

❖ WWII MUSINGS ❖

Volume 2 Issue 9

John D. Bowen, Editor

Dec 1994

Bulge 50th Anniv.

During this period of 16 Dec 1994-25 Jan 1995 we commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge and salute all veterans, both male and female, who served in this greatest battle that the US Army has ever fought. As stated on the new Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge Memorial erected by the Delaware Valley Chapter at Valley Forge Military Academy in Wayne, PA this was a TRIUMPH OF COURAGE. We must never forget the 19,000 who made the supreme sacrifice and no doubt

stand proud in that heavenly abode as the heroes of this great battle. Each of you whether you were slogging in the mud or snow, manning an artillery piece, cooking the chow, typing the Morning Report, running an Aid Station or bringing up supplies from the rear played an essential part in this great victory. To each of you sincere thanks from a grateful nation for turning the tide of the war and the defeat of Hitlerism.

St Louis Success

The 50th Anniversary Commemoration of the Battle of the Bulge was held from 15-18 December 1994 in St Louis Missouri and was a huge success. The Commemoration opened with a Buffet Reception on the evening of 15 Dec and enjoyed comments by the Missouri Lt Governor and Mayor of St Louis. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General John Shalikashvili was the keynote speaker. Prince Philippe of Belgium and Prince Henri of Luxembourg represented their governments as well as the Ambassadors from both countries. They attended all of the ceremonies in St Louis. The next morning we awoke to driving rain which caused the cancellation of the parade. Though the parade was rained out, the ceremonies were held in the ballroom of the Regal Riverfront Hotel. Each of the National Anthems were played followed by presentation of a WWII flag streamer of the Luxembourg Croix de Guerre by Prince Henri to the flag of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge. The main address was given by Lt Gen John P Otjen, Commanding General First US Army. A replica of the memorial plaque was unveiled by the two Princes, the LTG Otjen and VBOB President Bill Tayman. Wreaths were then laid by the unvailors.

The rain did stop for the memorial ceremonies which were held in the afternoon in the beauty of the Great St Louis Cathedral. A beautiful ceremony which began with the procession of the colors and the flags of the 50 states. Music was provided by the Band of the Belgian Guides which sat in the Sanctuary of the Cathedral with the flags standing behind them as a backdrop. Memorial messages were given by representatives of the Protestant, Jewish and Catholic

clergy. Taps and a resounding rendition of the Battle Hymn of the Republic closed the program. That evening at 9 PM The Symphonic Band of the Belgian Guides' Regiment presented a concert in honor of all Battle of the Bulge Veterans.

On the following morning, many partook of a tour of the city of St Louis. Some excitement was added when Ted Breeden, of the 75th Inf Div tried to take his first jump, head first, into the emptied fountain pool at the St Louis Historical Museum. Ted was looking up instead of down as he left the building to reenter the bus. In the afternoon a brief meeting was held at which our member Grover Twiner was installed as the new President of VBOB as well as the other recently elected officers and trustees. After the meeting the producer of the movie introduced his movie on the Bulge entitled Brave Rifles-The Battle of the Bulge. That evening the main banquet was held at which the Secretary of Defense, William J Perry, was the main speaker. A souvenir wine glass with the 50th Anniversary logo and Belgium/Luxembourg 16 December 1944 St Louis Missouri 1994 was given to each attendee. All veterans were asked to stand and received a beautiful plate with the winter soldier on it from Belgian Fusiliers as well as a gift from Luxembourg. Medals were presented to the Present and Past Presidents of VBOB. Following dinner, The Soldiers' Chorus of The United States Army Field Band of Washington DC known as the "Musical Ambassadors of the Army." This tribute to the American Soldier was a musical journey back through time from today's peacetime army to memories of World War II and the music that lifted the spirits of fighting men who so proudly sang the song of liberty. "For over four decades, The Soldier's Chorus has thrilled audiences throughout the world with its own special arrangements of music as varied as the communities it has visited." The following day, Sunday morning, religious services were held for those of the Protestant, Jewish and Catholic faiths.

OTHER EVENTS

16 Dec-25 Jan 1995 - Battle of the Bulge exhibit in the Pennsylvania State House Rotunda, Harrisburg, PA

16 Dec-25 Jan 1995 Battle of the Bulge exhibit in the Worcester Massachusetts Library prepared by John McAuliffe, President of Central Massachusetts Chapter, Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge

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

12 Feb 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 Engr Combat Bn.

19 Feb 1995-50th Anniversary of US Marines assault on Iwo Jima to provide another airfield for the B-29 assault on

Japan. Iwo Jima Memorial, Rosslyn VA.

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

Jun/Jul 1995-Encampment on the Mall-A living history display/exhibit focusing on the WWII period. Cancelled by Smithsonian.

Jul 1995-Ettelbruck -"Remembrance Day" in honour of Gen George Patton, Jr liberator of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg in 1944, who is buried in the Hamm American Cemetery with 5,100 soldiers of his famous Third US Army. Military parade, air show, exhibitions of military equipment, concerts.

2 Sep 1995- V-J Day Commemoration, Washington DC.

St Louis Centerpiece

The white flowers depict the snow
on the battlefield.

The red poppies, the blood of our
fallen comrades.

The three flags, Belgium,
Luxembourg and the United States.

Field of Red

The poppies grow on the hills and
fields

Where once our soldiers bled
What once was snow and bitter cold
Is now a sea of red.

On this ground they shed their
blood

Red as the poppies waving
The only hope in their hearts
Was of a world worth saving.

Did they shed their blood in vain?
No! Let it not be so.

Let freedom always reign,
As long as poppies grow.

Millie Knize
President, Ladies Auxiliary
St Louis Chapter of VBOB

The fighting quality of American
Troops never reached a higher level
than in this operation (Battle of the
Bulge), Neither intolerable weather or
the best troops in the possession of the
germans were able to stop them or
prevent their supply.

Lt Gen George S. Patton Jr

Books

A few new books that may be of
interest:

Hitler's Last Gamble
by Trevor N Dupuy, David L
Bongard and Richard C Anderson Jr
on the Battle of the Bulge

This book purports to be "based on the most comprehensive collection of documents and secondary sources in existence. The authors dispose of many myths about the Bulge that have been accepted through retelling. Some of these are the supposed poor performance of German panzer commander Sepp Dietrich; myths about German tank strength; the reasons for Eisenhower's decision to place the First US Army under Montgomery; and Montgomery's alleged ineptitude. The book also provides detailed backgrounds on all senior American and German Commanders, objective treatment and analysis of the actions and decisions of both sides and many descriptions of dramatic small-unit actions." This book contains a wealth of information about both sides. It provides a clear understanding of the organization of units and concise statistics. This 565 page book (\$30.00) from Harper Collins Publishers brings new analysis on the Bulge. It is a welcome addition. It is a main selection of the History Book Club and an alternate selection of the Book-of-the-Month Club.

BULGE MONUMENT

On 12 November 1994, the long awaited Battle of the Bulge Monument was dedicated at Valley Forge Military Academy, Wayne PA. Activities begin at 9:30AM, and include a Memorial Service in the beautiful Cadet Chapel followed by a Cadet Review & Parade and the unveiling of the beautiful monument with its mottoe "A Triumph in Courage." A reception followed. Representatives of the Belgium and Luxembourg governments were present. Approximately two thousand veterans and their guests attended. Delaware Valley Chapter VBOB Stan Wojtusik was Master of Ceremonies.

Dirty Little Secrets WWII

by James F Dunnigan & Albert A Nofi
The flyleaf states "Fearlessly taking aim at the myths, mysteries, arcana, and boondoggles that remain virtually unknown even to military buffs. This ... new book exposes the dark irreverent, misunderstood and often tragicomic aspects of military operations. All theaters, all participants, and all forms of warfare are vividly brought to life in more than 300 infobytes."

The book is loaded with interesting points such as: "In the early 1990s there remain about 8.5 million of the more than 16.3 million men and women who served during WWII, approximately 10% of whom are receiving benefits for service-connected disabilities, while another 1 million receive other forms of benefits."

50 YEARS AGO
THIRD U.S. ARMY OPERATIONS
The Bastogne-St Vith Campaign
19 Dec 1944 - 28 Jan 1944

The Ardennes operation was the heaviest, most concentrated and bloodiest of all those in the European War. Roughly, so far as Third US Army was concerned it was broken down into 5 phases which include: (1) the reorganization and shift to the north, (2) the relief of Bastogne and protection of the Meuse River Line, (3) the drive to Houffalize and junction with Allied Armies, (4) the attack toward St Vith and seizure of positions along the Our and Sauer Rivers, and finally (5) the prolongation of the attack to originally held positions and into Siegfried Line fortifications.

The whole operation grew from an attempt by the enemy to launch an attack in Army Group size with the purpose of throwing the Allied time table out of order, separating the American Forces, and possibly breaking into France to cut off or interfere with, Allied supplies. That the operation failed was due to the harmony between Allied Armies under one centralized command, and to the utmost efforts of the First and Third US Armies and the British Second Army.

Third US Army's offensive along the Saar River against the Siegfried Line was progressing well during the middle of December, and a large sustained attack had been planned in that zone when the Germans launched their heavy counter offensive in the First US Army zone, late on 16 December.

By 17 December the enemy had broken through First US Army lines on a 30 mile front, and had penetrated 40 miles. Twelfth US Army Group in the city of Luxembourg was separated from the majority of First US Army units by the enemy salient. Accordingly, First US Army was assigned to 21st Army Group (British).

Penetrations were made into the VIII Corps zone which then consisted of the 4th, 28th and 106th

Infantry Divisions (InfD) and the 9th Armored Division (ArmdD) and in the 99th InfD zone of the V Corps. This penetration of approximately 40 miles in depth and 30 miles in width was made along the St Vith-St Hubert axis, with the flanks anchored in the south on Echternach and Etlebruck, and in the North on Monschau, Malmedy and Stavelot.

To combat the affects of the breakthrough and to take away the impetus of the enemy drive, the Supreme Commander of Allied Forces on the Western Front through the Commanding General, Twelfth US Army Group ordered the Commanding General, Third US Army to assume command of all available forces south of the enemy breakthrough, which could be regrouped and committed, and to attack north to drive, cut off and destroy the enemy that penetrated the First US Army zone. This included the forces of the VIII Corps (First US Army) with all elements that were then able to be committed.

Third US Army immediately began shifting its forces to the north, leaving only protecting forces behind to cover its present zone. Army units of all types shifted their zone of action to the north - and Third US Army prepared to enter into the Ardennes Campaign.

A series of fragmentary orders were sent by Third US Army on 17 and 18 Dec to the various Corps. They ordered XII Corps to pass control of its zone to Seventh US Army, to pass the 80th InfD and the 4th ArmdD to III Corps, to pass control of the 87th InfD to Seventh US Army, to assume control of the 5th InfD, and finally, following its relief by Seventh US Army to move to the vicinity of Luxembourg. Fragmentary orders to III Corps provided that the Corps would give up its zone to XX Corps, would pass control of the 6th ArmdD and Task Force Fickett (6th

Cavalry Group) to XX Corps, and would move the 26th InfD and III Corps HQs to Arlon in Belgium to operate on the south flank of the enemy salient. XX Corps was ordered to assume control of the 6th ArmdD and Task Force Fickett, and to relieve the 5th InfD in the Saarlautern bridgehead, so that it could be employed in Luxembourg.

Immediately, major units began moving north, the entire switch of the Third US Army to its new northern zone being a well planned, excellently executed example of tactical speed in troop movements. The III Corps moved its elements north of Arlon, while XII Corps moved to Luxembourg, and the XX Corps held the lower zone after an adjustment of the Sixth - Twelfth US Army Group boundary moved the zone of the Seventh US Army north to take over part of the former Third US Army zone.

On 20 December the Army Commander issued a directive to the four Corps (including VIII Corps), giving the major Army mission of attacking north from the Luxembourg - Arlon area to destroy the enemy on its north while being prepared to change direction of advance to the northeast. III Corps (26th and 80th Divisions, 4th ArmdD) was to attack north to zone in direction of St Vith while keeping contact with XII Corps on its east flank and VIII Corps on its west. XII Corps (4th, 5th InfDs, 10th ArmdD less Combat Command B), plus Combat Command A, 9th ArmdD) and 2nd Cav Grp was ordered to hold the west bank of the Moselle River in zone, and to attack under Army order, initially north on the right of III corps while pushing patrols to the east and northeast to determine crossings of the Sauer and Our Rivers, and the strength of the enemy in the Echternach area. It was

THIRD US ARMY OPERATIONS

Continued from Page 3

further ordered to protect the right (east) flank of Third US Army, to maintain contact with the III Corps and XX Corps and to be prepared to change direction of the attack to the northeast. VIII Corps (101st AbnD, 28th InfD and 9th ArmD less Combat Command A, plus Combat Command B, 10th ArmD) was to regroup its forces, and prepare for an attack to the north while defending its zone. XX Corps (90th and 95th InfDs, 6th ArmD, 3rd and 6th Cav Grps) was to defend its Saarlautern bridgehead, passing the lower part of its zone to Seventh US Army, while maintaining contact with XII Corps on the north and Seventh US Army on the South.

The first attack into the enemy salient was made in the morning of 22 Dec by III Corps, with the 4th ArmD, the 26th and 80th InfDs making substantial gains. The original advance headed for Bastogne where the 101st AbnD and attached units was completely surrounded by the enemy. III Corps was deployed with the 4th ArmD on its west flank, 26th InfD in the center and the 80th InfD on the east flank. In 2 days such substantial advances were made that the 4th ArmD reached a point 6 miles due south of Bastogne, and the 26th InfD reached a point 10 miles southeast of the city. Then the enemy resistance stiffened, and the Corps made steady gains toward Bastogne for the next 2 days, which culminated in a juncture of the 4th ArmD and the 101st AbnD on 26 Dec at Assenois 2 mile south of Bastogne.

The successful drive by the 4th ArmD to contact and liberate the 101st AbnD around Bastogne was due not only to the powerful attack of the division and the supporting attack of the 26th and 80th InfDs, but also support furnished by VIII Corps on its west, which took pressure from its flanks during the late stages of the attack.

XII Corps opened its attack into the enemy salient in a zone east of the III Corps on 23 Dec, when the 4th and 5th InfDs and the 10th ArmD with Combat Command A, 9th ArmD attached, made local gains to the north against heavy resistance. This advance continued steadily with gains of 1 or 2 miles per day for the following 3 days. On 25 December the 35th InfD moved from Metz and assumed positions on the front line.

The VIII Corps, then consisting of the 4th, 28th and 106th InfDs, the 7th and 9th ArmDs and the 101st AbnD was badly mauled by the enemy in the breakthrough. On 18 December the 10th ArmD, the first division of the Third Army to swing to the north, reinforced the 101st AbnD around Bastogne with its Combat Command B. That combat command was trapped soon thereafter with the 101st AbnD and the attached Reserve Combat Command of 9th ArmD when the enemy completely surrounded the city.

By 19 December the 106th InfD had lost 2 regiments, and the third had been driven north of the enemy salient, the 101st AbnD was completely surrounded at Bastogne, the 7th ArmD was on the

north flank of the enemy salient, the 28th Div was split up with its 109th Infantry attached to the 9th ArmD, and the 9th ArmD was separated into three separate parts, one of which was forced to the north of the enemy bulge, and attached to the XVIII Airborne Corps, another was at Bastogne with the 101st AbnD, and the third (Combat Command A) was on the southern part of the salient with 109th Infantry (28th InfD) attached.

Third US Army took over the task of attacking to the north from the area Luxembourg-Arlon to destroy the enemy on its front while prepared to change direction to the northeast to seize crossings of the Rhine River, a mission prescribed by the operational directive issued 20 December. It passed control of the 4th InfD from VII Corps to XII Corps, and gave the remainder of the VIII Corps the mission of regrouping forces prepared to attack to the north, maintaining contact with III Corps and continuing defense of zone. Thus, the line-up of VIII Corps, following the reshuffling of units included elements of the 28th InfD, 101st AbnD with attached Combat Command B, 10th ArmD and Reserve Combat Command 9th ArmD (then isolated in Bastogne) and remaining elements of 9th ArmD.

During the period 21-25 Dec VIII Corps defended Bastogne with the 101st AbnD and its attached armored elements while the remainder of the Corps was gradually pushed back from Sibret, 5 miles SW of Bastogne to Neufchateau about 15 miles SW of Bastogne. Liaison between the 28th InfD and the 4th ArmD (III Corps) was established 25 Dec, and from that time on the situation improved. The following day, 26 Dec, other elements of the 4th ArmD contacted elements of the 101st AbnD at Assenois, 2 miles south of Bastogne, finally effecting solid contact between all elements of Third Army on the southern perimeter of the enemy salient. This contact furnished a great uplift in morale of Army troops who could see the ultimate success ahead. The enemy did all in his power to capture Bastogne, but by determination and spirit of Third US Army troops he was held off.

Far to the south the XX Corps held a good part of the former Third US Army zone. A change in the Third-Seventh US Army boundary moved the boundary north to give Seventh US Army control of the former XII Corps zone. XX Corps assumed control of the former III Corps area in addition to its own. It assumed control of the 6th ArmD and the 6th Cav Grp, released the 5th InfD to XII Corps and retained the 90th and 95th InfDs. On 20 Dec the Corps was ordered to release the 6th Cav Grp to III Corps, to protect the south flank of Third US Army while maintaining contact with Seventh US Army on the south and XII Corps on the north, defend the Saarlautern bridgehead and other positions on its front. The Dil?ingen and Ens Dorf bridgeheads were abandoned and forces occupying them were removed to the west bank of the Saar River; elsewhere all positions were maintained.

To be Continued

NOTES ON BASTOGNE OPERATION
General George S. Patton Jr

By 10 Dec 1944, the Saar Offensive of the Third Army, begun on 8 Nov, had progressed to the point where the XX Corps had forced a crossing of the Saar at Saarlautern, using the 90th and 95th Infantry Divisions (InfDs), and had the 5th InfD and 10th Armored Division (ArmdD) prepared to exploit the impending breakthrough of the Siegfried Line in that town. The left of the Corps from Remich to Merzig was covered by a Task Force consisting of the 3rd Cavalry Grp Reinforced, Colonel Polk Commanding.

In the XII Corps zone the crossing over the Saar had been forced and the Corps was attacking in a northeasterly direction parallel to the Blies River.

12 December 1944

As a result of the meeting with General Spaatz, General Doolittle, General Vandenberg, General Weyland and myself, a definite scheme for the rupture of the Siegfried Line in the vicinity of Zweibrücken-Kaiserlautern by a three day air blitz, followed immediately by a ground assault had been arranged, with target date the 19th of Dec.

In XII Corps, the 87th Div had relieved the 26th Div east of Saarguemines, and the latter had assembled at Metz and taken over the training of 4,000 replacements secured through a 5% cut in the overhead of all Corps and Army troops in the Third Army.

The 5th and 80th Divs were up to strength but the Army as a whole was 12,000 short. All divisions were ordered to cannibalize headquarters and anti-tank gun sections to provide infantry riflemen.

16 December 1944

In the XX Corps, the 5th InfD began to relieve the 95th Div in Saarlautern, preparatory to the final assault for a break of the Siegfried Line. It was then to attack NE in the Corps zone supported by the 10th ArmdD.

Due to heavy enemy resistance, the date of the air blitz at Zweibrücken was moved to 21 Dec to assure the arrival of ground troops within assaulting distance of the Siegfried Line in time for this date. The XII Corps started to place the 80th InfD and 4th ArmdD in line abreast of the 87th InfD.

The III Corps, consisting of the 26th and 6th ArmdDs which had become operational 15 Dec, initiated a reconnaissance with a view to passing through the 35th InfD, XII Corps, immediately subsequent to the blitz.

Orders were issued for movement of HQs Third Army to St Avold on 19 Dec.

Orders were received from Twelfth Army Group directing the 10th ArmdD be temporarily attached to VIII Corps, First Army, to counter a serious attempt at a breakthrough on the part of the enemy, this movement to be initiated 17 Dec.

18 December 1944

At the direction of the Army Group Commander I reported to his Hqs in Luxembourg, accompanied by G-2, G-3, and G-4 of the Third Army. The situation of the enemy break-through, as then known, was explained.

General Bradley asked when I could intervene. I stated I could do so with three divisions very shortly. I then telephoned the Chief of Staff Third Army and directed that the attack of the 4th ArmdD and 80th InfD be halted and sufficient transportation to move the 80th Div anytime after dawn of the 19th be collected. That the 4th ArmdD be prepared to move the night of 18-19 Dec. Also to notify the XIX Tactical Air Command that the blitz was off for the present.

General Bradley called at 2200 hours and stated that the situation was worse than it had been at noon and directed that the troops as per previous paragraph be moved as rapidly as possible. Also that General Milliken move forward echelon of his hqs to the front. I suggested Arlon. This was approved. General Bradley further ordered that General Milliken report in person to the Chief of Staff Twelfth Army Group on the morning of the 19th; and that I, accompanied by one staff officer, meet General Bradley for a conference with General Eisenhower at Verdun at 1100 the same date.

One Combat Command of the 4th Armd moved at midnight on Longwy, followed by remainder of division at dawn. The 80th InfD started to move on Luxembourg at dawn 19 Dec. The G-4 of the Twelfth Army Group facilitated these operations by a rapid collection of truck companies from Com. Z.

19 December 1944

Meeting of all Corps Commanders and the C. G. of the XIX Tactical Air Command and the General Staff of the Third Army was called at 0800. The new situation was explained. I stated that the reputation of the Third Army and the XIX Tactical Air Command for speed and effectiveness resulted from the efficiency of the officers present, and that I counted upon them for even greater successes.

On the assumption that the VIII Corps would be assigned to Third Army, a plan for the employment of III and VIII Corps was drawn up. Three possible lines of attack was envisaged: Neufchâteau-St Hubert; Arlon-Bastogne; Luxembourg-Diekirch-St Vith.

A brief telephone code between myself and the Chief of Staff Third Army was drawn up.

Left for Verdun at 0930, arriving at 1045.

As a result of the conference, the Supreme Commander directed that the Sixth Army Group take over the southern front as far north as the southern boundary of the XX Corps, Third Army; the 6th ArmdD to stay in the Saarbrücken area until relieved by elements of the 7th Army. The 87th and 42nd InfDs of the Third Army to pass to the 7th Army.

At this moment, it seemed to me probable that the Third Army in its new role would be constituted as follows:

VIII Corps (Gen Middleton) in vicinity of Neufchâteau - 101st AbnD, and elements of 28th InfD, 9th and 10th ArmdDs, and 106th InfD plus Corps troops. III Corps (Gen Milliken) in vicinity of Arlon - 26th InfD, 80th InfD

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and 4th ArmdD. The XII (Gen Eddy) to be assembled in the vicinity of Luxembourg, consisting of 35th, 4th and 5th InfDs and elements of the 9th and 10th ArmdDs. The XX Corps (Gen Walker) in vicinity of Thionville - 90th and 95th InfDs, 6th ArmdD when relieved by 7th Army and Task Force Polk.

In reply to a question from General Eisenhower as to when the Third Army could attack to the north, I stated it could attack with III Corps on the 23rd of December.

After meeting at Verdun, I called Chief of Staff Third Army by phone and gave following instructions: 26th InfD to be moved Dec 20 to vicinity of Arlon, advanced detachments to move at once. The XII Corps to disengage, and Corps Hq and artillery to move to vicinity of Luxembourg 21st of Dec, leaving a working hqs at old location until such time as it could be relieved by XV Corps, 7th Army. 35th InfD to be withdrawn from line and assembled at Metz. Tactical Echelon Third Army Hq to move on Luxembourg 20th of Dec, Forward echelon III Corps to move in vicinity of Arlon at once.

20 December 1944

I visited Twelfth Army Group at Luxembourg, then the Commanding Generals of III and VIII Corps and 4th ArmdD at Arlon, later visited Hqs 4th and 26th InfDs, 9th and 10th ArmdDs, and the advanced echelon 80th Div which had just reached Luxembourg.

As it was apparent that for the present the VIII Corps had no offensive power, it was directed to hold Bastogne with the 101st AbnD and following attachments: one Combat Command (CC) of the 9th Armd and one CC of the 10th ArmdDs; the 705th Tank Destroyer (TD) Bn, less one company; and some Corps Artillery. Remainder of the Corps to fall back, using delaying action and demolitions.

The III Corps is to attack with the purpose of relieving Bastogne on 22nd of Dec at 0600. The Commanding General 10th ArmdD was directed to take temporary command of XII Corps pending arrival of that HQs Also to incorporate in his unit one CC of the 9th ArmdD in the vicinity of Luxembourg. The Commanding General of the 9th ArmdD with his Hqs was sent to VIII Corps to take over command of two combat commands of the 9th ArmdD and one combat command of the 10th ArmdD.

Through the Chief of Staff Third Army arranged for immediate movement to new theater of combat of all self-propelled tank destroyer battalions and separate tank battalions, necessary ammunition, engineers and hospitals

Also, that the 5th Div be disengaged at Saarlautern and be moved on Luxembourg at once. NOTE: The 10th Infantry of the 5th Div actually reached Luxembourg at midnight this date, and one company of tank destroyers of the 818th TD Bn, which had been in combat east of the Saar River in the morning, opened fire on the enemy north of the Sauer River that night having marched in the meantime 69 miles.

It is noteworthy that all the operations, including plans for attack executed on the 22nd of Dec were done by

personal conference or by telephone, and that the highly complicated road and supply movements were only made possible by the old and very experienced General Staff of the Third Army and the high discipline and devotion to duty of all the units involved.

21 December 1944

US losses during Saar Operation from Nov 8th to midnight Dec 21st amounted to 29,688 killed, wounded and missing. During the same period enemy opposed to the Third Army lost 40,265 prisoners of war or buried by our Graves Registration.

22 December 1944

The III Corps (4th ArmdD, 26th and 80th InfDs) attacked at 0600. Bastogne was still holding out. The 10th Inf Regt of the 5th Div, XII Corps, attacked NE on Echternach, driving the enemy towards the river.

23 December 1944

The weather fine. Seven fighter-bomber groups, eleven medium-bomber groups, and one division of the 8th Air Force and elements of the RAF were up in support of the Third Army.

The III Corps continued its attack. The XII Corps continued its limited attack. The XX Corps launched an attack in the direction of Saarbourg as a diversion.

The 35th InfD closed in Metz at 2400 hours.

24 December 1944

The 6th Cavalry Grp, reinforced with one company of engineers and one company of tank destroyers, moved, this date, to join the III Corps.

The III Corps continues attack. The XII Corps clears Sauer River from Diekirch inclusive to Echternach exclusive.

25 December 1944

Clear and cold. All the air up. Visited all front line divisions. Where men were in contact and could not get hot Xmas (Christmas) dinner, they were served chicken sandwiches.

Exchanged the 6th ArmdD (XX Corps) with 10th ArmdD (XII Corps) effective tonight.

The 35th InfD which closed at Metz on midnight the 23rd Dec, absorbed 2000 replacements from the second 5% cut in Corps and Army troops of Third Army, all with less than a week's training. They will close north of Arlon at 1400 tomorrow, prepared to attack between the 26th InfD and 4th ArmdDs the morning of the 27th. The 80th InfD passes to XII Corps at 1800 the 26th.

26 December 1944

Combat Command A, 9th ArmdD, serving with 10th ArmdD in XII Corps joined to 4th ArmdD this morning and attacks west of CC "R" (Col Blanchard) 4th ArmdD.

Col Blanchard's CC "R" by a very daring attack entered Bastogne 1645 with one battalion of Armored infantry and one battalion of tanks. We took in 40 truckloads of supplies that night, thus re-opening the supply route. Also, 22 ambulances with a total of 652 wounded were evacuated; the first night 224 went out and the remaining were evacuated the next morning.

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The total time from the moment the 4th ArmD left the Saarbrücken sector to the taking of Bastogne was seven days; the distance covered was 120 miles; the distances gained by combat during four days was 16 miles. In addition to the 4th ArmD, the 318th Infantry (less 3rd Bn) of the 80th Div and Combat Command A of the 9th ArmD should be given special credit for the penetration into Bastogne.

The 6th ArmD closed on Luxembourg. The 87th Inf and 17th AbnD and 11th ArmDs are near Reims in SHAEF Reserve. The Third Army requested their assignment.

28 December 1944

General Bradley explained further operations for a future continuation of the Army Group offensive action.

The 11th ArmD and 87th InfDs released to Third Army and assigned to VIII Corps.

29 December 1944

Started 11th ArmD and 87th InfD on Neufchâteau. They should close by 2400 and will attack west of Bastogne on Houffalize at 0800 Dec 30th.

6th ArmD closed north of Arlon, preparatory to attacking on the axis Bastogne-St Vith on the 31st.

30 December 1944

The 11th ArmD on the right and the 87th InfD on the left jumped off at 0800 and ran into the flank of a German counterattack headed SE to cut off Bastogne. The German attack consisted of the 130th Panzer Lehr Div and the 26th Volksgrenadier Div. Our attack stopped them and turned them back. At the same time on the other flank of the Bastogne bulge, the 35th and 26th Inf Divisions were attacked by the 1st SS Panzer Div and the 167th Volksgrenadier Div. The artillery of the 4th ArmD came to the help of the 35th InfD, and the enemy was repulsed with the loss of 55 tanks. This repulse was largely aided by the action of the XIX Tactical Air Command which was able to fly most of the day despite very bad weather. The 101st AbnD also repulsed a counterattack from the NW.

Unquestionably, this was the critical day of the operation, as there was a concerted effort on the part of the Germans, using at least five divisions, to again isolate Bastogne.

Twenty-one Germans, wearing US uniforms were killed in battle.

Army commander entered Bastogne and decorated Brigadier General McAuliffe.

31 December 1944

Very bad weather with snow and sleet. Tractors could not be used to pull guns. Necessary to use the diamond-six trucks.

Germans continued to counterattack strongly, but the 6th ArmD attacked as planned and made 4 kilometers on its axis. The enemy counterattacked 17 times today — 11 repulsed with heavy losses to the enemy. We also sustained casualties, particularly in the case of the 11th ArmD which is very green.

The 17th AbnD was released to the Third Army and is being replaced at Reims by the 28th InfD less one

regiment still with the First Army.

1 January 1945

At 0001 all guns on the Third Army fired a New Year's greeting on the enemy for twenty minutes — heavy casualties inflicted.

Germans have formed a definite pocket in wood SE of Bastogne from which they seriously threaten our line of supply and bring the principal road under machine gun and mortar fire. It will be necessary to evict them.

The 6th ArmD continued to advance. All other units made little to no progress.

The VII Corps, First Army, will initiate an attack on Houffalize from the north in the morning. This should take some pressure from the Third Army.

17th AbnD ordered to attack through 11th ArmD at 1200, Jan 3.

3 January 1945

87th InfD gained on the left. The 11th ArmD repulsed a strong counterattack in the center but is badly disorganized and needs a few days out of the line. Due to slippery conditions of the roads, the 17th AbnD was unable to attack through the 11th ArmD as planned.

To be Continued

The above are the personal notes of General George S Patton, Jr on the Bastogne Operation and continue through 16 Jan 1945. They present a good contrast with the official Third Army Operational summary written by others in his Headquarters about the same events. They are contained in file 103-0.5 of the official records for the Third US Army kept by the National Archives and Records Administration, Washington DC. They will be continued in the next Musings.

WORLD WAR II MONUMENT

H.R. 682, authorizing the construction of a WWII Memorial, was passed by both the House and Senate and signed into law on 25 May 1994.

The American Battle Monuments Commission is authorized to establish a memorial on federal land in the District of Columbia or its environs to honor members of the Armed Forces who served in World War II.

This law establishes a World War II Memorial

Advisory Board to promote the establishment of the memorial, encourages the donation of private contributions for it and advises the Commission on the site and design for the memorial.

On 3 Oct 1994 President Clinton appointed to the Advisory Board Sarah McClendon, Reporter, columnist, WAC during WWII and Bill Mauldin, cartoonist and WWII infantryman. Contributed by Richard C Schlenker.

**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. 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 by 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 artillery and additional support to make this the most significant Bulge Reenactment yet. The event will be open to veterans and the public at 10 AM on Saturday, 28 January 1995. Visitors will be bused to the reenactment area for the 1 PM portion of the event. For further details on this event, please contact John D. Bowen, 613 Chichester Lane, Silver Spring, MD 20904-3331. Tel 301-384-6533.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR
NOW!**

**OFFICER CANDIDATE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
General Membership/Reunion Meeting**

For those who graduated or just attended an OCS class there will be a Reunion of all classes 27-30 April 1995 in the Columbus/Fort Benning GA area. This event with the theme "OCS Past, Present, and Future promises to be the most successful get together since inception of the Alumni Assn. The main base of events will be the Columbus Hilton where special rates of \$62.00 single and \$65.00 double have been obtained.

On Thursday, 27 April 1995 there will be registration followed by a hors d'oeuvres reception at the Columbus GA Hilton. On Friday the 28th, this day will be devoted to an all-day visit to Fort Benning. This will include briefings, a visit to the present OCS training area and the OCS Hall of Fame. After a stop for lunch at the Officers Club, the afternoon will be devoted to the observation of ongoing training demonstrations. In the evening, time has been left vacant for the individual classes to get together. On Saturday the 29th, a general membership meeting will be held in the morning. A visit to the National Infantry Museum is scheduled for the afternoon getting you back to the hotel to rest and prepare for the evening dinner dance, with guest speaker, that will be held at the Historic Columbus Iron Works and Convention Center. The current officer candidates will join the attendees for this event. On Sunday 30 April, there will be a memorial service for deceased OCS graduates.

Reservations may be made by contacting the US Army Officer Candidate Alumni Assn, Inc PO Box 52192, Fort Benning GA 31995-2192. Membership in the Alumni association is \$10.00 per year and is open to all OCS graduates or associates regardless of branch of commissioning. Registration must be received by 6 April 1995.

Hotel reservations should be made direct to the Columbus Hilton by calling 706-324-1800 or 1-800-524-4020. Be sure to cite the US Army OC Alumni Assn, Inc to get the group rate. The hotel is located at 800 Front Ave, Columbus GA 31901.

Forward Ever, Backward Never!

Books

Continued from Page 2

"The campaign in France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany from D-Day through VE-Day cost the Western Allied Armies 766,294 casualties (including some 200,000 dead), of whom about 60 percent were Americans out of a total of 5,412,219 troops landed, for a casualty rate of 14.2 % or roughly 1 in 7. There were also at least 50,000 Allied civilians killed during the campaign." The book may be purchased from William Morrow Publishers. Cost \$25.00.

The Ardennes Generals
This book can be secured through the Government Printing Office and is a critical review of the Generals in the Battle of the Bulge. At the present time I do not have information on price.

Your comments or personal experiences about these Musings are welcome. Responses about any of the articles should be directed to the newsletter editor John D. Bowen, 613 Chichester Lane, Silver Spring, MD 20904-3331.

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.

