

**Blue Ridge 80th Division
The Service Magazine**
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OAKMONT, PA 15139-1574

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BLUE RIDGE

The Service Magazine
Volume 86, Number 345

Summer - 2005
Issue 2



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

Be sure it will **NOT**
be forgotten!

Remember....
every dollar received
before **June, 2005**
adds two to the

**80th Division
Monument Fund**



Submitted by Jeff Wignall

Deadline for the next issue is September 1, 2005



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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All communications, including articles, photos, news items for publication, changes of address, dues remittances and death notices should be addressed to the Secretary/Editor.

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8275 Hagerty Road Ashville, OH 43103-9715 / 740-474-5734

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PNC Angelo J. Barone (L-317)
Dempsey J. Prappas (317-AT)
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Albert J. Cresson (C-315 FA)
Don Davis (K-319)
George V. West (C-318)
Tom Pappas (F-318)

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1 Year; Felix Cistolo (G-317)
 2 Year; Robert N. Nathason (L-317)
 3 Year; Robert W. Smith (K-317)

2 Years
 Gerald V. Myers (G-317)
 Laverne J. Schock (F-317)
 Tom Pappas (F-318)

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

1 Year
 Melvin C. Beers (C-319)
 Richard Davis (905 FA Bn)
 Albert S. Haley (H-317)

3 Years
 George V. West (G-318)
 Andy Ferens (M-317)
 Robert J. McDonald (C-319)

COMMANDER'S REPORT



I wish to thank all the people who helped me in my term of office, and we wish the Reunion Committee success on the up coming Reunion in Columbus, OH August 24-27, 2005.

M.R. Spencer, National Commander

2005 Reunion News

Place: Marriott North, Columbus, Ohio

When: August 24-27, 2005

The reunion invitations were mailed in late March. Plans are completed to insure that your stay in Columbus, Ohio will be an enjoyable one.

Hotel reservations can be made by calling a toll free number: 1-800-228-3429. When making your reservation, inform the hotel you are reserving a room for the 80th Division Reunion. ROOM RESERVATIONS must be MADE by JULY 31, 2005.

The room rate of 78.00 per night (single or double) is plus tax. This rate will prevail for three days before and three days after the reunion.

Please complete and return your Reunion Registration form with your check made to the Reunion Chair: Walt Spangler, 8275 Hagerty Road Ashville, OH 43103 by July 31, 2005.

All we need to make this a great reunion is YOU.

Walt Spangler, Senior Vice Commander, Reunion Chairman
 Phone: 740-474-5734

Welcome New Members

Cimbaluk, Julian A-317
 1865 Port Carlow Place
 Newport Beach, CA 92660-6602
 Compliments of Herb Barwell
 Omitted from last issue

Durbin, Alvert M. 80th Rcn
 4107 HUNTING HORN CT. APT 2
 Cincinnati, OH 45255

Smith, Ellsworth K-318
 309 Carteret Terrace
 Orange, NJ 07050-2411

Memorial Fund Goal \$20,000

These people have contributed since the last issue of the Blue Ridge Newsletter. We wish to thank all that are making this Memorial possible. If I have omitted your name, please let me know. The last date of entry was 6/1/2005

| | | | |
|--|----------------|--|----------------|
| Acree, James M. | C-319 | Lenord, Henry G | H-317 |
| Anderson, James K. | Hqs-319 | Long, Harry B. | 3d Bn Surg 318 |
| (Omitted from previous Issue) | | Mansberger, Burl W. | B-318 |
| Anon | I-318 | Marsh, Burt | M-319 |
| Balas, John . | L-319 | Myers, Gerald V. | G-317 |
| Barden, Arlin | A-318 | Palombaro, Dominic F. | Hqs-317 |
| Bumgardner, Leonard | I-318 | Parks, Robert E. | L-317 |
| Campbell Lois J. In Memory of husband and father John D-305 Med. Bn | | Pfleder, Robert | CN-319 |
| Cattrell, Roy F. | I-319 | Prappas, Dempsey J. | 317-AT |
| Chuiko, Charles | B-318 | Sackela, Andrew | E-319 |
| Cicchini, Flordor | I-318 | Scacco, Albert A. | A-305 Eng |
| Cistolo, Felix | G-317 | In memory by Charles L. Falvey A-305 Eng | |
| Cleary, Richard N. | B-305 Eng | Shoemaker, Howard | I-317 |
| Conner, Richard J. | Hqs-317 | Shoemaker, Howard | I-317 2nd |
| Cotton, C.J. | L-318 | Donation | |
| Davis, Don | K-319 | Shoemaker, Judy L., Daughter of Howard | |
| De Lucas | Hq-317 | Smith, Robert W. | K-318 |
| Di Carlo, Victor J. | 2nd Bn Hqs 319 | Tansits, Charles J. Jr. | D-305th Med |
| Dolan, John J. | C-319 | In Memory of S/Sgt. William Osborne | |
| Edwards, Daniel L., Jr. | 80th Signal | KIA 12/25/44 | M-317 |
| Eightieth Rcn Troop | | Treerlinck, Constance | 305th Med Bn |
| Fischbeck, Albert W. | H-318 | Turner, Zane | H-317 |
| Frentzos, George B. | A-317 | Walls, Glenn E. | 315th FA Bn |
| Hanson, William E. | A-313 FA Bn | Assoc. In Memory of his father Orville | |
| Hayes, James H. | 2d Bn Hqs 317 | "Jiggs" Walls and his Bride Libby | |
| John, Sr. Parke H. | 319-Medic Det. | Watson, Frank J. | Hq-317 |
| Ledbetter, Oran H. | D-319 | Warren, Francis M., Friend of Shoemaker | |
| | | Yesvetz, Leo J. | L-319 |

To all of you who have made a contribution to the Memorial Fund, on behalf of the 80th Division Veterans Association, I wish to thank you for your donation whether it was large or small. However, it seems that some of you have forgotten your buddies of the war. Don't let it be said I didn't support the Memorial. I'm sure this is an oversight. This will be your last opportunity to remember your buddy and send a much-needed gift to match that of Dempsey Prappas. Won't you re-think about this? We are trying to have a Memorial in both Arlington National Cemetery and Fort Benning GA.

LIFE PLUS CLUB 2004-2005

If you sent in money and I omitted your name let me know so I may give you credit. Last date of entry 6/1/2005

| | |
|---------------------|--------|
| Dolan, John J. | C-319 |
| Foester, Richard H. | 305Eng |
| Hovey, Richard B. | E-318 |
| Pfledderer, Robert | CN-319 |
| Popolis, Rudy-Steve | M-318 |

McBRIDE SCHOLARSHIP FUND

80th Rcn. Troop
Schonely Eleanor 80th Rcn Trp
In Memory of her Husband Paul
If you paid into the McBride Fund since the last issue and I have omitted your name, send me your name so I can give you credit. Last date I entered a name was credit. Last date I entered a name was 6/1/2005
Hovey, Richard B. E-318

TRIP REPORT

Every ten years after the end of WWII in Europe, and the liberation of all concentration camps, the German Government selects one camp to celebrate the end of the war. This year, for the 60th anniversary, they selected Buchenwald near Weimar.

They normally invite former inmates from any of the camps plus veterans of the units involved in the liberation. This being the 60th anniversary of the end of WWII in Europe, it is probably the last opportunity for this celebration.

In addition to the former inmates, the Germans invited veterans of the 80th Inf. Div, 6th Armored Div, the 76th Inf. Div and the 130th Evacuation Hospital.

Ida and I made a special effort at the urging of the "U.S. Veterans Friends, Germany" to attend. There were only 8 veterans present, including Bob Harmon and his family, from the 80th. Also in attendance was Helen Patton, the granddaughter of General George Patton. Both Bob Harmon and Helen Patton gave impressive presentations at Jena University, which were well received by the student body and the faculty.

Yours truly also spoke briefly at the dedication of a new monument in Weimar, dedicated to all U.S. soldiers KIA in Thuringia and again at a reception at the Thuringia State Parliament in Erfurt.

We found the German people friendly and hospitable, as we had on previous visits. I believe that our interface with the Germans, particularly young people did a lot to further enhance relations, regardless of what goes on among politicians.

Eric Reilinger

MAIL BAG

Since November 1999 three of us (now two) have been visiting schools in Orange and Seminole counties in central Florida presenting our experiences in the Battle of the Bulge. One was in AAA, one was with the 101st Airborne surrounded at Bastogne, and I was a 2d Lt. rifle platoon leader with Company A, 318th Infantry. We have spoken to students from grade five into junior college and the University of Central Florida. Following are some of the statistics I have recorded. Note: I have participated in all the presentations while the other two have missed on some occasions. The figures are through the last school year -2003-2004. We are continuing the program this year; no figures are included for the current school year. Number of visits to schools: 195 Number of students contacted: 31,363 Individual man-hours in class: 512 Round trip miles from my home. George (Bill) Kane Co A, 318 Inf.

I've been reading our 80 Div Bulletins for many years. I just woke up. All these years I couldn't figure out why our Artillery units weren't mentioned, You can't put something in the bulletin unless you get news from us. I have been noting about the deaths.

I was in the 905th FA Battalion. I was a T/SGT. A couple days after we arrived in France, Lt. Edgar Wilson and I were blown out of a Church Steeple in St. Gemmes, Fr.. Next day Col. Browning called me up to his HQ. We were short an Officer, I should take over a Forward Observations job for a couple days. I was there till the end, except the times I was in the Hosp. with wounds. I was in 905th FA Bn, Btry B. I directed Artillery for the 2nd Bn of the 319th Inf. Numerous times I would have to take over when the Officers were wounded or killed. Does anyone from the 319 remember something like this? I would love to hear from anyone remembering this, or whatever they remember. Thanks Les Schlager lesterj Schlager@aol.com

C. J. Cotton, 746 High Hill Creek Road, La Grange, TX 78945 writes, I was captured at Argentan but escaped 2 days later to the Polish Army. I was with them when they made contact with the Americans and the Canadians witch closed the pocket on the Germans. I never did get by to my old Company "L" 318th.

Chaplains Wife Passes Away

It is my sad duty to tell you of the passing of Dr. Lydia Arlene Sitler Woods, 85 the wife of our dear Chaplain John. She had been in a nursing home for awhile and on April 26, at 2:20 PM she passed away. The obit was a long one, much too long to include it here. She was a Mennonite and she born in Canada and will be buried in Canada. John met her while both were stationed in Korea, and married in 1981. Cards may be sent to John at 339 E Jamestown Road, Greenville, PA 16125.

The Ladies Auxiliary had another PNP to pass away, Marcella Haley, wife of Sid, of Company H-317. She had been in the hospital for a couple months and took pneumonia and died on 17 May 2005.

HELP WANTED

My father, **Clarence Wesley Elwood, Jr.**, of the North Side of Pittsburgh, was a member of the 80th Rcn Trp, 80th Division in WWII. He was wounded on the 26th of November 1944 somewhere in Germany I believe.

I would like to know if anyone remembers him so I might talk with them. He passed away in March of 1977. I am also interested in finding out exactly where he was when wounded.

Thank you so much. Dorothy Elwood
78 Broad St. Apt. A, Leetsdale PA 15056-1110, ph: 724-385-0613

Bernd Schmidt is again requesting any information you may have on Buckenwald. Forward it to the Editor who will see that he gets it. Anyone of the 1st or 2nd Battalion 319th who was in Weimar on 12 April 1945 who can furnish any detail of their activities on that day will be welcome. Was it Col. Bandy or Col. Costello who accepted the surrender of Weimar?

National Ladies Auxiliary Members!

Please, if you have moved or no longer want Auxiliary information on Auxiliary activities let Helen Beers know, also, if there has been a death of an Auxiliary Member please notify Helen Beers with this information.

We need to be able to keep our records updated & with postage going up when we get sent back to us an envelope it cost the Auxiliary extra money. If your 2005 dues are due please send your check to her also.

Send all information & checks to:

Helen Beers 80th Division National Ladies Auxiliary Treasurer
2867 Meadow Street PO Box #7 Natrona Heights, PA 15065

Hope to see you all in Columbus at the reunion! Kay

Secretary's REPORT

FAX: (412) 828-7651 • E-MAIL ADDRESS: divinf801@verizon.net

Look at the front cover of the Newsletter. If your date of Dues is other than 2005, you owe dues. The Executive Council in 1998 ruled for anyone in arrears more than three years be dropped. I must have something toward your dues or you may dropped.

TAPS

Baird, Charles H. C-319/MP
153 Jamaica Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15229 11/14/04
Reported by Wife Lottie

Beers, Melvin C. C-319
PO Box 7
Natrona Heights, PA 15065-0007
Rptd by Wife Helen 4/2/05

Bergin, Francis X. F-317
25 Stuben Street
Waterbury, CT 06708
Rptd by Wife Kay 2/6/05

Bucher, Peter J. Jr. 780th Ord
Mail returned marked Deceased
Unknown

Carlson, Hollis D. Hq-318
094 S 13th Ave. Apt 503
Blair, NE 68008-2269
Rptd by Wife Madeline 2/27/05

Clements, C. D.
525 Grandview Avenue
Camp Hill, PA 17011-1813
Rptd by R.B. Wadley 3/8/05

Covey, Rodger L. F-318
447 Piltz Ave.
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 5448-6136
Rptd by Robert Fasnacht 3/22/04

Dodd, Richard P. Hq 318/317
61 West Bay Drive
Cocoa Beach, FL 32031-2401
Date not given / Rptd by Gerald Myers

Dyson, Robert C. Hqs 2d Bn 317
925 W. Wilson Ave.
Mooresville, NC 26115-8811
Rptd by wife Eugenia 2/18/05

Hollingsworth, Owen B. 80th Rcn
Returned mail marked Deceased

Martinovich, Pete I-318
496 Leroy Street
Johnstown, PA 15906-1461
Rptd by Wife 8/4/04

Palmietto, Dominick G-317
192 Grand Street
Croton on Hudson, NY 10520-2328
Rptd by Felix Cistolo 5/1/05

Radock, Richard C-305 Medic
107 Smithfield Street
Belle Vernon, PA 15012-2629
Rptd by Wife Velma 12/21/05

Randulich, Michael "Randy" C-318
Chicago, IL
Rptd by John Eckrich 4/22/05

Rider, John E-318
3634 Red Cloud Place
El Paso, TX 79936 6/24/2004
Rptd by Wife

Robellard, William J. Hqs-305 Medic
1584 Lyndhurst Road
Lyndhurst, OH 44124
Rptd by daughter Linda 3/10/05

Tirdil, Joesph J. D-319
Norvelt, PA
Rptd by Raymond Fritz

Walker, Robert M. S2-317
12020 Clubhouse Drive
Fishers, IN 46038-2742
Rptd by Bill Costley 4/16/05

Update on the 80th Division Memorial

Fort Benning, GA

1. In early March, the Florida Chapter approved the monument design at its Reunion meeting.
2. After the Florida meeting, Chairman O'Neil and committee members Futch and Burrows met with Fort Benning's museum officials in Columbus, Georgia.
3. Site for monument was selected. Application was submitted. Final approval was given in May 2005. Contract is to be signed by Archer Futch.
4. Present plan is to place the monument in front of the old museum with a Formal dedication in September 2006. If the new park and museum are completed it will be placed there. If not, the monument will be removed at no cost to the park at a later date.
5. With the dedication in mind, Bob Burrows set the reunion at the Columbus, Georgia Hilton in September 2006.
6. Cost of the monuments - Columbus Monument Company.
 - a. Cost of five-foot stone with smooth front and rough or apex sides \$4,300
 - b. Cost of 12" x 42" x 20" foot stone is \$1,000
 - c. Cost of Pad and site preparation at Fort Benning - \$2,500
 - d. Total cost with shipping and other incidental costs is approximately \$10,000

Arlington National Cemetery - Arlington, Virginia

1. Letter sent September 13, 2004 to the Superintendent of Arlington National Cemetery.
2. Reply received September 24, 2004 advising that a Joint Resolution by Congress is required to place a Memorial Stone of this type in Arlington, Virginia.
3. Numerous letters were sent to Congressmen and Senators without positive results but still pending.
4. A contact by Cecelia Smith, descendant of the 80111 Division Veterans to Congressman Tim Murphy of Pennsylvania was received with a positive reaction and he is willing to present the resolution for action to Congress.
5. It was discovered that our Commanding General Horace McBride is buried approximately 20 yards down the road from John F. Kennedy's gravesite.
6. In order to replace his stone, approval must be obtained from his surviving next-of-kin.
7. Bob Murrell did extensive research to locate his closest surviving relative. The search found John Saxey, first cousin, and he has given approval to replace the McBride marker with our Memorial Stone.
8. Through a personal contact, this information has been presented to the American Legion National office for their assistance.
9. Hope to have the approval by our August Reunion.

*Respectively Submitted,
Eugene O'Neil Committee Chairman.*

Company H 319th Post # 33

Summer is upon us and it is time to get a newsletter off to the Blue Ridger.

The Columbus, Ohio reunion should be a very good one. I still remember the last one (years ago). The visit to the German Village was unforgettable, of course, Clem Fujawa, for some reason was frequently struck with the bill. Thanks Clem!! Ed Crook, the master at the key board always found a piano and pepped up the group with some good ol' oldies, most of them clean. Ed not only entertained Co. H, but also members of all the Division units. We miss you Ed.

I heard from Nick Grossi. He and Ginny moved from Mercer Island to across the bridge to Bellevue, Washington. Both plan to join us in Columbus.

Reggie and Karol are still in Iowa, awaiting a new home in Arkansas. I do not think either is in a hurry to move, as the golf course is almost a daily visit.

Lola Kudrna, Karol's mom, has returned from her hide out in Florida to her home in Iowa.

Orin Ledbetter says he and Debbie are planning to join the group. Orin says his part of li'l Texas is as dry as a day-old spit ball and that his stock is not developing into Big Mac's.

PNC Irv Robinson and Hilda plan to attend and that Irv is ready to swap yarns with anyone interested. We are all ears, Irv!

I do hear from John and Kate Beebe. They like most of us are running on Doctor's advice and Rx's. John lives near Joe Reichle. Joe was a 2nd platoon machine gunner. John reports that Joe has planted 15 pound of onion sets. Yes, you read right, fifteen pounds! The Reichles, having eight children need the large garden.

Bill and Wilma McKinzie will join us to greet all the in coming members in Ohio. Wilma plans to visit the Basket Company. Does she have any company?

Jerry, Penny and John, at the present time, are planning to attend the gathering and join in the company merriment.

Sad news, C.D. Clements passed away. C.D is well remembered to all Co. H members and many other in the Division. Before induction he took time off to marry his high school sweetheart, Louise Stetler. The marriage survived until his passing. They have three children. He climbed the ladder of success from private to 1st Lieutenant and, later in the Army Reserves to the rank of Major. While servicing in Company H, he was assigned to the position of reconnaissance Sergeant. C.D. and I had PNC Frank Sacamandi as runner and Vito Donofrio as Driver. The mission of the reconnaissance group was to select positions and targets for the machine gunners and to assist the Mortar Platoon FO's in selecting targets in support for the rifle companies. I may have been the Lieutenant in charge but some how always got the short end of rations and any other convenience. No, I was very proud to have had everyone in my command.

I would like to hear of any information leading to the contact of Donofrio. Hope to see Ken and Barb and would like from them to join Company H in the festivities.

God Bless, Ohly

As Commander of Cincinnati Post # 34, I have finally got around to giving my report. Our "Get Together" for the breaking of bread, indulging in good food, friendship and hospitality. We met at the Greyhound Grill, Fort Mitchell, KY with the following in attendance. The Obels, Wettig's, Benzinger's (?) Mel Schmidt, for a total of six people. We had expected PNC Russell Sick of Hamilton, OH but for whatever reason he didn't show. I know he wasn't at the Reds ball game as they were out of town.

We would like to say "hello" to all our members that could not make the meeting we missed you.

Our meetings bring back memories of long ago train ride across the US with induction into the Armed Forces, evenings spent at the PX, traveling across the Atlantic and returning from the service. What memories of past happenings. I imagine our stories are just about the same as the other Posts of our Association.

News is scarce these days and I know we are old and fail to contact our fellow brothers in arms and I apologize for such action.

We should make every effort these days to remember those who have passed on and those that are disabled and cannot attend our "Get together" no matter where they are located wherever that may be.

Now may I say "God Bless all of you." Keep faith in our great country and may we that still survive always remember those that made the Supreme Sacrifice. I'll get off the soapbox and say Vic and I are now at home. Vic was hospitalized for a couple months and we thank God for her recovery. As for myself, I am still going strong. I am able to get up each morning with no pain so to all members of our Association I wish all of you Good Health, Long Life, and pleasant memories of times passed.

Sincerely, John Wettig, Sr. Commander

305th Engineers Post # 40

Most of my mail arrived around Christmas time, but there's been nothing recently. So, this hello is to all who have not written and I'll be brief because all I can say is, I've been to a couple Florida Post meetings, and have been to all the monthly Cincinnati Post dinners, but the annual 80th Division reunion may be my only opportunity to visit with the 305th Engineers that may attend that affair. The invitations are out for Columbus August 24/27, 2005. We all have to make an effort to get there so PLAN now and don't ask WHY? If sixty years of comradeship isn't reason then I can't answer "WHY?" The Engineers hospitality room will be waiting for you

Russ Sick

Rcn Post # 37

Word from Eleanor Schonely is that her neighbor had a fire, after workmen left some hot tools causing her to have a lot of smoke and water damage and the settlement of the claim.

In addition she still is on a walker after a Hip Replacement and Colon Cancer, thank Heaven was not cancerous. Says with all her problems, she needs to tie a few loose ends up and get her boxes in order.

Post #44 Company M 318th

Happy to report I have had a phone call from both Jack Stumcke and Lloyd Jonnes. Jack reports he is doing very well and still needs to have someone with him whenever he leaves his room. Said to tell all his Buddies Hello. Lloyd works tracing Ancient Head Stones and finds the history of them. He is working on some Volume #70 something or other. He and his wife Lynn are doing fine. I have also heard from Allen Waller, he and Tommie wants everyone to know they are doing fine.

Had a surprise 89th birthday gift of a dinner for Doris and I at the Oakmont Country Club, from a couple of people who are working overseas at the Stryker Supply Base. We then on 26 May went back to IN and KY see our folks. Doris people had called 22 people and all were there for a mini reunion while I had some thirty cousins I haven't seen in over forty years. Good times were had on both sides of the family.

Bob M

3rd Battalion 317 Post # 36

A few notes from our members: *Bob Smith* (K) attended the Legion of Valor Reunion in California. *Angelo* (L) and *Kay Barone* and *Bob Smith* were at the New York Post meeting in Albany, May 26-30. *Bob Moorhead* (L) had knee replacement. We wish Bob a speedy recovery.

We are saddened to report the passing of three faithful and supportive wives of the 80th and extend our most sincere condolences to the family. We are sorry of Nancy Ann Pierce death notice did not arrive in time to be included in the previous issue of the BLUE RIDGE. —

Nancy Arm Pierce (Leroy K. Pierce - L) January 31, 2005. Nancy was a nurse at Morning Sun Community School. She started the Louisa County Public Health Nursing Service and served as nurse/administrator in this public health agency from 1967 to her retirement in 1992. Nancy was an accomplished vocalist, singing solos as well as duets, trios, quartets and choirs. She is survived by her husband, Leroy, three son's grandchildren and a great-grandson. Leroy K. Pierce, 200 S. Church Street, Box 37, Morning Sun, IA 52640-9420.

Lucille Clark (O. E. Clark - I) February 20, 2005. Lucille was in a Nursing Home for a year. Notice from Niece, Susan Clark Williarrs, 441 Gentlemen Ridge Road, Blairs, VA 24527.

Elsie McGrath (Donald McGrath - I) April 23, 2005. Elsie was in a Nursing Home for two months. Ellie Schaub received notice from daughter, Mrs. Nick Smith (Becky), 4983 Deis Hills Road, N. W., Dover, OH 44622.

Our prayers and good wishes are with those who are ill and have physical problems. Please send any news so I can include it in the column. My address is: Newtown Towers 204-B, 3400 West Chester Pike, Newtown Square, PA 19073.

Have a great reunion in Columbus!, Bob Nathason. Sect.

New York Post # 43

By the time you have received this we would have held our annual Spring meeting at the Tuff Inn, Albany NY.

All officers were re-elected and things went well. We finally had our trip to New York State History Museum in Saratoga, NY, a few miles up the interstate. This goes back to state of our great USA Country. Fran and Harry Nutting were our hosts.

Next meeting is Geneva, NY one of the Finger Lakes in the area. This is Monday through Thursday gathering, October 10-13, 2005. This is right in the great wine country. Around these lakes are over 50 successful wineries along with many great fruits. I know many stock up on both at this time. We will hold a short gathering and our usual White Elephant Raffle. We will have our noontime luncheon followed by our gathering in our hospitality room. We need your support or we will not continue receiving these Free Hospitality Rooms. We must have good numbers so, mark your Calendars -plan in advance.

I am sad to report the loss of one of our long-time post members, and a real active member in our National, Dominick Palmietto, Company G-317th, from Croton-on-Hudson, NY.

Hope to see a good reply for our meeting in Geneva next October.

Ed Bredbenner Sect

Lane Hall Post # 42

It was quite a winter we had and I am sure all of you are really happy to be in the Spring/summer weather by now. I have my fill of shoveling snow and trying to keep the place in order but I guess we all had it this year. Let's hope the next winter will be a little better.

I did not get this news until I had already mailed my copy in to the Blue Ridge. Mary Brinker's son Jim, who is such a great part of our group and has been attending reunions for so many years, had a stroke in February. Jim has always enjoyed being with all of us and does look forward to our get-to-gathers. Let us all say a prayer that will be o.k. and be able to join us again.

In a later note I received from Mary, she told me Jim was able to go home, he was talking now where as when he first had the stroke he wasn't able to speak, he is working with a speech therapist and is doing much better.

Audrey Blocker also was operated on in February and is recovering at her children's homes in Ohio. Audrey hopes to be with us in August.

Charlie Noxon was in the hospital in February, Alice wrote that he had to have a pacemaker put in. He is home now and we can add him to our prayers. On March 1, Alice called and told me Charlie was doing fine, she said the doctor's say he can do everything he used, to do before this happened. Charlie, we love you and take care.

Also heard in March, that Jerry Tristano fell and fractured his ankle. Sue says he was in a cast. Jerry, we want to see you at the reunion you're one of us now.

April 16, 2005 receive a card from Lou Shirey that Charles Kingsolver, one of our members from Indiana had passed away. Our sympathies go out to his family.

Late Easter Sunday received a call from Walter Stec, he has not been feeling well, and while driving, his leg stiffened, and he had to have someone else continue the driving. I told him to see his Doctor as soon as possible, to find out why that was happening, and he promised to do that, and get back to me on the results. I do hope he is

feeling better, and the thought maybe some of his friends could drop him a line.

Received E-mail from Ann Hatcher on 3/31. Lee has had a new pacemaker-defibrillator battery installed. She said Lee was doing better after being monitored for a few hours, and even though he had gained 6 pounds of water in 5 days, they had been working on getting rid of that. Our love Lee, and see you at the reunion.

Was sitting with my little dog, reading the paper on Sunday, April 3rd and the phone rang and it was Dom Abbruzzese calling. It was good to hear from him, he told me about some of his plans he has been making, and some of them were to go to Henderson, NV to visit Arthur Skinner one of his old friends from the Army. I thought that was great, Arthur was a very good friend of my husband. I am sure Dom will enjoy visiting with him. Also, Dom and his family will be visiting the area in Europe where the 313th was active during the war, I am sure they will enjoy the trip. I made that trip with Ed many years ago, and enjoyed seeing the various cities and towns. Dom will see all of us at the reunion in August. I am sure everyone is looking forward to it this year.

Received a letter from William Hanson in Largo, FL today, April 12, 2005 and was sorry to hear that he would not be attending the reunion in August. He has not been feeling well, and the Doctor does not think he should travel. Bill also sent a generous check to be forwarded on to the 80th Memorial Fund. Thank you Bill for the check. I will send it on for you, and we hope you are feeling better and get to see you at the next reunion.

Jim Phillips called during the last week in April and said to inform everyone that we will be having a Hospitality Suite for four nights. It will be nice hanging out together and getting to know what everyone has been doing etc. See you there.

I hope that all of you are doing well. I want to remind you, if there is anything to report, or you would like to have printed here, please call or write me. Francis E. Poletti, 28 Arnold Lane, Rowayton, CT 06853, 203-855-1928, until next time keep well and let me hear from you.

I came across this when I was looking at some old albums of the 313th, and I don't know if everyone has a copy, so I thought I would include it in my write up this month:

THE 313TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION

"The 313th FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action against the enemy on 12-21 September 1944. The 313TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION supported the attack of the 317th Infantry Regiment" in crossing of the Moselle River the morning of 12 September 1944. At 1800 on that date the 313TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION crossed the Moselle to positions in the vicinity of Bezaumont. That night and the following 4 days the forces that crossed the river were repeatedly attacked by tanks and infantry supported by artillery, mortars, and machine guns. These attacks were in all cases repulsed, on two occasions only after penetration of the firing positions of the 313TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION. On 14 September 1944 the situation became critical. An attack by enemy infantry and tanks supported by heavy concentrations of mortar and artillery was directed against our lines. This attack succeeded in penetrating deep into our positions. Without hesitation, and based upon a sound plan, all men of the 313TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION, including Service battery and Headquarters personnel, except the minimum necessary to serve the pieces, were deployed as infantry. Making use of bazookas, machine guns, carbines, and their primary weapons, the 313TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION, from their defensive positions, repulsed the attack

without the loss of material. Two enemy tanks were destroyed in this action. The 313 FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION was the only artillery unit east of the Moselle River during the period 12-16 September 1944. During these 4 days, the battery positions were repeatedly subjected to small-arms machine-gun, mortar, and artillery fire. During the early morning hours of 16 September 1944 an attack by tanks and infantry, directed principally against the left (north) of the front lines, was repulsed by the infantry supported by 313TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION and some infantry elements had been forced back across the river. The 313TH FIELD ARTILLERY distinguished itself in battle by extraordinary heroism, exhibited such gallantry, determination, and esprit de corps as to set it apart and above units participating in the same engagement. The magnificent courage and devotion to duty displayed by all members of the 313TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION are a credit and inspiration to the armed forces of the United States.

Florida Post # 47

Our March meeting in our relocated hotel is now history. It was a new facility to us. They had sufficient facilities, pool, exercise room, restaurant etc. The staff was not familiar with us so a few glitches were bound to happen but nothing to ruin our pleasure. The Florida Chamber of Commerce let us down this year the temperature was a little cool. The total attendance was comparable to last year. We missed a few of our regulars but we picked up several new people and quests. One of the high lights of the function was the banquet, the food was excellent. A number of pleasant compliments were addressed to the appropriate personnel. Our drawings were held with ample prizes and money.

We had our usual music group it is always good but at this gathering it was better, we were provided with an additional member, it improved their performance. We hope it will be a permanent addition.

I am sorry to report the loss of two members of our group Dominick Palmietto and Marcella Haley, PNP. We extend our sympathies to their families. On our sick list is George West who is home from a stay in the hospital, Hope he will be back to his old self soon.

Before leaving Florida for our more pleasant summer up north, we along with George and Jean Bell checked on the progress being made on the Holiday Inn Oceanfront, the one building most of the extensive hurricane damage seems to be repaired. The other building is still being worked on. We will check again as soon as we get down this fall. We expect it to be completed by the end of this year. We are still planning our March meeting there next year.

At our place in Florida we could only get one estimate and it was ridiculously high. Workers in the area are coming from as far as Wyoming and paying \$200 a night for motel rooms. Most motels in the area are filled to capacity. Just before heading north we finally got the small amount of inside damage repaired, the outside which was not as bad as first reported to us will wait until this fall when we return.

Now to more pleasant things, Our Fall Meeting will be October 27, 2005 to October 30, 2005. It will be at the Hampton Inn, 3434 College Road, Ocala, FL 34474. Phone (352) 854-3200. Our code when making reservations will be D80.

Hoping to see you all in Columbus, Ohio in August at the National Reunion.

Francis Rajnicek Sect.

Company L, 319th Infantry

How quickly the days go by as we age. Seems like it was only yesterday and we were welcoming in the New Year 2005 and here we are already in June. In just a few short weeks we will be together again greeting old friends and reliving our experiences in World War II.

This report starts out on a sad note as we all mourn the passing of our dear friend Helene Soloninka who passed on to her new life on April 10th. Maria and I represented the company at a wake service held on the 17th of April at the Beck-Givnish funeral home in Levittown PA. I know you all join me in offering our sincere condolences to Frank and his family on the occasion of this great loss. Pattie Garran, Frank's daughter will be soon moving to Florida to take care of her dad.

Betts and John Flynn were caretakers for two of their Ethiopian grand kids for 10 days and had a visit from a Vermont friend just after the grannies left. Betts said she and John are exhausted from the ordeal.

Bill and Billie Krehbiel are feeling fine and are doing catch-up work on the lawn and garden. They have been on the go again and have been to Michigan and the Ozarks and have been attending several graduations, one north of Columbia Mo. for a niece. Bill and Billie are eagerly awaiting the reunion in August.

Rudy and Carol Berman passed on the good news that their oldest daughter Karen is to be married in July. Rudy said he and Carol are well and enjoying the beautiful spring weather. They are looking forward to being with us in Columbus.

I received a nice letter from Bill Siebert and he said he can sympathize with Lou Blatz. Bill also lost his microwave and thinks there is a virus going around.

John Balas E-mailed that he and Helen celebrated their 57th wedding anniversary with a quiet dinner. He said the marriage has lasted 57 years because they learned to give and take. Helen is still suffering from leg and back pain and dizziness from the medicine she must take for the leg and back pain. (A vicious circle). John is having foot problems and suspects he may have a heel spur. John said he is limping around on tired old legs. If heath does not get worse for them, they expect to be in Columbus for the reunion.

Fred Eckelmann Jr. has been bringing his dad to the reunions for the last few years and we hope they will be joining us this year.

No word from Lou Blatz but he is a tough old bird and I'm assuming he is well and will be coming to Columbus with Richard.

Sylvia Salesby, Jim Young's right hand "man" advised me that Jim is out of town so I have nothing to report regarding the "boss" it is very difficult to write this report with little input from Company L membership. I would appreciate it if any Company L members reading this report would take a few minutes each quarter and drop me a note regarding their activities and health status. My address is 9218 Twin Hill Lane, Laurel Md. 20708-2507.

We want to hear about you. Hank Einolf

THE NANCY BRIDGEHEAD

Foreword

I consider the crossing of the Moselle River in September 1944; the circling of Nancy, France, causing its fall; and the establishment of the Nancy Bridgehead as one of the most efficient and effective operations of the XII Corps. The old and well-known fortified bastion of Nancy and Toul, almost completely circled by the natural obstacle of the Moselle and Neurthe Rivers, was strongly defended. The Germans had been given a respite from the relentless pursuit of July and August and had time to prepare. However, the double envelopment effected by forced crossing of the five tributaries of the Moselle south and southeast of Nancy by the 35th Division and the subsequent crossing of the Moselle to the north by the 80th Division, followed by the encirclement of Nancy to the east as far as Chateau Salins by the 4th Armored Division caused such confusion far behind the German lines that the city was evacuated, allowing a task force of the 35th Division to occupy it with practically no opposition. During this operation the action of the Combat Command A of the 4th Armored Division was particularly noteworthy. This command had much experience in driving deep into enemy-held territory and in working well behind the German lines since it led the break-through in Avranches, 31 July 1944. In this operation it added its laurels. Its ride around Nancy is comparable on a modern scale to Stuart's ride around Richmond with the difference that Clarke's ride was largely instrumental in causing the fall of Nancy and played the key part in a well-conceived and well-executed plan. The bridgehead produced from this operation was the base from which the drive against the SAAR was launched in November 1944.

M. S. Eddy Major General, Former Commander, XII Corps.

Introduction

In the past war many fine armored units emerged before the termination of hostilities; one of the early exponents of daring thrusts through enemy lines into his rear areas was the 4th Armored Division. For weeks on end in 1944 it had been the "farthest east" of the allied divisions swarming across FRANCE. This move across FRANCE was culminated in mid-September by its double envelopment of NANCY, establishing the bridgehead from which the winter offensive of the Third Army was launched in early November. This narrative deals with the part Combat Command A played in this action.

There are many missions suitable to the characteristics peculiar to the armored division. This action brings out several of these "typical suitable" missions and at least one that is not generally considered proper employment for armored. All of which may prove nothing at all, but does serve to give weight to the arguments advanced by some of the exponents of armor, that it can operate anywhere and perform any mission that other troops can.

This particular action began with an attack on a narrow front to achieve a break-through to be followed by a period of exploitation (during part of which time the combat command operated while isolated behind German lines); then came an attack against enemy armor as a matter of self-preservation, an active defense of an area against superior forces, and finally a protracted period of dug in static defense. This last is one that an armored unit would rather not engage in, but is one that it can do if the necessity arises.

Situation and Mission, 12 September 1944

Situation, XII Corps

The XII Corps was drawn up on the west bank of the MOSELLE River with the 2nd Cavalry Group covering the south flank, the 35th Infantry Division in the vicinity of TOUL, the 80th Infantry Division at DIEULOUARD, the 4th Armored Division, less CCA at VAUCOULEURS and CCA at PRAGNY. After twelve days delay, imposed by a shortage of gasoline and other vital supplies, the corps was poised to continue its drive to the east. It will be seen later that this twelve-day delay was to contribute much to the benefit of the German forces and to the discomfort of the allied forces.

XII Corps Mission

The mission of the XII Corps for the immediate future was to cross the MOSELLE RIVER on a wide front, capture NANCY, and continue on to the east to establish a bridgehead over the SAAR RIVER in the vicinity of SARREGUEMINES. The corps advance was set for early morning of 13 September.

The 2nd Cavalry Group was to protect the south flank of the corps.

The 35th Infantry Division was to advance through the FORET de HAYE, capture NANCY, and continue to the east in the direction of CHATEAU-SALINS.

The 80th Infantry Division was to expand its shallow bridgehead over the MOSELLE RIVER at DIEULOUARD and continue to the east in the direction of DELME while covering the north flank of the corps from the strong German forces defending METZ, which was under attack by the XX Corps.

The 79th Infantry Division was to move to the east in the direction of LUNEVILLE but was not scheduled for serious commitment in this attack. Not long after this action the 79 came under control of the Seventh Army and saw heavy fighting in the FORET de PARROY (due east of LUNEVILLE).

The 4th Armored Division was to by-pass NANCY in two columns to the north and south, seize the high ground in the CHATEAU-SALINS area to block the exits from NANCY, and be prepared to continue the advance across the SAAR RIVER in the vicinity of SARREGUEMINES.

Combat Command A Mission

CCA was to pass through the bridgehead of the 80th Infantry Division with the objective the high ground in the vicinity of ARRACOURT. There it was to cover the roads leading east from NANCY to prevent the escape of German forces retreating from that city in the face of the assault by the 35th Infantry Division. Since CCB (which was to be followed by the rest of the division) had many river crossings to make on its route south of NANCY, it was felt that CCA had a much better chance of getting to the east of the city first, hence the choice of the objective.

The Penetration Phase 13-14 September

When CCA received its order late on the afternoon of 12 September, it was engaged in preparations for a separate crossing near PAGNY. Upon receipt of the order mentioned previously, these preparations had to be broken off and new plans perfected on short notice. First of all, Captain Trover, who commanded Troop D of the 25th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, the mechanized cavalry troop attached to the combat command was sent for and given the mission of moving his troop to

the bridgehead and of establishing contact with the infantry already there. D Troop started this movement at about 1800 in the evening, arriving at DIEULOUARD at about 2100. Along with Captain Trover went Captain Burns, liaison officer of the combat command, to establish liaison with the headquarters of the 80th Infantry Division, acquaint them with the plans of the combat command, and complete the arrangements for passing through the bridgehead at 0600 on the following morning. Also with Captain Trover went guide parties from the other units of the command to mark the route for the night march which was to follow.

The troop composition and order of march used on both the 13th and 14th was approximately as follows:

Reconnaissance

Troop D, 25th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron (Mechanized)

37th Tank Battalion Column

37th Tank Battalion (-) Company B, 53rd Armored Infantry Battalion, 66th Armored Field Artillery Battalion, Combat Command A Headquarters, Division Artillery Headquarters, Platoon, Company C, 24th Armored Engineer Battalion, Battery, 191st Field Artillery Battalion (155mm How)

53rd Armored Infantry Column

Reconnaissance Platoon, 53rd Armored Infantry Battalion, Company C, 53rd Armored Infantry Battalion, Battery A, 94th Field Artillery Battalion, Battalion Headquarters, 53rd Armored Infantry Battalion, 191st Field Artillery Battalion (155mm How) (-) Company A, 53rd Armored Infantry Battalion, Company C, 24th Engineer Battalion (-), Service Company, 53rd Armored Infantry Battalion 166th Engineer Column, Company A, 166th Combat Engineer Battalion, 1st Battalion 318th Infantry Regiment (Motorized) Company A, 46th Armored Medical Battalion, Combat Command Trains and Company A, 126th Ordnance Battalion.

The commanding Officer of the 166th Combat Engineer Battalion was placed in command of the 166th Engineer Column, which included a battalion of infantry from the 80th Infantry Division.

This engineer officer had worked with the combat command before, and his capabilities were well known. The battalion of infantry was unknown to the combat command commander; hence the seemingly strange command setup.

The main body of the command started its movement to the bridgehead at 0400 on the morning of the 13th. Soon thereafter the combat commander received word from Captain Trover that he had not been permitted to cross into the bridgehead during the night, and had planned to cross at 0600. But shortly after 0400, German force of infantry, reinforced with some light self-propelled guns, had launched an attack against the American Infantry holding the bridgehead and was driving it back toward the river. He would keep the combat commander informed of the situation in the bridgehead and would continue to press for permission to cross the river into the bridgehead as soon as possible, in order to get first hand information on the situation. The combat commander's reply was to approve this plan and to add that he would proceed at once to the bridge sites, where Captain Trover was to be prepared to report to him on request. The combat Commander then worked his way up the column, picking up on the way the commanding officer of the 37th tank Battalion, the leading battalion in column. These commanders reached the bridge shortly before 0700. At DIEULOUARD the MOSELLE has two channels and a barge canal running parallel to the river at that point.

In the meantime, the main column continued its march and by 0700 had began to pull off the road between GRISCOURT (west of DIEULOUARD) and DIEULOUARD to await clarification of the situation in the bridgehead and orders from the combat commander. Part of the artillery of the command went into firing positions just west of DIEULOUARD to support the crossing of the main column if it became necessary to fight in the bridgehead.

At this point it may be well to briefly outline the organization of the staff functioning and chain of command as applied in Combat Command A. It had been found early in the campaign that, due to the swift movement of events, it was necessary to establish a division of responsibility and permit a latitude of decision to staff officers and subordinate commanders that at first glance appeared radical. On closer examination, however, the advantage of this system became apparent. It permitted the officer on the spot and in full knowledge of the situation to make a decision quickly and take action when it was most needed and when it would do the most good. This was the teamwork that resulted from training closely together and becoming fully acquainted with each other.

Within the Combat Command Headquarters, the commander looked forward while the executive officer looked to the rear. The intelligence officer, S-2, worked directly under the operations officer, S-3, and both were directly responsible to the commander. Thus when the commander was forward along the column, he kept in direct communication with the S-3 and transmitted through him most tactical instructions to subordinate commanders. In some cases he gave orders direct to the subordinate commanders and notified the S-3 of his actions. When the instructions of the commander were general in nature the S-3 worked out the details to fit the situation and transmitted them to the units without further confirmation from the commander. The executive officer was responsible for the marching of the column, keeping it closed up or "coiled" off the road and dispersed when the head was halted or stopped, and for all the administrative work of the command, such as the general supervision. He kept in direct communication with the division headquarters, forwarding reports and receiving orders from the command, and in the absence of the commander became responsible for the tactical operation of the command. The Executive, S-3, and the S-2 were close together in the column, and during the course of every day consulted frequently. The supply officer, S-4, was in direct command of the trains, marched them at the rear of the combat column, and handled the general supervision of the attached units. In his column he had the service companies of units, the attached Maintenance Company, and as protection a platoon of antiaircraft artillery. He reported to and received his orders directly from the executive officer. The plans of all the staff sections were correlated at the start of each operation, and each night adjustments were made in the projected plans in accordance with results of the day's actions and the prospects for the following day.

Subordinate commanders were allowed the greatest amount of responsibility. The commanders were given assignments and allowed to carry them out as the situation dictated. They were given a job to do and, knowing what was expected of them, they never hesitated doing what was necessary to get the job done, with no delay because of checking with the commander over details.

Thus when word received that there was trouble in the bridgehead the combat commander was able to move immediately to the troubled spot without waiting to discuss the situation with his staff members or to give them instructions. The S-3 notified the units of the situation and instructed them to be prepared to fight in the

bridgehead. The leading force would make the initial attack if required and would be supported by the next force in column if help should be needed. The division artillery commander moved the rear artillery elements forward and put them in position on the west side of the river to support the attack, leaving the forward battery free to follow immediately into the bridgehead for support there if need. As the head of the column approached DIEULOUARD without being able to cross as yet, the executive officer moved each succeeding element off the road into assembly areas to free the road and have the command gathered for any contingency.

At the bridge site the situation was tense! By 0615 German infantry was fighting for control of the easternmost of the three bridges, and it appeared probable that the bridgehead would be lost. Under these conditions the corps officer at the bridge gave his reluctant consent for Captain Trover to take his troop into action. Already alert and ready to go, it moved at once. Attacking viciously across the bridges it drove the German infantry in flight across the valley and up the heights of STE. GENEVIEVE and through the towns of LOISY and STE. GENEVIEVE. In the latter place the fighting was hot, and German self-propelled guns were met which outgunned the light armored cars of the cavalry. Captain Trover took cover with his troop on the reserve slope of the heights and reported to the combat commander that he would hold his ground until the main body came through.

While this action was taking place a council of war was underway at the bridge. The combat commander and the commanding officer of the 37th Tank Battalion had arrived shortly after Captain Trover had initiated his attack and were soon joined by the commanding generals of the XII Corps, 4th Armored Division, and the 80th Infantry Division. The combat commander asked for and received permission to move on across the river and continue his mission. Accordingly, the 37th Tank Battalion column was ordered to attack at once clear the bridgehead, an assembly preparatory to continuing the advance toward CHATEAU-SALINS.

At approximately 0800 the 37th Tank Battalion, reinforced with a company of infantry from the 53rd Armored Infantry Battalion, began crossing the bridges. Moving rapidly and deploying from march formation, this force stormed up the precipitous heights of STE. GENEVIEVE and soon had cleared all of the bridgehead area, which included the towns of STE. GENEVIEVE and BEZAUMONT in addition to LOISY, already cleared by the cavalry troop. During this action our troops were under constant fire from the German artillery and heavy mortars from the vicinity of PONT A MOUSSON to the north. There the ground was even higher than that at STE. GENEVIEVE. The German defenders had perfect observation on our attacking forces and continued to pour fire into the CCA column all during the day as it passed over the bridges and through the breach in the German lines.

Assembling rapidly, the 37th prepared to launch its second attack of the day with BENICOURT as its objective. This town lay five kilometers to the northeast and on the main highway between PONT A MOUSSON and CHATEAU-SALINS. Its capture would clear the way for the continued advance toward the combat command objective, as well as threaten the German positions at PONT A MOUSSON. The 66th Armored Field Artillery Battalion had by now crossed into the bridgehead and was in position to support the attack on BENICOURT. The combat command had joined the 37th commander, and the order to attack was given.

This attack jumped off at about 1000, drove the Germans back through the woods to the east of STE. GENEVIEVE, and cleared the town of BENICOURT by noon. As this attack drove home, observers from the CP, which had moved to BEZAUMONT

in the meantime, could clearly see columns of German troops leaving PONT A MOUSSON at a rapid rate. They left artillery behind to shell the bridgehead and fight a delaying action. Later, when the armored attack swung in another direction, the Germans returned to their positions at PONT A MOUSSON and launched several counterattacks from there against the infantry.

With BENICOURT captured and the way now clear to continue the advance, the remainder of the column began to cross the river more rapidly. It was hindered but not stopped by the Germany artillery fire that from time to time damaged a light vehicle or one or the other of the bridges. But the column continued to move, putting into practice the axiom of General Patton, "The safest thing to do when under artillery fire is to keep advancing; the enemy seldom shortens his range." By 1300 the bulk of the combat elements were across the bridges and the order was given to the advance.

By now the situation was vague, and knowledge of what might be expected as the advance continued was totally lacking. Accordingly, the combat commander went up in an artillery plane to conduct personal reconnaissance and to better control his column.

As the forward elements of the main body neared NOMENY a force of German tanks of unknown strength was reported by a Cub liaison plane to be in the vicinity of LIXIERERS, about three kilometers to the south of the route of advance. The 37th Tank Battalion Commander detached his leading infantry-tank team to deal with this threat. With the remainder of his force he investigated NOMENY, found it to be heavily mined, by-passed it to the south, and returned to the highway about a kilometer to the east of the town. There the force was joined by the LIXIERERS force, which had found the reported tank threat to be the motor park of a German infantry unit, guarded with a few self-propelled guns. About half of this material had been destroyed, and the rest had escaped to the south.

The column was now "rolling"! It stormed through AULNOIS-SUR-SEILLE, scattering the personnel of a German regimental supply installation and seizing intact a valuable bridge over the SEILLE RIVER. A squad of engineers was left to guard the bridge temporarily because the column was now in the PROVINCE of LORRAINE, where many of the population were sympathetic to the Nazi cause. As the column neared LEMONCOURT, German infantry, in considerable numbers, were surprised in a close formation. The tanks ran through and over them without stopping and with all guns firing. The terrified Germans attempted to hide in haystacks and farm buildings, but the incendiary bullets of the 50 caliber machine guns set these afire and sent the victims to a flaming death. Few if any of this force escaped, and almost none were taken prisoner. The column pressed on to FRESNES, from which a German replacement battalion fled toward CHATEAU-SALINS. Some who failed to escape hid in buildings of the town and were captured during the night while trying to escape. The high ground overlooking CHATEAU-SALINS from the west was reached at little past 1700.

One of the few prisoners taken at LEMONCOURT was an SS colonel. His unsolicited comments as a result of watching the command move into position for the night is of interest. For the sake of accuracy, the official report of Lt. John H. Prisoner, in charge of the prisoner of war iteration team, is quoted: "This prisoner, an SS Colonel (Standardtenfuhrer Theodore Werner, possessor of the German Cross in Gold) who commanded a division in Russia for a period of over two years, is only a short time with the SS and while waiting in the POW enclosure for evacuation he watched our units move up and made the following remark: "having been a commander of Army units in Russia covering an area of approximately 1500 miles, I must admit that

the American troops are not only equipped with the best material, but what strikes us especially is the excellent organizational under which these men function. I would be please to know the commander of this particular division, and I am sure that it must be part of General Patton's Third Army. General Patton is for the American Army, what Rommel stands for in the German Army, but to know the commander of this armored division would explain to me how this Army managed to achieve such a speed of advance which in many instances caught us unprepared".

While the main body of the command was making this rapid advance, two light forces were performing valuable work on the flanks. As BENICOURT was cleared, Captain Trover moved D Troop through the town and to the north flank to protect the command from that direction. Much of the time moving across country he passed through CLEMERY (to the north of NOMENY), reduced defended roadblocks in ABOUCOURT, LETRICOURT, and CRAINCOURT, and passed on to DELME, where he found the town too strongly defended to be successfully attacked. From DELME he returned to the route of the main body at LEMONONCOURT, where the direction of advance had turned sharply to the southeast. There he was placed for the night to protect the "elbow" on the route until the advance could continue the next day.

When C Company of the 37th Tank Battalion had gone to LIXIERES to deal with the German motor park, it had been followed by D Company of the same battalion. His light tank company had been reinforced with the assault gun platoon of the battalion. From LIXIERES he had moved east on roads parallel to the route of advance till he reached the SEILLE RIVER. At three towns, bridges over the SEILLE had been blown, and the ground was too marshy to fording of the river feasible. Accordingly he returned to the axis of advance at AULNOIS and held that town and its valuable bridge until relieved by a platoon of Trover's troop about noon of the next day.

The column closed slowly, and it was not until nearly daylight of the 14th that the last combat elements had taken their place on the perimeter of the bivouac area. The trains of the combat command did not reach STE. GENEVIEVE until nearly midnight. The combat commander flew the column once more just before dark and saw the last elements of the trains still on the West Side of the MOSELLE. Since they had very little protection with them and the route of the main body had taken several detours, it was decided to have them bivouac within the protection of the lines of the 80th Infantry Division until daylight. However, as the leading elements of the trains had become lost due to a break in the column and had moved down onto the plain east of STE. GENEVIEVE, the combat command S-4 and trains commander placed all his vehicles together in leaguer and fought off small German patrols throughout the night. The damage to the bridges previously mentioned and congestion in the bridgehead had broken the combat command column many times during the day and caused much nerve-racking delay.

As customary, the artillery of the command was placed in position to fire around the entire 360 degrees of the compass. During the night harassing fire was placed on crossroads and towns, both close by and to the limit of the range of its guns. This helped materially in confusing the enemy as to the exact positions of the command and was one of the principal factors in the strength of its perimeter defense. It also restricted the use of the roads to the enemy and aided materially in concealing the probable direction of advance the following day. This practice of placing three battalions of artillery in position for all-round defense paid big dividends on this and the nights to follow.

At daylight of a cold rainy day the trains were brought up and the command

resupplied in readiness for further movement. During the night some artillery fire had been received from CHATEAU-SALINS and as that town was a rather large one decided to by-pass it in the movement toward ARRACOURT. Accordingly, at 1200 on the 14th the column struck straight south from its bivouac and moved by a woods trail, toward the town of CHAMBREY, which lay close by the main highway leading from NANCY to CHATEAU-SALINS. The combat commander again flew the column in a Cub plane during the advance and until the leading elements had taken ARRACOURT. Scattered German vehicles were met at CHAMBREY and destroyed. Turning east past VIC-SUR-SEILLE, which was by-passed, the column again turned south through ARRACOURT to VALHEY and then to EINVILLE and BAUZEMONT, on the RHINE-MARNE CANAL. At ARRACOURT and VALHEY the headquarters of the German 15th Panzer Grenadier Division was overrun and most of its personnel captured or killed. At VALHEY the first CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL of HONOR to be won by a member of the division was Sergeant Sadowski when the column overran and destroyed a nest of eight 88mm antitank guns which were manned by former members of Rommel's Afrika Korps. The award was made posthumously. At RINVILLE and at BAUZEMONT the bridges over the canal were found blown, and the heads of the column swung back east to LEY, the easternmost part of the outpost system that night.

By 1900 the entire command had closed in the ARRACOURT area and all units were disposed to carry out the assigned mission of exploitation: to block the roads east of NANCY to prevent the escape of the German defender of that city. On the first night dividends were taken! By daylight more than 300 prisoners had been captured, and many vehicles destroyed, and several German columns forced to retreat to try another way out of the trap.

As the trains closed on the night of the 12th a small task force consisting of one medium tank company from the 35th Tank Battalion plus one infantry company from the 10th Armored Infantry Battalion joined the combat command. The division commander had sent it to reinforced CCA on the mission of exploitation. The commander of this force reported that there had been no sign of the enemy along the route of advance. Because of this report and since it was expected that friendly infantry units would follow up the advantage gained by the break-through of the combat command, D Troop was relieved of its mission of guarding the supply route and ordered to move from positions at LEMONCOURT and AULNOIS to rejoin the main body in order it might conduct reconnaissance to the east. D Troop had relieved D Company of the 37th at AUKNOIS early on the 14th, and this light tank company had made up the rear guard for the movement from FRESNES to ARRACOURT.

Discussion

In this first phase of an operation which was to extend over a period of two weeks the command had, in 37 hours, advanced more than 45 miles into enemy territory. In so doing, it had re-established a bridgehead that was in imminent danger of being lost, had forced a breakthrough of a strong enemy defensive position, had captured the command installation of a German division charged with the defense of the NANCY sector, and had also captured the map depot of the sector as well. This had been accomplished with negligible losses of personnel and equipment. CCA was in position to exploit its advantages. In the trains was a supply of gasoline, ammunition, and rations sufficient to carry it through at least seven days of operations should it become cut off.

Very early in the game it was learned that the only sure way to have supplies when you needed them on an operation of penetration or exploitation was to take them with you. Accordingly, the command had made a practice of carrying along every available truck loaded with supplies. Every kitchen truck was stripped of its mess equipment and loaded with gas or ammunition. Rations were carried on the combat vehicles. Every supply truck was loaded to more than 100% overload, and indeed some trucks carried as much as seven to eight tons of supplies. Whenever possible, as it was in this case, an extra truck platoon from an attached truck company was attached to the trains. The trains were never left behind to be brought up later; they followed immediately behind the combat column and that they proved to be the safest place for them. They could follow along in the vacuum created by the shock of the combat column and be safety through the enemy resistance before it could recover.

In the two days of this phase of operation, much had been learned. For the first time in its combat history the command had passed through the bridgehead of another unit. Always before it had established its on bridgeheads. On this occasion it was learned that to make an operation work smoothly it is necessary to have very close control by members of the command itself, at the bridge sites, and that all vehicles of the command must have priority over all other units until the crossing is completed. It was proved that any force passing through a bridgehead must be prepared to fight its way out if necessary, and to accomplish this it must be able to attack from march formations. The penetration of the command and its taking up position behind the German defenders had a decisive effect upon the operations in the NANCY area. Similar results, from similar operations, were to be gained many times in the future by this and other armored units in the closing phase of the war.

It also soon became apparent that to gain full benefit from armored thrusts, infantry must follow up quickly to exploit the advantage before the enemy can recover.

Exploitation Phase, 15-18 September 1944 in next issue.

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