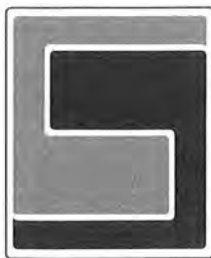


# FIGHTING 69TH INFANTRY DIVISION

## ★★★★ Association, Inc.



VOLUME 63, NO. 1

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SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER – NOVEMBER – DECEMBER  
2009

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

P.O. BOX 4069  
NEW KENSINGTON, PA 15068-4069  
724/335-9980

## bulletin

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149 East Side Drive, #164  
Concord, NH 03301 ..... 273  
Dr. Edward Sarcione, *Vice President*  
P.O. Box 648  
Hamburg, NY 14075-0648 ..... 272  
Joseph F. Huber, *Secretary*  
1341 Evergreen Street  
West Bend, WI 53095-3815 ..... 272  
John Barrette, *Treasurer*  
930 25th Place, P.O. Box 215  
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495-0215 ... 271  
Paul N. Shadle, *Membership Chairman*  
P.O. Box 4069  
New Kensington, PA 15068-4069 .... 271  
William Snidow, *Chaplain* ..... 661  
Dottie Shadle, *Editor* ..... 271  
Edith Zaffern, *Sunshine Lady*

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\*Deceased

## 1st Battalion Headquarters Company 273rd Infantry, Anti Tank Platoon



Building at Leipzig University. All the windows were blown out



Leipzig University Library. Only shell of the building left standing.



Phil Formel, Ralph Scholtz & Jack  
Frageman. Augustus Platz  
(formerly Adolf Hitler Platz)



Art Seidenstricker at  
Leipzig University



L-R: Philip Formel, Arthur  
Seidenstricker.  
Augustus Platz



Art Seidenstricker atop the  
Napoleonic Wars Monument  
Leipzig



Phil Formel, Art  
Seidenstricker.  
At Leipzig Railroad  
Station

Submitted By: **Ralph C. Scholtz**  
AT, 1st Bn. Hq., 273rd Inf.  
2107 Cherry Hills Way  
Coral Springs, FL 33071

These photos were taken a few days after the fall of Leipzig in April 1945, from the 1st Bn. Headquarters Company 273rd Infantry, Anti Tank Division.

# A Message from Our President Robert Crowe

Company E, 273rd Infantry Regiment  
149 East Side Drive #164  
Concord, New Hampshire 03301  
Telephone: 603/228-9485



**The 62nd**

Reunion number 62 is in the record book—it had great attendance and much fellowship.

The hotel provided excellent food and great service. At the Memorial Banquet I went from table to table asking if there were any major problems—not one person had a complaint.

The PX beer party was enjoyed just as in the old days at Shelby, self-service and open bar seems to do that.

Riverboat dinner cruises are always great and this one was no different with old time Tim Watson's band providing music and comedy, family style food service and waiters bringing your drink orders to you at your table, the hours passed too fast.

The Memorial Service just prior to the Saturday night banquet was somber and dignified as in the past with special thoughts of those we left behind.

Elsewhere in this bulletin Paul Shadle will give you details about membership and the 2010 reunion information.

Take care, see you at number 63!

\*\*\*\*\*

## Help Needed

Once again we must talk about the need for you to help in a few positions, this is especially true in the directors group.

On the left side of the cover page of your bulletin you will see the three year board of directors list. Each year the current team of five directors ends at the reunion and a new five person group must be elected for the third year out.

The "job" does not require a great amount of time or work. During the 2009 year only one decision had to be resolved, it was done via the secretary mailing out postcards to the officers and directors—they checked the approved or disapproved box and mailed it back.

The major work is done at the reunion just before the general meeting—here the twenty member board and officers decide what you want at future reunions.

On average this takes only one or two hours.

Please get involved and keep the Association rolling.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Loveland and Berthoud, Colorado Veterans Visit WW II Memorial

Submitted By: **Douglas George**  
Headquarters Company, 273rd  
1012 Jay Ct., Loveland, CO 80537

Twenty World War II veterans from Loveland and Berthoud, Colorado joined more than 100 others from the area to embark on a free overnight trip April 28th and 29th, 2009 to the country's capitol, hosted by a nonprofit Honor Flight Northern Colorado. Honor Flight, a national network started in 2005, uses donations to take veterans on the free trip to the capitol.

Leaving on buses from Loveland's the Ranch, the group flew from Denver to Washington, D.C., where they visited the National World War II Memorial, as well as the Vietnam and Korean war memorials. Loveland veterans who were able to attend included: **Carl Buchanan, Vernon Eads, H. Douglas George, Hudson Grotzinger, George Hekowczyk, Loyd Johnson, David Landers, Clarence Matheny, John McKeown, Joseph McQuaid, C. Harold Meier, William Reinhart, Ervin Schlepp, Oliver Shields Jr., Edward Stone, Donald Swansstorm, Robert Wood and Edward Young.** Berthoud veterans were **Harold Eckhardt and Frank McDonald.**

For more information about the Honor Flight Northern Colorado visit their website:

[www.honorflightnortherncolorado.org](http://www.honorflightnortherncolorado.org)

\*\*\*\*\*

## Up Front with Mauldin



**EDITORS NOTE**—In connection with the sketch to the left, **Sgt. Mauldin** writes: "The little stripes on the guy's sleeves each denotes six months' service overseas. I imagine nearly everyone at home knows about them, though." So the soldier to the left, with three stripes, or 18 months' service, is practically a newcomer.

1945 by: "How's things in th' States?" United Feature Syndicate, Inc.

# Annual Meeting of Officers and Board of Directors 69TH INFANTRY DIVISION ASSN. Friday, October 23rd, 2009 HOLIDAY INN SELECT NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

**Call to order:** Vice President Robert Crowe

**Invocation:** Chaplin William Snidow

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Vice President Robert Crowe

Moved, seconded and carried on a voice vote that the minutes of the 2008 meeting of the Board of Directors be approved as carried in the Bulletin.

## REPORTS

**Vice President Robert Crowe** reported the **President Dave Theobald** is unable to make the trip east to attend the reunion and that he was acting as president in his place. Dave developed a blood pressure problem and was not able to attend. On behalf of the group, Bob wished Dave a speedy recovery.

**Secretary Joe Huber** reported that decorations had been in place at the various cemeteries in Europe and England for Memorial Day and that they have been ordered for Memorial Day 2010. He also reported that it was his pleasure to acknowledge gifts to the Association as memorials to members.

**Treasurer John Barrette** presented two reports showing the status of the Association's finances indicating the assets are nearing \$49,000. John indicated that next year he will submit a one page financial report.

**Membership Chairman Paul Shadle** reported that the roster contains 1,960 names. Of that amount 255 are widows, 135 are associate members and 80 are honorary members leaving a roster of 1,490 69ers. Paul stated that he plans to make a first class mailing to the membership checking if all are active members and asking that they bring current dues up to date.

Moved by **George West** that the reports be accepted as made, seconded and carried on a voice vote.

**Bill Sheavly** gave a short presentation on the 69th Next Generation Group. Present membership is 89 members. He stressed that the group is not trying to supplant the Association but hopes to continue the memories of the Division after we have closed up shop.

## NEW BUSINESS

**VICE PRESIDENT BOB** reminded the directors of the motions at last year's meeting where we voted to have only wine and beer in the reception room, have no table gifts at the banquet and no coffee and danish

prior to the General Meeting. At the General Meeting the membership indicated opposition to this action. During the year an informal vote was taken on the subject allowing the Reunion Committee to act with formal action to be taken at this year's meeting.

Moved by **Edger Parsons** to recant the action of the 2008 Board meeting in these matters. Seconded by **Chet Yastrzemski** and carried on a voice vote.

Nominating committee report by **Chet Yasterzemski** the following:

### Two Year Term

**President-Robert Crowe** ..... *E Co., 273rd Infantry*

**Vice President-**

**Edward Sarcione** ..... *AT Co., 272nd Infantry*

**Secretary-**

**Joseph F. Huber** ..... *AT Co., 272nd Charlie Squad*

**Treasurer-John Barrette** ... *HQ Co., 271st Infantry*

### Board of Directors, Class of 2012

**Joe Kurt** ..... *E Co., 271st Infantry*

**Mel Schulz** ..... *AT Co., 272nd Infantry*

**Warren Goodman** ..... *M Co., 273rd Infantry*

**Eugene Pierron** ..... *Recon Trp. 661st TD's*

There was no one nominated from Divardy so a call for a volunteer will be made at the general Meeting.

Discussion on the Sunshine Lady problem. There was a mixup on the request for additional cards made by Mrs. Edith Zaffern. Action was taken by a member to resolve the problem. Mrs. Zaffern will continue as sunshine lady.

**Joe Lipsus** reported to the group that the 69th Div. Web Site has received 300,000 hits during the year.

**2010 Reunion Report: Reunion Chairman Paul Shadle** told us of two options, Indianapolis, IN and Charleston, SC. Indianapolis was least costly but there was a \$45.00 one way cost from the airport to the hotel.

Charleston had free airport connection and free breakfasts. Moved, seconded and carried on a voice vote to meet in Charleston in September or October date to be determined.

Moved by **George West** that we adjourn, seconded and carried on a voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted

**Joseph F. Huber**

*Secretary*

**PLEASE** if you have newspaper articles with photos that you would like to have in the bulletin. Send the original. We will make sure we get it back to you. We can not reproduce a photocopy of the pictures.



# Annual Meeting of the General Membership 69TH INFANTRY DIVISION ASSN. Saturday, October 24th, 2009 HOLIDAY INN SELECT NASHVILLE, TENNESSE

Meeting was called to order by **Vice President Robert Crowe** at 10:00 am Saturday, October 24, 2009 in Nashville, TN.

Invocation by **Chaplain William Snidow**.

Pledge of Allegiance lead by **Vice President Crowe**.

Moved, seconded and carried by a voice vote to approve the minutes of the 2008 meeting as published in the BULLETIN.

**Vice President Bob** reported the **President, David Theobald** is unable to be at the reunion due to a blood pressure problem. He had his air transportation, hotel reservation and activity orders all in order but had to cancel the orders.

On behalf of the Association, Bob wished Dave well.

**Secretary Joe Huber** reported that decorations were in place at the cemeteries for 2009 and that the decorations for 2010 have been ordered from the American Battle Monument Commission in Paris. He also reported on acknowledging gifts to the association as memorials to members. He suggested that members tell families that these memorials are a welcome idea.

**Treasurer John Barrette** reported via a two page financial report. He reported that the Association's finances are in good order and that the assets are nearly \$49,000.

**Membership Chairman Paul Shadle** reported that the current roster holds 1,960 names with 1,490 being active 69ers

Moved by **George West** to approve the reports as stated. Seconded and carried on a voice vote.

**Chet Yasterzemski** presented the slate of officers for the coming two year terms:

**Robert Crowe, President** ..... *E Co., 273rd Infantry*  
**Edward Sarcione**

**Vice President** ..... *AT Co., 272nd Infantry*  
**Joseph F. Huber**

**Secretary**..... *AT Co., 272nd Charlie Squad*  
**John Barrette, Treasurer** .. *HQ Co., 271st Infantry*

## Board of Directors, Class of 2012

**Joe Kurt** ..... *E Co., 271st Infantry*  
**Mel Schulz** ..... *AT Co., 272nd Infantry*  
**Warren Goodman** ..... *M Co., 273rd Infantry*  
**Eugene Pierron** ..... *Recon Trp. 661st TD's*

There was no nomination from Divardy so a call was made for a Volunteer from Divardy to assume the post.

Call for nominations from the floor. There were none, so it was moved, seconded and carried on a voice vote to elect those nominated.

**Bill Sheavly** spoke giving a short summary on the 69th Second Generation. He stressed that they do not want to replace the Association but to carry on the story of the Division when we close up shop. As of the Saturday meeting the membership has grown to 93 members. The group web site is in coordination with the 69th Division web site to give a better picture of both groups.

**Joe Lipsus** gave us a short report on the web site stating that it had received 300,000 hits during the year.

2010 Reunion report: **Reunion Chairman Paul Shadle** said that the 2010 reunion will be held in Charleston, South Carolina in September or October the date to be announced at a later date.

**President Bob** made the following appointments:

**Dottie Shadle** ..... *Bulletin Editor*

**Paul Shadle** ..... *Membership & Reunion Chairman*

**William Sidnow** ..... *Chaplain*

**Bruce Young** ..... *Service Co., 879th Field Artillery*

as a **Member of the Board of Directors, Class of 2012**

There being no further business, it was moved and seconded that we adjourn until 2010, and carried on a voice vote.

Respectfully submitted

**Joseph F. Huber**

*Secretary of the Association*

\*\*\*\*\*

## 661st Tank Destroyers Mini Reunion

Submitted By: **Thomas Slopek**

*Company C, 661st T.D.*

2515 Shade Road, Akron, OH 44333

**August 13-16, 2009**

Our reunion took place in Roanoke, Virginia this year with the **Snidow** family hosting our stay. It is worth mentioning that **Nathan Snidow**, grandson of **Bill** and **Ellen Snidow**, functioned as host and co-coordinator for this event, and did a great job in his first event. Our gratitude and congratulations go out to **Nate** for extending himself to make sure our veterans and their legacy are not forgotten.

We enjoyed a hospitality room for the duration of our stay, and the star attraction was a tour of the Bedford D-day Museum in Bedford, Virginia, of course, has the sad distinction of being the hardest hit town in the history of WWII in terms of casualties, with 21 of its sons lost on Omaha Beach on opening day. It is for this reason that the museum is located there. We had a beautiful, sunny, Virginia day for our outing, and its gardens, monuments, and guided tour were appreciated by all of us.

Our banquet on Saturday was held at the hotel. We enjoyed a wonderful meal together, and were treated to a presentation and lecture by Mr. **Riese House** on the topic military uniforms. Mr. **Riese's** presentation was solicited by **Hope Dolan**, daughter of **Ruth Mellinger**. His talk and display was very interesting as well as informative, with tips on how to care for and preserve uniforms that many of the veterans and their families still have.

(Continued on Page 5)

## 661st MINI REUNION

(Continued from Page 4)

Next year's reunion will be held in Akron, Ohio, with **Thomas and Tammy Slopek** as hosts. We are hoping to have it sometime in August, so that more of the children and out-of school grandchildren will be able to attend.

### This year's attendees included:

**Bill and Ellen Snidow, Nate Snidow,  
Pat and Steve Woody  
John and Eva Golden  
Bill and Margaret Dawson,  
Vincent and Linda Puccio, Tony and Josh Puccio,  
Wiley and Jane Keel  
Bill and Mary Wahl with Bill, Jr. and Jan Wahl  
Patsy Slopek, Tom and Tamara Slopek,  
and Jack Dowler  
Ruth Mellinger, Karen and Dave Royer,  
Dawn Kilhefner, Marlin Mellinger,  
Rachel Mellinger, Hope and Nate Dolan  
George Wallis  
Marion and Wayne La Franco (Hilton Spokany)  
Marvin and Connie Brown  
The Gillette Family: Wilma, Julia Cushman,  
Daniel Gillette, Randy Gillette  
Charles and Carol Rodgers  
Mike and Dorothy Kotnik, Connie and Lanie Smart  
Ernest Sencabaugh  
Reise and Karen House**

\*\*\*\*\*

## Across West Germany

Submitted By: **Tech/4 Julius G. Tivald**

*Signal Company, Radio Section, 569th*

*207 Kresson-Gibbsboro Road*

*Voorhees, New Jersey 08043-9524*

One day we had breakfast in the backyard of a village home. The cooks set up a table with boxes of cereal on one end and the milk "powdered" on the other end with sugar. I chose a box, the kind you could open on the side to add the milk and sugar. As I was eating the cereal I heard the engine of a fighter plane and looking up I saw an (ME109) German fighter plane coming right for us at about 150 feet off the ground. I saw a brick fence circling the backyard of the home and figured I would jump in front of the fence if the ME 109 started to fire. Just as I decided to jump the plane did a 90 degree turn to the left to get behind a convoy that left a few minutes before. I could see the pilot with a bright red scarf behind his head. When he got behind the convoy I could hear his machine guns go off. After we finished our breakfast our convoy formed to follow the one that left before. After a few minutes we saw a dead American on the side of the road with a GI blanket over him. I'm sure there were wounded in the other trucks forming the convoy.

One day we obtained a room in a village home. Usually it was a second floor bedroom. After things were settled a tall man came up the stairs to talk. He was a Russian. The Germans brought them in to work

on the farms. Fortunately we had a man on our team who could speak Polish and some Russian. His name was **Harris**, he stated that when his grandparents entered the United States they had a long Polish name and was told by the immigration people that from now on your name is **Harris**. After a while the lady of the house called for the Russian to come down and milk the cow. The Russian was told the war is over for him, but he said, "Here I have a bed to sleep in and food to eat." He then went down stairs to milk the cow.

One day I went down to check on the 3/4 ton truck as the engine had to be run 20 minutes out of the hour to charge the battery. The receiver was on for 24/7 a day except when we were in line to cross the Rhine on a pontoon bridge, as the Remagen Bridge had already collapsed. In one village home we had the receiver remote controlled to an upper room. The receiver was remote controlled to a cellar when we were sent to Battalion Headquarter's. The Germans sent volleys of rockets over to our position. They could either see us or hear our transmitter. As I started to tune the transmitter the first volley came over. I jumped out of the back of the truck and could hear the shrapnel hissing in the snow. We were there for three days. The Germans sent over a volley about every two to three hours. We were in an empty unheated house as the commander didn't want us close to his Headquarters for fear we would draw fire, he was right.

One day as I checked on the truck I saw what was a German Fighter Plane approaching, it had no means of propulsion. As it passed over I could see four Venturis on the tail section. It passed over at a high rate of speed. It disappeared behind our position. I waited for it to return. It did and was quiet. No guns were fired. It was without, the first of a kind, "Rocket Plane."

\*\*\*\*\*



Submitted  
By: **Robert  
E. Harris**  
*Co. D, 273rd  
PO Box 148  
Roanoke, TX  
76262*

**Camp  
Shelby,  
Mississippi,  
Company D,  
273rd  
Infantry**

*Standing L-R:  
Bobbie Jones,  
Robert  
Harris, David  
Arnold  
Kneeling L-R:  
Louie Shafer  
J. Cante*

# THE MAIL BOX

By **Dottie (Witzleb) Shadle**  
Editor



Company E, 273rd Infantry Regiment

P.O. Box 4069

New Kensington, Pennsylvania 15068-4069

Telephone: 724/335-9980

E-Mail: danne345@comcast.net

**Raymond Halvorson**, 5013 135th Place S.E., Snohomish, Washington 98296-5218, Telephone: 425/337-3678, E-Mail: roh.one@verizon.net — Service Co, 273rd: Thanks many times for the copies of the bulletin. Unfortunately I find few if any names that I remember.

My copy of the Division book (1946) remains in my library—and reminds—on occasion. Time has an effect on memory—some times not possible I'm remembering correctly.

1) Seems we were called (when at Camp Shelby) the 5 B's Bolte's Bitchin, Bewilderd, Bivouacking, B's. Then again, can't trust 65+ years of memory.

2) Also, recall **Lt. A. Kopsebu** met the Russians without prior approval, hence **Lt. Robertson** got to return quickly to the U.S. for bond drive tour. Another questionable memory.

3) The 273rd sailed in at the area of the "Bulge" — in bad weather—spent nearly a month penetrating the Siegfried Line—then a mad rush to Leipzig and the Hapdianic Monument.

4) The Division book lists 400+/- lives lost in +/- 3 months, out of an entire Division of +/- 17,000 — we lost a lot.

Also, before joining the 69th, was N.Y.U. ASTP program — thus diverted to Civil Engineering — will be interested to hear from any former N.Y.U. ASTP's.

**Robert Siglow**, 4026 Hill Avenue, Toledo, Ohio 43607—Company L, 271st: Attached find my check for 2010 dues. Thanks-a-million to you and all Staff for all the work that you do. It is appreciated!!

**Mark Guho**, 20657 Martinez Street, Woodland Hills, California 91364-2311—Company K, 273rd:

Yesterday morning I mailed you my letter dated August 27, 2009 and that same afternoon I received the Bulletin from you that I had requested. Needless to say I was left rather disconcerted.

Please accept this little gift as a token of my appreciation for the extra work that I put you through as well as thank you for your exemplary demeanor in addressing my request. You and your husband are to be commended for keeping the nostalgia and camaraderie of this organization alive. Not having ever met you but seeing the results of your efforts throughout the years, you each are a class act in your own right.

**THANK YOU.**

**Vito J. Narducci**, 84-39 153rd Avenue Apartment 4A, Howard Beach, New York 11414, Phone: 718-843-4248 Company K, 273rd Infantry: Dear Brothers, Trying to fulfill a promise. In 1945 while trying to take the town of Coldenz my friend **S/Sgt. Paul Beck** was killed while manning the machine gun on a half track. While **Paul** and I fought our way through Europe I promised him that if anything ever happened to him I would look up his father and daughter who lived in Pennsylvania. After **Paul** was killed and I returned to life I was remiss in fulfilling my promise, which has haunted me to this day. I am trying to find **Paul's** daughter and tell her about her Dad. If anyone has any information or knowledge of **Paul Beck's** family can you please help me to find her? Anxious and hopeful that some of my brothers can help.

**Charles E. Burchett**, 2430 Haines Road, Madison, Ohio 44057, HQ, 661st TD Battalion: The picture on the back of the summer issue (Volume 62, No. 3) of the Fighting 69th Bulletin is familiar to me. We were on a training mission in Louisiana. The tent in the background is the kitchen tent. One night I was on guard duty and I heard a noise in the distance and soon saw coming toward the camp a big herd of wild pigs. I started throwing sticks at them and they spread out and went through the surrounding tents where the guys were sleeping. You never saw such scrambling. Tents came down with the guys and pigs caught inside. The pigs went for the cook tent and carried off anything they could carry in their mouths. They returned later for anything else they could carry. There were bags of flour broken open and a general mess on the trail into the woods where they went to eat their loot. This Camp Polk Louisiana. We were from Fort Hood, Texas.

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**BULLETIN STAFF**  
Dottie (Witzleb) Shadle  
Editor  
PO Box 4069  
New Kensington, PA 15068  
Phone: 724/335-9980  
Send Articles, Pictures, and Material  
John Barreter  
President  
PO Box 4069  
New Kensington, PA 15068  
Phone: 724/335-9980  
Send Dues to John  
Paul Smith  
Vice President  
PO Box 4069  
New Kensington, PA 15068  
Phone: 724/335-9980  
Send Address Changes  
New Members  
and Deaths to Paul  
Dottie (Witzleb) Shadle  
Editor  
PO Box 4069  
New Kensington, PA 15068  
Phone: 724/335-9980  
Send Letters, Articles  
Material to Dottie



## THE MAIL BOX (Continued from Page 6)

**Michael F. Whalen** son of **Tech-Sgt 2nd Lt. James Whalen**, 1837 Napfle Avenue, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19111, E-Mail: mfwhalen@philasd.org—Anti Tank Co., Mine Platoon Unit 271st Infantry: My father, **James Whalen** enlisted into the service out of New York in 1943. I know he spent some time in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. He made Tech-Sgt., in October of 1944. He was wounded, 23 April 1945 and received the Purple Heart. He was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant, 4 April 1945 in Europe.

My father was 6'1", 185 lbs., blond hair, blue eyes and fair complexion. He was born in Colliers, Newfoundland, 1917 and came to America in May of 1939. He was assigned as a Tech-Sgt to the Mine Platoon Unit of the 271st Infantry, Anti-Tank Company, 69th Division. If you go on the 69th web and look at the Company Photo Section of the 271st Infantry Regiment AT Co Photo (Dec 1944, Twyford, England), you will see **Sgt. James Whalen** holding the unit flag. He has his left hand holding the top of the flagpole and his right hand holding the bottom of the flag (1st row-middle). You can also see him in the Mine Platoon of the 271st, Anti Tank Unit in bulletin dated 1988, Volume 41, No. 3 page 46. He is the Sgt. kneeling with his Lt. in the front.

**Ralph C. Scholtz**, 2107 Cherry Hills Way, Coral Springs, Florida 33071—Company H-1, 273rd: I am enclosing several pictures of my buddies of 1st Bn. HQ. Co. 273 Inf.(Anti Tank Platoon) taken a few days after the fall of Leipzig.

Hope to see you all at the reunion in Nashville. Best regards to Paul.

**Mr. & Mrs. E. Stagg**, 321 Barbertown Point Breez Road, Flemington, New Jersey 08822—Co. G, 273rd:

I'm battling arthritis and **Ed** is having small strokes so we won't be able to go to Nashville.

You asked for stories or photos. I guess we're so old now we can't get them to you but I thought to help fill the paper, if you would ask for photos from past reunions. Something we think is special or funny. The photo I'm enclosing is from the last Nashville reunion. I got the fans for the ladies because it was so HOT. When I asked the men for a group photo they took the fans and as you see a funny photo.



left to right: Howard Klapp, Orville Schultz, Edson Stagg, Al Aronson, Joe Panganiban and Bill Beecher

I'm sure the members have some great photos they can share – Maybe you can bring it up at the ladies meeting or write about it in the next bulletin.

As usual we thank you for all the hard work you and Paul and others do so we can enjoy the bulletin.

Have a great time at Nashville. We'll be thinking of you.

**Alex Gabbard**, 1829 Grubb Road, Lenoir City, TN 37771—Company and Regiment unknown: I noticed on the back page of the last Bulletin "Any one know where this photo was taken?" and I thought I would submit the enclosed photos for a similar question to your readers. They are from the collection of **Cpl. Garvey R. Cheek** of Thumond, North Carolina who passed away some years ago and we have been unsuccessful in locating any one who remembers him. We don't know who is in the photo with the big gun, although we think it must be someone who **Cpl. Cheek** knew for him to keep the photo. The soldier seated in the other photo is **Cpl. Cheek** with notation on the back, "June 1945, Querfurt". He was apparently sight seeing in that ancient Saxon town with its thousand year old castle.

### Does Anyone Know These Men?

We do not know who is in the photo with the big gun. Can You Help?



**Cpl. Cheek** was the father of my wife, Mary Alice Cheek.

*Cpl. Garvey R. Cheek —  
June 1945, Querfurt*

If you are **NO LONGER** interested in receiving the Bulletin in the future, please let us know.

If you are still interested in receiving the Bulletin, please make sure your dues are paid in full and are up to date.

# THE AUXILIARY'S PAGE



**Dottie (Witzleb) Shadle**

**By Dottie (Witzleb) Shadle**

*Ladies Auxiliary Editor*

P.O. Box 4069

New Kensington, Pennsylvania 15068-4069

Home Telephone: 724/335-9980

E-Mail: danne345@comcast.net

**Dorothea Duncan, President**

23 Invincible Court

Alameda, California 94501

Telephone: 510/521-3766

E-Mail: Duncan@Alamedanet.net

**Jeanne Theobald, Vice President**

8401 Moravian Street

Sacramento, California 95826

Telephone: 916/383-6592



**Edith Zaffern, Sunshine Lady**

22555 Hallcroft Trail

Southfield, Michigan 48034-2011

Telephone: 248/357-4611

**Carmen Sanborn, Recording Secretary**

333 Mechanic Street

Laconia, New Hampshire 03246

**Jennie Ambrose, Chaplain**

803 10th Street

McKees Rocks, PA 15136-2123

\*\*\*\*\*

## A Message from your President, Dorothea Duncan

December 1, 2009

My Report....

On Saturday, October 24, 2009, the 58th meeting of the Ladies Auxiliary of the 69th Infantry Division had registration and the donation of lap robes and accessories from 9:00-9:30 a.m.

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by President Dorothea Duncan followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and the Opening Prayer by Dorothea Duncan. The introduction of officers was brief as only the President and Secretary Carmen Sanborn were in attendance.

Minutes of the August 16, 2008 meeting were read and approved by motion without additions or corrections. Carmen Sanborn read the correspondence from 2008 and a thank you letter for last year's donation.

In the absence of the Chaplin, Dorothea Duncan conducted our memorial service. This was followed by Carmen Sanborn making the Sunshine Report for Edith Zaffern. There were 1,432 cards sent from November 1, 2008 to October 1, 2009. Edith said she would be willing to continue as Sunshine Chairman as long as the association needed her. Postage costs were not available at the time of the meeting. New cards had been ordered as Edith's supply had run out.

There were 25 members in attendance; 3 first timers, and a few next generation guests in attendance.

We then discussed the fact that there was no one that wanted to be an officer any longer, and that the main function of the auxiliary which was to assist the 69th

with the organization and execution of a successful event, is now handled by an outside organization. We continue to knit lap robes and slippers, donate toiletries and other articles to be used at the VA. It was with a certain amount of sadness that we finally decided by motion made by President Dorothea Duncan, seconded by Jean Ross and voted to disband the Ladies Auxiliary. June Mussay stated that the Auxiliary has served its purpose, and it was time for the group to disband.

Connie Brough of the Second Generation said they will pick up after the 69th Division Organization disbands. For now, we will continue to do our handwork that will be donated to the VA. Next year that will be in Charleston, SC.

The meeting closed with a prayer by the President and adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

I learned after the meeting that the Ladies Auxiliary still has funds available. Since we are disbanded that money will roll back to the 69th Division Treasury. My suggestion was that we continue to give a check along with the lap robes to the local VA where the reunion is located.

I would like to personally thank all of the women, who, over the years, have given so much time and effort to make the Ladies Auxiliary the success that it has been. We, as an organization, have given a substantial assist to the men to make each reunion a success. Thank you all again for your endless hours of work. May you and your family have a happy and healthy New Year. See you all in Charleston...keep on knitting!!!

Respectfully submitted,

**Dorothea Duncan**

*President, Ladies Auxiliary*

*(Continued on Page 9)*



# 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting Ladies Auxiliary 69<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division

**Saturday, October 24, 2009**

The meeting was opened by President Dorothea Duncan at 10:02 AM. Roll of officers was called and present was President Duncan and Secretary Carmen Sanborn.

Attending the meeting were: 25 regular members, 3 first timers and 1 guest.

We collected six lap robes and 59 pairs of slippers for the Veteran Home with a check for \$500. A representative from the V.A. came to pick them up after the meeting.

A discussion on the Auxiliary to disband after this meeting and a few minutes of whys, etc. a motion was made by Dorothea Duncan, seconded by Jean Ross. All in favor of motion.

Our next Reunion will be held in Charleston, SC in mid September or October, 2010.

It was suggested that we have a get together for the women at our reunions.

Connie Brough of the next generation said they will continue after the Men's Association disband. Everybody is invited to join and contributions and donations are accepted.

Souvenirs will be combined next year in South Carolina. Jean Ross resigned as Chairwoman and Mary and Warren Wilmont will be co-chairmen of Souvenirs.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:50 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

**Carmen Sanborn**

*Secretary*

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## A Thank You Letter From Department of Veterans Affairs Tennessee Valley Healthcare System

1310 24th Avenue South  
Nashville, Tennessee 37212

3400 Lebanon Road  
Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37129

On behalf of the patients and staff at the Tennessee Valley Healthcare System, we would like to extend our appreciation to you for your donation of knitted booties to our hospitalized veterans. We'd like to thank you for your continued support of our hospitalized veterans. Through your thoughtfulness and concern, we are able to let our veterans know that we care for them and all the sacrifices that they have endured for our freedom.

Without your support, we could not provide for the niceties that make hospitalization more bearable. Your thoughtfulness also reflects the concern and compassion that our community feels for our veterans.

With Warm Regards,

**Anthony Stevens**

*Assistant Chief, Voluntary Service*



**FIGHTING 69<sup>TH</sup> INFANTRY DIVISION**  
\*\*\*\**Association, Inc.*

November 1, 2009

Ms. Jo-Ella Benford, Voluntary Service  
US Department of Veterans Affairs  
VA-TN Valley Healthcare System  
1310 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue South  
Nashville, TN 37212-2637

Dear Jo-Ella:

It was so nice to meet you when you picked up the knitted items and bath care items that we had collected for the VA. We trust the check in the amount of \$500 will be of value to your work with our veterans.

Although our auxiliary has been disbanded, we still intend to keep up with our knitting and bath care items for our veterans.

Thank you again for picking up the items. Have a safe and happy holiday season in the next few months.

Sincerely

**Dorothea Duncan**

*Past-President*

*69<sup>th</sup> Ladies Auxiliary*

\*\*\*\*\*

## A Thank You Letter From Department of Veterans Affairs Tennessee Valley Healthcare System

1310 24th Avenue South  
Nashville, Tennessee 37212

3400 Lebanon Road  
Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37129

69<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division Association:

On behalf of the patients and staff of the Department of Veterans Affairs Tennessee Valley Healthcare System (VA TVHS), we would like to extend our appreciation to you for your donation of \$500. As requested, this donation has been deposited in the following General Post Fund account 9100-TVH General Purpose.

The commitment you have shown to our patients demonstrates your concern for America's heroes. Again, thank you for caring.

With Warm Regards,

**Anthony Stevens**

*Assistant Chief, Voluntary Service*



*Slippers donated to the DVA Tennessee Valley Healthcare System, knitted by the Calvary Baptist Church, Norristown, PA*

## **- In Memoriam -**

### **"LADIES' TAPS"**

**Margaret Kormas**

Wife of **Alex Kormas**

12500 Edgewater Drive #503, Lakewood, Ohio 44107-1673

Headquarters - 879th

**Teddy Nemeth**

Wife of **Frank Nemeth**

66 Gaping Rock Road, Levittown, Pennsylvania 19057

Company B - 269th

**Reba Sheavly**

Wife of **William Sheavly**

218 Sacred Heart Lane, Reisterstown, Maryland 21136-1414

Company M - 271st

**Helen Wallace**

Wife of **John Wallace**

745 Briar Lane, Wellfleet, Massachusetts 02667

Company C - 880th

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## **Company I 271st Regiment 69th Division 2009 Mini Reunion**

Submitted By: **H. Lynn Jones**

Company I, 271st Reg. 69th Division

Company I Group met with the 69th Division 63rd Reunion in Nashville, TN. October 22, 23, and 24 for their Annual Get Together...We had missed the 2008 reunion due to a number of issues — mainly health of the troops — not in real good traveling condition. We did want to try and get a few people to meet in Nashville — A few die hards with willing bodies were able to come to Nashville. Attending were:

**Hy Kurfirst**

**Douglas Duckstad** with his son **Bob Duckstad**

**Lynn and Lou Jones**

**Joe McMurray** planned to attend, but due to a little mishap his daughter called to say he could not make it. Our long timers that had medical problems, doctor appointments and just not able to travel were:

**Jack Leibfritz**

**Bob and Phyllis Jorgenson**

**Dick and Jane Haines**

**Dale and Peg Thompson**

**Bob and Carol McMillan**

**Leigh and Mae Tenney**

We remembered our fallen members:

**Nathalie Duckstad, Harris Timmer, Marty Miller, Mae Rita Kurfirst and Virginia McMurry.**

We all arrived Thursday in time for dinner together at the Hotel, then on to the Annual Beer Party — which was well attended — as usual. We got to know Doug's son Bob, who is such an outstanding young man — He is a 30 year US Army Retired Lt. Col. living in Virginia and working at the Pentagon.

Friday started with breakfast, provided by the Hotel, we were able to visit with other 69th people and enjoyed talking among ourselves to catch up on Who, What, Where and Why about our doings. There were a few **Hy Kurfirst** jokes — which we did and have always enjoyed. The man's memory is outstanding — maybe because he is still teaching kindergarten classes. We enjoyed the hospitality room and again seeing and talking with old friends from other units — **George West** has a loose leaf folder with photos from all of the past reunions. There was a picture of **Bob and Janis Buckstad** at an earlier reunion when he was in uniform — **George** presented it to **Bob, Doug and Bob** were getting ready for an early dinner and heading out to the Opera, **Lou and I** took **Hy** on a trip to West Nashville to see and tour the Parthenon in Centennial Park — Nashville is known as the Athens of the South. It has just been upgraded and refreshed — we enjoyed being there after so many years since we visited there — **Hy** made some pics and maybe he will send a few, later. **Hy, Lou and I** went to Darfon's for dinner. **Doug and Bob** really enjoyed the older "Opera" members who were performing.

Saturday morning: breakfast as usual at the Hotel — Some more talk and jokes and lots of remembering things that happened to our company in Camp Shelby, going over, England, France and Germany — Visited the hospitality room again — **Lou and I** departed to watch the UT vs ALA football game. UT let that one get away — We put on our finery and attended the memorial service (which is always so touching and somber — as we recall fallen comrades). Dinner was served and we enjoyed the very nice music — **Chet** was busy making photos for the bulletin — we may be in the next one — **General Bolte's** son was present this year.

Sunday we ate our farewell breakfast and said our good byes. With hopes of attending next year's reunion in Charleston, South Carolina along with those who did not make this trip. In 69th Tradition — **WE JUST WON'T QUIT.**

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## **MOVING**

**Please print your new address below:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please send this form  
and your old address label to:**

**PAUL SHADLE**

**P.O. Box 4069**

**New Kensington, PA 15068-4069**

**Please allow six weeks advance notice.**

# The Formation of the 69th Infantry Division Association

Submitted By: **Albert B. Drake, Jr.**  
Son of: **A. Brooks Drake** (deceased)  
Company D, 369th Medical Battalion  
160 North Lakeside Drive, Madison, Indiana 47250  
Phone: 812-866-1463

Dear Mr. Barrette,

During World War II my father was a dentist in the 69th Infantry Division, 369th Medical Battalion, Company D. He is deceased. Recently I have had the honor of reviewing his paperwork from his time in the 69th. Most of the paperwork is mundane and of interest only to us as a family.

However, the enclosed letter from General Reinhardt to members of the 69th outlining the formation of the **SIXTY NINTH INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION** may be of interest to the Association. Therefore I am enclosing it for you to keep and do with it as you see fit. It belongs not to one person but to all the men who served in the 69th.

I am sending it to you because I do not know where else to send it. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

I thank you and salute you for your service to our country.

Sincerely,  
Albert B. Drake, Jr.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Sixty Ninth Infantry Division Association 409 Ridgemont Avenue San Antonio 2, Texas

To: All Veterans of the Sixty Ninth Infantry Division,

Recently, a representative group of former members of the Sixty Ninth Infantry Division met in New York City for the purpose of taking initial steps in the organization of the *Sixty Ninth Infantry Division Association*. At that meeting, our Association was formed and a tentative organization set up to function until such time as a reunion might be held at which the permanent officers would be elected, a Constitution and By Laws adopted and a permanent working organization set up. Several committees were appointed to make studies and recommendations for a constitution, rules for membership, news bulletins and other matters necessary to make the Association a going concern.

At this meeting, **Major General Charles L. Bolte**, U.S. Army, was chosen Honorary President of the Association. **General Bolte** activated the 69th Division and commanded it for over a year. More than any one man, he was responsible for molding our division into an efficient fighting outfit.

**Major General Emil F. Reinhardt**, U.S. Army (Retired) was elected as the Acting Secretary-Treasurer, with the additional duty of continuing the distribution of the Division Pictorial Histories.

A temporary *Board of Directors* with Mr. **Edward Leary** as chairman, was selected with power to act until such time as a permanent organization could be established. Regional representatives are being selected throughout the United States in the larger centers of population.

Generally, the purpose of the Association will be to keep alive the spirit and tradition of our great division, distribute news bulletins, hold reunions, memorialize our heroic war dead, help former buddies in distress, help you keep in touch with your close buddies, sponsor state or regional chapters of the 69th Division Veterans, gather all possible information concerning fallen buddies for their nearest of kin and to promote a national awareness of the need for Adequate National Defense. This Association will be a **NON PROFIT AND NON POLITICAL** organization.

As I mentioned in my previous notices, the dues are set at \$1.00 per year. In the organization of a National Association, there will be many initial expenses to drain the Association Treasury. To meet the high initial cost of organization, it was decided that, for initial membership, an initiation fee of \$2.00 would be added to the first annual dues, making a total of \$3.00 for initial membership and annual dues of \$1.00 thereafter. Dues were purposely set at a low figure in order that the greatest possible membership might be attained. This is **YOUR ASSOCIATION** and it is our aim to have every one of you join in an organization of the Veterans of a great fighting division. The Cost to you is **LOW**. The good that we can do is **GREAT**. I hope that all of you will join with your buddies to make this a **GREAT ASSOCIATION**.

**WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR MEMBERSHIP?** Any man who served honorably as a member of the Sixty Ninth Infantry Division for any period of time between activation and demobilization is eligible for **REGULAR MEMBERSHIP**. Complete membership rules as will later be contained in the Constitution, have not yet been written, but the above will apply to all to whom this notice has been sent. It is my recommendation to the membership committee that all 69th Division veterans who have been permanently disabled as a result of wounds or line of duty accidents during combat as members of the Sixty Ninth Division, be given **LIFE MEMBERSHIP** in the Association, with all privileges of Regular Membership without payment of initiation fee or annual dues. It is also my recommendation that members of the Tank Battalion, Tank Destroyer Battalion and the Anti Aircraft Battalion who fought as part of the **SIXTY NINTH DIVISION FIGHTING TEAM**, be made eligible for regular membership. They fought close to our sides in our most important engagements. Association Memberships etc. are matters that are being given careful study by the membership committee.

The membership in which most of you will be interested is the **REGULAR MEMBERSHIP** for which the Dues and Initiation Fee will be \$3.00. For those who can and wish to contribute in excess of the regular dues and initiation fee, there will be a **SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP**. This is, of course, entirely voluntary but will greatly help to start the Association on a sound financial basis. It carries no extra membership

(Continued on Page 12)



## THE FORMATION OF THE 69th ASSOCIATION

*(Continued from Page 11)*

privileges but anyone paying \$5.00 or more will be credited with a SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP. Initial membership in the Association WILL BE GOOD UNTIL 1 JANUARY 1949.

In making distribution of Pictorial Histories, I have had numerous requests for autographed copies. With the huge task of distribution, I was unable to meet these requests. With every SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP, I shall be glad to send an autographed copy of the history. Anyone else desiring an autographed copy may obtain one for \$1.00. The whole dollar will go into the Association Fund.

When the Association has been established on a sound foundation, it is the intention to sponsor and assist local or regional chapters of the Division Association. The details have not yet been worked out by the committee.

The matter of a SIXTY NINTH DIVISION REUNION is being studied. In addition to renewing close friendships that now exist between you and your buddies who fought in the mud and muck of the Sigfried Line, the permanent organization of the association will be established.

One of the functions on the Association will be to issue periodic news bulletins. There must be many items of interest that all of us will be glad to read. *THESE NEWS ITEMS MUST COME FROM YOU.* Of the many news items that I hope to obtain, those of the most general interest will be selected to be included in the NEWS BULLETIN. For example, do you know that **1st Lt. Turner F. Northern**, 880th Field Artillery Battalion and **Pfc. Kenneth F. Culp**, Company "K", 271st Infantry, listed as fatal casualties in the Pictorial History, are still alive? Both were badly wounded in action and spent many months in hospitals but are still very much alive. **1st Sgt. David Kaye**, AT Company, 272nd Infantry and **Clarence Marshall**, Division Headquarters Company have written me. **Sgt. Kaye** is still in the hospital. **Clarence Marshall** lost the sight of both eyes. These men really took it on the chin but like true soldiers, they are not squawking. They have earned their Life Memberships.

Their Addresses:

**1st Sgt. David Kaye**, Ward 305, Cushing General Hospital, Framingham, Massachusetts.

**Clarence Marshall**, 345 6th Avenue, New Kensington, Pennsylvania.

**Kenneth F. Culp**, 2857 43rd Street, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

**Turner P. Northern**, RFD 4, Lebanon, Tennessee.

These men will be glad to hear from their buddies.

These are just a few of the items that will be contained in the news bulletins. There are many other items of interest. Maybe **YOU** have a bit of interesting news. Perhaps **YOU** have the name and address of a buddy who is still in a hospital or is seriously disabled for life. If you do, please let me know. **YOUR** news item will help make our Bulletin a success.

For several months, I have been trying to contact the wives or parents of your buddies who were killed in action with the 69th Division. To each, I have sent a copy of the Pictorial History, autographed and with a little message in the name of the Sixty Ninth Division. Their fine letters of appreciation have made all of this work worth while. Do you know the address of the nearest of kin of any of your buddies who were killed? Do you know the circumstances under which they lost their lives? Their relatives would be most grateful to have this information. You can help by writing to me and telling how and where your good buddy lost his life. His wife or mother will be most grateful to receive this information from those who know.

I have sent hundreds of addresses of buddies to men who have written me. Sometimes I do not have all of the addresses requested and again I have been up against a stone wall because the man making the request failed to sign his name. I now have nearly 14,000 names and addresses and still several thousands to go. If you haven't already done so, you can help me build this roster still further by sending the names and addresses that you know. If this notice reaches you and is incorrectly addressed, please give me your correct address. One of your good buddies may want your address. Please mention your organization. It will help me to refer to your card in my files. If you change your address, please let me know so that I do not lose contact with you.

Did you get the history that you ordered? A few did not and they have written me. Their histories were sent out immediately. Out of over 9000 sent out, only one has not been finally delivered. The address was in Brussels, Belgium. If you have paid for a history and have not received it, please let me know. Some errors have been made and some books may have been lost in the mail.

In building this roster from almost a total blank, I wish to thank hundreds of you who took the time to write down all of the names and addresses that you knew and sent them to me. They helped me greatly to build this roster to its present size of nearly 14,000. I have worked over a year to build up the Division roster, distribute our Pictorial Histories, place histories in the hand of relatives of your buddies killed in action, sent out hundreds of addresses of buddies on request and many other services. These services have been for **YOU**. This is your opportunity to help carry on this work and make ours the **GREATEST DIVISION ASSOCIATION**.

These are some of the services for you during the past year. It has taken months of slow and tedious work but I have not forgotten how magnificently you fought while under my command. All that I ask of you is to **JOIN THE SIXTY NINTH DIVISION ASSOCIATION**. Just go back and read again the purposes of our Association. If you agree with those purposes and if you are proud of your great Division, and I am sure that you are, you will join with thousands of your buddies and send your dues and initiation fee. With

*(Continued on Page 13)*

## THE FORMATION OF THE 69th ASSOCIATION

(Continued from Page 12)

your help, the **SIXTY NINTH INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION WILL BE AS GREAT IN PEACE AS THE FIGHTING SIXTY NINTH DIVISION WAS IN WAR.**

And **BUDDY**, this means **JOIN NOW**. Don't make a second notice necessary. The enclosed envelope addressed to me needs no postage. Just enclose your initiation fee and dues, \$3.00, and mail it to me. You may pay by cash, check or money order. Make checks and money orders payable to the **SIXTY NINTH DIVISION ASSOCIATION**.

**THINK IT OVER. THIS WILL BE THE MOST SATISFACTORY INVESTMENT THAT YOU HAVE EVER MADE. DO IT NOW.**

To every one of you, I send my kindest wishes,

Very Sincerely,

**E.F. Reinhardt**

Major General, USA (Retired)

Acting Secretary-Treasurer

\*\*\*\*\*

## The Thoughts of an Old Soldier

Submitted By: **William R. Drugg**  
Company K & Headquarters Co. 272nd  
211 N. 14th Avenue  
Altoona, Pennsylvania 16601-5611



Yes it does not take much begging for an old man to be coaxed into thinking-daydreaming or just staring into space, with a blank look on his face, any excuse will do and away we go into thought – deep thought day, or night, hot or cold just say the word and away we go. It seems the older we get the faster we can think and at night is a good time to do it. *I find when it is dark. So—when Dottie said, "Come on you Guys, we need your stories and photos." I for one started racking my brain to help our Maiden in Distress. Well here goes—GANG—MY BIT—to help the cause and the plea from Dottie.*

Saga of My Tour at the Seventh Army Gas Station

Now let's see—I remember telling the tale of my being transferred to a Gas station on the Autobahn, at the town of Heidleburg, a busy exit and entrance to a highway, a very busy place. It was a busy place with something happening all the time pumping gas as the



need was met, helping the patrol trucks (there were two of them, one going south the other north) helping other GIs that may be in trouble. Oh, yea lest I forget Toys, well not really toys but lots of things to play with, a big boys dream. Trucks, trailers, motorcycles, tanker trailers, wreckers and my orders were learn to drive them. With plenty of gas available and the German superhighway right there what more could you ask for—of course a vehicle—well we had two patrol trucks (they were really Chevy's) trucks used to load bombs on airplanes during the war, motorcycles if needed and a BIG Diesel wrecker plenty of fuel and



straight road I admit this was something that gave me thought. Never being this close to a diesel monster before with air brakes and all sorts of knobs, controls, levers, lights, whistles and other noise makers well it does give one pause to think. I will say when the wrecker and I started down the street with red lights flashing and sirens screaming I was not the only nervous one on the street, many bicycles headed for safe land, as well as the little two and four cylinder cars headed for higher ground. When it snowed or rained all the workers would start the wrecker because any moisture made the temporary logs that had been placed over the overpasses slippery, causing many skidding accidents and deaths from out of control vehicles. We were busy most of the time.

One of the incidents that happened bears repeating.

One slow evening a group of us were just sitting around, an officer came in the station asking for the man in charge, when I introduced myself he said he had a problem, he then told us he had four (4) armored cars stuck in a muddy field down the road (it seems they had gotten lost and made a wrong turn and when they attempted a correction they all got stuck). Enter the foul up, to the rescue. The Officer and I decided to go to the aid of the four stuck in the mud vehicles. I thought if no one mentioned the streetcar incident

(Continued on Page 14)



## The Thoughts of an Old Soldier

(Continued from Page 13)

(the time I almost up set a fully loaded streetcar with German civilians looking on. So, onward and upward. You may read about it in an earlier issue of the Bulletin #58, page 28.)



Down the road we went, my following the officers' instructions, we went off the main road to a narrow country road to a small road to a village now it is starting to get dark and the road is like a cow path only a little narrower or so it seems. All of a sudden, we hit a bump that threw the back of the wrecker in the air, now a wrecker that size is too big to be air

born very long, so down it came and so did the officer, as we all started to breathe again we continued down the cow path. At last we saw the four armored cars and they were in deep doo-doo. After hours of digging and praying we finally got them free. Later when talking about it nobody could tell how it was done. Hours later as we all started singing, Hi Ho hi ho its—we'll you know how it goes. It was a very dark night as we came down that narrow road, it was very dark, even the small town was in darkness. Yes, it seems a large truck (or) wrecker went up the side of the pole and the temporary wires lighting the little farming village were tore up.

The officer sitting beside me on that dark night in that wrecker said if my men could help get the mud off his vehicles his lips were sealed, so far he is a man of his word.

A Truly Officers Gentleman, I would say. Would you all agree?

\*\*\*\*\*

## A Thumbnail Sketch of my Life in the Service

Submitted By: **Robert Greek**

*Company E, 272nd*

10-482 County Road 13, Montpelier, Ohio 43543-9634

Telephone: 419-485-4751

I noticed in the last 69th bulletin you were asking for stories from those that served in the 69th Division. I don't know if my story will be of interest or not. It doesn't have any nail biting stories of combat and not a great lot about the 69th but it does have several unusual happenings.

I was in the first group of draftees out of our county. On 3 February 1941 we went to Toledo by train for our final physical. When we passed we were immediately inducted into the Army for a year of service and boarded the train to Camp Shelby. We were assigned to the Ohio 37th Division to bring it up to strength. The 37th had been mobilized into Federal Service in October 1940 for a year's service.

We took part in both the big maneuvers in Louisiana. While we were on maneuvers in Louisiana

orders were received from the War Department that there would be no discharges in October, which ended the National Guard members hopes of going home and we knew that our service wouldn't end in a year either. I was a squad leader in the 60MM Mortar section at the time. Non-com ratings were extremely hard to earn in the 37th, because it was an established National Guard Unit, those positions were already filled. The draftees looked forward to October when the Guard men would be discharged and promotions would be available. But when we shipped out for the Pacific I was one of only two or three draftees that held a non-com rating. In the Army the policy was never volunteer for anything but I did and it was a good choice. Co. "A" needed to rebuild the Mortar section. I had been in a rifle squad for six months and figured it couldn't be any worse than that so I would try it for the remaining six months, which turned out to be four more years. Shortly after that a Mortar squad leader job opened and I was promoted to Corporal.

After that, we returned to Camp Shelby, the War Department made some big changes, on 1 February 1942 they streamlined the Infantry. A division was reduced to three Regiments they in turn were reduced to three Battalions. The 37th Division lost the 166th Regiment and the first Battalion of the 112th Engineers.

The 37th was one of the few Divisions at the time ready for combat so we left Shelby Friday, February 13th for Indiantown Gap and was given an APO-NY address. We prepared for shipment to Europe but then stayed in Indiantown Gap for a couple of months. We were told that we had been scheduled for shipment to Europe but the captured French liner that was being prepared for our troop transport caught fire and capsized which caused the delay.

Because of the rapid advancement of the Japs in the Pacific a combat ready Division was needed immediately. We were then transferred to San Francisco by train and given a San Francisco APO address. We shipped out of San Francisco on May 26th, and landed in the Fiji Island 10 June 1942. Fiji was the last major Island not in Japanese hands and it was in the main supply route to Australia. We immediately dug in preparing for the expected Jap attack. We were spared from the attack because of the Japanese Naval defeat in the Coral Sea Battle.

After the battle of Guadalcanal we were transferred there and then to Russell Islands and finally to New Georgia where we were first committed to combat. We were only in New Georgia a few days when on 19 July 1943 we were ambushed on a trail and a Jap machine-gun bullet splintered my helmet and two pieces entered my right arm just below my shoulder. They flew me to Guadalcanal on a PBY amphibious plane also called the flaming coffins because they were fabric covered. I was then put on a hospital ship for New Caledonia.

After surgery they loaded me on a Victory Ship for San Francisco. About midnight in the middle of the Pacific Ocean two lone ships, one going north and the other south collided. Our ship received a huge dent in the hull and the gun turret was tilted on edge but we

(Continued on Page 15)



## A THUMBNAIL SKETCH OF MY LIFE ....

*(Continued from Page 14)*

didn't take on any water so we safely landed in San Francisco and on 6 September 1943 I entered the Letterman General Hospital. I was then transferred to Ashford General hospital, which was the White Sulfur Springs resort, so I slept in the Hotel where some of our Presidents vacationed and played golf.

I was then sent to Camp Shelby and on 4 December 1943 was assigned to the 69th Division, 272nd Infantry. I didn't arrive at 272nd Regimental Headquarters until after recall and only a T5 was on duty. I presented my orders and he called an officer informing him that he had a Corporal replacement in the office and he was going to send me to Co. E because they needed five non-coms. When he hung up I said I have been a 60 MM Mortar squad leader for over a year can I get in an outfit where there is a Mortar squad leader opening. His answer was, "Well if they need a Mortar squad leader they will put you there otherwise they will put you in a rifle squad." As it

happened they needed a mortar Squad leader.

On 18 January 1944 they changed the squad leader's rating to Sgt. Soon after that the Sgt. Porter, the mortar Section Sgt. was promoted to Platoon Sgt. and I was promoted to Staff Sgt. as leader of the mortar section. I continued to serve with the 69th until the war in Europe ended and the movements and combat action of the 69th had been well reported into the Division Bulletins. I had been in the service four and a half years with about two and a half of that overseas duty and the Purple Heart award so I had way over enough points for immediate discharge.

After we had landed in Europe we complained that we going to have to continue to walk all the way across Europe. Finally they got us trucks which sweetened our dispositions. My surprise was that as I looked at the bumper on the trucks I saw they were the 112th Engineer trucks so I was back riding former 37th Division trucks again. After we met the Russians and the War in Europe ended I was on my way home and on 19 July 1945, I got my honorable discharge at Indiantown Gap.

The unusual things I mentioned were:

I served in combat in the Pacific-Then served in combat in Europe.

I was wounded on 19 July 1943 — I was discharged on 19 July 1945.

I served twice in Camp Shelby.

I was billeted in Indiantown Gap twice.

After 4 years I ended up again riding in the 37th trucks.

Last: When I was in the Army I said, "If I ever get out of this Army I'm never going to walk anywhere again." I'm now a couple of months short of being 92 and I go into the skating rink five mornings a week and walk an hour, which would be 3 to 4 miles.

SO NEVER SAY NEVER!!!

## A Message from Paul and Dottie Shadle Membership Chairman and Editor

Paul Shadle, Company E, 271st Infantry  
P.O. Box 4069 • New Kensington, PA 15068-4069

Telephone: 724/335-9980

E-Mail - Dottie: danne345@comcast.net

Paul: pauls1504@comcast.net



*Membership Chairman Paul Shadle  
and Editor, Dottie Shadle*

The reunion in Nashville is now history and we feel that all the attendees had a good time. We had one family with about 30 members in attendance, and other families also had a few members in attendance.

Paul & Dottie along with Bing Poon had the opportunity to sit at a banquet table with three members that have not seen each other in sixty years. We really enjoyed their stories of the war and their lives since. They said they all hope to be at the next reunion to be held in Charleston, North Carolina from October 10th to October 17th, 2010. There are several events still in the planning stage. Please plan to come and enjoy yourself.

We are sorry the bulletin is later going out this time. We had some sickness in our house and also at the printers. Everyone seems to be recovered now. We plan to get another bulletin out in May to publicize the reunion and the events that will take place.

**Up Coming Reunion**  
**CHARLESTON, NORTH CAROLINA**  
**OCTOBER 10 — 17, 2010**  
**Plan to Come and Enjoy.**  
**More Information in the Next Issue**  
**of the Bulletin.**

# 69th Infantry Division Reunion Attendees

## October 20th - 25th, 2009

### HOLIDAY INN SELECT NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

## - TREASURED MOMENTS FROM THE 62ND ANNUAL REUNION -

A happy group of 69ers, wives, sons, daughters, grandchildren and friends gathered at the Holiday Inn Select Opryland/Airport, Nashville, TN, October 20-25, 2009, for the 62nd Annual Reunion of The Fighting 69th Infantry Division Association, Inc.

What follows are photos of some of those in attendance taken by **Chet Yastremzski**, *Company E, 272nd Inf Rgt.*



*Secretary, Joe Huber, Vice President Ed & Dolly Sarcione, Mel Schultz, Anti Tank Division 271st*



*Micky Skaggs & Chet Yaz, Company E, 272nd*



*Fuzzy & Lila Mae Spangler, Company E, 272nd*



*Bill Sheavly, Jr. & General Phil Bolte*



*Jane and father, Bill Jackson, Company G, 273rd*



*Dolly & Vice President Ed Sarcione, Anti Tank, 272nd*



**FIRST TIMERS:** William Lee, 777th, TB,  
Ralph Gilliland, Co. F, 273rd,  
David & Ethel Voight, Co. M, 273rd,  
Mary West, AT, 272nd and Georgine West, AT, 271st



Company I, 271st: Hy Kurfirst, Doug Buckstad,  
Lynn & Lou Jones and Bob Buckstad



Company E, 272nd, Front L-R: Chet Yaz, Lila Mae & Fuzzy  
Spangler, grandson Sullivan, Back L-R: Denise Sullivan  
and granddaughter, Major Kevin Sullivan, Lori Sullivan,  
General Philip Bolte & Kit Sullivan



Standing: Bob Rosane, Seated L-R: Jean Rosane, Co. D, 273rd,  
Harold Faulkner, Co. C, 272nd and Peggy Shaw, Co. B 273rd



Company D, 273rd: Families of Betty Jo McCarty, Art Ayers  
and Allan Blackman



Julie  
Schilling,  
Director Joe  
Kurt and Jeff  
Kent, Co. E,  
271st



John Kastanakis, 569th Signal & Bing Poon, Company E, 271st



Treasurer, John Barrette, HQ, 271st &  
President Robert Crowe, Company E 273rd



# Just One Of The Presidents' Men

Submitted By: **Leslie H. Lee**  
*HQ Co.1st Battalion, 273rd Infantry Regiment*  
 8011 Waldorf Ct., Orlando, Florida 32817-1587

From the Orlando Sentinel *By Jeff Kunerth*



In Barack Obama's entourage, on John McCain's campaign staff, on George W. Bush's payroll, there is someone like **Leslie H. Lee**. They are the men and women who reside in the proximity of power, driving cars, carrying luggage, cooking meals for the White House leaders, their families and guest.

And when their years of public service are over they retire to Florida, where they blend in with the landscape in houses like the yellow stucco one with white trim belongs to Lee.

How he accompanied Dwight Eisenhower around the world, how he became the personal chauffeur of Jacqueline Kennedy, Lee explains as the result of just plain luck and good clean living, "no drinking, no smoking, no foul language started me for the White House," said Lee, now 84 and widowed.

It all goes back, he says, to when he was stationed in Korea and a brigadier general requested a driver who was sober, smoke-free and chaste in his vocabulary. Leslie Harland Lee was that man. From that came a career as driver and advance man for a succession of generals and presidents.

An oak-and-brass plaque hangs in the hallway of Lee's Orlando house. It says, "To Leslie H. Lee, on your retirement in recognition of your distinguished service to the President of the United States and the White House staff, July 1959 - January 1971."

Saved in an engraved wooden box from Eisenhower's Eleven-Nation Goodwill Tour in 1959 are Lee's White House badges and identification cards and a note from Jacqueline Kennedy on White House stationery: "For Leslie Lee. Thank you for all you have done for me and the President."

## *Pieces of the past:*

In the bottom drawer of a bedroom dresser are nearly a dozen 14-by-17-inch prints of Christmas scenes at the

White House from President Eisenhower, Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson. A color photograph of Richard Nixon is inscribed, "To Master Sgt. Leslie H. Lee, with appreciation and best wishes, Richard Nixon."



Lee is 5-foot-7, 150 pounds, with a trim physique that still fits inside the green Army jacket that hangs in his closet next to old sports coats and winter jackets. In his voice there is still the sound of the coal-mining town where he grew up outside of Pittsburgh. If he hadn't been drafted in 1943, Lee said, he would have ended up driving a truck like his father in Hopedale, Ohio.



## *Driving Mrs. Kennedy:*

Instead, he chauffeured generals, flew with presidents and drove Jackie Kennedy's get-away car.

One day, Lee said, he was sitting in the parked car outside the Kennedy home in Hyannis Port, Mass. The first lady came out in a hurry, and she was - he hesitated to think of the kindest word - "irritated." Lee opened the door, and she slid into the back seat.

He sat at the wheel, waiting for the Secret Service to catch up to them, when the command came from the back seat: "Let's go."

So he went. Kennedy didn't give him any directions or tell him where they were going. They just drove. They didn't get far when the Secret Service called on the radio, asking where they were.

"Turn it off," Jackie instructed. He did. They drove around in silence for awhile until Kennedy told Lee to stop the car. She got out.

Whatever happened that day to make Jackie Kennedy want to drive away quickly, Leslie Lee doesn't know.

*(Continued on Page 19)*

## JUST ONE OF THE PRESIDENTS' MEN

(Continued from Page 18)

What he does know is that when things got irritating, the first lady went shopping.

When he's done with the memories and mementos of his life in the shadows of the presidency, Leslie Lee packs them back inside the blue-and-green floral Samsonite suitcase and returns it to the shelf above the clothes dryer in his garage.

"This stuff is like me. It's growing old," he said, "I don't know why I keep it. Somehow, I don't have the heart to throw it away."



Longtime White House staff member Leslie H. Lee and his late wife, Marjorie, were photographed on the White House lawn in the 1960's

## The Job Opportunity of a Lifetime

Submitted By: **Leslie H. Lee**

HQ Co. 1st Battalion, 273rd Infantry Regiment  
8011 Waldorf Ct., Orlando, Florida 32817-1587

From the Herald Star

By Julie Ghirst

Once in a great while, an unbelievable job opportunity presents itself through either fate, luck or simply by the grace of god. And that was the case for Leslie H. Lee.

The Hopedale native's career began based solely on the fact that he was of a good, moral character, according to his sister, Toronto resident Beryl Michelli.

Lee was a man who didn't drink, never smoked and did not partake in the use of strong profanity, according to his sister. For those reasons alone, he would eventually find himself in a position where four U.S. presidents would quickly come to depend on him. Currently residing in Florida, the retired Master Sergeant of the Army Transportation Division has served as former first lady Jacqueline Kennedy's chauffeur, accompanied Dwight D. Eisenhower around the world in Air Force One and was a staff member to three additional presidents - John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson and Richard Nixon. So the question remains, how did a man who graduated from Hopedale High School in 1942 become involved in the political world in Washington, D.C.?

That answer lies in Korea, where Lee was stationed during his military years after being drafted in 1943. Lee explained that during World War II, "They were killing faster than they were drafting, and nobody was sure they were coming home."

All of his classmates, as well as his younger brother Marvin Donald Lee, had been drafted too, although many never had the opportunity to come home.

Marvin Donald Lee was killed near Frankfurt, Germany, Lee's sister stated. She also said one of her brother's close friends was killed in combat.

While stationed in Korea, a brigadier general announced he was in need of a driver who was of "good moral character", Lee fit that description, and from that moment on, a new career would soon unfold.

### ***Holding on to memories:***

For five decades, Lee has held onto various pieces of memorabilia from his days in Washington, including his White House badges and identification cards, which he keeps in an engraved wooden box from Eisenhower's Eleven-Nation Goodwill Tour in 1959.

Next to those badges lies a note hand written on White House stationery from Jacqueline Kennedy. Her words: "For Leslie Lee. Thank you for all you have done for me and the President."

Lee served as the Kennedy's chauffeur from January 1962 through, September 1964 - nine months after President Kennedy was assassinated.

Lee recalled that sometimes the Kennedy children would travel to the Middleburg farm with their mother and stop along the way for some ice cream.

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## THE JOB OPPORTUNITY OF A LIFETIME

(Continued from Page 19)

The chauffeur would always make sure to bring some money with him to cover the cost since Jacqueline Kennedy "didn't carry very much money with her."

Today Lee is 84 years old, widowed and resides in Bradford Cove in Orlando, Florida, but he still holds onto the memories of the times he has shared with some of the men and women who have made U.S. history.

He noted that, had he not been drafted, he would have ended up driving a truck in Hopedale, Ohio, just like his father had.

"He was the right man in the right place at the right time." Michelli said of her brother.

### Lee's Honors:

Lee earned five ribbons, a Combat Infantry Badge for serving in combat duty during his time in the Army. He served in the European Theater in England, France, Belgium and Germany. He notes his most treasured of these awards is the Combat Badge because he faced combat and was fortunate enough to survive.

Lee was among the first troops to meet up with the Russians, but was not aware of the distinction until reading about it in the newspapers years later.

He also served in Japan, Saipan, Tinian, Guam, Okinawa, the Korea and Philippines. While in Tokyo, during 1949-1951, he worked out of General Douglas MacArthur's headquarters and would see the general often.

Perhaps his most treasured and beloved memory, however, is that of his wife Marjorie. She and Lee dated for two years at Hopedale High School, graduating the same year. The two were together for only two of the first nine years of their marriage, as Lee was sent overseas in the war.

According to the family, Marjorie was with Lee for only five years in their Bradford Cove home when she died of leukemia. Since then, Lee has not changed a thing about his home and has left everything in place.

The couple had two children - Joan, who is a retired teacher living in Arlington, VA and James Lee, who resides in North Carolina and is a retired Navy chief.

Leslie comes from a long line of family members who served in the military, and he said he's proud he is an American. A small way of paying tribute to the land he loves, including wearing his retired Army hat and making sure to raise and lower his American flag each and every day.

\*\*\*\*\*



273rd Division  
Service Co. Great  
42nd Annual  
69th  
Reunion, August  
1989, Denver, CO  
Harry Miller,  
Cliff Stolpe,  
Pete Peterson  
looking forward  
to 1990 at  
Valley Forge, PA  
& 1991 at Beloxi,  
MS

## Memories of the 273rd Division Service Co.

Submitted By: **Clifton B. Stople**

Service Company, 273rd Division

39 Allison Dr., Bella Vista, AR 72715-4903

Telephone: 479/855-6283

Read the bulletin cover to cover, brings back memories. Drove truck mostly. Attached to I Co. for most of the war.

They took me off Service of Hill Country and put me on a half track vehicle to Geishied for ammo, food and water. Whatever else war needed - war wounded - had one of the medics push me off and kept going.

After that, back to truck and was on that till we met the Red Army. Service Co. drivers were on duty for all needs. Once I drove all night, stopped on the road for rest and was wakened by a kick on my feet, then a second kick. I woke with a start, General Eisenhower wanted to get by. I jumped up startled and he laughed, said he was sorry to wake me, but he needed to get by.

When we met the Reds, we had a meal together, every other one at the table was Red Army. After the meal, the Russians each pulled out a bottle, no label. They took first drink and passed the bottle. When I took mine, it took my breath, I thought wine, but it was vodka, my first experience with it.

I have read about Camp Shelby and our company at that point. I would have to agree with Harry Miller, our mess was the best with "Ma" Mullins in charge. Drove late and go to bed and he would get after us for not waking him to get to eat before going to bed.

I was on KP duty on Sunday mornings. He said, "What do you guys think about serving those guys in bed, we all said lets do it. I know it happened because I was at Shelby.

I am now 85, do fairly well, and am thankful. I have a full scrapbook of memorial times and buddies.



Cliff Stolpe (me)



Lepain, Magelerie & Halvarson  
Ammo Section



My two buddies by my truck



Is this your truck? I didn't think it was that big. No wonder you handle the Chevy rough.

I call Ray Hal and really have a good visit about old times. We were in the same places for most transportation needs.

(Continued on Page 21)



## MEMORIES OF THE 273RD DIVISION CO.

(Continued from Page 20)

Would surely like to get in touch with **Dave Stuart** or his family, Marge and my wife wrote to each other often. His children's names are Vicki, Kathy and Sue. Would like to get some history on his family.

Clifton was one of five brothers that all served in World War II. The five-star insignia, an embossed cloth wall hanging, was given to their mother, Anna Stople during the war to symbolize her five sons serving in the war.

*More  
Pictures  
from the  
Scrapbook of  
Cliff Stolge*



*Cliff Stolge, Paris,  
December 22, 1945*



*Remember this  
bird? Norman  
Feinberg, Mail  
Carrier*



*Calling grounds for Russian D. P.'s: Roosevelt, Petain  
Stalin, Churchill*



*Yours truly, M. Mageleri, NKF &  
Little Franklin*



*Cliff Stolge,  
Herb Polfus, Germany  
1944*



*L-R: Abernathy,  
Stuart, N. K.  
Feinberg,  
Bidwell, Lepain,  
Forsythe, Widdle*

## General Marshall's Visit To Camp Shelby, March 5, 1944

Submitted By: **Grant D. Brown**

*69th Quartermaster Company*

665 Angelita Dr., Prescott, AZ 86303-5014

On Sunday, March 5, 1944, while bivouacking in the Mississippi woods on an extended field problem, I had the privilege of transporting commissioned officers back to camp to hear an address by General George Marshall. His speech really moved me. He wasn't the greatest speaker that I'd ever heard, but what he said to the officers was pertinent and meaningful, even to me, a Private in the back row. The final, victorious outcome of the war in large measure due to Marshall's skill as an organizer.

I also hauled troops many times during maneuvers for many miles. The infantry men were very well behaved, quiet and always thanked us at the end of the ride. The soldier who had a soft, behind-the-lines job nearly always griped and yelled at us drivers whenever we hit a chuckhole or kicked up a little dust when we gave them rides. I felt strongly at times like this, that the country was handing the wrong man the tools of war. What a waste of this country's most precious commodity, the nation's finest young men, the foot soldier did the dirty work and sacrificed, and the HQ personnel would often get the medals and the credits. The Fighting 69th Infantry Division bivouacked so often that we called ourselves the B.B.B.'s. Bolte's Bivouacking Bastards.

Our division marched to Gulfport, on the Gulf of Mexico, on one extended field exercise. It took about six weeks to negotiate the 60 miles or so and it required our quartermaster trucks three solid, 24-hour days to help truck them back to Shelby. It's the only time in my life I worked without rest for 72 straight hours. It'd kill me now if I had to do what was needed then. On the second night as I recall, I fell asleep for a moment at the wheel, I woke up, fortunately, when the right front wheel hit the ditch on Highway 49. I just had to evade a tree. I yelled, stomped my feet, sang, pinched and slapped myself just to keep awake.

Practically every large field problem operation had casualties. Soldiers would get run over, crushed by heavy equipment such as portable bridges, blown up by explosives, vehicles accidents - just like life in general. One had to remain alert constantly.

On extended field problems we first slept in out shelter half tents. Being a truck driver, it didn't work out at all. We were mobile and often temporarily attached to other units that had no trucks of their own. Soon we were allowed to sleep in our trucks or in our half-ton trailers that we generally pulled. I usually collected enough pine needles to make a wonderful 12 to 18-inch-thick mattress for my blankets. The other drivers soon followed my example. I learned to sleep under difficult conditions, such as on the bouncing bed of a moving truck or during a 10-minute break. Life

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## GENERAL MARSHALL'S VISIT TO CAMP SHELBY, MARCH 5, 1944

(Continued from Page 21)

certainly was not routine, especially during maneuvers.

On these exercises, we often parked or camped in the beautiful southern pine forest. I remember one place in particular. The pines were large and virgin. The creek running through them was crystal clear and quite cold. A most beautiful spot. Most of the Southern waterways that I saw were muddy, slow moving affairs, some loaded with gar, a prehistoric looking fish. Occasionally our platoon would drive to the Pearl River to wash our trucks. We would also drag out rusty tire chains through the river sand to polish them up.

**Editors note: Grant sent a photo copy of a newspaper article along with this story from *The Reveille Newspaper*, Thursday, March 30, 1944 which he gave to the Museum at Camp Shelby many years ago. We are sorry, that we could not reproduce the photos.**

\*\*\*\*\*

## General Patton

Submitted By: **Hubert Porter**

*Anti Tank Company, 273rd*

900 Cedar Street, Atlantic, Iowa 50022-2010

When the 69th Infantry Division was being sent home I was low on points and got transferred to 3517 Ord. M.A.M. company. Our company was about halfway between Manheim and Heidelberg at the town of Seconhiem.

The town of Manheim was an industrial center and had been bombed many times, there weren't many buildings left standing. The autobahn was also destroyed on the east side of the town. They had built a bypass two lanes on the east edge of Manheim and that is where General Patton's staff car and a signal corps truck collided.

General Patton was taken to the 130th Station Hospital in Heidelberg. I was a patient there at the time with diphtheria and was on the second floor just above him. The accident happened on 10 December. General Patton had crushed vertebrae. He was in traction and they had gotten his wife over and were contemplating how to get him back to the states. He passed away 21 December.

They brought two new half-tracks to our company and cut all of the armor plating off and made casket bearers. They made two in case one broke down.

General Patton is buried in Luxembourg.



## Awards and Decorations

Submitted By: **Stan Eskin**

*Combat Battalion Company A, 269th Engineer*

1074 Exeter - E, Boca Raton, Florida 33434

E-Mail: Artistseasel@aol.com

Since AOL will not send my words to you via my computer, I'm forced to use the good old way of writing, namely with the typewriter/computer board. Anyway, this is what I've got to say.

I had been wearing the Meritorious Unit Commendation wreath on both my Army uniform and my Air Force uniform even though my U.S. Army discharge didn't show this award. However, I had been told by someone, whose name escaped me for years, that the 269th Engineer Battalion had been awarded this medal due to the efforts on my part and probably others, to locate and distribute lumber throughout Europe to help in its rebuilding process.

I did write about this to our bulletin some years ago however, I didn't know about the medal and ribbon that went along with it, at that time. In Googling through "Awards and Decorations" the other day I came across the award with the ribbon being a pretty red color but didn't show the metal that goes with it.

What I would like to tell my remaining engineer cohorts is that they too can write to:

**National Personnel Records Center;**

**Entitlement Awards Division**

**9700 Page Boulevard**

**Saint Louis, MO 63132**

If they can't help you then they will forward your request to the people who will take care of your questions regarding this and other awards.

I am enclosing a copy of the official letter I received from Major Gabriel Cazares to whom I had written, and who took the time to investigate my questions regarding the award.

*AFPMP-12-C-4 1st Ind*

*Department of the Air Force, Hq USAF,*

*Washington 25, D.C. May 22, 1952*

*To: Co, 4012th Operations Squadron, 97th Air Base Group, Biggs Air Force Base, Texas*

*Records indicate that the 269th Engineer Combat Battalion was awarded a Meritorious Unit Commendation for action during the period 1 February 1945 to 2 April 1945 per General Orders 58, 69th Infantry Division, 7 June 1945.*

**BY COMMAND OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF:**

**GABRIEL CAZARES**

*Major, USAF*

*Acting Assistant Chief, Awards Branch*

*Personnel Services Division*

*Directorate of Military Personnel.*

How we would go about having this award added to our discharges, I know not. And, at this late date would it be worth it?

# What I Heard Over the Switchboard the Day We Met the Russians

Submitted By: **Douglas George**  
*Headquarters Company, 273rd*  
 1012 Jay Ct., Loveland, CO 80537

The 273rd Headquarters wire section was located in a 3 story house in Tresben, Germany. Col. Adams' headquarters were just across the street. I was one of four switchboard operators in the wire section. I listened to Major Fred Craig call Col. Adams and asked for permission to go look for the Russians. He got a "No." Craig asked why, he told Craig, "I can't tell you - all I can say is no." Craig asked again, "Is it you or higher up?" Craig was persistent, "Is it division?" -No.- "Corp?" -No.-. "Is it Army?" - "No. I can't say," replied the Col.

Craig then said "We may go and get lost." Only Craig could say that to Adams. I may have heard Kotzabue or Robertson call - but I don't recall - but since we all knew Craig, I definitely remember his conversations.

Either sometime in this conversation or afterwards, they were all threatened with court martial if they went and broke orders.

Toward evening there was quite a little activity at HG and more conversations about court martial.

Early the next morning jeeps with three and four media people in each began to show up across the street. Over-nite the news reached New York and they were all declared heros and we didn't hear any more about court martial. Hal Boyle was there. Also I read many years later that John Eisenhower, Ike's son was also there - probably a guess of 50 people. We watched out our 2nd story window - both until they left and again when they returned, very exciting.



*Regiments Headquarters, Tresben*



*Lt. Kotzabue, at a track meet in mid or late May 1945*



*Wire Section Home from April 23 to sometime in June 1945: The Switchboard was on the second floor.*



*Captain Conway, Communications Officer 273rd HQ*



*Chow Time - Mess Sgt. Allen (no hat) to the left of the guy with cap.*

*February 1945, 273rd Regimental Headquarters Wire Section on the Seigfried Line:*



*Cpl. Bennie Foy of NC in middle of photo looking at the camera, Victor Colletti of Beaumont, TX with cocked helmet on, Howard Benken from New York, NY (no helmet) standing next to Colletti. I don't recall the other fellows in the photo.*

*Maybe you know who they are - or maybe it is you.*

## \*\*\*\*\* Pulitzer Prize Caps Hal Boyle's Career

Submitted By: **Douglas George**  
*Headquarters Company, 273rd*  
 1012 Jay Ct., Loveland, CO 80537

*By Don Whitehead*



*Hal Boyle, Associated Press war correspondent and winner of the Pulitzer Prize for outstanding war reporting*

With the U.S. First Army - "They couldn't have given it to a better guy or one who deserved it more."

That among the tribute that colleagues paid to the Associated Press Columnist, Hal Boyle, when they heard he had been awarded the Pulitzer Prize for distinguished correspondence.

The award climaxes a ten-year career with the Associated Press for the 34-year-old columnist, who has the soil of a poet and a wit that has made him one of the best-known and best-liked correspondents in Europe.

Boyle probably has chronicled the individual exploits of more soldiers than any other correspondent in the European theater because he told the story of the war in terms of "the little fellows."

*(Continued on Page 24)*



## PULITZER PRIZE CAPS HAL BOYLE'S CAREER

(Continued from Page 23)

He fell in love with the American infantry back in North Africa and always believed it was the infantrymen who would win the war.

Irrepressible is the best descriptive for the new Pulitzer Prize winner. His wit bubbled in an uninterrupted flow that has made him the most quoted correspondent in Europe. Wherever newspapermen gather, Boyle usually becomes the subject of conversation sooner or later. Most often told is the story of the day he entered a Tunisian town ahead of the troops. While Arabs gaped, he sprang up in his jeep and shouted "Vote for Boyle, son of the soil - Honest Hal, the Arabs pal."

Startled Arabs took up the chant and when troops entered the town later they were greeted by natives urging them to vote for "Honest Hal."

Boyle began his career as war reporter August 11, 1942, when he got ashore, half-drowned in North Africa. His byline first appeared as Harold V. Boyle but he never likes the formality of his full name and finally convinced the office to whittle it down to Hal Boyle.

Through the bitter winter campaign he stayed in the field with the troops. It is said that when the last shot was fired in the Tunisian campaign, Hal was standing beside the gun taking the names and hometown addresses of the gunners.

After North Africa came the heat, dust and hills of Sicily. He landed with Patton at Gela and trudged down the mountainside 38 days later into battered Messina to finish another brilliant job of reporting.

Hal began writing his column - Leaves from a War Correspondent's Notebook - more or less as a voluntary sideline in North Africa. He turned out spot news and features and occasionally wrapped up some of his experiences into a column which proved more and more popular with the reader at home.

He landed at Salerno with the infantry, was one of the first correspondents into Naples and followed the doughboys to the bitter fighting at Cassino.

After Cassino, Hal, home for a rest, was technical advisor on Ernie Pyle's movie and was caught up in a round of radio appearances and speeches. He startled members of one exclusive, rather staid New York club when he opened his speech with "My old man was a butcher and always said I would wind up in prison, but just look at me now."

Quotas on correspondents prevented his landing with the infantry in Normandy - one of his greatest disappointments. But he came storming ashore at the first opportunity.

Hal could have stayed in safety, in the rear areas to write his column, but he chose to see the windup of the war with the First Army and he was with spearheading elements of Hodges' troops in their victory breakout from the Rhine bridgehead - writing not only his daily column, but colorful spot news stories as well.

When the news of the Pulitzer award reached Paris, his colleagues wired him, "Pulitzer Prize Committee voted for Boyle. All us Arabs too happy even to send you a funny message. Hurry to Paris and let us break

a bottle of champagne over your thick head."



Western Front - The dramatic meeting between the Russians and Americans is recorded by the noted columnist.



Italy - Hal used the shovel to dig foxholes. Other tools are better for digging up material for his columns.



Hollywood - The Arab's pal is shown circulating among west coast tents during a brief absence from the warfront.



Back Home - High school students in his home town turn the tables and interview the front line interviewer.

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## Leaves From a War Correspondent's Notebook: Yanks Praise Russian Liberators

Submitted By: **Douglas George**  
Headquarters Company, 273rd  
1012 Jay Ct., Loveland, CO 80537

By Hal Boyle, Associated Press Correspondent

### With the 69th Infantry Division on the Elbe.

When the Russians liberated a prison camp they do a thorough job. Mounted Cossacks freed 28,000 Allied prisoners at a notorious prison camp east of the Elbe and they didn't bother with formalities.

"They just galloped up and pulled down fences with cavalry horses" said Capt. Lyle A. Silvernail of Lawton, MI, who commanded 2,600 Americans in the camp.

"Everyone in the camp went wild with joy and the first thing the Russians did was to take out 8,000 of their own countrymen. A lot of the Cossacks were wearing bandages for minor wounds. They had been treated at first aid stations and then went back into the fighting."

"The first Russian patrol reached our camp at 5:30 in the morning. By 8:30 AM we had an American flag flying

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## YANKS PRAISE RUSSIAN LIBERATORS

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- the first one to go up in the camp.

"Our German guards had pulled out the night before. they had tried to get us to march west across the Elbe with them, but we refused. The only ones to go with them were the Polish prisoners. They didn't want to be liberated by the Russians and preferred to take the chance of Americans moving eastward to free them."

"I went into the city that afternoon to contact the Russians for supplies. They were extremely liberal and gave us a lot of food. First they took out a map of the city and outlined an area and told us we could have all the German food supplies stored there."

"Take whatever you need for your men", said the Russian commander."

"When I hesitated about seizing those supplies, he promised me that food would be sent to the camp. Soon after, the Russians drove 70 head of cattle into our camp and that night they sent over a food convoy. That commander really kept his word."

One unfortunate incident attended the liberation. Fourteen Americans were killed the night before when they were caught between the Russian and German lines by advance Soviet troops who mistook them for enemies.

"When the Soviet commander learned what had happened, he immediately sent us his apologies," said Silvernail. "I don't know who the Americans were. They apparently were prisoners from another camp trying to get through to our lines and somehow they got mixed up in no man's land."

Silvernail was bitter over the treatment received by American prisoners who he said were "treated with almost the same brutality the Germans showed the Russians."

"We have German orders specifying that prisoners sent out on hard and particularly nasty work details should be taken from the Americans," he said. "They starved these men, worked them exceptionally long hours, gave them inadequate shelter and inadequate medical care and provided only the crudest sanitation."

"Most of our camp deaths which German doctors listed as pneumonia actually were men who died of dysentery, starvation and exposure."

"There were cases where they shot Americans and Russians in the camp streets and I have been seen German guards use bayonets or rifle butts on American prisoners who happened to step too near them in passing."

"They wouldn't bother to warn you - not these self-appointed supermen - they just clubbed you or gave you the bayonet point for getting too close."

Silvernail is recovering from a stomach ailment caused by bad water.

"I'd like to stay on here and fight Germans," he said, "but they won't let us do that. As soon as my stomach is well I want to go to the Pacific. I guess if they won't let us take another crack at the Germans, the Japs will have to do."

## NAZIS TO THE YANKS IN PANIC

Submitted By: Douglas George

Headquarters Company, 273rd

1012 Jay Ct., Loveland, CO 80537

By Hal Boyle, Associated Press Correspondent

**On First Army Front Fully Armed German Troops Surrender to the Americans at Every Opportunity to Avoid Capture by the Russians Smashing Across the Elbe River.**

**SHOOT ONLY AT SOVIETS**

**Order of the Day Tells Hitler's Men Not to Fire on the Americans, a Captive Among Mass of Prisoners Says.**

**CIVILIANS JOIN IN THE STAMPEDE**

**Hysteria Sweeps Over People Remaining in the Corridor, the Cutting of Which Will Slice the Reich in Two.**

**With the U.S. First Army Beyond the Mulde River, April 25.**

First Army patrols probing for a junction with Soviet forces on the Elbe river today met hundreds of panic-stricken, fully-armed retreating German troops who surrendered at every opportunity without firing a shot.

"Our order of the day this morning was to fire on American troops but only to fire east toward the Russians," said one German soldier among the masses giving up and marching back across "no mans land" without guards.

**Discipline is Gone.**

During the day Nazi discipline broke down completely and a wave of hysteria swept over German civilians and German soldiers living and fighting in this "corridor of fear" between the Mulde and Elbe rivers, where American and Soviet forces are rushing toward a linkup of the eastern and western fronts which will cut Germany in half.

The fear was a fear of the Russians, Germans by the thousands, in and out of uniform, started an "Oklahoma land race" for the American lines, a pell-mell flight unlike anything else in the history of the Reich.

Two patrols of the 69th Division, totaling some forty men, rode in highly-armed jeeps through the German rear lines without meeting either resistance or Russians, and at 2:45 o'clock this afternoon no other patrol sent out from American divisions along the Mulde river line had reported contacting the mysterious Soviets, who apparently were moving at leisure toward the historic junction.

"What kind of war is this?" one patrol asked in a report, "We are moving down roads between lines of fully armed German infantry in good shape and they don't want to fight - they just want us to help them. Help them get away from the Russians."

Streams of German soldiers, fleeing German families and freed Allied prisoners of war and slave laborers pushed along the roads pointing back at a city near the Mulde where other troops were waiting to surrender on "unconditional" terms about which no wehrmacht soldier even wished to quibble, as long as it got him out of reach of the Russians.

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## NAZIS TO THE YANKS IN PANIC

(Continued from Page 25)

### Two patrols Meet.

Our 69th Division patrol, led by Capt. George Morey of Dumont, NJ, met up deep inside the German rear positions with other patrol led by Lt. Edward A. Gumpert of Glen Ridge, NY and Maj. James R. Sykes of Grand Rapids, MI.

They ran into a company of German infantry and a heavy weapons company, fully equipped with machine guns, mortars and brand new automatic rifles from which no bullet had been fired.

Forty Americans quickly argued the more heavily armed the Nazi troops - who could have wiped them out in two minutes - out of carrying through their plans to group with other German units in the vicinity for a counterattack against the Russians.

"Why don't you throw down your arms and walk back to our front lines and give up?" the American patrol leaders suggested. Scores of German infantrymen promptly accepted the invitation to cast away the guns they didn't want to carry any further or be caught with if the Russians broke through unexpectedly.

"But wait - I must check with my higher officers," said one young Nazi lieutenant, the only officer near by.

### Plead to Troops.

He ran to inform his superiors and they came back on the double, shouting to their confused troops:

"Take up your arms again. Pick them up. You must have them to fight against the Russians."

But the Fighting 69th division officers, after a few minutes of diplomatic conversation, convinced the German commanders, that is was useless to fight on.

A few minutes later both German Companies were marching back toward the west to surrender. And the forty Yanks road on to the east, looking for at least one Russian to link up with.

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## Military Formalities Go by The Board in Joy of Meeting

Submitted By: **Douglas George**

Headquarters Company, 273rd

1012 Jay Ct., Loveland, CO 80537

By Hal Boyle, Associated Press Correspondent

*The Yanks Arrive Before the Reds Complete Their Triumphant Arch and the Photographers Have a Field Day Before the Two Staffs Sit Down to a Typical Russian Banquet.*

With Marshall Konev's First Ukrainian Army East of the Elbe, April 26 they tried to make the first meeting of Russians and American divisional commanders on the German front a grand opera event today but it ended like the finale of a circus performance.

There was just too much good will and wine flowing to keep military formalities - and that probably was the best thing possible for future international relations.

Arrangements had been made for the first meeting of the Allied divisional staffs on the east bank of the Elbe in the Torgau region at 4 o'clock, and Russian work

troops began building a triumphal log arch. They had with them a huge Soviet flag and homemade Stars and Stripes to symbolize Allied unity.

### Appearance Is Unexpected.

While high-ranking Soviet officers were back in their barracks giving their boots a final gloss and pinning on every decoration they had won in four years of battle, the American party appeared unexpectedly on the other side of the river.



*Crossing the Elbe at Torgau, where both bridges had been demolished, Gen. Reinhardt uses one of the racing skulls found at the near-by Torgau Rowing Club. Differences in time zones caused a mix-up and the American general arrived at the meeting place before the Russians*

Both bridges had been blown by the Germans during their defense of Torgau so **Maj. Emil F. Reinhardt** of Detroit, MI and his staff clad in impeccably near-**Eisenhower** dress jackets, had to be rowed over the swift flowing Elbe in racing sculls. Crowds of refugee Russian men and women waiting to cross the river looked on in wonder.

The American staff walked slowly through a growth of river weeds to the meeting site and stood uncertainly for a moment. They had arrived twenty minutes early.

An interpreter quickly made known their identity, however, and a Russian officer who was helping dig post holes for the triumphal arch dropped his spade and came over and shook hands warmly with **General Reinhardt**.

The Russian troops saluted the American staff smartly and handed British and American flags to **Reinhardt's** two bodyguards. **Cpl. Clarence Tate** of Grapevine, TX, took the Union Jack and **Pfc. Frank Kanes** of Donora, PA, took the Stars and Stripes.

After waiting ten minutes the American staff turned and started marching up the hill toward the Russian barracks.

As they left, the Soviet soldiers still were hammering frantically to complete their triumphal log arch - which never did get erected.

### Appear on Hillside.

When the Americans were half way up the hill a large body of splendidly clad Russian officers rounded a grove of trees and started down to meet them.

As two colorful processions came closer and closer a great cheer went up from the Russian and American soldiers on both sides of the river, and gunfire echoed as the celebrating troops fired whatever guns were at hand.

It was a news photographer's dream. Besides the regular army photographers the Russians had many representatives from Tass and Pravda news agencies.

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## MILITARY FORMALITIES GO BY.....

(Continued from Page 26)

The Americans had a number of army signal corps cameramen and a half dozen newspaper and magazine photographers.

Russian and Yank picture snappers immediately began to vie good-naturedly for close-ups of the military staffs, and this historic meeting was certainly well photographed — possibly from more angles than any other in history.

A half dozen photographers were almost trapped and trampled when the American and Russian staffs ran the last few steps to join and shake hands enthusiastically. The meeting for a few minutes then became a melee, with Russian and American officers and men laughing, trading "short snorter" notes and souvenirs, while a cordon of photographers surrounded the meeting line like Indians circling a wagon train and burrowed in and out of the milling crowd like moles to get close shots.



US and Red Armies join at Torgau — Russian and American soliders, carrying their respective flags, advance after their juncture at the Elbe river near Torgau, Germany, where the Yanks crossed the river in small boats. Maj. Gen. Emil F. Reinhardt (third from the right), commander of the 69th Infantry Division, talks with the commanding general of the Russian unit involved in the link-up. (AP wirephoto from Signal Corps. radio)



Yank and Russian Embrace as Armies Meet — 2nd Lt. William D. Robertson (left) of Los Angeles, 69th Division US First Army, and Lt. Alexander Sylvashko of the Russian army, embrace before a curled American flag and a sign "East Meets West" as the Yanks and Soviets joined on the east bank of the Elbe river April 25. (AP wirephoto from Signal Corps. radio)



One of the first four Americans to make contact with the Soviets, Pfc. Frank Huff of Washington, VA, shakes hands formally with a Russian before poster signaling the event. Less formal Russian greetings included guitar playing, bear hugs, handshakes that left Yank hands aching.

### The Sun Is Hot.

As the Russian and American officers started back up the hill, the Soviet and Yank cameramen, sweating under the hot April sun, backed up before them and made more pictures. It was like an old-fashioned movie "horse opera."

"Head for Eagle Gulch!" yelled one grinning photographer.

"Yeah! Cut 'em off at the pass!" yelled another, while the Russian cameramen quipped and their officers laughed.

At a captured German building which the Russians selected for a banquet, the American staff was seated before tables as smiling Russian WACs began carrying in trays full of wine, vodka, champagne, cognac, fried eggs sunny side up, fresh pork and a half dozen other dishes.

The commander of the Russian 58th guards division proposed a toast. Standing and turning to Reinhardt, the 35-year-old, dark-haired commander said:

"General, and officers of the American Army, I congratulate you on this day of historic meeting. This is a happy day. It means the end of the enemy."

Reinhardt replied with another toast: "I wish to toast the divisional commander and the 58th guards division. It is a great honor to command the American division that has driven through our common enemy to meet you. May the peace for which we fight come early."

### Food and Wine Plentiful.

Then the Russians really began to pour on the banquet. Food and wines of all vintages flowed like the town pump, and the Americans began to look more and more worried as each dish and bottle arrived. But there was no escaping the Russian hospitality.

The American staff, stuffed to the bursting point, finally was able to back away from the tables after a

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## MILITARY FORMALITIES GO BY.....

(Continued from Page 27)

couple of hours of eating and make its departure. As they were being rowed across the river, one doughboy looked at the skiffs and said, with a grin:

"The gunwales are a least four inches deeper in the water than when they went over."



*Many toasts were drunk some GIs found it necessary to get fresh air outside on the grass. The Russians delighted in giving all Americans heel-clicking salutes, called them "Americanski tourishch" (American comrade). In return the GIs sang what they knew of "The Volga Boatmen."*

Russians near Reisa.

He had set out twenty-four hours before and his laconic message at 3 o'clock this afternoon electrified regimental and divisional headquarters:

"Have completed mission and am arranging meeting between commanders."

### Cheer in Headquarters.

There were no additional details immediately and jubilant staff officers laughed and shook hands with each other celebrating the exploit of the young Texan who had added fresh luster to the reborn "Fighting 69th" which had proven its right to the famous nickname accorded the 69th New York national guard regiment in World War I by the stirring capture of Leipzig after a 5-day siege.

To assist in arranging the details for a formal meeting of Russian and American commanders, **Lieut. Col. Richard J. Conran** of Brooklyn and a Russian-speaking interpreter, **Sgt. Charles Kulikowski** of Chicago, took off in an artillery Cub liaison plane for the junction point.

The successful patrol which first made contact with the Soviets advancing past Elbe was only one of several reconnaissance parties sent out by American divisions all along the Mulde river holding line.

It was one of three patrols sent out by the 69th Division to probe the chaotic corridor of despair between the Mulde and Elbe rivers where the roads are clogged with German troops looking for anyone to surrender to who did not have a Russian accent,

**With the U.S. First Army Beyond** the Mulde River, April 25th (Delayed, AP).

A young platoon leader won everlasting fame for the 69th Infantry Division by effecting a link-up with the Soviet forces four miles west of Reisa on the Elbe River at 1:32 o'clock today in a historic meeting of Allies that cut Germany in two.

Streaking past long columns of German troops, fleeing westward from the Russians and hoping to surrender to the Americans, **Lieut. Albert L. Kotzebue** of Houston, TX, led twenty men in six jeeps to a junction with the surprised

thousands of German families trying to flee westward ahead of the Soviets and other thousands of freed Allied war prisoners and slave laborers.

The dramatic search of these patrols for the Russian vanguard — in a race won by **Kotzebue**, a chunky blonde muscular soldier in his early 20s who two days ago was awarded the Bronze Star for battlefield bravery during the Siegfried line breakthrough — was first told by **Lieut. Philip Sinnott** of San Francisco, a fellow officer in the 273rd regiment.

### Dashed Into Leipzig.

**Sinnott** himself was the liaison officer who road a jeep in the wild dash by a tank column into Leipzig last week through a cordon of Nazi SS troops to the steps of the city hall, and, he still is sorrowful because he did not get a place on the patrol that met the Soviets.

"**Lieutenant Kotzebue** and twenty men took off late yesterday afternoon in six jeeps and headed east," said **Sinnott**, "They didn't have a single armored vehicle and only 30-caliber machine guns on their jeep."

They looked until dark without finding anything and sat down for the night on the other side of the Mulde after reporting no contact. Everyone was disappointed and confused because our Cub planes hadn't picked up any big road movements and we didn't know just where in the hell the Russians were.

"All we knew was that there were a lot of people running towards our lines to get away from them."

This morning at 4:45 o'clock the regimental commander, **Col. C. A. Adams** of Hazleton, PA - sent out another party of twenty men led by **Capt. George J. Morey** of Dumont, NJ.

And at daylight a third patrol, consisting of a regimental intelligence and reconnaissance platoon — twenty-four men in seven jeeps — sent out to find the elusive Russians. The third patrol was led by **Lieut. Edward Gumpert**, Glen Ridge, NJ.

"The last two patrols didn't have any luck," **Sinnott** said, "but all three groups ran into krauts right and left. They had an eerie sensation driving through lanes of marching German soldiers fully armed and waving them on back to surrender — without even stopping in most cases to take away their guns. There were just too many of them and they (the Americans) weren't looking for Germans to capture. They were looking for Russians to greet. (Footnote from **Doug George**: I am 100% sure that Gen. Reinhardt did not send - or authorize - any patrols to go looking for the Russians. It was learned later that he had promised the Russians they could go into Berlin and meet the Americans and be the first to do that.)

### No Fire From Nazis.

So far as I know not one German soldier fired on our patrols. One Nazis said an order of the day was given out 'do not fire on American troops - fire only to the east where the Russians are.'

All along the roads were clogged with wild-eyed German housewives and husbands and children packing their clothes and silver in baby buggies and carts and on the back of bicycles as they hit out for the Mulde river.

Thousand of Americans and French prisoners of war also were whooping along back in every kind of vehicle

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## MILITARY FORMALITIES GO BY....

(Continued from Page 28)

they could get to run or pull. In some cases they had just escaped, but in most they had just been turned loose by the Germans. Some of them brought along German prison camp guards who pleaded with them not to be left behind to the Russians.

"Then at 3 o'clock we got a message from **Lieut. Kotzebue** that he had contacted the Russians. He had kept pushing forward along roads full of refugees until finally he met the Russians. It must have been the surprise of a lifetime for them.

"What a wonderful day — if you were there," said **Sinnott**.

**Sinnott** described **Kotzebue** as one of the best platoon leaders in the army and added:

"He's really got get-up-and-go."

**Kotzebue** landed in England with the division last November and won the Purple Heart and Bronze Star for bravery during the fighting through the Siegfried line last February 27th at Ramscheid, Germany.

Although wounded in the foot by rifle bullet he reorganized his men and took an enemy position under intense fire.

(Another footnote from **Doug George**: I was acquainted with **Lt. Kotzebue** and **Maj. Craig**, but **Lt. Robertson** got most of the credit because he brought the first Russian to Headquarters.)

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## Find 11 Nazi Prison Camps

Submitted By: **Douglas George**

Headquarters Company, 273rd  
1012 Jay Ct., Loveland, CO 80537

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*By Hal Boyle, Associated Press Correspondent*

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*In Two of the Facilities Overrun by Yank Patrol More than 50,000 Allied Troops, Including 8,600 Americans, Freed by their Guards. Are Counted.*

### Many Nazis Surrender

*Lightly Armed First Army Troops Take Whole Columns of Enemy Soldiers Rushing West Toward Mulde River Line.*

### Press Close to Soviet Action

*Bodies of Two Cossack Soldiers, Killed in Fighting Only a Few Hours Earlier, are Found by the Far-Ranging GI's.*

With the 69th Infantry Division Beyond the Mulde River, April 26.(AP) — A jeep patrol running at will through disorganized German lines overran eleven German prisoner of war camps and hospitals today and reported that in two camps alone were more than 50,000 freed prisoners, including 8,600 Americans.

The U.S. First Army patrol, disarming whole columns of Germans marching toward the American lines, pressed on to a town where they found the bodies of two Russian Cossacks who had been killed in a small scale patrol action only a few hours before.

## Told to Await Aid.

The liberated Allied prisoners of war were so numerous that the small patrol told them to stay where they were while plans were made to bring them out.

"I can't even estimate how many were in other camps," said **Maj. Fred Craig**, Friendship, TN, on his return from a patrol beyond the Mulde toward the Russian lines along the Elbe.

"But everywhere we went prisoners went wild with joy to see us."

Because of a news blackout on the positions of American and Russian lines converging in the narrow corridor between the Mulde and Elbe rivers, it was impossible to give the exact location of the camps.

"In one camp," said **Craig**, "we found 20,112 prisoners, and among them were 267 Americans. This camp was built by the Germans in 1941 for French prisoners and there still are thousands of them there."

American boys told me they had been shuttled from place to place to keep them from falling into our hands as we advanced, and that this was the fifth camp they had been in.

Their guards pulled out four nights before, leaving them to shift for themselves.

### Lack Time To Count Men.

We also overran a camp which Allied prisoners themselves said contained 30,000 men of whom about 6,000 were Americans. We didn't have time to count them.

"In this camp there were some 3,000 ambulance cases, most of them suffering from malnutrition."

"In another German hospital we found 7,000 wounded — half of whom were Germans suffering from recent bullet wounds," **Craig** continued. "There were only five Americans here. One was a lieutenant of the 2nd Infantry Division captured only three nights ago."

"In an adjoining town we came across a luftwaffe hospital with 3,000 German patients."

**Craig** said that in all cases, the American hospital patients told the same story — of harsh treatment on the roads or in prison, but of efficient and not unkindly care once they were placed in hospitals.

We found that almost all doctors and nurses in German hospitals were carrying weapons and we disarmed all we ran across," he said. The German medical personnel said they were afraid that the advancing Soviet troops would massacre them and the Nazi patients.

"German guards had run off from all prison camps or turned themselves over to the prisoners," he said. We found an American major, a prisoner, had taken over one camp and was running it.

### Busy on Another Mission.

"As we were on another mission, there wasn't much we could do on the spot. We told them to sit tight for the next forty-eight to seventy-two hours while plans were formulated to remove them."

"I never saw more happy men in my life, they did everything but kiss us — and one colonel who had been a prisoner since the North African campaign even did that. On both cheeks, too."

Among released war prisoners were British, French, Russians and Poles and U.S. First army officers

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## FIND 11 NAZI PRISON CAMPS

(Continued from Page 29)

expressed belief that when the Mulde-Elbe corridor finally had been cleaned up scores of thousands of war prisoners would be freed.

The hard-pressed Germans, caught in the Allied east-west squeeze, no longer have any place to take them. There were only thirty-one men in **Craig's** patrol and they rode in open jeeps, armed with nothing heavier than machine guns.

"We learned from one burgomeister," said **Craig**, "that the volksstrum was dissolved in our area yesterday by order of the German commander and those home guard troops were told to change into civilian clothing as soon as they could and try to hide from the Russians."

The order went out when the Germans learned the russians were crossing the Elbe.

**Craig** took several towns by telephone, the favorite technique now with **General Hodges'** First Army Division.

### No Trouble After Call.

"We just phoned the burgomeister in the town ahead telling him we were coming through and that if we met any resistance we'd destroy the town with artillery fire," he said, "and we didn't have a bit of trouble."

"We met hundreds of German troops marching back toward our lines in perfect columns. They were fully armed. We halted them and broke their rifles and took their pistols — but we couldn't collect all their weapons so we just waved a lot of them on back toward the Mulde."

"And when our patrol finally did halt it wasn't because of any resistance we met."

**Craig** said that in one town they arrived just as four German cargo trucks loaded with sixty men were pulling out the other end.

"All the garrison couldn't get away and we captured twelve prisoners in the town. We also found the freshly-killed bodies of two Cossacks from a small Soviet patrol which the Nazis told us they had fought in the town only a few hour before."

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## Germans Replace White Flags With Red in Link-up Area.

Submitted By: **Douglas George**  
Headquarters Company, 273rd  
1012 Jay Ct., Loveland, CO 80537

By Hal Boyle, Associated Press Correspondent

With the U.S. First Army, April 26. (AP) — German housewives have quit hanging out white surrender flags. They are dangling red bed ticks from windows and stringing up red blankets on clotheslines.

Even red stockings and red unmentionables, are hung out to show the pacific attitude of German householders as Russian troops sweep on toward the Mulde river.

That's the surest sign that Russia's "Red" army is near.

## Germans Replace White Flags With Red in Link-up Area

Submitted By: **Douglas George**  
Headquarters Company, 273rd  
1012 Jay Ct., Loveland, CO 80537

Leipzig, May 16. (UP) — **Lt. Albert L. Kotzebue**, of Houston, TX, leader of the four-man patrol of the U.S. 69th Infantry Division that made the first contact with the Russian Army April 25 was awarded a medal by the Russian government "in recognition of your leadership."

At the same time, American and Russian soldiers were decorated at joint ceremonies. **Lt. Gen. Courtney H. Hodges**, commander of the U.S. First Army, presented the Legion of Merit to the commander of the Fifth Russian Guards, **Col. Gen. Zhadov**. The Soviet general in turn presented **Gen. Hodges** with the Order of Suvarov, first class.

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## Luxembourg Radio Reports Linkup Along Elbe River

Submitted By: **Douglas George**  
Headquarters Company, 273rd  
1012 Jay Ct., Loveland, CO 80537

American and Russian forces have linked up on a broad front along the Elbe River, Radio Luxembourg, regarded as the "voice of SHAEF", announced last night.

Formal announcement of the junction from the United Nations' capitals was expected shortly, Radio Luxembourg said. The broadcast reported that the Russians reached the Elbe River near Torgau, 20 miles northeast of Leipzig.

Other unofficial reports that the linkup was made were published in New York by *The Sun* and in London by the *Evening Star*. The latter placed the scene of the junction at Eilumburg, nine miles northeast of Leipzig. *The Sun* quoted military observers in Washington. The British newspaper credited the Swiss radio, which in turn quoted a Moscow dispatch.

A previous INS broadcast from the U.S. 1st Army reported that the Russians had told U.S. frontline troops along the Mulde river: "Stay where you are; we'll come and meet you."

**Dr. Edward Sarcione, Vice President, 272nd, will have his message in the up coming issue of the bulletin.**



## "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.

**Robert L. Baer**  
4524 Loraine Lane  
Bethlehem, PA 18017  
Co. C - 273rd

**Cyril E. Bassett**  
Chester, CA  
QM - 69th

**Robert E. Bliss**  
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Ashland,  
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AR - Div. Hq.

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944 Somerset Street  
Gloucester, NJ 08030-1857  
Co. C - 661st

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Centerville, IA 52544-9033  
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**Sam Grundy**  
804 Coral Ridge  
College Station, TX 77845-4435  
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1391 Ridgeway Avenue  
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BA - 69th

**John R. Kemper**  
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Clio, MI 48420-1506  
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Barberton, OH 44203-6825  
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**Phillip Kozlovsky**  
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North Dartmouth, MN 02747-3704  
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**James P. Linn**  
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Oklahoma City, OK  
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**Raymond C. Lottie**  
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Rancho Murieta, CA 95683-9408  
Co. L - 271st

**John McKeil**  
2777 NE 183rd Street Apt. 221  
Aventura, FL 33160-2165  
Co. D - 272nd

**Don McKee**  
3569 Hill Road  
Duncansville, PA 16635  
Co. G - 273rd

**Robert A. Messia**  
P.O. Box  
Melrose, NY 12121  
Co. M - 271st

**Carl A. Miller**  
1016 Marion Road  
Bucyrus, OH 44820  
MP - 69th

**Arthur S. Moore**  
1320 Berlin Turnpike Apt. 520  
Weathersfield, CT 06109-7001  
Co. C - 881st

**Gen. Robert G. Moorhead**  
9152 Hent Avenue  
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Div. Hq. - 69th

**Anthony T. Mruk**  
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Elmira Heights, NY 14903-1503  
Co. H - 273rd

**Edward Muller**  
5503 Hampstead Street  
Parma, OH 44129  
Co. B - 269th

**Marshall M. Ney**  
2061 Oak Run North Drive  
Indianapolis, IN 46260-5131  
RE - 69th

**John P. Penny**  
2960 N Lake Shore Dr. Apt. 2708  
Chicago, IL 60657-5662  
Co. I - 273rd

**Ward E. Peterson**  
1096 Powderhorn Drive  
Glen Mills, PA 19342  
Co. B - 269th

**Bing T. Poon**  
P.O. Box 360  
Mercersburg, PA 17236-0360  
Co. E - 271st

**Elmer M. Pusey**  
22 Lynn Brook Terrace  
Easton, MD 21601-3362  
Hq. - 881st

**Kenneth W. Reitz**  
1215 Rock Hollow Road  
Birdsboro, PA 19508  
Hq. - 273rd

**Richard L. Sodorff**  
527 S Fouth Avenue  
Sandpoint, ID 83864-1223  
Co. M - 272nd

**Harold R. Sprang**  
192 Street, RT. 603 W  
Shiloh, OH 44878-8848  
Co. E - 273rd

**Robert D. Stakich**  
P.O. Box 1907  
Marco Island, FL 34146  
Co. B - 271st

**John B. Trampler**  
5994 N Farm Road #171  
Springfield, MO 65803-8659  
CA - 271st

**Ralph Utermoehlen**  
2121 Meadowlark Road OFC.  
Manhattan, KS 66502-7528  
Co. I - 271st

**Anthony Vink**  
1831 N Lafayette Street  
Dearborn, MI 48128-1166  
Co. F - 271st

**William L. Whitworth**  
12474 CR 1141  
Tyler, TX 75709  
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## Photos from Camp Shelby 1943

Submitted By: **Tech/5 Nick J. Etze**

*Company D, 272nd*

Harmon House, 601 South Church Street, Mt. Pleasant, Pennsylvania 15666

I passed out the mail to our company. I keep in touch with twenty to twenty-five of the fellows from our company. Keep up the good work, I enjoy getting the 69th Division bulletin.



*Nick Etze(me) & B. Patton*



*Company Clerk Pete Meade  
and unknown*



*Company Clerk Pete Meade*



*Mail Call! I'm the center of attention.*



*Unknown  
Do you know him?  
I can't recall who he is.*

### **BULLETIN STAFF**

**Dottie (Witzleb) Shadle**  
*Editor*

P.O. Box 4069  
New Kensington, PA 15068  
Telephone: 724/335-9980

**Send Articles, Pictures,  
and Material**

**John Barrette**  
*Treasurer*

P.O. Box 215  
Wisconsin Rapids,  
Wisconsin 54495-0215  
Telephone: 715/423-4921

**Send Dues to John**

**Paul Shadle**  
*Membership Chairman*

P.O. Box 4069  
New Kensington, PA 15068  
Telephone: 724/335-9980

**Send Address Changes,  
New Members  
and Deaths to Paul**

**Dottie (Witzleb) Shadle**  
*Ladies' Auxiliary Editor*

P.O. Box 4069  
New Kensington, PA 15068  
Telephone: 724/335-9980  
**Send Ladies' Auxiliary  
Material to Dottie**