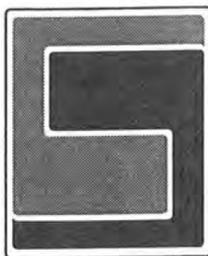


FIGHTING 69TH INFANTRY DIVISION

★★★★ Association, Inc.



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1999

“THE THREE B’S”
BOLTE’S BIVOUACING BASTARDS

P.O. BOX 69
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bulletin

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The Siege and Capture of Leipzig

Submitted by: William Currier, Headquarters, 273rd Infantry

A Tribute to Our Editor, Earl Witzleb 1925-1998



The death of Earl Witzleb, our editor, is one of the greatest losses our Association has had to endure. His devotion to the 69th was with us to the end, as he continued to perform his duties with his failing health of the past few years. Almost every letter or article that we received had something to say about Earl, be it a condolence to his wife and the Association, or something they remembered of him from a Reunion, telephone call or letter. Unfortunately, we cannot include all of them but the thoughts of all of the members are most appreciated. Thank you and we hope we can carry on and continue the tradition of producing quality bulletins, as Earl always did, that would make him proud.

* * * * *

Written by our Treasurer, Bill Matlach

Earl Witzleb, our Bulletin Editor or Co-Editor for the past 21 years, died on November 6th, 1998 of heart failure, following six years of gradual weakening which resulted from an initial infection in the heart area. Although spending considerable time in hospitals during recent years, he continued his duties on the Bulletin.

During World War II, **Earl** joined the 69th Division in September 1944 and served with E Company of the 273rd Regiment. He was Messenger for the 2nd Platoon and served in that position in combat until he was wounded and was awarded the Purple Heart.

During the initial post-war years, **Earl** attended most of the national reunions of the 69th Infantry Division Association. Being a bachelor, he usually shared a room with another 69er, often **Ray Fahrner** (A273) who likewise was a bachelor. In his quiet, unassuming manner, he enjoyed celebrating the reunion with a group of 69ers until the early hours of Sunday morning, as was the custom in those days.

In 1973, **Earl** married **Dorothy Morris**, ending his bachelorhood. A few years later, in 1977, he decided to accept some of the work load in running the 69th

Division Association, and became Treasurer and Bulletin Co-Editor at the same time. He remained Treasurer through 1984, at which time he also became a primary driving force in the Tri-State Branch of the Association. In 1985 he was Reunion Chairman for the Pittsburgh Reunion. In 1987-1989 he served as Vice President, followed by a term as President in 1989-1991. Through all of this period he continued to act as Co-Editor of the Bulletin through to the present, simultaneously taking part in organizing weekend events for the Tri-State Branch, Central Pennsylvania Branch, and national reunions.

Earl Witzleb devoted a tremendous portion of his time to performing tasks for the benefit of his buddies in the 69th Infantry Division.

In his private life, **Earl** was born October 21, 1925 in McKeesport, Pennsylvania. During his adult life he spent many years employed by the Jones and Laughlin Steel Company, serving in the accounting and payroll department. He was active as a referee and official for the W.P.I.A.L. and P.I.A.A. for more than 50 years. He was a 32nd Degree Mason, having been a member of the Marion Lodge #562 F&AM, the Tall Cedars of Lebanon #77 and the Consistory Valley of Pittsburgh. He was a member of the Hempfield Township American Legion, member and Past President of the Chestnut Ridge Lions Club, and was a life member of the Green Oak V.F.D. He was also a member of the Calvary United Methodist Church, Acme.

Earl is survived by his wife, Dorothy, and his sister Mrs. Charles (Joan) Smith. His buddies will remember him as a devoted self-sacrificing 69er who applied a great deal of his life for the benefit of his wartime friends.

* * * * *

Crandon Clark writes . . .

I often think back to the years 1990 to 1991 when **Earl** was the President of the 69th Infantry Division Association and I was the Editor of the new 69th Division History Book. As you may well know, my History Book Committee was small. The one person who assisted and encouraged me the most was **Earl Witzleb**. He was always proud of the fact that he had been a combat infantryman with E Company, 273 Infantry of the 69th Infantry Division and he looked forward to future banquets when he could return to sitting with his E Company, 273rd friends.

When I was seeking out responsible and key members from each of the 16 units of our Division Association, **Earl** was the one person who suggested people for me to contact and provided the address and telephone numbers as well.

Our joint trip to The Turner Publishing Company at Paducah, Kentucky to meet with the publisher's staff

(Continued on Page 3)

A TRIBUTE TO OUR EDITOR, EARL WITZLEB

(Continued from Page 2)

demonstrated that **Earl** and I could work together and we were able to conclude many important decisions concerning the construction of our History Book.

We have a quality Division History Book of which we can be proud. **Earl** was a very willing and a strong contributor to this book. And I will always be appreciative of that fact.

Earl did not forget to thank his History Book Editor. At the 69th Division Association reunion banquet in Biloxi, Mississippi the Association President awarded me with a very attractive Hamilton wrist watch inscribed with the 69th Division insignia. In addition, **Earl** also awarded me with an attractive 8" x 10" metal and wood plaque from the Association as an appreciation for my editing the 69th Division History Book.

I have always admired the editing and production work that **Clarence, Earl** and **Dottie** have done for these so many years on the 69th Division Bulletin. **Earl** will be sorely missed by all of us.

* * * * *

Paul Shadle writes . . .

I have known **Earl Witzleb** for a long time, not only as a comrade-in-arms, a co-Purple Heart Recipient and a co-worker at the reunions, but also as a true and great friend. **Earl** had done a great deal for the 69th over the past many years and he will be sorely missed in that respect. But I will miss him in many other ways and he will be remembered in my nightly prayers.

* * * * *

A few words from Earl's Eulogy . . .

By Reverend Carol Morris

Earl loved life to the fullest and participated in it wherever and whenever he could. He was a man of integrity who invested much of his life serving his family, his country, his church, his community and God.

Earl faithfully served his country during World War II in the 69th Division as an infantryman. He was wounded in combat and received the Purple Heart. One of **Earl's** commanding officers said **Earl** was very dependable, someone you could trust to do his job and never get in trouble. Another Army buddy, **Paul**, had many fond memories of his friendship with **Earl**. He served in the Honor Guard at General Patton's funeral and was President of the Fighting 69th Association. When **Earl** committed himself to anything, he gave it his all. **Earl** gained many friends over the years and it was said of him that once he was your friend, he was your friend for life.

This is a time of mixed emotions where we feel sadness at the loss of a husband, brother, uncle, or friend, but also celebrate his graduation from this life where he experienced both joy and pain to his new life in eternity where there is no more suffering, pain or sadness, only joy and peace.

A Note from Dottie

Earl had always told me that the people of the Fighting 69th Division Association were a special group of people. I now know why he had said that. I would like to thank everyone of you for your prayers, cards, letters, notes, phone calls, and visits I received when you heard of **Earl's** untimely passing. The division was also well represented at the services. A special Thank You to those who attended the viewing and services.

As many of you know, he was very active in the division for many years in different offices and helping at the various reunions. This was a job he surely enjoyed and after we were married, I also enjoyed these activities. **Earl** was also proud of the Tri-State Group and its members.

Earl felt that his greatest accomplishments came during his tenure as President of the Association. During this time he worked with a few others in having a History Book published and also the Memorial at Camp Shelby. The persons that helped in these endeavors know who you are and I do not want to leave anyone out, so I will not name them individually.

I will continue on as the editor of the bulletin. **Earl** and I had talked about me doing this and he was very happy when I told him I would do it for a while.

Thank you again and God Bless All of You.

A note of thanks from Nat Green's daughter

Eleanor Davis

12 Danker Avenue, Albany, New York 12206

I am writing to thank everyone for their thoughts, notes of kindness and phone calls after the untimely death of my father, **Nathan Green**, Company G, 271st Infantry, and his friend **Roxanne Kushner**, who were killed in an auto accident after leaving the Houston reunion.

I was so grateful to receive the December bulletin of the Fighting 69th Association to see what special attention was given to them by your hand.

Again, my heartfelt thanks. It meant a great deal to me.

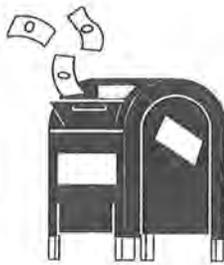
OOPS!!!

James T. Carter, of Company C, 272nd Regiment, 6813 Riviera Drive, Biloxi, Mississippi 38532, was mistakenly listed under "TAPS" in the last bulletin.

However, he is very much alive and kicking. **Jim** stayed in the service until 1970 and retired as a Lt. Colonel. Sorry for the mistake, **Jim**.

THE MAIL BOX

By Dottie Witzleb, Editor



Company E, 273rd Infantry Regiment
P.O. Box 69

Champion, Pennsylvania 15622-0069
Telephone: 724/455-2901 (Note area code change)

* * * * *

Fred E. Hanley, 837 N. Main Street, Fostoria, Ohio 44830 — Co. A, 273rd Infantry: Thank you for the extra copies of the Fighting 69th magazines. It sure brings back memories of my combat days.

Could you tell me where I could get a map of Germany that was like when we were there? I'm making a photo album of pictures and I want to trace the towns and country that we marched over. If you could help me I would appreciate it.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: If anyone can help Fred with maps, please write to him.)

Lester E. Hart, 7916 North Hayes Road, Williamsfield, Ohio 44093 — Btry. C, 881st F.A.: I did not go to Houston so thought I better get paid up. I thought it was too hot in Texas (100 degrees in July) but guess it had dropped a little for the reunion. I expect to be in Florida for next year's reunion, I winter there (Leesburg). I went to Williamsburg, Virginia in September and attended the Tank Destroyers' get-together. We had a good time at the Ramada Inn. We traveled to Norfolk, Virginia one day and toured the large harbor there. Several boats were in the D-Day dock. We stopped at the MacArthur museum, and also the transportation museum. The banquet night was a large buffet (excellent). Stay well and off that last page of the Bulletin. By the way, we found out that Mrs. MacArthur is still living. She was 100 years old in October '98. She lives in the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York City.

John B. Durst, 1832 Alta Street, Redlands, California 92374-1718 — Co A, 273rd: A fellow comrade in the American Legion just told me anyone who served in combat in France can get the "Liberation Medal." I wrote off for the "Bronze Star" medal last August after seeing the article in the August 1998 Bulletin, and also for all my medals from the: Commander, U.S. Army Reserve Center, ATTN. ARPC: PSV-V, 9700 Page Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63132-5200.

I have not yet received any. Do you know if we can get a medal from Belgium, Russia, or perhaps even Germany? (We liberated the Germans from the Nazis!) Belgium has beautiful medals - "The Croix De Guerre with Palms" and the "Military Cross" Medal

which looks like the German "Pour Le Merite"; the highest medal of World War I in Germany (General Erwin Rommel has one) but the Belgium version had a crown on the top for the king. Do allied countries give us any? I could write the Belgium Consulate in Los Angeles or others too.

P.S. My friend is a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and said their HQ is near St. Louis, MO and they may help us. My wife, Marcee and I, and her father, "TAY" (pronounced Tie) attended the reunion in Houston. We had two dinners with **Ed Lucci**, **Bill Matlach** and our assistant company commander. A great event!

Gerald H. Dominy, 21 Lozier Place, Plattsburg, New York 12901-1618 — Co. D, 273rd: I was a member of Company D, 3rd Platoon, 273rd Regiment from July 1944 to August 1945. I did not know that there was a 69th Infantry Division Association and that reunions were being held until someone sent me a clipping last summer from the bulletin announcing a Company D reunion to be held in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina during the week of November 1-6, 1998. I did attend that reunion.

I am interested in becoming a member of the Association and receiving the Bulletin and any other mailings that the association may generate.

Carl Yusna: It was nice to see a mention of my father, **Joseph Yusna**, in the 269th Engineers roster in the summer issue. I was reading the bulletin while my sister Madeline and I were waiting to take mom and dad out to dinner. The occasion was their 50th Wedding Anniversary on July 31st. Keep the stories of "The Greatest Generation" at war coming so they can be passed on.

Rick Cagno, 215 South Bradford Avenue, Tampa, Florida 33609 — Btry. B, 724th F.A.: I want to thank **Lloyd M. Lippman** for the information I requested regarding the criteria needed to receive the Combat Infantryman's Badge which would make you eligible for the Bronze Star. The Badge can only be given to infantrymen and cannot be given to any units attached to them. Those units would have to make their own awards. This would have been alright if awards had been given fairly but as many of you know, this did not always happen. I received a letter from **Robert Starner**, who, like myself, feels that something was not done right. Robert and I are the same age and joined the division in May of '43, at 18 years of age. They must have thought, "They're just kids - give it to an older guy." I bet there are many others who feel like Robert and I. Are there???

I and some of the other guys from the Battery, God willing, plan to attend the Division Reunion in Orlando in November. I would like to hear from you fellows from B Battery.

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THE MAIL BOX

(Continued from Page 4)

Mary E. Lantz, widow of **Joseph Lantz**, 11227 Hollywood Road, Hagerstown, Maryland 21740-7508 — Co. B, 271st: I hope everything went well at the reunion in Houston. Had **Joseph** been living we would have gone as I have relatives there and would have visited them also. I enjoy the Bulletin and look forward to its arrival. I had a hip replacement in December of 1997 and had lots of time to catch up on reading. Many thanks and may God bless you all.

Jack Hartzog, 520 Lindenwood Avenue, Sikeston, Missouri 63801 — Co. L, 273rd: Will you please send me one or two large decals for the rear window of my car. I just bought a new car and I have had a 69th decal on my car for years and would hate to be without one. I am proud to have served in the 69th even if only for a short while. I joined the 69th at Camp Shelby in September 1944 and was assigned until late December 1944 when I, along with many others, was pulled out and sent as a replacement to another division that had suffered a lot of casualties during the Battle of the Bulge. My company was stationed at Basingstoke, England at the time I was reassigned to another division.

Alfred Earl Clegg, 3183 S. 8620 West, Magna, Utah 84044-1720 — Co. F, 273rd: I'm sort of old and forgetful and in looking over the Bulletin I was reminded of my dues. In the last Bulletin, I read about 1st Lt. **Matlach**, **Fred Scherer** and **Larry Kolarik** (now deceased). He was a fine fellow I had corresponded with after I was shot up at Leipzig and sent home after about a year and a couple of months. I also was a 1st Lieutenant (Exec. Officer of Co. F). Thanks for everything you all do for me and the others in the 69th.

H. Raymond Fahrner, Forge Gate Apts. #18E1, Lansdale, Pennsylvania 19446 — Co. A, 273rd: I was on guard duty at 1st Battalion Headquarters on April 25th, when **Bill Robinson's** jeep arrived with a major and a private of the Russian 58th Guard Division. The medics attended to the private's wounded hand, gangrene was setting in and the bandage was dirty. They cleaned the wound, poured sulfa on it and rebandaged it. He was a friendly guy and the Polish speaking GIs of 1st Bn. Hq. spoke with him. Funny, but in two weeks, (early May), we were enemies!

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Since this writing, we are sorry to report that Ray has passed away.)

Raymond C. Norris, 642 Law Street, Aberdeen, Maryland 21001 — Co. F, 271st: I am sending in a booklet entitled "Deuces Wild," the history of the 2nd Battalion of the 271st Infantry. I am sure it could apply to the other infantry battalions in the Fighting 69th. (The author is unknown except for the initials J.F.H.).

In reference to **Jim Kidd's** letter on page 3 of the last issue of the Bulletin, (about the attack of the 271st

on the town of Buschem and a brave soldier named **Peter Dunn**), I too would like to add a salute to **Peter Dunn** who was truly a great soldier and a very close friend. I first met **Pete** in Camp Shelby and we conquered the battle of swamps, woods and many hours of training. Also I recall the time spent in Hattiesburg and the refreshment garden of the PX. Prior to shipping out of Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, I had the opportunity to visit **Pete's** family only a short distance from the camp and they treated me with open arms and just like a son. After the battle of Buschem, I was able to visit **Pete** at the Battalion Aid Station. **Pete** had five bullet holes in his body and he still didn't want to be evacuated from the area. The next time I saw **Pete** was when I returned to the States in 1947. I was being processed for discharge and visited **Pete** at his home in New Jersey and again, we had the chance to reminisce the good old days, bad days and the end of the war. That was the last time I saw **Peter Dunn**.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Jim story, "Deuces Wild," will appear in the next issue of the Bulletin.)

LeVerne Loveland, 517 Rosewood Terrace, Linden, New Jersey 07036-5832 — Co. G, 271st: Thank you for sending me **Sergeant Ralph Plugge's** address. When I took my basic training at Camp Shelby, **Sgt. Plugge** was the NCO in charge of one of our platoons. I believe the 2nd or 3rd platoon. I was in the 1st platoon, but I knew him then and respected him very highly. He is in the photo of our company taken with the original group of trainees which I have. Eventually I was shipped out and ended up as a replacement in the 90th Infantry Division in July 1944 in Normandy. We fought across France into Germany and in March 1945 I was wounded and sent back to England to recuperate. Christmas 1944 we were stationed on the Saar River with the Germans on the other side and then the 90th got orders to move up to help relieve the "Bulge" problem. I was discharged from the English hospital on V.E. Day and eventually returned to my 90th Division unit and after many months, was shipped home and discharged in early December 1945.

Many memories I have of my overseas activity are better forgotten, but my basic training with the 69th Division was tough and thorough and believe me, well worth it. I've followed the 69th and its exploits through Europe and had many buddies who remained with it, so you can understand why the 69th Division still means a great deal to me. The 69th Division has always had a very special place in my heart and will to my dying day. I look forward to the Bulletin. By the way, **Loar Quickle** was a very good friend of mine.

The death of **Nat Green** in a senseless accident was a terrible tragedy that should never have happened. We can survive the horrors of war and still fall because of some other action by the carelessness of our own people.

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THE MAIL BOX

(Continued from Page 5)

Carl Q. Christol, 1041 Anoka Place, Pacific Palisades, California 90272-2414 — G-3 Section, Div. Hq.: In recent months I have been working with a Southern California organization which has been promoting the establishment of an International Criminal Tribunal. My interest stems from having taught international law at the University of Southern California prior to my retirement. The interest goes all the way back to the prosecution of the major German war criminals in Nuremberg at the end of the war. I thought that almost everyone would favor a new tribunal based on Nuremberg, but find there are powerful dissenters. I have also been giving some talks on the subject of "Impeachment." I can highly recommend Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist's book entitled "The Grand Inquests." It covers both the historical and legal aspects of the subject. The book should be available in most public libraries.

My international law involvement in recent years has centered on international space law, involving satellites and remote sensing. As a result of these activities, The International Institute of Space Law of the International Astronautical Federation at its October, 1998 meeting in Melbourne, Australia, awarded me its "Lifetime Achievement Award." It reads: "Author, lecturer, and expert consultant on space law and policy. In recognition of his lifetime fundamental contributions to the analysis of legal, scientific and societal aspects of astronautics, his early vision and dedicated service to extending law into this new environment, and for his unique dedication to international space cooperation affecting the future of mankind."

Happily we "won" World War II. If that had not happened, perhaps none of the above would ever have come about.

Lynn D. Farrar, 955 Diablo Drive, Lafayette, California 94549-4607 — Btry. C, 881st F.A.: Through my best buddy in my old outfit, I found out about the 69th Association to my great surprise and delight. I am only sorry that it has been so long before I was informed about it. The Bulletin is terrific and I guess I have read it and re-read it several times. Add to that the fact that my buddy's picture with his wife was on page 13, **Hugh and Dorothy Milstead** of Bolivar, Tennessee.

I knew in WWII that the 69th was a great outfit and now I can see there is still plenty of talent among the group to hold the annual meetings they do and put out such a fine Bulletin. I am really sorry that I did not know about the get-together in San Francisco some years ago. It is just a hop, skip and jump from where I live. The best of regards to all.

Carl A. Fritch, 60 South Park Avenue, Mertztown, Pennsylvania 19539-9001 — 569th Signal Co. (Radio): I remember Christmas 1944 in Winchester, England. A few of us Radio boys had dinner at a children's

orphanage. We got food and fruit from the mess hall and had an unforgettable time. Many more unforgettable times after that. I was with the 272nd all through combat to the link-up.

Seymour Cy Abrams, 5540 Owensmouth Avenue, #213, Woodland Hills, California 91367 — Co. C, 269th Engineers: I sure wish I could attend more of the reunions. The last one I attended was the Queen Mary reunion in Long Beach, California. I had a stroke 2 years ago which left me paralyzed on the right side. You are doing a terrific job for the 69th.

USO Entertainers Deserve Recognition

Submitted by: Donald W. Rogers

12740 Huntingwick

Houston, Texas 77024

Donald Rogers' wife was a USO Entertainer and recently passed away. After this information was published in the bulletin, he started hearing from USO people from all over, some who knew her and some who knew of her. That started him trying to answer the question, "Why is there not a memorial or monument dedicated to the thousands of people who, paid or unpaid, entertained millions of our guys both here and abroad?"

Not being able to answer this question, he started inquiring and found that there is no memorial. He also uncovered a great deal of support and interest from various places.

Anyone who knows someone who was in the USO during World War II and Korea, please contact Donald and send along their name and address. Also, anyone in the 69th who worked with USO groups, please write to Donald. Possibly some of the Special Services people of the Division might know something of interest that happened in England and Europe.

MOVING

Please print your new address below:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Please send this form and your old address label to:

**Robert Kurtzman
P.O. Box 105, Wilmot, Ohio 44689**

Please allow six weeks advance notice.

Message from the President



James E. Boris
6800 Henry Avenue
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19128
Telephone: 215/483-2064

I am writing from Florida at this time where I came to get away from the snow and cold of Pennsylvania.

I have checked out the facilities for our 1999 Reunion and I must say they are great. Those of you who may have questions and hesitations about attending, please reconsider. Time is short, how many more reunions do you think we, as individuals, will have the health and energy to attend. If you are like me, it's always great to see our old friends and buddies. Don't wait until it's too late.

You golfers can look forward to a nice outing, for I have contacted a nice club who will take good care of us. As your Golf Chairman, as well as President, I urge you to sign up now for Orlando.

Here's hoping to see you all in Orlando in November. Let's see a good turnout.

An Incident in Germany

Submitted by: **Jim Boris**

I have been wanting to tell a short story of what occurred one night in Germany.

We had just crossed the Rhine River and went to our position on top of a hill. I am not sure of the spelling, but I will spell it the way it sounds to me, "Ehren Briet Stein." I was a Staff Sergeant at the time, in Headquarters Battery in command of a section called "Fire Direction Center." This section computed the data that was to go on the 12 guns of a 105mm Howitzer Battalion.

Shortly before we were sent overseas I was sent a new man from one of the gun batteries. This soldier will go unnamed, because until this day, he says this never happened. I was to make him a computer operator. This was that person who received the data from

me and one other person, and then by phone, sent that data to the gun battery he was the operator for.

We had a little free time this day and he asked me if he could visit his old buddies at the gun battery he was formerly assigned to. I gave him the OK and he came back later that day a little under the weather. His former battery was stationed down the road near a wine factory and had a little too much to drink.

I told him to get to bed and get some rest. I lost track of him, but about 3:00 a.m. in the morning we get C.S.M.O., which means "Close Station March Order."

In an Artillery Battalion, as I remember, each section had a place to be in line as we were moving on the road. I had a 2 -1/2 and a 3/4 ton truck assigned to me to move my men and equipment. We were ready to move out and I could not find the soldier in question. Now, when you are expected to have your vehicle in line, they better be there. We looked and called and could not find him.

I asked the men to give one more effort to find him, and this decision stayed with me the rest of my life. Under one of the wheels of the 3/4 ton truck, we found the missing soldier, his head under the wheel. We placed him in the vehicle and were on our way. If we had pulled out without finding him, he would be dead now.

After leaving the service in 1946, one year later, I became a professional fire fighter, which I have been retired from after 30 years of service. I was an officer for 22 years and what happened to me that night stayed with me. For when we had a fire, I was responsible to make sure the fire was out, whether it be in a room, in grass, an auto, etc. I can honestly say I never had a rekindle, that is a fire that restarts after you have left the fire scene.

This is what I attribute that good record to. I checked the complete fire area, then had one of my men check it also, after which I rechecked it.

This is what that night on the hill taught me and I say it lives with me until this day. I possibly saved that man's life by not hurrying and rechecking, looking for that soldier.

As I said before, today that soldier doubts this ever happened. This did happen, so help me GOD!!!

**52nd Annual Reunion
Orlando, Florida
November 14th to 21st, 1999**
*The perfect time
of year for Florida!*
Hope you can make it to this one.

Membership Chairman Report

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

ATTENTION!

If you wish to stay on the roster and continue to receive the Bulletin, you will have to help by giving us your correct address the way the Postal Service wants it and also give us a complete nine digit zip code.

The Postal Service is returning bulletins and dues notices due to addresses being incomplete: i.e., Moved - Left no Forwarding Address, No Such Address, Forwarding Address Expired, Rural Address - Not Correct Due to 911. You may have a street listed when it should be an avenue, circle, terrace or place.

There are also rumors that third class mail will not be delivered without the nine digit zip, so please let us know what the four extra numbers are. All you have to do is ask the Post Office what it is.

In the future if we get a return, we will send a letter back to the Postal Service and if we do not get a correct address back, your name will be removed from the roster.

We are also quite sure that there are many deceased members still on our roster. If you have any knowledge of deceased members that may still be on the roster, please let us know. If you don't want to spend 33¢ on a stamp, just send me a letter without a stamp and leave your return off the letter and it will be sent to us with postage due and we'll be glad to pay for it.

Don't forget to pay your dues. Remember that the Association cannot operate without money. We have no means of generating revenue and it is up to you, the members, to keep your dues current. We are getting older and we tend to forget, so mark it in a place where you can't miss it. Pay your dues as soon as you get your Dues Notice. Don't tuck it away!

New Men Relocated Since Our Last Bulletin

- James A. Henderson** — AT, 273rd Infantry
1014 Evanston Street, Houston, Texas 77015-4455
- Louis J. Robbins** — Battery C, 880th Field Artillery
71 Amsterdam Ave., New York, New York 10025-6907
- Leo Cavanaugh** — Unit Unknown
1801 4th Street S.W., Ruskin, Florida 33570
- Gardner W. Hitchcock** — Co. B, 269th Engineers
1100 Spears St., W. Memphis, Arkansas 72301-1950
- Roscoe W. Gilbert** — Company D, 273rd Infantry
2610 Blueberry Street, Pasadena, Texas 77503
- Raymond L. Bond** — Battery C, 880th Field Artillery
Route 135, Box 2760, Winthrop, Maine 04364
- Joseph L. Devlin, Sr.** — Company K, 273rd Infantry
4027 Castor Avenue
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19124-5337
- Henry S. Bashkin** — Battery C, 880th Field Artillery
2358 King Place N.W., Washington, DC 20007-1029
- Gerald H. Dominy** — Company D, 273rd Infantry
21 Lozier Place, Plattsburg, New York 12901-1618
- Louis J. Roman** — Company G, 271st Infantry
45 N. Fernway Road, Memphis, Tennessee 38117
- Joe Morrison** — Cannon Company, 271st Infantry
1221 Evergreen Ave. S., Clearwater, Florida 33756
- Philippe J. Desmarais** — Battery C, 880th F.A.
1 Flat St., #101, Cumberland, Rhode Island 02864
- Comie Lee Welborn** — Company E, 271st Infantry
240 N. Wonder Dr., Leesville, South Carolina 29070
- William Moskowitz** — 69th Recon
3 Troy Drive, Livingston, New Jersey 07039
- Richard Boelke** — Battery C, 880th Field Artillery
6302 Mineral Point Road
Madison, Wisconsin 53705-4373
- Richard H. Escott** — Battery C, 880th Field Artillery
119 Litchfield Street, Clinton, Michigan 49236-9764
- Ralph E. Gilliland** — Company F, 273rd Infantry
708 Old Orchard Drive, Fostoria, Ohio 44830
- Lloyd D. Shelton** — Battery C, 880th Field Artillery
308 Cleveland Street, Tallulah, Louisiana 71282

**NEWS MATERIAL AND PICTURES
FOR THE BULLETIN SHOULD BE MAILED TO:
FIGHTING 69th BULLETIN, P.O. Box 69, Champion, Pennsylvania 15622-0069
ADDRESS CHANGES, NEW MEN AND TAPS SHOULD BE
MAILED TO OUR MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN:
ROBERT KURTZMAN, Membership Chairman, P.O. Box 105, Wilmot, Ohio 44689
DO NOT SEND DUES TO THE BULLETIN OR BOB!!
DUES GO TO OUR TREASURER, WILLIAM MATLACH.**

**1999 69th
Infantry Division
52nd Annual Reunion
November 14th-21st, 1999
ORLANDO, FLORIDA
WYNDHAM ORLANDO RESORT
8001 International Drive**

Ken A. Sawyer, Reunion Chairman
Company D, 273rd Infantry
2311 Skywind Circle
Melbourne, Florida 32935-1460
Telephone: 407/254-7175

Plan to be in Orlando this November. There is little need for me to describe the vacation spot that you all know and most of you have visited. You probably know all about its many amusement parks. Many of you attended the 37th reunion held here in 1984. It was great fun then, and it will be great fun in 1999.

Don't let the dates worry you. November is a very pleasant month in Florida. This past November the temperature reached over 80 degrees every day from the 14th to the 30th. Hopefully it will be a bit cooler this year. Records show that it can get down into the 40's, but not very often. Bring along a warm sweater or jacket just in case. No need to worry about hurricanes either; officially the season is over November 30, but a November hurricane is a rarity.

The reunion committee has set up a few tours for your enjoyment. A visit to the Kennedy Space Center on Thursday is a natural choice. There have been many improvements over the years. You will get to see a show in the visitor center and take a 3 hour bus tour of the space center. We wish we could schedule a launching that week. A launching on Thursday might be disastrous for our plans. The space center tour was on the 1984 agenda as was a trip to Cypress Gardens. On Friday we will enjoy an ice show as well as the famous water show. The floral setting has been enhanced and acres of mums have been added. The viewing tower, sculptures, and much more await us. Not on the '84 agenda is the Wednesday tour in Orlando. The day will include visits to a couple of cultural attractions: the new science museum and the Tiffany museum. A stop in Winter Park in the middle of the day is included for lunch time and a bit of shopping.

Orlando has many facilities for being entertained while dining. We have selected two of them for your Tuesday and Wednesday pleasure. On Tuesday we will visit King Henry's Feast where we will observe numerous acts with a medieval theme. On Wednesday we take in Arabian Nights which offers 17 acts featuring

horses, including the Lippezaners. In 1984, a night was spent at Church Street Station. It is still there and going strong. Shuttle service is usually available from the major hotels. Check for times and dates when you get there.

The hotel is offering a beef, a chicken and a vegetarian selection for both the Early Bird Dinner and the Banquet. Please indicate your preference on the accompanying registration form. Those not making a selection will be served the beef.

The unique style of the Wyndham Orlando Resort provides the opportunity to try something a little different. We can enjoy sandwiches with iced tea and lemonade at the pavilion on Friday evening, between Cypress Gardens and the PX party. Other beverages can be purchased at the outdoor bar. The price is moderate, and the menu is suitable for those with moderate appetites. The pavilion is close to the meeting site.

All of the above is not meant to deter you from visiting the major theme parks. These will cost you over \$40 per. Turnaway crowds are not uncommon in season. November is a low attendance month and a comfortable one. Transportation from the hotel to Sea World and Universal Studios is available for \$6 round trip. Disney attractions will set you back \$10. The trolley on International Drive can take you to Sea World for 25 cents.

International Drive is loaded with tourist attractions and franchise restaurants. There are economical eating spots within easy walking distance. And you also have the trolley for those spots a little further away. International Drive is a tourist attraction in itself: you can skip the expensive parks and still have fun.

The Wyndham Orlando Resort covers 40 acres and consists of 16 residential buildings. Buildings 13, 14, 15, and 16 are next to the hotel convention center. Buildings 7 and 12 are close by. Room assignments cannot be made ahead of time. Be sure to request a nearby building if you have mobility problems. Trams run a continuous route from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. to provide transportation from your quarters to your hotel destination. Special requests for a tram pickup can be made anytime. Look for a map of the hotel in this bulletin.

There is parking near each residential building. The hotel has a lot where you can leave a recreation vehicle. The vehicle cannot be used for overnight accommodations.

Please note there is a reservation deadline. On October 26, the hotel will release the remaining rooms from those we have blocked out to other customers. Why wait? You can cancel your reservation up to 48 hours before arrival date without charge.

The Orlando Airport is about 10 miles away. Shuttle service is available to the hotel for \$12 per person. A taxi will cost \$27 for up to 5 persons. The shuttle bus and taxis can be found at the baggage retrieval level.

69th Quartermaster

Submitted by: **Epitacio F. Granillo**
862 North Grand Street
Mesa, Arizona 85201-4220



Pictured are six personnel that were in my outfit after the war. We were transferred to an Ordnance outfit. I don't remember the organization. We were stationed near Heidelberg, a small town called Sandhausen. We didn't have enough points to go home.

Kneeling: Sgt. Dick Laughlin, M/Sgt. Steve Martini, Sgt. Norton. Standing: Corporal Soto, Sgt. Epitacio Granillo, Corporal Beaver.

We were on R&R on the French Riviera, France.

I entered the service on February 9th, 1943. From Phoenix, Arizona we went to Fort McArthur, California. We were there for about three (3) weeks getting our shots and uniforms. We were sent to Camp Adair, Oregon for Basic Training. Two months of training and then we were sent to Camp Shelby. This was about April 15, 1943. Since we were the first troops to arrive, we were in operation to help the infantry troops and artillery hauling items that they needed. The 69th Quartermaster was the first company to be formed.

On November 1944, as others remember, we sailed on the U.S.S. LeJeune. We were cramped like sardines. After a long, long journey we arrived in South Hampton, England. Our company was stationed at Winchester.

On December 16, 1944, we were alerted to go to Belgium. We arrived in Belgium on December 17th. That afternoon we transported troops to the front line.

We were doing this hauling for about a week and other duties. We traveled many times through St. Vith and Malmedy. These two cities I cannot forget. We lost our Company Commander and two enlisted men, **Roberts** and **Bernal**. Our company received the "Unit Citation" for a job well done. When our troops met the Russians, our company was in Leipzig, Germany.

I was discharged on March 30, 1946. I worked for the Air Force for 38 years. Also retired from Arizona State University. I am a Past Commander of the American Legion.

You and your staff are doing an excellent job. Keep up the good work. God bless you, God bless America.

Tony Bummara writes...

*Company E, 273rd Infantry
87 Hickory Lane*

Mays Landing, New Jersey 08330-8902

I noted on the "Taps" page of the last bulletin that **Arthur Madderson** had passed away. He was in my company and while in the service, he and I were pretty close. After the war ended, we bunked together, dated

together and got into trouble together. We got together at his house in Upper Darby, Pa. once right after we got home in 1946 and I got married in 1947. But I had not seen him since, not even at any of the reunions although we did talk on the telephone during the Valley Forge, PA reunion.



Arthur Madderson, Germany 1945



Doris and Tony Bummara at the Houston Reunion.

**69th INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION 1999
52nd ANNUAL REUNION
461st AAA BN. - 661st T.D. BN. - 777th TANK BN.
Wyndham Orlando Resort
ORLANDO, FLORIDA
NOVEMBER 14th thru NOVEMBER 21st, 1999**

SEND THIS RESERVATION FORM TO:

ATTENTION: RESERVATIONS

WYNDHAM ORLANDO RESORT

8001 INTERNATIONAL DRIVE, ORLANDO, FLORIDA 32819

Telephone: 407/351-2420 or 1-800-421-8001 Fax: 407/352-8759

HOUSING: Please reserve one of the following:

\$77.00 + Single _____ \$77.00 + Double - 2 persons _____ \$87.00 + Triple - 3 persons _____

\$97.00 + Quadruple - 4 persons _____ ALL ROOMS ADD 11% TAX

Print full names of ALL persons sharing room: _____

NOTE: Special accommodations required: (if available)

HANDICAPPED _____ KING SIZE BED _____ 2 DOUBLE BEDS _____ NON-SMOKING _____

I / We plan to arrive (day) _____, November _____, 1999. (Check in after 4:00 p.m.)

I / We plan to depart (day) _____, November _____, 1999. (Check out before 11:00 a.m.)

I / We will be bringing guest(s) _____ Adults _____ Children

If possible, I/We wish to be quartered near other guests from the same Unit (Specify) _____

Send Confirmation to: (Please Type or Print)

Name: _____

Street / R.D. / P.O. Box: _____

City / State / Zip: _____

Telephone / Area Code: _____

IN ORDER TO CONFIRM RESERVATIONS, One of the following *MUST* accompany this form:

Check or Money Order (One Night's Lodging) payable to the WYNDHAM ORLANDO RESORT, or
Major Credit Card and Date of Expiration. The following Credit Cards are accepted:

American Express, Master Card, Visa Card, Diner's Club, Carte Blanche and Discover.

Credit Card Name _____ Number _____ Expires _____

I, (your signature) _____ authorize the WYNDHAM ORLANDO RESORT to
make charges on my credit card. Date: _____

If this form has been filled out by anyone other than the person for whom this reservation has been made, give name,
address and telephone number of the person filling out this form.

Reservations must be received not later than **October 26, 1999**. After this date the group's blocked rooms will be released for
immediate resale. Reservations requested after this date will be on a space available basis at the group rate. Group rates can only
be offered for the dates of the reunion. If a particular type of room is unavailable, the next most suitable room will be assigned.
No particular room, room type, or location can be guaranteed. Deposit returnable on 48 hour cancellation notice prior to your
arrival date.

69th INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION 1999 52nd ANNUAL REUNION

461st AAA BN. - 661st T.D. BN. - 777th TANK BN. WYNDHAM ORLANDO RESORT - ORLANDO, FLORIDA NOVEMBER 14th thru NOVEMBER 21st, 1999

Registration form to be mailed to: **William R. Matlach, Treasurer**

P.O. Box 474, West Islip, New York 11795-0474 • Telephone: 516/669-8077

I/we will attend the 69th Infantry Division Association Reunion in Orlando, Florida during the week of November 14th thru 21st, 1999 and will attend the following activities.

Name: _____
 Street / R.D. / P.O. Box: _____
 City / State / Zip: _____
 Telephone / Area Code: _____ First Timer Second Timer Old Timer
 Unit: _____ Wife's Name: _____
 Guests: _____

Daily Events	Per Person	Number Persons	Amount
Registration: Monday thru Friday , 9:00 a.m. to Noon and 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. (Check the Bulletin Board for Changes)			
Sunday, November 14th — Early Arrivals on your own.			
Monday, November 15th — Check Bulletin Board and Hospitality Room.			
Tuesday, November 16th — KING HENRY'S FEAST - 6:00 to 10:00 p.m.	\$ 35.00	_____	\$ _____
Wednesday, November 17th — ORLANDO TOUR	\$ 25.00	_____	\$ _____
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Lunch on your own.			
ARABIAN NIGHTS DINNER - 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.	\$ 35.00	_____	\$ _____
Thursday, November 18th — KENNEDY SPACE CENTER	\$ 30.00	_____	\$ _____
8:45 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Lunch on your own.			
GOLF TOURNAMENT — 9:00 a.m. Check Bulletin Board for details.	\$ 28.00	_____	\$ _____
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING — 4:00 p.m. Check Bulletin Board			
EARLY BIRD DINNER , Cash Bar-6:00 p.m., Dinner 7:00 p.m.	\$ 30.00	_____	\$ _____
Selections: New York Strip____, Chicken Breast Oscar____, Tortellini Primavera____			
Friday, November 19th — CYPRESS GARDENS	\$ 32.00	_____	\$ _____
8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Lunch on your own.			
PICNIC IN PAVILION — 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.	\$ 10.00	_____	\$ _____
PX BEER PARTY — 8:30 p.m. to 12:00 Midnight	\$ 5.00	_____	\$ _____
Saturday, November 20th — COFFEE AND DANISH - 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. GENERAL MEMBERSHIP and LADIES AUXILIARY MEETING. 9:00 a.m. to Noon			
BANQUET — Cash Bar 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. Selections: Prime Rib____, Chicken Wellington____, Vegetarian Strudel____			
MEMORIAL SERVICE — 7:00 to 7:30 p.m.			
DINNER DANCE - 8:30 p.m. to 12:00 Midnight	\$ 30.00	_____	\$ _____
Sunday, November 21st - Farewell Breakfast - 7:30-10:30 a.m.	\$ 12.00	_____	\$ _____
Replacement Cost for Lost or Broken Permanent Badges	\$ 4.00	_____	\$ _____
SUPPORT YOUR HOSPITALITY ROOM: DONATIONS PLEASE!!!			\$ _____
DUES — New Dues Year - August 1, 1999 to July 31, 2000		Reunion Sub-Total	\$ _____
Regular Membership	\$ 10.00		\$ _____
Ladies Auxiliary	\$ 5.00		\$ _____
Postage and Bulletin Donation (up to you)			\$ _____
		Total Amount Paid	\$ _____

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

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

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

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

Last Call!

Submitted by: **Frank A. Taraburelli**

Company K, 272nd Infantry

3 Fuller Road, Middleton, Massachusetts 01949-2334

I was with the Battle Patrol of the 272nd. During my time in Europe and at war's end, I was shipped to Camp Top Hat, tent city of embarkation, now set up to ship men to Japan. When the war in Japan ended, I was in Antwerp, Belgium. I was then transferred to Salzburg, Austria and was given the Four Power Pass and I.D. Card of U.S.F.A. Headquarters, United States Forces of Austria, APO 777 U.S. Army No. 2651. My duty there was to deliver whatever from Salzburg to the Vienna Garrison.

One day I was to drive from Salzburg to the Garrison to deliver some parcels or mail with another soldier. He was doing the driving and we were to go through English and Russian territories. A Russian convoy of horses and weapons was entering in the opposite direction of us on this high rise two way street when my partner struck the two horses pulling a wagon loaded with confiscated furniture. They ran in front of our jeep throwing at least 5 Russians into the air stopping our jeep which was going about 40 mph. The driver had a bad cut over his eye and I was trying to stop the bleeding, holding a piece of cloth over his wound.

Approximately 20 minutes later, an American staff car was coming by and the American captain asked what happened. Lucky for me to see an American vehicle in this sector. We were in Linz when it happened. I explained this incident and he stated for me to stay with the vehicle. The Russians returned and now had two more horses and towed my vehicle to a house in Linz. I was at this house for 17 days signing hand-written letters, all written in Russian, regarding this accident (I think). I was under house arrest.

Well, at age 20 I still had enough brains to say, "Nich Furstane," "I don't understand" to this Russian sergeant. I had heard that quite a few GIs were supposed to be missing during this occupation. I thought to myself that I better just wait for the relief this captain would bring. I waited over two weeks and still no results. On the seventeenth day, I thought I'd try to correct this vehicle problem myself. The radiator was resting against the fan.

Now, I was treated good by my Russian guards. We'd go to town to get food we needed, take chickens or whatever the civilians had and all the liquor that we could confiscate. If I didn't leave soon, I'd probably end up an alcoholic or possibly, in Siberia, Russia. Bad things were going through my mind at an unbelievable rate. Vienna was only about 40 miles from Linz. I couldn't understand why it was taking so long for help to arrive.

Finally, I observed the damage and asked my Russian guards for help pulling the radiator back in place. They did help me with this. I had three guards, two in their 60's and the other was 34. I found this out

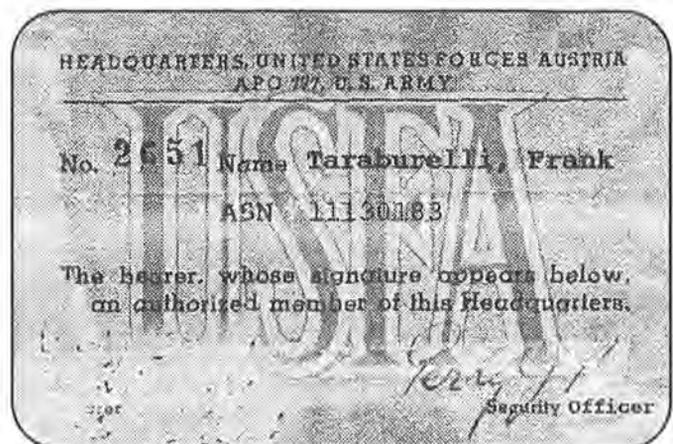
speaking in German and body language, our way of communicating we had developed from all the time we had spent together.

I was just learning to drive and we never had a car at home. We had the radiator in place now and I asked one of the guards to get me a pail of water. I filled the radiator up and the Russians felt important and very happy about having helped me.

Now, I was parked on a hill. The vehicle was turning over very slowly and I couldn't get it to start. I then asked the Russians if they would give me a push going down the hill. Maybe I could start it in 2nd gear. As I was going down the hill I put it in 2nd gear, got it started and drove away. I think I went about 40 miles in 2nd or 3rd gear. I did not look back. Unbelievable!

At the Vienna Garrison, I spoke with the officer of the day who did not know that I was missing or the jeep. I asked him about the captain that I ran into the day this happened and he stated, "Who knows! Men are being rotated every day here." He knew nothing of the incident.

I was stationed in Vienna for about two months and sent home on the point system. If I hadn't have done what I did, I would probably still be there.



Treasurer's Message



William R. and Jane Matlach

William R. Matlach, Treasurer

Post Office Box 474

West Islip, New York 11795-0474

Telephone: 516/669-8077

In the May-August 1998 Bulletin there appeared an article entitled "69th Division Patrol Meets Russians At Czechoslovakia," which I had submitted. To my surprise it drew comments from a number of 69ers, both at the Houston Reunion and in notes which have accompanied the incoming dues. I am glad that a few people found it interesting - I wrote it because I thought it was an interesting experience, but then, I am in a highly biased position in that regard. At Christmas time, I received a card from **Chaplain Howington** who writes:

"Dear Bill,

In a recent issue of the 69th newspaper, you detailed our trip to Czechoslovakia. My memory and my diary supported your report in most details. I did return to Headquarters when the Russians refused entry, but had our pass renewed and took off south of the Russian territory to Kolarik's country. I recall Pilsen very clearly. A few years ago my wife and I traveled by train from Munich to Prague, passing through Pilsen. The Russian occupation had pretty well denuded that country before they pulled out.

Blessings on you during this holy season. I vividly recall a Christmas in England caroling in a G.I. truck entertaining kids in the village at a Christmas tree party. But as you confessed in the above mentioned article, memory does not always serve us well. After all, that was over a half century ago.

Yours,

Nolan Howington"

I have read that the United States Postal Service is a highly efficient organization, operating solely on postage and fees collected with no subsidy from the

government. They deliver letters to all 50 states (including Alaska and Hawaii) for \$.33 which appears to be a very low cost for the amount of work it entails. In recent years they have been keeping costs down as much as possible by automating many operations, including the sorting of mail, which is commendable.

However, this has been causing the 69th Infantry Division Association many problems, especially in the bulk mailing of Bulletins and Dues Notices. We find that an unusually large number of Bulletins and Dues Notices are being returned because the address is incorrect, or insufficient, or the person has moved and left no forwarding address. Many of the reasons stated for the return do not make sense, such as "No Such Street," "No Such Number," or "Not Deliverable As Addressed" when they have previously been delivering to this address for ten years or more. It would appear that previously, when hand sorting was done, the sorter would disregard minor errors and the mail would get delivered. However, it seems that the computer or sorting robot is less forgiving and any minor error is sufficient to warrant returning the mail to us, particularly in the case of bulk mail.

To try to save as many members as we can from being lost, **Bob Kurtzman** and I have been sending form letters by First Class mail to the "defective" addresses and find that the treatment is a little better than for bulk mail. Sometimes the letter comes back marked "Deceased" (at least we know what happened to the member), or the letter gets through to the member and he sends us a new address. Many times there is no return and no response, which indicates that the letter has been delivered but for some reason no one has responded, so the address was usable, although perhaps not to the liking of the robot computer.

On one occasion, I received a response from the member giving me a corrected address: we had sent the mail to "Box 47 Route 3" and it should have been "Route 3 Box 47"! Somehow, the computer could not handle that!

Just the other day I had a new experience with Post Office automation. To acknowledge receipt of your dues, we send you your membership card and a short note acknowledging the receipt. To save addressing envelopes, whenever we can we use a "window" type envelope and insert the used Dues Envelope tab you have sent us in such a way that your address label shows in the window. Using this technique, we can save addressing 1500 to 2000 envelopes per year, which is a lot of work saved. For some reason, the set of address labels printed for the recent Dues Notice were printed using a narrower style of type compared to that used for previous labels. When we used these tabs with window envelopes, several of the acknowledgements were delivered to me instead of to the addressee! The postal clerk told me that the sorting computer must have had a problem reading the narrow

(Continued on Page 16)

THE TREASURER'S MESSAGE

(Continued from Page 15)

print of the label so it read my return address instead, marked the letter with the bar code for my address, and the letters were sent to me!

At any rate, if you notice that the address we are using for you is incorrect in any way, even minor, please send us a correction. With the present sorting systems even a minor error in the address could prevent the mail from reaching you.

Believe it or not, we are collecting dues again this year as we did last year! In case you forgot to respond to the Dues Notice, you may send in your dues now: Regular Dues \$10.00, Auxiliary \$5.00, and any donations to our Postage/Bulletin Fund will be appreciated. Make checks payable to the 69th Infantry Division Association, Inc.

HAVE YOU PAID YOUR DUES!

NEW DUES YEAR FOR 1998-1999

August 1, 1998 to July 31, 1999

Regular Membership \$10.00

Ladies' Auxiliary \$ 5.00

Bulletin Donation Up To You

***Keep the Bulletin Coming.
Send Your Dues in Today!***

Send Your Dues To:

WILLIAM R. MATLACH, TREASURER

Post Office Box 474

West Islip, New York 11795-0474

Telephone: 516/669-8077

Do not send dues to Bulletin Headquarters.

Attn: Co. I, 273rd Men

In the Jan., Feb., March, April 1997 Bulletin Volume 50, No. 2, page 52, there appeared a Company I, 273rd photo that was submitted by **Paul H. Eagon**. His address was incorrect in that bulletin and he has requested that we correct it as some of the men were trying to reach him. It's never too late to fix a mistake. Many men keep the bulletins for a long time. His correct address is:

Paul H. Eagon

1435 North Avenue, Waukegan, Illinois 60085

Company H, 271st Infantry

Submitted by: **Morris Yegelwel**
6149 Pointe Regal Circle, Apt. 210
Delray Beach, Florida 33484-1808



*Pfc. Haugen the Barber and Pfc. Morris Yegelwel
Schmidtheim, Germany 1945*



*"There are no creases in the ETO."
L. Sgt. Sol Rosenblitt and Pfc. Morris Yegelwel*

The Final Word About "J" Platoon???

Submitted by: **Herb Pickett**
Company K, 271st Infantry Regiment
P.O. Box 11695
Casa Grande, Arizona 85230

Questions by **Jim Kidd** in Bulletin (Volume 51, No. 1, Page 36 1997) unanswered by **Raymond Norris** in Bulletin (Volume 51, No. 3, Page 35, May, June, July, August 1998) can be cleared up in part by reading "J" Platoon's account of their part in the war - written by members of their own platoon on page 47, Volume 51, No. 3, - May, June, July, August 1998 bulletin.

As Company Commander of K Company during the full time of which "J" Platoon was also a part of the company, I feel that I am qualified to respond.

Some time before our company entered Kassel, I was called to Regimental Headquarters for a meeting to discuss the integration of negro troops into our Regiment. There was to be one platoon per regiment in the 69th Division and that platoon was to be assigned to a rifle company. All of those at the meeting were briefed on the concept handed down by Eisenhower.

After the meeting I was asked (told) to remain for a meeting with the Regimental Commander and 3rd Battalion Commander. To make the story short, I told them that I would be honored to have the negro platoon become a part of my company. They joined us at Kassel and stayed with us until the war was over.

It was not revealed to me who decided to have the platoon remain as one unit rather than divide them among the four platoons.

The name "J" for the 5th platoon in our company came about in a "brainstorm" session - there being no "J" unit in the Army we would use it.

"J" Platoon joined Company K during combat, therefore, little time was available for all to get to know each other until several battles later; and, I must say that when they engaged the Germans, the Germans knew they had been in a hell of a fight. "J" Platoon suffered almost one-third casualties wounded and killed in the battle for Leipzig.

Neither time nor space permits all the stories: some sad, some funny. By the time the war was over we all had bonded well.

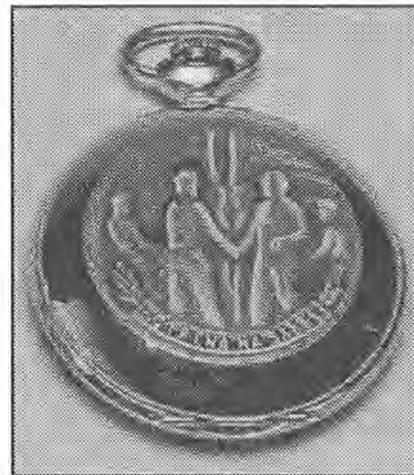
The negro volunteers for infantry in WWII had their first reunion in 1995 - white soldiers who fought with them were invited.

Please go back to the Bulletin (Volume 51, No. 3, 1998 - May, June, July, August) and read "J" Platoon's own story.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Thanks Herb, hopefully this will help to some degree in this ongoing controversy.)

Commemorative Watch Nice Keepsake

Submitted by: **Harold A. Sorenson**
Service, 273rd Infantry Regiment
3500 Queens Avenue
La Crosse, Wisconsin 54601-8327



My daughters gave me a pocket watch which I think many 69ers would want for show and tell. The 50th Anniversary of the end of World War II is commemorated in this crafted 18-jewel steel watch made by the acclaimed Molnija watch factory in Russia. Interior face is steel filigree. Includes a 14-inch chain and Russian-English documentation: New: \$49.00.

The front of the timepiece commemorates the meeting of the Russian and American troops at the Elbe River in May, 1945. On the back are the Russian words, "50th Anniversary of the end of the Second World War."

The **Elbe River AWB085**, which is the order number, can be ordered from Mass Army Navy whose catalog includes Army and Navy surplus from around the World. Their toll free number is 1-800-343-7749.

Mass Army Navy
15 Fordham Road
Boston, Massachusetts 02134-3000

Attention Members

We want all to be aware that when you send in your photos, we will pick out the best ones for print and return the rest to you. A lot of the old photos sent in are so blurry or faded that no one is recognizable in the photos. Therefore we do not want to waste space in the bulletin by printing them. However, we **do not want to discourage anyone** from sending in photos. We need all the material we can get. So do send them in and we will decide what is best. Please fellows, do not get upset if we don't print all of your pictures. We do our best with space permitted.

Louie Rodgers writes on the Russian Exhibit

There was an exhibit held in our Memphis Pyramid Arena, a Wonder Exhibit: "World War II through Russian Eyes." Two of my retired Air Force officer friends got me involved with our local paper because I had told them the exhibit included some pictures about the link-up. I visited the exhibit several times.

The exhibit includes pictures of the Torgau Bridge where **Lt. Robinson** and Russian **Lt. Silvas** met. The view of the bridge is identical to the thirty-two cent commemorative stamp shown on the front of Bulletin 48, No. 3, May-August 1995. Another picture includes men from the 69th Recon Troop with Russians of the 58th Guard Division. The men included in the picture are **Frank Veazey, Elmer McClain, John Veres, Ed Silvas and Robert (Bones) Schuler**. The large blow-up picture cut off **James Fikes**. This same picture appears on page 2, Bulletin Vol. 48, No. 2, Jan.-April 1995. It appears the picture had been sent to the Bulletin by **McClain**.

Another photo shows men of the 69th in a jeep talking to some Russians. There's one showing a Russian woman pinning something on the jacket of a 69er in the presence of a couple more Russians.

The fifth picture shows General Reinhardt and General Russakov, along with General Maraist and staff personnel beginning to walk away from the Elbe River and going to the building where the two division commanders will have their brief meeting along with toasts, fried egg luncheon and the exchanging of gifts. I am in the rear of the picture behind **Lt. Col. Ed Leary**, our Chief of Personnel for the division.

All of the pictures were blown up each to measure about three feet by five to six feet. The whole exhibit is most credible and has been put together in a very professional manner. Through the years I am sure most everyone has either seen something on TV or read something in a newspaper or magazine about these historic events and the exhibit is put together from all of this in a piece meal fashion. I would recommend it to anyone. It takes about one and a half to two hours to go through it with the tape player and head phones, which are included in the price of \$11.00 for seniors.

The exhibit is on a circuit here in the U.S. Watch for it as if it comes near you, it is well worth seeing.

(See Louie's story on the following page)

AN EXHIBITION
WWII

through
Russian Eyes

OF more than **500** objects

Never before
displayed in the West.

Presented by the
Historical Achievements
Museum, L.L.C.
in association with
WONDERS.



www.wiilthroughrussianeyes.com

We received information from a few 69ers on this exhibit that is now touring the country. Unfortunately, we don't have the information of where it will be and when. Perhaps if you watch your local paper, you can find that it is coming near you. Try the website or get one of your kids or grandkids to do it for you for more information.

Submitted by: **Joe McMurry**
Company I, 271st Infantry
110 Fountain Place
Jackson, Tennessee 38305

I recently had an opportunity to see this exhibit in Memphis, Tennessee. It had previously been in Washington, DC and will leave Memphis January 31, 1999 to go to San Francisco.

The exhibit includes more than 500 objects, mostly photographs and there are quite a few of the 69th Link-Up. The whole exhibit is worthwhile. It shows how fortunate we in the U.S. are since the Russians lost 20 million civilians and 7 million military personnel.

Lamar Wallis and his wife **Bea** are docents at the exhibit. **Lamar** was with Headquarters, 273rd.

I also met at the exhibit a lady named **Peggy** who was a docent and had previously lived in New York City. She said that during the war she had dated a lieutenant with the 69th who was named **Edgar Clark**. She thought **Edgar** was from Ohio.

Officer's Story adds wonder for guests

Submitted by: **Louie N. Rodgers**
Division Headquarters
99 North Main Street, #609
Memphis, Tennessee 38103-5004

THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL By Tom Bailey, Jr.
TUESDAY, JANUARY 5, 1999

Lt. Col. Louie Rodgers (USA, ret.) stayed awake late the November night after he visited the Wonders exhibit "World War II: Through Russian Eyes." "You get overwhelmed with nostalgia," Rodgers said. "It was hard to get to sleep. When I saw this at The Pyramid . . . I normally go to bed at 10:30. I didn't get to sleep until 2:00 o'clock."

Rodgers was there when the American and Russian soldiers converged from west and east to pinch off the Germans. He was aide-de-camp to General E. F. Reinhardt, whose 69th Infantry Division converged with the Russian 58th Guard Division.

Rodgers, 78, who lives in Memphis, walked into the photo display at the end of the exhibit, looked to his left at a 4-by-6-foot photograph and saw a group of Army officers in a historic walk after crossing the Elbe River in Germany.

Being the group's most junior officer - a captain - that day, Rodgers was in the rear of the party. Visible in the photo is half his helmet; the rest of him is obscured by a bespectacled colonel.

How does Rodgers know that's his helmet? On Monday, at the foot of the photo, he opened a photo album and showed a reporter several pictures of the party from different angles. The album shows him smiling with the others on that momentous day, and he's behind the officer with glasses.

"You see that helmet right there," he said. "That's me."

Seizing an opportunity, five Wonders visitors removed their headsets and crowded around. Three docents left their posts to listen.

The little group was privy to several corrections Rodgers was wonderfully qualified to make.

The photo caption states: "First meeting of American and Soviet troops at the Elbe, April 25, 1945."

Actually, Rodgers said, the photo was taken April 26th. The historic meeting happened the day before. Three link-ups between Americans and Russians occurred on April 25th.

The first one occurred south of Torgau, when a combat patrol joined Russians on the Russian side of the Elbe. However, the

American soldiers made a huge PR blunder, Rodgers said. The soldiers were slow to return to the American side and announce the link-up.

Meanwhile, about mid-afternoon April 25th, a Lt. Robinson contacted Russians at Torgau. But Robinson brought his Russian counterpart to the west side of the Elbe to meet his American superiors.

"Therefore, Lt. Robinson got all the publicity," Rodgers said. "He brought the proof back with him."

"I was with Reinhardt in his office when the regimental commander phoned and said he had two Russians, and the general said, 'Bring them to me.' They got there at 11:00 that night," Rodgers said.

The picture Rodgers pointed to shows the American division commanders going to the Russian side the next day. Reinhardt invited Rodgers to come.

The American and Russian division commanders exchanged gifts and flags. The following day, April 27, was even more ceremonious when American and Russian corps commanders met near the same spot. Rodgers remembers vodka, toasts and dancing.

For Rodgers and his colleagues, the Cold War started four days later. He accompanied Reinhardt back to the Elbe to talk to a Russian officer about plundering and "atrocities against civilian women" the Russians were committing in the no-man zone, Rodgers said. But the Russian didn't show.

"And we never heard any more from the Russian division command. At the time we didn't know it was going to be a Cold War."



Louie Rodgers shows memorabilia related to events he witnessed during World War II.

THE AUXILIARY'S PAGE

by - **Dottie Witzleb**
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A Message from Past President Alice Wolthoff

I have noticed that in the last few bulletins there hasn't been any greetings from our President. She'll have to remind our members about the lap robes and slippers. I know we all have good intentions but somehow forget if not reminded periodically. I believe everyone is looking forward to the coming reunion in November. I have sent along instructions for the lap robes and slippers. Get busy ladies.

LAP ROBES

36" x 45" for V.A.

Gauge 9 stitches 2" = 1 "V" equals 5 inches

18 ozs. 4-ply knitting worsted
 on #8 circular knitting needles

Cast on 180 stitches. Knit 1 row.

Pattern: Row 1: K3, (Y0, K10, K2 together twice K10, Y0, K1), 7 times, Knit 2

Row 2: Knit 3, P to last 3 stitches, Knit 3

Row 3: Knit across row. (Knit first and last 3 stitches every row for border.) Repeat these 3 pattern rows until all yarn is used ending with row 3. Bind off in Knit stitch. Block to size.

SLIPPERS

Size 8 Needles • Use knitting worsted yarn

Cast on 80 stitches, Knit for 2 inches, Knit 34, Knit 12, Knit 13 and 14 together turn.

Knit 12, Knitting 13 and 14 together. Repeat until 40 stitches remain. Knit for 1 inch. Knit 2, Purl 2 for 3 inches. Sew Sides.

"LADIES' TAPS"

RUTH DRAKE

wife of **A. Brooks Drake**, Co. D, 369th

ARLENE KENDLE

wife of **Earl Kendle**, Hdq., 272nd

ERNESTINE McCLAIN

wife of **Elmer McClain**, 69th Recon

MARY MOOSE

wife of **Thomas Moose**, Co. K, 272nd

RUTH WALKER

wife of **Lloyd Walker**, 69th Recon

No correspondence has been received from the Ladies Auxiliary Officers. **Jane Matlach** has sent in the names for the Ladies Taps. Please ladies, get some material into the bulletin. We cannot have a Ladies Page unless we receive the material. Dottie is busy now that she has undertaken the task of doing the entire bulletin.

Headquarters Co., 1st Battalion, 272nd Infantry

Submitted by: **George Kille**
D-54 Weber Court
Stone Harbor, New Jersey 08247-1142

Photo right. Top Row: Gerring, Schovain, Bieger, Bourke, Handwerker, Goldberg and McGrath.

Bottom Row: Folger, Kille, Harriman, Tarr and Quigg.

*Weissenfels, Germany
1944 or 1945*



Back: Martila, Cawley, Folger. Front: Spivey, Schovain. Weissenfels, Germany



Back: Harriman, Bieger, Bourke, Handwerker, McGrath, Goldberg. Front: Krupick?, Quigg



*On the Road.
1-1/2 Ton Prime Mover*

The Ambush at Witzenhausen

Submitted by: **Karl D. Martin**
Company B, 272nd Infantry Regiment
1464 Virginia Avenue
Eden, North Carolina 27288

As I began to write this accounting of the actions that took place, I must start by admitting that my memory has dimmed over the years and also point out the fact that the GI in the mud and snow mostly was not concerned with names of towns we took, nor were we too awfully worried about the big picture or overall tactics. We were concerned about doing our part to the best of our ability and staying alive. We depended on our officers to know where we were supposed to go and what we were supposed to do. There always seemed to be another city, town or village just up the road and I cannot begin to record all the terrible things I saw and experienced in just one article, so I will begin with the story.

I remember that B Company was coming up to take the point the next day and we were just outside of Witzenhausen. An old German civilian came into our lines and asked to see the commanding officer, so we took him to the captain's billet. The German went into the captain's billet and they talked for a while. When the German civilian left, the captain came out to the troops and I remember him saying, "Boys, we are going to have an easy day tomorrow. That old man said that all the German troops have pulled back from the town and all we have to do is walk in and secure the town." I remember we were all very happy on hearing that, each remembering the fighting just finished in Kassel.

The next morning we started out early for the town and I remember thinking that Witzenhausen reminded me of a town I was familiar with. It looked like Bassett, Virginia as it was located in a valley set down between two sets of hills. The only thing that was different was that the German towns had no trees except a few around the houses.

I remember that as we approached Witzenhausen, I noticed that the hillsides above the roadways had been plowed recently. We were all out in the open and moving in good order when the Germans opened up on us from both sides of the hills. It was immediately clear that they had put foxholes in the newly plowed earth and sent the old German out to bait us into a trap. There was nowhere to go except to sprint into town as fast as possible. There was no cover and retreat was not an option for us. So we ran - we ran as fast as we could. I saw some guys fall and at one time I noticed that a German gunner was trying to get a bead on me. He was shooting low because he was digging dirt up all around my feet. I got tripped up and fell. As I rolled over one of my buddies screamed,



From the top, left to right. Stanley Marcos, Al Yates, Bill Rollyson, Johnny B. Montgomery and Karl Martin.

"Martin, are you hit?" I hollered, "No," and my buddy yelled back, "Well get up and let's get the hell out of here now!"

I remember that during this time, I saw one little artillery spotter plane flying just off the ground looping and diving and throwing out grenades into German gun positions. That guy flying the plane probably caused a lot of Germans to duck and dodge him and in the process, saved a lot of us from getting shot that day.

One of my buddies got hit badly on the way into town and other soldiers told me that when they finally got him to medical care, he died after a final request, "Tell my mama they have killed me here."

Well, we moved into this town quickly and soon picked out a house for our billet. I recall that this house had a small courtyard and a tree about a hundred feet from the house. I walked out into the courtyard to the tree and I could see a graveyard on top of a hill close by. Just then a German soldier stood up in the graveyard with what was called a burp gun. He fired his first clip at me cutting branches and leaves over my head. I scrambled behind the tree as he fired his second clip. This time he had lowered his aim as the bullets tore into the tree behind me, tearing off bark. I began to realize that it was not too large a tree after all. My buddies came on the run to see what was going on and I saw they were hastily setting up the mortar for a shot. When I saw the angle of the shot they were

(Continued on Page 23)

THE AMBUSH AT WITZENHAUSEN

Continued from Page 22)

going to make, it scared me more than the German. I was sure the shell would go straight up and come straight down and get me too. But when they fired, the graveyard took a direct hit and I do not know if the German was killed or wounded or what, but he quit shooting at us.

A short time later a German Tiger Tank came rolling back towards town and pulled up to fire at us with his turret just visible over the crest of a hill just out of town. When the shells began to land near us, we all got out of the house and dug in. I dug in out in the yard. I only had time to dig a small foxhole when an American tank pulled up so close to me that I could look directly up and I was under his muzzle. Well, when he fired at the Tiger Tank, his concussion blew me up out of my foxhole. I was afraid that our tank crew did not know I was there and might actually run over me or worse yet, the Tiger Tank might score a hit on our tank and I would be killed in the explosion. All of a sudden I was beginning to feel like I was between a rock and a very hard place. After a time our tank must have made it too hot for the German tank because he pulled back. I was damned sure glad to see him go.

I guess this is about all I remember about this fight and I will close by saying that I met another soldier from B Company when I was at the reunion at Myrtle Beach. He was **Harold Capps** of Hendersonville, North Carolina. We kept in touch for a while but the last cards I've sent were returned. Are you out there **Harold**?

My sergeant was **Al Yeatts** of Wethersfield, Connecticut. I also served with **Johnnie B. Montgomery** of Germantown, North Carolina, **Bob Fisher** of Boston, Massachusetts, **Ray Dovan** from Green Bay, Wisconsin, **Fred Olberg** of Chicago, Illinois, **Bill Rollyson** of West Virginia, **Ed Mitchell** from New York City, **Ray Goodwill** from Franklin, Pennsylvania, **Walter A. Isanski** from Mt. Carmel, Pennsylvania, **Stanley Marcos** of New York and **Richard K. Witmer** of Hanover, Pennsylvania. All these above guys were in our Mortar Crews with which I served. Our Machine Gunners were **Roderick Macormack** of Mississippi, **Dick Dwyer** of Brooklyn, New York, **Dick Hatley** of Minneapolis, Minnesota, **Clarence Minton** of Saltville, Virginia, **Lee Hootman** of Ohio, **Harry Spillman** of Flint, Michigan, **Tom Murray** of Providence, Rhode Island and **Malvern Braverman** of Bronx, New York.

These soldiers are the men I was closest to. Although I have lost touch with most of them over the years, I would love to hear from any of these men. I can attest that these men were as good as any soldier on earth.

Torgau, that was the Place

Written by: **Carl J. Millner**

Co. C, 272nd Infantry

1523 Vance Avenue, Coraopolis, Pennsylvania 15108

Torgau, that was the place where we had to clear all those apartments in the long row of buildings along the upcoming 'parade route' where all the brass were coming to shake hands (and drink) with the Russians. Residual snipers were verboten.

Torgau, that was the place where you saw a house set afire every night in the Russian zone as they taught the Germans a lesson. And where BREEDING from our squad saved a German girl from being raped by a Russian. Where for a couple of nights we heard a loud kar-boom that woke us out of our sleep, only to see the next morning that a Russian was spread eagled on the riverbank with the buckets he was hoping to haul some river water in, at his side. A victim of not paying attention to the taped off mine markers.

Torgau, that was the place where my BAR man shot his finger as he was setting the safety on the souvenir pistol. Then while he was being patched up all hell broke loose south of us. BAR, M-1, ammo and all, I joined the squad racing toward the explosions. Hell of a time to die, we thought to ourselves. It was the ammo dump that someone (maybe on our side) had set off. While here one has to search houses, doesn't one. The old couple didn't want us to go upstairs, but up we went only to find a little altar with two candles burning in front of a picture of Hitler.

Torgau, that was the place where I found a big sack of Mothers Oats which I cooked up for myself and others, batch after batch. The others included those old Russian horse cart drivers. The miles and miles of them that passed going south from their Berlin battle. Many a Russian ate the mothers oats from that sack.

Torgau, that was the place where the Russians made fun of us for not being able to drink. Some had confiscated motor bikes they rode until the gas ran out. One in particular stopped to chat and drink. After drinking a half a canteen cup full of vodka, got on his bike, laughing at us for not being able to drink as much, rode down about half a block, dismounted, proceeded to spray the buildings with his tommy gun and passed out.

Torgau, that was the place where that big heavy olive-drab sedan stopped directly in front of me, as our company was lining the road the brass took to see the Russians. The back window rolled down and there he was, the big boss himself, General Omar Bradley. I came to attention, presented arms and at eased myself. Bradley asked how long I had been overseas, where I was from, etc. Here I lied to him, couldn't say Coraopolis, PA (where's that) so I said Pittsburgh (10 miles from Cory). He told the Russian General there with him and I could hear him say, "Da, Da, Pitsburrguu". Ever heard of Pittsburgh. It produced more steel in the war than all of Germany and Japan combined. With a "good show" they were off up the road, going back towards our lines, where I don't know? The whole thing left me mumbling to myself, "Well what do you know about that."

The Fighting 69th Salutes Bill Robertson

Submitted by: **Delbert E. Philpott**
Company A, 271st Infantry Regiment

P.O. Box 2014, Sunnyvale, California 94087-0014

Our own **Bill Robertson**, who is famous as the 69er who was first to link-up with the Russians, passed away on January 23rd, 1999. I learned that a memorial service would be held in Culver City, California on January 30th, 1999. I attended the service and made a presentation on behalf of the 69th Infantry Division Association. **Bill's** wife was a teacher. When she died, he set up the "Nancy Robertson Scholarship fund" in her memory. The family told me that they plan to change the name to include **Bill's** name. The address for contributions is:

The William D. Robertson Family
5102 Copperfield Lane
Culver City, California 90230

Following is the presentation that was given by me on behalf of the Fighting 69th Division Association.

* * * * *

World War II was coming to an end in Europe about this time 54 years ago. **Bill Robertson** was about to play a historic role that would forever impact his life. It was he who would be credited as the "first American soldier to link-up with the Russians" in a meeting that would end the terror of Fascist Germany. The photo of Bill with Alexander Silvasenko, his Russian counterpart, has become a famous symbol of the link-up in many parts of the world.

Bill often represented the Fighting 69th Infantry Division Association at national and international events that commemorated the link-up. He was interviewed for newspaper articles and TV documentary programs as part of Link-Up Anniversary celebrations of similar events and was a major participant in festivities in the cities of Strehla and Torgau in Germany. He willingly re-created his wartime escapades like breaking into a local Torgau drugstore to get chemicals to transform an ordinary bedsheet into a make-shift American flag that could be waved at the Russians to convince them that his group was not the enemy. He

gladly rode "jeep patrols" to help bring attention to Torgau's Elbe Days celebrations in April. Mayor Gerstenberg made Alexander Silvasenko and Bill honorary citizens of Torgau in a special ceremony in April of 1995.

In May of 1995, Bill traveled to Moscow with President Clinton on Air Force One to join other 69th Infantry Division veterans and Russian veterans in commemorating the 50th Anniversary of World War II. Bill dedicated many hours to this facet of his life and the Fighting 69th Infantry Division Association salutes him for his contributions. He was often seen at reunions and other 69th functions throughout the years, and always played a part in our overseas visits. He will be greatly missed.



Bruce Robertson, Del Philpott, Douglas Robertson and Richard Robertson at the Memorial Service on January 30th, 1999.



Display of Bill Robertson's memorabilia at the Memorial Service.

More than 1,400 re-enactors march back to World War II

Submitted by: **Russell Doaty**
Battery A, 879th Field Artillery
119 West 46th Street
Reading, Pennsylvania 19606-3301

EAGLE/TIMES

By Gail Rippey

Russ Whitehead was watching the people go by, glancing over his left shoulder, then his right. All at once, he did a double take: Standing before him was a Gen. George S. Patton lookalike.

For Whitehead, 75, it wasn't the regalia, but the man's face, build and the way he carried himself that stirred memories of the World War II general.

"When I saw him, I was aghast," Whitehead said. "He was just like Patton."

The Ringoes, New Jersey resident should know. He served in the 83rd Division under Patton during the Battle of the Bulge, which began December 16, 1944, and continued into January 1945.

Whitehead was among about 3,000 people who gathered Saturday at Fort Indiantown Gap, Lebanon County, for a re-enactment of the bloodiest battle in America's military history.

An estimated 19,000 Americans were killed, 40,000 were wounded, and 20,000 taken prisoner during the fighting. German casualties totaled at least 100,000.

The re-enactment was the world's largest, according to tactical coordinator James O. Martin, Waynesburg, Greene County. Martin, a member of the World War II Historical Federation, Leesburg, Virginia, said the 1,450 re-enactors were the most ever assembled to recreate the battle.

"They came from around the world," he said.

Arthur C. Pope, 65, of Bloomfield, Michigan, portrayed Patton, whose forces had trained near Pope's hometown of Martin, Tennessee. As a 10-year-old boy, he had carried water to the troops.

About 10 years ago, Pope said a friend told him he bore a resemblance to the general. So he got riding boots and pants such as Patton wore, a belt buckle, a jacket with brass buttons, and medals. In all, Pope said he spent about \$1,000 for his authentic look.

Pope said he plans to fly to Reading June 6th to take part in the World War II Commemorative Weekend at the Mid-Atlantic Air Museum at Reading Regional Airport.

Whitehead said the hilly terrain of Fort Indiantown Gap was remarkably similar to that of Belgium's Ardennes forest, where the battle, the last gasp of Nazi forces, was fought.

(Continued on Page 26)



Portraying troops of the U.S. Army's 4th Division, re-enactors advance on German troops.

MORE THAN 1,400 RE-ENACTORS MARCH BACK TO WORLD WAR II

(Continued from Page 25)

Martin said the lay of the land, and the fact that members of the Pennsylvania 28th Infantry Division who had fought in the battle had trained at the Gap, was why the event is re-created there annually.

"It's very much like the Ardennes, especially when there's snow," Martin said. "I tell the re-enactors that it's nothing to put up with it for five hours, when there were guys who not only lived in it for four weeks, they were being shot at, too."

Whitehead, who was a buck private in F Company, 329th Regiment, said it seemed more like four years than four weeks.

"The snow was up to the crotch," he said. "It was so damned cold and we weren't dressed for it. It was about 30 degrees below zero."

Even though there wasn't any snow and it was 30 some degrees above zero, the re-enactment was true to form, Whitehead said. "It brought tears to my eyes, it was so real."

Spectators marveled at the rattle of machine guns and the booming of tank gunfire. Unfortunately, most of the hand-to-hand combat took place a quarter-mile away from the crowd.

Martin said the event wasn't really open to the public but because of publicity and previous re-enactments, large crowds usually come. "They never get a full view of it."

For example, they didn't see the 110th Regimental Combat Team get wiped out by the Germans. "We were in the wrong place at the wrong time," said Carl A. Garofalo, Jr., who served as a reconnaissance officer at the time. Garofalo heads the history department of Redstone Middle School, Brownsville, near Pittsburgh. Garofalo and his students, past and present, make up the Redstone Living Historians, who perform re-enactments of events from the 1750s through World War II.

Martin said the re-enactors cater to the veterans who come to the event. "They really have a good time here," he said. Not only do the veterans, but also the sons and daughters of veterans and their children.

"My son is a World War II buff," said Diane L. Cicak, Harrisburg, referring to Seth M., 10. "My Dad was a three-war veteran, and my son just idolized him. "We're going to visit his grave after we leave here."



Re-enactors taking the part of American soldiers proceed down a dirt road on their way to another skirmish.



A "German officer" confers with his troops before attacking

"As I Remember It"

PART II

Written by: **Robert L. Muckel**

Company I, 273rd Regiment, 3rd Platoon, 1st Squad

655 S. Chiques Road

Manheim, Pennsylvania 17545

With Company I, 273rd On The Siegfried Line

Our quarters are down in the basement of an abandoned German home. Most of the fellows are just lying and sitting around. Me, I am lying down half asleep, when suddenly, one of our guys came running through the doorway shouting, "German Paratroopers, German Paratroopers!" Quickly we are ordered to leave the building and occupy a vacant German trench located just a short distance away. Most of our equipment lay piled alongside the cellar walls. We all began groping around in the semi-darkness for our gear. I always kept most of mine on, so fumbling around in the darkness, I found what I thought were my heavy rubber overshoes, put them on, grabbed my rifle, ran outside and headed for the trench. As we ran over the snow covered ground, I seemed to be having trouble with my feet. It felt like I was slipping sideways. Looking down, I saw the problem. I had on two left boots. Son-of-a-gun. Well, right now someone is probably cursing the fellow wearing his other boot.

After jumping down into the trench, we looked upward to the sky expecting to see it filled with German paratroopers. In the distance, on our right front was a large aircraft flying towards the German lines, leaving behind a long trail of white smoke. Just below it were several white parachutes, slowly floating down towards the ground. What was thought to be enemy paratroopers was actually one of our Giant Super Forts, damaged by German anti-aircraft fire. And the chutes were those of its crew leaving their doomed plane. I felt sorry for those fellows because they will land and be captured by the Germans, and it is a well known fact that the Germans have an intense hatred for the American pilots who drop their bombs on them.

The Prisoner

Today we are informed by our superiors that the Germans are not taking any more prisoners. Anyone caught by them will be shot right away. Hmm, now that's a sobering thought, and something to keep in mind. Someone came over to me and said, "Muckel, you are to report to the bunker right away." I thought to myself, "What's up?" I ran out of the basement, up the steps and headed for the bunker. On arriving there I found one of our officers standing near the bunker entrance. A German soldier stood, about twelve feet in front of him with both arms raised straight up in the air. And about thirty feet away, standing on a high dirt

bank, stood an American soldier with one leg propped up and his bayoneted rifle in both hands and resting on his left propped up leg. He kept looking towards the German lines. His bayonet was one of the old models, a sixteen inch job from the First World War. The way he stood there reminded me of one of those big bronze statues of a soldier which stood in front of a school or armory building back in the States. The German soldier was about twenty-five years old, and wearing a camouflage jacket, blond and bareheaded. The officer pointed his finger at the German and said to me, "Search that man." I stood my rifle against the bunker wall beside the officer, walked over and began searching. I gave the officer everything I found, then returned to my basement quarters.

I felt hungry. I have not had a hot meal since we came on the line here! I have a chocolate bar left over from my K-rations. I took this out and began to nibble on it. The bar was rock hard. There is no way you can chew it. You can either suck on it or use a knife and slowly scrape small slivers of it into a cup of hot water, and make what might pass for hot cocoa, no milk of course.

The Attack!

We have received notice. Our company is getting ready to leave our present position here on the line and stage an attack on a small town. We check our equipment - Well let's see now, I have my cartridge belt with a full canteen of water, first aid packet, bayonet and scabbard, and my rain poncho folded in half and wrapped around the rear of my belt, my gas mask and my little kerosene lantern tied to the back of my belt. We are also given three small wax covered boxes of food called K-rations. One for breakfast, dinner and supper. I tie these to the back of my belt also. Then we are given hand grenades. I took two fragmentation and one white phosphorus grenades. These I tied to my suspenders which held up my cartridge belt. We are also given two bandoliers of extra ammunition. These we put on criss-crossing our chest. I am now carrying everything but the kitchen sink.

Well, we are off. The company is formed up in two columns with each man about ten feet apart. We make a left turn on the road, which is parallel with the front line. We walk maybe about five hundred feet, stop and face to the right.

Over on our left flank is a dense woods of evergreen trees which extend the whole way up to our objective, the town on top of the hill we are facing. We are standing on a ridge which slopes gradually downward to a small valley then upward to the town. We break formation and form a long line along the ridge. About ten feet to our rear is another line, then another, then more lines. The ground over which we are going to advance is all open field with a few small shell hole craters scattered about. The order to advance is given.

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"AS I REMEMBER IT," PART II

(Continued from Page 27)

In wave after wave we start walking up the slope. We did not get too far, because the Germans opened up with their artillery. The shells began bursting all around us. In training, we were taught that when a shell bursts, the steel shrapnel usually flew upward, and outward in a cone shape. So a person lying flat on the ground had a better chance of not being hit. So this is exactly what some of us did, hit the ground. Well one of our officers must have had a different teacher than we did, because when he saw us lying there, he hollered out, "No one told you men to hit the ground, get back on your feet, and keep moving." So we got back up on our feet again, reluctantly of course, and continued our charge up the slope. The shell fire became heavier, this combined with rifle and machine gun fire from the Germans which made any further advance senseless. It would be like walking into the whirling blades of a giant lawn mower.

The order was given, "Fall back, fall back." Well, this is just a nice way of saying, turn around and run for your life, which we all did, and very quickly, I might add. We all ran down that slope at full speed. I was enjoying the run when suddenly a barbed wire fence appeared in my path! Where in heck did that come from? I don't remember it being there when we came up the slope! I was running too fast to change direction, so I tried to leap over it. I cleared the top but on landing my one leg got caught on some barbs. I stood there trying to free my leg when I heard someone shouting. I looked down the hill, it was our assistant squad leader **Corporal Riley**. He hollered, "Hurry it up Muckel, let's go; get a move on." I thought to myself, "The shells are falling, the bullets are flying, and here I am all by myself tangled up in barbed wire, and he tells me to move faster. Damn it, on the way up the hill, he yelled at me for going too fast. Now on the way back down he yells at me again for going too slow." Well being scared, and angry I gave one big pull and tore my leg free from the wire, leaving a big tear in my trouser leg. We ran down to the bottom of the valley, and up the other side on up to our starting point at the top of the ridge. Here we stopped running and were ordered to take up positions all along the ridge from left to right about ten feet apart and dig in.

The Sniper

I began digging my foxhole. The ground was pretty hard. As I removed the dirt, I piled it around the front of the hole and used the flat of my shovel to pat it down and make it more compact, because in our training, we were taught that three feet of compacted earth will stop any rifle bullet. I kept digging away. I guess the hole was about two and a half feet deep by now. I am patting the dirt around my hole, every time my shovel hits the ground, it makes a slapping sound. I became a little tired so I stopped working and lit up a cigarette.

Suddenly I heard another slapping sound. I looked around thinking it was one of the other fellows working on a hole. To my surprise, there was no one else in sight. I thought, "That's odd! What the heck is happening here?," when slap, a bullet kicked up the dirt right beside my leg. Well that solved the mystery! The slapping sounds I heard after I had stopped digging were made by the German sniper's bullets hitting the ground around our holes. I dove head-first into the partially dug hole, and curled up like a ball to try and keep every part of my body from being exposed to the sniper's view.

I laid there for about five minutes, when I became aware of someone staring down at me. It was a member of our Platoon, **Pvt. Elwood Neiss**. He was lying there on the ground beside my hole with one arm stretched out supporting his back, and the other hand holding his rifle between his legs. He had just returned from taking two German prisoners back to Battalion Headquarters. Looking down at me all curled up like a ball, he laughed and said, "What in the heck are you doing in there?" I answered!! "Sniper." He laughed again, and said, "There is no sniper around here." I did not say a word. I was beginning to feel a little foolish, when slap, a bullet hits the ground right beside him. He yelled out, "Move over!" and jumped into the hole right on top of me. Well the two of us did not have to debate that subject anymore.

Night time came and the darkness gave us some protection from the sniper. We resumed work on the hole making it big enough for both of us. When finished, it was about five feet deep. We then built a roof over top using small tree branches, dead leaves and finally covering it with about ten inches of dirt. We finished up just in time as a heavy snow began falling with a strong, bitter cold wind swirling it around. We dropped down into our hole through an opening we left on the front as an entrance and observation window facing the enemy lines. We were in our hole freezing I guess, for about two hours, when we heard someone outside call in to us, "Hello in there, do you have room for another person?" Well we thought, the more the merrier. So we called back, "yes, with a little more digging." So now there are three of us in the hole. We were just making ourselves comfortable in our cold, little hole when we received another call from outside. Well before the night was over that hole contained five of us. Talk about being cramped together, we were packed in there like sardines. And cold. Rumor has it this is the coldest winter Europe has had in forty years.

Man it is cold. We must have some heat. We took one of our small wax covered boxes that held our K-rations and tore it into small pieces, and built a little bonfire which gave off the light and heat of a small candle. Aaahhhh, that feels good. It really did not throw off much heat, but just having a fire and light made us

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"AS I REMEMBER IT," PART II

(Continued from Page 28)

feel good. It lifted our spirits a little. We enjoyed it for about five minutes, when suddenly, machine gun bullets came ripping their way into our roof showering us with dirt and leaves. We quickly covered the fire and put it out. Well, back to freezing again. Waiting about two hours, we took a chance on the German gunner being asleep. We lit up the little fire again. This time we enjoyed it for about ten minutes when the machine gunner opened up again. This time we put out the fire and left it out. We had a choice - light the fire and stand a chance of bullets tearing into our bodies, or keep the fire out and freeze. We chose the latter.

Oh Boy, Hot Food

Morning finally came, the ground was covered with snow but the cold wind has slowed down a little. Our rifles were froze up and are inoperable. What should we do? The word came down to urinate on them. This we did, and that did the job. They now work. We hear the sound of an automatic rifle (B.A.R.) being fired. We look around to see what is going on? One of the biggest jack rabbits I have seen is running across the snow, with bullets kicking up the snow all around him, he zigs and zags, the bullets getting closer and closer but never hitting him. The shooting stops, the little fellow made it to safety. Well, no rabbit stew today.

Last night I laid my canteen of water near the opening to our hole. When I picked it up for a drink this morning, it was frozen solid. The word was passed around that our company is going to have a hot meal for once. It will be the first one I can remember having, since we came on the line! The cooks are on their way up here now, "Ya Hooo, Hot Food." The hours pass by - still no food, then we received the word. The cooks were bringing up the hot food in a Jeep when the Germans saw them and began lobbing artillery shells at the Jeep. So the driver stopped the Jeep, and they took off the five gallon insulated cans of food, sat them down in the snow, and returned to their base. From there they called us up on their walkie talkie radio and gave us the approximate location where we could find them. Shortly after this, **Corporal Riley**, our Assistant Squad Leader, came over and said to us, "The First Squad has the job of going out and finding the food."

It is beginning to grow dark. Night is coming on and the cold wind is getting worse. It's swirling the snow around so much it makes it hard to see. My hands are so stiff and cold. I can hardly pick up my rifle. We walked and walked, how far I don't remember. But eventually we did find the cans. But it seems the Germans found them before we did as the lids were off each and every can. Part of the contents of each one were missing. A German patrol, must have eaten their fill, then left the rest exposed to freeze solid. Boy we were all real hungry. We looked at the mashed potatoes and creamed corn, but no way were we about to touch that food after the Germans had messed with it.

Well, that ends our dream of a good hot meal. So we turned around and went back to our foxholes on the ridge. The next morning I was sitting outside our

foxhole when our B.A.R. man, **Robert Whaley**, came over to talk to me. Suddenly an enemy artillery shell exploded nearby. Instinctively, I dove to the ground. **Pfc. Whaley**, he didn't even flinch. He just sat there, not the least bit unnerved; with a big fat cigar clenched between his teeth. He took a few puffs, removed it from his mouth, looked down at me with a smile on his face and said, "Muckel; don't worry about them shells. If one of them ever hit you, you will never know it." I did not answer him. But I thought, no, I guess not, but what worries me is the thought of the hot razor sharp steel shrapnel ripping and cutting its way through my body while I am still alive. Looking at him sitting there I thought, "This fellow is one cool operator. The Army did the right thing by making him a Browning automatic rifleman."

I do not remember how long a time we spent on that ridge. But we never did get to that town on the top of the hill. That night we received some good news. Our Company I is being pulled out of here and sent back to the rear area for a rest.

As our replacements arrived, their Sergeant led them along the ridge. At each foxhole he ordered our man out and replaced him with one of his. When he came to our hole, he received a big surprise! Instead of one man, five of us crawled out. With a startled expression on his face the sergeant looked at us and said, "Where are they all coming from?"

You know, I have often wondered why **Private Neiss** and I had so many guests at our foxhole home. Did they all hit rock while digging their hole? Or was our hole the only one with a roof over it?

TO BE CONTINUED . . .

55th Anniversary Tour in 2000

Come on!!! and let's accompany each other for a journey of remembrance, more specifically, to the Leipzig and Torgau areas and visit your memorials in Torgau and Strehla, Germany. We are going try to make this trip exciting and interesting for everyone. The trip will cover most of the interesting areas that you visited in 1945 in a threatening manner. Then we will follow up with an exciting climax with a visit to several cities in Italy. I am sure that it will be exciting for everyone.

DEPART THE U.S. APRIL 18th, 2000

Arrive Paris. Stops in Aachen, Koblenz, Kassel, Leipzig, Torgau, Strehla, Munich, St. Moritz Switzerland, Zermatt, Milan, Venice, Florence, Naples, Rome.

More information will appear in the next bulletin, but it is important that you let me know of your interest in this tour as soon as possible. Write for further details to:

William R. Beswick
P.O. Box 576
West Point, Virginia 23181



Headquarters Company, 777th Tank Battalion

Submitted by: **Epitacio Granillo**, 69th Quartermaster, 862 North Grand Street, Mesa, Arizona 85201-4220
Sent to him by **Frank See**, (deceased) - member of the 777th Tank Battalion

Some of those pictured are: Colonel David Zwiebel, Major Raymond Martin, Major McMahon, Captain Joe Yurko, M/Sgt. Don Pfeiffer, T/Sgt. Charles Young, T/4 Al Liane, T/5 Bob Parson, T/Sgt. Howard Bowens, T/4 Robert Vaughn, T/4 Arthur Cubbison, T/5 Charlie Hill, T/5 Gaylord Thomas, T/5 Loren Roush, T/5 Elmer Carter, Pvt. Herman Pierce, Captain Duke, T/4 Kenneth Graden, Sgt. Clifford Jacka, Captain Chiles, Pvt. Ted Barber, Pvt. Roy Hood, Pvt. Herschel Rudman, Corporal J. B. Ruhl, T/5 Walter Bush, Pvt. Knudsen, T/5 Walter Strauss, Pvt. F.X. Buche, Lt. Bratten

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

We are interested in all news from Chapters, Groups, Branches, Companies, Battalions, Regiments, Recon, Artillery, AAA, Units, T.D.'s and minis for this column. Mail your date(s), location, banquet cost, activities and room rates, plus a good write-up to **Fighting 69th Division Bulletin**, P.O. Box 69, Champion, Pennsylvania 15622-0069 or 183 Pineslope Road, Acme, Pennsylvania 15610-9606, as early as possible. Then follow through with a write-up immediately after the event(s).

Company D, 273rd Infantry

Kenneth A. Sawyer, *News Reporter*
2311 Skywind Circle
Melbourne, Florida 32935
Telephone: 407/254-7175



Rear, Bob McCarty, Ken Sawyer, and Art Ayres. Front, Wimpy Smith in Houston.

Company D had a good turnout for its reunion in Myrtle Beach, November 1st thru 6th, 1998. There were 22 of us to share our memories of the 40's and of reunions in the past. We made our hospitality room the center of our activities. Members took advantage of the entertainment offerings of the area. The weather was great for swimming the first few days and then favored beach strolling.

The Landmark has come a long ways since 1995 when the Division met there. Our ocean front hospitality room with full kitchen was reminiscent of the former accommodations. Completely unexpected were the fabulous suites. We were paying about 15% of the rack rate. Taking a small chance on the weather paid off big.

Members present were **Bob and Betty Ammon** from Michigan, **Art Ayres** from Pennsylvania, **Ed and**

Mary Case from Pennsylvania, **Gerald and Ruth Dominy** from New York, **Paul and Elaine Gornbein** from New York, **Roland and Jan Hendrickson** from Oregon, **George and Barb Johnson** from Virginia, **Bob and Betty Jo McCarty** from Louisiana, **Ken Sawyer** from Florida, **George and Frances Shoulars** from North Carolina, **Jim and Katherine Sprinkle** from North Carolina, and **Jim and Sandy Winstead** from North Carolina. I believe the **Ammons, Dominys, Shoulars, and Winsteds** were first-timers. We loved seeing you and hope it will be often.

Our company turnout at the Division Reunion in Houston in August was of a smaller number. The few of us there did enjoy ourselves, even when we ventured out into the summer heat. The hotel was very well appointed. Although overall turnout was below average, the reunion was enjoyed by all. Those D Company members present were **Art Ayres** from Pennsylvania, **Bob and Betty Jo McCarty** from Louisiana, **Ken Sawyer** and **Fran Collard** from Florida, and **Wimpy Smith** from Texas.

A large turnout of company members is expected at the division reunion next November in Orlando. I am counting on my buddies to back up the local committee as needed.



Betty Jo and Bob McCarty

(Continued on Page 33)



*Company D,
273rd Infantry
at Myrtle Beach,
South Carolina*

*Picture taken
at LEGENDS*

*Back Row:
Ken Sawyer,
Bob McCarty,
Roland Hendrickson,
Art Ayres, Ed Case
and George Johnson.*

*Middle Row:
Mary Case,
Betty Jo McCarty
Jan Hendrickson,
Barb Johnson and
could it be?*

*Front Row:
Chauteur & Footman*



69th Cavalry Recon Troop

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Independence, Missouri 64052-2962
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"DUTY, HONOR, COUNTRY"

Report on West Point, New York Reunion September 9th thru 13th, 1998

Although we still had a reunion "committee" handling our West Point reunion, the majority of the load was very ably handled by **Mike Moscaritolo**. Mike made a couple of personal trips to West Point to confer with their personnel and we'll never know just how much of a phone bill he ran up, but he talked with West Point a great many times arranging all the details.

Mike had us billeted at the Thayer Hotel right inside the main gate of the U. S. Military Academy. Even though the rooms in the majestic old hotel were smaller than we may be used to and the baths were quite small and showers a little difficult to turn around in, everyone did pretty well. Rooms were clean and beds were comfortable. The lobby of the hotel was

beautiful with an abundance of highly polished and heavy woodwork.

Mike had arranged a package for us that was very good. It included our rooms, breakfast every day, a bus tour of the academy grounds, a cruise on the Hudson River and capped it all off witnessing the cadets marching in review on Saturday morning. Our package also included a very large hospitality room.

Our bus tour of the grounds was on Friday morning. Our guide was very knowledgeable and gave us a very complete description and history of various aspects of the Academy.

After the bus tour we were taken to the river where we boarded the boat for our cruise. We were served a package lunch brought by the hotel. Here again our guide was very knowledgeable and we learned some very interesting facts about the river defenses during the Revolutionary War. We could also view many academy buildings from the river.

Saturday night we had our sit-down dinner in a private dining room. After dinner, as we have done in past years, the troopers and widows present related to the group their family happenings during the last year. Prior to the dinner, **Mike** had arranged for a photographer to be present to take a group picture of the troopers and also a group picture of the troopers and their ladies.

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**DIVISION ASSOCIATION CHAPTERS, UNITS,
COMPANIES AND GROUP MINI-WEEKENDS
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(Continued from Page 33)

One of the interesting events of the day and possibly the scariest, was "first timer" **Wayne Naus** being caught in the elevator when he was coming down to dinner. **Wayne** said he pushed buttons and pounded on the door before someone finally came to his rescue. Needless to say the group was very concerned when we were told about it. **Wayne** said that after that he would take the stairs to his room, even though it was five floors. It took 24 hours for maintenance personnel to get the elevator operating again. Luckily there was a second elevator available.

At our business meeting held on Friday, **Mike** brought us up to date on the absent troopers he had heard from and those who had to cancel. Then the discussion centered around where we would hold the reunion in 1999. As usual, no trooper volunteered to host the 1999 reunion in his area. Someone mentioned Washington D.C. and someone else threw in New Orleans. It was suggested that **Bobbie Fox** be approached and asked if she would consider organizing the 1999 reunion. She agreed to do so. A vote was taken and it was determined that we would go to New Orleans. However, this turned out to be too expensive. The 1999 reunion will we held in Biloxi, Mississippi.

Bobbie Fox has found that decent accommodations in New Orleans are extremely high. Decent hotel rooms run \$129.00 per day, plus 13% tax. Cost of food, etc., is also high. In addition to that the crime rate in New Orleans, as is the case in most large cities, is very high. Biloxi accommodations and food are reasonable. Biloxi is also celebrating their 300th anniversary and there are numerous special events. No doubt a trip to Camp Shelby can be arranged to go through the 69th Museum. New Orleans is not too far from Biloxi and some may want to take a trip there.

You will receive additional information from **Bobbie** at a later date. Start planning now for September 22 through 25, 1999.

We were very pleasantly surprised on Saturday morning when we received a call from **Al Gold**. He had previously canceled his reservation due to other commitments. The surprise was that he called our room from the hotel lobby. We went downstairs and there was **Al** and **Esther** and Esther's mother. A number of the troopers and wives came down and we had a nice short visit before they had to leave. Also on Saturday **Tony Ingrassellino** and his son came in. **Tony** had previously canceled his reservation due to health reasons but then decided to make the trip to the reunion. Good decision **Tony**.

One of the highlights of the reunion was the presence of three "first timers," **Wayne** and **Wilma Naus** from Pennsylvania; **Tony Baldi** and his grandson, from

New Jersey; **John "Curly Bill"** and **Helen Snyder**, from California. It was great to see these folks and they said they would do their best to be with us in Biloxi. **Wayne** was one of the original members of the troop. He left us early and ended up going through Sicily, Italy and France. **John** put some time in Alaska prior to coming to the 69th. He came home with the division due to being a high pointer. **Tony** went to the 29th Recon with some more of us and got home in April '46. These folks said they would do their best to be with us in Biloxi.

Troopers attending were:

Tony Baldi and grandson New Jersey
Gordon and **Fern Ewing** and guests Florida
Bob Fuller Texas
Ed and **Mary Lou Glenz** Pennsylvania
Lewis Hill Texas
Morris Kaiserman Illinois
Seymour Bellin Massachusetts
Charles and **Barbara Fox** Maryland
Harold and **Jeanne Gardner** Missouri
Al and **Esther Gold** w/Mom Massachusetts
Tony Ingrassellino and Son New York
Jerry Leib California
Bert Lippincott New York
Wayne and **Wilma Naus** Pennsylvania
Wally and **Carolyn Pepper** Florida
Bob and **Mable Schueler** Ohio
Henry and **Lillian Weiman** New Jersey
Fred and **Fran Wohlers** and guests Florida
Lenke Treible Ohio
Mike and **Mary Moscaritolo** Florida
Floyd and **Evelyn Opdyke** New York
Charles and **Pat Rice** Oklahoma
John and **Helen Snyder** California
Bob and **Jean West** Ohio
Janet Vaughan New York
Nancy Makris and friend Connecticut

It was a great reunion and we hated to see it end. Sunday morning is always kinda sad when we say our goodbyes to each other for another year. Again **Mike Moscaritolo**, thanks for a job well done. You put in a lot of effort, time and phone calls. It paid off and it's a shame that we had seven other couples who were unable to make the reunion due to health problems, etc. We missed you folks and hope to see you next year.

Mike also presented each trooper with a new cap with the 69th logo and Recon on them. He also presented us with several 69th decals. Thanks a bunch, **Mike**.

Now, you troopers who haven't made a reunion ever or haven't been with us for a number of years, you have missed a lot of good ones. Why not start planning now on being with us in Biloxi, Mississippi. It seems that every year we lose more of our gallant troopers. It's getting later than we want to admit.

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**DIVISION ASSOCIATION CHAPTERS, UNITS,
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(Continued from Page 34)

Headquarters Company 273rd Infantry

Earl W. Walters, *News Reporter*

P.O. Box 304

Landisville, Pennsylvania 17538-0304

October 19th, 1998 two members of Headquarters Company, 273rd Infantry, **John Sneary** and **Judy** and **Earl Walters** and **Anna** met with **Emmy Murphey** for a luncheon at **Bill Knapp's** Restaurant, Springfield, Ohio. **Robert Miller** and his wife **Judy**, had planned to join in the mini reunion, but the **Miller's** had other commitments for the time arranged for the mini reunion. It's pretty hard to schedule an event with doctor appointments taking preference.

Bob Miller had served with **Alan Murphey** in the I & R Section and was with **Alan** when the German officer surrendered the Colditz Castle.

Bob and **Emmy** still keep in touch so, I'm sure **Bob** was disappointed in not being able to join in on the 'get-to-gether.'

We enjoyed the time we had together and we plan on doing it again sometime, "God willing." We all said, "you look good!" - a little older perhaps, (we didn't say that) but, at least we all agreed that we all felt good!

Everyone expects to attend Orlando in '99 - there again we left it up to "God willing." If **Emmy** had ever attended one of our association's reunions, I'm sure she'd be just as anxious to join in the fellowship as much as **Anna** and I do.

Our thanks to those responsible for making the Bulletin what it always has been - "The Best!"



*Earl Walters, John Sneary and Emmy Murphey
(Alan Murphey's wife) at their mini-reunion.*

269th Engineers

Frank Nemeth, *News Reporter*

66 Gaping Rock Road

Levittown, Pennsylvania 19057-3410

Hi to the 269th Engineers,

Sorry I haven't been on the ball in sending news to the 69th Bulletin and since I missed the last reunion in Texas, I don't have any photos to send in.

I went through my albums and so many of the photos have sort of faded out and wouldn't reprint very well. It would have been nice to see **Steve Sholtis** (H.S. Co.) once again and to meet our first timer from Oklahoma, **Joe Sears** (Co. C). Going back over the old photos of the reunions gone by, we had 20 to 25 Engineers and their families, so we had a nice size crowd.

I'm enclosing the names of the men from Company B that are on the 69th Roster at the present time.

George Allen	Darrell Orn
Ernesto Burciaga, Sr.	Ward Peterson
William L. Campbell	Andrew Plutz
John Corley	Leo Podbielski
Robert Lee Cornell	Sidney Poirrier
William Corpman	William Porter
L. W. Critchfield	John Pontieri
Ray Dahill	Edmund Reeber
Edward Davis	Don Reynolds
Joseph Eginton	William Riggle
John A. Fitzgerald	James Riley
Thomas Green	Robert Ritchey
James O. Hibbits	Cecil Robinson
Dale Highfield	Henry Rosenberg
Johnnie Jones	Fidel Sanchez
Ernest Krause	Ray Schug
Donald A. Legrid	Francis Sullivan
Alfred Leirness	Harold Thomas
David McCallum	D. G. Tomlinson
Andrew M. McGee	Ray Twork
Stanley Milewski	I. H. Wheeler
Edward Miller (Muller)	Albert Winchester
Paul Murry	Robert Winslow
Frank Nemeth	Fred Young, Jr.
Michael O'Connor	

If anyone has any knowledge of someone not on the roster, please send their name and address to me and I'll try to locate them. Now's a good time to send in those old photos so we all can see them. I am sure some of you fellows have some.

Hope to see ya' in Orlando, Florida at the next reunion in November.

Your Ole Buddy,
Frank

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**DIVISION ASSOCIATION CHAPTERS, UNITS,
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(Continued from Page 35)

**Anti-Tank Company
272nd Infantry Division**

Harry G. Austin, Jr., News Reporter
P.O. Box 827
Mars, Pennsylvania 16046-0827

Roy Bush wrote most of our company suggesting they make the Houston reunion. You can imagine how happy I was as their Company Commander, when 23 persons showed. The first time I had seen many in 53 years! Those that made the trip:

- Roy L. Bush Liberty, MO
- Don and Libby Calhoun.....Naples, FL
- Bruno and Jean Campese Beaver Falls, PA
- Urno and Evelyn Gustafson Pittsfield, PA
- Harold Kaska Clayton, CA
- Russell and Betty Koch Bucyrus, MO
- Ray and Janet Sansoucy Worcester, MA
- Dr. Edward and Dolly Sarcione Hamburg, NY
- Dallas and Laura Nelle Shelton Dahlgran, IL
- Darwin and Ethelda Van Houten Six Lakes, MI
- Robert and Annette Walter Des Moines, IA
- Joseph Huber West Bend, WI
- Harry and Roseann Austin Mars, PA

My wife, Roseann has a cousin, **Paul Priestas**. He was with the division November, 1944 to March, 1945. In crossing the Rhine, he was injured and when being released from the hospital, was reassigned, never to return to the 69th. He doesn't remember which 69th outfit he was in. He says he was a cut-up and maybe if you were to write of him in the Bulletin, someone may remember him. His best memories of the service were those four months with the 69th. His name and address are:

Paul Priestas

3127 Lakeview Drive, Del Ray Beach, Florida 33445

Hope to seen everyone in Orlando in November.

BIG, BIG BOO BOO!

The last issue of the Bulletin was incorrectly named Vol. 51, No. 3. It should have been Volume 52, No. 1. We hope this doesn't create too much confusion.

When referencing either of the 2 bulletins that were named Vol. 51, No. 3, please include the months covered which appear under the Volume Number.

We are sorry for this error, and hope that you will forgive us!

**Does Anyone Remember
Lt. Col. Wayne G. Springer**

Wayne G. Springer, Jr.

13107 Indian Creek, Houston, Texas 77079

Home: 713-468-5321 • Work: 713-467-9390

E-Mail: wspringer@atiwa.com

My father was a member of the 69th Infantry Division. I believe he was in the 272nd but I'm not positive. I dropped by the Annual Reunion that was occurring here in Houston and the folks here recommended that I write to you with my request.

My Dad died in 1955 when I was very young so I don't really know a whole lot about him. I am searching for anyone who might have known him during his time with the 69th Infantry Division during World War II.

I have enclosed a newspaper article that ran about him that I found in some old files. I would also be curious **about whether anyone knows more details about the action that occurred on April 8th, 1945** for which he won the Bronze Star. Where was it exactly and what happened? Thank you for your help with my search!

**Springer
Wins Bronze
Star Award**

From Headquarters 69th Infantry Division, U.S. Army, the following citation was received by Lt. Col. Wayne G. Springer, son of Mr. and Mrs. Bert Springer of Hettinger. Wayne was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Oak-Leaf Cluster.



Lt. Col. Wayne G. Springer, Infantry, United States Army for heroic achievement in connection with military operations against the enemy on 8 April 1945, in Germany. When his battalion was ordered to extend a bridgehead over the River, Lt. Col. Springer personally directed the attack in the face of enemy small arms, tank and artillery fire. His courageous and aggressive leadership served as an inspiration to his officers and men and resulted in the quick accomplishment of the assigned mission. Throughout the entire action, Lt. Col. Springer displayed the superior qualities of courage and leadership, reflecting the highest credit upon himself and the armed forces of the United States.

By command of Major General Reinhardt

History of Company L, 271st Infantry

Submitted by: **Ralph D. Fitzgerald, Jr.**
1-102 Bethway Drive
Sykesville, Maryland 21784-7203



Kneeling: Fitzgerald and Jacobs. Standing: S/Sgt. Dudek, Korthals and Anderson.

On November 1st, 1944 we left Camp Shelby, Mississippi at 0500 for Camp Kilmer, New Jersey. We reached the camp on the 3rd. This was the land of the P.X., movies and stage shows. The mess was exceptionally good. We received passes to New York, Philadelphia and Washington. It was great. We were eating well, life was merry and the P.X. is still a wonder to us all. This is the life! Chubby faces and bellies are beginning to appear in the company. Men are walking around half asleep after night passes. The pint ice cream feature at the P.X. is the rage.

All good things must come to an end, I guess. We left Camp Kilmer by train at 2100 on the 14th of November for Jersey City. We took a ferry to the Manhattan docks and embarked on the SS John Erikson, formerly the Kungsholm. On the 15th, we left New York harbor for overseas at 0630. We traveled in the Gulf Stream and the sailing weather was fair.

We "fed the fishes." An epidemic of "mal de mer" - that's French for "you can't take it with you" has hit the boat. We're not seasick, but awfully sick of the sea. Our sleeping quarters are very crowded, and the smells of night aren't too pleasant. Our destination was announced as England and there was great rejoicing.

We began a training schedule including calisthenics, nomenclature of the M1, carbine and pistol, military courtesy, etc. is put into effect. Plenty of comments were made and all were bad! We sighted our airplane escort and some pigeons. Land is near.

On November 26th at 1400, we arrived at Southampton, England in the typical English foggy, murky, dreary, wet and damp, sordid atmosphere. This place seems to be the Seaport Flow of the merchant marine. After policing up the ship, we left the troop ship at 1800 and traveled by train to Winchester, England. We're quartered in the Winchester Barracks.

During December a lot went on. We enjoyed the dancing at New Alresford and Medstead. This English beer is O.K. Bitters has gotten the best of many a man. Darts are now the sport. We are now saying "Cheerio" and smoking English tobacco, but if we see another brussel sprout in the chow line. The "Three Horseshoes" has endeared itself to our hearts.

Christmas came and what a Christmas present we received today. We shipped men out as reinforcements for divisions on the continent. We spent the 26th to the 30th trying to gather what equipment we had left after giving the reinforcements all the items they were in need of. New Year's 1945 came and we spent two days recovering from it.

On January 20th we left Bighton and traveled by truck establishing a new record of how many men and full field equipment could be placed in a 2-1/2 ton truck. We left New Alresford by train at 0600 breaking all records on how many men you can stuff in a railroad car. We arrived at Southampton at 1100 and started out on a long distance march which finally ended on the English ship "Llangleby Castle," where we all squeezed on and left England at 1540 - there's a rumor - we may go to France!!

They call it food, but most of the men challenge that statement. The tea (?), potatoes and bread are becoming monotonous after the first feeding. Sleeping in hammocks is fun - for some. The night of the 21st we arrived in Le Havre, France, and waited until 1930 to dock. We passed a sunken vessel in the gateway and moved to within 300 yards of shore, whereupon we loaded on LSTs and came ashore. The port of Le Havre was blasted beyond recognition. We walked fully 20 minutes before we saw our first complete house standing. A surprise in Le Havre was a movie with American films for GIs. Of course we were merely passing by. We loaded on the "40 and 8" and waited until 2345 before leaving Le Havre.

On the 23rd we arrived at Buchy, France about 30 miles from Rouen. What a relief to leave the cars! The devil must have had a hangover from an all night binge and thought up ways to punish mankind, with the result of that being the invention of the torture chamber known as the 40 and 8. We left Buchy for

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HISTORY OF COMPANY L, 271st INFANTRY

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Heronchelle, about 5 miles distant, where the company took over what was supposed to be a chateau - Our idea of a chateau was definitely lowered. Our training schedule was started including close order drill in the snow.

On February 1st we left by 40 and 8's but this time we had some room and we obtained some straw for the floor. (The mortar section had a radio in its compartment). We shoved off at 1100. We reached Amiens about 1600, saw some captured Jerry material and proceeded on. On the 2nd we reached Liesse-Gizy and with full field equipment and excess baggage, marched 7km to our new home - Tent City. We are beginning to have trouble with the mud here. It's everywhere! It is the dominating factor of our present lives, Mere adjectives cannot describe its omnipotence.

We were informed that we are part of the 15th Army. We received our reinforcements. They are all Pvts. in L Company, a total of 75 EM. The company is now full strength. The fact that the new men in the company have no galoshes can be seen everywhere. The mud is playing hell with their boots. In fact, the mud is playing hell with everything!

On February 7th we left our Tent City near Pierrepont and hiked to Liesse-Gizy and left by train at 1530. We passed through Laon, up by Lille, and on the 8th were at some dump in Belgium. Past Namur, we followed the Meuse River into Liege and finally stopped at Veviers. We loaded on trucks at 2030 and rode 35 miles to Ondeval, Belgium after passing through Spa and Malmedy. On the way to chow every morning we passed dead Germans lying by a grotto. There were quite a few dead Jerries around this town. We now are in the First Army.

We left Ondeval at 0940. We loaded on trucks by a field of dead cows that had been machine-gunned. We rode 20 miles and detrucked at 1220 after a shell had burst in the area to our right, then hiked 5 miles to our position on the Siegfried Line, arriving at 1430. We are living in pillboxes with the exception of the 4th platoon which has built an outdoor site. There are mine fields about us and a battery of 4-105's is about 500 yards to our right as we face the front. We are in reserve, but those 105's aren't. All day and all night Jerry gets a taste of them. Mess and supply are at another site and chow is brought to us twice daily. The weather is bitter cold and wet. Everyone is on edge. Our position is 3 miles south of Hellenthal.

In addition to Battalion guards, our guards, and night patrol along a road from Purple Heart Junction to Regimental Headquarters, we have become engineers and are fixing roads. Plenty of mud.

On Valentine's Day a B-17 was blown out of the air near our position. We counted 7 parachutes - one landed in our lines but the rest were in the Jerry lines. We

were quite sorry to see this happen. Today we had our first taste of counter artillery fire. Jerry must have gotten the range of those 105's and sent some screaming meemies to our area. The 4th platoon was putting logs around the canvas walls of their hut. There was quite a bit of air activity today.

The next night while on guard at the medics, Pvt. B.R. Reynolds accidentally shot himself through the foot with his M1. He was dropped from the company roster and sent to the hospital.

The 16th was a clear day and the Air Force was really out. We watched some Jerry AA fire on our planes and watched some dogfights between Jerry and American fighters - no results. For the third straight day we are still engineering. Is this the Infantry?

We got rid of all extra equipment, tons of soap were thrown away as were cartons of Raleigh cigarettes. We were allowed two barracks bags per platoon for clothes and nothing else is left. We are gradually getting into combat T/E. We were just waiting for things to break. Rumors are flying fast and furious as to where and when.

Pfc. Lopez, while standing guard at night, opened up with 2 clips of BAR against the tank traps to our right. He claimed enemy troops were coming up the hill and fired on him. He plastered those dragons teeth with 30 cal. slugs. Yeah, Lopez!

One night along the road, the 4th platoon proved it should stick to its crew served weapons and leave rifle work to the rifle platoon. While on patrol they heard a noise along the wire placements by the road junction and challenged. After an unsatisfactory exchange of words, they opened up with 3 carbines, 1 M1, 2 pistols, and 1 M3 grease gun at a 20 yard range against the darkness - and missed! They brought in a scared K Company man who was lost. Touche - More counter battery fire from Jerry.

Some 155 long tom artillery men came to look at our positions. We have a reclaimed bazooka and have hot water for baths. Artillerymen are blasting positions for guns - there's a rumor we may move soon. On the 27th we moved up 1-1/2 miles by foot to forward positions. Our company is in reserve. We are dug in on a reverse slope. We can see troops attacking a town about 2 miles to our front; artillery shells are coming and going. The holes we dig are plenty deep. The first platoon worked for 12 hours as a carrying party for 2nd Battalion hauling ammo, food and water over the mountains.

On the 28th we received our baptism of fire. We pulled out of our position at noon and were to reach our destination at 1400. We left the main road at 1230 and took off into the woods and mountains. The going was exceedingly rough. Pfc. Ankony passed out twice from the heavy load of mortar ammo. The climb up the mountain and so forth was very tiresome. We hit some

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artillery fire along the route but kept going. We then passed through 2nd Battalion lines drawing artillery fire on the way. When we reached a position of about 500 yards from Dickerscheid the artillery was heavier. We dispersed and then reformed and reached our jump-off point at 1600. We formed the company - the 2nd platoon on the left, 3rd platoon on the right, one machine gun squad with the 2nd and 3rd platoons and one with company headquarters; 2 mortars with the 3rd platoon and one with the 2nd platoon; and the 1st platoon was back at our former position in Battalion reserve. We came from our wooded positions, marched about 200 yards and started to cross the fields before Oberrefferscheid. Just then, the Jerry artillery opened up with their heavy stuff. The platoons increased their distance and formed out in a rough line of skirmishers with the mortars to the rear and company headquarters to the front. Mortar and artillery fire rained down, but finally after about 700 yards of running, jumping and hitting the ground we reached the town of Oberrefferscheid. After it was cleared, we proceeded to a small knoll and dug in by night. That night the 1st platoon rejoined the company. For this action the entire company was awarded the Combat Infantry Badge.

Casualties were, Dead: **S/Sgt. Thompson, Pfc. Chow, Pfc. Parker, Pvt. Pinion and Pvt. Haywood.** Wounded: **Keifer, McCollum, Jung, Waugh, Harris, Cecil, Kassel, Fulwiler, Fryhling.**

On March 1st the Jerry mortars and artillery zeroed in on our positions on the knoll and in the town. **Pfc. Beal** went from his hole to urinate and was blown back into it by a mortar shell. He was wounded in the leg and buttocks. **Pvt. Gyles** was wounded by a mortar shell while inside the company C.P. Cannon Company arrived to support us with an anti-tank gun at the C.P.

We were still dug in the next day. Hot chow came that night. We ate inside a small room. Blankets came up with overcoats. It snowed. We repulsed a small counterattack. As our artillery showed up in force the Jerry artillery didn't seem so bad. A flight of airplanes passed over during the day into Germany. It kind of made us feel good hearing those planes. Patrols were sent out to find out about the enemy positions to our front.

On the 5th **Pfc. Lamb** was wounded by a mortar shell in the left ear and cheek. A couple of our patrols hit mine fields. The casualties were, Wounded: **Lt. Geer, S/Sgt. Hutt, Pfc. Walsh, S/Sgt. Frost and Lt. Peebles.** Missing: **Hickman** (later found by the 28th Division - Dead.)

The next day we received 22 new enlisted men. Enemy Artillery has definitely slackened after the terrific shelling from 4 to 8 o'clock the night before. Communication lines between the C.P. and all platoons were all out. The third platoon with a machine gun



2nd Squad, 2nd Platoon: Camp Shelby, 1944. Front center sprawled, Vince Kicas. Kneeling: Anderson, Korthals, S/Sgt. Young, S/S Dudek. Back Row: Murray, Sanfilipo, Brown, Doyle, Cook, Jacobs.

squad advanced to the town of Wiesen and met no resistance. The company followed. We left Wiesen along mined roads and entered Wildenberg at 1800. It was here that a castle dominated miles of territory and it was the O.P. of the enemy artillery, accordingly with the latrine rumors. We had no food since morning and ate food in the houses. Guards were posted in the driving rain. The next day we left Wildenberg at 1130, hiked 2 miles across country and captured Paulsdorf. Four young soldiers, mere boys, came out to surrender. We advanced two more miles. We took a small estate at the road junction and dug in and were to remain there. Orders came down to continue the advance. We advanced 2500 yards to a road junction between Schmidheim and Blankenheim and went into the forest for the night. Very few of us slept. Instead we walked and ran around trees to keep warm.

On the 8th we had our first GI food in three days which was a hot breakfast with doughnuts. Then we marched back to Schmidheim. We were in Corps Reserve. It was on this march that we found a Stars and Stripes stating that the 69th was in action. We reached Schmidheim and bedded down for the night. Oberrefferscheid is a thing of the past. We are now living in houses, not too good, but better than foxholes. Hot chow twice a day against C rations - Hell, this is damned good!

Twenty-one new men came into the company. We got the chow hall set up and it's now three hot meals a day, plus we have movies! We were watching a movie

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one night and it was broken up when some Joe put a bullet through the loud speaker. If he wants to shoot himself, Okay!! - but why does he have to ruin the loud speaker?

On the 18th we took showers and wondered if this was really the Army.

On the 19th we left Schmidheim by foot at 0700 and hiked 10 miles with full field and all to Freilingen, a small village. This town has not been touched by the war, in fact, the war seems remote in all of this peacefulness. After chow in the evening we go to the fields and play softball. The beauty of the warm spring evenings will always be remembered.

On the 25th we left Freilingen by truck at 0900 and arrived at Buir 1155 after traveling 43 miles. We went through Munstertufel, Euskirchen, Duren, the Cologne Plain and were 8 kilometers from Cologne. We saw the results of the fury that devastated Duren (a ghost city now). At Buir we were spread out along the outskirts and protected the railroad in the town. First we ate chow in an outdoor messhall complete with tables and chairs. On the 28th we left Buir at 1400 by truck and traveled past Bonn where we first saw the Rhine, past Remagen, crossed the Rhine at Bad Neederbreuig to Honnigen, past Coblenz and followed the Lahn River past Bad Ems arriving at Weinahr at 2205, traveling 110 miles in all.

Every cellar had cases and kegs of wine, champagne flows like water - wine was being used to wash glasses by some. There was enough wine here to fill the American Army's stomach for a day at least. On the 30th, we left Weinahr by tanks of the 777th Tank Battalion, Company A and arrived at Wirbdau at 1300 and left Wirbdau that night to put down a riot in Wetzlar on tanks. It was 37 miles to Wirbdau and 30 more to Wetzlar. When we got there the supposed riot was a displaced persons celebration. It was March 31st when we bedded down for the night in an apartment house.

On April 1st guards were being posted on bridges and all around town. On the 2nd about 4 Jerry planes flew up the Lahr River. AA fire tried to bring them down, but failed. On the 3rd, we left Wetzlar by tank and proceeded to a bivouac area two miles southeast of Geesen at 1030, then waited until 1930 and then set off. We arrived at 0800 at Mandern after a 55 mile trip, but not for long. We left Mandern that afternoon and arrived at Bergheim-Giffliz. It was a nice small town. We searched the woods thoroughly and caught a young German deserter. On the 6th we left Bergheim-Giffliz at 1020 by truck, passed the big airbase at Fritzlar with Jerry planes still intact, and arrived in what once was called Kassel at 1130. The 8 Tank Destroyers knocked out by the 26 Tiger Tanks were seen.

The entire company lives in the former Field Transportation Building of the German High Command for this part of Germany. Our mission is roving patrol. The city is leveled in our area. There are typewriters all over the place and practically all the mail going out of the company is typewritten.

We left Kassel on the 8th at 0645 by truck and traveled 30 miles through thickets, woods and winding roads to the outskirts of Witzenhausen at 1000. We detrucked and crossed the Weser River. We crossed over a pontoon bridge running at a 10 yard interval. From Witzenhausen we followed the course of the Weser River with orders to dig in on high ground near the Autobahn after taking the town of Hubenthal. After a 2-1/2 mile march with Co. L as the forward element on the march, we took Gertenbach. After clearing out the town we proceeded west until we were met by small arms fire which pinned down the Company. The 1st platoon, which was the point, was caught out in a field by the fire and withdrew to a covered spot. 60mm and 81mm mortars fired on targets and artillery was called in to hit crew served weapons. Information had been passed down that tanks were in the area and we hit one near Hubenthal. **Sgt. Miller's** squad took off to the right flank and took the town of Hubenthal. This was accomplished while the rest of the company took the left flank and secured the high facing the Autobahn. The Jerry tank was knocked out by artillery fire. A heavy fire fight was heard off to the west as the 2nd Battalion came up on our right flank. Fighter planes with rockets were overhead supporting the advance.

The town fell at 2000 and then the company dug in for the night. K Co. was on our left and I Co. was on our right. AA along the Weser River fired on a Jerry plane - no results. We had two rounded - **S/Sgt. J. Youngs**, in the thigh; **Pfc. O. N. Windrath**, in the left heel.

On April 9th, we left Hubenthal at 0715 by foot. During the afternoon we cleared out towns and woods near Gottingen and then swung south until we arrived at Simerode at 1800. Slight enemy resistance was expected at this town and some sniper fire was met and wiped out. When marching into the town we found that the Regimental C.P. had already been set up in the town and that their Medics were serving hot chow. The movements are so rapid that happenings such as these are commonplace. Medics often move into a town to set up and find that they are the first soldiers in the town. Kitchen personnel on trucks have been known to take a wrong turn in the convoy route and when they finally get back to the convoy they have taken 4 or 5 towns. During today's activities, we ran off two maps that we were using.

On the 10th orders were received that we were supposed to proceed at the greatest speed, 42 miles to

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HISTORY OF COMPANY L, 271st INFANTRY

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Hemblen. Co. L mounted Cannon Company trucks and traveled all night arriving at Hemblen at 2230. Once during the movement we were halted by enemy air activity.

We left Hemblen on the 12th at 1700 and proceeded to Ebelen where we halted by the 9th Armored Division bivouac. We left Ebelen at 1530 by secondary roads, passing through Wiehi and Bad Bebra and took 14 POWs. Air support was received at Laucha against enemy artillery installations and the Bn. column, with Co. L leading, swung north until it reached a point 2 km. north of Baumsroda. Here it was learned that the 1st Battalion, 271st Infantry with tank support, had met heavy enemy artillery fire and had been forced to withdraw. Orders were that since K Co. had been lost from the convoy, I Co. was to attack enemy 88's 1 km. south of the road junction and L Co. was to attack 4 miles north of the road junction. Since L Co. would be operating in 2nd Div. territory, if the plan were carried out, the plan of attack was dropped. I Co. was to have its original mission and L Co. was to support the attack. However, at this point, the spearhead of the 9th Armored Div. came up and since we were well ahead of our spearhead, we were ordered to withdraw and let the tanks pass through. Plan of action was dropped and the Bn. returned to Baumsroda. We bivouacked here for the night. It was here that we learned of the death of President Roosevelt.

On the 13th orders were received to move forward with great speed to the west bank of the Saale River and secure the bridgehead 4 km. north of Taguerverben. We left Baumsroda at 1000 and swung onto route 88. Many a joke was made about Friday the 13th on Route 88. We reached Taguerverben at 1300 and proceeded to a point 400 yards from the town; here we detrucked and dropped along the roadside. It was reported that enemy installations were in the vicinity. Three jeeps were sent out ahead as forward elements to scout and pick up a route so as to speed the advance. Cannon Co. came to the outskirts of town and then the Jerries opened up with 88's and 120's. The 1st platoon deployed along the road while the 2nd, 3rd and 4th found cover in an old drainage ditch. The heavy shelling which came from our front, left and right lasted about an hour. It was the heaviest concentration since Oberrifferscheid. The company received orders to withdraw before dark to Taguerverben by following the drainage ditch. A patrol of the 1st platoon was to remain and protect the return of the three jeeps. The three jeeps had been captured and freed in a ten minute period. The company withdrew to Taguerverben with no casualties suffered, thanks to that drainage ditch which was 4 ft. deep and 2 ft. wide most of the way. P-47's with rockets came at 1700 to attack the enemy artillery position. When Co. L withdrew from Taguerverben at

1900, Jerry laid down a heavy flak concentration along a road parallel to our route of withdrawal. We arrived at Zeuchfeld at 2000, ate hot chow and bivouacked for the night.

On April 14th we left Zeuchfeld at 0800 with orders to cross the Saale River at Naumberg and proceed to Holemolsen. This order was carried out and when we arrived at Holemolsen the convoy was pulled off the road to await further orders. We then proceeded to the iron mines and waited for I Co. and T.D.'s to pass through us and take over the lead of the convoy. We proceeded until we reached the outskirts of Starseidel where small enemy resistance was encountered. L Co. then entered the town and bivouacked for the night. Strict blackout was enforced - no civilians were allowed to enter or leave town - all telephone and telegraph wires were cut - the town was blacked out. About 2300 the tanks raced their motors and made as much noise as possible as they withdrew to a point one mile in the rear of the town. The company gave the impression that it had withdrawn.

On April 15th at 0400 we launched a surprise dawn attack on Lutzen 4 km. north of Starseidel. Enemy 88's and artillery were known to be guarding the town and a strong garrison was known to be defending it. L Co., four men astride the road had the 1st and 2nd platoons in the left column and the 3rd and 4th platoons in the right column. K Co. was in the attack along the road to our right and J platoon coming into town on our right flank. The defending force was taken entirely by surprise.

The outer defense which covered our route of approach was caught half asleep and half eating the morning meal. Four machine guns were overrun before they could fire a single shot. **S/Sgt. Worthington**, acting as forward scout, lifted up a cover to a foxhole and there was a machine gunner asleep. Such seemed the case throughout the town. The 1st platoon swept through the town, its 1st squad setting up the outposts, the 2nd and 3rd squads clearing the left side of town. The 2nd and 3rd platoons, with LMGs attached, cleaned up the left side of town also and the 60mm and 81mm mortars remained by the railway station; J platoon assisted on the right side of town. The tanks arrived and elements of the 1st platoon worked on tank and infantry cooperation in the clearing of Lutzen. The enemy was caught off balance by the unexpected dawn attack. Lutzen fell swiftly and with surprising ease. The surprise had worked. Almost 200 prisoners were taken and a fairly large city taken with only one casualty. **S/Sgt. Worthington** was hit by sniper fire in the left shoulder. Some Jerry fired on the town and L Co. directed counter-battery fire.

At 1600 we left Lutzen for Pegau and arrived at 1800. AA fired on a Jerry plane but no hits. We bivouacked at Pegau that night and over 200 prisoners were taken.

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HISTORY OF COMPANY L, 271st INFANTRY

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The next day we left Pegau at 1100 for attack on Audigast. K Co. was on tanks for the attack with L Co. in support. We suffered 4 wounded: **S/Sgt. Shulman**, **Pfc. Pope**, **T/5 Grubb** and **Pvt. Fryhling**. K Co. was cut off from Bn. by artillery landing in town. L Co. was organized to attack according to the following plan: 1st platoon along the road; 2nd platoon along the RR; 3rd platoon and mortars along the RR in reserve. At 1605 the attack was started and at 1606 it was called off. The 300 radio was opened up and a detailed description of the forthcoming night attack was discussed openly. Every detail, especially the support of artillery, was emphasized to let the Jerries know what they were up against.

At 2330 we pushed off in the attack on the left side of the road. We were to by-pass K Company's town on the left flank, proceed through the low ground and clear out the next town behind a rolling barrage of 155's and then reform and proceed to Russen behind a barrage of 4.2 mortar fire. We proceeded off to K Co.'s left flank, waited until the 155's were landing in town and then followed our barrage into town. The 1st platoon clearing the left side of the main road and the 3rd and 4th platoon taking the right side. Around at our assembly point outside of town we waited for 4.2 mortars to start the barrage and then swept into Russen from the lowland to the south passing through the Jerries M.L.R., cleared the town as the 4.2 shifted to targets ahead of our lines. At 0530 on April 17th, we assembled in a field 1 km. north of Russen and then proceeded to the water works for this district. Part of the company was left behind in the town to guard prisoners. At this point we were 4 km. in advance of Bn. and surrounded on all sides by snipers and machine guns. To our flanks flak batteries were firing at the field directly to our front. At 1000 I Co. was to draw up into Russen, but they did not appear until 1600, having met resistance in the first town we passed through. A request for ammo and food, both of which were getting low, was refused by Bn. because the 4 miles Bn. and L Co. were separated by were occupied by Jerries. We were firing at snipers from the attic of the water works. We were forced to cease fire when at 1600 I Co. mistook our fire for that of the Jerries and began to fire at us. That night men from the 2nd platoon under **S/Sgt. Miller** took a German truck back to Bn. and returned with food and ammo at 0230.

On April 18th at 0400 we launched a dawn attack on Lobshutz. We had one Bn. of 105's in support of L Co. Two rounds were fired, one long and one short. By the time we received the artillery the day was up and we proceeded in the attack with no artillery. As we approached, no resistance was encountered; six prisoners were taken. After contact was established with the 2nd Bn., we proceeded by shuttle march to Bohlen

to remain for the night. We left Bohlen at 2200 with the mission of a night attack to carry us to Leipzig. L Co. and I Co. were to stay off the main road and avoid all contact with the enemy while K Co. coming up the road was to clear the villages. L Co. was in the lead and all was proceeding to plan up to Glasehwitz where we were face to face with a Jerry F.P.L. We withdrew under machine gun, rifle, panzerfaust and mortar fire. 81 mortar support was asked for in hopes of cracking the F.P.L. but was not received and so we attempted to flank the F.P.L. As we swung to the left flank, day broke and at 0730 we approached an area known to have 88's and flak guns and so we bivouacked in a battery at Grossbohlen about 6 km. from Leipzig.

On April 19th at 1300 we swung back to our original route, passed Glasehwitz which K Co. had taken, swung up to Markleeburg where we made contact with 2nd Division. In these maneuvers we captured over 275 prisoners. While marching into Leipzig our mission was changed, and we proceeded to the southeast of the city and cleared out 5 suburbs. Typical of the shattered resistance was the happening of **Pfc. Shiras** who walked into a schoolhouse and before he could reach for his pistol, took 13 prisoners. We returned to Leipzig and bivouacked in an apartment house. Casualties were 3 wounded: **Pfc. H.E. Greager**, **Pfc. R.M. Bliss** and **Pfc. G.N. Gable**.

On April 20th we moved in convoy to Pantzich on the eastern flank of Leipzig. The 21st and the 22nd were the first rest we had in a while and the first time we were able to send mail home in two weeks.

On the 23rd we moved by foot 10 miles to the Mulde River. We arrived at Puchau, secured the west bank of the river and while the 1st and 3rd platoons and machine gun sections remained in Puchau, the 2nd platoon and the mortar section occupied Kossen about 2 km. to the north. The next day the 1st and 3rd platoon moved to Gothen. On the 25th we dug in at 500 yards distance from the Mulde along a levee to prevent civilians from crossing the river. Only surrendering Germans were permitted to cross. On the 26th the 60 and 81mm mortars fired upon Canawitz on the east bank of the river and as a result over 100 prisoners came to the foot bridge in I Co.'s area. Each night for the past 5 nights **S/Sgt. George** has led a patrol across the Mulde to scout territory and try to meet the Russians. We remained dug in for the next couple days.

On April 29th we found out that **Pfc. J.C. Garner** was killed in action on April 17th.

On May 1st we were called in from defensive line along the Mulde to Kossen and were relieved from our positions by the 104th Infantry. We left Kossen the next day at 0830 and traveled along the Mulde past Gremma to Grossbothen. Our mission in Grossbothen was guarding the roads from town and the railroad through town.

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HISTORY OF COMPANY L, 271st INFANTRY

(Continued from Page 42)

On May 4th we crossed the Mulde as part of a Bn. patrol and swept the woods to a depth of 5 km. and captured 6 prisoners. We returned after a 7 hour search.

On May 8th V.E. Day was announced!!

On May 10th the lights went on that night - no more blackouts!! We left Grossbothen at 0830 by trucks and arrived at Obereichstadt at 1330. We traveled 65 miles and passed through Ryan, Weissenfels and Naumberg. Obereichstadt is a small, smelly town. We had our usual duties and training schedules were started. The war now seemed to be over.

May 15th was the 2nd anniversary of the 69th Division and 6 months overseas. We had our company artillery open up at retreat formation. A small antique cannon was fired and at last report there are 4 cases of combat fatigue and 7 applications for the Bronze Star.

On May 29th, 39 men were shipped to the 29th Division located in Bremen, Germany. With the shipping of these men, Company L, 271st Infantry had come to an end.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Ralph writes that he is searching for a Company L, 271st photo and cannot find one. If anyone can help, please write to him at the address at the beginning of this article.)



Ralph Fitzgerald

In Formation: Army Ranks

Submitted by: **Arthur S. Moore**

Battery C, 881st Field Artillery

55 Highgate Road, C-4

Newington, Connecticut 06111-5251

FROM THE HARTFORD CORANT

By Robb Kyff

AtteNNNtion!

The order of the day is to learn the origins of words for army ranks!

PRIVATE comes from "privatus," a Latin word that meant not only "belonging to oneself" but also "set apart from the state, deprived of office," which a lowly private certainly is.

CORPORAL is a variation of "caporal," from the Italian word "capo" (head, chief). Some say "corporal" was influenced by the Latin "corpus" (body), making a corporal, appropriately enough, half head (leader) and half body (follower). But others lance that theory.

SERGEANT, from the old French "sergent" (common soldier), is ultimately derived from the Latin "servus" (slave) - which makes the term "master sergeant" an oxymoron.

LIEUTENANT derives from the Old French "lieu" (place) and "tenant" (hold). That's why lieutenant also refers to an official who acts in the place of a superior, as in "lieutenant governor." A lieutenant is so named because he or she could serve in lieu of a . . .

CAPTAIN. This word kangarooed into English from the Latin "capitaneus" (chief), derived in turn from the Latin "caput" (head). A French derivative of "capitaneus" - "chevetain" - became "chieftain" in modern English.

MAJOR descends virtually intact (and in tactics) from the Latin "major" (chief), while "**COLONEL**" marches all the way back to the Latin "columna" (column). Many theories have been advanced to explain why we pronounce "colonel" as "kernel," but here's a "colonel" of truth:

A derivative of the Latin "columna" was the Old Italian "colonello" (the commander of a column of soldiers). French adopted "colonello" but in the process changed it to "coronnel," which became "coronel" in English.

Soon some pedant, trying to reflect the word's Italian origins, changed the spelling of "coronel" to "colonel." But while the spelling changed, the pronunciation didn't, and that's why we still pronounce "colonel" as "kernel."

I hate to have to generalize, but generals are called "**GENERALS**" (from the Latin "genera," kinds or types) because they're in charge of all kinds of soldiers from privates to colonel, and sometimes even other generals.

At ease!

Photos from Battery C, 881st Field Artillery

Submitted by: **Arthur S. Moore**

55 Highgate Road, C-4, Newington, Connecticut 06111-5251



I have had this picture taken from a German prisoner for over 50 years and still can't figure it out.

What is happening here? Perhaps some of our tanks boys can come up with a solution.



Where does an F.O. officer take a bath? ANYWHERE HE CAN. Lt. Reinecke of the 881st, C Battery, taking a bath in a creek somewhere in Germany. I guess he knew he was having his picture taken because he had a grin on his face, but I would not want to be nearby after he put his clothes on.

Photo taken by Nat Suckerman

* * * * *

Photo left: Paul Molinari, Elmer Aspery and Art Moore of the 881st somewhere in Germany at the end of hostilities.

A GI's Tale

PART I

Submitted by: "Howitzer" Al Kormas
Headquarters, 879th Field Artillery
12500 Edgewater Drive, Apt. 503
Lakewood, Ohio 44107-1673

They say the Army travels on its stomach - horsefeathers. This article is devoted partly to food, no matter where you were or what it was. Once you entered the service, home cooking was gone forever and finicky eaters were in for a lifelong lesson. The 69th infantry was typical of many other units, barring the few lucky ones such as the air corps and the navy.

My story begins when I was called up for a physical on May 12, 1943. It was an all day affair featuring a few hundred draftees daily all through the war. At noon, they marched us downtown to an eatery for our first government meal. All the office gals watched us and smiled which picked up our spirits. The meal so vividly recalled, was half cooked lima beans, a cold, greasy hamburger, old cornbread, sponge cake - also old, and cold, and watery cocoa. Our first meal - ugh, and somebody made a fortune on it!

Anyway, we returned one week later and were ready to go. Our government, in between, sent us just enough transportation fare, one way only of course. I had to say goodbye to mom who said tearfully - behave and come back alive, and also happy birthday. (She couldn't understand why the army did not give me a few days to celebrate my birthday at home.) We were enroute to Fort Hayes which had been an army induction center back in the time of the war between the states.

We came into Fort Hayes and were hollered at by rookies who just got there the day before us - "Bout time you draft dodgers got here." The next day many of us were yelling the same thing to the new arrivals. Never mind how the uniforms fit us - we all went through that. There were tremendous messhalls there with thousands of meals served. A hometown buddy I left there vowed that he came to fight a war and would not serve K.P. They soon changed his mind.

We were now on a troop train of over twenty-some cars heading south. I remember the sergeant saying that we were going to Keesler Field Air Corps and would be live cowards. Pretty reassuring. We found out later just how perverted this sergeant was.

How did they feed us on the train? As you know, the middle car was the messhall. All troops on one end walked to the opposite end and came back with a cardboard plate and plastic utensils to your own car. The trash was picked up by some unfortunate on their first garbage detail.

As the train slowly crawled into the back swamps of Mississippi, the same sergeant said, laughing, "You guys are all going to the infantry and in a year, a lot of you will be dead." Well, throughout the train one could

hear a pin drop and stark realization set it. This is it. God help us all.

Little did we know that Shelby was the largest camp in the country, at times with over 70,000 men there. It was also known as the a--hole of all. Chiggers, mosquitoes, heat, humidity, lousy PXs. Hattiesburg which was the town seat, was 12 miles away and GIs were not very welcome. The pre-war population was about 5,000.

I was assigned to my unit. For three days I was in Co. K, 271st and then I was told that I did not belong there. I was told that an artillery truck would pick me up on the corner. After an hour of waiting, no truck. I did not know where I belonged. I had that miserable feeling of not being wanted.

The first time I was on K.P. was for a combined Headquarters and Service Battery which consisted of roughly 200 GIs. My initiation was being called at 0430 and the cooks were ready to straighten out and terrify the new rookies. How green we were, washing dishes with egg stains and coffee mugs with two temperatures of water - hot and boiling hot, and you were emersed in a cloud of steam. All the while the cooks would holler - hurry up, there's more work to be done. A cook by the name of Fowler and I had instant bad chemistry between us. This persisted through my entire time in the army. Later on, we even exchanged some choice words. We were instructed on how to dry silverware the easy way. Go to supply and get a mattress cover. Then two of us were to put the boiling hot mess into the cover and shake it. Then we had to swab the messhall and for the first few weeks, line up the coffee mugs even with a piece of twine. Then there was the grease trap, putting your arm into the tank and pulling it out. There was never a moments rest. You would have to sneak to the latrine and before you got back, someone was looking for you. We got done at about 1900 hours. My whole torso ached. I think this is where the saying originated, "Oh my aching GI back!" You would crawl to the shower and try to erase the grease. It did some good but you could never get it all out of your hair. Then you would either fall into the cot or stagger up to the PX. Many of the men could not put up with it. I did it because of the reassurance of easy detail.

The PX was another joke. The only thing available to us was beer, Jax and Log Cabin, pop, candy and a few other articles, but the air corp had full treatment - sandwiches, soda bars and tables. While we stood in line, they would draw two beers at a time. If it was early, the beer was half frozen, then later on it was as warm as you know what. One good point was a shaving lotion called West Point. It cost 15¢ a pint and contained a lot of alcohol and soap. Many took right to it as you could relax with the alcohol and the soap would clean you out the next morning. Sales of this item skyrocketed and soon you could only buy one bottle at a time.

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A GI's TALE

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Being on the serving line gave one the opportunity to exercise a little power. If the food was good, you would heap it on your buddy's plate and if someone was in line that you didn't like so well, you would give him a skimpy portion. If the item was lousy, you would heap it on the latter's plate and shake your head at your buddy whom you would give only a little.

Sunday night - ah, Sunday night, no matter where you were it was the same standard menu. Cold cuts known as h--k, d--k, p--p and cheese known as c--ass, potato salad and lemonade. Whoever planned this should have been classified as a Section 8 and shot at sunrise.

Mess in the field was always fun. You would get out your messkit and the brass would tell you to stay low and go from bush to bush to disperse the food, while many of them sat at folding tables with chairs devouring their rations. Even that gave way, thank goodness. Many officers would come in from the field and make sure their men got fed. They would stand in the chow line behind them. On maneuvers we were fed twice a day. We had breakfast in the dark. We were handed a sack with a peanut butter and jelly sandwich and an apple and this was supposed to hold you over until supper which was long after dark. You had to eat this stuff without lights and once in a while someone would be holding onto their chow and fall into a foxhole - oh my, the language. We sure picked up army terminology quickly which in many cases lasted long after returning to civilian life.

The Army really had some ridiculous ideas about how things should be done. When the troops were really annoyed, they would yell, 47-48-49-50, some shit! Yes, I said it. A great call.

We would dig sump holes in which all the garbage was dumped. We would cover it over and a sign was put on top stating the date the sump was dug and the unit. Field latrines were handled in the same way. Can you imagine good old Shelby, full of thousands of covered holes. How fertile it must be. Boy, what crops you could grow there now. Recently I was told by a buddy living in the vicinity of Fort Benning that there are no more latrines in the field. Now they use port-a-potties. They don't get much time out on maneuvers as the EPA is on the rampage, concerned about protecting birds, insects and wildlife.

In the field we had three large water containers with heaters to clean our mess kits. If you were one of the last ones to use it, it wasn't so clean. It would be full of grease and food, which was probably one of the causes of the "GIs." The GIs persisted from the ETO, through Africa and into the Far East. A great Army malady. Thank goodness our C and K rations all had a supply of olive drab toilet paper enclosed, camouflage colored, naturally. C, K and later 10 in ones, towards

the end of the war were not too bad, but C's did get monotonous - beans, hash, stew, a few off brand smokes, candy or fruit bar and crackers that tasted like cardboard. We all soon had the great little fold-up knives to open the tins, a great item.

Our first holidays away from home we were all miserable and thinking of mom crying and pop drinking to forget. The Army, however, did give us a great feast, complete with cigars, which I never saw - where did they go? You know, ha, ha!

Now after nine or ten months we had been transformed from civilians to soldiers the hard way. The division as a whole got a pass to go to Biloxi and almost destroyed the town. It was the only non-dry town in the state. On return to camp, General Bolte made an appearance and told us that the damage would be paid by the army. He said that if we could almost destroy a town, we should be fine in combat.

Ah, General Bolte, he was hard driving. It was said that he spent more time in the field than any other division general. But tough as he was, we were better prepared for the days ahead. He rode through the areas on his white horse and behind him was Colonel Parker. He was not too well liked. One group was having a class nearby and one of the GIs yelled out, "Hi, Ho, Silver." He was a great comrade from the 880th but modesty forbids me from naming him. For years Bolte tried to find out who he was - sorry.

Now we were getting ready to ship out and had been trained for the Pacific. But as usual, the Army sent us elsewhere. Packing and unpacking, what a job. We were told to tell no one where we were going - heck the whole town of Hattiesburg knew where we were going. Trains had to be scheduled and there was paperwork to be done by the ton. We were allowed a limited amount of clothing. The rest was to be sent to the Africa Corps men prisoners. Another 47-48-49-50, some shit.

We left Shelby before Thanksgiving 1944 and the camp gave us a final holiday feast. Again, where were the cigars? On the train we played cards and rested. Rumors ran wild. We were under the wing of the Army Transportation Corps and we were served another Thanksgiving feast, again no cigars. We went east and into Chester, Pennsylvania just below Philadelphia. It was a clear, cold Thanksgiving morning and many homes were close to the tracks. Many of the people had sons who were also leaving. Fathers came out with a bottle waving to us to come and mothers holding pies or a roaster waving us in.

The slow crawl into Camp Kilmer was agonizing. They had another Thanksgiving feast for us - was this the American Army or were we all dreaming? After three days we were granted a 24 hour pass to New York. The limo drivers charged ten bucks a piece. We filled their so-called cabs and - New York, here we come! Four of us were together - **Big Foot Parker, Dave Oberst, Pankop** and myself. **Oberst** fixed us

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A GP's TALE

(Continued from Page 46)

all up with dates. What a night - were we loaded, oh yes! We got back to the girls apartment about 0300 and after few more drinks, we sprawled out all over the apartment and got up at about 0600 and claimed we were running down to the corner to get some pastry for coffee, when actually we went for the "hair of the dog."

Our last night in Kilmer we were on alert which meant we were confined to an area, all phones were cut off and the nearby PX was off limits. Well, it was our last night so Bigfoot, Juggy, Gray, Hartman and myself sallied forth and accumulated pitchers of beer. We were caught and marched to the tremendous messhall serving thousands of meals daily. There we were assigned to different duties. As soon as the mess sergeants left, we got out our stowed pitchers and soon felt no pain and didn't care. We knew that the next day we would be going overseas.

In desperation the sergeant in charge gathered us together in a storage room and said, "If you guys will do me a favor please, we need eggs for breakfast. All you have to do is crack them and put them into the large G cans and when you are done, you are off the hook." We thought this was a good deal. Do you know how many eggs you have to crack for a few thousand men? We sat around doing our duty between quaffing beer when someone yelled out, "Fire Mission" and an egg sailed onto a far wall. Being artillerymen, we fired and corrected our shells and many eggs went that way. Some of the guys were throwing shells and all into the G Cans. The next day at breakfast, no one noticed and they all raved about the eggs.

The girls went down to the station to see us off to who knows where. We did hit some of the finest clubs in New York and many drinks came to our tables. What great memories, so precious and dear.

Now on the loading docks at Staten Island, our Battery Clerk, **Hoch**, was staggering under the load of records he was carrying. I offered to help him carry his load onto the train. Hoch lives nearby me and to this day, has never thanked me for helping him - my buddy.

When we got onto the Staten Island Ferry, they packed us like sardines. We were so close together, we could not even raise a hand to scratch our nose. One guy described it by saying we were so close, you couldn't even fart. Of course the brass was on the upper level with plenty of room - the good old army.

We climbed up the long gangway onto the ship with all our gear and were helped by 2 navy monsters into our bunks. They were 5 high, about 6-1/2 feet long, 18" wide and 14" between each one, but we soon got used to them. We were on the top deck for good reason as we had a lot of ship detail. God pity the thousands of men below deck with almost no way of getting up if an emergency arose. We were on the SS LeJeune. There were over 8,000 troops on board plus a few thousand navy personnel.

Feeding the troops and the navy personnel was quite an ordeal. Meals were twice a day for us and it seemed like we stood in line for hours. We weren't going anywhere, so what was the difference. We walked up a gangway, down another gangway and up, and even sometimes ended up outside. It gave us a lot of time to "B.S." and complain, as usual. It was the Army way of life. When we approached the mess area, we could smell the aroma of sausage or bacon, fresh bread or rolls, etc. We would tell each other, "Hey, this should be good." It was the usual Army 47, 48, 49, 50. The navy men would get all the good food and be able to sit. We would proceed further up to our mess area way up in the bow and have to stand - wieners, beans and weak coffee. Welcome to the troops mess - a great breakfast, horsefeathers! During the day we were allowed to buy a large box of crackers or a good supply of candy bars. Thank God for that. Our evening meal consisted of a lot of starchy foods except for Spam.

One morning we were out on deck. A nice ocean breeze came along and the smell of the food coming from the above deck was like ambrosia. We were really hungry. There was a sign up, "No Troops Allowed." Well, we had had enough. Gray, Bigfoot and I went up and into the passageway just following the aroma. We came to a sign saying, "Chiefs' Mess." We walked in there like we belonged. They were all seated four to a table and being served by a mess attendant. We just piled food right into our hands - meat, rolls, etc., and left. The next morning a sea-going bellhop, as we called the marines, was on guard and kept us away. No wonder the navy lads didn't like them. Anyway, that ended that.

My gang and I had found a secret hideaway under a big motor launch in the stern and we spent our days there. One day the 1st sergeant, **Ed Stark**, spent the day scouting the ship for us. The next day a few of us were sent to K.P. and spent the day opening 6 lb. cans of Spam (ugh). We were using cleavers to do this job and after a while our hands refused to grip any more. Now after all these years, Stark knows where we were.

The Army as always, had a schedule to follow and this schedule would be adhered to. The first Sunday at sea, shots were the order of the day. A big storm had brewed up. We were lined up anyway, our shirts were off and at times, the lines went across the rain swept decks, dousing us all. It was extremely cold. In the passageway, needles were coming at us from either side. We were told to put our hands on our hips and keep walking. A few of the guys passed out. They told us to step over them and keep moving as they had thousands of troops to stab. Chow for the day was chicken ala king. But with the storm and shots, many passed up the chicken ala king. They were just too sick to eat it. The sad part about it was that this was our only good meal on this ship. Those who could eat got second helpings though, so we got our fill.

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A GI's TALE

(Continued from Page 47)

Now the problem of latrines was a serious one - all these men and only a few latrines. These latrines consisted of a long trough to sit over. Water came in one end and drained out the other end. The motion of the ship caused one a swipe at their behind as the refuse came by so you had to keep a sharp eye and lift yourself up for a moment. There was always a clown who would wad up a piece of paper, light it and let it float down. The troops would be howling and cursing the army, the draft board, etc. Fortunately, with the amount of chow we got, we didn't have to visit this den of iniquity too often. And don't try to wash or take a shower on this ship. The soap would not suds up because of the salt water we used.

As the days passed, we were told we were taking the southern route. When we got near the Azores, a navy tin can destroyer pulled up alongside us and all ill sailors were transferred aboard. This small ship was really rolling on the sea and the men were in oil skins. On our large ship, we had our shirts off and were sunbathing.

We were a day away from England and the battle stations alert sounded. This monster felt like it was skidding as it maneuvered breaking up the convoy. It took a day for the convoy to regroup. We all had to wear our belt-type life preservers and the brass meant it so we complied. We docked at Southampton at 1700 and people were scurrying around the dock. A whistle blew and they all disappeared - "Tea Time." That English tradition was adhered to, war or no war, if at all possible. It seemed very strange to us.

Being that it was our last night on board, someone got the idea to blow up the CO-2 cartridges and use the life belts for a cushion or pillow. They had been used for a long time and a lot of them had leaks and were worthless. By the way, it was noted that our brass all had regular life preservers.

We boarded a typical English train at about dusk. All shades had to be down. While we were at the station, we could hear girls on a train alongside of ours. Of course, all shades went up. These were office girls going home. That was a treat.

We arrived at who knows where and were let out in the dark. This was our first real experience with a blackout. We all huddled in the fog out in an area in the country, and everyone was trying to squeeze into the center of the crowd.

Finally, our 6x6's arrived and after an hour or two we arrived at our dark, dismal camp. We were ushered in at about 0200 and were welcomed by dank, dreary surroundings with homemade beds of boxes, steel strappings and misshapen mattresses that were supposed to contain straw. This was merry, old England.

(To be continued in the next issue of the Bulletin with the arrival in England.)

A Few Choice Memories

Karen Gluntz had sent in an article to us regarding her father, William McHenry, Jr. of the Anti-Tank Co., 273rd Regiment. It appeared in Volume 51, No. 2 bulletin, page 24. It prompted a letter to Karen from a former member of Company L, 273rd. She wanted to share it with us.

Anthony W. Plasic

Company L, 273rd Infantry

711 Main Street

Steelton, Pennsylvania 17113-3114

Dear Karen,

I read your article in the 69th Bulletin. What a coincidence. I was stationed in Basingstoke and finally in Lummo. We landed in Liverpool and went by train to Basingstoke. We stayed in old mushroom buildings. To keep the peace with the English, we were asked to hold dances to accommodate the British ATS and Air Forces privates. They were chaperoned by officers and British NCO. When we had our NCO dances there were many British NCO and not enough of our NCO. They would not dance or socialize with our privates. So I went to my C.O. and asked if the privates could borrow a sergeant's shirt for the dances only, to which he said yes. Now there were lots of NCO and everybody was happy. Later, the British NCO would see our men as privates who were sergeants at the dances.

We were shipped to France before we started fighting. What girls! After the dances there, they would feed us coffee and doughnuts. We had to walk across a field about 1/2 mile to town to get a few drinks and bread.

Our outfit met the Russians about 4 days before the official meeting took place. They had women fighting alongside them. One Russian asked me in true Croatian for my watch. They had all kinds of uniforms. They wore caps like our taxi cab drivers and anything they could steal or take from the dead. They had a concertina. We had no more worries. The war was over for us. We indulged in the vodka and wine with the Russians and rejoiced in the fact that the war was over.

Our medical staff was in Grimma. We played softball with them after the war. **Steve Vakmanic** from Bressler was a medic in that outfit.

Today it is a lot of fun to remember. My captain and one machine gunner were married to girls from Basingstoke who were next door neighbors. They never knew it until they met at a convention in Kentucky. I write to the captain but the gunner's wife died 10 years ago and he died last year. What a small world.

Belonging to the 69th Association affords us all the opportunity to enjoy fellowship and comradeship and continued memories stemming from the Bulletin that we GIs should never forget.

Ray Pugliese writes . . .

Company A, 273rd Infantry
31 Chestnut Street

Steelton, Pennsylvania 17113-2518

I was drafted May 14, 1943 and was shipped from New Cumberland, Pennsylvania Supply Center to Camp Shelby. I arrived on May 20th, 1943.

I was assigned to Company A, 273rd initially with a Rifle Platoon and later transferred to 4th Platoon, Weapons.

Near the end of Basic Training I was at the right place at the right time. As I was walking to mail call, **1st Sergeant Harris** was asking around the orderly room outside area if anyone there could type. I raised my hand and **Sergeant Harris** had me type some passes he had approved. The next day I was told to report to the 273rd Personnel Headquarters where I was assigned to the Classification Section.

I was with the 69th until the end and came home with the Division in September or October of 1945. I didn't have enough points for discharge and had to spend 45 days at Fort Jackson, South Carolina and was given a 45 day leave before reporting to Fort Jackson. I got my discharge in January 1946.

While we were overseas, part of my duties was going with **Captain Hooper** to replacement centers and typing rosters showing which units the replacements were being assigned.

On one such trip, a million to one shot occurred. While traveling back to our location to deliver the replacements, I saw a single soldier along the countryside watching the trucks go by. I was in the back seat of a jeep and I started shouting, "Joe, Joe," as the guy watching the caravan was my brother. He was with the 190th Field Artillery Battalion stationed nearby. He heard the roar of the trucks and walked the road to investigate. At first he couldn't associate the voice as he kept saying, "Who is it?" We were driving along slowly. I identified myself and he ran alongside the jeep for about 10 yards when we started to pull away.

It was a great experience and it was all like a dream. I'm glad I was young (18) when I went in, and survived. I consider myself very lucky and thankful.

As an addendum, the article in Volume 51, #3, page 19 submitted by Philip Smith, "Remembering a photograph and a fivefold tragedy," the Company Clerk was **Corporal Roscoe Gilbert**, not Corporal Williams.

I tracked down Corporal Gilbert and told him about the article. He said he would write and correct the article. He is not a 69th Association member. His address is: Roscoe Gilbert, 2610 Blueberry, Pasadena, Texas 77502.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: We printed that article exactly as it was sent to us. Sorry if there were inconsistencies. We also heard from a couple of others who said the same thing.)



Company D, 273rd Infantry Mini-Reunion at Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, November 5, 1998

Kneeling: Art Ayres, Ed Case, Barb Johnson, Jan Hendrickson, Jim Winstead. Standing: Paul Gornbein, Elaine Gornbein, Mary Case, Gerald Dominy, Ken Sawyer, Ruth Dominy, George Johnson, Betty Ammons, Bob Ammons, Sandy Winstead, Roland Hendrickson, Betty Jo McCarty, George Shoulars, Bob McCarty, Jim Sprinkle, Frances Shoulars and Kathy Sprinkle.

Attention: 272nd Guys Do You Recall Lt. Graham Garren?

Submitted by: **Park M. Fellers**
Headquarters Company, 272nd Infantry
935 Jefferson, Box 396
Hillsboro, Illinois 62049



Lt. Graham Garren, May 1945 - Elbe River, Torgau

If anyone from the 272nd remembers **Lt. Graham Garren**, I would like very much to hear from you. My first trip to London in December 1944 was with **Lt. Garren**. I do not remember his company, but apparently he was stationed where I was at Danebury Downs.

Graham and I were billeted at the Red Cross Reindeer Club. At our first breakfast we sat with an American Air Force officer who recommended a number of places we should see. One I recall was the daily tea dance at the Picadilly Hotel. If Gram should read this, I'm sure he will remember our good times there.

I believe he was from Orlando Florida. If anyone recalls **Lt. Garren**, you may reach me at the above address or call me collect at 217/532-3328.

Notice: Bulletin Material MUST BE SENT TO HEADQUARTERS!

Do not send material to the printer or other officers of the Bulletin. It may delay your material being printed in the bulletin. All material must be submitted to Headquarters before being considered for print. Thank You.

I'm A Senior Citizen

Submitted by: **William McCall, Sr.**
Company E, 271st Infantry Regiment
743 Purdue Avenue
Wenonah, New Jersey 08090-1044

- I'm the life of the party . . . even when it lasts until 8:00 p.m.
- I'm very good at opening child-proof caps — with a hammer.
- I'm usually interested in going home - before I get where I'm going.
- I'm good on a trip for at least an hour without beano, aspirin, antacid . . .
- I'm the first one to find the bathroom wherever I go.
- I'm awake many hours before my body allows me to get up.
- I'm smiling all the time because I can't hear a word you're saying.
- I'm very good at telling stories . . . over and over and over again.
- I'm aware that other people's grandchildren are not as bright as mine.
- I'm so cared for: long-term health care, eye care, private care . . .
- I'm not grouchy, I just don't like traffic, waiting, crowds, children, politicians . . .
- I'm positive I did housework correctly before my mate retired.
- I'm wrinkled, saggy, and lumpy, and that's just my left leg.
- I'm having trouble remembering simple words like ...
- I'm now spending more time with pillows than with my mate.
- I'm realizing that aging is not for sissies.
- I'm anti everything now: anti-fat, anti-smoke, anti-noise, anti-inflammatory . . .
- I'm going to reveal what goes on behind closed doors . . . absolutely nothing!
- I'm sure they are making adults much younger these days.
- I'm in the initial stage of my golden years: SS, CD's, IRA's, AARP . . .
- I'm wondering . . . if you're only as old as you feel, how could I be alive at 150?
- I'm supporting all movements now . . . by eating bran, prunes, and raisins.
- I'm a walking storeroom of facts . . . I've just lost the storeroom.

I'M A SENIOR CITIZEN AND I THINK I'M HAVING THE TIME OF MY LIFE!

69th Member in Search of 99th Division Next of Kin Opens Big and Interesting Can of Worms!

Submitted by: **Theodore Snyder**, *Company I, 272nd Infantry*
3 Carolyn Court, Syosset, New York 11791

I had tried to find information on a GI from the 99th Division whose body and dog tags I found in February 1945 when I was with Company I, 271st, 1st Battalion, 2nd Squad, when we went on line around February 8th to the 10th. His name was **K.R. Grundman** of Wisconsin. The State Secretary of Wisconsin couldn't locate his name, but the wonderful people in Belgium and Ohio had his I.D. I'm in the process of locating his next of kin to tell them of my seeing him lying peacefully in a field, having given his life for his country and civilization.

Since the 69th Division replaced the 99th Division, it finally dawned on me what unit **K.R. Grundman** must have belonged to. I sent a letter to the Checkerboard, the 99th Division newsletter and received a response from a Mr. Harold F. Schaefer of the 99th Division, and presto, within the week, I received a wonderful letter from Jean-Louis Seel, the 99th "digger" in Belgium about his hobby of locating MIA's and 99th Division battlefield artifacts.

Mr. Schaefer informed me that **Grundman** was killed in action in December 1944 and was originally buried in H. Chapelle 3U-70138 on February 29, 1945. He was later returned to Wisconsin for burial. If the KIA date is correct, then he lay there quite a while.

Mr. Seel's Belgian research in his backyard reminds me of the years of study of the Civil War battlefields in America in our own backyard, amazing!

Following is his letter to me and a very interesting article on the M.I.A. dig project going on in Belgium.

* * * * *

Jean-Louis Seel

Clos des Beguines 67
4800 Ensival
Belgium

Phone: 32 87 231257
E-Mail: digger@skynet.be

Dear Mr. Snyder, (*ID = Infantry Division*)

I received today the Checkerboard, 99th Assn. newspaper and read your letter about Mr. Kenneth R. Grundman, as well as your correspondence with Mr. Curtis Whiteway from Co. E, 393rd Inf.

I'm one of the diggers searching the 99th battlefields for the remains of the 99th ID soldiers who were killed in action but bodies not recovered. I attached the story of our searches to give you an exact idea of our task here. (*see following pages*)

We are all members of the 99th ID Assn. and two of us go quite often to the Assn. reunion in the U.S. We also lead groups of 99th ID Assn. when they come to visit the 99th ID battlefields.

Pfc. Kenneth R Grundman, 16157516. Reported KIA on Dec. 17, 1944 with the Co. I, 393rd Inf. He is buried in Wisconsin.

I assume you found the body once the 69th ID relieved the 99th ID in early February 1945, at the original location of the Co. I, who was holding a part of the Siegfried line (German territory) in the woods East of the Belgian village of Krinkelt-Rocherath.

If you need more information about Mr. Grundman, I could provide you his IDPF but it will take a few weeks to get it from the archives.

Also, I would suggest you to contact members of the Co. I who are in the Assn. One of them is Mr. Al Nelson, 8457 E. Hinsdale Dr., Englewood, CO 80112.

Over the years of search on the 99th ID battlefields, we found many identification items like dog tags, ID bracelets, sometimes mess kits or canteens that were engraved or scratched by their owners. Some of these things belonged to the 69th ID soldiers.

Those men, like most of the time, just lost their dog tag(s) or bracelet and are still living somewhere in the U.S. It took a longer time to find their whereabouts, because they were not members of the 99th ID Assn. for which we have the Assn. roster or all the status files for most of the men who fought with that Division.

Most of these ID items were found around the sector of Losheimergraben, where the 272nd Inf. relieved the 394th Inf. Three other dog tags were found and identified for 69th veterans along the International Highway (nickname given by the 99th soldiers to the road running North-South and making the border Belgium Germany. This road made part of the 99th front line on December 16, 1944). The dragon teeth of the Siegfried line follow that road for a while and this road was not far from the Co. I 393rd Inf. original position.

We don't have any contact with the 69th ID Assn. although we tried many times to contact them, we never got an answer. The Assn. could be of great help and save a lot of time once a dog tag is found on the battlefield and not identified for a 99er. Here follow what we found over the past years that either belong to or that we believe belong to members of the 69th:

Pfc. Caola, Arthur C. 33806838
69th Inf. Div., 272nd Inf. Rgt. ?

Pvt. Casdorff, David K. 35219695
69th Inf. Div., 272nd Inf. Rgt., D Co.

Pfc DiGirolamo, Santo 33668372
69th Inf. Div., 272nd Inf. Rgt., E Co.

(Continued on Page 52)

69TH MEMBER IN SEARCH

OF 99th DIVISION KIN (Continued from Page 51)

Sgt. Fitzgerald, John J.	35555203
69th Inf. Div. ??	
Pvt. Franklin, Arnall	38464213
69th Inf. Div., 269th Eng., C Bn., B Co.	
Pfc. Quimby, Norman B.	31146518
69th Inf. Div., 272nd Inf. Rgt., D Co.	
T/5 Rakestraw, Russell E.	35556718
69th Inf. Div., 272nd Inf. Rgt., 2nd Bn., Hq. Co.	
Sgt. Spitz, Edward K.	12158160
69th Inf. Div., 273rd Inf. Rgt., E Co.	
Sgt. Worman, John M.	35407485
69th Inf. Div., 272nd Inf. Rgt., G Co.	
Pfc. Ziems, Kenneth L.	35227687
69th Inf. Div., 272nd Inf. Rgt., L Co.	

We are or had been in touch with Mssr. Caola (his son), Casdorff, Di Girolamo, Quimby, Rakestraw, Spitz, Worman and Ziems. Someone else from Rocherath village contacted Mr. Franklin about his billfold found in a barn a few years ago! I found that Sgt. John Fitzgerald got the Silver Star Medal with the 69th ID but was discharged with the 78th ID. He was from South Bend, Indiana. Mr. Fitzgerald passed away in 1984.

That's all the information I can give to you. I'm sure that I still have other ID items here who belonged to other members of the 69th ID, but the search for the owner is a very difficult task!

It is a way to let you know that by searching the 99th battlefields we search also your part of history.

Of course, I want you to know that we do all of our marches just on a voluntary basis, with no money aim. That's why we are members of the 99th ID Assn. but also the only official group doing diggings in Belgian Army camps and in the national forest where the diggings are forbidden.

If you have any doubt about our work here, please contact Mr. Bill Meyer, P.O. Box 99, Marion, KS 66861 316-382-3475, who is in charge of the 99th Association.

Thank you very much.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Following is the history of the overseas MIA Project, and how they go about their searches.)

* * * * *

M.I.A.'s Project

99th Infantry Division Association

Preface: Jean-Louis SEEL

For many years I have been interested in military history thanks to my partner, Jean-Philippe Speder. I met him in 1978 at the college when I was 16 years old. Jean-Philippe was already a collector. He had an exhibition room to display his WWII items, including manikins full dressed and bearing equipment from both camps, American and German. Another good way

to complete his WWII collection was to use a metal detector over the ex-Battlefields of the Bulge. The woods scanned with detector were the ones of the North area, eastern part of Belgium, near and around the village of Elsenborn. A few miles NE of Elsenborn is the village of Rocherath, the highest village of Belgium, about 2,000 feet. The forests all around were officially opened to the public in 1952 because of the explosives left during the 1944-1945 fighting. Major roads running in the forest and firebreaks were cleaned of mines, and a maximum of explosives were removed and destroyed. But of course, it was an impossible task for the Belgian Army engineer to remove all of them. It is very surprising to know that in the mid-seventies, the first ones who searched those woods for WWII material had to stop after a few hours because trunks of their cars were full of artifacts!

By a rainy day of March 1980, I followed for the first time Jean-Philippe in his searches. I directly found that hobby very interesting. A few weeks later, I bought my own detector since I was still using it once or twice a week. I must say also that over the years, the hobby began a real passion.

The first searches had no real aim, except they were just a way to complete our WWII collections, mine only including artifacts: rifles, pistols, knives, bayonets, hand grenades, helmets. A little while later, on June 29, 1980, I discovered my first set of dog tags. This particular set, composed of 3 dog tags, was left with a lot of souvenir coins along a firebreak in the woods of Rocherath. The 3 tags bearing the name of Max Wisnieski with a NOK address from Waukesha, Wisconsin. It was a good but a strange discovery. At that time, I just put those tags in my collection and didn't do anything else, only asking myself what could have happened to that man...

In the summer of 1984, we met a British man living in Belgium, William C.C. Cavanagh. Will is a well known WWII historian and a specialist of the Battle of the Bulge. He just finished writing the official story of the 99th Infantry Division, "Dauntless," and he's also the author of "Krinkelt - Rocherath: The Battle for the Twins Villages." I asked him to find the Wisnieski's whereabouts because I had no idea how to do that. It took a few months to find Max Wisnieski's widow. I learned that Pfc. Wisnieski was in Co. A, 38th Inf., 2nd Div. and that he had died in the early seventies. With that letter, my collection had just turned into something new and very interesting: the possibility to know a soldier story, not the one of a four-star General but the one of a man who was there on the front line. Then, we changed the way of searching the Battlefields, looking only for identification items like dog tags, ID bracelets, mess kits or canteens with names and numbers engraved on them (laundry numbers).

In 1986, we contacted for the first time the 99th Infantry Division Association. We asked Bill Meyer,

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M.I.A.'s PROJECT

(Continued from Page 52)

editor of the Checkerboard, 99th Infantry Division Association newspaper, to look in the roster of their membership to see if they had some matches with the names we provided him. Of course, many owners were 99ers and members of the Association. It was the beginning of our big collaboration with the 99th Infantry Division Veterans. In 1987, we joined the Association as members.

Over the years, we not only searched the 99th Infantry Division front line but a few other parts of the Battlefield where the following units fought or rested: 1st, 2nd, 4th, 9th, 28th, **69th** and 106th Infantry Divisions, 82nd Airborne, 3rd and 7th Armored Divisions. We scanned most of the woods of the different sectors, from north to south: Mutzenich, Konzen, Kalterherberg, Hofen, Elsenborn, Krinkelt, Rocherath, Wahlerscheid, Murringen, Bullingen, Losheimergraben, Buchholz, Schnee Eifel, St Vith, Schoenbels, where we also found identification items.

But, with experience, there is no doubt that the search for the owner is more difficult than the finding of the dog tag itself in the woods!! Sometimes, it would take a few years to trace a man! Sometimes, within two weeks, we have a positive answer of the owner in the mail box. But for a few, we weren't able to find the whereabouts of the person. There are various reasons: the Veteran hadn't applied for VA benefits or because the file was destroyed in 1973 during the fire at the National Personnel Records Center. We ask also help of National Organizations like the American Legion, the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

It is still amazing that, with a full name, a complete Army Serial Number and sometimes a complete Next of Kin address, there is no way to find the whereabouts of a man!

The very start of the MIA's Project occurred on Thursday September 29, 1988 with the discovery of the remains of Alphonse M. Sito from Baltimore, Maryland. Five days earlier, by a cool and sunny fall afternoon, Jean-Louis and myself decided to explore another sector of the 99th ID front, located between the German town of Losheim and the custom houses of Losheimergraben. This road coming from Losheim was one of the major routes of invasion on Dec. 16, 1944 and is known as the Losheim gap. This heavily wooded area was held by the 1st Bat., 394th Inf., 99th Div. on Dec. 16, 1944.

Given the large front occupied by the 1st Bat. and the thickness of the forest, platoons and squads were scattered all over the forest. They were covering shallow depressions, firebreaks or little clearings. One of these squads was the LMG (Light Machine Gun) squad of Co. B's weapons platoon. The squad was under Sgt. George Ballinger and was dug in about 800 yards into

the forest, covering a shallow ravine. Due to miserable weather and living conditions, the place was gloomy and the doughs nicknamed it "Creepy Corner."

On Dec. 16, 1944, shortly after the German barrage lifted, the position was attacked by Volksgrenadiers of the 48th V.G. Regiment of the 126 V.G. Division. Pfc. Sito was covering the squad's right flank and after repulsing several attacks, he was hit in the head and fell dead in his foxhole. The rest of the squad was soon forced to surrender. The body remained there until Sept. 29, 1988, when Jean-Louis and I found it in the same foxhole, and exactly as he fell 44 years earlier.

The foxhole was carefully emptied, the skeleton removed as well as Sito's personal effects, including his billfold, a rosary, a bible, five religious crosses and two sets of dog tags. Lots of articles were recovered from the hole, including a fifth dog tag bearing the name of Robert L. Muyres from Minneapolis, MN.

Contact was first established with Bill Meyer, editor of the Checkerboard, asking him to contact Muyres who was a member of the Association. We then contacted the Mortuary Affairs of the US Army, based in Frankfurt, Germany. On October 11, 1988, we met with Michael Tocchetti and one of his men, both members of the Mortuary Affairs. They came for a look-see, looking for the personal effects, exact location of the foxhole and looking for the kind of bones recovered. A week later, Michael Tocchetti came back with his Search and Recovery team (S&R). They searched again the hole and its immediate vicinity but found nothing else. We had done a good job. The S&R team picked up the body, went back to Frankfurt to report and sent the body to the US Army Central Identification Laboratory in Hawaii for positive identification. On Dec. 6, 1989, it was done, Pfc. Sito was positively identified, turned back to his family and finally buried on Dec. 18, 1989 in the St. Stanislaus Cemetery, Baltimore, MD.

On October 13, 1991, we met with Alphonse's brother, Richard Sito. A few days earlier, Richard called Jean-Louis from Germany, asking him to visit the place of the recovery. Once on the site, there was a lot of emotion but we knew that something good had been done. Bob Muyres came back also in July 1990 to visit the place. Bob had a very good memory. He directly found his foxhole (not the one of Sito) and explained to us all the details of the fight before his capture. Bob died on December 26, 1991.

For a few years, we already had good contacts with the 99th Inf. Div. Ass'n, welcoming and guiding groups of Veterans on the Battlefields. For obvious reasons, the story was not published in the Checkerboard, but in two Veterans' minds, Richard H. Byers and Rex Whitehead, both members of the Ass'n Archives Committee, and a third man, Bill Warnock, a business major at Ohio State University, the idea that something should be done grew rapidly. With a more scientific approach of the situation, it could be possible to find other MIA's. The 99th ID MIA's Project was born.

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M.I.A.'s PROJECT

(Continued from Page 53)

Bill Warnock compiled a list of 33 names, all 99ers listed as missing during the Bulge. It was published in the Checkerboard and information was asked for that would help locate the missing men. The search is a real coordinated effort between WWII Veterans and men born 20 years after the war. Jean-Louis and myself are the inspection team, the On-Site Search Team, as we've been nicknamed, who search the woods helped by maps, photographs, aerials, overlays, witnesses, morning reports, after action reports, etc. Lately, two new men joined our group as member of the OSST, Mr. Marc Marique and Jean-Luc Menestrey.

Some of this information led to the creation of a map showing the probable site where 2nd Lt. Lonnie O. Holloway, Jr., 60mm Mortar Platoon leader, Co. K, 393rd Infantry was killed. Six eyewitnesses had helped to pinpoint the location. In October 1990, Dick Byers came to Belgium with a group of 99ers for the 99th ID monument dedication, in the twins villages of Krinkelt-Rocherath. We spent some extra days together working with the map he delivered to us. One month later, on November 9, 1990, Lt. Holloway's remains were found about 10 yards from the location he was last seen on Dec. 16, 1944! From witnesses we had learned that he was last seen lying half up the steps of a roofed-over hole. Apparently, the Germans who used that hole had pulled the body out, took it to a nearby slit trench. Afterwards they threw a lot of debris (mortar containers) on top of it. Lt. Holloway was wearing an overcoat, field jacket, trousers and boots. We found his wallet with officer's identification card, it was recognizable until it dried out and then the ink disappeared. His dog tags were also found entwined in tree roots. On Lt. Holloway's shirt collar were the Infantry crossed rifles and a Lt's bar. We sent those two last things to Sarah Holland, Lt. Holloway's sister, the only Next of Kin alive, living in Corpus Christi, TX. A few days later, we met again with Mike Tocchetti and his S&R team. Like Sito, Lt. Holloway's remains were picked up, sent to Hawaii and positively identified. The Lt. Holloway's file was definitely closed on September 6, 1991 when he was buried with full military honors at the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, San Antonio, TX.

One must keep in mind that such a search is not as simple as it looks. Veteran's witnesses, though correct, must be sometime interpreted. Obviously, a clear recollection of 50 year old events is very difficult and a wrong detail can send us to a wrong direction. All the opportunities are searched and verified. Most of this important part of the search is done in the States by Bill Warnock, the MIA Project Chief researcher. Searching the forest, our part of the job has had to avoid a major obstacle. Digging Battlefields is strictly prohibited in Belgium. We took this calculated risk and after some troubles with forest rangers, a few of

them agreed with our motivation and gave us unofficial permission. When the MIA's Project started, two rangers even worked with us, helping us as much as possible.

Looking for MIA's in the woods is like finding a needle in a hay stack, the chance factor is important. It was like this on June 25, 1992. Jean-Louis drove to the home of Chief ranger, Mr. Erich Honen, to secure permission to continue searching a place in the forest for the remains of another MIA. While talking with Mr. Honen, Jean-Louis learned that earlier that month, a lumberjack had discovered human bones lying near a foxhole, with rusty remains of German equipment. Mr. Honen went directly to the place to verify this and, after returning home, he phoned the local authorities to ask what to do with those bones. It was decided to inter the bones of the German soldier in the pauper's common grave at the Rocherath Cemetery. However, at the time of Jean-Louis's visit, no such action had taken place. Jean-Louis immediately suggested a search of the foxhole for identification. Chief ranger Honen agreed and a date was set for the following week. On July 3, 1992, Mr. Honen showed us the foxhole. The tell-tale remains of Battlefield relic hunters was unmistakable. The foxhole was turned over with dirt and bones strewn all around it. Not more than six months had passed since it had been haphazardly ravaged. We began to carefully search the area and, as we culled the dirt in and around the foxhole, a sizable collection of bones began to accumulate. Besides the bones we also unearthed pieces of US Army winter combat uniform and vestiges of a .30 cal. cartridge belt and clips for M1 rifle. Unfortunately no dog tags were found.

In the back of our mind, it became obvious that the German bones were in fact, the remains of an American soldier. On top of all, a single set of a deteriorated US Army sergeant's stripes was found among the uniform shreds. By day's end, a skeleton, almost complete, had taken shape. To complicate the matter, there were duplicate bones. Thus the remains were not of one but two individuals. Another matter of equal importance concerned the individuals' identities. The only clues immediately apparent were the shreds of a winter combat uniform with the sgt. stripes. This evidence pointed toward one possible conclusion: the remains were of two Americans, one of whom was a Sergeant. Regarding the site of the discovery, we knew only two unresolved casualties cases for whom one of them was a Sergeant. With this in mind, Dick Byers, Coordinator of the MIA's Project, was contacted and it was decided to call Mr. Tocchetti again.

On July 21, 1992, Mike Tocchetti and his 4 man team reexamined the recovery site but found nothing more than one tooth and several small bones. The remains were repatriated to Hawaii but, to this date, no positive identification has been made. Deep in their

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mind, all members of the MIA's Project are convinced about the identity of these remains, too many details match together to happen fortuitously.

The MIA's Project is still going on and several cases are under investigations. If no other case is resolved in the future, at least, four American GI's doughboys would have been repatriated and given a decent burial, three of them as a direct result of the MIA's Project.

We've been asked, often, what was our aim, what was our motivation in this MIA's Project. Beyond the historical interest and war facts, the MIA's Project is so far the only way we know to repay the supreme

sacrifice of those young boys that died for a country and for people they never heard before. The feeling of guilt toward all those white crosses in the American Military Cemeteries in our country, is still present in the minds of people who lived the events, but almost non-existent in the younger generations. Jean-Louis, Jean-Luc, Marc and myself are drops in these younger generations, but we decided to remember and to teach our children respect and gratitude. To forget the past is to agree with its return.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. Seel would be thrilled to hear from any 69ers interested in his project. Please feel free to write to him. As stated in this article, many 69th artifacts have also been located.)

69th Infantry Division KIA's by Rank and Unit

Submitted by: **Carl J. Millner**, Company C, 272nd Infantry
1523 Vance Avenue, Coraopolis, Pennsylvania 15108

UNIT	PVT	PFC	T-5	CPL	T-4	SGT	S/SGT	T/SGT	1st SGT	2nd LT	1st LT	CAPT	LT COL	COL	Unknown	TOTAL
271st Infantry Regiment	46	73	3	7	1	12	12	4		5	3	1			1	168
272nd Infantry Regiment	9	19	3	2		4	3	2								42
273rd Infantry Regiment	30	65	7	1	2	11	11	7		5	2	1				142
661st Tank Destroyers		3	1	2	1	1	1									9
777th Tank Destroyers		6		4		1					3					14
879th Field Artillery				1							1	1				3
880th Field Artillery		1		1						1	1					4
881st Field Artillery	1		1			1										3
269th Engineers	2		1		1					1						5
Headquarters, 69th Div.											1			1		2
69th Cavalry Recon	1									1						2
69th Quartermaster		2											1			3
69th MP		1	1													2
369th Medical	1															1
569th Signal Company				1												1
769th Ordnance									1							1
TOTAL	90	170	17	19	5	30	27	13	1	13	11	3	1	1	1	402

Source: Alphabetical listing in 69th Infantry Division Pictorial History (German Printing 1945)



WORLD WAR II

M E M O R I A L



"America's National Memorial to those who helped win World War II"

Did you or someone you know help win World War II?

If you are a World War II veteran who wore the uniform of America's armed forces during that great and noble cause . . .

Or if you played your part on the home front by working in a factory or growing a victory garden . . .

Then I'd like to commemorate your service to our country by entering your name, or the name of someone you choose, perhaps your mother or father, in the Registry of Remembrances at the **National World War II Memorial** in Washington, D.C.

More than 50 years after the end of World War II, America is now building a National Memorial to honor the courage and sacrifices made by a generation of Americans to win the war that forever changed the course of human history.

The Memorial's Registry of Remembrances, a state-of-the-art interactive display of names, will pay lasting tribute by permanently listing as many of the men and women as possible who, together, won the war and liberated the world from the forces of tyranny.

You and your family and future generations of Americans will be able to come to Washington, visit the World War II Memorial on the Mall, and see the name or names you have entered on the Registry.

The American Battle Monuments Commission has been charged by Congress with the task of building America's National World War II Memorial in our nation's capital.

The land on which this majestic Memorial will be built is situated directly between the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial.

The Memorial is a worthy tribute to those who faithfully served their country in the defining event of the 20th century.

It will cost approximately \$100 million to move the earth, haul tons of marble and stone, and construct the magnificent edifice that will honor forever those who participated in the war - both on the battle front and on the home front.

The construction of the Memorial will be funded primarily by voluntary contributions from private citizens like you and me.

That is as it should be. For those who served in World War II or helped on the home front, volunteerism and sacrifice were the order of the day.

We invite you to join with us in establishing this long overdue Memorial.

First, you may enter a name in the Registry of Remembrances without cost or obligation. Enter your own name, or that of someone else, just as long as that person helped in some way to win World War II, whether at home or abroad. Both veterans and civilians are encouraged to register.

Next, to help us raise the \$100 million we need to build the Memorial, I urge you to send a contribution of **\$20, \$35 or \$100.**

With your gift of \$20 or more, you become a Charter Member of the World War II Memorial Society, and you receive:

- **The World War II Memorial Newsletter** with stories about the war and its participants, both in battle and on the home front, plus updates on the Memorial's construction.
- **A Certificate of Appreciation** acknowledging your financial support, and listing any names you enter in the Registry.
- **A personal Charter Membership Card** to identify you as someone who stepped forward to help build the Memorial.

If you send **\$35**, you also receive the beautiful World War II Memorial **Lapel Pin**. Wear this pin proudly to help spread the good news that World War II veterans and home-fronters are finally getting the Memorial they deserve.

For a contribution of **\$100** or more, you also receive an **Artist's Rendering of the Memorial** suitable for framing. This large scale image will make a handsome addition at home or work.

Building this Memorial is a big job, and \$100 million is a lot of money. But when you consider the task faced by our nation in 1941, how could we do anything less today?

On behalf of everyone who contributed to the greatest military victory in history, please join with us by sending your gift of \$20, \$35, or \$100. Thank you so much.

General Fred F. Woerner, USA (Ret)
Chairman, American Battle Monuments Commission

Please write for an Enrollment Form to enter a name on the Registry of Remembrances Form or send your contributions to:

American Battle Monuments Commission
Arlington Court House Plaza II • 2300 Clarendon Blvd.
Arlington, Virginia 22201

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS AND COMMUNICATION SCHEDULE

May I just make note to all leaders of Chapters, Groups, Branches, Companies, Battalions, Regiments, Recon, Artillery, AAA, and T.D.'s to get your Activities Schedules to **Bulletin Headquarters, Box 69, Champion, Pennsylvania 15622-0069** or **183 Pineslope Road, Acme, Pennsylvania 15610-9606**, as soon as possible. We try to work at least a year ahead, as we only put out three Bulletins a year. When mailing in this information, do send your organization's name, person in charge (Chairman), address, city, state, zip, telephone numbers including area codes, dates, location, and anything else that you feel might be of interest for members to know.

1999

MAY 13th, 14th and 15th, 1999
MIDWEST GROUP SPRING MEETING

ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS
Best Western Clock Tower Resort
7801 East State Street
Rockford, Illinois 61125-0285

Telephone: 1-800-358-7666 or 1-815-398-6000

A block of rooms will be held for us until April 13, 1999, so don't delay. Mention the 69th Infantry Division when making the reservation.

Rate: \$80.00 plus tax

69ers can come earlier or stay later at the same rate

Location: The Clock Tower is at the intersection of Interstate 90 and Business U.S. 20 A (State Street). The Tower can be seen from the highways.

Program:

Thursday, May 13th

- Check-in Time is 4:00 p.m.
- Hospitality Room
- Dinner at a Restaurant to be selected.

Friday, May 14th

- Golf and Activities for non-golfers
- Free guided tour of the famous Time Museum at Clock Tower
- Lunch
- Tour of another attraction to be selected.
- Golfers can request a Time Museum Tour in the afternoon.
- Hospitality Room
- Dinner Theater at the Clock Tower

Saturday, May 15th

- On Your Own
- Check-Out Time is 12:00 Noon

For further information contact:

Curt and Evelyn Peterson
4900 Wallace Avenue
Madison, Wisconsin 53716
Telephone: 608/222-7957

* * * * *

MAY 31st, 1999

Deadline for news material and pictures for:

Bulletin Volume 52, Number 3

May, June, July, August 1999

Bulletin expected mailing date is late August or early September.

JUNE 10th thru JUNE 14th, 1999
COMPANY I, 271st INFANTRY REUNION
TEWKESBURY, MASSACHUSETTS

For further information contact:

Dick Haines
22 Windham Road
Tewkesbury, Massachusetts 01876

* * * * *

SEPTEMBER 8th to 11th, 1999
BATTERY C, 880th FIELD ARTILLERY

ST. MARYS, PENNSYLVANIA
The Bavarian Inn
33 S. St. Marys Street, St. Marys, PA 15857
Telephone: 814/834-2161

Several events have been planned and it will prove to be a very relaxing reunion. Contact us for further info.

Committee:

Lee and Betty Meyer
117 Grandview Road
St. Marys, Pennsylvania 15857

Marvin and Mary Reber
1210 Meade Street
Reading, Pennsylvania 19611

* * * * *

SEPTEMBER 22nd to 29th, 1999
69th CAVALRY RECON REUNION
BILOXI, MISSISSIPPI

Further information to follow on hotel, etc.

Possible trip to Camp Shelby could be arranged to go through the 69th Museum. Biloxi is celebrating their 300th anniversary. Numerous special events planned.

Committee:

Bobbie Fox
P.O. Box 7370
Silver Spring, Maryland 20907-7370

Harold Gardner
2929 Mason Avenue
Independence, Missouri 64052-2962
Telephone: 816/254-4816
E-Mail: RCNTROOP@aol.com

* * * * *

SEPTEMBER 30th, 1999

Deadline for news material and pictures for:

Bulletin Volume 53, Number 1

September, October, November, December 1999

Bulletin expected mailing date is late November or early December.

(Continued on Page 58)

OCTOBER 8th, 9th and 10th, 1999
461st AAA AW BATTALION
HEADQUARTERS & MEDICAL DETACHMENT
SALEM, VIRGINIA
Quality Inn

Committee:
Mac and Madge Morris
630 North Oakland Street
Arlington, Virginia 22203
Telephone: 703/527-2796

OCTOBER 20th thru 24th, 1999
661st TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
HAMPTON INN YORK
York, Pennsylvania
1550 Mount Zion Road, York, PA 17402
Telephone: 717/840-1500
Adjacent to York Galleria Mall with nearly 100 stores.
Other points of interest planned.

Committee:
William R. Beswick
P.O. Box 576
West Point, Virginia 23181-0576

November 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 1999

69th INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION

52nd ANNUAL REUNION

Orlando, Florida

THE MARRIOTT ORLANDO
8001 International Drive, Orlando, Florida

RATES: \$77.00 PLUS TAX

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP AND AUXILIARY MEETING

MEMORIAL SERVICE - BANQUET DINNER DANCE - GOLF - SHOWS -
SHOPPING AND MORE - SUNDAY GOING HOME BREAKFAST

TOURS: Kennedy Space Center, Orlando City Tour, A Trip to Cypress Gardens
and Much, Much, More!

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Ken A. Sawyer, Company D, 273rd Infantry Regiment
2311 Skywind Circle, Melbourne, Florida 32935-1460 • Telephone: 407/254-7175

We were here in 1984 and it was one of the best reunions ever!

Come join us in Florida at the best time of the year possible.

DEADLINE FOR MATERIAL FOR

BULLETIN VOL. 52, NO. 3 - MAY, JUNE, JULY, AUGUST

MAY 31st, 1999 - *Get Your Material In On Time!*

Fellows, write up those remembrances from World War II and send them in. Someone else will recall the same thing and write to you and write to us, etc., etc. It's a great way to set off a chain reaction of correspondence. And ladies, we haven't heard much from you lately. Get your stories and news in also. The war affected you as well.

We are putting out a request for good cover photos. General photos of war scenes are always very good. We don't like to put too much emphasis on one person, so look in your attics and see what you can find. Who knows, maybe it will end up on the front of the bulletin. Thanks.



“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.

Ralph Trapper
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G - 273rd

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Granada Hills, California
C - 880th

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Div. Hq.

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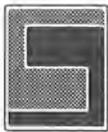
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K - 272nd

(Continued on Back Cover)



the 69th

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“Taps” *(Continued from Page 59)*

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