

**Blue Ridge 80th Division
The Service Magazine**
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BLUE RIDGE

The Service Magazine
Volume 85, Number 338

Fall - 2003
Issue 4



Official Publication of the
80th Division Veterans Association, Inc.

A. E. F.

Artois-Picardy
St. Mihiel
Meuse-Argonne

E. T. O.

Northern France
Ardennes
Rhineland
Central Europe

God Bless America

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**Eightieth Division
Veterans Association**

**BLUE RIDGE
The Service Magazine**

The official quarterly publication by the 80th Division Veterans Association.
(Incorporated as a not-for-profit organization in the State of Pennsylvania).

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Service Officer

Felix J. Cistolo (G-317)

Flag Sergeant

Albert J. Cresson (C-315 FA)

Color Sergeant

Don Davis (K-319)

Sergeant-at-Arms

George V. West (C-318)

Public Affairs Officer

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2 Year; Robert W. Smith (K-317)

3 Year; Felix Cistolo (G-317)

2 Years

George V. West (G-318)

Andy Ferens (M-317)

Robert J. McDonald (C-319)

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1 Year

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Laverne J. Schock (F-317)

Tom Pappas (F-318)

3 Years

Melvin C. Beers (C-319)

Richard Davis (905 Fa Bn)

Albert S. Haley (H-317)

Commander's REPORT



By the time this report reaches you, the 2003 Reunion in Roanoke will be history. Senior vice Commander Archer Futch has worked tirelessly to bring you an exciting and enjoyable convention. I am sure that you had a good time socializing with your comrade and their families. On behalf of all attendees, thank you Archer for a job well done and good luck as national Commander in the coming year.

Also, by the time you read this, I will have joined the distinguished ranks of Past National Commanders, making this article my final report.

I cannot leave this post without saying what an extraordinary honor it has been to represent each one of you: THE VETERANS OF THE GREATEST DIVISION, THE 80th, AND THEIR FAMILIES. I have served with pride and humility and I want to thank you for allowing me to be your commander during this past year.

In continued comradeship, Eric Reilinger, PNC

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Brewton, Oneal	B-317	Shuford, John A.	2d Bn Hq 318
R2 Box 3232B		700 W. Blue Bonnet Street	
Crockett, TX 75835-8974		Rio Grande City, TX	
		78582-4349	
Hass, Gary	?-317	Simeral, John S.	G-318
309 SW Dian		9356-50th Terrace N.	
Burleson, TX 76028		St. Petersburg, FL 33700	
Honnold, Royal C.	Sv-319	Wheeler, Warren	K-318
12510 N. Meadowlark Street		110 Larkwood Circle	
Mead, WA 99021-9608		Gadsden, AL 35906-6302	
Russell, Charles A.	E-317 Assoc		
1107-31th Avenue			
Laurel, MT 59044			

Life Plus Club 2002-2003

Life Members who contribute over and above the Life Membership. There is no set amount, it's free will as of 1 September 2003, and I may have omitted a name. I assure you it was not intentional. Please write me if I omitted your name, it will be corrected in the next issue of the Blue Ridge. I wish to thank each and everyone of you who contribute, by donating you are helping to promote the 80th Division and help one who may be less fortunate than you or I.

Gentlemen: While some of you have been faithful in sending in extra for the Life Plus Club, due to the shrinking membership (just follow the "Taps" column and close to 75% having taken Life Dues), I am asking those of you who haven't been a part of the Club in the past, to consider making a donation over and above your Life membership. Thank You!

Annon	I-318
Barwell, Herbert	A-317
Bloedorn, John H.	L-318
Bloomer, Lloyd	A-314th FA Bn
Byrne, J. T.	Hq-905 FA Bn
Coleman, Robert	C-318
In memory of his son	
Robert T. Coleman, Jr.	
Costley, Maurice W.	C-319
Garnett, Fred T.	80th Signal
McCaleb, R.L. Dr.	CN-319
Nicoll, William O.	780th Ord
Pledderer, Robert Cannon	319
Smith, Robert W.	K-317
Sproull, Robert C. Dr.	Hq 313 FA Bn
Stuart, Dr. D. D.	B-305 Med Bn
Terry, James B.	F-318
Turner, Zane	H-317
Turner, Zane	H-317 2nd Award
Uhl, Dennis J.	B-305 Eng
Wiggins, Robert D.	L-318
Woods, John O.	Dv Chaplain

Secretary's REPORT

FAX: (412) 828-7651

"E" MAIL ADDRESS: Divinf80@AOL.Com

PLEASE NOTE:

If you have moved and have not sent in your change of address, when it is no longer that the Postal Service will forward your mail, then it comes back to me without an address to sent it too. Therefore, when you don't receive your Newsletter, blame

yourself, not the Secretary.

If you want an article printed in the Service Magazine, it must be signed or it won't get printed.

At the Melbourne Business meeting, a motion was made and seconded to eliminate any dues in arrears penalty, prior to paying any current dues. Motion was carried.

Help! Help! Help!

MY NAME IS DEAN J. DOMINIQUE. My Grandfather, PFC Herman "Frenchy" Robichaux was in K/317th. I just recently completed my thesis on the 317th in World War II and placed it on the Internet. Anyone who wants to read it can find it at www.geocities.com/WWII317. I would appreciate any feedback. Also, I want to add more personal stories. If you would like to send me some personal accounts, corrections, or feedback, I can be reached at dean-dominique@us.army.mil. I'm currently stationed in Afghanistan, so I cannot be reached by phone at this time. I would also like to thank all the veterans and their families who provided the information to write the story of the 317th.

CPT Dean J. Dominique
Instructor, Tactical Transportation Branch
DSN 927-6420
COM (757) 878-6420

STANLEY W. MORRIS was KIA 2 April 1945 in the attack on Kassel. We understand he was in Hqs Company 319th Regiment. At the time I was with the 104th Infantry Division, not far from the 80th. Stanley's surviving friends and relatives from Salisburg, MD would appreciate hearing from any of his buddies who knew him. We were great friends from Elementary School until when we both entered the Army. Thank You. Lee D. Smith Cambria, CA 93428-0396 Tel: 805-927-8043.

ANYONE WHO SERVED with T/Sgt. William G. Simpson, Co. "C" 317th from August 8 to November 8 1944, please contact Scott E. Simpson, 17350 E. Temple Ave. #309, La Puente, CA 91744-4636. Telephone: (909) 990-6543.

BOB COLEMAN C-318, 401 Centre Avenue Nyack, NY 10960 writes, I have been trying to find the name or names of our boozka man. The name of "Kent" sticks in my mind. I can't recall if it is his first or last name. Can anyone from C-318 help me?

WANTED: 319th CANNON INFO

Son of Pvt. Bill Treichler (Iowa) looking for anyone who remembers him or willing to share Cannon Co. experiences and info. Randy Treichler, Three Springs, Penna (814) 448-3223, treich@innernet.net.

MAIL BAG

Word has been received that Tootie Stack, wife of Bill Slack Cannon 319th passed away in early June... All you people from the 317th Infantry Regiment will be happy to know that Harold Bomhoff 317th Chaplain had his 100 BIRTHDAY on 17 July 2003. Why don't you send Harold a belated Birthday Card? He is in a nursing Home and I'm sure he will appreciate it. Chaplain Harold Bomhoff, 201-8th Avenue Oelwein, IA 50662-2447... Ronn Munro, 4280 Creek Road, Collegetown, PA 19426, would like to know if anyone remembers his Brother-in-law, Ellis Read. He was a very large person and I think ended up driving a jeep for some Brass. His nick name was "Ready." Ready died some years ago under unclear circumstances. His death certificate said he committed suicide, but he was loaded up with Thorazine that I never accepted that as a fact...

Colonel John O. Woods
August 11, 2003
Dear Mr. Murrell:

Since John, regretfully, will not be able to attend the 80th Reunion in Roanoke, VA., I was wondering whether you might like to publish something in your Bulletin regarding his regret. You could also inform the members that John has been transferred to the Special Therapy Unit of St. Paul homes, here in Greenville, PA. He has been diagnosed as having dementia

of the Alzheimer's type. He is still able to read, write and talk. Actually, you could call him on the telephone and talk. However, he would not recognize you by name and probably just call you "buddy." He would remember the 80th Division, his participation in WW II and the many fellows that fought with him; of course, not individual names.

With kindest regards from John and me, sincerely, Arlene Sittler Woods (Mrs. John O. Woods)

EDITORS NOTE: At the bottom written in her hand, if you want to phone him you would call: 724-588-7610 and ask for the Special Therapy Unit. They will bring John to the phone of course; any one can visit him at anytime. I did phone John and he was happy to hear my voice but didn't know whom he was talking to.

MCBRIDE SCHOLARSHIP FUND

We continue to take funds for this Award due to the Stock Market being what it is in order to make up the difference of what the Foundation has earned and the award of \$500.

Nicoll, William O. / 780th Ord PNC & HNC Club in Memory of PNC Edward J. Sacco
Schoenly, Eleanor B. in memory of her husband Paul / 80th Rcn
Schoenly, Eleanor B. in Memory of her Husband Paul / 80th Rcn
(2nd Award of Donation)
Schonely, Eleanor B. in personal Sympathy of Jim Holland / 80th Rcn

A MESSAGE FROM PNP IDA REILING

Thank you Archer Futch for a wonderful Reunion in Roanoke, VI. in September. A special thank you also, to all whom helped with the Ladies Auxiliary. Best wishes to Sr. Vice Commander Marvin Spencer at the Pittsburgh Reunion in 2004. Following is a poem I put in the Program Book at the 2003 Reunion, and for those who missed this great reunion, I repeat my poem here:



ARCHER FUTCH,
REUNION
CHAIRMAN

— A UNITED REUNION —

Our country was born
Out of want and of need,
A refuge for those
at the gates of hell,
They knew, for success,
some one must lead
Before they could ring
that liberty bell.

Ahead lay a long
and a winding road.
But the dream remained
in everyone's heart,
Sheer will and courage
was a heavy load.
But from no one
would the dream depart.

Foundations were set
and most ills were cured.
For fervent and strong
the endeavor,
United they stood—
success was assured
For their minds and their hearts
were together.

Our Reunion, too,
in a way can compare
To our great country's
hard earned glory,
For it too was born
when the need was there.
And our many years
tell the story.

For our dreams to survive,
we too must be strong.
With our thoughts and our minds
far sighted.
The road is weary
and the road is long.
But the rewards are great,
when united.

Were grateful, indeed,
to the precious few,
To the ones spearheading the drive.
For each Reunion we have,
brings commitment anew
So the next year's Reunion
can thrive.

Out of the past... *Continued from Spring 2003 Issue*

The corps commander therefore ordered that his divisions hold during the night of the 24th in preparation for attack early on Christmas day. Two battalions of the 318th Infantry were joining the 4th Armored to give the needed infantry strength in the corps' main effort. Reinforcements by the fighter-bombers had been requested (Gaffey asked the corps for high-priority flights over the 4th Armored as a Christmas present), and good flying weather seemed likely. On the debit side there were indications that reinforcements were arriving to bolster the German line facing the III Corps.

Thus far the Third Army counter-attack had tended to be a slugging match with frontal assault and little maneuver. General Patton's insistence on bypassing centers of resistance had been negated by the terrain, the weather, and the wide-reaching impact of the earlier VIII Corps demolition scheme. Perhaps the pace could be speeded up by maneuver, now that the enemy had been drawn into the defense of the Arlon-Bastogne approach. At Gaffey's request the III Corps commander shifted the boundary between the 4th Armored Division and the 26th Division, making the infantry division responsible for the Bigonville sector and releasing CCR, on the night of the 24th, for employment on the open west flank of the corps with entry into Bastogne as its primary mission.

The 80th Division Battle in the Woods 24-26 December 1944 on the morning of 24 December 1944 the 80th Division lost two battalions pre-empted by the corps commander as

infantry reinforcement for the 4th Armored Division. This diminution in its rifle strength and successive collisions with German units crossing the front en route to the Bastogne sector in the west constituted the closest link the 80th Division would have with the dramatic effort being made to reach the encircled 101st Airborne. From this time forward the 80th Division attack would be related to the fighting farther west only in that it was blocking the efforts of the Seventh Army to move its reserves into the Bastogne area.

For the three days the division would wager a lone battle to reach and cross the Sure River and on the east by the Sauer River with a base represented by the Ettelbruck-Heiderscheidgrund road. This area the 80th came to know at the Bourscheid triangle. Within this frame lay thick forests, deep ravines, and masked ridges, the whole a checkerboard of little terrain compartments. Control of a force larger than the battalion would be most difficult, artillery support-except at clearings and villages-would be ineffective and the maintenance of interlocking impervious front nigh impossible. Once a battalion cleared a compartment and advanced to the next the enemy could be counted on to seep back to his original position. Unobserved fire and loss of direction in the deep woods, down the blind draws, and along the twisting ridges made each American unit a potential threat to its neighbors, often forcing the use of a single battalion at a time. The infantryman would be duly thankful when tanks, tank destroyers, or

artillery could give a hand or at least encourage by their presence, but the battle in the woods and ravines was his own.

On the 23d the enemy forces facing the 80th Division were so weak and so disorganized that the Seventh Army commander Brandenberger, had feared that the 80th Division would drive across the Sure during the course of the night and sever the main line of the communications leading to the west. By the morning of the 124th, however, reinforcements had arrived and the threat of a clean, quick American penetration was on the wane. The LXXXV Corps (Kniess) thus far had faced the Americans III Corps with only two divisions, the 5th Parachute and the 352d. Despite the Seventh Army apprehension that two divisions would not possibly hold the long blocking line from Ettelbruck to Vaux-Rosieres and despite daily requests that OKW release additional divisions to the army to strengthen this line, the German High Command was slow to dip into its strategic reserve.

The Fuehrer Grenadier Brigade, the first to start for the battle front, was ordered to take the road from Ettelbruck to Martelange and thee deploy in support of the 5th Parachute Division. Its mission, assigned before the Third Army began its counterattack, was changed on the evening of 21 December, and so was its route, now menaced by the 80th division advance on Ettelbruck. Trying to cross the Our River at the Roth bridges, the brigade ran into trouble. The bridges had been damaged by attack from the air, and traffic was backed up for miles on both sides of the river. Untrained driver and mechanical failures further delayed the brigade as its columns

entered the icy, narrow, twisting roads of the Ardennes, but by 23 December the reconnaissance battalion, a rifle battalion in armored carriers, and two tank companies had reached Eschdorf and Heiderscheid. Gravely concerned by the rate of the American advance, the Seventh Army commander sidetracked these troops short of the Bastogne sector to restore the gap which was opening between the 5th Parachute Division and the 352nd Volks Grenadier Division, and, as already noted, the main body went in on the 23rd to stop the 80th Division at Heiderscheid. A part of the battalion of armored infantry marched south from Eschdorf and succeeded in getting cut off by the 26th Division night attack at Grevels-Bresil.

The heavy losses suffered by the green brigade in its first hours of battle had a marked adverse impact on the morale of the entire command. Many times, in subsequent days of battle, higher commanders would comment on the damage done the brigade by piecemeal commitment and defeat in its baptism of fire. The loss of the brigade commander, Col. Hans-Joachim Kahler, further demoralized the Fuehrer Grenadier. For successive days the command changed hands as new elements of the brigade arrived under more senior officers; this lack of leadership hardly was calculated to restore the shaken confidence of young, inexperienced troops. Yet despite these early reverses in the counterattack role the young soldiers of the brigade would prove tough and tenacious on the defensive.

On the morning of the 24th the Fuehrer Grenadier Brigade, still

Continued on page 11

"TAPS"

Bell, Alvin E. Jr 80th Signal
2634 Castleton Ave.
Toledo, OH 43613 6/23/2003
Rptd by wife Georgia

Burke, John E-319
Lee Center, NY 6/9/2003
Rptd by Ed Bredbenner

Craig, Lt. Col. James A. 1st Bn317
24 Kennsington Square
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055-2364
8/20/2003
Rptd by Jim Phillips & Ivan Downs

Duckery, Ernest Unknown
802 Peach Street
Hazelton, PA 18201 8/2003
Rptd by PNC Barone

Firmani, Domenic C-305 Eng
1447 Nova Ave N.E.
Washington, DC 20027 6/30/2003
Rptd by wife

Heinemann, Harry N. Jr. Hq-319
1319 Mc Indoe Street
Wausau, WI 55403-5084
Rptd by Wife Virginia

Hildebrand, Jerry Unknown
7739 E Oak Side
South Bend, IN 306614 6/14/2003
Rptd by Jim Allen

Holland, James "Jim" 80th Rcn
768 W. Elm
Bishop, CA 93514-2508 8/7/2003
Rptd by Eleanor Schonely

Husky, Sr., Major "Cotton" Unknown
Gatlingsburg, TN 7/28/2003
Rptd by Newspaper Obit by
Lee Hatcher

Jordan, Arliss H. ? -318
Southwestern Nursing Home
Pittsburgh, PA 15235 6/9/2003

Mollica, Joseph M-318
1242 Girard Ave
Wyomissing, PA 19610 7/1/2003
Rptd by Lou Shirey

Michalakos, Michael G. Unknown
Lowell, MA 12/30/2002
Newspaper Obit
Rptd by John C. Chisholm

Mulloy, Joseph J. H-319
303 38TH STREET PL APT B
Sioux City, IA 51104-2055 6/8/2003
Rptd by Carroll Peterson

Murnahan, Ralph Dv Hqs
115 S. Campbell Blvd
Haubstadt, IN 47639 7/13/2003
Rptd by Fred Buscarini

Rocco, Joseph J. 80th Signal
404 Mitti Road
Shillington, PA 19607 6/10/2003
Rptd by Angleo Barone

Sacco, Edward J. Hq-905 FA Bn
38 McCready Ave
Wheeling, WV 26003 6/20/2003
Rptd by Wife Mary Lou

Showers, Warren P. F-317
7299 Bernville Road
Bernville, PA 19506 3/19/2003
Rptd by wife Dorothy

Todd, Henry Dv Hq
Oakland Ca. 4/6/2003
Rptd by Fred Buscarini



EDWARD J. SACCO

Edward Sacco of Wheeling, WV, died Friday, June 20, 2003 surrounded by his family and in the compassionate care of the staff in Peterson Rehabilitation Hospital.

He was born Oct. 1, 1918 in Wheeling, the son of the late Edward P. and Myrtle Watson Sacco.

Edward, a U.S. Army veteran of World War II was Past National Commander of the 80th Infantry Division Reunion and a member of HQ Battery 905th Field Artillery Battalion.

"The Stories of the Men of the 80th"

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OUT OF THE PAST

Continued from page 9

without artillery and half of its tanks and infantry still east of the Our River, stood opposite the inner wings of the American 26th and 80th Divisions. The force of perhaps two rifle companies which had been cut off by the 26th Division south of Eschdorf was known to be fighting it way out to the east. The LXXXV Corps commander therefore decided to use his incoming reinforcements—infantry of the 79th Volks Grenadier Division—in a counterattack to regain contact with the lost companies somewhere around Eschdorf. This would be followed by a pivot to the east, intended to strike the Americans in the flank at Heiderscheid. For this maneuver Col. Alois Weber, commanding the 79th, had available one regiment, the 208th, and a single battalion of the 212th. His division, like the Fuehrer Grenadier Brigade, had encountered the crossing on the Gentingen Bridge had been further delayed by American fighter-bombers. The assault gun battalions and tanks from the Fuehrer Grenadier were at Webers disposal, but his artillery regiment was missing, entangled someplace on the road east of the Our. By chance the 79th found an artillery battalion, belonging to the 5th Parachute Division, which had been left behind when its prime movers broke down, and these guns were impressed to support the counterattack toward Heiderscheid.

*An Address Given by
Charles R. Harmon Anti-Tank 319
Hamm, The American Military Cemetery
Memorial Day 2003*

“Moyen!” (Moien! Good Morning or simply, “Hello” in the dialect). A long-ago poet told us that “No Man is an Island” and that we are, all, of us, responsible for, and to one another. And even longer ago, a Teacher reminded us that “Greater Love hath no Man than this, that he lay down his life for another”. Lay down his life for a friend and in life, we should all strive to be friends. We are gathered here to celebrate that lesson.

Several thousand Allied Military, Many of them from Luxembourg, combined to defend these rolling hills and winding valleys in 1944 and 1945. Almost 7,000 Americans lost their lives in doing so. Of those Americans, Five Thousand and Seventy-six lie here, on this lovely hillside and “There the sun shall greet them” every morning of the year. And each day they will be remembered, as they are today, by Friends.

A fine American Poet, Robert Frost, lies buried along the slope of a sweet New England Churchyard. At that slope near the entrance to the church, visitors to Mr. Frost’s grave might notice another grave, that of an Officer from our American Revolution. In light of our history, one is struck by the epitaph inscribed upon his respectfully large Tombstone: “He died in THE WAR”.

For one reason or another, for all good or ill, Americans have not

contented themselves with one war, “The War”. Even one so important. To ourselves and - I believe - to the world, as the American Revolution. Long before that revolution ended, in 1783, we were busily involved in the Atlantic World. The very next year, American Skippers made their first trading voyage to china. Since that time, Revolutions in manufacturing, transportation and Communications have insured that we are a part of “On World” whether we like it or not.

Ambassador Terpeluk has asked e to say a few words about the 80th Division in which I served, and our experiences here in December of 1944 and January of 1945. Let us go back in time.

As part of our English heritage, Americans have always shared an ancient prejudice against standing army, in some ways; this had remained true, even in current times.

As a malign result, we often ignore the advice of one American Expert who cautioned us that, “Mere Skill with a rifle does not make a soldier.” We have paid a heavy price, ever since 1783, for neglecting that advice, as a result, 1914, an later on, 1939, found us with only a small Cadre of highly Professional Soldiers and Sailors, equipped with a few, but not many, first-class Weapons, and with only a relatively tiny manufacturing

capacity prepared to immediately equip them with the tools of war. The 80th Division fought I Europe in the last months of what was then simply called “The Great War”, and disbanded in 1919, only to be reorganized in 1942. We thus became in World War I and World War II an apt symbol of America’s interest in the “Atlantic World.”

We had been well trained in the states before sailing to England in the spring of 1944. We came into France over Utah beach in early August, and were part of the “breakout” from Normandy. By September, we were in action opposite the American Military Cemetery at St. Mihiel the Moselle Valley. A tender line of Poetry remembers our soldiers who died and were buried there in 1918 as “men who once and somewhere else were young.” The 80th spent the remainder of the rainy, muddy autumn of 1944 fighting over military vantage points north of the city of Nancy and east of Metz, places still haunted by the ghosts of ancient Celts, the armies of Rome, and other armed bands.

I said we were “well trained;” it would be better to say we had been as well trained as men can be for the shock of heavy, prolonged infantry fighting. Action in Normandy and Lorraine taught us what has been aptly termed “the true purpose of infantry.” That is, to keep doing dangerous things in noisy places until one is seriously wounded or killed. A shrewd American observer phrased this as, “Hang around infantry long enough, and you’ll get yours.” The same violent truth applies to

active engineers, Airmen, the Armored Forces and Artillery as these beautifully tended graves testify.

On my level, that of a plain soldier, we were usually led by earnest amateurs, non-commissioned and Commissioned officers who were desperately trying to learn the art of war and teach us at the same time. As a result, those of us who survived long enough, learned two absolute rules:

- 1) It is good to be skilled;
- 2) It is better to be lucky.

We could admire the comment of a young British Rifleman serving in Burma in 1944-1945 who said, “we were not professionals; we were experts.”

The 80th Division and the Third Army to which we belonged had been fighting along the Magnet Line around St. Avold in late November. In Mid-December confused stories of a heavy German attack out of the Schnee Eifel and into the Ardennes impelled us Northward and into the Grand Duchy as fast as possible. We drove all night through a light snowfall, and to give you an idea of General Patton’s sense of urgency, with our lights on - the first time any of us had seen vehicle lights on full since we left the states in June.

I should tell you we were not simply the “American Third army.” by the time we arrived in Luxembourg, to most of us, we were “Patton’s army.” so far as I recall, the only American army in the European theater of operations which identified itself simply by the name of our Commanding General. Pat-

ton was respected by his soldiers because in the Words of a great Military Historian, Martin Blumenson: "Patton was a Winner"

When we Americans first came to Luxembourg in September of 1944, and, with far greater force and fierce purpose in December of that year, most of us were not quite sure just where we were. None of us had any doubt or question about why we were here.

Our education in the states and along the bloody path from Normandy had taught us the bitter Realities of Nazism, and we found it easy to understand why Europeans often thanked us "Liberating" them (as did so many then; as do so many now). In the words of General Roy Flint, legendary Professor of history at the United States Military Academy, we shared a grim resolve that; "there are some things worth dying for."

In his thoughtful invitation, Ambassador Terpeluk was so cautious as to ask me to say a few words about my own time in Luxembourg with the 80th. Well, My personal adventures were commonplace for an Infantry survivor. To illustrate, I was one of only 17 Men from my company, who went, unhurt, all the way from Normandy to Austria.

My Regiment, the 319th Infantry, was in action in several places in central and eastern Luxembourg, so, let me speak for a moment of just one of those Places: the commune of Goesdorf. It is not far north from Hamm. It was tiny then. It is tiny now. But it had a Commanding view out over one of the main German supply

routes in "The Bulge." we took it on January 6, 1945, and were ordered to hold it. "Hold," as in "stay there no matter what happens." and we did.

The Germans attacked the commune several times, usually just before dawn. We knew they would. So we would check our weapons and ammunition and wait for them to struggle up the hill through the snow.

When they would get 75 or 100 meters away we would send up flares. Our mortars and machine-guns would open up and we riflemen would start picking our Targets. The Germans tried hard. But they had no chance, out on that snow in the light of flares and trying to attack Americans 'forted up' (as we would say) in the stone farmhouses and barns. After a few days and several failures, some of them began coming in to surrender and we could tell that the "Battle of The Bulge" was giving away to a desperate German Retreat out of Luxembourg.

One incident from Goesdorf is still sharply vivid in my Memory: Jempi Goeres, a young boy from the farm we were defending, went out to their well to try to get some water for his family and for the 25 or 30 local citizens who were jammed into the farmhouse with us. German shells exploded near him, and although we tried to save him, he died of his wounds later that day. His family still lives on the farm and are good friends to me and to my family and I visit them every time I'm in Luxembourg.

In the words of a friend of mine

who, like myself, made it all the way from Normandy, "we were lucky. There were lots who didn't make it."

Many of those "who didn't make it" lie buried here. Let Us be thankful to the people of Luxembourg who Share this ground with us and grateful to the Superintendents and the staff for their careful Maintenance of the graves, and their gentle welcome to all who come to visit.

All Americans, indeed all serious students of history, owe a special debt to the dedicated members of C.E.B.A.—the circle for the study of the battle of the Ardennes. The men, who survived the fight on these hills, in that awful winter, are especially grateful to the Marvelous U.S. Veterans Friends Association of Luxembourg for their respectful attention to these Graves. And also to such monuments as that Dedicated to the 80th Division at Heiderscheid, Commemorating all of the good men whom died Fighting Sur Ces Collines Dans le Bataille des Ardennes (On these hills during the Battle of the Ardennes).

*Mr. Ambassador, Colonel Schiltz, Colonel Parker, Ladies and gentlemen: Thank you.
Charles R. "Bob" Harmon
Seattle University,
Department of History*

Colonel Schiltz, Citizen of Luxembourg, is mentioned in the program. 'Colonel Parker' is Colonel John Parker, USAAF during WWII and U.S. Air Force after WWII until

his retirement from the service. He was a B 17 pilot during WW II. Married to a Luxembourg native, he resides part of the year in the duchy and part of the year in Florida. At all times of the year, he is a good citizen and a splendid companion.

CORRECTION:

In the last issue of the Blue Ridge, # 337 there is a letter (P. 10) from Bill Costly. He mentions Christopher J. Anderson, Editor of WWII Magazine, whom he knows. Chris sent him a copy of the magazine (March 2003) containing an article about the 80th in the Bulge.

I wrote the article ("A Rifleman's Story"). Bill's letter has my name wrong; it's Wyatt E. Barnes (not Walter E. Barnes). But far more important than that, he credits the outfit featured as B Company of the 318th. It was F Company of the 318th. F Company should get the recognition; it earned it for its ordeal during that time. In the drive to relieve Bastogne, the 1st and 2nd battalions of the 318th were assigned to the attack. Of course, B Company, in the 1st battalion, suffered heavily itself, but that trial by fire was not the subject of the article.

— Wyatt E. Barnes, F-318

305th Combat Engineers

4 September 1944

It was just another river crossing, one of the many across which the 305th Combat Engineers had assisted the 80th Division. Yet, this one was different, as Captain Alferce E. Wrenn, Commander of Company C, 305th Combat Engineers Battalion tells the story.

One sunny September morning, 4th to be exact, the time was 1130; the leading Battalion of the 319th Infantry Regiment, under the command of LT. Colonel Cheston found itself just North of Toul, France with the Moselle River to its front. Enemy resistance near Toul had been successfully bypassed. C Company was in support of the regiment clearing all obstacles as the Infantry advanced. A quick decision was made; the river was to be crossed that day, and the enemy to be taken by surprise. He was.

Plan were made quickly, but thoroughly. Captain Wrenn and Lt. Hobson, one of the platoon leaders, made a personal reconnaissance of the assault crossing site, while six large rubber floats and air compressors were brought up to the railroad embankment, at a point where a small creek flowed into the Moselle River. This creek flowed under the railroad, then under the canal, which paralleled the Moselle River, and thence into the river itself. Both the railroad and highway bridges across the river had been completely demolished by the Germans.

At 1300 all preparations were finished and the actual crossing started. The inflated boats were floated

down the creek. The Infantry, assembled behind high banks of the canal, loaded into the boats. One entire company in the first wave, rowed under the canal, straight out into the river and across. All this in a period of less than ten minutes and the enemy never knew we were crossing, till we hit the other side.

Before the last boat had even gotten back, a foot bridge had been put in over the canal, due largely to the work of Sgt. Copenetti of C Company, who swam the canal to accomplish his mission. The second and third Infantry Rifle Companies crossed the footbridge, got into the boats and crossed. All the fighting elements of the battalion were over in thirty minutes from the time the first boat of the first wave had started out.

All this while artillery fire, both friendly and enemy was falling on and near the crossing site. Enemy small arms were coming at us too, but the fast and daring crossing took most of the punch out of the enemy's fire.

To further tax our Engineers skill and courage, the Moselle River was flowing with a 10-15 MPH current at the crossing site, and had numerous whirlpools in its center. Immediately after the assault crossing was complete, all boats were taken upstream and were used in building rafts to ferry litter jeeps, ambulances, ammunition and rations. These ferries had to be built under small arms fire. Supporting Engineer units constructed two power-driven ferries, and commenced building a 464-foot Treadway bridge near the old bridge site in Toul. The remainder of the regiment used the ferries and debris at the old bridge, with ladders set up by C Company, to cross the river. By the

continued on page 17

Post 44 Company M 318th Inf.

Once again we have lost another great warrior from our ranks. Joseph Mollica who most of you know was the Bugler of the Company. How many remember this. The CO would send him off behind some sand dune while we were in Camp Laguna. Joe attended the reunion as much as his health would permit. I missed seeing him in Reading due to his being sick at that time, when I visited the Reading Post last fall. Not too many of us left... Much to my surprise I had a call from my very dear friend and comrade Jack Stumcke. Jack has move to 215 Bicentennial Hwy Apt 301, Springfield, MA 01118-9962. He had his own apartment and is on a walker. He can't leave his apartment to walk unless someone is there to help him. He walks twice a day. Jack will turn 92 this month. Write him a card and tell him he isn't forgotten...

continued from page 16

next day the entire regiment was across, and had firmly established the first 80th Division bridgehead across the Moselle River.

Ten days later Army Engineers had a 210-foot timber trestle bridge in place.

Due to the speed in effecting this crossing, our units had extremely few casualties. At no time could the enemy see any of our preparations for the assault crossing, yet the work was done in broad daylight within yards of the river.

Jim Phillips/Sect/Treas.

Co. H Post # 33 H 318th Inf

Taps has sounded for Joe Mulloy. Joe was assigned to the Mortar Platoon. Carroll Peterson, a continuous friend of Joe's represented Company H at the interment. Thank you Carroll and condolences to the Mulloy family.

Irv Robinson is awaiting medical results from his doctors. Irv keep that angel on you shoulder and we will keep you in our prayers.

Nel Ledbetter has a health problem that may keep the faithful Ledbetters on the ranch instead of attending the reunion.

Mc and Wilma are as eager as two honeymooners and ready to head for Roanoke.

I have a knee problem that slows me down, but I'll be with you in Roanoke. Oh! Yes, those golden years are great.

John and Kate Beebe are sitting on the porch and watching the tomatoes (mangos) grow. John reports that the tomatoes are extra large, over a pound, this year. Yes, the fertilizers he uses is his special blend

*So long for now, God bless
"Ohly"*

—NO REPORT—

L-318

Brett Post # 3

Reading Post # 32

Rcn Post # 37

305th Engineers Post # 40

Post # 46 Co. F - 318th Infantry

New York Post # 43

No new members on the rolls. Lost one member, John Burke, Lee Center, NY E-319, deceased 6/9/2003. Our membership high was 160, we are now down to 54.

Our big gathering in Ithaca will be over when this is received, but we have a full slate planned. Back to Albany in May 2004. Still planing our fall 2004 gathering.

All had a good time in Albany at the last gathering. All officers were re-elected, Barone, Chair and also Chaplain, Burt Marsh, Cmdr., Don Wilkinson, Vice Comdr, Rd Bredbenner, Sect. We approved and paid for a full-page ad in the 2003 Reunion Program. Cards signed for many members. Saturday's winners: Nutting's birdhouse's won by Marsh & Norry. 80th Plate to Marsh, Video's to Marinello, our first timers, fancy wine opened to Rajnicek. Sunday winners: 50-50 won by Norry, (returned half to post), Barone's big basket of goodies to your sect. (I finally won one) 80th hat to Watson, 80th Plate to Paterson, Nutting's birdhouses to Patterson, Gehman & Barone. (These are very popular and attractive.) Many nice white elephant gifts won by many.

Attending Barones', Bredbenner, Germans, McCormicks, McDonalds, Marchs, Morinellos, Norrys, Nuttings, (plus four children) Palmiettos, Pattersons, Rajniceks and Frank Watson. Session closed in good harmony as we spread about the east. Everyone behaved. We all look forward to Ithaca, end of September.

Ed Bredbenner, Sect

Post 39 DV Hqs & Hqs Co

Up to this point, 2003 has been a sad year for Post 39. On January 14, Francis Nunley, widow of Corbett Nunley passed away. After Corbett left us in 1991, Francis kept up with the doing of Post 39 through our newsletter. She kept us informed of the happenings in her family, her sons, daughters, grandchildren etc, etc.!

Henry Todd (J.A. Section) died in Oakland CA on April 6th. Henry never got to a reunion, his Law business kept him too busy, but he always made a healthy contribution to our Hospitality room, and he always said "Give all the Guys a drink or two on me."

Ralph Murnahan (Motor Officer) left us on June 14. No one in our post enjoyed the reunions as much as he did. He was our "Go-for" man, if we needed some things from the grocery store, he would go for it, or if we needed Beer or Liquor, Ralph would be there, he would help put the hospitality room together by getting chairs and extras tables. He would also tend bar if Carter Brumfield wasn't there. He enjoyed every minute of the reunions. He will be missed.

We, of Post 39, send our Prayers and Sympathy to the families of Francis Nunley, Henry Todd, and Joyce Murnahan and family.

Fred Buscarni, Sect/Treas.

Cincinnati Post # 34

NOTE: This report arrived fourteen days after the deadline of the last issue.

It is a rainy day here in KY yet we have good news for the 80th by a report from the Cincinnati Chapter. As you know we have been meeting the first Sunday of every month for years. I can't recall when we started but Betty Cammerer forwarded a list of those present at Dantes Restaurant in the Western part of Hamilton County, OH. for this meeting.

Those present for the dinner were Jean and Jessie Obel, Grace and Art Rehling, Melda Schmidt, Russell Sick, Vicky and Jack Wettig, Betty Cammerer.

Friends of the 80th, Gladys and Stan Benzinger, Karen and Daryl Cammerer and Marge and Pete.

We had a report on our missing that Lucy (Brennert) Macke and her husband Howard are feeling much better. Hope to see them soon. Also Betty replies that she is getting better every day. Lou Feldman calls Betty often and keeps himself busy all the time. We miss Lou and hope he will find time to visit with us.

Deepest sympathy to the Stack Family in the passing of Tootie Stack. She passed away in early June. Her husband was member of Cannon Company 319th Infantry.

Not much else to write except we are enjoying the spring weather here in the Ohio Valley. Write us when you can.

John T. Wettig, Sr.

Florida Post #47

I haven't heard from many of the Post members so it is my belief that everyone is in good health and enjoying the summer.

Clarence and Naomi Brockman had a visit from our 2nd Vice Commander Marvin Spencer and family. They showed them sites around Pittsburgh and getting things ready for the 2004 reunion.

Well, we joined the walking wounded. My wife and secretary Kay had some vision impairment. After a visit to our oculist a cataract was discovered. It was recommended that it be removed which may clear up the problem. However, it did not. So it was off to a retinologist who discovered a Macular Hole. This required surgery to repair. A Gas bubble replaces the fluid in the eye. During the healing process she had to keep her head face down, day and night. It was a very uncomfortable. She had no pain in the eye but sure had a pain in the neck.

Don't forget to get your reservations for our November meeting in Ocala. The dates are November 7th to 9th, 2003. It will be at the Hampton Inn, 34534 SW College Road, Ocala, FL 34474, phone (352) 854-3200. The rate remains the same as last year \$61.00. When making your reservation please use the code F80. The rate is good three day prior and after the meeting. Looking forward to seeing a lot of you there.

Francis Rajnicek, Sect.

Post # 36 3rd Bn., 317th Inf.

On June 18th Bob Smith (I) received the Legion of Honor Award in Oetrange-Centre, Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. The Legion of Honor Award presented by The Chapel of Four Chaplains publicly recognizes persons who have rendered selfless service to humanity without regard to race, religion, or creed. Bob is now a member of the Chapel's Legion of Honor and his name will become a permanent part of the Chapel's rolls. Congratulations, Bob!

Jerry Spellman (3d Battalion) and son Tim had a good trip to Luxembourg and also attended the award ceremony.

Bob Parks (L) is recuperating from a fall but still has back problems. Bob, we hope your back will continue to improve.

Bob Smith and the Barones will be attending the New York Post Meeting in September.

We welcome into Company L, Don Merkison, 8347 Knighton Way, Civerdale, GA 30296. Don came in as a replacement.

Yours truly was in the hospital due to an asthma attack and had to return to have medication monitored. Am now home recuperating. Regretfully, Rose and I will not be at the reunion this year.

Stay healthy and have a good reunion.

Bob Nathason, Sect.

Lane Hall Post # 42

Another mini reunion for the 313th has been completed. As you know, it was held at Bedford, PA. I liked the area very much. It was only about a two and half-hour drive for us. Pennsylvania Turnpike just about all the way. A little more sunshine would have made it better.

Those who attended were:

Lou Shirey, Charlie and Alice Noxon, Charlie's son and his wife. Mary and Jimmy Brinker, Mary's daughter and granddaughter, Hilda Latusek, Hilda's daughter Patty Flemming and her husband Jack, Sue (Ambrosic) Tristano and husband Jerry, Jim and Ruth Phillips and friend Helen Lang. Seventeen in all. A much larger gang than I expected. Brinkers drove the farthest, almost four hundred (400) miles. Every one appeared to have a good time. It will be determined in Roanoke if we will try another mini for 2004. Let me know what you think.

Bob Brinker had another birthday August 24. If you didn't remember, send him a late card. From what I hear not much improvement with Bob.

Best wishes to all of members with health problems. This is just about everyone. Do the best you can. Go day by day and enjoy memories of the past. These Senior Citizens' days are for the birds!

Ruth and I will be in Roanoke, God willing. Will give you some information about the 84th Annual Reunion in the next Blue Ridge. Keep in Touch.

Jim Phillips Sect/Treas.

Company L 319 Infantry

Normally this quarter's report is written after the Reunion and there is Reunion news to report. With little news from Company L members and no Reunion news this report will be brief.

On a sad note, Jim Young advised me that Dave Kirschbaum had a stroke and therefore could not join us in Roanoke.

Two other couples, the Berman's and the Soloninka's will be attending to the business of moving so had to skip the Reunion this year. They promised they would be with us in 2004.

To those who correspond with the Krehbiel's via E-mail, please note they will be off line until the first part of October.

John Balas has recently been upgraded to 40% disability. Son Andy visited from LA and son Jack has received a teaching assignment at the University of Arizona. Jack has a web site JACKBALAS.COM which shows all of his paintings. Helen continues to suffer with her back spasms.

As you may or may not know, there is now being built in Washington D.C. a WWII Memorial to honor those people who served their country during this period in time.

As a WWII veteran, you are entitled to have your name inscribed on a plaque to be kept in the Memorial for all future generations to see.

Company L members who I have entered in the Memorial to date are Jim Young, John Balas, Rudy Berman, John Flynn, Bill Siebert, Frank Soloninka, Marshall Hill,

Gayle Baker and myself. I understand that Bill Krehbiel is also entered and I'm guessing Billie made the entry.

I hope all Company L members reading this article will consider adding their plaque to this Memorial. I will do the entry for any of you who wish to be part of this National Treasure.

The entry is free and will include your name, your hometown, your rank, your unit and your service record. If you wish to add a photo, and you should, there is a \$10.00 charge.

What I will need from anyone wanting me to do the entry for them is a copy of your discharge papers, a picture and \$10.00 if you want to add a picture. The \$10.00 charge must be made through a credit card so you should make out your check to me and I will charge it against my card.

If you participate, I will return all of your material to you along with a copy of the plaque suitable for framing.

If you want to be part of this WWII Memorial, don't delay too long. The Memorial is in the finishing stages and will be dedicated on May 29, 2004.

Hank Einolf

All of the past National & Honorary Commanders are looking forward to seeing you at the 84th Annual Reunion
September 9-13, 2003 in Roanoke, Virginia

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