

BATTLE OF 75 THE BULGE

NEWSLETTER
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Patton Battalion - USABOT is a chapter of the US Army Brotherhood of Tankers and is a 501(c)3 Non-Profit.

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The Blood and Guts Newsletter covers events and activities within our area and USABOT National.

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And registered with the state of Kentucky

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PATTON BATTALION - USABOT ILLINOIS - INDIANA - KENTUCKY - TENNESSEE

Here we are again, December, the close of another year. Over the past few months I have covered the story of Combat Command R, 9th Armored Division. I hope that you have enjoyed this and maybe learned something new. I sure have. This issue covers some of the men who were CCR, 9th AD. I have tried to provide a little back story to the men we have been talking about. This December is the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge. We are nearing the day that the men who fought in that battle will no longer be with us. All of the men that I corresponded with over the past 20 years have all since moved on.

There is something that always stays in my mind about the Battle of the Bulge. I first came to light while researching the WWI killed from McLean County last year. A soldier had been killed either on Nov 10 or 11. His family received word of his death via telegram on Christmas Eve. I thought about how terrible a Christmas that must have been for that family. And in December 1944 I think about men like LTC Harper who had two young daughters who's Christmas would always be scarred by the Bulge. Those men who had war brides and those men who may have not been married yet. In the Bulge it would also be hard to notify as many were listed as Missing in Action. Not until after the POW camps would be liberated would families know. So that would be April and May of 1945.

A lot to ponder on these 75 years later. I wish I had talked to these men more than I did. It is a shame that the brave battle these men fought would be but a small note in the history books today. Those men knew the story.

The 811th TD Bn has a great history book with all the names of the men who served and chapter dedicated to those who sacrificed it all. A large portion of that unit would be captured. The 52nd Armored Infantry Bn suffered much the same.

I would like to thank Kevin Bailey with the Eisenhower Presidential Library in Abilene, KS for all of his help with the papers, and research information. I have hounded him and the staff there for the past few months trying to find information on CCR. One day I hope to be able to go there and look through the material myself and see if there is something we have missed.

As we close out the year we are still working to build the Patton and the US Tank Corps Monument here at Fort Knox. We have some new items available so please check out pages 11-12. If you would like to just make a donation please let me know.

The Armor School and Fort Benning are making the Sullivan Cup week Treat'em Rough week! If the poster on the back page is any indication of what's coming it should be a BLAST! I have heard that there might be hats and tee shirts planned as well. I am hoping to make it down there for the opening events, the tank shoot! Fingers crossed!

I want to take this time to tell you Happy Thanksgiving, belated. I also want to wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and Happy New Years from me and my family. I hope that everyone has family or friends that they can spend the Holiday Season with. Take a moment to think about those men and women who will not be at home or far away from home.

KP Morris
Patton 6

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Combat Command R - 9th Armored Division - Battle of the Bulge

Seventy-five years ago US forces were beginning to breach Germany. The German Army had been planning a counterattack as the Allies were racing across France. In December when the weather turned to their favor, they launched their attack. When people think of the Battle of the Bulge today they immediately think 101st Airborne Division. Some think about the 28th Infantry Division. Over the past twenty-five years I have learned about the 28th ID which was the front line, and CCR, 9th Armored Division which was behind them, the 10th AD which was sent to Bastogne and some on the 101st AB Div. All of these units played key roles in the Bulge. Most are well documented except the CCR 9th AD.

Over the past three months I have tried to show you the documents of CCR, 9th AD. As you have read there is a lot going on. I was hoping to answer some questions I have and I think I did but now I have more questions. I think.

As I read through the 2nd Tank Battalion history I think I know why Col Harper went toward Houffalize. The night before he sent his battalion trains toward Houffalize. I still think, and this is only my assumption, that he must have been in communication with the tanks of TF Rose. That he was going to link up with them and must have thought that his battalion staff was following him. Still there are many questions as to the actions that night.

The 52nd Armored Infantry Battalion had nearly its entire battalion captured except for some 60 soldiers that fought in two different directions but all ended up in Bastogne. There is one LT Hamilton that I have been trying to find more about but I have had no luck at all.

The 73rd Armored Field Artillery Battalion was much like the 52nd AIB which were captured, killed and spread all over the battlefield. There was mention of them being south of St. Hubert and heard tanks. Those tanks were probably the tanks of 2nd Tk BN as they drove from St. Hubert to Neufchateau!

The 811th Tank Destroyer Battalion was, as indicated in their AAR, spread thin and never had a chance. I still don't know how they went from Longvilly to Tintage. And how they didn't get stopped along the way and put into a defensive position I will never understand.

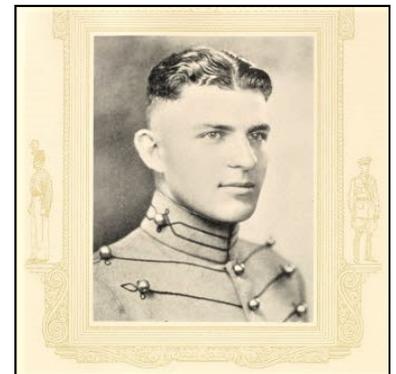
I now understand better why these AARs are overlooked. Most of the men who were in combat were either captured, killed or wounded. I don't think that were any survivors who were not wounded. These reports were written by what would assume was one of the survivors of the unit. Probably why all seem to have a little dislike of the circumstances as to the handling of them by the Corps Commander. There is not one AAR that doesn't state that the situation as know was never passed along to them. Something that may have allowed for a better prepared defense had they know why they were up against.

The men of Combat Command R, 9th Armored Division, December 1944.

Below are key players in the battles described about CCR 9th AD.

Joseph Howard Gilbreth, COL, Commander of Combat Command R, 9th Armored Division. (27 Jul 1905 - 29 Nov 1962) US Military Academy Class of 1927. 1936 Student of the Tank Course, Ft Benning. He is buried at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, San Antonio, Texas. Enlisted 27 Jul 05: Infantry: CO CCR 9th AD T-E 44-45 (PH): HQ ETO 45-46 (BSM) XO, CO Military Posts Europe 49-52: G3 Sec Hq 4Army 52-54, G2 6Army 54-56: DCS/P&O 6Army 56: Retired 57 COL. Gilbreth would be the second Combat Commander in Bastogne, Col Roberts of CCB, 10th AD would be the other. Gilbreth was wounded will in a half-track when the men on each side of him would be killed. He would later be the G-3 for 15th Army in 1945. *I could not find any papers on Col Gilbreth and I even tried to reach out to his son, Joseph H Gilbreth, Jr, 16782, class of 1949, but have had no luck.*

John P. Evans, COL, G-3 VIII Corps. (27 Aug 1877 - Sep 1970) US Military Academy Class of 1923. Entombed at Pomona Cemetery and Mausoleum, Los Angeles, California. Enlisted 18 Apr 01: Infantry: G3 8Corps. T-E 43-45 (LM-2BSM-CR): CO 16 Infantry Europe 48-50: Ch US Military Liaison Mission to USSR Forces Germany: Retired 54 COL: *I searched for the papers of Col Evans but could find anything. He would be an interesting man to talk to about the Battle of the Bulge as he was the G-3 for VIII Corps. I may search the LSU Library for anything there.*



Men of Combat Command R - 9th Armored Division - Battle of the Bulge

Thomas W. Roane, COL, Commander of the 12th Armored Group Headquarters. (16 Mar 1897 - 8 Dec 1971) Virginia Military Academy class of 1919. Graduate of the Tank School in 1925. He is buried in Rose Lawn Cemetery, Marion, Virginia. Col Roane was sent to VIII Corps on December 16. Post war he was the commander of the Tennessee Military District (TMD) in 1958.



Ralph S. Harper, LTC, Commander of the 2nd Tank Battalion. (17 Jul 1918 - 18 Dec 1944) US Military Academy Class of 1935. was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Cavalry. After graduating, he was assigned to the 14th Cavalry and stationed at Fort Des Moines, Iowa, where he met the lovely Marian L. Wareham. They married on 29 December 1938. Soon thereafter, Ralph and Marian moved to Fort Riley where he attended the Cavalry School, following which he was attached on temporary duty to the 1st Mechanized Cavalry Regiment at Fort Knox, while he attended the Armor School in 1940. After graduation from the latter, Ralph was assigned to the 7th Cavalry at Fort Bliss, Texas, where he and Marian lived for a short while until he was transferred to Camp Polk, Louisiana, to help organize the 3d Armored Division.



In June of 1941, they moved back to Fort Riley where Ralph joined the 2d Cavalry Division, which in June of 1942, was reorganized as the 9th Armored Division. He was promoted to Major in February of 1942 and to Lieutenant Colonel on 20 October 1942. He commanded and trained the 2d Tank Battalion continuously thereafter, during five months of desert training in 1943, and ten months more at Camp Polk, Louisiana, taking the battalion overseas in August of 1944, with the rest of the division. He was survived by his widow Marian, their two daughters, who unfortunately, were not old enough during his lifetime to get to know their father. He was awarded the Bronze Star Medal and Purple Heart and is buried in Union Cemetery at Columbus, Ohio.

Robert Middleton Booth, LTC, Commander of the 52nd Armored Infantry Battalion. (24 Jul 1912 - 16 Oct 1970) US Military Academy Class of 1935. Silver Star for gallantry in action Dec 19, 1944, cited for directing the defense of his position and later withdrawal of his men from a litter, after he had fallen from a vehicle and suffered a leg injury. Captured that night and liberated on April 12, 1945. Retired from Active duty in 1965. He is buried at Arlington National Cemetery, Section: 48, Grave: 832. A classmate at West Point with LTC Harper and LTC Cherry.



Henry T. Cherry, LTC, Commander of the 3rd Tank Battalion. (15 Jul 1911 - 19 Aug 1953) He entered West Point in July 1931, graduating in 1935. A Classmate of LTC Cherry & LTC Harper. After graduation, Hank joined the Eighth Cavalry at old Fort Bliss where he served for four years. There he married his regimental commander's daughter—the much sought after Suzanne Swift. In 1939, Hank took the Troop Officers' Course at the Cavalry School where he graduated at the top of his class. He was nominated for the Advanced Equitation Class in 1940. With war looming Hank was sent back to Bliss for a brief second tour with the 1st Cavalry Division.

In the Summer of 1942, Hank moved to Fort Benning to take over the 3rd Tank Battalion of the 10th Armored Division. Appropriately enough, this battalion was formed from the old 3rd Cavalry. Hank trained at Sand Hill and on the Tennessee maneuvers for the exacting task that was to be its lot overseas. In Europe, Hank was aggressive and courageous in combat and an outstandingly strong battalion commander. Twice wounded in action at the head of his battalion; three times he was cited for gallantry and once for extraordinary heroism. Hank was a key figure in the historic defense of Bastogne. General Maxwell Taylor had this to say of him on that occasion: "Gathering up armored vehicles in and about the town, Hank made up an effective armored command which, moving on interior lines within the perimeter



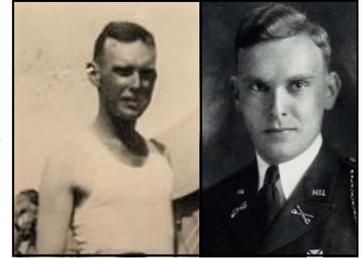
Men of Combat Command R - 9th Armored Division - Battle of the Bulge

Henry T. Cherry, LTC, Commander of the 3rd Tank Battalion. Cont...
defended Bastogne under the flag of the 101st Airborne Division.

After the war, Hank did a tour with Headquarters, Third Army, in Heidelberg and later, with the Vienna Area Command, being joined by his family in 1946. In 1947 he returned to the US to take the course at the Armed Forces Staff College. Upon graduation from the College, at the personal request of General Taylor, Hank was assigned to command the Armored Detachment at West Point. Thereafter, Hank attended the Army War College and served a tour on the Department of the Army General Staff, as Chief of the Special Weapons Section of Army War Plans Branch in G3. He was under orders for Korea as Chief of Staff of a US Division when he was stricken with his fatal illness. Cherry died in Ft. Sam Houston, TX.

General McAuliffe stated: "I had nothing but the greatest admiration and respect for Hank Cherry, both as an officer and as a man". From far off Korea, General Maxwell Taylor wrote: "I join his family and countless friends in mourning the loss of this gallant and able soldier."

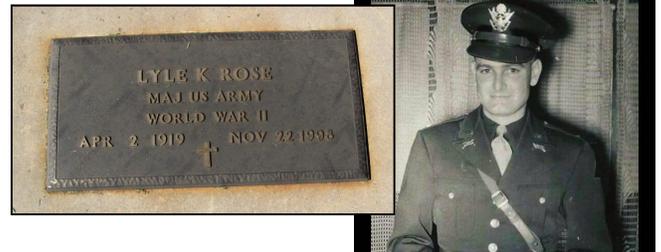
Philip A. Baird, Jr., MAJ, S-3 for 2nd Tank Battalion. (1915 - 28 Dec 1997) COL Baird attended Norwich University ROTC graduating in 1938. Served some time with the 3rd Cavalry Regiment. Col Baird wrote the History of the 2nd Tank Battalion. Retired from the US Army Reserves in 1965. The photo on of COL Baird in the tee shirt is from Phil Wickey, son of Thomas Wickey who served under COL Baird. The other photo is from the 1938 Norwich University Yearbook.



Eugene A. Watts II, MAJ, S-3 for 52nd Armored Infantry Battalion. (11 Dec 1917 - 26 Nov 2006)
MAJ Watts commanded Team SNAFU & Task Force WATTS in the Bulge. COL Watts was Professor of Military Science & Tactics at Texas Christian University from 1958-1961. That is where I found this photo of him. I wrote to COL Watts back in 2001. He is buried at Arlington National Cemetery, Section 47, Grave 244. I paid him a visit in July 2018.



Lyle K. Rose, Commander Company C 52nd Armored Infantry Battalion (2 Apr 1919 - 22 Nov 1998) Listed on as Capt L. K. Rose in the US Army Green Book "Ardennes Battle of the Bulge" Capt Rose was captured along with most of the men of the 52nd Armored Infantry Battalion the night of December 18, 1944. He was in the POW Camp that Task Force Baum tried to liberate. Him and some others escaped but were recaptured later. Rose owned and operated a service station until his retirement. Before his release from the military, Rose became a Major. He wished his military career could have advanced further, but thinks his time as a POW hindered his advancement. MAJ Rose is buried in Kiowa, KS.



John E. DeRoche, XO of Company A 2nd Tank Battalion (28 Sep 1911 - 22 Aug 2004) I have never seen any mention as to why the Commander of Company A was not present during December 1944 but LT DeRoche was the acting commander. Both sons that I have spoken to say that they their fathers both spoke very highly of LT DeRoche. The photo below is of DeRoche and his crew during the Bulge. This photo I obtained from Phil Wickey, the son of Thomas Wickey. LT DeRoche remained in the Fort Knox area toward the end of his career. I have found articles that mention him at events at the Armor School when he was a LTC. In some letter I received from Belgium DeRoche mentions running into LTC Harper at a road junction when they displaced from their roadblock. They were surprised when they ran into him. They would be the last of the men to see him alive when they left Houffalize to go towards St. Hubert. DeRoche was part of the teams in Bastogne, Team Pyle, SNAFU and would remain until relieve on December 31. LTC DeRoche is buried in Radcliff, KY at the North Hardin Memorial Gardens. He would serve with 2nd Tank Battalion until the end of the war.



Men of Combat Command R - 9th Armored Division - Battle of the Bulge

William C. Leachman, CPT, 2nd Tank Bn (2 May 1913 - 17 Aug 1993) LTC Leachman is buried at Glendale Cemetery in Des Moines, Iowa. Block 16, Lot 00043.

Howard J. Pyle, CPT, 2nd Tank Bn (Killed in Action) Commander of TEAM Pyle.

Charles A. Brown, CPT, 2nd Tank Bn (17 Jul 1917 - 2 May 2003) CPT Brown is buried at Moore Memorial Gardens Cemetery in Arlington, TX.

Robert W. Linder, 1LT, 2nd Tank Bn

Guy J. Martin, 1LT, 2nd Tank Bn

John R. Carlson, 1LT, 2nd Tank Bn (12 Jun 1912 - 29 Dec 1944) LT Carlson is buried at Forest Hill Cemetery in Cosmopolis, Washington. Section 1, Block 268, Lot 4. Killed in Action.

Roy F. Clough, 1LT, 2nd Tank Bn (12 Jun 1919 - 11 Mar 1945) LT Clough is buried at Pine Ridge Cemetery in Chelmsford, Massachusetts. Killed in Action.

Herbert G. Pulsifer, 1LT, 2nd Tank Bn

Thomas J. Wickey, 2LT, Platoon Leader Company A 2nd Tank Bn. LT Wickey was part of TF Rose, when the tanks displaced his platoon was the one pulling a final protective fire as they moved. When he took off they ran into what they thought was the rest of Co A tanks but was in fact the rear of a German tank column. They were captured. They were moved along at night with very little guard. When they were marching along the road in the dark where there was a wooded area LT Wickey rolled out of the column and into the woods. When he stopped there was another soldier with him, CPL Olsen his gunner. They worked their way to what they thought was friendly lines only to hear German voices and to be fired upon. Finally they made it to Bastogne and were given a tank from CCB 10th Armored Division. Over time they would be added into Team SNAFU and join the rest of CCR 9th AD in Bastogne.

Thomas Wickey would name his son Philip Wickey after MAJ Philip Baird the battalion S-3. Phil Wickey is who I made contact with a few years ago and has been providing information on his father and his service. Thomas Wickey, John DeRoche and John Terral would remain great friends long after WWII.

John C. Terral, 2LT, Platoon Leader Company A 2nd Tank Battalion (3 Mar 1917 - 23 Oct 2003) LT Terral was part of TF Rose. I spoke with John in the fall of 2001. John told me over the phone about TF Rose and the exploits of the men of CCR 9th Armored Division. It is because of him I have continued to research and learn about CCR 9th AD. I did not realize what I was hearing about when talking to him so as I have said many times I wish I had asked more questions and paid more attention.

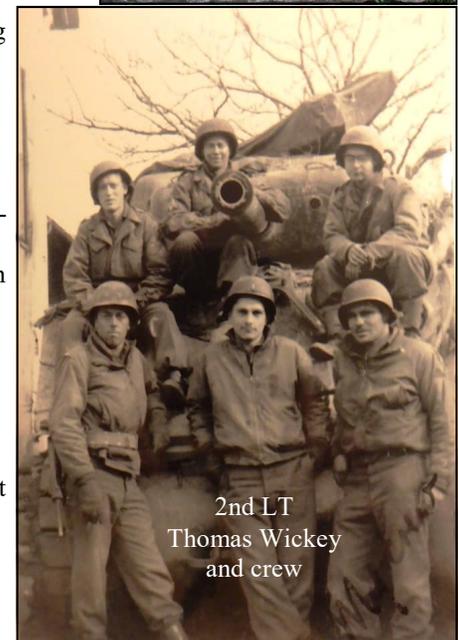
LT Terral was in the ROTC at Louisiana State University. John told me over the phone that during the battle of TF Rose that either his tank got marred or was damaged. When they made it back to Neufchateau he was given a replacement tank. He told me that the tank had been in a fire and smelt of burnt flesh and had large holes in the turret welded up.

John told me of passing 4th AD tanks on their way back into Bastogne. This would have been TF Ezell returning to Vaux-les-Rosieres where the rest of CCB was located. As I indicated to him these two groups would have been the last in and out of Bastogne. He told me on the phone that he remembered seeing the tanks of the 4th AD and thought "what the hell are they doing here?"

John would fight in Bastogne up until December 24th when he would be wounded by mortar fire. He would be in some of the first ambulances to roll out of Bastogne when the breakthrough came.

John is buried at Beulah Cemetery in Spearsville, Louisiana.

The sons of John Terral and Thomas Wickey both said that their fathers both spoke highly of John DeRoche and Philip Baird.



2nd LT
Thomas Wickey
and crew



Spring 1944



John C. Terral



Men of Combat Command R - 9th Armored Division - Battle of the Bulge

Robert J. Johnson, 2LT, 2nd Tank Battalion

John F. Calvo, 2LT, Company B, 2nd Tank Battalion (2 Jan 1912 - 25 Jul 1955) LT Calvo is buried at Saint Mary's Cemetery, Jacksonville, Florida.

Joseph M. Obester, 2LT 2nd Tank Battalion (Unknown - 29 December 1944) LT Obester is buried at Henri-Chapelle American Cemetery, Liege, Belgium. Plot E, Row 16, Grave 71. Entered service from Ohio.

Roy B. Cowin, Jr., 2LT, 2nd Tank Battalion

Charles G. Bong, 2LT, 811th Tank Destroyer Battalion (- 9 Feb 1945) You will remember the exploits of LT Bong as he some troops made their way back to Bastogne, joined up with the TD Bn with 10th AD and fought in Bastogne. Sadly he lost his life after the Bulge and when offensive operations began. LT Bong is buried at Luxembourg American Cemetery at Hamm, Luxembourg. Plot E, Row 13, Grave 48. Entered service from Wisconsin.

Warren E. Zickafoose, SGT 811th Tank Destroyer Battalion (24 Feb 1922 - 3 Apr 1945) Buried at the End of the Trail Cemetery, Clintonville, West Virginia. Rev. M. J. Painter and Rev. John Bragg will conduct services Sunday at 1:30 p.m. at Winona Methodist church for Sgt. Warren E. Zickafoose of Winona, who was killed in action in 1945 in Germany. Burial will be in End of the Trail cemetery at Clintonville, with Nickell mortuary at East Rainelle in charge. Military rites at the grave will be conducted by the Ansted American Legion Post. He was the son of Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Zickafoose of Winona, who survive. Other survivors include, a daughter, Nancy Lou; four brothers, and the grandparents, all of Winona, and two sisters, Mrs. Mary Cosgrove of Baltimore and Mrs. Joyce Hypes of Winona. (The Charleston Daily Mail, Charleston, WV, Saturday Evening, December 18, 1948, p. 7, Col. 3-4)

80th Infantry Division, General Order # 131, 20 May 1945, Silver Star Citation "For gallantry in action in Germany on 4 April 1945, in connection with military operations against an enemy of the United States. On 4 April 1945, while supporting infantry troops in holding Vollmarshausen, Germany, Sgt Zickafoose, a gun commander of a tank destroyer, observed four enemy tanks approaching the town. Realizing the he was outnumbered he nevertheless elected to move into a firing position to prevent the enemy from over running the infantry. By taking up an advantageous position he repelled the attack, although his destroyer received a direct hit which mortally wounded him. The courage, aggressive leadership, and supreme devotion to duty as displayed by Sgt Zickafoose exemplifies the highest traditions of the armed forces of the United States."



Men of Combat Command R - 9th Armored Division - Battle of the Bulge

There is one Lieutenant that has been someone I have not been able to track down extra information on. There was a Lieutenant from the 52nd Armored Infantry Battalion that was part of TF Booth that fought his way to Noville. In Noville he presented the troops there with a very detailed briefing of what had been happening and what they were to expect. He then went into defensive positions and put up some fight at Noville before making it to Bastogne and joining Team SNAFU. He is mentioned in several books but I have only seen a name mentioned in the book *Phantom Nine*.

In *Phantom Nine* he is mentioned as LT Hamilton. Proceeding the reconnaissance of the 2nd Panzer into Bourcy was a section of armored infantry from C/52nd AIB, one of the remnants of TF Rose.

The platoon leader, LT Hamilton, told the sergeant in charge of an outpost which Major Desobry had placed here that the Germans were right in back of him. He and his men continued to Noville, where the LT reported to Desobry all the information he had about the nature of the enemy force approaching and then occupied a section in the perimeter of the village with his men.

In the book *The First Eight Days of Bastogne* by SLA Marshall on page 53, It became the experience of Team Desobry that these stragglers who came to Noville singly or in small groups were of almost no value in defense; when the action started, they took to the cellars.

This was not the case of a platoon of armored infantry from CCR which fell back into Noville near midnight. their lieutenant had held them together during a running 36 hour fight with the enemy armored forces. He gave Major Desobry a vivid picture of his experience and of the action of the enemy forces moving toward Noville from the east. He volunteered to move his platoon into position at Noville and throughout the defense there, it fought courageously.

In the book *Impact 10th Armored Division in WWII*, But most of these men were either exhausted or demoralized and could not be utilized by the defending Tigers except for a superbly led infantry platoon of the 9th Armored Division which plugged a hole in the perimeter with excellent results.

In the History of the 2nd Tank Battalion Col Baird mentions a LT Adams commanding most of the infantry in Bastogne. Not sure if this was who the real LT Hamilton was or not. I am trying to get the History of the 52nd Armored Infantry Battalion from the Eisenhower Presidential Library in an effort to find out his name and maybe more about him.



BASTOGNE is preparing for the 75th!!!



12th Armored Group Headquarters History - Battle of the Bulge

As we parts of CCR 9th AD I wanted to share the histories or After Action Reports. So when I learned about the 20th Armored Group I was very interested in learning more about this group and their role. So below is an excerpt from the 20th Armored Group HQ History.

The 12th Armored Group now attached to the 9th Armored Division. Personnel of both the 9th Armored Division were combined to form Combat Command R (Reserve) of the 9th Armored Division under the command of Colonel Gilbreth. On 11 December 1944 Colonel Roane with two officers and six enlisted men were attached to VIII Corps.

On the 12th of December 1944, CCR moved into Trois-Vierges. This was to be the beginning of our days in combat.

On 17 December 1944 under cover of darkness, the entire command moved from Trois-Vierges to Oberwampach on the order of VIII Corps. For miles it seemed, you could see a long column of cat eyes and the occasional red glow that brightened as the drivers jammed on the brakes. Over on the left searchlight batteries threw up artificial moon light on the low hanging fog that enveloped the whole country side. The column finally snaked its way into Oberwampach and the command post was set up and functioning at 2130.

At 1000 on the 18th of December 1944, the Command Post was moved to Longvilly and arrived at 1115. This was the beginning of the "Battle of the Bulge" and "The German Breakthrough" for the 12th Armored Group. The Germans broke out of their dug in positions along the Seigfried line two days before with every Panzer unit, infantry outfit and every hunk of artillery they owned. This was their "Sunday Punch" and we knew it. They threw everything at us but the kitchen sink - and some of us even believed they threw that. We all know now that the Krauts had taken advantage of the cloudy weather of the weeks proceeding and assembled all of their tanks, 88's, infantry and artillery unobserved by our reconnaissance planes. We knew they were planning an attack but with how much material we didn't know. We soon found out!

The little village of Longvilly looked peaceful and lethargic the morning our tanks and half-tracks roared into it. The town was soon in turmoil. Somehow the civilians knew "the Boche come." We had to occupy their homes, barns and barnyards. Crying women, expressionless men, barking dogs, frightened chickens, the roar of the Army vehicles as they dispersed in the town and GI's going about their jobs with speed all contributed to the confusion of the scene.

The command post, set up in a house opposite the church across the street, was a beehive of activity. In the kitchen the situation map was set up and huddled around it stood "the old man," his staff, and all the liaison officers. In the next room the communications platoon was busily and swiftly coding and encoding messages. Messengers flowed in and out constantly.

Hq Co, CCR established outposts encircling the town of Longvilly utilizing 3 light tanks, company half-tracks and 4 TD vehicles from "C" Co of 811th TD Bn and 1 platoon of "C" Co, 9th Engineers.

Task Force Rose was hit by the enemy at 1430 and was overrun. Our forces were too small in numbers and too light in fire power to stem the push of heavy Panzer armor and the numerical superiority of their Arm'd Inf. Task Force Booth and Harper were both heavily engaged by the enemy's armor and infantry. Their mission was to hold positions at all costs - and the costs were heavy.

Now that our roadblocks were being chopped to bits, the command post still had to be protected. Every clerk, cook and typist - every man available was sent out as part of a bazooka team, machine gun crew, road mine crew or as part of a road block team. Many of these men sent out, either came back to the CP wounded or were never seen again. Reports from the liaison officer were far from optimistic - the whole damn CP was surrounded by Germans from the North, East and South. West of Longvilly at Magaret the enemy had set up a road block eventually cutting us off from the road to Bastogne.

At 1730 the Liaison Officer from Team Cherry, CCB, 10th Armored Division, reported to the CP and Colonel Gilbreth. The picture began to look much brighter and there was reason to laugh when Colonel Gilbreth slapped the liaison officer on the shoulder and said "You couldn't look any better to me if you were Jesus Christ himself!" And the Colonel had a good cause to be optimistic. Outside on the road were the team - 1 medium Tank Company, 1 Company of Armored Infantry, 1 platoon of Engineers and 1 platoon of Recon troops, Colonel Gilbreth asked for assistance in holding road blocks that had not as yet been overrun and to reinforce the positions held by Task Force Booth and Harper. Our optimism was short lived. The Commanding Officer of Team Cherry was without orders enabling him to commit any of his troops east of Longvilly - so for lack of orders his column remained on the road west of Longvilly until the next day like so much cold useless steel.

At 2345, the CO seeing that our position was fast becoming untenable and with Team Cherry not giving us any aid, ordered a 15 minute alert to move the CP to a position in the vicinity of Bastogne. At 0015 on 19 December 1944 part of CCR moved West on the road to Bastogne, Belgium as ordered. Shortly after the order was countermanded and we were ordered to hold our position. All that night the Germans shelled our CP in Longvilly - mostly mortar and small arms fire. The enemy seemed to occupy all the high ground in the general shape of a horseshoe. And the shrapnel clattered on the tile roofs and on the ground like hail, while radio men in the half-tracks frantically tried to contact VIII Corps. This was the almost impossible since the signal operations instructions for that period were taken by the Message Center personnel which moved out in the first serial. The operators could not authenticate or even get into the Corps net. Corps operators thought they were Jerry operators and not taking any chances so for the rest of the night out tank destroyers and tanks moved into new positions doing as much damage as they could to the enemy. Wounded men and stragglers from the 28th Inf Div already hit hard by the German push on 16 December trudged in, while the Germans kept moving in closer and intensifying their mortar and artillery fire.

At 0830 on 19 December our remaining vehicles and personnel attempted to move out to set up a new CP near Bastogne. The road block west of Longvilly held up the column. We couldn't budge an inch. The high ground on each side of the road prevented us from taking off cross country. Jerry knew our predicament, and it wasn't long when his Tiger tanks on the hills opposite of us began

20th Armored Group Headquarters History - Battle of the Bulge

“zeroing in” on our tanks and half-tracks, assisting by artillery and small arms fire from all flanks. The leading vehicles were being knocked off like ducks and burning tanks and other vehicles further prevented the column from getting the hell out of the hot spot that was forever getting hotter. The noise was indescribable - as turf, sod, half-tracks and tanks would go up in a sheet of red flame and black smoke. The air stunk of gunpowder.

A 30 caliber machine guns no match for a Panzer 88 or their mortar and artillery fire - that was quite obvious. Men were being hit by shrapnel and vehicles were burning furiously with their ammunition exploding to add to the noise and confusion. This was the moment when the TO's were forgotten and men gladly changed their branch of service from Armored to dogfoot. The vehicular weapons were dismounted from vehicles not yet hit and all men sent to the high ground near the Catholic Grotto for better defensive positions. It was at this time that Mr Gibbons, our Warrant Officer, was hit and killed by a German mortar shell, and the Group lost a capable soldier and swell guy, liked and admired by everyone.

All of the men were split into small groups and proceeded to infiltrate through enemy lines into Bastogne. Each group had its own particular hell to go through, its own stories of bloodshed and tangling with the enemy and some managed to bag themselves some German PW's before they finally reached the City of Bastogne and to become known as the “Bloody Bastards of Bastogne.”

As the men of CCR, 9th Armored Division began to assemble in Bastogne, under directions of Colonel Gilbreth, Major Fernald Bagley and Captain John M. Kilker, they were placed in different organizations namely CCR, Hq 2nd Tk Bn, “C” Co of 9th Engineers, “C” Co 482nd AAA and “C” Co 811th TD Bn. Our CP was set up with CCB of the 10th AD in the Le Bruin Hotel and attached to the 101st Airborne Division. We were the mission of setting up the interior defense of Bastogne. This team was known throughout the operation as Team SNAFU under the command of Captain Kilker. But the Krauts were soon to learn we were far from being SANFU as we understand the word in the Army.

A whole book could be written on the action in Bastogne and of the unsung heroes, the sacrifices in blood and life. But history speaks for itself - the German never did take Bastogne and from that time on the Germans fought a losing game all the way back to their own ball park. 12th Armored Group will remember it as two weeks of freezing hell, blood, sweat, death and guts. Even time can't erase the memory of mortar shells landing in the streets cutting men to shreds, the drone of Jerry planes at night just before they dropped their string bombs on Christmas Eve, of the screaming whistle of the bombs as they sought to blow us out of our cellars. Bastogne will always be remembered by Group as a picture of buildings burning at night, the screams of the wounded and dying when the hospital was hit by an aerial bomb, bitter cold nights in the fox holes, snow and cold that rotted men's feet, living all day on one box of “K” rations, sleepness, torturous nights and bright blood on the snow. The happiest sight that was hundreds of C-47's of the 9th Troop Carrier Command as they dropped their red, green, yellow and white parachutes weighted down with gas, medical supplies, food and ammunition to turn the tide of battle. This was our “Merry Christmas!”

On 31 December 1944 all personnel of Group and CCR were relieved and assembled in vicinity of Saulces-Monclin, France. Colonel Thomas Roane assumed command replacing Colonel Gilbreth who was wounded in Bastogne. The battle for Bastogne was over for the 12th Armored Group.

Commanding Officer - Col T. W. Roane

Executive Officer - Lt Col F. N. Latimer

Lt Col W. J. Lavigne

S-2 - Capt Breck Moran

S-3 - Major Lawrence F. Becnel

S-4 - Major Robert K. Morrison

Ln O - Capt Gordon L. Bryant

Com O, Asst S-3, Air - Capt John M. Kilker

Orientation - 1st LT Robert M. Grinnell

Asst Com O - 2nd LT Lorenz G. Schuessler

Special Service Officer - 1st LT Joe H. Taylor

Dental Officer - Capt E. J. Neaverth

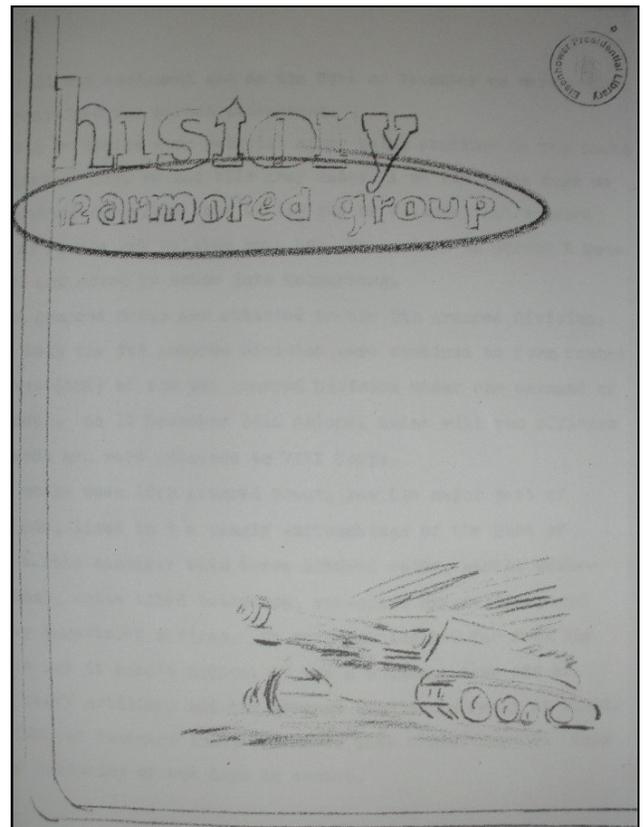
1st LT Frank F. Giannangelo

Chaplain - Capt Stephen E. Balogh

Hq Co CO - Capt Gerald G. Daubek

Tk Plat Comdr - 1st LT Arthur E. Stanze

Maint O - 2nd LT Joseph Zatorski



OPEN HOUSE at the American Armor Annex - Battle of the Bulge

The U.S. Army Armor & Cavalry Collection cordially invites you to the last American Armor Annex Open House of 2019. In honor of the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge, we will be hosting this special event on 14 December, from 9 AM until 4 PM. There is no charge to attend!

Besides our normal selection of American vehicles, we will have weapons and equipment on display from the Collection highlighting the heavy fighting in the Ardennes, a special guided tour by the curator, and hosting signups for our volunteer program. Refreshments will also be provided.

The American Armor Annex is located with the U.S. Army Armor School at the Harmony Church Area of Fort Benning, on the east side of Building 4303 (Whittington Hall). The quickest access is through the 8th Division Road/Harmony Church exit off Martha Berry Highway. PLEASE COMMENTS BELOW FOR MAPS TO THE ANNEX. Due to the location on Fort Benning, standard access requirements will be in effect (Valid U.S. Department of Defense ID or Fort Benning visitors pass) for off post visitors. Please see <https://www.benning.army.mil/GateInfo/index.html> for further information on access.



Please follow these maps in order to find Building 4303. As a reminder, all visitor's attending will require a U.S. Department of Defense ID or Fort Benning Visitor's Pass (acquired at the Main Gate at the end of I-185). More information on Visitor's Passes can be at <https://www.benning.army.mil/GateInfo/>. Currently, Visitor's Passes can be obtained either at the Main Gate Visitor's Center at the Main Gate on Interstate 185 or at the Harmony Church/8th Division Road Gate Visitor's Center.

THE U.S. ARMY ARMOR & CAVALRY COLLECTION
PRESENTS

THE THIN OLIVE DRAB LINE:

AN OPEN HOUSE FOR THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF
THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

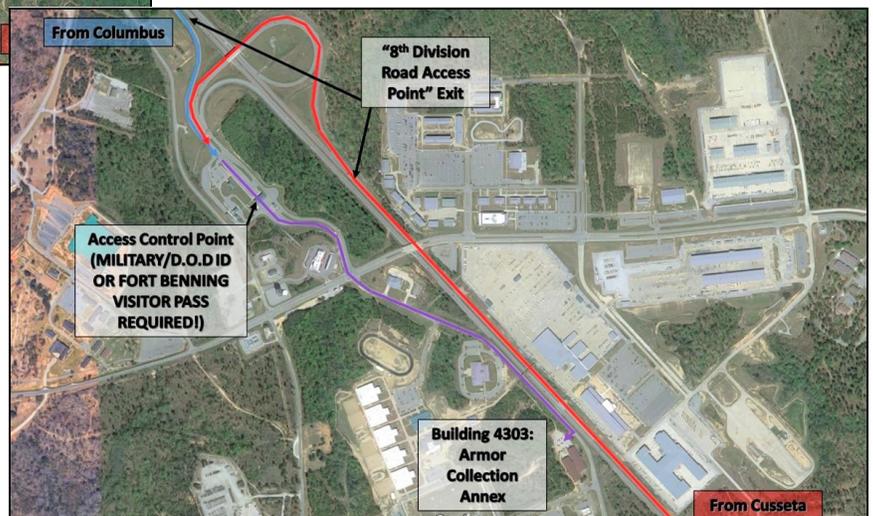
14 DECEMBER 2019
9 A.M. TO 4 P.M.

36 VEHICLES AND GUNS
VOLUNTEER RECRUITING & SIGN UP
EQUIPMENT AND WEAPON DISPLAYS
GUIDED TOUR, "THE M4 SHERMAN", BY THE CURATOR AT 10:30 & 12:30

AT THE AMERICAN ARMOR ANNEX - BUILDING 4303 (NEXT TO WHITTINGTON GYM)
7098 OLD CUSSETA HIGHWAY, FORT BENNING, GA 31905

Learn about American Armor history with a selection of 36 American tanks, tank destroyers, armored personnel carriers, and anti-tank guns from the U.S. Army's Armor & Cavalry Collection. There is no cost for admission. This event is hosted by the Collection as part of its mission to educate, promote, and tell the story of the U.S. Army's Armor Branch.

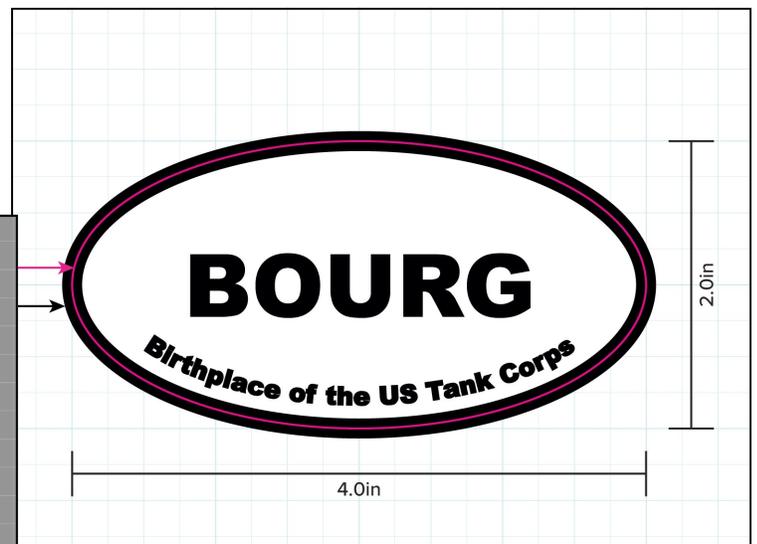
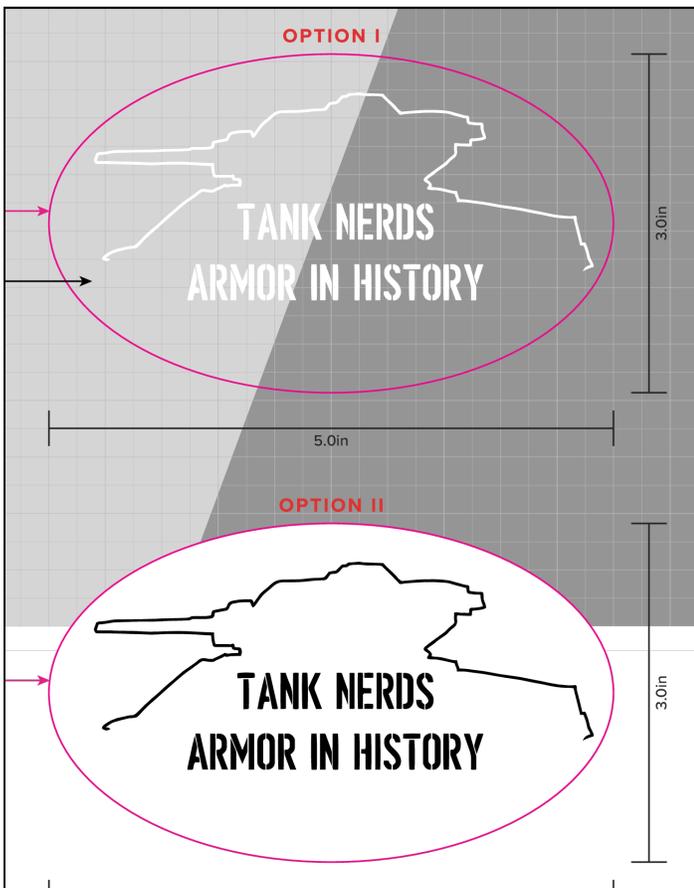
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New Patton and the US Tank Corps Monument Items

So we have some new items on top of the tees and the mugs. I have decals/stickers that we have had made. The first is the Bourg oval decal/sticker. These are just like the Treat'em Rough decals. They are made for indoor and outdoor use. These are small but I wanted to see how these would do before diving head first. These are 2" tall and 4" long. I have 25 of these on hand.

The other item is the Tank Nerds Armor in History decal/sticker. These are slightly larger than the Bourg decal. These are 3" tall and 5" long. It is a clear decal with the image on it. I made the mistake of selecting Option II, black ink, for the first set. We can always get white ink but I will have order those. I have 25 on these on hand.



New Tank Corps Monument Item



The 75th Anniversary of the Battle of Bulge tee shirt. These are on a run like the shirts we did before. Colors are White, Grey, and OD Green. Sizes will run from Small through 3XL. These shirts are athletic cut and do run small in size. These are \$30 each, 3XL shirts are \$35 each. Shipping can be included.
(THE FIRST ROUNDS OF TEES DELIVERED ON DECEMBER 5th!!!!)



Patton Battalion has anew item for the Patton US Tank Corps Monument Project.

It an 11oz Diner Mug made here in the USA by Deneen Pottery. These are available for \$25 each and shipping if needed is between \$8 and \$10 depending on quantity and distance.

Out of the 47 ordered we are down to just 9 left on hand. So they are going quick. Contact me or look for them on the 19Series Website. <https://19seriesclothing.com/>



Patton Monument Report for 2019

As of December 2, 2019, the Monument fund has \$15,559.40.

Total in Monument Account: \$15,559.40.

The Bourg Tee Shirts we have on hand.

Large: Yellow - 3, Tan - 2, **2XL:** Yellow -4, Tan - 3, OD - 4, **3XL:** Yellow - 2, Tan - 2, OD - 1, **4XL:** Yellow - 2.

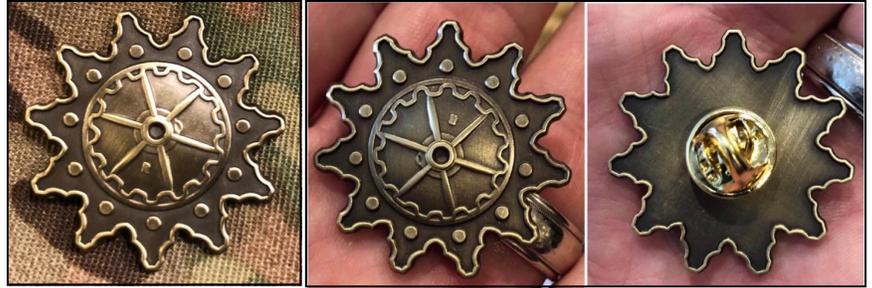
M4 Tee Shirt

Large: Tan - 1, OD -1.

2XL: Tan - 1

Lapel Pins

We are looking at \$12 each for these.



I have over 40 of the Treat'em Rough stickers again! We are asking \$5 each, which includes shipping. If you want some please contact me!

Patton Battalion Funds / Memberships / Dues

The Patton Battalion, as of December 2, has 451 members on our battalion Facebook page. Out of those 451 members we are currently at 93 paid members. The Patton Battalion has \$.76 in funds in the PayPal account. We have \$326.27 in the Patton Operating account. \$500 of that is for the mugs, Battalions funds are \$313.22.

In order to be a paid member of the battalion you must be a paid member of USABOT National. Again, a paid first year membership of \$15.00 which gets you a free battalion patch. Since we now have the battalion patch in the larger size both in color and subdued you have a choice as to which one you want free with your paid membership.

Both patches are also available for \$5 EA.

Your annual membership renewal will be \$10.00 every year after that. ***Annual dues for the battalion are now due in June of each year!***

You can pay for your battalion membership through Paypal at:
pattonbattalion@outlook.com or
patton.battalion@usabot.org.

If you don't have a Paypal account you can send a check or Money Order to:

Patton Battalion - USABOT
1432 Flood Road
Shelbyville, KY 40065



ATTENTION

USABOT Memberships can be renewed and purchased By mail at

USABOT
68 West Marion ST
Doylestown, OH 44230

Make checks payable to USABOT
If at all possible try to go the USABOT Store Online
and register there so that the G4 can track.

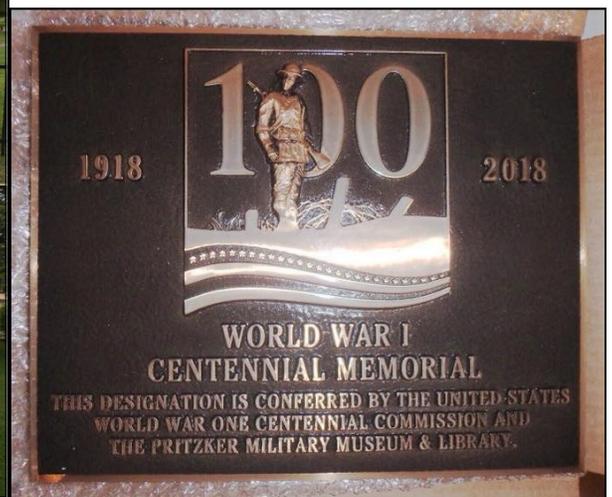
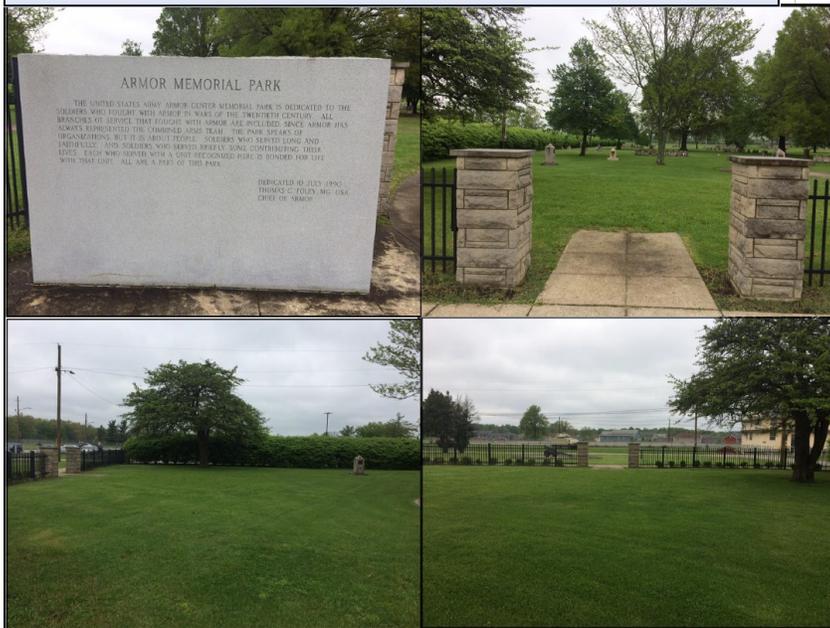
WWW.USABOT.ORG

Patton Joins the US Tank Corps Monument



The US Tank Corps shirts we still have few tees left!

<https://19seriesclothing.com/>



Patton Monument Layout

Proposed wording for back of monument - Left Side

Captain George S. Patton, Jr., during WWI, while assigned as the first officer to the U.S. Army Tank Corps, 10 November 1917, built the U.S. Army Light Tank School at Bourg, France, developed training, tactics, techniques and procedures for light tanks and help develop the first U.S. built tank, the M1917.

Letter from Captain Patton to Commander-in-Chief A.E.F, Subject: Command in the Tank Service. October 3, 1917.

1. I understand that there is to be a new service of "Tanks" organized and request that my name be considered for a command in that service.
2. I think myself qualified for this service for the following reasons.
 - A. The duty of "Tanks" and more especially of "Light Tanks" is analogous to the duty performed by cavalry in normal wars. I am a cavalryman.
 - B. I have commanded a Machine Gun Troop and know something of the mechanism of Machine Guns. I have always had a Troop which shot well so think that I am a good instructor in fire. It is stated that accurate fire is very necessary to good use of tanks.
 - C. I have run Gas Engines since 1917 and have used and repaired Gas Automobiles since 1905.
 - D. I speak and read French better than 95% of American Officers so could get information from the French Direct. I have also been to school in France and have always gotten on well with Frenchmen.
 - E. I believe that I have quick judgment and that I am willing to take chances. Also I have always believed in getting close to the enemy and have taught this for two years at the Mounted Services School where I had success in arousing the aggressive spirit in the students.
 - F. I believe that I am the only American who has ever made an attack in a motor vehicle.
3. This request is not made because I dislike my present duty or am desirous of evading it but because I believe that when we get "Tanks" I would be able to do good service in them.

November 10, 1917: Order for tanks approved by GHQ AEF General Order 153, Paragraph 37.

On November 16, 1917, Captain Patton and 2nd Lieutenant Elgin Braine, the second person assigned to the US Tank Corps, were sent to the French Tank School at Champlieu, France and began learning about French Light Tanks.

"Light Tanks" was the first paper submitted by Captain Patton. The double-spaced, fifty-eight-page report was submitted on 12 December 1917 to the new Chief of Tanks, B.G. Samuel D. Rockenbach. It served as the foundation for subsequent tank developments in the AEF. The report, divided into four sections, including a detailed mechanical description of the Renault light tank, recommendations for the organization of tank units, a discussion of tank tactics and doctrinal theory, and proposed methods for the conduct of drill and instruction.

Patton described the light tank as a self-propelled armored vehicle capable of delivering predetermined firepower on the battlefield whenever needed. It had to be able to overcome all terrain obstacles in its path, provide maximum protection to both crew and engine, and be armed in order to accomplish this mission. He further specified that the vehicle must be easily manufactured in large numbers, have a power-to-weight ratio proportionate to the potential of its engine and traction, and be transportable to training or battle areas by either rail or truck. In later years when Patton was arranging his files, he wrote in pencil across the top, "This paper was and is the Basis of the U. S. Tank Corps. I think it is the best Technical Paper I ever wrote. GSP, Jr."

On December 17, 1917 Patton and Braine went to Langres, France where they reported to the Commandant of the Army Schools for the purpose of establishing a Tank School.

In late December Patton and Braine reconnoitered land that would be suitable for the tank School. They found and looked over ground near Bourg and decided that it was exactly what was needed for a school, tank park and maneuver ground. At Bourg, five miles south of Langres on the road to Dijon, the land was in the Bois d'Amour, a rising piece of ground crowned by a wood and flanked by two good roads and a railroad. Bourg, with nearby villages of St. Geosmes and Brennes, as well as Langres, were conveniently located for billets.

Promoted to Major, Temporary, January 26, 1918.

Assigned formally as the Commandant of the 1st Light Tank School, February 14, 1918.

Promoted to Lieutenant Colonel, Temporary, April 3, 1918.

Organized 1st Light Tank Battalion with himself commanding, April 28, 1918.

Organized 2nd Light Tank Battalion, with himself in command of the Regiment, June 6, 1918.

Captain Patton, after seeing division patches on units arriving in France, said "I want you officers to devote one evening to something constructive. I want a shoulder insignia. We claim to have the firepower of artillery, the mobility of cavalry and the ability to hold ground of the infantry so whatever you come up with it must have red, yellow and blue [the traditional colors of artillery, cavalry and infantry] in it". The winning design was a triangular patch with equal parts of the three colors. The winning designer was awarded a \$100 dollar bill. Patton wanted to make the Tank Corps stand out from everyone else. That triangle [shoulder patch] was the first step.

Student, General Staff College, Langres, France, August 20, 1918.

Organized and assigned himself Brigade commander 304th Tank Brigade, August 24, 1918.

On 12 September 1918, Colonel Patton led the 304th Tank Brigade, consisting of the 326th and 327th tank battalions, that he trained, into combat during the Battle of St. Mihiel.

Led the 304th Tank Brigade during the Meuse-Argonne Offensive. The Distinguished Service Cross Citation reads: for extraordinary heroism in action while serving with the Tank Corps, A.E.F., near Cheppy, France, 26 September 1918. Colonel Patton displayed conspicuous courage, coolness, energy, and intelligence in directing the advance of his brigade down the valley of the Aire. Later he rallied a force of disorganized infantry and led it forward, behind the tanks, under heavy machine-gun and artillery fire until he was wounded. Unable to advance further, Colonel Patton continued to direct the operations of his units until all arrangements for turning over the command were complete. General Order No. 113 (1918)

Promoted to Colonel Temporary, October 18, 1918.

His leadership, esprit de corps, élan, fundamentals and the combat aggressiveness that he instilled into the U.S. Tank Corps, continued into World War II through Korea, the Cold War, Desert Storm, Iraqi Freedom and continues on to this very day...."Treat'em Rough!"

Patton Monument Layout

Proposed wording for backside of Monument (Right Side Rear)

TANK BATTALIONS THAT SERVED IN COMBAT

**301st Heavy Tank Battalion
306th Tank Brigade
331st Tank Battalion**

**304th Tank Brigade
344th Tank Battalion & 345th Tank Battalion**

ST. MIHIEL

● ESSAY ● NONSARD ● JONVILLE ● PANNES ● ST. MAURICE ● WOEL ● BENEY ●

MEUSE-ARGONNE

● VARNNES ● MONTBLAINVILLE ● EXERMONT ● CHEPPY ● CHARPENTRY ● CHAPAL CHEHERY ●
● BAULNY ● VERY ● SOMMERANCE ● MONTREBEAU WOODS ● KANDRES-ET-ST. GROERGES ●

WITH BRITISH FORCES

● BRANCOURT ● FRESNOY ● LA-HAIE MENNERESSE ● ST. SOUplet ●
● CATILLON-ET-GIMBRAMONT FARM ● LE-CATELET BONY ●

MEDAL OF HONOR

2

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

50



WORLD WARS TANK CORPS ASSOCIATION

In 1919 the movement began to create Tank Corps Posts as a part of the newly formed American Legion. The purpose of the organization was to promote and maintain public interest in tanks as an arm of the service and to form a bond between its members by means of social and fraternal activities. These tankers created Tank Corps Posts formed in Chicago, New York, St Louis, Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. just to name a few. The group was fond of the two men who made great impressions on them during World War 1, General Dwight D. Eisenhower and General George S. Patton, Jr.

The WWTCA lobbied the Post Master General in 1953 to create a General George S Patton, Jr. stamp. The stamp was unveiled on November 10, 1953 on General Patton's birthday.

The official combat badge of the American fighting tankmen was approved and released by the World Wars Tank Corps Association in April, 1957. Centered on the badge is a replica of the British Mark V tank running over the flaming sword symbolic of battle and in particular of Chateau Thierry. The background is blue and the inscription "World Wars Tank Corps." All armored combat men of both World Wars were eligible for the badge which was issued only through the World Wars Tank Corps Association. President Eisenhower received the first combat badge on July 7, 1958, at the White House.

The WWTCA lobbied the War Department to create a Combat Armor Badge after the success of Armor in World War II and the Korean War. In 1950's the WWTCA began to sponsor a measure before Congress to establish a Combat Armor Badge and Expert Tanker's Badge. The discussion would continue throughout the 1960's and 1970's during the Vietnam War and again in 1991 after Operation Desert Storm.

One of the last contributions made by this group was the Armored Force Monument located in Arlington National Cemetery.



Patton Battalion - USABOT

Board of Directors

- Matthias Martinez
- Karlen P Morris
- Nathan Snyder
- William Starks
- Dion Walker, Sr.
- Phillip Wilburn



Be sure to check us out on
Twitter @pattonbattalion



Coming up in the January Issue -

Upcoming Events

US Cavalry & Armor Association Chapter Fort Knox - Stable Call monthly meeting, 3rd Thursday of every month, Location TBD - Fort Knox, KY

World War I Event - Indiana Military Museum, Vincennes, IN, March 2020.

Sullivan Cup - Best Tank Crew Competition - Fort Benning, GA, 4-8 May 2020

Patton and the US Tank Corps Monument - Fort Knox - **TBD**

From the US Army Armor School
 Are you ready for #SullivanCup2020!?
 The events will be held 4-8 May 2020 here at Fort Benning!
 Official invites and further details to follow, but let's start getting excited
 about seeing who the best tank crew of 2020 will be!!!
 #armorready #tank #tanksgiving #mcoe #fortbenning #columbusga

