed from France into Germany to take the little town of Medelsheim. And now up north to Belgium to help close the pincer movement around the invading Germans.

By 1830 the three battalions had closed into their bivouac areas. They were located about five miles out of Libramont along the road to the Southwest. The special units pulled in a little later. No sooner had we arrived than Col Sugg, who had been called to Division, returned with an order for us to jump off in the attack the next morning. The battalion and special unit commanders were called to Regimental Hqs, and Col Sugg went over his plan of attack for the next day. The 1st Bn was our strongest at this time having suffered the least number of casualties. They were selected to jump off at 0600, with Libramont as its LD and Moiricy in the direction of the attack. The 3rd & 2nd Bns were to follow the 1st in the order stated. That night the men got all the sleep they could, commensurate with their preparations to move off in the attack the next day.

During the night the I & R Platoon under Lt Anderson was busy reconnoitering the road between Libramont and Moiricy. They returned at 0600 and reported to Major Gunter, the Regimental S-2, that they had encountered no enemy.

The troops were trucked to a point in rear of Libramont at 0600 and moved into position ready to jump off. Lt Col Bock had A Company in the lead, with a part of his heavy weapons company in close support. Companies B & C and the remainder of D followed. By 0800 the Bn was on its way. They moved forward aggressively and made good time. By 1030 the Bn CP was moved to Freux Menil, a small town about five and one half miles up from the LD.

It was about this same time that Company A first received fire from the enemy. Two burp guns opened up on the

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point from the outskirts of the town of Moircy. Company A deployed and continued to move forward. They met continued resistance on the outskirts of the town, but they pushed on. At 1400 the report came back that A Company and elements of D Company had entered Moircy. B & C Companies and the rest of D Company were in support on the left rear flank. They had made good progress.

At 1600 C Company moved up on line and pushed to the town of Jenneville, about a thousand yards on up the road. They occupied the town under heavy artillery barrages. Along about 1700 Jerry was reported as still firing and putting up a resistance in Moircy. C Company dropped back from Jenneville to give the rest of the Bn a hand in occupying the town. The 1st Bn anti-tank platoon under Lt Kasper moved into the town and set up its guns. Two hours later, about 1900, the Germans counterattacked Moircy. Four tanks and some foot troops were reported moving toward Moircy from Jenneville. This formation arrived and overran the town, driving most of A Company and a part of B & D Companies back to positions to the southwest. Lt Col Bock issued orders for all units to withdraw so that artillery fire could be brought down on the town. C Company, one platoon of B Company and a part of D Company had lost contact with the Battalion CP and remained in the town. All communication with Moircy was out. At 2145 our artillery opened up with heavy artillery concentrations covering Moircy and to the North.

In the meantime, the 3rd Bn was moving up behind the 1st to stop any possible breakthrough the Jerries might make. The Germans laid artillery fire all along the road throughout the night, and this Bn suffered quite a few casualties.

The 2nd Bn was moved up to a position in the woods to the south of the little town of Seviscourt, and they remained there in reserve.

On the morning of the 31st contact was regained with the 1st Bn troops who remained in Moircy. Major Usera, Executive Officer of the 1st Bn, reported several litter cases were located in the cellars of some of the homes. They were evacuated at once and given medical aid.

It had been a victory, but a costly one. Many casualties were reported. It was during this action that Capt Kromer, Commanding Officer of Company A, was killed. He was reported wounded twice, but despite his wounds he had continued to command A Company until he was killed. The 3rd Bn also suffered a heavy loss when Capt Nichoson, Commanding Officer of I Company, was killed by Jerry artillery fire.

Later in the day the 1st Bn moved up to the high ground on either side of Moircy, and prepared to defend their position.

Back at regimental Hqs plans were being made to commit the 2nd Bn over on the right flank. Lt Col Lehrfeld was ordered to move his battalion to Rondu, from where he was to attack to the northwest, taking the high ground to the north of the town of Remagne, cleaning out Remagne on the way.

The 2nd starts moving out at 2300 the night of the 30th and opened their new CP in Rondu at 0710 the morning of the 31st. By 0910 Regiment received word from Division that the troops formerly out in front of the 2nd Bn had been withdrawn. Colonel Sugg immediately contacted Lt Col Lehrfeld giving him the situation and the word to hold off on the attack and to defend the town of Rondu.

Coordination with the 41st Cavalry Recon was finally made at 1155 and plans were made to move out in the attack, the previous plans to be followed.

The Bn moved out at 1330. The way was comparatively clear save for road mines and artillery fire. F Company lost a Jeep on the road between Rondu and Remagne. E & F Companies reached the town, moved through it with little difficulty and up to the high ground to the north. G Company moved through the town and up to the high ground on the right.

At 1830 F Company reported as having taken their objective and that they were digging in. E Company soon followed, and then G Company. The high ground was secured, and once more the 2nd had accomplished its mission.

Vigorous patrolling was carried on in the woods to the north to scout out any possible counterattack that might develop.

GILBERT PROCTOR, JR.  
2nd Lt., 345th Infantry  
Unit Historian

*The above report was found in the Unit Records of the 87th Infantry Division for the 345th Infantry Regiment in Record Group 407, 387-INF(345)-0.3 History – 345th Infantry Regiment Dec 1944 at the National Archives and Records Center, 8601 Adelphi Road, College Park MD Textual Records Branch.*

## BULGE REENACTMENT 24 – 28 January 2001

The Federation has announced that the annual Battle of the Bulge Reenactment will be held again this coming January 2001 at Fort Indiantown Gap PA near Annville PA just off of Interstate 81 about 25 miles north of Harrisburg PA.

The cost this year will be \$55.00 for a bunk in actual World War II Barracks and Breakfast and Dinner and entertainment, on Saturday, 27 January 2001. If you would like you may arrive anytime after 1800 hours on Wednesday, 24 January 2001 or any of the subsequent days of Thursday, Friday or Saturday. You may come on any of those days. There will be hospitality, videos, and good old fashion camaraderie that only veterans know how to show. A good time is had by all and it gives you an opportunity to view the reenactor barracks, both Allied and German as they transform them into what barracks living was 56 years or more ago. Last year there were over 1400 reenactors and 120 veterans attending.

If you would like a registration form please send a stamped self addressed, long (#10) envelope to John D. Bowen, 613 Chichester Lane, Silver Spring MD 20904-3331. Registration for veterans closes on 31 December 2000.

**REFLECTIONS**  
**by Joseph Zimmer**

*These reflections were given by the author at the MD/DC Chapter of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge Association meeting, on Sunday, 13 August 2000, at the Ft Meade Golf ClubHouse. Joe served with Company B, 345th Infantry, 87th Infantry Division. His thoughts are shared with those who were unable to attend.*

We are approaching the end of the pathway which was World War II, 1939, 61 years ago. We struggle for words to find a king's language, and think maybe, we could give historical justice to World War II and what it was. It all defies explanation, description.

On September 21st this year, we finally should get a decision from the National Capital Planning Commission, which will mean ground-breaking for the beginning of our National Memorial on Veterans Day. For all ages in the future, this WWII Memorial must show by its size, grandeur and magnificence, the true import of this momentous time in world history, a sense of authenticity, a voice of authority, to bring reality to the sacrifices, courage and bravery, epitomized by that era of mankind – the last powerful architecture piece to pay tribute fully to what that struggle was all about. This memorial then, will never have an emptiness in meaning and purpose.

We veterans of the Battle of the Bulge do not come as individuals in splendid isolation. We, in our Chapter, and all Chapters, are unified as one in the strong belief, well founded, in our contribution to world order 55 years ago. Since then, generations of children and adults have found a way of life worthy of them, including lately (1989), those who were under the iron curtain of the now defunct Soviet Union. Are we as good today as we have ever been before? Who cares!! A recent book by Tom Wolfe, perchance, describes each of us well: "A man in full."

in camera work, portrait or otherwise, skill comes from knowing when to shoot – to capture, capture the scene, person, reality. Geometry all in place. With God's help and our example, we have left a gallery of pictures, a library of words and thoughts, museums full of nostalgia, plaques, depictions of who we Bulge Veterans were – men at our finest possessing that courage and bravery that is legend. Yet, to all the questions of the past, present, future, there are still some things, even now, left unspoken or that we can't say out loud.

In war, time was so precious to the young, particularly our brave comrades killed by enemy action who we memorialize in thought, word and deed, the noblest of men who ever lived. They did not leave this earth in the snows of Belgium and Luxembourg, the way a snowflake disappears, without a trace, without a single permanent imprint to mark their passing. Let us continue to vow never to forget them. Their names are etched in our memories, and faces of men, only youngsters like ourselves, only 18 or 20 or 25 years old then, haunt us even to this day. All of us have dreads and well we should. With the many screens we now have access to in this great technological age: movies, television, the Internet, the web site, the computer, much is added to our lives. Yet some say it has de-personalized, at times, our relationships with fellow humans. That is not and never will be how we view our fallen heroes.

From Eisenhower through George Bush, all but one American was a veteran of WWII. I served under all administrations from Ford through the first half of the Clinton first term. There is something I noticed in my years since WWII and my service in the White House OMB. I had the opportunity to see many survivors of the war in Congress. Participating in hearings and also testifying, I was deeply moved by the eyes of Senators and Congressmen who had served in combat. There was a look there in those eyes, whether in the chambers, at cocktail parties or receptions, that still expressed what they've been through and the horror of war. A few come to mind: Strom Thurmond, Ernest Hollings, Bob Dole, John Chaffee, John Glenn and Dan Inouye. To be sure, whenever a softness showed through, I'm sure it was because of their wives, family, their children. This is a way of closing here today and at the same time pay tribute to our own wives or companions, and children who have nurtured us in some way, to work through those horrors, and, ghosts that remain from those days long ago. Thank You.

**FOXHOLE**

**The term originated in World War I for any type of a hastily dug hole in the field for a person to kneel, sit or stand. Officially these had been called a "skirmisher's trench."**

**Yesterday is history  
 Tomorrow a mystery  
 Today is a gift  
 That is why it is called present**

Courtesy Northwest Chapter VBOB Newsletter, Ken Neher, Editor

**INFORMATION ON VETERAN BURIALS**

**Web Site is:**

**[www.militaryfuneralhonors.osd.mil](http://www.militaryfuneralhonors.osd.mil)**

**Telephone Number**

**1-800-697-6947**

## Fact Sheet of the 35th Infantry Division

**TYPE OF DIVISION:** National Guard (Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska).

**NICKNAME:** "Santa Fe," Name given it in World War I because its members, from Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska, descended from pioneers who blazed old Santa Fe Trail.

**SHOULDER PATCH:** Santa Fe Cross, employed in the old days for markers along Santa Fe Trail; patch composed of white cross within outer circle of blue, divided into quarters and inner circle of white.

**HISTORY.** Division originally formed August 1917, from units whose traditions date back to 19th Century and Indian War. The division was organized for World War I at Ft Sill OK, from National Guard units. First element arrived in France 11 May 1918. After training in France, during Meuse-Argonne offensive, the division attacked from 26 Sep to 1 Oct 1918, taking towns of Vauquois, Varennes, Cheppy, Charpentry and Baulny. In October it was relieved by 1st Infantry Division and proceeded to Vavin court Area, relieved 15th French Colonial Division in Sommedieu and later relieved 81st Infantry Division. Returned to United States 20 April 1919.

When the 35th was fighting in France during World War I, it had as a Field Artillery Officer, Capt Harry S Truman. Just 27 years afterward, President Truman stopped at Antwerp, enroute to a Berlin parley with Prime Minister Churchill and Marshall Stalin, and inspected a guard of honor of his old outfit, the 137th Infantry.

**ACTIVATION DATE:** 23 December 1940

**INACTIVATION DATE:** 7 December 1945, Camp Breckinridge KY

**COMPONENT UNITS:** 134th, 137th, 320th Infantry Regiments; 127th (M), 216th 219th, 161st (L) Field Artillery battalions.

**TRAINING UNDER ARMY GROUND FORCES:** After training at Camp Robinson, Arkansas, division took part in Louisiana maneuvers, then was assigned to guard Southern California. Under Second Army it was reorganized as a triangular division 1 March 1942; it was assigned to Army Ground forces in January 1943, under II Armored Corps, San Luis Obispo, CA. Assigned to VII and III Corps, Camp Rucker, AL, from April to November 1943, then participated in Tennessee Maneuvers and later moved to Camp Butner NC with XIII Corps.

**DEPARTED U.S. FOR FOREIGN DUTY:** May 1944 for ETO.

**DATE ENTERED COMBAT:** 11 Jul 1944

**COMBAT DAYS (DIV):** Not Available

**BATTLE CREDITS:** (Division) Normandy, Northern France, Rhineland, Ardennes, and Central Europe.

**RETURNED TO US:** 11 July 1946.

**SUCCESSIVE COMMANDING GENERALS:** MG R E Truman, Dec 1940 to Oct 1941; MG William H Simpson, Oct 1941 to April 1942; MG Maxwell Murray, May 1942 to January 1943; MG Paul W Baade, January 1943 to inactivation.

**CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR WINNERS:** S/Sgt Junior J Spurrier, infantry, won the Medal of Honor for action at Achain, France on 13 November 1944.

**DISTINGUISHED UNIT CITATIONS:** 1st Battalion, 320th Infantry for outstanding performance of duty against the enemy in the vicinity of Mortain, France, from 10 to 13 August 1944. 3rd Battalion 137th Infantry for outstanding performance of duty in action against enemy in France from 18 to 21 November 1944. Company "F," 137th Infantry regiment for outstanding performance of duty against the enemy at Saarguemines, France, on 10 December 1944.

**COMBAT HIGHLIGHTS:** The 35th division sailed from England 4 July 1944 and from 5-7 July its troops poured into Omaha Beach, near Colleville-sur-Mere, mission being St Lo, gateway to French interior. Just before dawn, 11 July, following barrage by 200 division guns, the doughboys drove forward. Close-in fighting resulted until La Meauffe was reached, then deeply entrenched Nazis' defense stiffened. However Yank artillery and doughboys finally drove Germans from town. Elements pushed on to "Purple Heart Corner" and took key defense town of Chateau St Gilles. Elements launched drive north of ST Lo, immediate objective being tall, forbidding Hill 122, dominating the town. Drive carried to Emilie which fell in house-to-house combat. Between 15-17 July Nazis counter-attacked 12 times, netting only 100 yards. 18 July division launched fierce coordinated assault with air power and tanks on Hill 122. At day's end 35th controlled Hill 122, road to St Lo was open and 134th Intelligence and Reconnaissance Platoon entered city. Division plunged across Cherbourg peninsula and threw back counter-attack which threatened Avranches. To east it recaptured ground near Mortain and rescued 30th Division's famed "lost battalion." Division took long string of towns in drive spearheaded by 4th Armored Division. Still streaking across France, it crossed Loing, Seine, Loire Marne and Meuse Rivers and by middle of September, took Nancy. On 5 Dec it sent its first shot into Germany; following day it took Saarguemines and crossed Saar. Advance ended when Von Runstedt launched Battle of Bulge. Plunging into action 27 Dec it beat off attacks by four divisions and wiped out threat to right flank of Bastogne highway. Division swung to south, where bulge break threatened and helped to stem it, then outfit sped 292 miles north to join Ninth Army. On reaching Reinberg, the 35th became last of Ninth Army elements to reach Rhine, later crushing Nazis pinned in Wesel pocket and driving into Ruhr. After 13-day assault, it crushed Villers, Lutrebois fell after fierce five-day fight and Lutremange was taken 11 Jan. Division then sped to Alsace to help tighten defense; from there it jumped non-stop nearly 300 miles to Maastricht,

*(Continued on page 10)*

**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP  
MD/DC CHAPTER  
VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE  
Chapter Dues \$10**

The Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge was organized to honor the Allies who served in the Battle of the Bulge and to remember those who never made it home. VBOB is a non-profit educational organization which does not engage in either political lobbying or propaganda activities.

Those who were in this historical battle never forgot. Let us recall it together and make it memorable for all time. The dues are modest; the aims are high. We encourage sons & daughters as well as grand children of Bulge participants to join as Associate members to learn about this battle and to foster the organization.

Membership is open to those who served in the Battle of the Bulge from 16 December 1944 – 25 January 1945 and served in a unit which received the Ardennes Credit according to War Department General Order 114, dated 7 Dec 1945 or any interested person may join as an Associate Member. All members of the Chapter must be new members or existing members of the national Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge organization. Dues for the National organization run for one year from the time of joining and cost \$15.00. Life memberships are available. You will receive an outstanding quarterly magazine, the Bulge Bugle from National and the bi-monthly Chapter newsletter, the Marcher and World War II Musings. A national Convention is held each year.

The MD/DC Chapter meets the second Sunday of each even month at the Fort Meade Golf Clubhouse, Fort Meade MD. Dues for the Chapter are \$10.00 per year and are renewable on 16 December each year. Chapter dues checks or money orders should be made payable to the MD/DC Chapter VBOB. You must be a member of the National VBOB to join.

Please return this form for Chapter Membership & Dues to John D. Bowen, Secretary, 613 Chichester Lane, Silver Spring MD 20904

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP+4 \_\_\_\_\_ Tel:( ) \_\_\_\_\_

DOB \_\_\_\_\_ Bulge Unit Served \_\_\_\_\_

National Membership Number \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Recruiter \_\_\_\_\_

**CHAPTER  
AFFILIATION**

MD/DC Chapter  
Chapter III



**APPLICATION FOR NATIONAL  
MEMBERSHIP  
Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge**

**ANNUAL DUES \$15.00**

New Member       National Member #

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DOB \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ TEL ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP+4 \_\_\_\_\_

All new members, please provide the following information below:

CAMPAIGNS \_\_\_\_\_

Units to which assigned during period 16 Dec 1944 – 25 Jan 1945 – Division \_\_\_\_\_

Regiment \_\_\_\_\_ Battalion \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ - Date \_\_\_\_\_

## BULGE UNIT REUNIONS

**2001 National VBOB Reunion, Orlando, FL** Date to be announced but probably in late Sept 2001. Contact: Nancy Monson, PO Box 11129, Arlington VA 22210-2129, Tel 703-528-4058.

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

**15-16 Dec 2000, 56th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge, by BOB**

**Historical Foundation and VBOB, Arlington VA and Arlington Cemetery, VA.** Visit the Library of Congress Map Collection and the Newseum on 15 Dec prior to the evening banquet. Hotel

accommodations at Sheraton Park Hotel, Arlington VA. Contact Ms Dorothy Davis, 301-881-0356.

*(Continued from page 8 35th Infantry Division Fact Sheet)*

Holland, relieving 155th British Brigade, 6 Feb and taking positions in Germany along Roer River from Annendall south to Kraudorf. Jump off for Rhine came 23 Feb — unit crossed Roer at Hilfarth and rolled 30 miles along flank of Siegfried Line in less than a week, taking 23 towns in two days. Division covered on Drupt; by 11 Mar, the 35th completed reduction of Wesel Sector and stood before Wesel Bridge and the Rhine. Thus the task of spearheading Ninth Army to final crushing of Germany fell to a crack Infantry outfit that had traveled 1300 miles through France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Holland and into Germany. The division took Recklinghausen, 3 Apr and a week later Herne fell. After a short occupational duty period, the division was scheduled to be redeployed through the US for the Pacific. However, V-J Day came while the 35th was in France and upon return to the US in Sep, reassembly at Cp Breckinridge KY followed recuperation leaves and furloughs, and on 7 Dec (1945) inactivation took place.

**Killed In Action:** 2,485

**Wounded in Action:** 11,526

**Died of Wounds:** 462

*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.*

**The WW II Memorial groundbreaking is Veterans Day 11/11/2000, 17th Street NW & the Mall, Washington DC. You are invited to attend and be honored.**

**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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- Page 9 Reflections*
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### NEXT CHAPTER MEETING

**Sunday 8 October 2000**

Ft Meade Golf ClubHouse  
Off of Mapes Road

**Contact Neil immediately!**

# FIRST CLASS