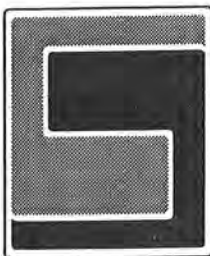


FIGHTING 69TH INFANTRY DIVISION

★★★★ *Association, Inc.*



VOLUME 50, NO. 2

JANUARY — FEBRUARY — MARCH — APRIL
1997

"THE THREE B'S"
BOLTE'S BIVOUACING BASTARDS

P.O. BOX 69
CHAMPION, PA 15622-0069
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bulletin

Our Sentiments Exactly!

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*Deceased



Charlie Chapman and Guy Rogers of Headquarters Battery, Divarty, express their sentiments on a Nazi flag found at Divarty Headquarters in Schmidtheim, Germany - their first stop in Germany.

Submitted by: Charlie Chapman, 7412 Exmore Street, Springfield, Virginia 22150-4026

The 69th Division's 50th Annual Reunion
August 17th thru 24th, 1997
Ferncroft Tara Conference Resort
Danvers, Massachusetts (Details Inside)

Dear Members:

We are sorry to have to report that Clarence Marshall, our Editor and Membership Chairman of many years, passed away on Sunday, March 30th, 1997. Clarence's contributions to the 69th Division Association spanned many years. His tireless dedication through years of a debilitating service related injury and illness, was unmatched.

Our next issue of the Bulletin will have a full eulogy on Clarence, his service history and the full scope of his involvement with the Association.

He will be sorely missed by all of us. He was truly a most special and giving human being, one in a million!

News From The Editor's Desk



By Clarence Marshall
Co-Editor

101 Stephen Street, New Kensington, PA 15068
Telephone: 412/335-3224

John J. O'Connor, 9321 Jefferson Avenue, Brookfield, Illinois 60513-1209 — Hq.-880th F.A.: Hope all is well with you and that you are getting through the winter in good shape.

I am sending you a copy of a letter that I received a few days ago. It is in regards to the article that appeared on Page 26 of the last bulletin entitled "The Ageless Spirit of Loved Ones Lost to War" written by Phil Smith. Phil sent me a letter in regard to the copy of his article that I had sent to **Al Kormas** and Al had sent to you. Thank you for publishing Phil's article. Isn't it a small world when you read the attached letter that I received from Phil, that his father served with the 69th and probably as a cadre member. Phil also sent me a tape that he talks about in his letter. It was really a poignant story on tape.

Thanks to both you and Earl for all your work on the 69th bulletin. You both do a great job. Fond wishes and hellos to you and yours. Letter from Phil Smith follows:
Dear John,

You won't believe this coincidence! I am the author of the Chicago Tribune article you submitted to the 69th Bulletin, "The Ageless Spirit of Loved Ones Lost to War."

My father served with the 80th Division in the European Theater, but he trained with the 69th at Camp Shelby. My father passed away in 1985, and last summer I attended my first ever 69th reunion in Schaumburg. So my father was a 69er like you - except he was shipped out as a replacement in August 1944.

I was so proud and pleased that you thought my article worthy for the Bulletin. The article was meant to be a tribute for all veterans.

My dad was **Percy Smith**, 1st Sergeant of Company D, 273rd Infantry at Shelby, then in the 80th Division he was 1st Sergeant with Co. G, 317th, serving from October 4, 1944 till he shipped home in December 1945. The 80th moved south of the 69th and at one point part of the 80th was attached to the 69th in the spring of 1945.

The Tribune article mentioned a radio program I had worked on. Enclosed is a copy of that program. It was broadcast on the 50th anniversary of V-E Day as a tribute to all veterans. Please share it with other 69er friends in your area.

Up until last summer I lived in Glen Ellyn. I've moved to Texas but hope to get back to the Chicago area soon. My job in Chicago was terminated, but I want to find work up there again as soon as possible.

My father wrote quite a few stories about life in Camp Shelby. I'll have to send in some to the Bulletin.

Thanks so much for sending in my Memorial Day article. It means a lot to me to do something for men like you who did so much for others. All the best.

Raymond Naylor, 1748 Castlerock Road, Tampa, Florida 33612-7673 — Hq.-272nd: I recently rented a movie called "Midnight Clear" from Blockbuster rental. It was produced in 1992 and taken from a novel written by William Wharton.

The movie portrayed an "I&R" Platoon, 1st Squad, in the Ardennes Forest near the borders of Belgium, France and Germany. I was in the 272nd, I&R Platoon. Although the time setting was a month earlier than when we were there, the plot and location were very similar. The film platoon also received their training at Camp Shelby, Mississippi.

I would like to know if anyone has any information that would clarify the coincidence of this fictional movie. I would like to know if anyone knows William Wharton and how he came up with a plot so close to a true story. Thanks for your time and trouble.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Anyone with any answers for Mr. Naylor, please write to him and fill him in.)

George Haddad, 30180 Cheviot Hills Drive, Franklin, Michigan 48025 — Co. E-272nd: A note to both you and Earl to express my deepest appreciation for allowing my article and the pictures to be published in the last issue of our fighting 69th Bulletin (pages 12 and 13). It was also very nice of you to return the photos especially since that was entirely unexpected.

(Continued on Page 3)

NEWS FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

(Continued from Page 2)

Your address strikes a familiar chord. Between 1980 and 1982 I served on the Middle Atlantic Region National Staff of the YMCA with offices first in Port Washington and then at King of Prussia. We lived in Exton about a mile up from the junction of Highways 100 and 30 in an area called Century Oaks. We really loved Pennsylvania.

May the coming and ensuing years continue to bring good health and happiness to you both and to your respective families. We are exceedingly fortunate in having you two as our editors. You are doing a tremendous job.

James Tsafos, 2219 New Holland Pike, Lancaster, Pennsylvania 17601-5419: My **Captain Austin** had me as first pick as replacement for the 99th. He and same outfit replaced us at Elsenborn. I then was one of the last across the Remagen Bridge before it collapsed. I was hit with shrapnel 4 or 5 places and my bazooka shattered; it was the only use it had. I left on the first trip back on the Queen Mary from Detelbach. I am proud of both the 69th and Checkerboard Charlie's 99th. God bless us all.

Jack and Carolyn Houghton, 1780 South Filbert Court, Denver, Colorado 80222 — Co. A, 273rd: Carolyn wanted us to let everyone know it has been one thing after another for Jack this year and taking care of him tends to put other things aside. She is happy to report that he is getting stronger each day. She states that they are proud to be members of the 69th Association, that they enjoy the bulletin very much and really miss attending the reunions.

Kenneth Sawyer, 2935 Turtle Mound Road, Melbourne, Florida 32934 — Co. D-273rd: I hope this finds you in reasonably good health. I admire you for not giving into the ravages of time. You set a good example for us younger types. Your efforts are appreciated.

I have been enjoying the latest bulletin. The contribution sent in by **Kormas** and **O'Connor** appearing on page 26 was of special interest. The article was written by Philip M. Smith. I call your attention to the unit report I submitted which appeared on page 35. You will find the name Phil Smith 10 lines from the bottom. Yup! One and the same. Phil Smith attended our Schaumburg reunion.

Phil's father was **Percy Smith**. He was the First Sergeant of Co D, 273rd until August 1944 when he was shipped out. He joined the 80th Division where he took part in the action referred to in Phil's article. **Percy** enjoyed writing about his experiences. Phil has given me a hundred page collection of anecdotes about D/273 which were written by **Percy**. Some of it may be a bit too racy for our prim and proper (?) publication. Phil also gave me a tape of that program that was prepared from his script and presented on National Public Radio. It was beautifully done and is quite moving. I will try to bring it with me to Danvers.

Those of us who got to meet Phil enjoyed his visit very much. He brought his ten year old daughter with him in the evening. She was undoubtedly a bit apprehensive in such a group. Everybody took a shine to this pretty little miss, and she soon had a smile on her lips. Her reaction after leaving? "It was fun."

Phil really seemed to enjoy spending time with us oldsters. His admiration for the veterans of WWII knows no limits. He sent me a little note of appreciation after the reunion and mentioned the possibility of joining us in Danvers. I think it more likely that he would attend a reunion in Texas if it comes to pass as he recently became a resident of College Station. Would he be eligible to volunteer as a host?

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Ken, I suggest you take that subject up at the Membership Meeting at our 1997 reunion.)

Elias Bloom, 8760 Carrollton Avenue, Indianapolis, Indiana 46240 — Co. F, 273rd: **Walt Harpain** of Fresno, California, recently tracked me down, and let me know that the Fighting 69th Infantry Division Association was still in operation. I was an early, if not a charter member, but didn't get any notices after the early 1950's.

I was in the machine gun squad of the 4th Platoon, F Company, 273rd infantry. I joined the 69th in Camp Shelby sometime in the summer of 1944, and was with the 69th until it loaded up with high pointers and shipped the low pointers out.

Robert D. Eicher, Route 7, Box 1115, Elizabethton, Tennessee 37643-9184 — Hq. Co. 1st, Bn., 273rd: I was a member of the 69th Division from the middle of 1943 to the middle of 1944 when we were broken up and sent to England as replacements. I ended up in the 30th Division as a squad leader. I went from France to the Elbe River with no major problems.

Alvin Bryant, 2707 Richwood Road, Durham, North Carolina 27705 — Co. D-273rd: Keep up the good work you all are doing for the greatest outfit in the U.S. Army. I'm proud along with my twin brother, **Calvin**, to have served my country in this great organization. **Calvin** and I are really proud to have had five other brothers, seven in all, to also serve our great nation overseas in combat. All seven of the **Bryant** brothers served our great nation overseas in World War II!

Francis G. Blais, 603 Church Road, Reisterstown, Maryland 21136 — Hq., 3rd Bn., 273rd: Not much for writing anymore. The old hands are a bit shaky. Let's hope that Anna and I can make the reunion this year. Here's our heartfelt wish for a Happy New Year for all.

SEND ALL LETTERS AND PICTURES TO:

Earl Witzleb, Jr., Editor

P.O. Box 69, Champion, PA 15622-0069

Telephone: 412/455-2901

**69TH INFANTRY
DIVISION ASSOCIATION
1997 50TH ANNUAL
REUNION
Tara's Ferncroft
Conference Resort
Danvers, Massachusetts**

50 FERNCROFT ROAD
DANVERS, MASSACHUSETTS 01923
508/777-2500 • 800-THE-TARA

Danvers, Massachusetts is approximately 18 miles from Boston's Logan Airport. All of the towns north of Boston are rich in American heritage. Our tours will cover the area and our guide will give us an historical overview of the entire area.

We hope many of you will join us at this reunion. It is our 50th reunion, one that none of you should miss.

TOURS

LEXINGTON and CONCORD TOUR

Tuesday, August 19th, 1997

9:00 A.M. — Board your deluxe motorcoach at the Tara Ferncroft Conference Resort. Here you will meet your knowledgeable Hawthorne guide to begin your journey to the start of the American Revolution. It was in Lexington and Concord that the first shots of the revolution were fired as the farmers took a stand against British oppression. Your guide will take you to the North Bridge where the "shot heard round the world" was fired and to see the famous Minute Man Statue. You will continue to follow the Battle Road and see the Hartwell Tavern and the Paul Revere Capture Site among other stops.

Concord is also known for its intellectual and literal history. Transcendentalism and the concept of Utopia grew with the writings and teachings of these local people - Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Bronson Alcott and Louisa May Alcott. Many of the homes of the writers/philosophers who challenged the thinking of a nation are still standing, and within easy walking distance from one another near Concord Center - the Wayside known as the "home of the authors" where Nathaniel Hawthorne lived, the Old Manse and the Emerson House with connections to Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Walden Pond where Henry David Thoreau lived and reflected on life, can all be visited.

Price includes deluxe motorcoach transportation and full-day guide.

It does not include admissions to historic homes.

BOSTON TOUR

Wednesday, August 20th, 1997

9:00 A.M. — Board your deluxe motorcoach at the Tara Ferncroft Conference Resort with your knowledgeable Hawthorne guide and begin to enjoy your full day of touring the cosmopolitan city of Boston.

Your ride along the *Freedom Trail* will take you to a number of world famous sites. The *USS Constitution* was launched in 1797 and today is the US Navy's oldest commissioned ship. A walk through the *North End* will introduce you to one of Boston's oldest and most historic neighborhoods, the *Paul Revere House* and the *Old North Church* where lanterns were hung to signal Paul Revere. *Faneuil Hall*, the *Old State House*, *Kings Chapel*, *Old Granary Burial Grounds*, site of the *Boston Massacre*, and *Beacon Hill* are all highlighted as your guide relates the history, folklore and current events of Boston.

The *Back Bay*, the *Boston Commons* and *Public Gardens* "Cheers," and upscale *Newbury Street* are covered enroute to the *Christian Science Building* to visit the *Mapparium*. We will also get a birdseye view of the city from the top of the *John Hancock Building*. At 60 stories, it is Boston's tallest building. Lunch will be on your own at *Quincy Market* where you may choose from a variety of restaurants.

After lunch you will ride through Cambridge the home of *MIT* and *Harvard University*.

3:00 P.M. — Return to hotel.

Includes guide service, transportation and admission to the John Hancock Observatory.

* * * * *

PLYMOUTH TOUR

Thursday, August 21st, 1997

8:30 A.M. — Board your deluxe motorcoach at the Tara Ferncroft Conference Resort, sit back and enjoy the ride to Plymouth. Your Hawthorne Guide will provide commentary enroute to Plimoth Plantation.

As you arrive at Plimoth Plantation, be prepared to step back to an earlier time period. This site is an authentic recreation of an early Pilgrim settlement. Costumed men and women bring to life the seasonal work routines and leisure activities of 17th century Plymouth. In their dress, speech, manner and thought, these "impostors" will give you a glimpse of what life was like for the Pilgrims and Native Americans in the year 1627.

Lunch will be on your own at Plimoth Plantation.

Following lunch, your group will board the motorcoach and continue with a narrated tour of Plymouth. Photo stop at *Plymouth Rock* and the *Mayflower II* is included. Tour concludes with a visit to the *Cranberry World Visitors Center* sponsored by *Ocean Spray*

(Continued on Page 5)

Cranberries, Inc. Here you will trace the history and development of the cranberry industry. Included is an exhibit of antique and modern harvesting tools and machinery. Complimentary refreshments are provided.

5:30 P.M. — Approximate time of arrival back at the hotel.

Includes transportation, guide service and all admissions as stated in the itinerary.

* * * * *

SPIRIT OF BOSTON LUNCHEON CRUISE

Friday, August 22nd, 1997

10:30 A.M. — Depart the Tara Ferncroft Conference Resort via deluxe motorcoach and enjoy your ride into the beautiful city of Boston.

11:30 A.M. — Come on Board and catch the exhilarating fun and wonder of a luncheon cruise. You will enjoy a tantalizing buffet, dance bands, a lively show and fabulous sights, all in one unique package.

You will dine on a delectable Lobster Clambake Lunch Buffet that includes:

Whole New England Lobster
Fresh Steamed Shellfish
Tangy Barbecued Chicken
Oven-Roasted Potatoes
Steamed Vegetables
Boston Baked Beans
Creamy Cole Slaw
Fresh Rolls with Butter
Selection of Desserts

2:00 P.M. — Return to Rowe's Wharf. Time allowed for group to shop at Quincy Market.

3:30 P.M. — Return to hotel.

4:15 P.M. — Approximate time of arrival back at the hotel.

Price includes round trip transportation via deluxe motorcoach and luncheon cruise.

* * * * *

BOSTON THEATER PLAY

Wednesday, August 20th, 1997

Wednesday evening we will be going to a theater in Boston to see the comedy play "Late Night Catechism." The bus will leave at 6:45 p.m. and be back about 11:00 p.m. Cut-off date is July 1st, 1997. Please have your reservations in early so you will not be disappointed.



Directions to Tara Ferncroft Danvers, Massachusetts

From upstate New York

Take Route 90 New York Thru Way to the Massachusetts Turnpike Exit 14 I95 North to Exit 50 (Topsfield) and follow signs to the hotel.

From northern Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan

Route 80 East to 209 North to I84 East to the Massachusetts Turnpike. Take Exit 14 I95 North to Exit 50 (Topsfield) and follow signs to the hotel.

From Southern Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and points south I95 North

395 North in Connecticut to the Massachusetts Turnpike East to Exit 14 I95 North to Exit 50 (Topsfield) and follow signs to the hotel.

(If you want to follow I95 all the way through Providence you can but you have a lot of traffic that is going to and from Cape Cod.)

If you get off of Exit 50 look to your left. Up the hill you will see the hotel.

FLYERS

For all of you who are flying in, we have contacted the Granada Transportation. Their rate is \$20.00 per person one way, or \$38.00 per person round trip to the Tara Ferncroft Danver. They said that when you purchase your ticket, call them at 1-800-633-6220 and tell them when you plan to arrive. They will have someone there to pick you up and bring you to the hotel. If you do not do that you can call them when you arrive, but you will have to wait about an hour or so.



Salem Maritime National Historic Site

Register Early for the Reunion!
You don't want to miss out on these tours.
Use forms located elsewhere in this bulletin.

Message from the President



Robert L. Pierce
144 Nashua Court
San Jose, California 95139-1236
Telephone: 408/226-8040

There are a couple of major issues that are of great importance that need to be addressed by the entire membership.

There is a gnawing issue that has been discussed with some concern at every annual meeting for several years, "Non-Dues Paying Members." At the Schaumburg Meeting, a recommendation was made by a Director that the Executive Committee study the pros and cons of dropping mailings of the Bulletin to members who have not paid dues for an extended period of time.

Our Treasurer indicated that about half of our approximately 5,000 mailings go to non-dues paying members. Accepting the fact that a prior purging of non-paying members was a mistake, non-paying members should be dropped from the Bulletin mailing list but maintained on a separate non-active member listing.

Let's be realistic, after 50 years if a member has been receiving several Bulletins a year "free" without paying dues, why would he be interested now in becoming an active member? Every year he also receives two (2) Dues Notices and is completely aware of his obligation to pay his fair share. Now is the time for Welfare Reform!

Comparing the 1994 and 1995 financial statements, I added the receipts and disbursements for both years and divided by 2 for an average annual cost comparison. I know some members may want to argue about the problem or even dispute the accuracy of the cost analysis, but the comparison is directly related to the problem regardless of exact accuracy. Cost to the Association in support of non-paying members is a significant problem.

| <u>RECEIPTS</u> | <u>94 & 95</u> | <u>1 Yr. Avg.</u> |
|----------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Dues-Regular & Auxiliary | \$52,223 | \$26,111 |
| Postage-Bulletin Donations | 16,167 | 8,083 |
| INTEREST | 3,937 | 1,968 |
| | <u>\$72,327</u> | <u>\$36,162</u> |

| <u>DISBURSEMENTS</u> | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Bulletin-Printing & Return | \$48,034 | \$24,017 |
| Dues Envelopes | 2,310 | 1,155 |
| Postage | 13,287 | 6,643 |
| | <u>\$63,631</u> | <u>\$31,815</u> |

ASSUMING 50% ARE NON-DUES PAYING

Average annual expenses @ 5000 members .. \$31,800
Average annual cost for non-paying members .. 15,900
Annual operating loss of Association Funds ... 15,900

This condition can no longer continue. I propose to recommend the following solution at the Danvers Reunion:

- Continue to distribute the Bulletin to all listed members for 1 year.
- During this year, put a notice in the Bulletin to advise members this is their third; second; and, last chance to pay dues in the Association or no longer receive the Bulletin.
- After one year, transfer non-paying members to a computer-generated list of inactive members.
- Continue to send dues notices to inactive members for two (2) additional years. After two (2) years drop all inactive members from any further mail distribution.
- Retain inactive list for future inquiries or to reinstate membership.

FUTURE REUNIONS

For those of you who regularly attend the Annual Reunions, you already know of the difficulty we are having in getting members to sponsor a Reunion. Several candidate locations have fallen through because local members declare their age, physical limitations, or personal expenses to participate are beyond their means. If anyone is interested in sponsoring a Reunion in the coming years, please contact me as soon as possible.

The Reunion Committee has tentatively selected Houston, Texas as the host city for the 1998 Reunion. We have assembled a committee of 9 members and wives for a total of 17 persons willing to conduct a successful reunion in Houston. Reunion activities are being planned and negotiations are in progress with several major hotels in the Houston area.

Since our Biloxi Reunion in September 1991, LTC R. C. Trimble, Retired, 69th Division Headquarters, has dedicated himself to the acquisition, sales and distribution of video tape coverage of our Memorial Monument at Camp Shelby. You will find on the following page, an article commending his accomplishments related to this task.

The 69th Salutes LTC Robert C. Trimble



LTC Robert C. Trimble presenting his check to General Emmet H. Walker, Jr.

Submitted by: **Robert L. Pierce**, *President*

LTC Robert C. Trimble, Retired, 69th Div. Hq., was the Association's Camp Shelby Monument Committee Co-Chairman. **LTC R. C. Trimble** placed the wreath at the 69th Infantry Division Memorial Monument at Camp Shelby September 20th, 1991.

In a continuing effort to capture this historic event for members of the Association, **LTC Trimble**, of his own volition, offered to obtain copies of video and Press Corps film footage of the events. Footage acquired was: Introduction of the Project with interviews with **Jack Duffy**, Chairman; early Monument construction; video tape of the "Spirit of Camp Shelby" narrated by Colonel Smith at the Dalton Hall Ceremony; TV Interview with Camp Shelby Post Commander; the Walk of Members and their families to the Memorial Site; and, footage of the Memorial Monument Dedication, Service and Taps.

LTC Trimble purchased the local TV tape, arranged for clarification of copy rights and reproduction, assembled home video tapes, and arranged for professional reproduction of the aforementioned products. Copies of these Camp Shelby Monument Dedication Ceremony tapes were offered through the Bulletin to members of the Association. A modest cost increase was included in the price with the intent of making a small donation, from the sale of the tape, to the Armed Forces Museum Foundation at Camp Shelby.

I am pleased to announce that **LTC R.C. Trimble** has fulfilled his ambition of completing the task. On January 22, 1997 he presented **General Emmet H. Walker, Jr.**, a check for \$100 on behalf of the 69th

Infantry Division Association. General Walker acknowledged this donation in a letter to the Association January 22, 1997. Both letters follow.

LTC Robert C. Trimble, Ret., is to be commended for an exemplary demonstration of dedication and tenacity in pursuing this long and arduous project. The Association is proud to have you not only as an active member, but as a standard bearer for the Association.

* * * * *

Dear General Walker:

On behalf of the Officers and Members of the 69th Infantry Division Association I wish to offer this small token of appreciation for the splendid efforts that the Museum has made in the gathering and preserving of memorabilia of military units during their periods of conflicts past.

This small token of thanks was derived from the sale to members of the video tapes depicting the reunion held at Camp Shelby in September 1991. Along with this small gift of \$100.00 we wish to also present to the museum a copy of that video tape for future preservation.

As it is known the world around, the 69th Infantry Division was activated and trained at Camp Shelby under the command of Major General Charles L. Bolte, and later went on to combat in Europe under the leadership of Major General Emil F. Reinhardt. The Fighting 69th's acclaim to fame, as having been the first American Unit to link up with the Russian Army in April 1945, will be forever chronicled in the history books.

Also allow us to thank you personally for your leadership and interest you have taken in the stewardship of this institution, The Armed Forces Museum Foundation, Inc., at Camp Shelby, Mississippi, the forever home of the Fighting 69th. God bless you.

Respectfully:

R. C. TRIMBLE

LTC US Army Retired

* * * * *

Armed Forces Museum Foundation, Incorporated

Dear Colonel Trimble:

We gratefully acknowledge and accept the Fighting 69th Division's \$100.00 donation. Please thank your entire membership for this and encourage each of them to continue supporting the preservation and education of military history at the Armed Forces Museum.

As you know the Armed Forces Museum Foundation was organized in 1988 and incorporated with the Secretary of State of Mississippi on 25 January 1989, thus we are in our eighth year of existence. During these years, the Camp Shelby Museum has achieved a permanent foundation and is growing beyond our expectations. The future is bright as we begin to look at needed expansions.

(Continued on Page 8)

THE 69th SALUTES LTC ROBERT C. TRIMBLE
(Continued from Page 7)

These accomplishments rest substantially on caring associations and support of persons such as yourself. The knowledge that there are so many of you that continue to contribute is a driving force in museum development.

The State Legislature authorized \$2.5 million in bonds to erect a new building at Camp Shelby to replace the World War II building now being used to house the Armed Forces Museum. The museum has

been operated with one part-time curator and volunteers. It will be up to those interested in military history to join with this Foundation to assure the interior displays are completed in a state-of-the-art mode, and there are appropriate funds for the new museum to be operated in a professional manner with full-time personnel. Again, thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

EMMETT H. WALKER, JR.

General MSARNG, Retired

President

**Division Association Chapters, Units, Companies,
and Group Mini-Weekends Across the United States**

We are interested in all news from Chapters, Groups, Branches, Companies, Battalions, Regiments, Recon, Artillery, AAA, Units, T.D.'s and minis for this column. Mail your date(s), location, banquet cost, activities and room rates, plus a good write-up to **Earl Witzleb, Jr., Box 69, Champion, Pennsylvania 15622-0069 or R.D. #3, Box 477, Acme, Pennsylvania 15610-9606**, as early as possible. Then follow through with a write-up immediately after the event(s).

661st Tank Destroyers

William E. Snidow, Reporter

Route #1 - Box 303

Pembroke, Virginia 24136-9613

The mini-reunion of the 661st Tank Destroyers was held in Salem, Virginia on October 17-19, 1996. Though our numbers are dwindling fast the number attending is still growing. The only planned activity for our gathering was the banquet on Saturday at which we had 84 people. The remaining time was spent visiting local points of interest, shopping, eating or just rehashing old memories and comparing family histories. As we get old we can better appreciate renewing old friendships and things of mutual interest.

Attendees were: **Co A: Thomas and Frances Knick, Lou and Flo Molinko, James and June LaDu, Elwin Patterson and Chris, John and Leora Sherlock, Guy Knowles and Genny, Mike and Dorothy Kotnik, Walter Jamerson and Marie, Sam and Gertrude Goldberg, Jack and Jane Sutor, Bill and Margaret Dawson, Vincent and Jeanne Eanes.**

Co. B: Bill and Ellen Snidow, Bill and Jo Beswick, Pete and Carol Besket, Raymond and

Rosemarie Anderson, Richard and Thelma McKinnon, Earl and Ruth Repman, Harry and Edna Murray, Ralph and Chris Bragg, Nelson Leaman, Ralph and Vera Chase, Charley and Alma Stuart, Earnest Sensabaugh and Ellie Levie.

Co. C: Charles and Frances Yannel, George and Helen Ringer, Harold and Peggy Hicks, Bill and Mary Wahl, Stanley and Gertrude Green, Jules and Pat Slopek, Marcell and Carol Pugsley.

Recon Co: Stanley and Olga Flak, Fred and Nancy Baumgartner, Floyd Austin, Paul and Louise Cole, Muriel Tinch, Eugene and Ethel Pierron.

Hq. Co.: Warren and Dot Mitchell, Bob and Ann Shull, Ruth Mellinger and Daughter Dawn. Several attendees brought sons, daughters, sisters and one grandson. Also one 272nd vet and wife from Covington, Virginia came but did not sign the register.

A good time of sharing memories was enjoyed by all with many pictures, scrapbooks and wartime pictures.

Next year's reunion will be in Akron, Ohio and hosted by **Jules and Pat Slopek**. Hope to see you all there. It will be a good time for all.

**DEADLINE FOR MATERIAL FOR
BULLETIN VOL. 50, NO. 3 - MAY, JUNE, JULY, AUGUST
MAY 30th, 1997 - Get Your Material In On Time!**

Membership Chairman Report

Robert J. Kurtzman, Sr.
P.O. Box 105
Wilmot, Ohio 44689-0105
Telephone: 330/359-5487

Thanks to our report in the last Bulletin it seems to have opened up the so called "CAN OF WORMS." I have received many letters concerning the problem of over half of our members paying no dues.

I did not wish to take up the whole bulletin with letters, so I only sent in four to be published.

If you are one who does not pay dues because you are not interested in the 69th, please let us know. Or if you are the wife or children of a deceased member, please contact us immediately with this information.

I'm sure this subject will be discussed at length at our Reunion at Danvers, Massachusetts in August and I'm sure that the future will see that those who don't care about paying dues will be removed from our mailing roster. If you wish to continue to receive the bulletin, please pay your dues. A word to the wise should be sufficient.

Following are a few of the letters I received.

* * * * *

Dear Bob,

As per your request I am writing to you regarding the removal of non-paying dues members receiving our Association Bulletins.

You say that we have over 2,500 non-payers currently on our mailing list. It occurs to me that we are really wasting a lot of postage when we continue to send these so-called members our bulletin.

The excerpt from the 87th Division is a very good idea.

If my memory serves me, this subject has been discussed many times and never has been completely resolved.

Now is the time after 50 years to take some real action on this matter.

Bob Silberg,
DHQ and AT, 272nd Infantry

P.S. Bob, you forgot the Bulletin cost.

* * * * *

Dear Mr. Kurtzman,

I have never felt that it was right for members or non-members to receive the bulletin and pay nothing or near nothing. Trains, Planes, Buses, and Ships do not carry passengers for free just because there is empty seats.

I have never known a veteran who could not afford \$10.00 per year.

I was with the 777th Tank Battalion and helped to end the war in Leipzig.

Jefferson F. Keith, Jr.
HQ - 777th Tank Battalion

Dear Robert,

Subject! "Paid Up Membership and Non-Paying Members."

I plan on sending out a long "epistle" to members of K-273rd, I want to talk up Attendance and Membership for our 50th Reunion in Boston 1997.

I was surprised regarding your Membership Report of so many non-paying members. I agree with your discussion. Remove those who don't pay.

Last year you sent me a roster of K-273rd which I have enclosed. I would appreciate a list of those who are delinquent.

James L. Mynes
Company K, 273rd Infantry

* * * * *

Dear Bob,

I would like to give you my opinion per your request regarding the people who receive the Bulletin and never send in any dues. I think we should remove them, like you stated. Some are probably deceased and a lot of the Bulletins end up in the trash.

Bruce Young
HQ - 897th Field Artillery

**FOUND A NEW MEMBER?
HAVE A CHANGE OF ADDRESS?
THIS SHOULD BE MAILED TO:
Robert J. Kurtzman
P.O. Box 105
Wilmot, Ohio 44689
Telephone: 330/359-5487
DO NOT SEND PICTURES AND
ARTICLES TO BOB KURTZMAN.
See bottom of page 3 for
Editor Earl Witzleb's address.**

MOVING

Please print your new address below:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Please send this form and your old address label to:

Robert Kurtzman
P.O. Box 105, Wilmot, Ohio 44689
Please allow six weeks advance notice.

Treasurer's Message



William R. and Jane Matlach

William R. Matlach, Treasurer

Post Office Box 474

West Islip, New York 11795-0474

Telephone: 516/669-8077

In this year's Volume 50, No. 1 Bulletin issue, our Membership Chairman, **Bob Kurtzman**, proposed removing from our mailing list all those members who have failed to pay their dues. This is not a new idea; it has been tried in the past but most of our current members are not aware of it.

Back in the late 1950's, the Association was having financial problems. The News Bulletins were the primary expense but although they each consisted of only 4 to 8 pages, the Association had difficulty paying the costs. The Executive Committee decided that they could save a lot of money expended on printing and postage by removing from the mailing list all those who had not paid their dues. It was believed that these members were probably not interested in being members anyhow.

Consequently, during the next few years the Treasurer, **Henry Madison**, removed from the mailing list 2000 to 3000 names until eventually our mailing list was down to about 950 members. At this point we held several reunions which had only 150 to 200 attendees including the ladies, and the number of attendees was decreasing along with the mailing list.

In the early 1960's **Loar Quickle** was elected President of the Association. He realized that some changes had to be made if the Association was to continue to exist and he created the office of Membership Chairman, appointing **Clarence Marshall** as the first Chairman, with the objective of rebuilding our mailing roster. At the same time, the current dues policy was established not to remove members from the mailing list for non-payment of dues, in order to avoid further decrease of the roster. **Clarence** went to work, gathering leads for

new members, checking out their addresses and the mailing list gradually started to increase. When he ran out of leads, he went to work on **Henry Madison's** card file of rejected 69ers, checked whether their addresses were correct, and added most of them back on the roster whether they had paid dues or not.

At the same time **Loar Quickle** was elected President, I was elected Treasurer. To solve the financial problem, I devised the first Dues Notice, an invoice individually addressed to each 69er. (We did not know about Dues Envelopes at that time.) Previously, dues had been collected primarily from 69ers attending reunions, with an additional small amount received in the mail in response to tearful pleas in the Bulletin for everyone to send in their dues. At the end of my first year, with the roster at 950 members, I found that in total I had collected dues from about one out of every four 69ers, or about 250 members. This was a great improvement over previous efforts, and as far as I know, we never again had a serious financial problem.

After **Clarence** added all the "dead wood" members **Henry Madison** had removed, we found that the proportion of paying members still remained at about one out of four, so the supposedly inactive members were carrying their load in the same proportion as the others. Eventually, when I left the office of Treasurer after serving six years, the ratio of dues payment had increased to about one out of three, and **Clarence Marshall** had increased the membership roster to about 2500 69ers, including **800 dues paying members** instead of just **250 when he started**. When **Clarence** resigned as Membership Chairman a couple of years ago, the Roster had grown to a little over 5500 and the dues collection rate had increased to about one out of every two members, or **2750 dues paying members instead of the 250 we had** when the policy had been started not to remove delinquent members from the mailing list.

At the present time our income easily covers all expenses including the cost of the Bulletins (which are now **60 pages**) in spite of the fact that a large portion of our members fail to pay their dues. Financially we are doing very well, and the total value of the 69th Division Treasury increases each year. Two years ago, the President appointed a committee to determine which charities should receive our surplus funds if the Association were dissolved. There is no reason why we cannot continue to subsidize the members who do not pay their dues (for whatever reason) instead of giving our surplus funds to a charity.

The group of members who pay their dues keeps changing all the time. Granted, some members always pay their dues and some members never pay their dues, but in between is a group that pays intermittently, and each year some of the non-payers awaken and start to pay. About a year ago, one man whose

(Continued on Page 11)

TREASURER'S MESSAGE

(Continued from Page 10)

record previously showed no payment sent me a check for \$100.00 — I don't know why, but he decided to start paying dues, and with a bang!

As I stated in the last bulletin, during the 1995-96 dues year 2,647 members paid their dues while during the previous year we had only 2,583 paid members. This was an **increase of 64 even though the mailing list had been reduced by 166**, mostly due to "Taps." Assuming that half of those lost had been paying members (say 84), that means we had 84 new payers to replace them plus the increase of 64 — **a total of 148 who did not pay the year before**. The body of paying members is not constant, but keeps changing.

Recently I did a survey of all the 884 attendees at the 1995 Myrtle Beach Reunion of which 445 were 69th veterans. I found that out of the 69ers who had attended, 112 had failed to pay their dues **at least once** during the previous 11 years, which is the limit of the records in my possession. That means that if the Treasurer had enforced dues payment during that period as **Bob Kurtzman** proposes, those 112 69ers would have been stricken from the mailing roster and would not have attended the reunion, **a decrease of 25% in attendance!** If, in addition, dues payment had been enforced during the 24 years prior to that, the 1995 reunion attendance would almost surely have been less than half of what it was, and probably there would not have been a reunion at all! By the way, three of those who attended had never paid dues before, but they came because we were finally having a reunion in their area.

Bob Kurtzman states that the 87th Division strictly enforces dues payment. I know nothing about the 87th Division, but I am a member of the 29th Division Association having been in that unit during the fall of 1945, as many other 69ers were. They also enforce dues payment, similar to the 87th. However, according to their news bulletin, "The Twenty-Niner":

1. They have a much larger source for their membership than we have, in that they were in combat much longer (D-Day-Omaha Beach) and had 20,300 casualties, a much larger turn-over than we had. Their service goes back to World War I, and they currently have an active unit known as "29th Infantry Division (Light)." **I would expect their reunions to be much larger than ours.**
2. In September 1995, the same year as our Myrtle Beach Reunion, they had their reunion at King of Prussia, PA and **"the banquet was attended by 465,"** including a World War I veteran. (We had **726 at the banquet in Myrtle Beach.**)
3. In the same bulletin, a report on the Membership Meeting states "Membership nearly 3,400. But we **lost 230 members through non-payment of dues.**" (That loss was in one year.) Obviously, this is the reason they have much smaller reunions than the 69th.

Removing members from the Mailing Roster for non-payment of dues would save money on printing and mailing of bulletins, but it would have a disastrous affect on the membership and the number of attendees at reunions, and it could even threaten the very existence of the Association.

One final point to bear in mind: The primary purpose of the Association is to maintain a means of communication between men who served in the 69th, through the News Bulletins, reunions, and individual correspondence with members who seek information. Collection of dues is merely the means we have for financing that primary function of communication and is of secondary importance to it. If 69ers are cut off from that communication because they did not pay their dues, we are making dues payment more important than the primary purpose of the Association.

Enforcing dues payment would undo everything **Clarence Marshall** accomplished during his 35 years as Membership Chairman, and there is absolutely no need for it.

New Men Relocated Since Our Last Bulletin

Nolan B. Farrell — Battery C, 880th F.A.

R.R. 1, Box 606, Brookeland, Texas 75931-9647

Harold P. McMurrin — Unit Unknown

441 Shane Drive, New Market, Alabama 35761

John B. Durst — Company A, 273rd Infantry

1832 Alta Street, Redlands, California 92374-1718

Denuel E. Wood — Unit Unknown

307 Harlan Avenue, Buchanan, Michigan 49107

Tavio Ferrare — Company D, 272nd Infantry

350 Capri Drive, Simi Valley, California 93065

Edwin Fischer — Headquarters, 271st Infantry

1280 Dixon Lane, Rydal, Pennsylvania 19046-1804

Elias Bloom — Company F, 273rd Infantry

8760 Carrollton Avenue

Indianapolis, Indiana 46240-1824

Rocco A. Gaudiano — Cannon Co., 271st Infantry

310 Smithfield Street, Mt. Pleasant, PA 15666

DID YOU PAY YOUR DUES!

1996-1997

August 1, 1996 to July 31, 1997

Regular Membership \$10.00

Ladies' Auxiliary \$ 5.00

Bulletin Donation Up To You

Keep the Bulletin Coming!

24 Hours in Hann Munden

Written by: **Martin J. Connor**
Company E, 273 Infantry Regiment
14 Coury Drive
Acushnet, Massachusetts 02743
Telephone: 508/995-1548

I don't recall all of the names in this story and maybe that is best. Our squad leader was **William Alldredge** and being a replacement to Company E, 2nd Squad, 2nd Platoon, I felt very confident with him as our sergeant. He led us on a couple of patrols and he always inspired confidence that we could complete our mission.

My first disappointment came when we were told that **Sergeant Alldredge** was chosen to be in the color guard at Fort Ehrenbreitstein. The assistant squad leader was put in charge and later a new assistant squad leader was brought up either from headquarters or from supply. I don't think he had been up the front as we had and he seemed he was trying to prove something. I don't recall his name but I guess Gung Ho will do.

Outside of Hann Munden we were sent through the woods to the next Company to pick up a German PW and bring him back for interrogation. As we were going through the woods it seemed that every time we got moving they would fire mortars in our direction. Our new squad leader was wounded at this time. Well we finally got there only to learn that they had decided not to send him back, and for us to return. Again on the way back we were shelled and did not get back until our outfit was getting ready to move out.

When we checked my buddy **Frank Dionne**, our #1 scout, was not there. We had become separated during the shelling. Being the #2 scout, I had to assume his position and we headed towards Hann Munden through the woods. Not having slept the previous night, when it came time to send PW's back, they sent me and another GI to escort 3 PW's. One was an old man who could not put his hands over his head, so we did not insist even though some officer on the way told him to raise his hands, we just kept on walking. The other two were young - very young maybe 12 or 13. We had a conversation that I will tell you later in this story.

After delivering our prisoners - 1 old man and 2 youths to the rear, the other GI and myself returned to where we left our outfit and headed towards Hann Munden. We came across a foxhole with a dead German soldier. He was older than the other two, perhaps 15 or 16. He wore glasses that were now crooked on his face. He reminded me of my 16 year old brother at home who also wore glasses.

Next we found a real German soldier who was playing possum. As I was about to check if he were

dead he rolled over and asked for help and told us about a hospital up ahead. We said we would send help. 100 yards away I found an M1 rifle with a full clip and not wanting him to get hold of it, I carried it into Hann Munden.

We met up with our outfit in a garage and my buddy **Dionne** was waiting to greet me. It sure was a pleasure to see his smiling face. He told me he had filled his canteen at a hospital down the road so I went to get fresh water. A nurse or nun, I'm not sure, showed me an empty canister but insisted I follow her and she led me through a ward of wounded soldiers to get my canteen full. Many of the wounded waved to me, a couple just stared. A doctor through an interpreter asked my age, where I was from, and in general was very arrogant. The GI that was with me alerted someone that there was a wounded German in the woods so they had us escort a stretcher bearer and a doctor. Guess who the doctor was, that's right it was the same arrogant guy, only he was very nervous this time and seemed relieved when we got back to the hospital.

I soon learned from my buddies in our squad what had happened after I left to bring back 3 PW's. They approached a foxhole with a German soldier in it. Our assistant squad leader told him to get out of it but he didn't move. He ordered him again to leave, he didn't - so he shot him and moved on.

We were getting ready to move out and it was early morning and still dark. My squad was leaving the garage that we were in and the rifle that I found in the woods was leaning against the wall. Sergeant Gung Ho finds this rifle and is having a fit that someone does not have his weapon. No one told him that I brought it in. As we approached a river there was a dam or something like a dam and we had to cross single file, so he stationed himself at this spot. Being pitch dark he wanted to feel each man's rifle as we crossed this river. He carried the rifle all day long.

Going back now to the part of my story where we took 3 PW's back, we had a chance to talk to the boys who both spoke a little English. They said that they were put in the foxholes with rifles and wooden bullets and ordered to fire at the approaching GI's behind them. Also in foxholes were these SS soldiers. If the youths were scared and tried to leave then the SS men would shoot them. They had no chance. I never found any dead SS soldiers just a 15-16 year-old-boy killed by a Gung Ho sergeant, who was afraid to come out of his foxhole. I've lived with this story for 52 years. I feel better letting people know that we committed some sad deeds also.



Mel Buschman's Camp Shelby Experience

Submitted By: **Mel Buschman**
Company C, 273rd Infantry Regiment
351 South Lawn
East Lansing, Michigan 48823

Having read the most recent 69th Bulletin about remembering Camp Shelby, I thought I should write of my experiences.

Upon completion of O.C.S. at Fort Benning, December 13th, 1943, I was assigned to Company C, 273rd Regiment, 69th Division. We were in a bivouacking mode - I rarely slept in a bed for 3 months. I was one of the 3 B's.

I attempted to transfer to the Air Force along with a few others by taking exams at Jackson, Mississippi. We needed the signature of our commanding officer to complete the transfer. We went in to see the colonel. He threw the papers back at us and said, "No (G.D.) Air Force will get any of my men," and immediately put our names on a list of overseas replacements.

My fiancée came to visit me and we decided to get married since the division was preparing to ship out. We were confined to base. We were allowed to get married in the 273rd Chapel. The wedding was set for March 23rd at 3:00 p.m. We, the couple standing up with us and the chaplain completed the preliminary instructions early and the chaplain asked if there was any reason to wait until 3:00 p.m. We said no, so we proceeded at 2:40. The ceremony ended at 3:00 p.m. As we left the chapel, my Company C, under the command of 1st Lieutenant **Nygren**, came double-timing in from bivouac to be at the wedding. I was very embarrassed, but the mistake was already made. I was unaware of this planned surprise.

The adjutant told me, even though the division was confined to base, it would take several days to move out for embarkation point. So he said to go to New Orleans and call him each morning at 10:00 a.m. and he would tell me if we were leaving.

My wife went to the train to wait for me. A bunk mate of mine had a car and agreed to take me to the train, but he ran out of gas and we had no stamps. We argued with the gas station owner for a long time. The train was due to leave when he finally relented and let us have a couple of gallons. When I got to the train station, it was already moving - I ran to catch it, barely making it. As usual the train was jammed with people and we stood up all the way to New Orleans.

We went to the hotel but we didn't have a reservation. It was 1:00 a.m. and the clerk said he didn't have any rooms available but to go sit in the lobby for a while and that he would have one soon. At 3:00 a.m. he had a room for us. At 10:00 a.m. I called the adjutant and he said we were not leaving today - so enjoy yourself. We did and the next day I called again and he said, get here as fast as you can. We're leaving. We were

given 4 days delay in route to Fort Dix and embarkation. I was assigned to the Liberty Ship with 500 replacements and loads of supplies for the campaign. Twenty days later we arrived at the replacement depot at Count Ciano's farm (Mussolini's son-in-law) where I was assigned to the 361st Regiment of the 91st Division to go to Anzio to break out with the 1st Armored Division. We rode the tanks to take Rome.

Three wounds later I was sent to the U.S. aboard a hospital ship, the *Wisteria*. These ships were named for flowers. I lost all my possessions including the P.J.s I was wearing when they carried me aboard. Twenty-two days later we arrived at Charleston, South Carolina.

World War II in Germany In Search of Eyewitnesses

I am in search of eyewitnesses who were there at the end of the war on the European western front in Germany in the region of the River Rhine, the Moselle and the Lahn River. I was born in 1940 and was a small boy in Bad Ems. I am now Chief Reporter for the News Press in Hannover, 400 km north of Bad Ems.

I am aware of the fact that members of the 69th Infantry Division participated in the capture of Bad Ems and participated in the historic events in the surrounding area.

I would like to know about the liberation of the town, the first meetings with the Germans in the area, what you did, where you lived. Also any stories of interest that involved the German citizens.

Maybe some of you have diaries, letters, momentos and photos from the area. The photos are of the utmost importance. I would appreciate copies of any of these items and will return them to you quickly.

The purpose of my book is to remember the young Germans and how they were affected by this terrible war and the Nazis.

I hope some of you are able and willing to share your experiences, diaries, letters, photos, momentos, etc. Even the smallest thing that you remember from that time would be of interest. I would greatly appreciate it.

Please contact:
Wilfried Dieterichs
Heinrich-Heine-Weg 27
D-30880 Laatzen
Germany
Fax: 011-49-5102-6281

Dottie and Me



Earl and Dottie Witzleb, Jr.

Earl and Dottie Witzleb, Jr.
Bulletin Coordinating Manager
Post Office Box 69
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or
R.D. #3, Box 477
Acme, Pennsylvania 15610-9606
Telephone: 412/455-2901
(Evenings after 7:00 p.m. and Weekends)
Exit 9 on the Pennsylvania Turnpike

Well, Spring is here. We here in Pennsylvania have not had a very bad winter. We are under our average snowfall this year. This is fine with us. We hope spring has arrived in your area also. We have been receiving notes and phone calls of many who are on our sick list. We wish all of them a speedy and complete recovery.

We hope many of you are planning to attend the annual reunion this August in Danvers, Massachusetts.

Following are a few letters we have received that we feel will be of interest to some members.

* * * * *

Stan Eskin, 269th Engineers (C) Bn., H&S Co.
855 Ronda Mendoza
Laguna Hills, California 92653
Telephone: 714/458-9109

Dear Earl:

While platoon interpreter I made visits to the lumber yards after the war had ended and bought lumber in the name of our government so that the lumber could be sent to various areas in Europe for its rebuilding. For this our outfit was awarded the Meritorious Unit Commendation.

I would like to know if someone has the exact wording of this commendation so that I might add it to the many items I have concerning the 69th which I've saved from the bulletins over the years it has been printed.

I was serving with the 269th Engineers (C) Bn., H&S Co. at the time, although I had also been with "A" Company along the way.

One of these days I hope to attend a reunion since I find that when someone writes about the get-togethers, I feel that I'm missing out on getting together with all the old crowd.

I also would like to commend all of you who are involved with the bulletin - how very well you guys write and how well you put things together. Keep up the good work.

Over these many years I've sent in one or two items I thought might be of interest and I would like to send in additional ones although I wouldn't like to repeat some of the things I've sent. We're at the age where most of us wouldn't blush about some of the things we did when we were of that age in the early 40's of the war, when we were in our early years and really just growing up.

Again, keep up the wonderful writing and coordinating of the material being sent in.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: If anyone can help out Stan with the wording on the Meritorious Unit Commendation, please write to him and let him know.)

* * * * *

Phillip M. Ikins
Company A and B, 271st Infantry
2636 East Genesee Street
Syracuse, New York 13224

Dear Sirs:

About a year ago I wrote to our newsletter and requested information and guidelines from the membership on how I could prove and validate my battlefield commission from staff sergeant to second lieutenant in B Company and A Company, 271st Regiment.

I was overcome with the response from our members who knew this and wished to validate and reinforce my claim. There were even friends who would certify in a court of law that it did occur.

Among these was **Jack Jones** who instructed me in the tedious but productive technique of requesting forms and validation devices from Archival Research of the government which in no time at all, so surprisingly, produced the entire documentation that was required and that I had been unable to get myself all these years so that now I had my proof of source of commission.

And there was a host of others of my not-forgotten friends who responded and reminded me of events of the past which has since quite amazed me. They include **William Noone, Gene Pasma, Billy Crowder** and **William Sheehan**. Then I finally realized that the real reward for my writing and requesting my most cherished Battlefield Commission Documents was renewing my memories and finding it all with these friends.

(Continued on Page 15)

DOTTIE AND ME
(Continued from Page 14)

Ray Norris, Company F, 271st Infantry
642 Law Street
Aberdeen, Maryland 21001-3535

Dear Earl:

I always look forward to receiving the Bulletin and enjoy it very much. You guys do a great job.

I was assigned to Company F, 2nd Battalion, 271st Infantry, in May 1943 and was with them all the way, just prior to entering combat. I volunteered for the Combat and Recon Patrol. **Herb Erhart** sent pictures which you published in Volume 47, No. 2, 1994.

Since then I have visited **Herb** in Eager, Arizona. He is now a retired doctor and big game hunter. The photo was taken in his trophy room. We enjoyed the visit with Herb and Luci. Since then I have been in contact with **Leroy Parks** who was my Assistant Platoon Sergeant who was wounded and evacuated before the war's end. **Herb** was from Company E and **Leroy** from Company G and is a member of the 69th Association.

I am in the process of down-sizing so I hope to be sending more letters and photos in the future.

Keep up the good work and God bless to you and all members of the 69th.



Ray Norris and Herb Erhart in Herb's trophy room.

**69TH INFANTRY DIVISION
50TH ANNUAL REUNION**
August 17 to 24, 1997
Tara's Ferncroft
Danvers, Massachusetts
IT'S OUR 50TH REUNION!
GET THOSE RESERVATION FORMS IN!

**69th
Division
Artillery
Hq. Btry.**

Left to right:
Charlie Chapman
Bill Gregg
Frank Tanquary
Dennis Michum

Submitted by:
Charles Chapman
7412 Exmore Street
Springfield,
Virginia 22150

*Note: Charlie also
sent us this issue's
cover photo.*



The 69th Counter Intelligence Corps

Submitted By: **Ellis M. Benson**
69th CIC Detachment
426 East Fulvia Street
Leucadia, California 92024-2145

The 69th Counter Intelligence Corps detachment was activated 23 September 1944 at Camp Shelby, Mississippi and traveled with this Division overseas. The original strength of seven was increased to seventeen upon arrival in England, the additional men being selected from the Division.

Having graduated from the University of California at Berkeley in Dec. 1941 with a major in history and a minor in German, I was sent to the Air Force where I had a short stint from which I was transferred to the Army Specialized Training Program to learn Italian by the total immersion method back at the University of California at Berkeley. After nine months of this training and having achieved fluency in the language, the army, being what it is, shipped me to the 69th Combat Engineers at Camp Shelby and I went overseas with that unit.

Upon arrival in England the call went out for men with language and other capabilities. I was selected by the 69th CIC (Counter Intelligence Corps) and identified as a Special Agent. The unit was quartered in the Winchester School where the new men began training in investigative and interviewing techniques.

A large amount of equipment was gathered to include fingerprint material. We were issued 45 pistols as well as snub nose 38's to use as concealed weapons. Also issued were Khaki trench coats. Instead of rank insignia we wore the U.S. symbols on each collar of the shirt as well as on the military cap, and were addressed as Mister. We were issued carbines for use in several jeeps which were allocated to the detachment.

The Detachment crossed the Channel with the Division from Southampton to LeHavre in January 1945 and was housed in the King George V Hotel in Paris directly after its liberation. We moved with the Division through France and Belgium going from town to town interviewing the mayors seeking French collaborators or rexistes as the Belgian Nazi collaborators were known.

Our task basically was to remove the risk of such collaborators as the Division moved.

As the Siegfried Line was breached and we entered Germany the task of identifying Nazi leaders as well as fanatic individuals who might pose a threat to our troops became all engrossing.

A questionnaire (Fragebogen) was developed which was administered to each suspect. Generally the German people in the Nazi period and even prior to that, were taught in their culture to respect authority. Therefore they tended to respond truthfully to the questions. It was indeed rare to find anyone who had not been a member of the party or at least one of its affiliate organizations. For example teachers were told in 1937 to join the party or lose their jobs.

The number of affiliate organizations was large to the extent that almost anyone could find one which had some interest for them, for example the party sailing club, sports club, skiing club and so on.

Of course teenage children were mandated to join the Hitler Youth (Hitler Jugend). Or for the younger ones, the girl's club Bund Deutsche Madel. Mature women were brought together in the Frauenschaft. Teachers were joined in the Bund Deutsche Lehrer. Many professors and vocations were brought together under the party aegis.

The CIC task was to follow leads in each town expecting to find those who might pose a threat. The top expectation of course was to find one of the upper leadership Nazis. At most our detachment did capture leaders of the Gau (state) level and mostly at the

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THE 69TH COUNTER INTELLIGENCE CORPS

(Continued from Page 16)

Burger (town) level. At one point in a discussion with a physician who admitted being in the SS when asked why he had joined, he replied that he was in his last year of medical school in Heidelberg and was told to become a member of the SS or be prevented from graduating. He asked me what I would have done under similar circumstances. It turned out he had participated in experiments at the Dachau concentration camp.

Of course each German would deny having been a member of the party but the German culture valued proper records of every activity. In a number of towns we found files in which individuals signed sworn statements in which they had forsworn the Christian religion to accept a condition known as *Gottglaubig* which essentially was faith in Adolf Hitler and the Nazi party. Other records in the town halls contained information of all kinds which enabled us to pursue individuals in the various arrestable categories.

Of particular interest to me as a historian and educator was the educational system in this National Socialist period. Most material for teaching was sent throughout Germany from the *Erziehungsamt* (Central office of Education). This was accomplished through the *Schulungsbrief*, a document which prescribed what was to be taught in that period until another one was sent.

Very large numbers of inexpensively produced National Socialist pamphlets were distributed throughout Germany. They were purely propaganda interspersed with a few facts. Those which dealt with America were slanted in every way. President Roosevelt was termed "Dictator of Democracy." The five volume *Galera Geschichte* presented the history of Germany from the National Socialist point of view.

I have retained these materials and have done some writing based on them. I plan to give them to Harvard University and the University of California. They provide excellent research materials.

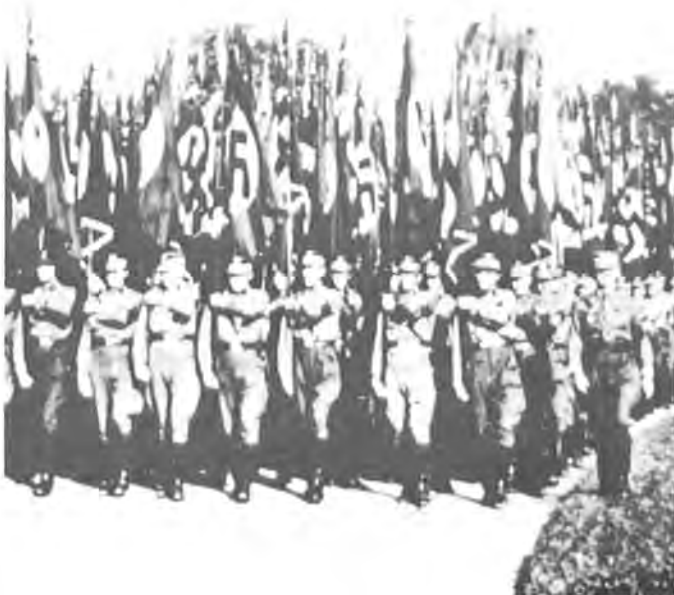
One of the tasks assigned to CIC was to prepare reports delineating the attitudes of the population in the area through which the Division moved. I recall an interview with a baroness in her castle. She held forth on the issue of race and race purity. The National Socialists placed great value on the Aryan race of which they claimed to be a part. They developed physical criteria to include measurements of the parts of the head with calipers as well as other parts of the body.

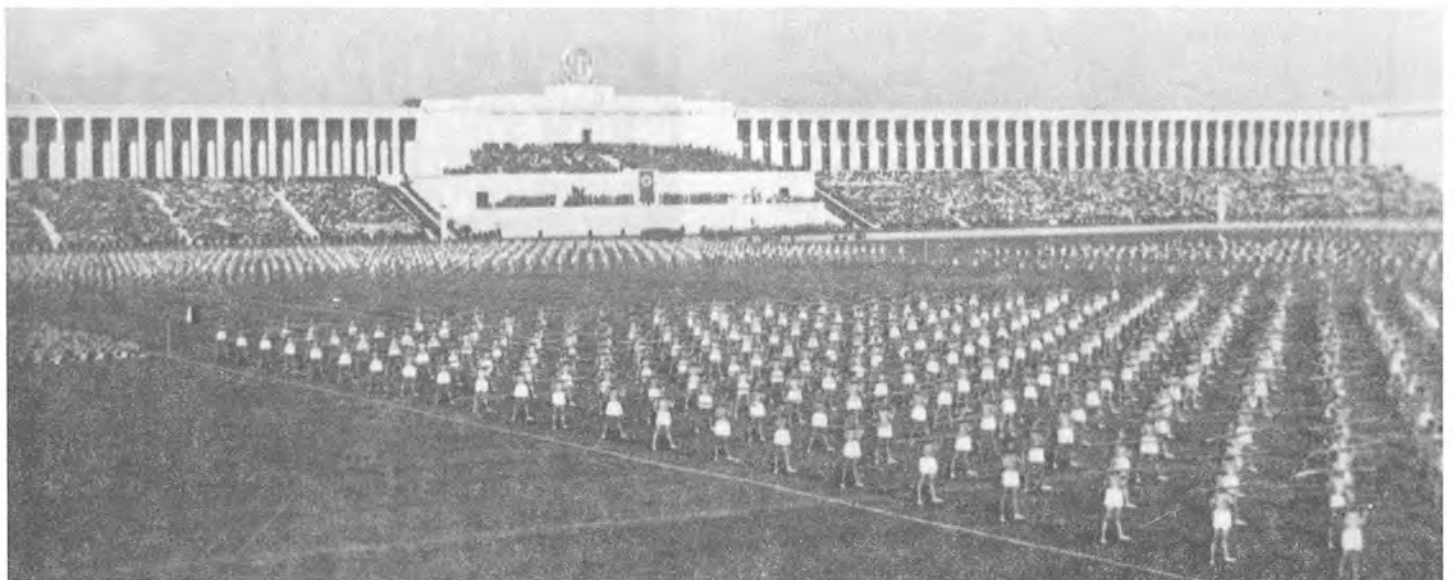
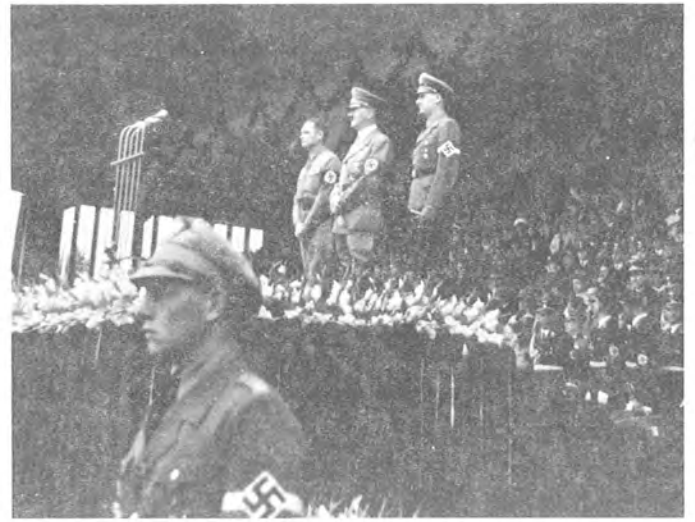
I have been able to communicate with only one member of the CIC detachment, **William Doyle** who unfortunately passed away several years ago. I would be delighted to hear from any others who still might be around.

As a final note one of the materials is the book of photographs of the 1939 Party Day in Nuremberg prepared by the official party photographer Heinrich Hoffman. The pictures are in stereo slide format and a stereopticon is included in the binding of the book. Included here are representative pictures showing the awesome degree of masses and theater that was able to sway a whole people. It was that in part that caused us in the 69th Division to do what we did in Europe in 1944 and 1945.



Sign directing to the CIC





Amendments are in the process for 1997 to our Constitution and By-Laws. Following are the Resolutions as amended in 1983. Beyond that are the recommendations for 1997 and Articles as they will stand if accepted.

Resolutions/By-Laws Committee

Joseph Wright, Chairman
Route 4, Box 140
Forsyth, Missouri 65653
Telephone: 417/546-4529

We regret to report to you that Joe passed away on April 5th, 1997. Direct all comments to the President.

The Resolution Committee is hereby presenting the Constitution and By-Laws as amended by vote of the General Membership at the 1983 Reunion at Scottsdale, Arizona.

In order to evaluate and present any amendments, it is again suggested that they be sent to the Secretary and Resolutions Committee Chairman, at least 30 days before the Reunion.

The Resolutions Committee hereby expresses its thanks for the cooperation and patience of the membership.

CONSTITUTION OF THE 69th INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION, INCORPORATED

PREAMBLE

We, the former members and associates of the 69th Division, in order to perpetuate the friendships born of a common danger and to maintain these bonds forever, to provide for the general welfare of its members and secure and keep fast the blessings of liberty and democracy to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the 69th Infantry Division Association, Incorporated.

ARTICLE I

The NAME of the Association shall be: The 69th Infantry Division Association, Incorporated.

ARTICLE II

The OBJECTS of the Association shall be:

(a) To aid and benefit the members of the Association.

(b) To perpetuate the brilliant record and achievements of the 69th Infantry Division and to assist the units which formed the Division in maintaining the spirit that animated it.

(c) To promote social relationships between the members of the Association.

(d) This Association shall be absolutely non-political and non-sectarian, and shall not be used for the dissemination of partisan principle, nor for the promotion of the candidacy of any person seeking public office or preferment.

(e) This is a civilian organization in which military rank shall not exist except on an honorary or complimentary basis.

ARTICLE III

The MEMBERSHIP in the Association shall be as follows:

(a) Active Members.

1. All individuals who at any time served with the 69th Infantry Division in WORLD WAR II or in units which were attached to the Division in WORLD WAR II, and who subscribe to this Constitution and By-Laws (except those excluded in subparagraph (d) of this Article) shall be eligible to active membership in the Association. Upon notification of the death of an active member to the Association, his membership shall be made available to his heirs who must be of blood relation.

2. All individuals who at any time served with the 69th Infantry Division in World War II or in units attached to the Division in World War II and who were seriously and permanently disabled by virtue of wounds received as a result of combat or incident thereto, shall upon application be entitled to an Active Life Membership in the 69th Infantry Division Association, and shall have the same rights and privileges as any other Active Member of the Association.

3. The Board of Directors of the Association or any of its branches are vested with the sole and exclusive discretion of determining whether or not an applicant is entitled to membership under the provision herein above mentioned and its decision shall be final.

(b) Honorary Members.

The Board of Directors of the Association or of any of its branches are authorized to nominate and elect Honorary Members of the Association or its branches respectively. However, Honorary Members of the National Association must be submitted to the Board of Directors for approval. Honorary Members shall not be entitled to vote or hold elective or appointive offices, but shall be extended the privilege to pay dues, as assessed, and may receive the official Bulletin of the Association.

(c) Associate Members.

The Board of Directors shall be authorized to approve as an Associate Member, the children of an Active Member, limited to and ending with the first generation. An Associate Member shall not be entitled to vote or hold elective or appointive offices, but shall be required to pay dues, as assessed, in order to remain in good standing and receive the official Bulletin of the Association.

(d) Exception to Membership.

No individual who has been dishonorably separated from the service or who has been convicted in civil life, of an offense involving moral turpitude, shall be eligible to hold membership in this Association.

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RESOLUTION/BY-LAWS COMMITTEE

(Continued from Page 19)

ARTICLE IV

The management of the Association shall be by a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and a Board of Directors (not to exceed twenty-four (24)).

ARTICLE V

The ELECTION OF THE MANAGEMENT shall be as follows:

(a) The Officers of the Association shall be elected by the members at the Annual Meeting, and shall hold office for two years or until their successors are elected and qualified.

(b) The Board of Directors shall be elected by the members at the Annual Meeting of the Association, and shall hold office for a period of three (3) years as hereinafter provided. At each Annual Meeting one-third (1/3) of the members of the Board of Directors will be elected for three (3) years.

(c) Vacancies on the Board occurring through causes other than expiration of the terms of office will be filled by election at the succeeding Annual Meeting of the Association.

(d) The Secretary and/or Treasurer shall be empowered to employ any personnel necessary to carry on the work of the Association, subject to approval by the Board of Directors.

(e) All Past Presidents shall automatically become Honorary Members of the Board of Directors but without the right to vote. Their primary function will be in an advisory capacity to the Board.

ARTICLE VI

DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS shall be the duties normally pertaining to their respective offices.

ARTICLE VII

MEETINGS OF THE ASSOCIATION shall be held annually at such times and places as the Board of Directors may select. At least thirty (30) days before the date of any meeting, the Secretary shall notify each member of the meeting by letter or notice in the official Bulletin.

ARTICLE VIII

Quorum of the Association at any meeting shall be forty-five (45) members. Eight (8) members of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum of the Board.

ARTICLE IX

EXPULSION. Any member may be expelled by the Board of Directors for causes stated in Article III, Section (d).

ARTICLE X

VOTING. The Board of Directors shall prescribe the method of voting, but the right of proxy shall not be denied, provided the material comprising the proxy is in the hands of the Secretary at least thirty (30) days before the Annual Meeting.

ARTICLE XI

DUES. The Board of Directors shall fix the dues, which shall be payable in advance. Life Members shall be exempted from dues.

ARTICLE XII

BRANCH SOCIETIES. One (1) or more branch societies may be formed in each State or Sector of a State or Sector consisting of a group of States on approval of the Board of Directors, provided that such Branch Society has at least ten (10) members. The name of such Branch shall have the following designation: "..... Branch of the 69th Infantry Division Association," prefixing the name of the State or Sector. All Branch Societies shall, wherever possible, adopt the Constitution and By-Laws of the Association.

ARTICLE XIII

AUXILIARY. There may be associated with this organization and subordinate thereto, Auxiliary Branches to be composed of wives, mothers and daughters who are eighteen (18) years of age or older of those members of the 69th Division who are entitled to Active Membership. These Branches are to be governed in accordance with the Constitution and By-Laws of the parent Association.

ARTICLE XIV

AMENDMENTS. The Constitution may be altered, amended, or added to at any meeting of the members, after one (1) month's notice thereof has been mailed to all members and a copy of the proposed amendments enclosed with the notice. No amendments shall become effective unless receiving the affirmative votes of a majority of the votes cast at such meetings at which a quorum is present.

* * * * *

BY-LAWS

OF

THE 69th INFANTRY

DIVISION ASSOCIATION, INCORPORATED

ARTICLE I

OFFICERS

Section 1. President.

The President shall preside at the Annual Reunion and at all meetings of the Board of Directors, of which he shall be chairman. He is charged with the direction of all affairs pertaining to the Association between the Annual Reunions; he shall from time to time call meetings of the Board of Directors and/or keep them informed by mail or telephone. The President shall appoint the Membership Chairman; Scholarship Chairman; Chaplain and Co-Chaplain, and Auditor. He shall also appoint all committees, except the Nominations Committee; make arrangements for Annual Reunions, and be responsible for the location and operation of the Headquarters Office of the

(Continued on Page 21)

RESOLUTION/BY-LAWS COMMITTEE

(Continued from Page 20)

Association, subject to the approval of the Board of Directors. The President shall have the authority to incur such incidental expenses as may be necessary. He shall make an Annual Report to the Association.

Section 2. Vice President.

There shall not be more than one (1) Vice President. The Vice President shall be a member of the Board of Directors, and shall perform the duties of the President during his absence or disability.

Section 3. Secretary.

The duties of the Secretary are administrative. He should be efficient and well informed. The Secretary makes and keeps a record of all business transacted at each meeting at the Reunion. The Secretary should have a copy of the Constitution and By-Laws. Upon completion of his term in office (two (2) years), the Secretary should transfer all of his secretarial records to the incoming Secretary.

Section 4. Treasurer.

The Treasurer should be a member of the Board of Directors. He shall receive and receipt for, and be custodian of all funds of any nature whatsoever due the Association, and such contributions as may be made to it, and deposit same in the name of the Association in a bank or banks, or a trust company or companies, to be designated by the Board of Directors. He shall draw checks in payment of all bills and claims against the Association, when such bills and claims have been certified to him by the President. He shall employ such clerical assistance and other personnel for and on behalf of the Association as may be necessary, subject to the approval of the Board of the Association. The Treasurer's duties shall begin at the conclusion of the Reunion at which elected, and shall furnish such bonds as may be required by the Board of Directors, the premium of which shall be paid from the funds of the Association. He shall make an Annual Report at the Reunion. The Treasurer should receive from the Reunion Chairman, all monies collected at the end of each day of the Reunion. The Treasurer shall make proper record of this money which shall be deposited each day to our account with the Reunion facility for safe keeping. The Treasurer shall make final statement with the Reunion facility to be completed in no more than thirty (30) days following the conclusion of the Reunion.

Section 5. Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors shall consist of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and those members not to exceed twenty-four (24) elected by the membership, with eight (8) elected each year to serve a three (3) year term. Membership each year shall include a representative from: Division Headquarters

- Special Troops; 271st Infantry Regiment; 272nd Infantry Regiment; 273rd Infantry Regiment; Division Artillery; 269th Combat Engineers; 661st Tank Destroyer Battalion; and the 777th Tank Battalion. The Board of Directors, during the intervals between Reunions, shall carry out the policies adopted by the Association.

The Board shall have authority to designate the time and place of each Annual Reunion (subject to approval of the General Membership at the Annual Reunion). The Board shall have the authority to set the amount of Annual Membership Dues.

Section 6. Term of Office.

The term of office for all elected Officers of the Association (President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer) shall be for two (2) years beginning at the conclusion of the Reunion at which they were elected and shall continue until their successors are duly elected and installed.

At the General Membership meeting of the 69th at Williamsburg, the following amendment to the By-Laws was approved.

Article 1, Section 7

In the event that the Secretary or Treasurer is not able to serve due to mid-term resignation or other causes, the President is empowered to appoint a successor to serve until the election at the next Reunion. The interim Officer is entitled to all of the rights and privileges described in the By-Laws. In the event that the office of Vice President is vacated for any reason, the position shall be filled without right of succession by the immediate Past Chairman of the nominating committee to serve until the next Reunion.

* * * * *

ARTICLE II STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 1. Resolutions Committee.

The Resolutions Committee shall be appointed by the President, and shall consider all resolutions presented and make its recommendations to the Reunion. Nothing contained in this section shall preclude the submission of resolutions from the floor.

At the General Membership Meeting of the 69th Infantry Division Association, Inc., held in Lexington, the following Amendment to the By-Laws was approved.

ARTICLE 2, SECTION 2 (NOMINATING COMMITTEE)

This Committee shall report to the reunion its recommendations for the Officers and Board Members of the Association for the ensuing term. Each annual class of the Board of Directors beginning its third year in office shall become the Nominating Committee for a

(Continued on Page 22)

RESOLUTION/BY-LAWS COMMITTEE

(Continued from Page 21)

term of one year terminating at the conclusion of the Annual General Membership Meeting of the 69th Infantry Division Association. The Chairman of the Nominating Committee shall commence with the following units and shall follow in chronological order. If the designated Chairman of the Nominating Committee is not in attendance, the Chairmanship shall pass to the next Unit in order until filled.

1. 269th Combat Engineers
2. 661st Tank Destroyer Battalion
3. 777th Tank Battalion
4. 369th Medical Battalion
5. 461st A.A.A.
6. 271st Infantry Regiment
7. 272nd Infantry Regiment
8. 273rd Infantry Regiment
9. Division Artillery - Consisting of: 724th F.A. Battalion, 879th F.A. Battalion, 880th F.A. Battalion, 881st F.A. Battalion, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery.
10. Special Troops - Consisting of: Division Headquarters, Headquarters Company, 69th Division Band, 69th M.P.s, 69th Recon, 569th Signal Company, 769th Ordnance and 69th Quartermaster Company

Section 3. Reunion Committee.

The Reunion Committee shall be appointed by the President and shall be residents of the city, or vicinity thereof in which the next Annual Reunion is to be held. Subject to the direction and approval of the Board of Directors, the committee shall be in charge of arrangements for the Annual Reunion.

Section 4. Chairmen of Standing Committees.

The Chairmen of the several Standing Committees shall be appointed by the President of the Association from the membership of the respective committees.

ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP DUES

Section 1. Dues.

The amount of Membership Dues shall be set by a majority vote of the Board of Directors. The dues period shall be the interval between the close of the Annual Reunion and the end of the succeeding Annual Reunion, and shall be payable at any time preceding the Annual Reunion.

ARTICLE IV ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Order of Business shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, except as herein modified. The Order of Business and program for each Reunion shall be arranged by the President of the Association.

ARTICLE V FISCAL YEAR

The Fiscal Year shall commence on August 1, and terminate on July 31, of the following year.

ARTICLE VI BRANCH SOCIETIES

Any area desiring a Branch Society should be aware of these requirements.

Section 1.

Local Chapters of this Association may be formed by not fewer than ten (10) eligible members of the Association in any State or Sector thereof. Not more than one (1) local chapter shall be formed in any one (1) community.

Section 2.

Petitions for organization of Branch Societies shall be addressed to the President of the Association, who shall submit same to the next meeting of the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall have final authority to approve any and all such petitions. Upon approval of a petition by the Board of Directors, the President shall issue a Charter for such Branch Societies.

Section 3.

The Constitution and By-Laws of each Branch Society shall contain nothing inconsistent with the Constitution and By-Laws of the Association. A copy of the By-Laws and Constitutions of each Local Chapter, with amendments thereto shall be filed with the Secretary of the Association. Each Branch Society shall file with the Secretary of the Association the names and addresses of all officers of such Branch Society.

ARTICLE VII AMENDMENTS

These By-Laws may be amended by a majority vote of the Quorum of eligible members attending any Annual Reunion of the Association.

1997 Recommended Amendments to the Constitution & By-Laws

For a number of years, your officers have been aware that some of our older records have been missing and could not be reconstructed. One missing document is our Articles of Incorporation. A year ago I was asked to get a copy of these Articles and I requested assistance from Sherman S. Lawrence who had Incorporated this Association. Sherman obtained a copy of the Articles from the Secretary of State of the State of New York and sent it to me. Our Executive Officers now have copies, including the Secretary. In reviewing these Articles, we noticed something that caused us concern. The Articles of Incorporation provide that the Association "Shall have not less than Ten (10) nor more than Twenty-Five (25) Directors."

(Continued on Page 23)

1997 RECOMMENDED AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

(Continued from Page 22)

At the present time we have authorized Thirty-Four (34) Directors, including the four (4) elected officers who have been designated Directors by the Constitution. Only once have we filled all of the authorized Directorships. Two Battalions have never fully utilized those directorships available to them. At the present time these two Battalions have a total of six (6) directors authorized, but only one (1) director between them. That leaves us with twenty-nine (29) directors, still over the maximum authorized.

We must reduce the size of the Board of Directors, even the maximum of twenty-four (24) is too many. Your Resolutions and By-Laws Committee has prepared proposed amendments to three Sections of the Constitution or By-Laws that will reduce the Board to Nineteen (19) Directors, including the four (4) elected officers. These changes are based on a ten (10) year study of Unit attendance at Reunions. This amendment will reduce the number of Units electing Directors from ten (10) to five (5) Units of approximately equal membership size.

Two (2) other amendments to the By-Laws deal with; (a.) Appointing a replacement for the Vice-President; (b.) Redefining the Fiscal Year to Financial Report Year which will preclude future changes to Article V of the By-Laws.

You may vote on any or all of these proposed amendments at the General Membership meeting scheduled for August 23rd, 1997 at Danvers, Massachusetts, or if you cannot attend the Reunion you may vote by Proxy by mailing your votes to the Secretary, William C. Sheavly at 218 Sacred Heart Lane, Reisterstown, Maryland 21136-1414.

Before voting you should be aware that the following proposed amendments are all inter-related: Article IV of the Constitution, and of the By-Laws Article I, Section 5, and Article II, Section 2. If you vote to adopt any one of these three you should vote to adopt all of the amendments. It is important that we approve and implement these amendments as soon as possible to reduce the size of the Board of Directors.

The following paragraphs are brief synopsis of each proposed amendment and the reason it is required.

CONSTITUTION, ARTICLE IV. This amendment reflects the applicable provision in our Articles of Incorporation word for word. By using this language we can alter the size of the Board of Directors in the future without further amending the Constitution. We would need only to amend the By-Laws. All other proposals are amendments to the By-Laws only.

Section 3. Secretary.

This amendment is to provide that the Secretary shall be the Custodian of ALL Corporate records (as

opposed to financial records for which the Treasurer is the Custodian). This provision has been sorely needed. In the past too many officers and Committee Chairman have kept all of the records of their activities, including contracts that obligate the association, or its members to pay specific amounts of money, and either have not produced the documents when needed or did not pass them on to successors or any other officer. This amendment also requires that a retiring Secretary complete his work and submit his last minutes to the **BULLETIN** editor and then turn over ALL of his records to his successor.

Section 4. Treasurer.

We removed the first sentence from this section as it expressed, in inadequate language, an attempt to make the Treasurer a member of the Board of Directors and was redundant since Section 5, immediately following, expressly makes all four elected officers members of the Board.

Section 5. Board of Directors.

This is the section that will reduce the number of voting units from ten (10) to five (5) and enumerates all the units that have been merged together into one voting unit. You can see that the three Regiments and Divarty remain untouched and all other units have been grouped together as one voting unit named "Division Special Troops and Attached Units" for lack of a better descriptive term. The five (5) voting units will, over a period of three (3) years elect fifteen (15) directors to terms of three (3) years each. No Director elected prior to August 23, 1997 will be removed from the Board and if, for any reason he cannot complete his term, a replacement Director from his unit will be appointed by the President.

Starting with the date of the next General Business Meeting, after the passage of these amendments, within two years we will have completed the reduction of the size of the Board from thirty-four (34) authorized directors to nineteen (19).

Article 1, Section 7.

This amendment is to correct a mistake made at the time this amendment was voted on at the Denver Reunion. At that time it was thought that if the President should leave office during his term, there would be no one to appoint a new Vice-President if he should also leave office in mid-term. Consequently, a method was devised to assure having someone automatically become the Vice-President. There is no reason to treat the Vice-President any different than any other officer. In the event the President should leave office the Vice-President would **IMMEDIATELY** ascend to the Presidency, and could then appoint his successor as Vice-President.

ARTICLE II. Section 2. Nominating Committee

This amendment establishes the rotation for the Chairman of the Nominations Committee among the

(Continued on Page 24)

1997 RECOMMENDED AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

(Continued from Page 23)

five (5) new voting units. Note that Divarty is the first unit in line as it is the next one in line after the 273rd Infantry who is furnishing the Chairman for the year 1997.

ARTICLE V. Financial Report Year

This new amendment is to establish the flexibility by which the officers who handle our finances can best determine the financial report year for the association without having to amend the By-Laws.

Submitted by your Resolutions & By Laws Committee

Eugene D. Butterfield, Chairman

Members:

Joseph E. Wright

Gaylord Thomas

* * * * *

Constitution and By-Laws as it will stand as amended

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE IV

The management of the Association shall be by a President, VicePresident, Secretary, Treasurer, and a Board of Directors to be not less than ten (10) nor to exceed twenty-five (25).

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE 1, Section 3, Secretary

The duties of the secretary are administrative. He shall be Custodian of all Corporate Records, and should be efficient and well informed. He shall make and keep a record of all business transactions at each meeting at the Reunions. He shall have a copy of the Constitution and By-Laws. Upon completion of his term in office two (2) years, he shall transfer all Secretarial and Corporate Records to the incoming Secretary, and shall be responsible for the completion of the minutes of the last meeting and for submitting the minutes of said meeting to the Editor of the BULLETIN for Publication.

Section 4, Treasurer

The Treasurer shall receive and receipt for, and be custodian of all funds of any nature whatsoever due the Association, and such contributions as may be made to it, deposit same in the name of the Association in a bank or banks or a trust company or companies, to be designated by the Board of Directors. He shall draw checks in payment of all bills and claims against the Association, when such bills and claims have been certified to him by the President. He shall employ such clerical assistance and other personnel for and on behalf of the Association as may be necessary, subject to approval of the Board of the Association. The

Treasurer's duties shall begin at the conclusion of the Reunion at which elected, and shall furnish such Bonds as may be required by the Board of Directors, the premium of which shall be paid from funds of the Association. He shall make an Annual Report at the Reunion. The Treasurer will receive from the Reunion Chairman all monies collected at the end of each day of the Reunion. The Treasurer shall make a proper accounting of the money which shall be deposited each day to our account with the Reunion facility for safe keeping. The Treasurer shall make final statement with the Reunion facility to be completed in no more than thirty (30) days following the conclusion of the Reunion.

Section 5, Board of Directors

The Board of Directors shall consist of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and those members not to exceed fifteen (15) elected by the membership, with five (5) elected each year to a three (3) year term. Members elected each year shall be from five (5) voting units: 271st Infantry Regiment; 272nd Infantry Regiment; 273rd Infantry Regiment; Division Artillery; and Division Headquarters - Special Troops and all attached Units, which shall include: Division Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 69th Division Band, 69th M.P. Platoon, 69th Reconnaissance Troop, 69th Quartermaster Company, 569th Signal Company, 769th Ordnance Company, 369th Medical Battalion, 269th Combat Engineer Battalion, 441st A.A.A. (A.W.) Battalion, 661st Tank Destroyer Battalion and 777th Tank Battalion.

This Amendment shall take effect as of August 23, 1997. All Directors elected prior to that date shall serve their full three (3) year term. If any Director resigns, dies, or is incapacitated his Office shall be filled by appointment by the President of another member from the Unit represented by the departing Director.

During the intervals between Reunions the policies and functions of this Association shall be carried out by the President with the assistance of the Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The Board shall have the authority to designate the time and place of each Annual Reunion (subject to the approval of the General Membership at the Annual Reunion). The Board shall have the Authority to set the amount of Annual Membership Dues.

ARTICLE I, Section 7

In the event the Secretary, Treasurer, or Vice-President is not able to serve due to mid-term resignation or other causes the President is empowered to appoint a successor to serve until the election at the next Reunion. The Interim Officer is entitled to all of the rights and privileges described in the By-Laws.

(Continued on Page 25)

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS AS IT WILL STAND AS AMENDED

(Continued from Page 24)

ARTICLE II - Standing Committees

Section 2. Nominating Committee

This committee shall report to the Reunion its recommendations for Officers and New Board Members to the Association for the ensuing term.

Each annual class of the Board of Directors, upon beginning its third (3rd) year in office, shall become the Nominations Committee for a term of one (1) year, terminating at the conclusion of the Annual General Membership Meeting of the 69th Infantry Division Association. The Chairman of the Nominations Committee shall commence with the following Units and in chronological order:

1. Division Artillery
2. Division Special Troops and Attached Units
3. 271st Infantry Regiment
4. 272nd Infantry Regiment
5. 273rd Infantry Regiment

ARTICLE V - Financial Report Year

The Annual Financial reporting period shall be determined by the Treasurer, confirmed by the Auditor, and approved by the Board of Directors.

Schedule of Service Btry. 880th Field Artillery

From Shelby to Merseburg

- 21 Nov. 1944.** Left Camp Shelby, Miss., 1500 by rail, enroute to staging area.
- 23 Nov.** Arrived Camp Kilmer, N.J. 1512.
- 30 Nov.** Left Camp Kilmer, N.J., by rail for POE at 1800. Arrived pier #10, NYPE, 2100. Boarded S. S. LeJeune 2240.
- 1 Dec.** Left N. Y. Harbor 0900 for E.T.O.
- 12 Dec.** Arrived Southampton, England 1400.
- 13 Dec.** Debarked Southampton 1430. Departed by rail 1830. Arrived Reading, England 2330.
- 21 Jan. 1945** Left Reading, England 0412. Arrived Weymouth, England 1400.
- 22 Jan.** Left Weymouth 0710. Arrived Portland, England 0810. Boarded L.S.T. #317 0900. Sailed 1600.
- 23 Jan.** Arrived Le Harve, France 0430. Debarked 1200. Proceeded in convoy to La Haye, France. Arrived 2130.
- 2 Feb.** Left La Haye 0700. Arrived Marchais, France 1600. 125 miles.
- 9 Feb.** Left Marchais, France 1120.
- 10 Feb.** Arrived Mirfeld, Belgium 0555. 175 miles.
- 11 Feb.** Took combat position 1030.

14 Feb. Left Mirfeld, Belgium 1355. Arrived Bullingen, Belgium 1450. 5 miles.

15 Feb.-24 Feb. In Combat - Activity light.

25 Feb.-6 Mar. In Combat - Ammo. Train very active.

10 Mar. Left Bullingen, Belgium 1500. Arrived Schnarrenberg, Germany 1600. 12 miles. Crossed Siegfried Line.

16 Mar. Left Schnarrenberg 0900. Arrived Dahlem 1000. 7 miles.

22 Mar. Left Dahlem 0950. Arrived Franken 1510. 40 miles.

24 Mar. Left Franken 1645. Arrived Meshenish 2030. 50 miles.

24 Mar.-28 Mar. Battalion in direct support of 2nd Bn., 28th Infantry Regiment, 8th Infantry Div., 7th Corps.

28 Mar. Left Meshenish 1512. Arrived Nieder Lahnatain 2020. 64 miles. Crossed Rhine River on pontoon bridge.

31 Mar. Left Nieder Lahnatain 0645. Arrived Ahlbach 1000. 32 miles.

2 Apr. Left Ahlbach 2000.

3 Apr. Arrived Reide 1035. 115 miles. (blackout)

5 Apr. Left Reide 1030. Arrived Sandershausen 1600. 24 miles.

7 Apr. Left Sandershausen 1015. Arrived Dalheim 1345. 5 miles.

9 Apr. Left Dalheim 0930. Arrived Witzenhausen 1130. 10 miles.

10 Apr. Left Witzenhausen 0830. Arrived Uder 1030. 12 miles. Left Uder 1630. Arrived Gressgrabe 2200. 34 miles.

11 Apr. Left Gressgrabe 1130. Arrived Ostramondra 1915. 42 miles.

12 Apr. Left Ostramondra 1145. Arrived Naumberg 2345. 29 miles.

13 Apr. Left Naumberg 1115. Arrived Jaucha 1730. 23 miles.

17 Apr. Left Jaucha 0830. Arrived Zweenfurth 1430. 34 miles.

20 Apr. Left Zweenfurth 1430. Arrived Plaussig 1445. 9 miles.

2 May. Left Plaussig 1530. Arrived Otterwisch 1700. 23 miles.

11 May. Left Otterwisch 0930. Arrived Merseburg 1230. 48 miles.

31 May. Battery Awarded Meritorious Service Plaque.

29 June. Battery broken up. 32 men and 2 officers transferred to 29th Infantry Division.

In Combat — 5th Corps, 1st Army.

After V.E. Day — 7th Corps, 1st Army.

In Merseburg — 7th Corps, 9th Army.

In Merseburg — 21st Corps, 7th Army.

Submitted by: **Vear L. Mortensen**

411 South 500 East, St. George, Utah 84770-3721

69th INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION 1997
50th ANNUAL REUNION
461st AAA BN. - 661st T.D. BN. - 777th TANK BN.
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AUGUST 17th thru AUGUST 24th, 1997

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69th INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION 1997

50th ANNUAL REUNION

461st AAA BN. - 661st T.D. BN. - 777th TANK BN.

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AUGUST 17th thru AUGUST 24th, 1997

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I/we will attend the 69th Infantry Division Association Reunion in Danvers, Massachusetts during the week of August 17th thru 24th, 1997 and will attend the following activities.

Name: _____

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Unit: _____ Wife's Name: _____

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Daily Events

Registration: **Monday thru Friday**, 9:00 a.m. to Noon and 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

For Saturday, Check the Bulletin Board.

Sunday, August 17th — Early Arrivals on your own.

Monday, August 18th — Check Bulletin Board and Hospitality Room.

Tuesday, August 19th — **LEXINGTON AND CONCORD**

9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Lunch on your own.

Wednesday, August 20th — **BOSTON TOUR**

9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Lunch on your own.

THEATER SHOW - 6:45 p.m. to 10:45 p.m.

COMEDY SHOW - "Late Night Catechism." Cut-off date: July 1st, 1997

Thursday, August 21st — **PLYMOUTH PLANTATION** - 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. ..

GOLF TOURNAMENT

EARLY BIRD DINNER, Cash Bar-6:30 p.m. Tickets Required

Friday, August 22nd — **SPIRIT OF BOSTON** - 10:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING — 4:00 p.m. Check Bulletin Board

PX BEER PARTY — 9:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m. Tickets Required

Saturday, August 23rd **COFFEE AND DANISH** - 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

GENERAL MEETING AND AUXILIARY MEETING - 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon

MEMORIAL SERVICE - 6:30 p.m.

DINNER AND DANCING BANQUET - 7:00 p.m. to 12:00 Midnight

Please Check: ☐ Prime Rib ☐ Boston Scrod

CASH BAR - 6:00 p.m. (Banquet Ticket Required)

Sunday, August 24th - **FAREWELL BREAKFAST** - 7:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Replacement Cost for Lost or Broken Permanent Badges

SUPPORT YOUR HOSPITALITY ROOM: DONATIONS PLEASE!

Reunion Sub-Total

DUES **New Dues Year - August 1, 1997 to July 31, 1998**

Regular Membership

Ladies Auxiliary

Postage and Bulletin Donation (up to you)

Total Amount Paid

Make Check or Money Order Payable to: **69th Infantry Division Association**

ALL RESERVATIONS MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY PAYMENT IN FULL — IF NOT — YOUR RESERVATION WILL BE LAID ASIDE UNTIL PAYMENT IS MADE AND THIS COULD RESULT IN YOUR REQUEST FOR SEATING AND FUNCTIONS BEING DENIED. NO CHARGE CARDS ACCEPTED FOR EVENTS.

If you do not have a plastic badge from earlier Reunions, please check box. ☐

Permanent badges will be made if your request is accompanied by an advance prepaid Reservation. Failure to attend Reunion will result in a \$4.00 charge for each badge ordered, and will be deducted from your refund. Please fill out this form and mail it with your payment in full, no later than thirty (30) days prior to the Reunion. By doing this, it will make our job much easier, and save you time at the Registration Desk.

THE AUXILIARY'S PAGE



Dottie Witzleb

by - **Dottie Witzleb**
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A Message from your Auxiliary President, Edith Chapman

Dear Ladies of the Auxiliary and Friends,

Happy New Year to all! So far we have had a mild winter in Virginia. I am thinking ahead about our reunion in Danvers next August 17th through the 24th. Hope all of you are planning to attend. I am very excited about the tours. All my life I have lived around all the interesting sites of Virginia, but I have not seen all the interesting places in New England. In fact, all I have seen were in Boston on a trolley car last September.

Ellen McCann, our former secretary, and her husband are in charge of the tours. There will be two tours of the city of Boston. One will be on Tuesday and the other one on Friday. Some of the other tours will be to visit Lexington-Concord, Plymouth Plantation and Mayflower, Salem and Marblehead. There will be a "Spirit of Boston" Cruise on Friday with a lobster luncheon. Umm!

Our Auxiliary Meeting will be held on Saturday morning at 9 o'clock. We will have a representative from the VA Hospital near Danvers. I hope many of you

are making lap robes and other things for the veterans. The measurements for the lap robes are 36" x 45." We will be presenting a \$500.00 check to the representative to be used for toilet articles such as tooth brushes, tooth paste, bath powder, etc.

For entertainment at our meeting we will be having the Cape Ann Senioresses, a dance group of ladies our age. We will have our usual gift exchange to cost no more than \$5.00.

When your husband sends in his dues, please have him send \$5.00 for you to belong. Encourage your friends to come with you to the meeting..

If you need any more information about our meeting or activities, please call me at 703-451-1904.

- In Memoriam -

"LADIES' TAPS"

LUCILE A. BAVICO

wife of **Joseph F. Bavico**, Co. C, 272nd Infantry

HELEN HEATH

wife of **Thomas Heath**, Btry. B, 724th F.A.

LORRAINE "JOY" HOPKINS

wife of **Richard J. Hopkins**, Co. F, 273rd Infantry

Eleanor Wright recalls her Wartime Marriage

Written by: **Eleanor Wright**

wife of **Joe Wright**, *Division Headquarters*
51 Audubon Trail, Forsyth, Missouri 65653

Inducted into Service 10/12/42
Married 12/12/43
Separated from Service 9/23/44

The above statistics signify that we were married when **Joe** was in the Service.

Around noon on 12/12/43 we presented ourselves at the County Clerk's home to get our marriage license. After receiving the license she gave us a lecture on war marriages and she didn't care much about seeing a marriage dissolved. We assured her we weren't young, starry-eyed kids. We were old enough to know our own minds. She let us go.

The marriage was to take place in my home church. It was then 1:45. There were many things to do including meeting Joe's family. One of his brothers had purchased a ring for me. He came with a whole handful of rings, all too big. Aside from that everything went smoothly. Joe had a weekend pass plus a 3-day pass, so we left for Chicago after the reception. Monday we spent getting the ring sized and taking care of some business before we met a friend who took us to dinner - a custom we enjoyed for many anniversaries. On Monday while Joe picked up the ring, I took the luggage to the train station. I sat beside a little old lady who was so perturbed about all the service men milling around saying good-bye to friends, loved ones, and wives. She just knew many marriages would be broken up, etc., before long. Joe came bounding up saying, "Hold up your hand," took it and said, "With this ring I thee wed," picked up our luggage and we took off - she had seen everything!

I went home, Joe left for Camp. In January I took a month's leave of absence and went to Hattiesburg. Joe met the train and took me to the home where we had a room. Walking in we were greeted by two big Persian cats right in the middle of the bed. Now I hate cats with a passion. After the cats were removed I proceeded to clean the room. Looking for a broom I discovered three more big Persian cats. I knew I had to keep the bedroom door closed, against the wishes of the landlady - these cats fought every night in her room which was next to ours - they shook the house. I went home at the end of two weeks as the outfit was going out on bivouac and wouldn't be back for two weeks.

In April I went back to stay until Joe went overseas. We had rooms on the third floor of a house closer to town where I could get around better. After getting involved with the Red Cross and a church choir and spending time at the USO, I felt I should get a job.

Obviously I wouldn't get work in any of the established concerns. I checked with the Reliance Mfg. Co. who made Big Yank work shirts. Nothing was available at the plant in town, but they had a plant out about ten miles - they called and I went out for an interview. The next day found me waiting for the bus along with about fifty other people who worked out there. We were bussed out and back every day at 7:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Lunch was served at the plant for 35¢ a meal - it was a complete meal very well planned and cooked. Many shirts and Army ponchos were made there. My job was to pile the shirts six to a pile according to size, fold each shirt a certain way, tie each bundle a certain way, and put them in a cart 5 days a week - it was a time-consuming job which I got paid for.

Coming from the North I was accustomed to the freedom black people had and was I surprised and shocked at the treatment they received in the South. I got into a little trouble a couple of times for not minding my own business, but by and large I got along with everybody.

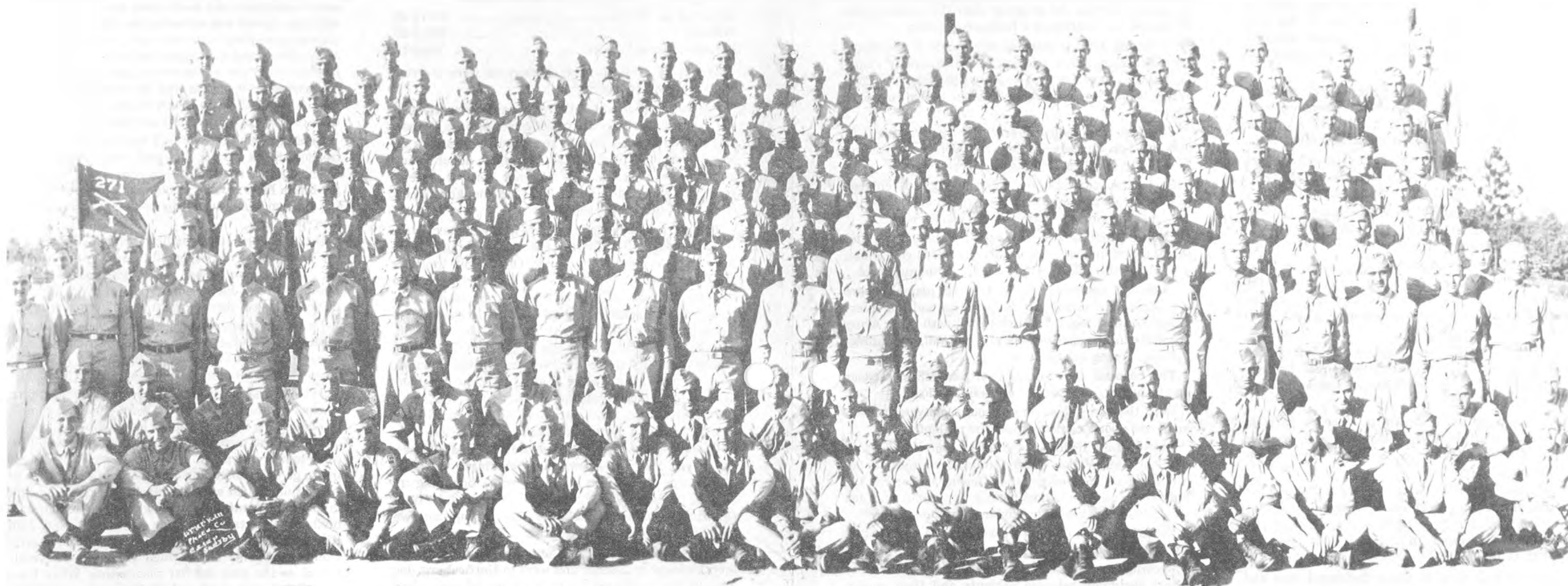
Being a singer I was called upon to sing at church services on the Post, especially services that were held the night before troops were sent out. I sang on Sundays. When Joe was on duty I sat in his office until he was relieved, then we went back into town together.

I met many interesting people, wives, soldiers, and townspeople and enjoyed every one of them. When the memorial was put up several years back I renewed old friendships with many of the town girls I had met.

The 69th shipped out just before Thanksgiving. I worked on that day and we were served a complete Thanksgiving Dinner, and as I remember it was delicious - my first taste of cornbread stuffing which I have come to like very much. I gathered up my stuff preparing to go back home, but the chaplain's assistant who was a fine pianist and had played for me many times, talked to his aunt and uncle in Pennsylvania and they invited me to stay with them while Joe was at Camp Kilmer. The chaplain's wife had a reservation on the train to go home but decided to drive there with a friend, so she gave me her reservation. When I went into the station in Philadelphia Joe was waiting for me. The next morning he left for Kilmer and it took me a week to get a reservation on the train for home - the Aunt and Uncle were just great people.

It was difficult to settle back in the old routine again, but you had to do it. Mail and war news became a large part of my life - either "feast" or "famine" on the mail. When I read of the link-up at the Elbe River I just knew Joe would be coming home soon, but then I always felt he would be home sometime. I got a telegram saying he was flying home and would be home tomorrow - thirty two days later he arrived home.

We are happy to say that the dire predictions that started our marriage didn't come true. After fifty-three years of good and bad, joyful and sad, in sickness and in health we are still together - my soldier boy and me.



Company I - 271st Infantry - Camp Shelby, Miss. - August 1943

**Company I, 271st Infantry Division - Camp Shelby, Mississippi
August 1943**

Submitted By: **Douglas Buckstad**, 28A Trillium Court, Asheville, North Carolina 28805-1357

Former Hospital was haven for wounded GIs

THE PHILADELPHIA ENQUIRER SUNDAY, JANUARY 26, 1997

By Joseph S. Kennedy

VALLEY FORGE — In anticipation of large numbers of battle casualties during World War II, the U.S. Army's Medical Department began a hospital construction program throughout the country in the early part of the war.

Under this program, the Valley Forge General Hospital was built in Charlestown Township near Phoenixville. It opened on March 12, 1943. And from that date until 1950, it treated more than 60,000 GIs.

"The facilities were excellent, my treatment was outstanding, and the food was good. I received the best care in the world," said Michael Jugan, 72, of Kimberton.

Jugan, a combat corpsman whose mouth and jaw were shattered during the Battle of the Bulge, was a patient at Valley Forge General for a year in 1946-47.

The hospital was situated on a 180-acre site that contained 130 two story semi-permanent brick buildings, according to the Army Medical Corps. All the medical buildings were connected with a total of 7 miles of corridors.

The hospital had a bed capacity of 2,509. In the beginning, it was staffed by Army personnel. Later in the war, a large staff of civil service employees was added.

As WWII progressed, the hospital began to treat some of the most horribly disfigured and disabled soldiers. Thus it specialized in plastic surgery, the blind and psychiatry.

"It was really terrible. Some of the boys didn't have any faces at all. You just had to look beyond their disfigurement and see that there was a real person there," said Nell Gautreau, a civilian hospital employee from 1945 to 1955.

"I tried to look right at these disfigured men and just not show my emotion. At the end of the day, I was exhausted," said Betty Jeitles, a Gray Lady for the Red Cross who volunteered during three wars.

Many accepted techniques of plastic surgery today were developed during the war at hospitals such as Valley Forge, according to the Army Medical Department. One common practice was to make a plaster mask of the soldier's face to serve as a guide for the surgeon doing the reconstructive surgery.

"When I was discharged from the Army in 1948, doctors told me that the reconstructive work done on my jaw and mouth would have cost \$10,000 in the civilian world," said Jugan.

Not all of the patients had such happy results. There were a notable number of suicides at the hospital,

during and after the war, by those unable to cope with their disfigurement, the loss of their sight, or their mental illness, former patients and volunteers say.

Caring for blinded soldiers and teaching them self-sufficiency was one of the programs at Valley Forge General. These soldiers were taught braille, and they developed finger skills by learning weaving and typing. So successful was the program that the hospital was chosen as the location of a Hollywood movie.

In August 1950, a cast and crew came to the hospital to film *Lights Out*, starring Arthur Kennedy, Peggy Dow and Richard Egan. The story was about a blinded WWII soldier and his rehabilitation at Valley Forge General.

The film, now called *Bright Victory*, premiered in July 1951 in Phoenixville, where much of the filming took place. Local residents were used as extras.

Part of the hospital's rehabilitation program centered around a vast recreation and entertainment schedule, aimed at keeping the servicemen's morale high.

On the grounds were a number of ball fields and tennis courts. Indoors were a fully equipped gymnasium, a bowling alley and an Olympic-size swimming pool.

Teams of administrative staff and patients were organized into intramural leagues as well as inter-mural hospital teams that competed with other Army hospitals in baseball, basketball, softball, swimming, bowling, boxing and archery.

The hospital also had its own post office, outdoor amphitheater, newspaper and radio station.

Over the years, big names from society, entertainment and sports came to cheer the patients.

The visitors included the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, Rudy Vallee, Eddie Canter, Gene Kelly, Duke Ellington, Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy, Ike Williams (the lightweight boxing champion) and Joe Walcott (the heavyweight boxing champion).

One of the most popular places was the post chapel, where hundreds of weddings were held.

Records from the Chester County Historical Society report weddings between patients and their sweethearts from home, nurses, staff and local women.

"The hospital joke was that the patients had saved the young, unmarried women of the Phoenixville area from becoming old maids," said Gautreau.

Gautreau met her husband, Bob at the hospital, where he was recovering from a land-mine wound. They were married in 1949.

The hospital had a great impact on the local economy. Monies from jobs at the hospital, spending by patients at local businesses, services rendered by local business, and supply purchases from local stores ran close to \$1 million annually, records indicate.

This created a bond between the hospital and the surrounding area.

(Continued on Page 33)

FORMER HOSPITAL WAS HAVEN FOR WOUNDED GIs

(Continued from Page 32)

No better example of this bond can be cited than Project Christmas, which started in 1969 during the Vietnam war.

Project Christmas was the brainchild of Betty Jeitles, who had been a Gray Lady volunteer since 1943, when she was 23.

"The idea was to bring in families of the soldiers who could not make it home for the Christmas holidays. I developed the idea, but there were a great many people in the area who did much of the work," said Jeitles now 76 and a resident of Schuylkill Township.

By raising thousands of dollars, the project was able to pay for room, board and transportation to bring 52 families into the area for the 1969 and 1970 Christmas Day celebrations.

In 1950, the Department of Defense ordered the closing of the hospital in a cost-cutting move but local

protests and the Korean War ended the plan. The hospital continued to treat soldiers until 1974 when it was closed and its facilities handed over to a number of groups.

Priscilla Crowell, archivist for the Charlestown society, says the site is now shared by Charlestown Township, which maintains sports and ball fields on the grounds; Valley Forge Christian College, which uses many of the original buildings; the Chester County Intermediate Unit; and a halfway house for homeless mental patients run by the state.

While Valley Forge General has not operated in more than 20 years, it remains a powerful memory for the people of the area and for those servicemen it helped to restore to civilian life.

NOTE: We would like to know if any of you 69ers were patients at the Valley Forge Hospital. Your late editor, Clarence Marshall was there for some time, as many of you know. Please write and let us know about your experience.

A Night to Remember - Company A, 271st Infantry

Submitted by: Herman F. Lipe, 604 West Rice Street, Landis, North Carolina 28088



Sergeants Herman Lipe, Eddie Palider and Willie Pate, taken on the night we boarded the John Ericsson for Europe. Palider was from Ohio and Pate was from Texas. I was wounded somewhere in Germany on February 28th and spent 8 months in hospitals. Pate, I understand, was sent to the Pacific Theatre. I had lost contact with Palider.

How Patrol #3 Made the Link-Up

Written in 1945 by: **Captain William J. Fox**
Member of the Patrol

Submitted By: **William R. Matlach**
Company E, 273rd Infantry
19 Barberry Road, West Islip, New York 11795

Recently, a few of us in the Association discussed an old clipping of a newspaper article dating back to 1945. It reported the adventures of Patrol #3 (also known as the "Craig Patrol") in the course of making their link-up with the Soviet forces. We generally agreed that the author had taken some liberties and that the article presented a completely distorted picture of what actually happened, presenting more fiction than fact. In the course of this discussion, **Bob Pierce** sent me a copy of a factual V Corp Historian's report written in 1945 by **Captain William J. Fox** who was a member of the patrol. The patrol was led by **Lt. Thomas P. Howard** of E-273 and included a large number of E Company personnel, although they were out-numbered by the men from H Company which supplied the jeeps required. Other personnel in the patrol were **Major Fred W. Craig** (HQ, 2nd Bn-273) and **Capt. George J. Morey** (HQ-273). A full listing of all 51 members of this patrol was published in the 1994 69th Division Bulletin Volume 48, No. 1.

The report is written in great detail and is very specific regarding time and place, even including map coordinates of the various locations. It appears to be entirely factual and was written by a participant very shortly after completion of the patrol. **Bob Pierce** has recommended that I submit the report for publication in the Bulletin so that all of our members can become aware of the events that occurred that day. It is presented here including an introduction by the author. I am sure you will find it to be a very interesting narrative.

* * * * *

INTERVIEWS, TIME, PLACE AND CIRCUMSTANCES: Actually, this is a narrative prepared by the writer who was a member of the patrol, and has been put together from personal observation, frequent conversations with **Major Craig**, **Captain George J. Morey**, assistant regimental S-2; **2nd Lieutenant Thomas P. Howard**, platoon leader from Company E whose men made the patrol, and many of the men on the patrol before, during and after the action described, and from notes made during the patrol. It was a patrol which, like the others, made contact with the Russians in a zone far beyond where it was supposed to go, though perhaps the best picture of the attitudes of the men who went so deep into German territory may be told from this excerpt from the writer's notebook, written the night after the contact:

"... We were told that no friendly troops were to go beyond a specified line about 5,000 yards to our front.

Yet the general feelings was that we were going to keep on until we met the Russians. It was a general spirit of eagerness, aggressiveness, and just plain hell-raising desire to meet them. We all operated under the hampering restriction of constant orders to hold where we were, orders which we chose to ignore. The thrill of the chase and the keenness of the hunt were too great. We kept going 'just a little bit further, and maybe . . .' But always the Russians remained wraiths . . . In at least our case, I was determined to meet the Russians that day, orders or no orders. This viewpoint reflected the feelings of the others, I know." When contact was ultimately made, there never was an inkling of an idea until a day later that any other contact had been made.

INTERVIEWER: Captain William J. Fox (2nd Information and Historical Service - V Corps.)

* * * * *

The morning was still young and the air cold as the six jeeps from E and H Companies, 273rd Infantry, rendezvoused with the radio jeep from regimental headquarters and the jeep from V Corps headquarters, in the dawn of 25 April.

The scene was the narrow, rickety bridge over the Mulde River at Trebsen, Germany. The objective was a patrol into German-held territory east of the Mulde to contact the Russian forces approaching from the east. The limit of advance was five miles beyond the stream; the unspoken, mutual agreement was that the Russians would be contacted that day, no matter what the distance, and come hell or high water.

The first elements of the patrol left the CP in town at 0445 and waited at the bridge. The sharp air made waiting unpleasant, and the distant booming of artillery, which might be Russian or might be German, seemed to promise that the day would bring adventure if not success.

Finally, at 0535, another patrol from the regimental I & R Platoon having crossed first, the patrol rattled its way over the old timbers of the Trebsen bridge and, 10 minutes later, having parted with the I & R group, passed through the last outpost and into the cold dawn fog which accentuated the uncertainty of the endeavor.

Theoretically under the command of **2nd Lieutenant Thomas P. Howard**, of Company E, the patrol actually was directed by **Major Fred W. Craig**, 2nd Battalion Executive and senior officer present. In addition, **Captain George H. Morey**, assistant S-2, had been detailed to represent the regimental commander, and **Captain William J. Fox**, of the 2nd Information and Historical Service, First U.S. Army, attached to V Corps, had been assigned to cover the story of the Russian-American link-up and had chosen this patrol as the one most likely of any to make contact on the corps front.

(Continued on Page 35)

HOW PATROL # 3 MADE THE LINK-UP

(Continued from Page 34)

The patrol followed a circuitous, sweeping route up and down side roads and main roads through Gornewitz and Denkwitz and Frendiswalde to Roda, slowing at the entrance to each town to cautiously reconnoiter before entering. These were just small peasant communities and were, for the most part, still asleep when the jeeps passed through. Some of these places had been scouted before, and desultory white flags hung from most of the houses. Here and there, an inquisitive youngster stuck his head out of an upstairs window, and small groups of impassive villagers watched the Americans silently move through their streets. There was no resistance, no demonstrations. It was early morning and everyone moved quietly. It was an unreal silence. War seemed far away in these gray houses and lonely, winding roads.

Progress was slow. The patrol moved carefully, alert to everything about it. The weather remained cold, the mist persisted. At the crossroads the vehicles stopped. **Major Craig** held a conference and decided to go on into Wermsdorf where, from a distance, a huge red cross could be seen glistening from the roof of what appeared to be a big hospital. Everyone kept his eyes peeled going through the lower portion of the Forst Wermsdorf.

At the outskirts of the town, the column stopped, the jeeps eased over to the side of the road. Those in the lead jeeps leaped out with weapons at the ready positions and deployed around the first houses. The others did the same thing. The short hairs at the back of the neck stood up and there was a momentary tension.

But, as everyone came around the corner of the houses, the tension fell away. There were groups of wounded Germans standing in the courtyard and others were peering from the doorways and windows. One German, who could speak English, came up and explained that there were only wounded in the town. All tactical troops had departed the day before. A German medical officer confirmed this fact. The medical personnel made quite a show of displaying their Red Cross identification cards and talked a great deal of the Geneva Convention. The wounded were a motley lot; there never was a thought of bothering them.

On the road some freed British PW's clambered over a fence, breathless and excited. They had escaped from a march column headed east the day before. "Foive years we've been waitin' for you blokes. Christ, Yanks! It's good to see you." That was their greeting. They were given several guns which had been taken from the German medics and told to head for Trebsen.

The patrol moved into the main portion of town. Some elements went directly to the hospital, some searched out other parts. A number of French, Belgian, Russian and Polish slave laborers and war prisoners

who had been turned into farm workers showed up. They were eager to help and volunteered to point out hiding German soldiers. Most of these simply had quit the army and returned to their homes. But they were rounded up. Most submitted easily, others were arrogant. Most had arms.

One was relieved of his pistol and was asked if he had any other weapons. He replied that he hadn't. Then it was noted that he was holding his right hand under his tunic. It was pulled out and he was holding an egg grenade in his hand evidently waiting for a favorable moment to use it on his captors. All the venom hadn't been extracted from the snake, despite the general appearance of submission.

At the hospital a search revealed a large cache of weapons. These were confiscated. Instead of searching the whole town, the hospital commander was told that he would be made responsible for the good conduct of all his patients and was told that all German military in the town would be taken care of inside the hospital grounds. There was a large group of wounded there, and a Luftwaffe hospital had moved in the day previously, bringing the total to an even higher level. Both groups of wounded had fled from the Russians in the east. Most of the women were reported as carrying vials of poison, just in case the Russians came. The Russian spirit of retribution had inspired terror in every German heart.

There were three Americans at the hospital. One was a lieutenant from the 2nd Infantry Division who had been wounded several days previously and couldn't leave. Another was a sergeant who was assisting a British medical officer, a Captain Sylvester, who had been captured in the western desert around Tobruk three years before, and chose to remain until proper evacuation was arranged. The third, a quiet, dark-haired youngster from the 45th Infantry Division joined the patrol, and, before he was finished, had acquired more weapons than the average infantry squad, proving to be one of the group's best assets.

Down the center of town the burgermeister was hauled out and, through an interpreter, instructed by **Major Craig** to tell the population that white flags must be hung from all houses and that all German soldiers must turn themselves in at the hospital by 1500. He was told to tell the people that any soldier seen outside the hospital grounds after that hour would be shot on sight. If any untoward incident occurred, the burgermeister would be shot and the town leveled by artillery.

The burgermeister mounted one of the jeeps and repeated these orders to the people who clustered around in crowds, interlarded with groups of freed allied workers, who looked somewhat puzzled, but happy, with their new-found liberty. Craig wisely omitted the fact that there was no accompanying artillery to enforce the threat and that the entire American Army in the area was this handful of men.

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This town was about at the limit of the area to which the regiment was permitted to send reconnaissance elements. When the patrol sent a position report earlier, regiment had sent a message: "Hold the patrol in vicinity you are now in. Do not proceed any further. Search that area." It arrived while the patrol was in Wermsdorf, and, when the capture of the hospital there was reported, a go-ahead to the north was given: "Have your patrol proceed to vicinity of (636166). Search area and report." The coordinates were those of the town of Deutsch-Luppa-Wendisch.

It was 0915 when the patrol reached Wermsdorf. It spent a considerable time there. Around 1100 the jeeps pulled out of town, headed up through the central wood which joins the Forsten Wermsdorf and Hubertusburg. The populace of Wermsdorf seemed properly cowed and gave no trouble.

Into the forest went the column and, near its northern fringe, stopped. Again the jeeps sidled under cover and everyone jumped out, weapons ready, and deployed. The reaction was smooth, automatic. The area on both sides of the road was swept in a radius of about a hundred yards, and everyone folded in on a point to the right of the road. There an entire German sanitary company was taken without trouble.

In a way, the precautions were a farce, for all of these people were wearing Red Cross brassards and their commander, a short, fat, natty colonel, who was eager to please yet wanted to get as many concessions as he could, argued that they were on their way to the hospital at Wermsdorf. They were all relieved of their weapons and ordered to report to the German commandant there by 1500 or suffer the same consequences as had been threatened to the other enemy soldiers.

This caused further delay and, by this time, there was a feeling of developing eagerness to meet the Russian forces as soon as possible. Shortly before noon, after the sanitary company had been cleared on its way to the rear, two Russian civilians, displaced persons, offered the information that the Russians had a pontoon bridge across the Elbe at Strehla, had had patrols in the vicinity of Oschatz during the morning, but had withdrawn to Strehla again. This information seemed reasonable and was in line with the reports of German civilians and soldiers all during the morning. If the Russians were that far, it would mean going far beyond the patrol's limiting zone.

Regiment, in getting a clarification on **Craig's** report on the Wermsdorf hospital, repeated its order: "Repeat instructions, you do not proceed beyond new area." Realizing this, **Captain Fox** told **Major Craig** that, if his orders precluded such a distant mission, he would go on and contact the Russians himself, providing **Craig** would lend him a jeep with a machine gun and his Russian interpreter.

However, the patrol continued on into Deutsch-Luppa-Wendisch, as instructed. As the caravan rolled up to the burgermeister's house, the townspeople seemed quite friendly. While **Major Craig** told the burgermeister to have all the houses display white flags and have all firearms brought in immediately, the people clustered around the parked jeeps. They seemed relieved. They were glad the Americans were there. They wanted to know: "Where are the Russians? Are the Russians coming here?"

The white flags appeared, the town was surrendered. The war was over for these people and they were happy about it. But still the patrol waited, and twice **Craig** asked for permission to continue with his "Original Mission" of contacting the Russians. Finally, at 1305, came another "stay" order with the latitude of scouting out the area roundabout. The eagerness to continue was piling up among the patrol members, regardless, and **Fox** repeated his desire to go on.

Meantime, several of the Russian displaced workers had attached themselves to the patrol and were taken along when the vehicles left Deutsch-Luppa because it was thought they might be helpful at any contact, in addition to the interpreter already a member of the party. The small body of soldiers again was the only portion of the American Army in the vicinity. So, to preclude any possible trouble, **Craig** told some of the people that the American and Russian armies had made contact in the east and that the Russian Army was on its way to the town at that moment. This word was spread quickly; the reaction was amazing. People scattered to their homes, the women grabbed their children and brought them inside their houses, some of the men held their heads in demonstrative sadness, a few broke down and cried. The merest intimation of a Russian approach was met with fear.

"I don't know how long we're going to get away with this," **Craig** said with a grin, "but we might as well bluff while we can. Then we won't have any trouble."

In line with the instructions to "scout out the area," the patrol departed for the east along the road to Calbitz. This time the three additional Russian civilians accompanied them, riding along like conquering heroes, having gained great prestige among their countrymen since they had joined the "Amerikanskis." Their presence added another note of mystification to the Yank members of the patrol for, at every stop, there was always a continued and intermixed babel of tongues as the liberated Poles, Russians, French, Belgians and the rest all talked at once as they crowded around the vehicles. Added to the German of the natives, the result often was chaotic but amusing.

The ride through the outskirts of Malkwitz and Calbitz and down the main road to the crossroads before the swing to Morkwitz was like a triumphal tour. The sun had begun to shine fitfully and the

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weather had turned warm. All along the road small batches of German soldiers were stopped, disarmed, and waved to the rear. They had no fight in them and there was no time to take them with the patrol. They were told to report to the Wermsdorf hospital which had become a collecting point for all PW's. Waving prisoners to the rear without guard had become routine.

It was about 1500 before the jeeps moved out of Calbitz, for there was the same waiting for the burgermeister and for a clearance from regiment to continue. The cars edged forward slowly, they were surrounded by crowds of people. The reports of the Russians' closeness began to multiply and they were supposed to be nearer and nearer, only about 12 kilometers east of the patrol's location. A French officer in charge of 50 liberated French PW's said that there had been Russian patrols in Terpitz the day before. The civilians laughed and waved and seemed overjoyed at seeing the Americans. White flags were flown with alacrity when they were ordered.

On down the road rolled the jeeps, stopping to surprise and flush small groups of German soldiers in houses and inns along the way. There were a few arrogant ones, but most gave in quietly. The hard-to-handle were told they would get their "teeth knocked in" and they came along peaceably. The move was almost akin to the liberation of France in the summer of 1944. And yet, theoretically, this was German territory, well within their lines. These people, who were enemy, were only too glad to yield to the Americans. A rising spirit of elation filled the members of the patrol.

All along the route were streams of freed workers and Allied PW's. They were the flotsam of Europe at the moment, and they were free. There seemed to be fear, evidence of German collapse, and most of these individuals had been turned loose. Caught in the cataclysm were a number of German civilians who had panicked in the face of the defeat. They were on the road in carts, wagons and sulkeys and anything else which could carry them. They were fleeing - the very old and the very young, the sick and the crippled. They were deathly afraid of the Russians and, no matter which way they were going, they always said they were going away from the Russians. They had been caught in the whirlpool of their own nation's collapse and had now started to join the other wanderers of Europe.

Contact with regiment was strangely silent.

As the column swung up into Merkwitz the attitude of the town and the people was different. The village had a strange, deathlike quiet over it. There were few people in the streets. At the burgermeister's house the same orders for white flags and surrender were given, but were complied with slowly, as though the population was in a stupor. Gradually, small knots of persons

gathered about the jeeps and a few tentative words of relief came from the Germans, to the effect that they were glad that the Americans instead of the Russians had come. Not desiring to waste any sympathy on them, the townspeople were told that the Russians would follow the Americans in there. The reaction was one of despair.

The jeeps were distributed along the one main street and the command group stood at the exit to the town looking at Terpitz, which could be seen plainly across an open plain to the front. There was a wait and a certain amount of indecision as to whether or not to continue. With urging, **Craig** decided to continue, but thought it wise to reconnoiter to see first if the Russians were in that town before moving the whole column out into the open. If there were Germans in Terpitz, the line of vehicles would be sitting targets for any artillery they might have; if there were Russians, it might be wise to let them know that these were Americans and not Germans approaching, should any of their soldiers have itchy trigger fingers.

To solve this problem it was decided to ask one of the Russian civilians if he would cycle ahead to reconnoiter, since he would draw little suspicion along with the other civilians who were passing along the roads. Nickolai Matchenko, a 19-year-old lad from Kiev, who had been a slave farm laborer in the Deutsch-Luppa area for over three years, agreed to go when asked. "Nicki" had been an agreeable and helpful kid, and had been used as a guide since he knew the area so well. He wasn't quite certain of everything that was going on about him, but he was happy to have found friends in the American group.

So, sometime around 1600, while the rest of the patrol waited, Nicki took off on a commandeered bicycle to check the reports - which were repeated in Merkwitz - that the Russians had had patrols in Terpitz the day previously. But Nicki was more eager than wise and, while the patrol members watched, took a wrong turn. Instead of going to Terpitz, he headed over a small rise for Willerswalde.

That washed up the value of Nicki's reconnaissance, and after waiting a short while longer, it was decided to push on regardless, the main body heading for Terpitz and one jeep heading for Willerswalde to see what had happened to Nicki. The vehicles divided at the road junction and the lone jeep proceeded to the north where, swinging around a turn on the main street, its occupants saw a crowd of civilians who melted away at their approach. In the center stood Nicki, blood streaming down his face and hate filling his eyes, tied by a rough rope to a burly German. He was quickly released under the guns of the single patrol and, in his hot-headed anger, attempted to shoot the German immediately. He was restrained. When the story came out, it appeared that Nicki had

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gone into the wrong town, demanded to know where the Russians were, and when the townspeople had said there were none about, he pulled a gun, but was beaten down before he could do anything. His beating had been unnecessarily severe.

For a few minutes, despite the German's wailing and protests of innocence, it was a toss-up as to whether or not to give him back his gun with ammunition, withdraw around the corner and wait for him to rejoin, letting him carry out his own ideas of repayment. But that idea was discarded, the Germans sharply told to display signs of surrender, advised that the Russians would be there shortly, and the single jeep withdrew without difficulty. One jeep without a machine gun in a town like that was not in an enviable position.

The vehicle rejoined the rest of the patrol, which had stopped on the hilltop. This was a vantage point upon which **Major Craig** had decided to halt and survey the area in the vicinity. The patrol was almost on the Elbe River. It was thought that perhaps the Russian bridgehead could be seen from there.

A sense of excitement filled everyone, for through field glasses, several columns of troops in tactical columns could be seen moving north over the gentle hill beyond Liebschutz near the windmill. No one could figure out whether or not they were Russian or German, but it wasn't long before the column was off in a cloud of dust along the secondary road past the southern fringe of Gaunitz to the crossroad, where it stopped. Questioning of a couple of German soldier strays there revealed the fact that the troops were German, and they had passed that point not 10 minutes before, and that they were retreating to the north.

The patrol moved on east into Clanzschwitz. The roads by then were very dusty and the air had grown warm, though there was still a chill wind. Moving through the village, the patrol was overtaken by a couple of speeding jeeps. The column halted. The men in the overtaking jeeps were from **Lt. Kotzebue's** patrol. They conveyed the startling news that **Kotzebue** had made first contact with the Russians during the morning and at the moment was on the east side of the Elbe, not too far away.

Immediately, **Craig** gave the signal to take off and the jeeps leaped forward, speeding out of the town, headed for Leckwitz and the Elbe. All the jeeps had cleared the last house, and the lead vehicle had gone about 150 yards to the east beyond the town limits when the column ground to a halt in a typhoon of dust. Everyone looked to his right and was open-mouthed. There, on the tree-lined parallel road coming from Zausswitz, was a column of horsemen moving to the west. One word came from every amazed mouth: "Russians!"

The horsemen apparently saw the jeeps at the same time, for they wheeled to their right and started galloping towards the Americans. Mixed in with the cavalymen were several on bicycles and motorcycles. All the Americans piled from their jeeps and time stood still while the first Russian approached.

"I thought the first guy would never get there," one soldier said later. My eyes were glued on his bicycle, and he seemed to get bigger and bigger as he came slower and slower towards us. He reached a point a few yards away, tumbled off his bike, saluted, grinned, and stuck out his hand. Then they all arrived."

This was the contact. The time was 1645. The sun was waning, the day was clear. Everyone grinned, no one could think of any fancy things to say. The Americans said "Amerikanski," the Russians said, "Russki." That was it. It was an historic moment, and everyone knew it. But no one could think of any deathless phrases to utter. The only thing that sounded somewhat eloquent was the set speech of **Pfc. Igor N. Belousovitch**, of Company E, who had been born of a Russian family in China, and had come along on the patrol as interpreter. To the Russian senior lieutenant who first came up, he said:

"I greet you in the name of the American Army and our commanders on this historic occasion. It is a privilege and an honor to be here."

The Russian, equally eloquent, replied: "This is an historic occasion. It's a moment for which both our Armies have been fighting. It's a great honor for me to be here. It is wonderful that we have met in this place. It is a moment which will go down in history."

But those were the only bits of eloquence. For the most part, there was a wholehearted sense of friendship between the two groups, and the most elegant thing the majority could do was grin and say, "Tovarisch." Cameras were out, pictures were taken, cigarettes were exchanged, one GI climbed up on one of the Russian's horses and pranced around. Everyone grinned and felt foolish because he couldn't say much. Everyone cursed the language handicap.

The meeting was brief and kaleidoscopic. The Russians, who consisted of a troop of the 1st Guards Zhitomir Cavalry Regiment, said they were on their way to Dresden and had to hurry. A lot had happened and nothing had happened, yet in a little more than three minutes, both groups were on their way. The meeting was over. It was just past 1648.

After making contact, **Craig's** patrol took off and rode furiously in a cloud of dust straight to Strehla to join **Kotzebue's** men, to the scene of the original crossing of the Elbe. There they found nothing, backed off, and sped north through Gorzig and across the open stretch of plain to the river bank opposite Kreinitz. There wasn't a shot and there wasn't a German along the way, but the whole sweep looked like an old-time

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Hollywood cavalry approach. On the east shore was another group of Russians. Across the river stretched a hand-drawn, crude pontoon ferry.

Immediately a few of the Russians started pulling themselves across. When they reached the west side, they drew themselves up, saluted and leaped ashore. There was more general grinning and handshaking, no one knowing what to say. The command group and a number of the men of the American patrol climbed on the ferry and in short order pulled themselves across the swift-flowing Elbe to the eastern bank. There, the inevitable Russian cameramen were grinding away.

Coming off the ferry, the Americans swiftly clambered up the sides of the sloping, cobbled bank to the Russian group which clustered around a stocky, firm faced little man. There was an exchange of salutes, but a certain reserve at first. Through Belousovitch, the little man was introduced as Major General Vladimir Rusakov, commanding general of the 58th Guards Infantry Division. The general was cautious at first and asked for identification before he continued.

"Show me your papers," he said to Craig, "and I'll show you mine."

Craig handed over his AGC identification card. The general looked it over and seemed satisfied, though a bit miffed that he had only a major, a couple of captains, and a lieutenant with whom to deal.

However, his attitude swiftly became friendly, though always with a certain reserve, which may have been motivated by the rank difference. The Russian soldiers who stood about as **Craig, Morey, Fox and Howard** parleyed with the general and his staff on the river bank, all were sharp and alert and appeared to have the highest military discipline. They saluted at the slightest provocation.

With Belousovitch doing the interpreting, there was a general exchange of information at the side of the river as the cameramen ground away with news reel and still pictures. General Rusakov said that his division was a part of the 1st Ukrainian Army, under Col. Gen. Zhadov, and was part of the Army Group of Marshal Koniev. They had fought from Stalingrad to the Elbe, and the general was proud to be there. He was aware of the "historic moment" and was "proud to have my division as the first one to meet the Americans."

But he wanted to know where was the rest of the American Army? When was it coming to the Elbe? How much armor was with the infantry? How many panzers were near? A patrol of a few jeeps wasn't in the book. His orders, he said, were not to go beyond the Elbe. He was puzzled when he was told that our orders were not to go beyond the Mulde.

Then he said something about the Germans running away from the Russians so that they could surrender to the Americans, but promptly was told that the American Army had fought hard and well and was not being foolishly soft-hearted with the enemy. That seemed to please him, and he hastened to add that he had deep admiration for the American Army. Now that we had joined, he said, we would quickly end the war together.

From the single star on each epaulet of his black great coat to his shoes, the general radiated a strong, determined personality. At the time, no one in the American group was quite certain as to his actual rank, although everyone felt he must be a mighty important individual.

Finally the exchange of amenities on the river bank was finished. Rusakov said that the other patrol members were "being entertained elsewhere." He said the men of this patrol would be taken care of and then led the American officers into a nearby house for a toast.

The table was set and the liquor flowed freely. **Craig, Morey, Fox, Howard**, Rusakov, a heavy-set colonel with glasses, who was introduced as his adjutant; a lieutenant colonel, who turned out to be Lt. Col. Alexander T. Gardiev, CO of the 175th Infantry Regiment in that sector, and to whom the general pointed with pride and said, "He's my best regimental commander," and Belousovitch, interpreting, began a series of toasts.

In the Russian fashion, the heads of Russia, Great Britain, and the United States were toasted, and then the health of every commander and private soldier in each Army seemed to be drunk. It was "bottoms up" each time and, before long, the going was rocky.

A solemn moment came when a toast was drunk to the memory of the late President Roosevelt, a man about whom every Russian seemed to be fully informed and for whom they seemed to have the greatest respect and affection. It was a revealing study in attitudes. General Rusakov even drank a smiling, quixotic toast to "our common defeat of Japan."

While this military and diplomatic protocol was being taken care of, duty was not forgotten. Regiment was notified of the link-up of the two patrols and, when word was received of the proposed arrival of two planes from division, preparations were made to help with its landings. Efforts were made to arrange a meeting between Colonel Adams, 273rd commander, and General Rusakov or some of his staff, but the general said that his instructions were not to go beyond the Elbe and wanted any American emissaries brought there.

After this, a puzzling message arrived from regiment which showed that they were not too clear as to what

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was going on at this point: "Push far enough east to gain radio contact with **Lt. Kotezbue** and still retain radio contact with Tryhard CP. Tryhard 6 will not leave until all arrangements are made." The patrol hadn't made radio contact, it was there; but obviously, that fact was not clear to regiment.

When the amenities were finished, the Russians offered to take the Americans to an overrun Allied PW camp which had been liberated several days before. The group accepted, and shortly before dark, everyone took off for Ofllg IV-B near Muhlberg, north of Krienitz. A lieutenant colonel, one of Col. Gardiev's staff officers, acted as guide for the entourage.

When the jeeps rolled into the entrance to the camp, it was almost dusk, but not too dark to conceal the fact that those were Americans. The reaction was like a tidal wave. The first amazed onlookers exclaimed, "My God! Yanks!" Then, as the jeeps made their way along the streets of the camp, the welcome rose and roared like thunder.

Americans, British, French, Yugoslavs, Allied officers and men of all nations cheered and screamed and cried their joy. This handful of Americans was no great force and they had been liberated for a couple of days, but the jeeps and American uniforms were symbols of something far closer to them. They stormed the jeeps, taking over the job of driving them and as many as could squeeze themselves into a few square inches piled aboard the vehicles and rode around the camp. They were eager just to say hello and shake hands and touch these men from the States.

One imprisoned soldier ran alongside one jeep and tore frantically at the shoulder patch of one 69th Division man, trying to get it off. Finally he used his tooth and ripped it off. "Just a souvenir," he grinned, and kissed it before he stuffed it into his pocket. The prisoners were men from many divisions in several Armies, but during those minutes they were just heartsick guys who had tangible evidence of home after months and years of confinement.

"Where you from?" "They got me in the Bulge." "Bloody bastards took me at Dunkirk." "Got me in the Siegfried Line last September." "Caught me in Normandy." "Shot me down over Bremen." "I'm from New York" or "London" or "San Francisco" or "Paris." "Parlez-vous francais? Je suis un Belgique."

Those were the things they said in a wild, confused, enthusiastic, outpouring of emotion, but the magnitude of what they left unsaid, of their happiness at last of being free, was greater than words could describe. They took the small group inside and plied them with coffee and talk. More than anything else, they wanted to talk. And ask questions.

Was it true about Roosevelt's death? Yeah, the Jerries had treated them better towards the end, even

gave them a radio to which they could listen. But the black-souled bastards of SS men had been hard and mean in the past. Ever stand helplessly by, buddy, and watch another American die in the street after a Nazi rat had shot him? We have. It's not pleasant and we have no love for these guys . . . When can we leave here? Yeah, guess it's best that we wait till they get the regular evacuation set up . . . Sure, we know you fellows are only a patrol. The rest are back at the Mulde? Isn't that a hell of a place to leave them? High command stuff? Yes . . . Well, it won't be long now. Won't you autograph this? Okay, we know you're not celebrities, but you're important as hell to us. Thanks . . . Have some more coffee. It's not much, but we haven't too much at the moment . . . You have to leave? That's too bad . . . Oh, okay. Sure, sure, we understand . . . Good luck . . . So long. Good show, boys . . . It's almost over now . . .

That's what they talked about and that's the way they acted. It was nothing, it was everything. As the members of the patrol who had gone to the camp left to go to the 175th Regimental Headquarters, they were very humble men. They had done nothing, but they had been the symbols in which these men had believed through long days of prison. They felt very proud of their uniforms and their cause.

At the regimental CP, they thought they would go to bed, but the Russian hosts insisted that they must eat first. And, of course, they must drink a toast or two. Officers and men were toasted, some at the CP, some on the west side of the Mulde. The Russians super-saturated the link-up of the two armies.

Meantime, there was a mysterious amount of stalling at regiment. At 2235 a message had come through: "Urgent - in the clear. Name of Russian general. Cannot negotiate before 1300. Who is the general. What unit. No meeting before 1300 unless General Rusakov." The patrol's radio remained on the air all night on orders from net control, but the only message which came in was from **Colonel Adams** at about 0230 telling **Craig** and **Kotzebue** to hold in abeyance all arrangements for any meeting. The whole procedure was very puzzling.

The next morning, shortly before 0900, **Craig** radioed: "Arrangements not clear. Meeting must be here if with this unit or this general. Will remain until I hear . . ." About an hour later, a reply came back. "Don't get too involved in anything on other side of river."

So, the two patrols just sat there on the banks of the Elbe, returning shortly after noon to the Kreinitz crossing site and waited and waited and waited. Nothing happened. Major Craig returned to Trebsen. The others waited on both sides of the river disinterestedly gazing at the small groups of displaced slave workers moving up to the ferry point on their way

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back home. The soft plain stretched away in silence to the west and the sun beat down. The whole scene was serene and far removed from war. Those who remained sadly contemplated the price of a Russian celebration as they slowly and gently transported themselves from place to place.

Still no information came in and nothing happened. The Russians pulled their ferry back and forth on its cable as the pontoon blowers squeaked their noisy song to keep the thing afloat. Just to keep regiment reminded of the fact that the main portions of the patrols were still there, another message was sent at 1643: "Still in contact in same location as last reported. Awaiting your arrival." Something must have happened, but what it was remained a mystery to the two patrols at the Elbe.

Then sometime around 1700, over the horizon loomed a column of jeeps and they raced out to the bank of the river. The by-now disconsolate group still there wondered if this was the group which was to parley with the Russians. But no, it was a patrol led by Lt. Col. George C. Knight, the regimental executive officer, accompanied by Capt. Faye L. Long, assistant S-3; Capt. Hans L. Trefousse, IPW officer; 1st Lt. P.J. Sinott, one of the regimental liaison officers, and a convoy of jeeps. They had come merely to check the situation.

They brought the news that another contact had been made elsewhere and meetings between **Col. Adams** and **Gen. Reinhardt** and the Russian commanders already had taken place at Torgau, which was farther north on the Elbe. Oh, yes. Things had been quite excited and confused, and it was an oversight that the patrols were not notified of the other contact.

It was quite late then, and this was an anti-climax to what had been an exciting meeting. The members of the new patrol crossed the river and explored around but **Capt. Fox** was anxious to get the straight story on this new development. So, with **Capt. William T. Hooper, Jr.**, and **M/Sgt. Paul Murdoch**, regiment sergeant major, they took off in a single jeep and sped up the west river road to Torgau, through areas which were only very recently liberated, if liberation actually had reached them.

They looked over the scene of the meeting sight - which was to be much publicized in a flood of misinformation as the original meeting place between the Russian and American Armies - and then returned to Trebsen by dark, going along the Torgau-Eilenberg road as elements of the 272nd RCT still were moving up to place it under guard.

There were no events and only the usual moving displaced persons and freed PW bands. The rest of the patrols returned from Kreinitz later without event.

Arnold King relates an Artillery Story

Submitted By: **Arnold King**

Headquarters Battery, 879th Field Battalion

5016 N.W. 5th Street

Delray Beach, Florida 33445-2105

After arriving at Camp Shelby as a member of the original Cadre group, I assumed my duties as radio repairman. For a short time, I acted alone, without the most welcome team that later arrived to fill out the group. The radio section enjoyed the talents of these men who ultimately became an excellent team.

In that year liaison aircraft were issued. The radio equipment was a totally inadequate AM transceiver that was to be replaced with the semi-portable SCR 610 FM models used with ground units. Fort Sill sent detailed instructions for this re-fit. The original trailing wire antenna was to be used. Regardless of all attempts to effect this installation, nothing worked. An extended field operation was planned, and full use of the air recon was essential. No help from Sill helped. On the Friday before the Field maneuver, I was summoned to the Battery commander's office and here is the story of the meeting with **Captain Thomas**.

"Sergeant King, the division will be leaving on field maneuvers Saturday morning at 0800 hours. You, however, will go into town tonight and visit your wife. Saturday morning at 0800 hours you will meet Captain (Flight Officer, F.A. Headquarters) (does anyone remember his name?) on the drill field and you will make those radios work. As soon as this is accomplished, you will return to Hattiesburg and enjoy your weekend. Report on Monday morning for transport to the field."

Upon arriving on the drill field, I watched the Captain do a perfect landing and I approached to make a check of the existing installation. A test flight proved no contact after take-off. After another, it became obvious - no good. Knowing of the antenna mount on each unit, I suggested an opening in the Lucite windshield over the radio unit. The good Captain did the task with my knife. (It was his airplane!) After mounting the telescoping antenna and extending it to near full length (17 ft.), a final tune, and Captain flew off. We talked by means of my Jeep mounted unit until he was out of sight.

We both left the drill mission accomplished. He went on to field maneuvers, and I to town to enjoy. I missed Monday's mail truck and finally arrived in Field Headquarters on Tuesday.

Captain Thomas' comment? "Where's the fox tail?"

A week later, Fort Sill sent 8 x 10 glossies picturing the whip antenna - no fox tail.

We used this antenna throughout the ETO campaign. A picture of this can be found on page 25 of the 69th Division history book.

German twins bright spot in 1945 for 69th Soldiers

Submitted By: **Harold L. McAdam**
Company C, 777th Tank Battalion
R.R. #3
Ogdensburg, Kentucky 13669-9803

As a former member of Company C, 777th Tank Battalion, I enjoy reading the Bulletin. Memories of **Chaplain James May** that appeared in Volume 49, No. 3, was especially interesting to me. He wrote about moving into Toucha, a large and pleasant town on the highway between Leipzig and Eilenberg. He also mentioned "Those pretty German twins, eight years old, perfect blondes, with plaited tresses, down to their waists . . . Gee, you'd like to love them a little, but it ain't worth sixty-five dollars." (fine for fraternizing)

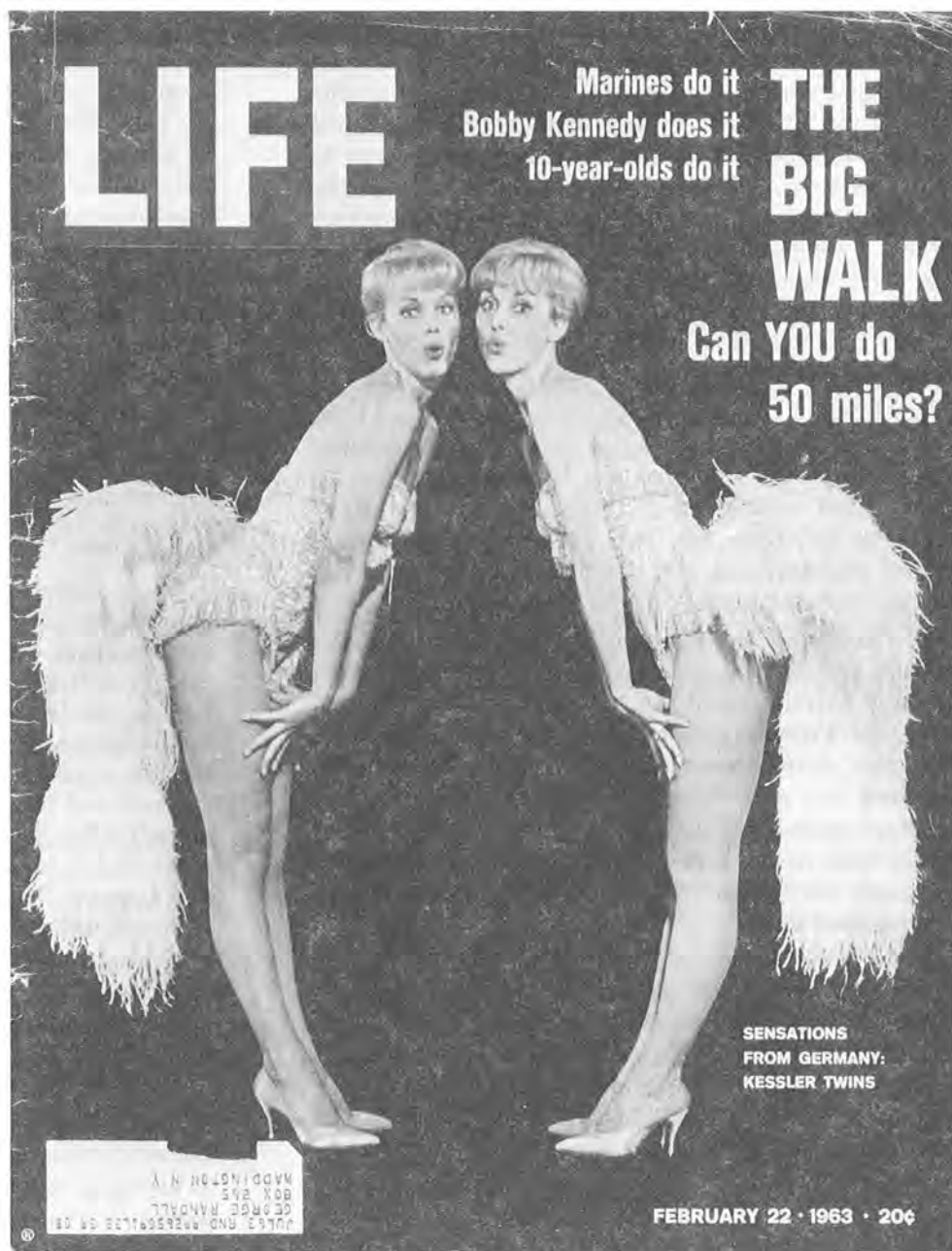
After Leipzig, Company C, 777th Tank Battalion, was given Toucha as a base. There was a large apartment building just inside the city with an open field across from it. We parked our tanks there and gave the Germans 15 minutes to evacuate the building, and we moved in. The Company kitchen and mess was set up in the courtyard at the rear of the building. German people watched us eat and raided our garbage cans for scraps of food. There was very little food then.

Soon the little twin girls appeared. They were like rays of sunshine - bright, smiling and with bubbling personalities. We didn't worry about a sixty-five dollar fine for fraternizing. There wasn't any money or anything to spend it on anyway. We took what we wanted or bartered for it later on. The twins could dance, sing, do acrobatics and play the accordion. They were there every day and would sit on our knee and eat from our mess kits.

Little did we know that these little girls would grow up to be world-famous entertainers - The Kessler twins, Alice and Ellen.

How they got from deep within Russian territory to West Germany is another story that I know nothing about. I was so surprised to see their pictures on the cover of Life magazine later on (February 22, 1963 issue). I was always kidding with them in spite of the language barrier. They brought me their pictures right out of their album. Some of them at a younger age. I still have them. They signed the back of one of them. What sounded to my ears like Ahleetsa turned out to be plain old Alice in English and the other one was Ellen. I'm so glad that things turned out so well for them.

The Russians took over after we left according to the Yalta Agreement that divided Germany. I haven't heard anything about them since that article in Life. They would be about sixty years old now. Time marches on. Back in 1945 they were a bit of brightness in a terrible time that I am sure they had nothing to do with.





Charles Burns sent me this picture of a group of guys with the twins. He is the sergeant on the left.



Harold McAdam in one of their little Opal cars.



Twins sitting on curb stone used to protect basement windows from bomb blasts.

CANDY BARRAGE PX-Men Make With Sweets

From the Reveille, February 17, 1943

Submitted by: **Gordon Schaefer**

Company I, 273rd Infantry

6506 Covington Road, Apt. 229

Fort Wayne, Indiana 46804-7343

(In the Field with the 69th Division) — The 272nd Regiment, reeling and groggy, is still trying to dig itself out from under the candy barrage laid down by **Lieutenant Bauer's "Raiders."** It all started when **Lt. Robert Bauer**, regimental field post exchange officer, unwittingly wound up "cornering the market" on a nationally advertised nickel candy bar.

With the men of the camp yelling for candy, Lt. Bauer and his crew raided the camp's post exchange warehouse for the sweet stuff. They had only one brand on hand so Lt. Bauer took that and sold it. On his second return for more candy the warehouse still had only the one brand. Lt. Bauer took that and sold it too. On the third trip to the warehouse, the candy situation was the same. He took it.

But this time sales slumped badly. An officer first, but a salesman of military necessity, **Lt. Bauer** and his crew consisting of **Corporals Bill Broder, Leo Fournier** and **Pfcs. Frank Mottola and Dan Broderick** conducted a flying candy bar sale campaign throughout the regiment. The excellent selling job they did is attested to by the fact that to find a soldier without a box of the nationally advertised brand of candy lashed to his field pack is in itself a regimental oddity.

"Only," explained Lt. Bauer in despair, "We still have that kind of candy left - lots of it." "If you know" he asked none too hopefully, "any outfit that is looking for candy bars, just send them down to us. There is a reported shortage of the candy bars in the post exchange back in camp."

CANDY MUST GO THRU SAYS 69th DIVISION UNIT SSOS

Among the unsung heroes of the 69th Division in the field were the unit special service officers and their small staffs who came through with the goods despite blackouts, "enemy" action, shortage of transportation, and bouts of playing "hide-and-go-seek" with the outfit that took off for parts unknown in Desoto National Forest before they could return for their supplies.

Despite the unnumerable stumbling blocks, the field post exchange staff managed to purchase approximately \$35,000 worth of supplies during the time the division was in the field for 69th GIs.

Cigarettes, candy and gum proved to be the items most in demand and requisitions revealed that a division of infantrymen can pack away a staggering amount of candy. One regiment (271st) topped the list with a whacking order for 30,000 candy bars.

Requisitions filled by the camp post exchange warehouse were hauled to regimental supply points. From that point they were picked up by the unit special service officer and his staff and then funneled down through battalions, companies and batteries and finally to the men maneuvering in the field.

Unexpected Bridge from the Past (1945-1995)

Joseph Lipsius

Cannon Company, Headquarters, 272nd Infantry

1354 Bramble Road

Atlanta, Georgia 30329

Telephone: 404/634-7118

The 272 Infantry had two remarkable Regimental Commanders. First, **Colonel Charles T. "Buck" Lanham**, then **Colonel Walter D. Buie**. They were diametrical opposites. **Lanham**, a crop carrying swashbuckler and not too military in his ways. **Buie**, a straight-laced strict disciplinarian, full of integrity and character. In between was an acting commander, **Lieutenant Bryan Halter**. All three were West Point graduates and career military men. **Halter** had been the second in command during the entire training period but was passed over to be the commander. A regiment was approximately 3300 officers and men.

I was under **Lanham** beginning with the 69th Division 30 day Officer's Training Class at Fort Benning, in March or April, 1943, until he left the regiment after D-Day (June 6, 1944). This class was my second trip to Fort Benning. The first was Officer Candidate School Class 27 (OCS) during April, May, and June 1942. I was commissioned a Second Lieutenant Infantry, July 2, 1942, one of the military's thousands of "90 Day Wonders."

Beginning with the Division's Officer Training Class, and for three or four weeks at Camp Shelby, I was the Regimental S-2 (Intelligence and Maps) staff officer, then his S-3 (Plans and Training and Operations). **Lanham** promoted me from First Lieutenant to Captain, but was unable to promote me to Major, the job's rank, because I had not been a company commander for six months. We were in complete accord. He often called me by first name as well as a nickname. Years after the war, and his death in 1978, when I thought of our time together, it seemed to me we were more like a close father and son, than a commander and his underling.

Lanham was sent out after D-Day as a replacement Colonel for one of the many killed in the landings on the French Beachheads and early intense fighting, or found unfit to lead a regiment in combat after the first few days. He was sent to the 4th Division's 22nd Infantry.

Halter took command of the 272 Infantry. We were poker playing friends. He told me his situation was temporary and a permanent commander would come along with some majors to fill table of organization jobs. I was a captain in a major's job. The wind-up was his assigning me to be Cannon Company commander before he left.

The regiment was in the Black Forest on maneuvers when **Buie** arrived in late August or September. Most

of the commanders and staff were at Camp Shelby undergoing special training called Preparation for Overseas Movement (POM). **Buie** came to the field to observe for a short time. He had just arrived at the field headquarters when I came to make a report. I was introduced to him by the acting regimental commander who had replaced **Halter**. The introduction included my present and past jobs in the regiment. I was still standing at attention when he asked, "Captain, when did you last shave?" I was trying to explain the reason for my two day growth of beard when he sharply stated, in his command everyone shaved daily before breakfast. Adding, "there will be no smoking in the command post," pointing to my ever present cigar. Later, back in Camp Shelby, when the regiment was tying up loose ends preparatory to moving out, destination unknown, he came to inspect my company area. I reported what we were doing which seemed to satisfy him, but before leaving he asked me, "Captain, what are the orders regarding shaving in the regiment?" I replied, "All officers and men will shave before breakfast." At this he asked, "Did you follow that order this morning?" Standing stiffly at attention, I replied, "Yes sir!" Barking out, "Next time stand closer to the razor!" he departed. He didn't give me a chance to explain I had a dark beard!

At Camp Kilmer, on the MS John Ericsson, in England and in France there were instances where we were on a collision course. Not from my being insubordinate but because my previous staff experience as the S-3, as well as my relation with **Lanham** combined to question and find fault at **Buie's** company commanders meetings. Finally, **Lieutenant Colonel Cecil J. Kennedy**, the regimental executive officer (second in command), came to my company area in France and warned me that if I wasn't careful, **Buie** was going to reclassify me. This meant demotion and transfer.

On March 1, 1945, the 272nd Infantry moved and occupied a position on the Siegfried Line. On March 4th or 5th, **Kennedy** phoned me at Cannon Company headquarters to pack my gear, turn the company over to the executive officer, and await a jeep which was being sent to bring me to regimental headquarters to report to him. On arrival, the driver went in and told



*Colonel Walter D. Buie
Regimental Commander
of the 272nd*

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on Page 45)*

UNEXPECTED BRIDGE FROM THE PAST (1945-1995)

(Continued from Page 44)

Kennedy I was outside. **Kennedy** came out and in effect told me **Buie** was going to make me the S-2, because of my previous staff experience, if he thought we could work together. He added, "Be careful talking to him." I told **Kennedy** I would do anything for the good of the regiment and with that he went to tell **Buie** I was at the CP.

Buie came out and I came to attention with a salute. He told me there was need to appoint a new S-2 and on **Kennedy's** recommendation he was putting me on the job if I thought we could work together, reminding me we had experienced difficulties. I replied, "Yes sir!" As he ushered me into the CP, he turned and said, "**Major Green** is allowed to smoke in the CP and so will you." This made my heart skip a beat for I knew we would be able to work together.

My first assignment was to orient a patrol to probe the pillboxes in front of our position to determine the degree of occupancy. The patrol was a success. The patrol moved on March 5 and the regiment moved forward on March 6, 7, and 8. From March 9 to 21, there was a relative calm period, and I think during these first movements and calm, **Buie** and I became closer. While he remained very strict and military, we began to see each other in a different light than when we were frequently clashing. We were together in the headquarters, often working side by side, I was carrying out his orders, or making recommendations. Under these circumstances, you can't help but to get a better view of a person. I think for both of us, the view was completely acceptable. Later, when I was promoted to Major, I always thought he initiated the paper work shortly after I came back to the headquarters.

As the regiment moved across Germany, we were together constantly. On one occasion, we were in his Jeep, following troops moving towards Kassel, Germany. An advance Jeep returned to inform **Buie** a castle was just ahead with a display of many valuable rifles, shotguns, and a huge gun shop. We followed the Jeep and were led to the castle. We were awed by an almost unbelievable collection. After looking at the display, we went to the shop. In one of the cabinets were three highly prized Broomhandle Mausers, semi-automatic pistols with shoulder holster stocks. **Buie** took one, and gave **Henry P. Green**, the S-3, and me one. This was the most prized souvenir of my time in Germany, and the Army.

Buie and I had memorable days together. One was the surrender of Leipzig. This is pictured on page 44 of the History of The 272nd Infantry. **Buie** is on the left, next is a Wehrmacht-Kommandant Major General who surrendered the city, then First Lieutenant Gerhard

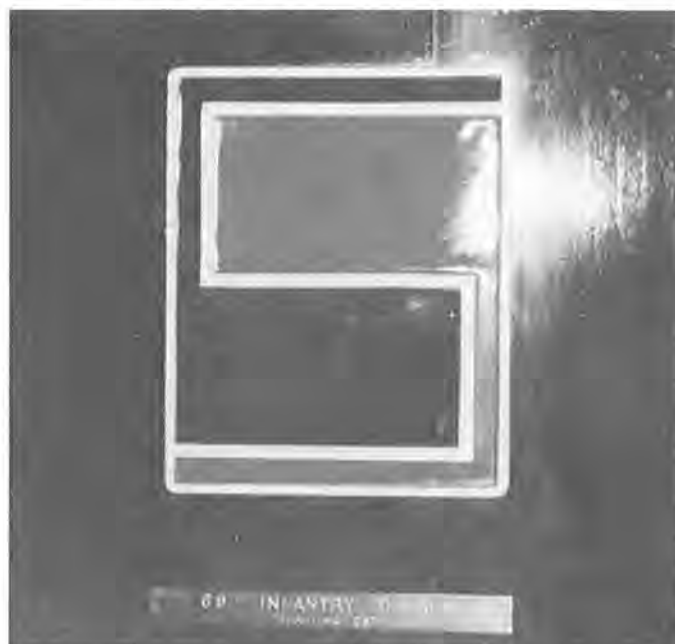
Czerner of the IPW Team No 242 who acted as interpreter, I am on the right. Another unforgettable day was our visit to Torgau following the initial link with the Russians. We did not return for another visit because the Russian soldiers were running around wild and almost out of control, drinking their vodka, bashing windows and having what they thought was a big time. We could have gone back because the CP was in Mockrehna, just a short distance from Torgau, in the middle of the Ellenburg-Torgau road. Our regiment was seeing to its security so the high ranking U.S. Generals could travel back and forth to meet their Russian counterparts.

V.E. Day was May 8, 1945, and shortly, men with high points were heading home. One of the first from our regiment was the S-3. **Buie** made me the new S-3, a job I had held for months at Camp Shelby. After a few weeks I was assigned to the 78th Division scheduled for the Pacific but V.J. Day changed all of this. February, 1946, found me in Atlanta, Georgia busy getting involved in civilian life.

In the fall of 1946, or perhaps later, I received a package with **Buie's** name and an APO Japan return address. Its contents was a highly finished wood plaque, about 19" x 22." Attached was a replica of the 69th Division patch, about 9" x 14." porcelain plated metal, in red, white, and blue. Under the patch was a bronze looking metal strip with "69th Infantry Division" and "Fighting 69th" on two lines.

On the back was attached a file card with the following:

PRESENTED TO:
CAPT. JOSEPH LIPSIOUS
S-2 272 INFANTRY
BY: COLONEL WALTER D. BUIE
COMDG OFFICER 272 INFANTRY REGIMENT
25 JULY 1946 OSAKA, JAPAN
MADE BY: JAPANESE MINT IMPERIAL



(Continued on Page 46)

UNEXPECTED BRIDGE FROM THE PAST (1945-1995)

(Continued from Page 45)

The plaque is on the wall in our family room and I still have the card, tattered from much handling. I am sure he sent plaques to several others, but my receiving such a beautiful memento of the 69th Division from **Colonel Buie** made me feel we had indeed become friends, as well as comrades in arms.

In 1949 or 1950, I had a brief encounter with **Buie** when he was in Atlanta commanding The National Guard Armory. Afterwards, I never saw his name in the newspaper, our bulletin, or met any 69'er who had. The Broomhandle Mauser and plaque were reminders of my service in the 69th Division, **Buie**, and my most prized souvenirs of Germany and the Army. This ended when the Mauser was stolen in a burglary of our home, along with valuable heirloom jewelry belonging to my wife Anne.

In April, 1995, some 45 years after my last seeing **Buie, John Barnett**, who was a Major in the 880th Field Artillery, sent me a short note. John was the liaison officer from the artillery to the 272nd Infantry. He lives in the Atlanta area, and we had been in touch, off and on, through the years. Enclosed was a copy of a clipping from The Atlanta Constitution of March 30, 1995. It was a letter in the "In My Opinion" editorial feature, signed by Sallie Cynthia Manet, a retired teacher and poet who had lived in Thomasville, Georgia for 10 years.

Ms. Manet's letter was headed "Georgian's Who Helped Win The War." She wrote "Fifty years ago, my father, Nashville, Georgia native **Walter Daniel Buie**, was an officer with the 69th Infantry Division in Europe." She continued about his service and the fact his brother, Paul Douglas Buie, was a Captain in the Pacific US Navy, then an Admiral in the Pentagon.

John Barnett wrote Ms. Manet, without a street address, and the letter surprisingly was delivered to her. She replied and **John** sent me a copy of her letter with the clipping. I wrote a very long letter to Ms. Manet telling of the bad and good service experience I had with her father. I related many things including our acquiring the Broomhandle Mausers, and how much I valued mine, only to lose it. I recounted the surrender of Leipzig, our trip to Torgau and other incidents. My letter was April 27, 1995. Since then we have exchanged many letters, tapes, and gotten to know each other quite well. I also became acquainted with **Buie** from his daughter's viewpoint. I continually begged her not to be offended by my describing our clashes, his extreme military manner, his "by the book ways," although I did not use that phrase. She responded at various times: "He was West Point and more military than you know"; "They wouldn't have gotten away with that with my father," referring to a dispute with a painter in which she came out second;

"honest and of strong character but too straight-laced"; "He was quite proud and did not play politics that the higher senior officers do." She also had written that he had decided on a military career at five years old after listening to his grandfather's experiences as a Major in The War Between The States (Civil War). He attended Georgia Military Academy at 16, University of Georgia at 17, and entered West Point at 18. I also learned, **Walter Daniel Buie** was born February 5, 1900 and died June 21, 1986. These responses made me happy to know I had not offended her because she knew her father was military through and through.

I had sent Ms. Manet copies of several published articles on my metal detecting hobby. One of these was about finding a very rare Confederate buckle and two US (Yankee) buckles. She wrote that she had discussed my metal detecting, and finds of War Between The States (Civil War) relics, with the President and Vice President of the United Daughters of the Confederacy in Thomasville. They wanted me to come with my finds and speak at a meeting. Ms. Manet invited my wife and me to stay at her home. When I tried to arrange a trip, it could not be worked out.

In a letter from Cynthia, as I now address her, dated October 8, 1996, she wrote about a sick "kitty" she had been caring for. The kitty was her father's, and came to the house, "Sent by God," as her father said, when his wife, her mother, was dying of cancer "so he would not be alone." Several years later when her father was in the hospital dying, all he could think about, Cynthia wrote me, was whether his kitty would be all right. Cynthia promised to take care of the kitty and did so until September 30, when just over 16 years old, the kitty died. Reading this gave me a picture of **Walter D. Buie** I would never have imagined.

In this same letter, Cynthia offered to give me her father's Broomhandle Mauser, writing, "My father would want you to have it. I'm sure only you would appreciate it." She invited Anne and me to come to Thomasville to pick it up and we could stay in her home. She didn't think that it was safe to send a gun through the mail. If we couldn't come, perhaps she could find someone going to Atlanta to take it to me.

I could not believe she would do this. I was overwhelmed with joy at the thought of having another Mauser. I replied thanking her for this wonderful gesture but told her to put it on hold for a while. Finally, I wrote that Anne and I were planning a trip to Cordele, Anne's home town, for a personal matter, but had to return to Atlanta the same day. We could come to Thomasville for a couple of hours.

After an exchange of letters, we decided on December 16, 1996 as a satisfactory date. We found Cynthia's street but passed her house. Turning around, we saw her at the yard edge waving excitedly. Anne was driving, and almost before the car came to a

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UNEXPECTED BRIDGE FROM THE PAST (1945-1995)

(Continued from Page 46)

stop, I emerged. She ushered us into her lovely home. We were greeted by a huffy fluffy white Pekingese named Jayella Joi. She had written me about Jayella but we didn't expect to see such a beautiful animal.

Sallie Cynthia Buie Manet is an attractive, warm, caring, tender person. We sat comfortably in her living room for about an hour talking about her father, herself, our writing and how much she had enjoyed the letters. She then asked us to come to another part of the house and to bring my camera. Asking me to stand, Anne to take the camera, she stood in front of me and read from a card:

Joseph Lipsius, as Captain (later Major) in the 69th Infantry Division under Colonel Walter Daniel Buie, my father, I hereby do acknowledge with deep appreciation your dedication to duty and service under his command during World War II in Germany.

Over a lifetime, the ties of the 69th Infantry Division do not diminish and the honor due them is just and right.

During the 50th Anniversary of the 69th Infantry Division's capture of Leipzig, Germany, the meeting of the Russian army at the Elbe River, and the end of World War II - our paths - yours and mine - crossed. It was with grateful heart that I received your complimentary letter about serving with my father.

Since he is no longer with us, I feel deeply sure that he would be greatly pleased for me to pass on to you, a treasured WWII relic - this Waffen Fabrik Mauser, captured in Germany.

May his blessing be with you as you take possession of this Mauser and may his memory be ever bright in your heart.

With sincerity, I present this to you - December 16, 1996

Sallie Cynthia Buie Manet

Tears of joy welled in my eyes as I accepted the Mauser and we hugged each other. She is truly a remarkable person to do such a deed. I will be grateful to her forever. Anne made pictures of Cynthia presenting me the Mauser and we hugged each other some more.

Cynthia then showed us her lovely home, numerous pictures of her beautiful mother. **Walter D. Buie** was not in many pictures but all portrayed the military of the man who commanded the 272 Infantry. Also, the various items her mother and father collected during his assignments and travels. Finally, she showed us her collection of dolls from all over the world that she had accumulated over a lifetime.

"The other side of the coin of **Walter Daniel Buie**" Cynthia told me, when her father was elderly, weak, infirm and unable to do many things in a wheelchair,

he would call for Jayella, "I want Jayella," he would say and Cynthia would put her in his lap. With trembling hands, he would fumble over the little face and body and Jayella who would never put up with this from anyone else would just sit calm and accept the unspoken ties bonding them.

While Cynthia and I had developed a friendship in our letters for the past two and a half years, this visit brought us much closer together for both Anne and me. I am deeply grateful to her for her generous deed and we will continue to keep in touch. While driving back, Anne said, "We will have to come back when we can stay longer."



Sallie Cynthia Buie Manet presenting Joe Lipsius with her father's prized Broomhandle Mauser.

"After the Battle"

THE BEST ISSUE I HAVE EVER SEEN

I received a magazine from a very good friend. It was published in Great Britain and sent to me from Honolulu.

It is titled, "After the Battle." It is the best write-up that I have ever seen, including photos that many of us have never seen.

The single copy will cost you \$6.95, even though it is marked \$5.95, plus postage of \$2.50. They still had some issues when last I spoke with them. Total cost to you is \$9.45.

You can call 1-800-562-7308, to see if they have any more issues, or take a chance and send your check for \$9.45 to: RZM Imports, P.O. Box 995, Southport, Connecticut 06448.

I am sure that you will enjoy the magazine as much as I have.

Bill Beswick, Co. B, 661st Tank Destroyers
P.O. Box 576, West Point, Virginia 23181-0576



Earl and Judy Fox, Ralph and Ursula Goebel



Tom Gaylord, Earl Hansen, Dave Scatina, Neil Shields



Emery and Pat Nagy, Bill and Judy Newblum



Armand Conte, Glenn Fellner, Tom Fellner, Bernie Segal



Vincent and Rosemary Mazza, Curt and Evelyn Peterson



Bill Fannucchi, Alan Gwynne, Stan Czeszyk, Bob Klein



James Long, Henry Parker, Fred Scheller, Martin Buol



George and Barb Johnson, Alan Blackmar, Walt Haag

News from Ed Lucci Co. A, 273rd Infantry

Edward L. Lucci

23 Evergreen Avenue

Lynbrook, New York 11563-3219

I received a letter from **John B. Durst**. **John** was in my platoon in A Company 273rd Regiment. I had not heard from him since June 1945. Actually, he found me.

Earlier this year, I received an obituary notice from the family of **Kurt Noelke**, telling me of his passing on March 25, 1996. In 1945 **Kurt Noelke** was a twelve year old German boy. At the end of the war, E Company 272nd was billeted in Bebra-Weiterode. **Kurt Nolke** had never forgotten the kindness he was shown then by the GIs, and had been trying to contact every member of E Company he could, to show his appreciation. In 1986 he attended our Reunion in Pittsburgh with two of his sons, at which time he extended an invitation to me to visit him any time I happened to be in Germany.

In July of 1988, I visited Germany with my daughter Diane and my two oldest grandchildren, Jeanna and Stephen. I looked **Kurt Noelke** up in the phone book in Weiterode. His third son, **Andreas** answered, and told us that his father and mother had left just that morning to visit friends in Poland, and that his brothers **Stefan** and **Claudius** were also not at home. Nevertheless he invited us to his house, and after refreshing ourselves, gave us a guided tour of his home town and the surrounding area, including a view of the iron curtain nearby. We spoke with several people in whose houses the GIs were billeted and they remembered the time well.

In April 1990, when some 69ers made a tour to Torgau and Moscow, **Kurt Noelke** invited us all to stop over in Weiterode. We accepted his invitation and he gave a well planned reception and breakfast for the entire group of over 100. I'm sure his family would appreciate a few words in the bulletin.

Best regards to all,

Ed Lucci

Following is the letter of correspondence to Ed Lucci from John Durst and Ed Lucci's response to him.

Dear **Mr. Lucci**,

I was a PFC in your platoon in combat in Belgium and Germany in January to April 1945.

I am gathering all my remembrances, letters sent home, etc. but I cannot remember and I have no record anywhere of the name of our Captain of our Company (A Co.). I believe you would surely remember his name. Could tell me what it was?

At the top of page 400 of "The Last 100 Days" by **John Toland**, it says, "At dawn an Infantry Company of the 69th Division attempted an assault on the gingerbread Town Hall, but was quickly pinned down." Unfortunately it does not give our Captain's name.

After being discharged in 1946 I returned to U.C.L.A. and graduated from U.S.C. in 1951. I worked for many aircraft and defense plants and in 1962 returned to college and got a Master's Degree as Cal State University at Los Angeles. I worked as a Audiologist for the prestigious House Ear Clinic in L.A., I retired in 1985, and moved here in 1987.

I finally got married at age 58 to an R.N. nurse in Manila named **Narcisa** (then age 29). **Narcee**, as she is always called, is now an R.N. at the nearby Veteran's Administration Hospital in Loma Linda since 1989. We have a 4 bedroom, 3 bath tract house. What have you been doing?

Sincerely, with best wishes,

John B. Durst

1832 Alta Street

Redlands, California 92374-1718

Dear **John**,

You can't imagine how pleased I was to hear from you! You are one of the men I have been looking for, for over 50 years.

I have been maintaining a roster of the known current addresses of all the men that were in A Company. You were on my list of "War Time Addresses"; current address unknown.

I have been in contact with quite a few of the men. For a long time, I had been corresponding with some of them, especially the three Platoon Sergeants that were wounded. I have also been exchanging Christmas Cards with a lot of them.

I have submitted your name to the membership chairman, to be added to the 69th Infantry Division Association Roster. Enclosed herewith is a copy of the Bulletin dated August 1996.

Meanwhile, in answer to your question, the Company Commander was **Captain James C. Notgrass**. Also the "Infantry Company" that you read about, in **John Toland's** book, "The Last 100 Days," was us, the second platoon of A Company, 273rd Infantry. You were there with me, and the rest of the platoon. We also did not "attempt an assault on the gingerbread town hall." We were told that F Company was in the City Hall Building of Leipzig, under attack by 200 SS men, from the adjacent building. We were asked to go the City Hall Building to relieve the pressure on F Company.

I have enclosed herewith my A Company roster as of today, after adding your name to it. Also enclosed are the changing rosters of our platoon, from February 12th, the day we relieved the 99th Division, to the middle of June, when most of us were transferred to the 29th Division. Of the 41 that we started with, you are one of nine men (including myself) that made it all the way through without a scratch.

Hoping to see you and your wife **Narcisa** soon at one of the Association's annual reunions, I am,

Your buddy,

Ed Lucci

"Buttermilk, Anyone?"

Submitted by: **Lawson Blankenship**
Company K, 272nd Infantry
Route 1, Box 337
Vansant, Virginia 24656-9722
Telephone: 540/859-2246

In 1945, after the Battle of the Bulge and we had come out of the Eifel Forest, we were located in the small village of Waldorf, Germany. We had, for some time, lived on C-rations or K-rations. After being in the forest for some time, we were living in houses in the village.

One day I decided I would cook us a supper. I remember they had some chickens so I killed twelve hens. All the other guys insisted that I would be court martialled for doing this. However, there was an Italian boy who said he wasn't going to let me take all the rap and that he'd help me out. So he helped me clean and prepare the chickens. We built a fire outside to heat water to scald and cook the chickens. We also cooked potatoes and mashed them and had other vegetables from cans. We fixed all this and in the mean time, I had found a churn of cream ready to be churned. After I churned it, we had fresh butter for the mashed potatoes.

When supper was just about cooked, we saw ***Captain Allen** and a 1st Sergeant from Texas and another lieutenant coming up the street. One of my buddies said, "Blankenship, they're coming after you right now." I said, "I don't care if they are. I'm going to ask them to let me eat supper before I leave."

They came in and said, "Which one of you is Blankenship?" I stepped out. They said, "We hear you have a good supper cooked up here. Could you feed three more 'bums?'" I said, "Sure, as long as we have anything to eat. I don't have anything but black bread." The captain said, "Blankenship, how many loaves of bread do you need?" I estimated the number and told him. He told one of the boys to go down to the kitchen and tell the cooks that **Captain Allen** said to send the loaves of bread.

The boy brought the bread and we were all eating supper. I told them I had a churn with fresh buttermilk there, but I didn't know how clean it was. The 1st Sergeant said, "A little cow shit won't hurt anybody." We started drinking it. The sergeant had a handlebar mustache. I remember he got buttermilk in his mustache. I don't suppose the supper was all that good, but after scant rations we had eaten while staying in the forest for some time and then having a "home cooked" meal, it really tasted good. The Captain asked, "Where did you learn to cook?" I told him I had never learned to cook. He said, "Don't tell me that. Do you want a job in the kitchen?" (During this time of combat, I definitely wanted the job.) He promised that I would get the first opening to come in the kitchen.

Well, after the war had ended, and we were living in Kayna, Germany, I got a notice to report to the captain's office. I had no idea what I was reporting for. I went in, reported, and the captain said, "At ease. Sit down. I want to talk to you." He asked, "Do you remember the little village of Waldorf, Germany?" I told him I did. He asked, "Do you remember the supper you cooked that day? I promised you the first opening that came in the kitchen. I now have an opening. I am a man who will keep his word." I said, "Thank you, but I don't want the job. I'm not doing anything now, and if I take the job I'll be working 8 or 10 hours a day." He said, "I don't blame you, but I wanted to keep my word."

If there is anyone who remembers this supper, please write me at the above address and let me know.

***Sergeant Livers** was our Platoon Sergeant at the time of this incident. He wouldn't approve or discourage what we were doing, so I always thought he was likely the one who informed the captain on us. We had lost our **Lieutenant Enslinger** who was killed in a Reconnaissance Patrol just a few days before.

Lighthearted shorts from the Sentinel

Saturday, August 4th, 1945

GI Witnesses Birth, Collapses

Captain Englund and **Corporal Frey**, 881st F.A. Bn., had an experience in Beisforth last week that they won't forget for a long, long time. Approached by a German mid-wife in a high state of alarm, they were asked to rush to the assistance of a woman who at that moment was about to give birth to a child. After working with the woman for a while and bringing the mother through a not quite normal delivery, Captain Englund presented the frau with a bouncing baby boy.

Corporal Frey probably had a harder time than either the suffering mother or the perspiring "Doc." He acted as interpreter between the two and looked like the proverbial "expectant poppa" during the operation. After the baby was born, he collapsed in an exhausted heap.

Trespass Measles Restriction Eased

A faint gleam of hope could be seen yesterday in the eyes of the men of Baker Co., 271st as their strictly enforced quarantine because of a German measles epidemic, showed signs of being lifted by Monday. The new Kraut Secret Weapon has struck down 15 men in the Baker area already.

Meanwhile, the company paid a visit to the new Trespass Recreation Center Wednesday for their first trip out of their area since the ban was imposed on them. However, the Center was a little on the lonely side as no other troops were allowed within a quarter mile of the place and all civilian swimmers were verboten at the Trespass pool.

"There went our best crack at fraternization," groaned one suffering Bakerite.



Company I, 3rd Battalion, 273rd Infantry

Submitted by: **Paul H. Eagon**, 143 North Avenue, Waukegan, Illinois 60085

Front Row: 3rd from left - Sgt. Al Glaser; 4th - Sgt. Hadaway; 8th - Capt. James Castrale; 10th - 1st Sgt. John Penny; 11th - Sgt. Meyers; 12th - Sgt. Norton; 13th - Sgt. Nick Villachi; 14th - Sgt. Paul White

Second Row: 1st from left - T/5 George DeHaven, 5th - Goldstein

Third Row: 1st from left - Sgt. DeVirgilio, 2nd - Gino Marchetti (Colts football player after the war); 6th - Lelchuck; 11th - Bill McKinney; 12th - Purvis

Fifth Row: 1st from left - Bob Whaley

Back Row: 8th from left - Justin Bloom; 9th - Paul Eagon; 10th - Milton Peterson; 15th - Abe Sternman

Special Orders for German-American Relations

Submitted by: **Howitzer Al Kormas**
Hedquarters Company, 879th Field Artillery
12500 Edgewater #503
Lakewood, Ohio 44107

Headquarters
Twelfth Army Group
Europe

I need not speak of your past accomplishments, other than to say you have reflected great credit upon yourself and your command.

We are now fighting on German soil, and we are in contact not only with the soldiers of our enemy but also civilians of Germany. As conquerors, we must now consider our relations with the people of Germany.

It is imperative that you do not allow yourself to become friendly with Germans, but at the same time you must not persecute them. American soldiers can and have beaten German soldiers on the field of battle. It is equally important that you complete the victory over Nazi ideas.

To guide you I have issued these special "battle" orders. They may appear to lead along a narrow path, but they are NECESSARY. You personally must prove to the German people that their acceptance of Nazi leadership is responsible for their defeat, that it has earned for them the distrust of the rest of the world.

General Omar Bradley
Lieutenant General
U.S. Army Commanding

1. To remember always that Germany, though conquered, is still a dangerous enemy nation.

a. It is known that an underground organization for the continuation of the Nazi program for world domination is already in existence. This group will take advantage of every relaxation of vigilance on our part to carry on undercover war against us.

b. The occupational forces are not on a goodwill mission.

2. Never to trust Germans, collectively or individually.

a. For most of the past century, Germany has sought to attain world domination by conquest. This has been the third major attempt in the memory of men still living. To many Germans, this defeat will only be an interlude - a time to prepare for the next war.

b. Except for such losses of life and property suffered by them, the Germans have no regrets for the havoc they have wrought in the world.

c. The German has been taught that the national goal of domination must be attained regardless of the depths of treachery, murder and destruction necessary. He has been taught to sacrifice everything - ideals, honor, and even his wife and children for the State. Defeat will not erase that idea.

3. To defeat German efforts to poison my thoughts or influence my attitude.

a. The Nazis have found that the most powerful propaganda weapon is distortion of the truth. They have made skillful use of it and will re-double their efforts in the event of an occupation in order to influence the thinking of the occupational forces. There will probably be deliberate, studied and continuous efforts to influence our sympathies and to minimize the consequences of defeat.

b. You may expect all manners of approach - conversations to be overheard, underground publications to be found; there will be appeals to generosity and fair play; to pity for victims of devastation; to racial and cultural similarities; and to sympathy for an allegedly oppressed people.

c. There will be attempts at sowing discord among Allied nations; at undermining Allied determination to enforce the surrender; at inducing a reduction in occupational forces; at lowering morale and efficiency of the occupying forces; at proving that Nazism was never wanted by the "gentle and cultured" German people.

4. To avoid acts of violence, except when required by military necessity.

For you are an American soldier, not a Nazi.

5. To conduct myself at all times so as to command the respect of the German people for myself, for the United States, and for the Allied Cause.

a. The Germans hold all things military in deep respect. That respect must be maintained at all times or the Allied Cause is lost and the first steps are taken toward World War III. Each soldier must watch every action of himself and of his comrades. The German will be watching constantly, even though you may not see him. Let him see a good American Soldier.

b. Drunkenness will **not** be tolerated. Penalties will be severe.

6. Never to associate with Germans.

a. We must bring home to the Germans that their support of Nazi leaders, their tolerance of racial hatreds and persecutions, and their unquestioning acceptance of the wanton aggressions on other nations, have earned for them the contempt and distrust of the civilized world. We must never forget that the German people support the Nazi principles.

b. Contacts with Germans will be made only on official business. Immediate compliance with all official orders and instructions and surrender terms will be demanded of them and will be firmly enforced.

(Continued on Page 54)

**SPECIAL ORDERS
FOR GERMAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS**

(Continued from Page 53)

American soldiers must not associate with Germans. Specifically, it is not permissible to shake hands with them, to visit their homes, to exchange gifts with them, to engage in games or sports with them, to attend their dances or social events, or to accompany them on the street or elsewhere. Particularly, avoid all discussion or argument with them. Give the Germans no chance to trick you into relaxing your guard.

7. To be fair but firm with Germans.

a. Experience has shown that Germans regard kindness as weakness. Every soldier must prove by his actions that the Americans are strong. This will be accomplished if every soldier treats the Germans with firmness and stern courtesy at all times.

b. Firmness must be tempered with a strict justice. Americans do not resort to Nazi gangster methods in dealing with other people. Remember, your fair but firm treatment of the German people will command the proper respect due a member of a conquering nation.

Colditz Castle as it looks Today

Submitted by: **Michael Booker**
50 Edgehill Road
Mitcham
Surrey CR4 2HU
England

I would like to know if any members of the 69th have any photographs taken in Colditz at the time of liberation. I know one was taken of the famous glider, but by whom I am not certain. I also know that the

first four G.I.s to enter Colditz, **Alan Murphey, Bob Miller** and two others, had a photograph taken. I believe Bob is the only one left with us today.

Finally, I am endeavoring to obtain any copies of the A.P.O. used by the 69th during World War II but in particular, during April 1945. I should be more than willing to pay any expenses involved. Thank you all for your assistance. I look forward to hearing from anyone with any information.





*From the October 1996
Edition of Reminisce Magazine*

WORLD WAR II was over, at least for us. That spring day in 1945, we were dangling our feet in the Elbe River, intently watching the brush on the other bank.

Then we saw what we hoped we'd see - a Russian soldier, his rifle at the ready, carefully making his way through the screen of vegetation.

When he saw us, the Russian tossed his rifle aside, threw up his hands and let out a victory yell that was probably heard all the way to Moscow!

Instantly both riverbanks were lined with soldiers - Americans on the west and Russians on the east - shouting and waving arms in the greatest of victory celebrations.

There was no such thing as a language barrier. Everybody knew what the others were saying - "The war is over!" No more gray uniforms, square helmets and Mauser rifles waiting to take their toll.

Soon a rowboat appeared and was launched with a Russian captain in the bow waving a bottle of vodka. After his crew rowed him across the river, they went back for more soldiers.

The Russian captain was introduced to our company commander, Captain Tom Shropp. Sharing the contents of the bottle, Captain Shropp took the Russian on a tour of the company. All the officers and non-coms were introduced, each taking a short swig from the jug.

"Vas ist das?" the Russian captain asked in broken German, a language neither he nor Captain Shropp knew much of. The Russian was pointing at a small "one-lunger" electric generator.

Russian Officer Ordered 'The Light Brigade'

*A language barrier
proved no problem
for these allies in
the glow of
1945's victory.*

*by Donald Lang
Kane, Pennsylvania*

AN INTERNATIONAL DEAL

Captain Shropp very patiently tried to explain what the machine was and what it did, but the language barrier proved too much. So he took the Russian to our command post tent and pointed to a lone light bulb flickering feebly.

With a little more very "low" German, a light bulb finally went on in the Russian's head. "Da!" he exclaimed. In something resembling German, he continued, "You have electric light. I do not have electric

light. You can run wire across the river, and I can have electric light, too."

Captain Shropp politely explained how that was not possible and shrugged with several reasons why.

With the hint of a grin, the Russian repeated, "You have electric light. I do not have electric light. You can run wire across the river, and I can have electric light, too."

The Russian was very polite, but he wouldn't quit. Finally Captain Shropp decided to try to beat him at his own game. He pointed at the Russian's sidearm, obviously taken from a German officer.

"You have a Luger pistol," Captain Shropp and, "I do not have Luger pistol. Give me your Luger pistol."

The Russian's grin turned to a wide smile as he happily replied, "Da!" He unbuckled his pistol belt and ceremoniously laid it on the box that served as Captain Shropp's desk.

The Russian got his electric light ... and we were kept busy all night pouring gasoline into that generator!

Submitted by: **Michael Kertis, Co. G-272nd**
12 Camille Lane, Millsboro, Delaware 19966-8806

Witzenhausen Advance Details Elaborated on by Crandon Clark

Submitted By: **Crandon F. Clark**
2nd Lieutenant, B Company, 272nd Infantry
395 Albin Court
Ridgewood, New Jersey 07450
Telephone: 201/444-6179

"The 69th INFANTRY DIVISION HISTORY BOOK" published in October 1991, by Turner Publishing, narrates the combat route of the 272nd Infantry Regiment, across Belgium and Germany during World War II starting on page 17.

The "RUTGERS UNIVERSITY CLASS OF 1944 MILITARY HISTORY BOOK" published in May 1944 has a biography of **Crandon F. Clark** shown on page 36. The 272nd Infantry Regiment combat movement from Kassel to Witzenhausen is mentioned here as having taken place on April 5th through April 7th, 1945.

Neither of the above History Books fully describe the unit and individual contributions made in this combat advance as well as the attached article recently published in "THE FIGHTING 69th INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION BULLETIN" of September-December 1996 shown on pages 53 and 54.

This informative article was written by **Richard W. Bell**, who was a jeep driver of D Company (Heavy Weapons) of the First Battalion of the 272nd Infantry in 1945 during WW II. I recall most of the details **Richard Bell** describes, and appreciate the additional information that he has supplied, for his readers. The three days of fighting that I experienced as a part of the First Battalion advance of 25 kilometers, from Kassel to Witzenhausen, remain very vivid in my mind. This letter is written to permit each recipient to have the opportunity to learn more about this action from **Richard Bell's** memory of what, and how, these events actually occurred from his close-up observation.

To assist my readers I have attached a map of the Kassel-Witzenhausen area showing the in between towns and designating the First Battalion, 272nd Infantry Companies that were engaged in these towns. Each of these 4-5 towns shown on the attached

map were astride the one and only secondary road on which our troops traveled and it was necessary to knock out the towns in order to continue our advance to Witzenhausen. The scale on the map is approximately 1 inch equals 2.8 kilometers.

Mr. Bell's title "THE ADVANCE TO WITZENHAUSEN", emphasizes the military importance of our covering this 25 kilometer line of advance in the three days time culminating with the dramatic capture of the Witzenhausen bridgehead across the Werra River after the stone arch bridge was blown up by the German Army. This was just minutes before we had reached the western side of the bridge. My rifle platoon then climbed down to the stones of the fallen bridge and climbed across at the water level to reach and hold a position on the west bank of the Werra River. **Mr. Bell** indicated that our Regiment was then on the same line of advance as the rest of the 69th Division.

Another note of importance is that, unknown to our troops at that time, this bridge over the Werra River was very close to the boundary line previously defined by the Allied "Big Three Powers" at February 1945 Yalta, Russia Conference as The Zones of Occupation of Germany in the post War period between the United States Zone of Occupation and The Russian Zone of Occupation. The attached map shows the German State of Hess lies west of the Werra River and the German State of Thuringia lies east of the Werra River. Thuringia was to become a part of the Soviet Zone of Occupation.

In conclusion, I thank **Corporal Richard Bell** for his initiative and diligence to write this brief, but important part of First Battalion, 272nd Infantry military history. I now know that **Richard Bell** drove the third jeep and the lead jeep was driven by **Cpl. Nelson** and the second jeep was driven by **Cpl. Rackliff**. These three vehicles carried one squad in my rifle platoon that served as the "Point" of the 272nd Infantry Regiment advance on April 6th and 7th, 1945. These three loyal soldiers of the 69th Division accepted this important assignment to provide transportation for B Company riflemen on April 6th and 7th as we led the Advance to Witzenhausen. Men of D Co., Heavy Weapons Company, I salute you for all of Company B.

(See map on following page)

NEWS MATERIAL AND PICTURES FOR THE BULLETIN SHOULD BE MAILED TO:

EARL E. WITZLEB, JR., Editor, P.O. Box 69, Champion, Pennsylvania 15622-0069

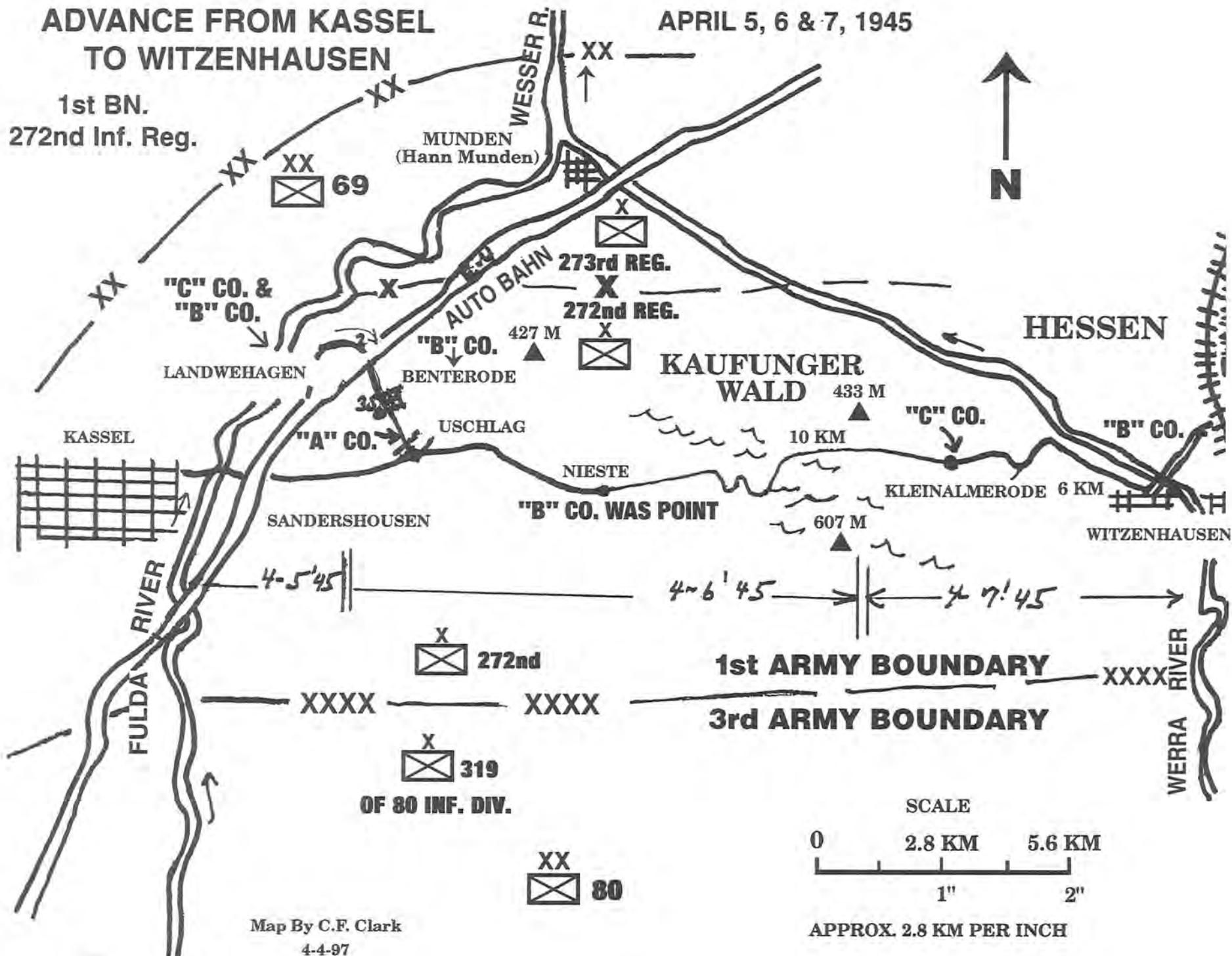
**ADDRESS CHANGES, NEW MEN AND TAPS SHOULD BE
MAILED TO OUR MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN:**

ROBERT KURTZMAN, Membership Chairman, P.O. Box 105, Wilmot, Ohio 44689

ADVANCE FROM KASSEL TO WITZENHAUSEN

APRIL 5, 6 & 7, 1945

1st BN.
272nd Inf. Reg.



CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS AND COMMUNICATION SCHEDULE

May I just make note to all leaders of Chapters, Groups, Branches, Companies, Battalions, Regiments, Recon, Artillery, AAA, and T.D.'s to get your Activities Schedules to **Earl E. Witzleb, Jr., Box 69, Champion, Pennsylvania 15622-0069 or R.D. #3, Box 477, Acme, Pennsylvania 15610-9606**, as soon as possible. We try to work at least a year ahead, as we only put out three Bulletins a year. When mailing in this information, do send your organization's name, person in charge (Chairman), address, city, state, zip, telephone numbers including area codes, dates, location, and anything else that you feel might be of interest for members to know.

MAY 8th to MAY 10th, 1997

MID-WEST GROUP SPRING MEETING

**Radisson Inn, 517 Grand Canyon Drive
MADISON, WISCONSIN**

Telephone: 608/833-0100 • Reservations: 800-333-3333

Rate: \$74.00 plus tax

Located on west side of Madison, off Hwy. 12, take exit 255 (Gammon Rd.) north to first stoplight, turn right on Odana Rd. to first stoplight, turn right to hotel entrance.

A block of rooms will be held for us until April 8th, 1997.

They are busy so make your reservation early.

Thursday, May 8th: Check in time, 3:00 p.m.

Shopping Malls, Hospitality Room

Dinner at Smoky's Club (voted #1 steakhouse)

Friday, May 9th: Golf at Tumbledown Trails. Tours for non-golfers include: Elvehjem Museum of Art, Veteran's Museum and Forest Products Laboratory. Lunch at Elks Lodge. Dinner at Bailiwicks.

Saturday, May 20th: On Your Own. Check out time, 12:00

Committee: Curt and Evelyn Peterson

4900 Wallace Avenue

Madison, Wisconsin 53716

Telephone: 608/222-7957

JULY 10th to JULY 12th, 1997

HEADQUARTERS BATTERY

880th FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION

Location: Comfort Inn

GREENSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

Committee

John O'Connor

9321 Jefferson

Brookfield, Illinois 60513

Telephone: 708/387-7809

Robert McKee

29 Sandy Point Road - Longpoint

Earleville, Maryland 21919

Telephone: 410/275-8629

* * * * *

SEPTEMBER 24th to 27th, 1997

BATTERY A

880th FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION

Location: FORT MITCHELL, KENTUCKY

For Information Contact:

John Barnett

6374 Brandwine Trail

Norcross, Georgia 30092

Telephone: 770/448-6513

August 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 1997 69th INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION 50th ANNUAL REUNION

Danvers, Massachusetts (BOSTON)

FERNCROFT TARA, FERNCROFT ROAD

Reservations: 1-800/843-8272 • Hotel: 508/750-7991

RATES: \$72.00 PLUS - Single, Double, Triple, Quad

Hospitality Room - Tours - Early Bird Dinner - PX Party - Memorial Service

Banquet Dinner Dance - Golf - Shopping - Farewell Breakfast and More

COMMITTEE:

Henry and Jean Putala, Co-Chairpersons - C-777th Tank Battalion

1139 River Boulevard, Suffield, Connecticut 06078-1416 • Telephone: 860/668-0066

Committee Members: John and Ellen McCann, George and Jennie Vasil, Robert and Irene Bishop, Robert and Jean Ross, Edward Gallagher, Robert Crowe, Stuart Mandell, Erwin and Carmen Sanborn



"Taps"

The melody of TAPS was composed by a non-musical (musician with no formal knowledge) nor the technical names of any of the notes. Union General Daniel Butterfield whistled it for Brigadier General Oliver Norton who wrote the notes on the back of an envelope July 2, 1862. The plaintive bugle notes that bring an involuntary lump to the throat typifies our loss and feelings of these two great buglers.

THE WORDS TO "TAPS" SAY IT ALL

Day is done, gone the sun
From the lakes, from the hills,
from the skies.

All is well, safely rest, God is nigh.

Thanks and praise for our days
'neath the sun, 'neath the stars,
'neath the sky.

As we go, this we know. God is nigh.

John Stephens
7226 Rock Canyon Drive
San Diego, California
Recon. - 661st T.D.

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Div. Hq.

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Service - 272nd

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Emanuel E. Fetzer
1957 East Dartmouth
Mesa, Arizona
Hq. 1 - 271st

(Continued on Back Cover)



the 69th

INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION, INC.

p.o. box 69, champion, pa. 15622-0069

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(Continued from Page 59)

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