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BARAGA 1999

The 107th Engineer Reunion has returned again to the Baraga Armory overlooking beautiful Keweenaw Bay. The men of Det-1 Co-A are preparing the last Reunion of this Millennium to be remembered well into the next Millennium.

If you don't already have it marked on your calendar, do it now. The dates of the Reunion are 30 July to 1 August, 1999. This is one of the most pleasant times of the year in the Baraga area so come and enjoy.

Friday afternoon can be spent meeting friends and renewing old acquaintances, as well as settling in and preparing for the festivities. There have been special arrangements made with local Motels for Reunion participants, be sure and see the attached reservation sheet for details. The State Historic Flag Display will be set up for viewing as well as our own 107th Historical Display.

Friday evening starting at 1800 there will be a social gathering with Hors D'oeuvres and other light fare. This will be the place to be, because at 2000 the Dancing begins to the DJ sounds of the "Music Machine" till midnight.

Saturday will be an activity filled day with many things to choose from. There will be an early morning Golf Scramble at the L'anse Golf Club (details at the

registration desk). Breakfast of eggs to order, SOS, etc will be available from 0630 till 0900 all at a bargain price. We will also have tours of the local area and a shuttle bus to the Ojibwa Casino will make regular stops at the Armory throughout the day.

At 1100 we will gather in front of the Armory for the traditional Memorial Service.

After the Memorial Service we will serve a Lunch of spaghetti, garlic bread and salad and prepare for the Annual Business Meeting, which will start at 1300. Of course for those not attending the business meeting there will be plenty of activities planned.

The formal Banquet will start with cocktails at 1800 and Dinner at 1900. SGT Jarve (of 96' reunion fame) and his crew of master chefs are preparing a banquet of Sirloin tip roast, mashed potatoes & gravy, vegetables, salad, rolls and desert. Dinner will be followed by a short program and that will be followed by music and dancing from 2100 to 0100.

Sunday morning will have breakfast (same menu as Saturday) and that famous engineer red drink. A toast to new friends, old acquaintances, long goodbyes and short speeches. See you there!

James E. Baker
1SG, Co-A, 107th Engineers

TAPS

Day is done, gone the sun
from the lake, from the hill,
from the sky.

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.



Earl C. Terrill (A 107 R-A 254) Orange City, FL
Frank J. Battisti (3rd Plt C 254) Cleveland, OH
Robert O. "Bob" Birney (B 254) Washington, IA
Jeno A. Canavera (B 107 R-522d) Iron Mtn., MI
Vern R. Cartwright (B 107 R-522d) S.S.Marie, MI
Francis A. Danis (F 107 R-B/H&S 254) Calumet, MI
Donald M. DeMine (B 254) Latrobe, PA
Michael Doherty (A 254) Plymouth, WI
Lawrence H. Ellenich (E 107 R-A 254) Calumet, MI
Lorenz R. Engebrecht (H&S 107 R-1121 Gp Hq)
Wausau, WI
Robert W. Ford (C 107 R) Madison Heights, MI
Burdette R. "Bert" Hayner (F 107 R-B/H&S 254)
Hastings, MI
John Hodges (A 107 NG Bn) Calumet, MI
Ames T. Minor (CO Co B 254-age 92) Bethlehem, CT
Sylvester Nocerini (B 107 NG Bn) Iron River, MI
Thomas S. Nurnberger (B 107 R-Hq 254-
G-3 Sec. V Corps Hq) Omaha, NE
Albert A. Oja (F 107 R-OCS from LA) Mohawk, MI
Benjamin O. Pascoe (D 107 R-PTO 32d Div
in 127 Inf R & 632D TD Bn) Negaunee, MI
Donald C. Rifleman (522d Engr Co) Green Bay, WI
A. P. Rosatti (A 107 R) Norway, MI
Art. Saviluoto (HHC NG Bn) Jacksonville Beach, FL
Joseph M. Shaltz (Med Det 107 R-AAC) Auburn, WA
Conrad "Connie" Solka (HHC 107 NG) Ishpeming, MI
Ralph E. Stenberg (D 107 R-B 254) Colgate, WI
Joseph Stone (E 107 R) Hazel Park, MI
Pellegrino A. Suriano (A 107 R) Escanaba, MI
Edward Stanchina (A 107 R) Quinnesec, MI
Raymond L. Versailles, Sr. (F 107 R) Dumont, CO
Mark A. Wood (HHC 107 NG Bn) Negaunee, MI
Arthur A. "Tex" Harper (B 254) San Marcos, TX

ROSTER ADDITIONS

Recognition and a Snortin' Bull Medallion to
(**as indicated**)

Ron Collins (HHC 107 NG Bn), 718 W. Magnetic St.
Marquette, MI 49855 (**Ed Vickstrom**); Stanley
Latowski (HHC 107 NG Bn), 2043 Cherry St., Mar-
quette, MI 49855 (**49'ers Mtg**); Carl Bengry
(HHC NG Bn -1075th), 397 Mangum Rd., Marquette,
MI 49855 (**49'ers Mtg**); Melvin Anderson
(HHC 107 NG Bn), 251 Helmsdorfer Rd., Negaunee,
MI 49866 (**49'ers Mtg**); Col (Ret) Robert
G.W. Brown (1121 Gp-C 254), 99 West Shore Road,
Ellington, CT 06029 (**Sanford Hall**); Mando
J. Moschella (3rd Plt A 254), 4216 Lost Creek
Blvd., Ft. Worth, TX 76008 (**Mrs. "Chuck"

Karpinen & Paul J. Van Abel**); Joseph Testolin
(D/HHC 107 NG Bn), N6694 Hwy M-95, Iron Mtn.,
MI 49801 (**self & Jim Hutcheson**); Maj (Ret)
Albert D. Burkhart (Army Advisor) 115 Oak
St., Ishpeming, MI 49849 (**Ed Vickstrom**);
Doris Switzer (Ilfracombe war bride of Comelo
A. Switzer, A 107 R-A 254-TAPS 1995), 1509
County Rd., Bessemer, MI 49911 (**Barbara Blow-
ers**); Lawrence G. Taylor (1st Plt A 254),
3164 Sugar Mill Land, St. Cloud, FL 34769 (**
American Legion Magazine**); And these "AWOLS"
brought in by Richard H. Wills (D 107 R-
B 254) as a result of his determined computer
surfing of names from the UNLOCATED (UL) file.
Though enthusiastically pursued even on the
proverbial needle-in-a-haystack national level,
Dick is getting results early on, to-wit:
Frank J. Tasson (D 107 R-RA Retired), 7767
Westlake Rd., Sterlington, LA 71280; George J.
Durski (B 254), 73 Roosevelt Blvd., Parlin, NJ
08859; Frank I. Ghinter (2nd Plt C 254), 1015
10th St. SW, Little Falls, MN 56343; Donald J.
Gitre (3rd Plt C 254), 183 Ludington St., New
Hudson, MI 48165. "And more coming," Dick vows.

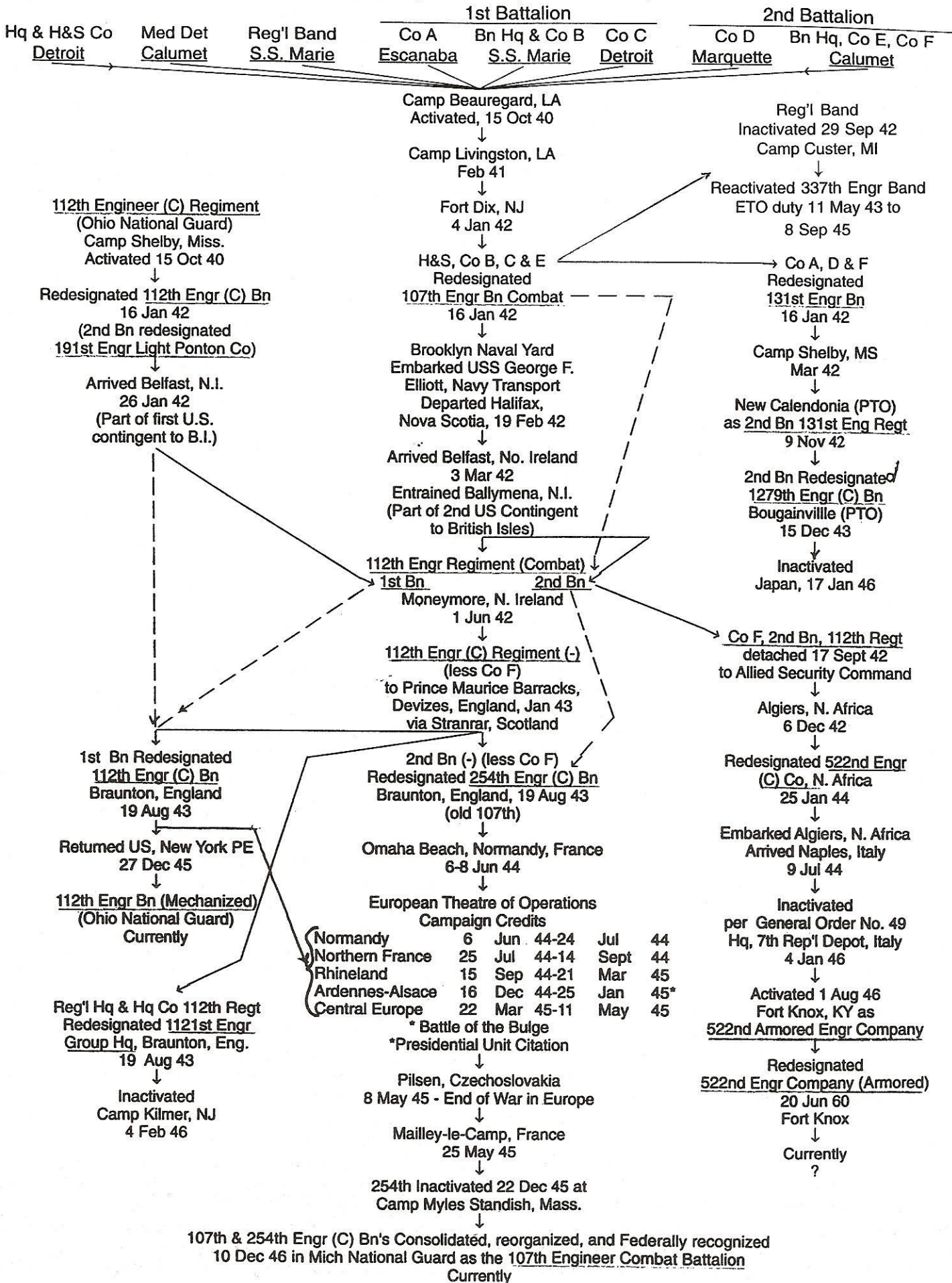
ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (1998-1999)

President: LSG James E. Baker (A 107 NG Bn)
V. Pres: SFC James W. Turunen (A 107 NG Bn)
Secretary: Ed Vickstrom (D 107 R- H&S 254)
Treasurer: MSG James L. Hutcheson (HHC NG Bn)
Historian: LTC (Ret) Fred Stonehouse (NG Bn)
P.R.O.: SSG Peter Bousu (A 107 NG Bn)
Permanent Dir: LTC Tibor J. Lanczy (107 NG CO)
4-Yr. Director: CSM Michael Floriano (HHC NG)
3-Yr. Director: Maj Thomas E. Perry (HHC NG)
2-Yr. Director: Paul J. Van Abel (E 107 R-A 254)
1-Yr. Director: Col (Ret) Don. R. Small (NG BN)
Chaplain: LTC (Ret) George J. Hansen (NG Bn)

NOMENCLATURE OF WWII 107th & COUNTERPART UNITS

A word of explanation about the following full-
page organizational chart initially scheduled
for 1998 Bull Sheet dissemination. And as pro-
mised in the last issue. Frequent inquiries
piped into the secretary's office, many from
family members seeking information about loved
ones, usually meant tedious and time consuming
research of loosely organized records in order
to faithfully address each such request. Fin-
ally, a simple outline was worked up which could
be duplicated and applied as the situation de-
manded. Ergo, a solution for a long standing
problem. Now figuring that this improved/expan-
ded all-on-one-page schematic will provide a
handy comprehensive historical reference cover-
ing the complex WWII era, 15 Oct 40 to Dec 45
here it is for pursual by troops, past and pre-
sent. Though confident the detail thereon is
accurate in all its complexity there of course
exists the possibility of error, though minor
and inconsequential. Its hoped!

107th ENGINEER REGIMENT (WWII) (Michigan National Guard)
32nd Infantry Division (Mich-Wis NG)



THE 254th ENGR C BN'S FIRST ENTRY INTO GERMANY

Prior to that event and over the period 8-11 Sep 44, the 254th camped near FUMAY, France, near the Belgium border. From there the battalion convoyed to BASTOGNE, Belgium, for a 11-13 Sep sojourn mainly doing routine MSR work in the V Corps sector. A Sep 12th order from Corps Engr was bucked down to Company B, to-wit: "Make rcn of RR overpass W of BASTOGNE and repair for Cl 40 traffic. No time limit on this job." No one then realized that this key communications town would 3 months hence explode into worldwide prominence during the Battle of the Bulge. Sqd Sgt Wayne A. Ray (D 107 R-B 254) writes from Grants Pass, OR: "I remember the BASTOGNE overpass repair. After completion, my squad was assigned overnight guard duty, and we holed up in a building at one end of the bridge. St. Romain (Ashton P.) spoke French like a native and was our interpreter when a town citizen invited some of us for dinner with his family. St. Romain, Polie Stroup and myself were free for a delightful evening and an appreciated meal of ham, potatoes, salad and bread. After dinner, our host brought out a bottle of brandy he had stashed away - even his 7 children, ages 3 to 12, had a small glass with a lump of sugar in it. That was one of my most pleasant experiences in combat and I often wondered later what happened to that wonderful family during BASTOGNE'S terrible ordeal." Three days before that the then assigned V Corps divisions closed on the Luxembourg/Germany border. F.O. No. 26 dated 081830B Sep detailed operations for breaching the WESTWALL (Siegfried Line) and capturing KOBLENZ by divisions abreast: 4th Inf Div on left, 28th Inf Div in center and the 5th Armd on right. The boundaries and objectives for each division and attached AAA, TD, Tank, Trdwy Br, etc., units were detailed in pars a thru d. Par e, Corps Engine - ers, directed: (1) and (2) 1121st Engr Gp (less 254th Engr C Bn) will support the advance of the 4th and 28th Inf Divs as directed by the Corps Engr Off. (3) 254th Engr C Bn will assemble and be employed as directed by the Corps Engr Off. Subsequently, FO No. 26 was postponed, but patrol activity into Germany, probing the defenses and locating enemy concentrations and strong points, was ordered per Letter of Instructions issued 101500B Sep which essentially directed: 4th and 28th Inf Divs to close in previously specified assembly areas during the afternoon of 11 Sep; 5th Armd Div to assemble one combat command in the area reserved for the 102d Calvary Gp, one CC in the area specified for 28th Div and the third in an area NE in a site selected by its div commander. On 12 Sep the 4th and 28th Divs were to launch a coordinated attack to the east, develop the SIEGFRIED Line within their sectors and be prepared for advance to

objectives within Germany if a breakthrough is accomplished. The 5th Armd Div will conduct rcn to the SIEGFRIED Line and be prepared to break through the German defenses in the general area WALLENDORF-ECHTERNACH and secure objectives in Germany. Preceding the attack, Gen GEROW (CG V Corps) was authorized to conduct a rcn in force and if progress was satisfactory a limited penetration was to be made beyond the SIEGFRIED Line; if not, the 3 division attack was to be delayed until 14 Sep. As a result of the communication, Gen GEROW instructed the 5th Armd to make a rcn in force on 12 Sep in accordance with his instructions. Though greatly generalized, this was the V Corps situation which directly and indirectly impacted upon the 254th's operations around WALLENDORF. A "Snortin' Bull" Medallion award to Harold W. Lomax (Engr Sec V Corps Hq-1121 Gp post war after his direct commission to 2nd Lt) who graciously copied applicable sections of his "V Corps WWII History" at the request of Lester H. Doro (107 R from 127th Inf-C 254) who in turn relayed reproductions of same to ye' editor special for this report. Same citation to Les too for his continuing self-directed research efforts. Now focusing on the 254's role beginning with an order from V Corps logged in the Bn Hq "Journal" at 1000 hrs, 15 Sep: "Assemble Bn and move to vicinity of P958418 to support CCR (Combat Command Reserve) and report Bn to CO CCR at above coordinate. Col (Loren W.) Jenkins (Bn CO) to report at once to CO 5th Armd Div at P900330. Pick up additional explosives (5 tons) at Corps trk head at P540615 before departure. Get further details about explosive at Corps." This message was routed to Bn CO, Bn Staff and all companies. Subsequently at 1715 hrs same date, Col Jenkins logged in this entry. "Reported to CS (Chief of Staff) 5th Armd Div at 1200 hrs as ordered by Corps Engr. Assigned mission of supporting CCR. Also contacted 22d Engr Bn (Armd) regarding work." (Note: the 5th Armd Div, activated 1 Oct 41 at Fort Knox, KY, claims to be the first division entering Luxembourg, fighting on German soil and plunging thru the Siegfried Line.) That this eventful period would evolve into another significant chapter in 107/254 history was not then a consideration. The Bn's preceding 4-day "Journal" entries summarized as follows were quite obviously preliminaries leading up to its 5th Armd attachment on 15 Sep - assigned missions including the BASTOGNE overpass job, rcn of bridges reportedly wired for enemy demolition, rcn of ETTLEBRUCH-ST. VITH road by the Rcn Sec (Lt H. Woodrow "Woody" Tompkins (B/H&S), S/Sgt Louis S. Barraza (107 R-H&S) and S/Sgt Edwin P. Kipina (E 107 R NG-H&S) for anticipated 5th Armd usage in event of infantry breakthrough, rcn of ford at DIEKIRCH, rcn and repair of WALFER-

DANCE and STEINFORT bridges for possible use by CCR, working with 22d Engr Bn on captured enemy dump (determined ammunition, not engr) which taken together indicates close cooperation with the 5th Armd Div and its organic engineers, the 22d Bn. Closed on the Luxembourg-Germany border, Bn Hq and all companies operated out of CPs established in Luxembourg during the entire 8 day period even though practically all operations were either on the OUR River or inside Germany. The 5th Armd being the first US outfit entering upon sacred German soil was the first enemy doing so since 1814. It follows then that the 22d Engr company assigned to CCR had to be the first engineer unit to do so - and the 254th Engr C Bn the second. Unofficially, let our history so reflect. The division's claim to fame is confirmed in the "V Corps History" and in Charles Whiting's book entitled: "Siegfried: The Nazis' Last Stand" - a book highly recommended. Upon arrival at the OUR River crossing site the Bn found a Treadway bridge in place assumed erected by the 22d Engr company assigned to CCR. Battalion records and personal recollections, notably a written one from Sgt George C. Anderson (A 107 R MG-A 254-Major (Ret) 107 MG Bn), tell us that Co A, Capt Allison B. Ware, commanding, put up a Class 40 timber bridge alongside the Treadway. The two hotly contested OUR River spans were vitally important for crossings into Germany - and for later withdrawal back into Luxembourg. More about that later. According to Bn reports, other OUR River crossings erected by unidentified 254 units, were a 24' Treadway at NIEDERSGEGAN and two Cl 9 timber bridges at MODERSCHERD, but exactly how these 3 bridges fit into the overall WALLENDORF scene is unclear. The battalion did a variety of jobs in the WALLENDORF penetration, and was involved in a number of small but sharp infantry engagements as well. The companies as usual operated pretty much independently of one another. Destroying 43 massive pill boxes provided excitement and a rare challenge. That was a dangerous job too because of roving enemy who at times moved back into vacated/liberated fortifications resulting in PWs bagged and casualties incurred by both sides. According to author Whiting, Der Westwall (as Hitler called it) built 1936-38 at tremendous cost in material and manpower, was a complex of 14,000 reinforced concrete mutually supporting pill boxes, bunkers, gun emplacements linked by concrete roads plus strategically placed anti-tank obstacles, troop shelters, command posts and observation points. All together a sophisticated fortified belt averaging 2½ miles in depth along its 400 mile length, Switzerland to Holland. Breaching this formidable barrier entailed bitter fighting (the HUERTGEN Forest perhaps the fiercest and most frustrating for

U.S. forces) along its entire length from Sep 1944 until early in 1945. Its bite was deadly and overcoming the Westwall, according to Whiting, prolonged the war by 6 months at a cost of 100,000 killed - Allied casualties higher than that suffered by the US Army in the Korean and Vietnam Wars combined. At 1715 hrs on 15 Sep, The Bn "Journal" recorded this order from Bn S-3 (Maj Jesse D. Kelsay) to Co B (Capt Ames T. Minor, CO: "Demolish captured enemy pill boxes of SIEGFRIED Line using the 5-ton explosives load in excess of basic requirements as previously authorized by V Corps Hq." A related order from Corps Engr to Bn the next day: "It is desired that Corps Engrs use captured HE artillery shells in destroying fortifications. It is available to you immediately at BASTOGNE on release thru Corps Engr. Request you pick up shells immediately." This message was relayed to Bn Staff and CO Co B. Sqd Sgt Roger D. Phillips (1st Sqd, 2nd Plt, Co C) in his "Personal History" telling about his experiences across Europe during and after the war observes: "The half underground pill boxes (typically measuring 21'x18'x40' with walls and roofs of reinforced concrete up to 9 feet thick per Whiting) were accessed by steps leading down to heavy steel doors. Usually equipped to house and protect a 14-man force, the boxes had small firing slots on 2 or 3 sides placed for interlocking MG and AT fire. The solid sides were covered with grassy earth and most roofs had vegetation/trees growing on them. Each box was strategically sited for overlapping fields of fire. We charged each one with 250-300 pounds of explosives." A Co B Wpns Sgt Warren L. "Marty" Romain (D 107 R from C 128th Inf) remembers: "We blew the first one which only lifted the roof before dropping the shattered pieces back into the box (see photo). After that trial run we increased the charge." Watching huge slabs of concrete cartwheel across the countryside was an awesome sight for workers and brave observers alike. S/Sgt Maurie Syrjala contributes from Ramsay, MI: "My platoon, 1st of Baker Co, went forward to rcn and calculate the explosive charge needed to blow a box. Sneaking up on the first one, we surprised some German soldiers burying one of their own. We didn't have any trouble with them and sent them rearward keeping an English speaking PW for communicating with others still holed up in the pillbox. They, however, refused to surrender to anyone but an officer which we didn't have so I went back to company hq and got a lieutenant (I don't remember who he was). All told we picked up about 50 Germans that day including the officers refusing to surrender to a mere enlisted man. After our officer with a couple guards took the PWs away, Pvt "Bert" (James L.) Lahr (107 R from A 127 Inf) and I



Photo from Jaj Jesse D. Kelsay archives

continued on to check out two more boxes which we found unoccupied. Going back we were fired on whereupon "Bert" took off to my right. That was the last time I ever saw him. (Note - reported MIA, no updates). While making a dash for a hedge where some of my platoon were, I was hit. After a time down, I made it to the hedge where the men made a stretcher out of field jackets and rifles. I don't remember who the guys were that took me back." From "Marty" Romain: "Maurie and Lahr went further in and then the shooting started. After Maurie got back to us, we made a stretcher and hauled him back following a drain ditch for cover. We got Maurie out OK but never did see Lahr anymore. The next day I was in the same area and was told there was a wounded men near a disabled quad 50 AA gun. While carefully nosing around, I spotted a target in a building and from behind a tree I emptied a clip which was answered by a MG burst showering me with leaves. I fired another clip and then the ground in front of the tree started flying around. Figuring the next burst would be bad news, I pulled out." Sgt Wayne Ray remembers: "We had just cleared out a pillbox holding 20-30 soldiers and officers when Syrjala was wounded. I was one of the carriers taking him back which was tough going with a sniper firing at us as we went down a hill. A buddy of "Red" Smith (Carl W.) with Maurie was either captured or killed as we never saw him again." S/Sgt Syrjala continues: "They got me back to the Bn aid station where

our Bn Surgeon (Capt Arthur E. Hirshorn) looked me over telling me that the bullet had gone right through. I was sent to a nearby field hospital where that night 4 of my men came to see me including my good buddy, Sgt Joe Clabots (F 107 R Livingston replacement), but I don't recall the others. (Note: Maurie visited Joe in a Marquette, MI veterans' facility, Aug 1998 - their first contact with one another since their separation 54 years before.) I went to England by plane where I underwent more surgery and afterwards sent to the U.S. by hospital ship finally ending up in Milwaukee's Woods Hospital where I was discharged on 23 Aug 45." Remembered by Richard H. Wills (D 107 R NG-Sqd trk driver for Sgt Ray's squad): "Company B also blew the locks or otherwise jammed entryways to some large concrete barracks-like structures thus denying their use to infiltrating enemy. Our squad was forced out of a work site and I hauled them up a steep hill painfully slow in low range all the time expecting enemy fire." More from Sgt Ray: "We had another experience the next day. Our Lt, I don't remember his name either, volunteered my squad to go check the bridge and sweep for mines on the approaches because the armor boys were being pushed back. I assigned "Billy" Shea (William P.) (D 107 R NG) to the mine detector. After he swept about half way up a hill, a German force appeared from town whereupon "Billy" alerted us and took off on a run for the bridge. Watching him come back with the detector bouncing along behind him was quite a sight. Being in an exposed position and not having enough fire power, we pulled back." On 17 Sep the Bn "Journal" records: From 22d Engrs to Bn CO and Co's B & C: "Bn relieved mission demolishing pillboxes. CT's of 5th Armd Div to clean out area. Continue maint and guard of ford at NIEDERGEGEN." Other entries identify engineer jobs and river crossings bucked down to the line companies. A 18 Sep entry reads: "1/4T & 2 men traveling S to BOLLENDORF drew MG and rifle fire near roadblock at P976423. Lt HICKS (Co C-no other info) who may be Lt John R. Hix, a Co B Plt Ldr) and S/Sgt SENECAL (Charles L.) (107 R-B 254-KIA BofB) slightly wounded - not evacuated." Battalion "After Action" reports credits Co B for 102 prisoners picked up. Because of insufficient infantry backup, areas liberated by the armored could not be entirely secured. Consequently enemy troops frequently infiltrated back into captured areas and fortifications during night time which made for a very uncertain situation. September's combination of combat engineering and hit-and-miss enemy contacts were abruptly consolidated into a Bn coordinated infantry mission. A 19 Sep "Journal" posting tells us: 22d Engrs to Bn CO to Rcn Off: "5th Div wants another river

crossing vicinity of P938442. CO 22d Engrs wants Bn to do job." Subsequently, Bn CO to all Co's: "Enemy counterattacking in strength on our immediate front. Get your Co's ready for combat as Inf." And, "Bn to take up positions on hill overlooking br at P960428. The 2 brs (Trdwy & timber) at br site are to be held. Co C to furnish point for move." Lt HIX (John R.-Co B Plt Ldr-UL) to take charge of 2 plats of Co B and one plat of Co A; will trk to REISDORF and work way to high ground above river at P9544. Move out immediately." The tersely recorded "Bn History" hereinafter duplicated "as is" factually reports the Bn's Sep 44 operations to higher headquarters. Otherwise, regrettably, nothing or no one tells us all that much about the Bn's overall tactical deployment and action during the br skirmishes - such informative things like maps, overlays, unit placements, etc. "Bn Journal" entries don't cast much light on the situation either. Just the stark facts - protect the bridges and the OUR River crossing. Tempering the sparse official, however, are a number of recollections from respondents which provide a cross-section sampling of what transpired there down-in-the-ranks. Quoting again from the "Journal," Co C to Bn Hq: "One squad was pinned down by arty fire at P965433 1400 hrs has now returned to Co. One man wounded and evacuated. One known dead (CASTEEL, Sgt) & one (ROHRABACHER, S/Sgt) believed to be dead. One 2 1/2 T trk had to be left at site." Recorded Sep 20: Corps Engr to S-4: "Pick up one ton dynamite near ETTLEBRUCK, Contact AA guarding br for location of explosives." S-3 to 22d Engrs: "Bn ret'd to bivouac area P888430 at 1125 hrs. One Co alerted to maintain approaches to WALLENDORF br, one Co alerted to destroy bridges at WALLENDORF on orders. Bn prepared to move on one hr notice." Mysteriously, the "Journal" makes no mention that bridge security was assumed by others, whether by the 109th Inf Regt, 28th Inf Div, the next unit in line north, or by a AA unit as maybe hinted above, but commonly believed the 109th. This omission is puzzling because that's what happened probably upon Corps orders. Nor did the disheartening news on 21 Sep, 22d Engrs to Bn CO, pinpoint the responsibility for: "Enemy succeeded in blowing timber and Trdwy bridges at WALLENDORF sometime during night. (Note-after successfully defending the bridges saying the 254 boys were thoroughly pissed is expressing it mildly.) There are mines on enemy side of bridge site laid during the night. Representative of Bn to meet Maj COOK at Inf CP near WALLENDORF. Situation around WALLENDORF is clearing up and repairs to river crossing should be ready to be executed." S-3 to Co's A & C: "Have nine loads of rock standing by ready to put in at WALLENDORF river crossing." Co C

to Bn CO: "Two necklaces of mines with men and 1/4T laid at P873444 and P885449 as directed by S-3. Rd blks are covered by fire." Co B to 22d Engrs: "Road swept from br site to town of WALLENDORF and moved wrecked 1/4T off road. Two mines removed and defused. One light tank crossed and upon reaching town was hit by a bazooka severely wounding one man. Small arms fire from town and bridge site is under fire. No work done on river crossing." Wpns Sgt L.V. E. Smith (D 107 R from M 127 Inf-C 254) remembers first going forward on a 2 jeep-8 man patrol: "At the bridge with one tank support, I saw a German soldier crawling away. I shot 2 or 3 times but didn't hit him. Right after leaving the bridge for cover in a ditch, a mortar shell exploded right where I had been. A U.S. ambulance carrying a naked German PW came by and was hit resulting in a flat tire. Capt (Reginald R.) Fairfax (CO Co C) ordered the crew to change the tire and get the hell out of there. We returned to the bivouac area for rations and our MGs and then returned to the bridge site. At distance, we saw a 3-man German MG crew setting up a defilade to us. I placed the MGs, sighted in on a tree across the valley, determined the elevation and windage for the crews and ordered fire picking off the gunner who was immediately replaced by another. Got him too whereupon the last man took off. I really thought the guy got back to his lines and then directed mortar fire our way, but later figured it came from a house in WALLENDORF. I had just ordered a gun out of action and while putting away my binoculars was hit by a mortar round exploding only 10 feet from (Nicholas) Pigan's (Co C-UL) gun position. The only other gun crew members I can recall are Battisti (Frank J.) and Petraglia (no info). Freeling Peck (A 107 R from L 126 Inf) took me to the Bn aid station where I saw Warren "Orv" Crow (D 107 R from L 127 Inf) (all Co C men). I was evacuated and treated at a field hospital and then flown to hospitals in Belgium and England. After recuperating and released for duty, I went back to France by ship and to Paris in a 40 or 8 boxcar. In spite of the confused situation during the first days of the Bulge, I finally made it back to Co C 254 on Dec 24th - 3 months after being evacuated. I forget who the platoon leader was then." "I can still remember that day at WALLENDORF," writes Leo P. Schiltz from LaCrosse, WI, "and being in L.V.'s gun crew of 6-7 men when the mortar round hit. Our plt Lt and Phillip LaMancusa loaded me on a jeep for evacuation to the aid station - then on to field hospitals and a Army hospital in England. In Feb of 1945 I was sent to Ft. Lewis, Wash., and remained there until the war ended. I was discharged in Sep 45, almost a year from the time I was wounded. While being

carried to a jeep, LaMancusa told me that L.V. had been wounded too. Later informed he was dead, I was very glad hearing these many years later that he survived." Sqd Sgt Joseph F. Clabots (F 107 R-B 254) recalls: "During night time the Germans tried to blow the bridge we were protecting. A AA gunner heard noises in the river so we both opened up. The AA man may be saved the bridge but I got the Kraut who evaded our fire by ducking underwater. "Marty" Romain was there and he reminded me about that incident at one of the reunions." Romain confirms: "Before I started shooting, Joe got out of his hole and got the German trying to blow the bridge." Joe hiked him up past my position with fixed bayonet." "As for WALL-ENDORF, I can't place it unless that was in Luxembourg where L.V.E. Smith got hit and we hauled out a fellow from Florida who had his head broke from a mortar round and two others were killed - one from PA and the other from N. Dakota. I heard from the latter's wife after I got home in '45." I remember being on the right side of the hill going down to the WALL-ENDORF bridges. An officer (don't recall who) told "Moose" (Richard)

Berry (A 254-TAPS 1992) and I to get a stretcher and check for wounded which we did with MIs handy. We made it down to the bridge and made it back OK, thankfully empty-handed," writes Richard P. "Richie" Gough (A 254) from Atlantic Highlands, NJ, who also sent in two undated (unrelated to the 254) WALLENDORF articles. The first tells of an incident during the US second entry into Germany here some 4-5 months after the 254's experience in the area. A "London Evening News" story related that 24 GIs including 4 medics were killed after the unsuspecting troops entered the town because every building displayed white surrender flags. In retribution on orders from the immediate commander, the entire town was burned to the ground. The second article is entitled "Lady in White - She Was Weirdly Beautiful By Night In Wallendorf's Hell Torn Ruins But Her Mission Was One

Of Death. Her eerie appearance and graceful nocturnal movements coinciding with enemy artillery fire on US troops crossing into Germany were unusual and puzzling. The uncannily accurate fire had to be directed by a well placed spotter. But where? A smart GI figured it out finally. As the Lady in White moved left so did the incoming artillery; a deliberately gauged right movement, same result. So determined, a burst from a .30 cal. air-cooled MG dogged her frantic flight into nearby woods. Though believed hit and searched for, she had vanished into thin air." The 28th Inf Div still manned this sector when it was badly mauled and driven back during the first days of the Bulge.

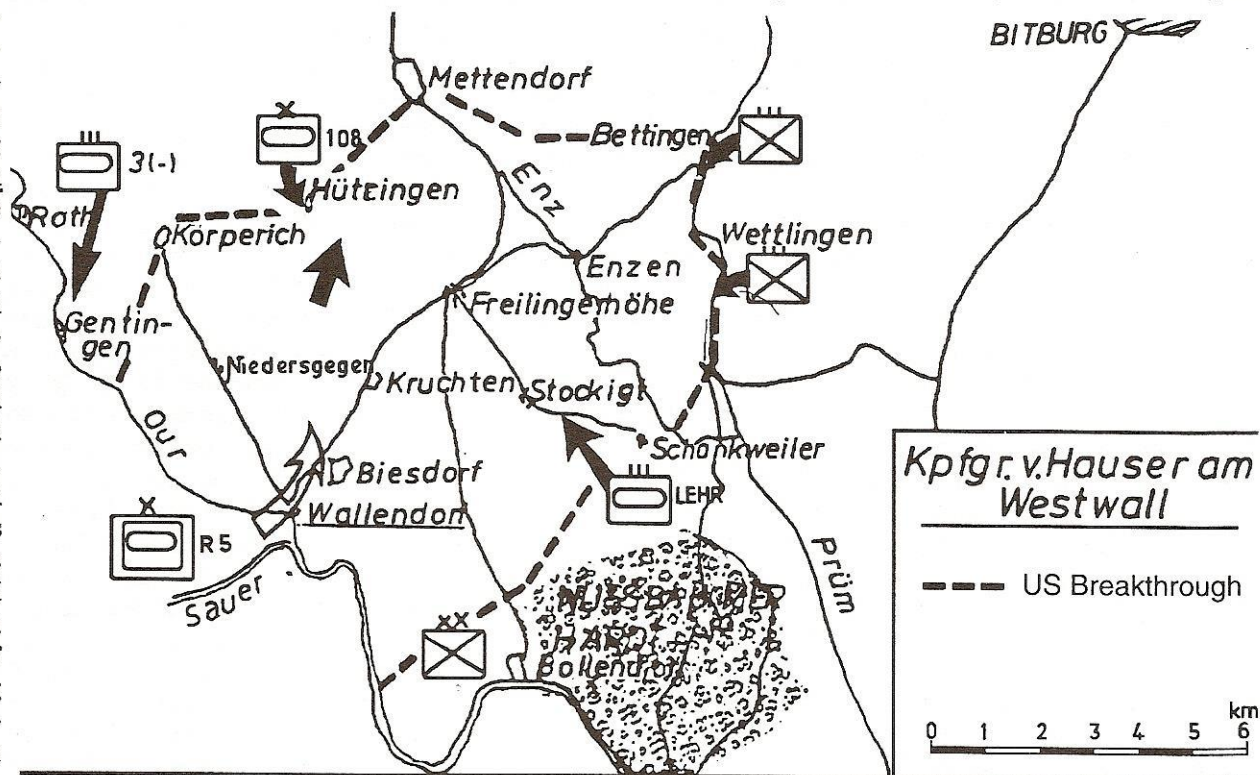
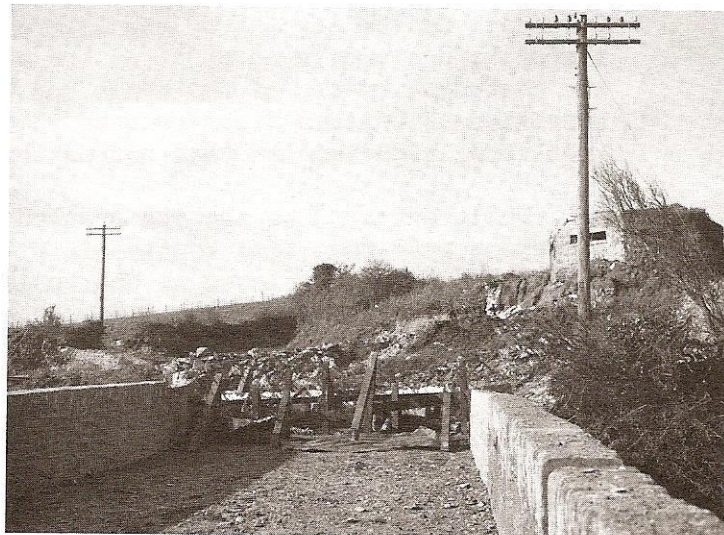


Diagram 18: Kampfgruppe von Hauser at the West Wall.

16-19 Dec 44, by the German SEVENTH ARMY whose mission was protecting the south flank. Troops of Gen Patton's THIRD US ARMY reentered Germany for good from the erstwhile Bulge on 29 Jan 45 including the war-torn WALLENDORF area - 5 months after the 254's relatively minor role there insofar as the big picture was concerned - but big for the battalion on its small level. The enemy's version about the US's first invasion into Germany is interestingly covered in the book entitled "The Western Front: Memoirs of a Panzer Lehr Officer" by Helmut Ritgen, Oberst (Colonel) A.D. which fortunately came to hand from the shared military library of Wpns Sgt Lester R. Doro, Portland, OR. The above map obviously is taken from that publication. In brief the book tells us that on 14 Sep the U.S. V Corps launched an attack along three axes of advance within a width of 30 miles. To the

south, at WALLENDORF, the reinforced CCR of 5th Armd Div advanced with the mission of seizing the high ground at METTENDORF and then BITBURG. Exploiting the incompletely destroyed SAUER River bridge and with artillery preparation, they captured WALLENDORF and overcame the steep eastern bank of the river against brave resistance from Alarm Battalion Trier (a pick-up outfit) defending the weakest position in that sector. Frantically assembling all available forces for a counterstroke the force was short of fuel and suffered heavy losses on 15 Sep when trying to hinder the US forces from crossing the GAY stream by an attack from KRUTCHTEN. Employing flame-thrower tanks the Americans systematically advanced against the pill boxes near BIESDORF which fell on 15 Sep. Having reached the PRUEM Valley the enemy had breached the West Wall, only 9 km away from BITBURG and thus was capable of exploiting the tactical breakthrough operationally. There were no available German forces east of BITBURG. The news that an American armored division had breached the West Wall at first attempt hit us like a bomb burst," according to Oberst Ritgen, "and commands and troops regarded it a miracle that the American thrust was neither continued, supported, nor widened because the German ring around the American bridgehead was paper thin." General Gerow, CG V Corps, on 16 Sep ordered the discontinuation of the offensive because Eisenhower's orders and the strained supply situation left him no other choice. The first German counterattack on 19 Sep was a failure. The attack was repeated on 20 Sep with better success and on 21 Sep the shrunken bridgehead around WALLENDORF was attacked on converging axes supported by all available artillery. At night the Americans yielded to the pressure and withdrew all forces to the western bank of the SAUER River after blowing both bridges (this is contrary to 254 records. On 22 Sep the penetration was eliminated and the West Wall was again solidly in German hands. In conclusion Ritgen notes, "although the enemy's behavior at that time could not be explained, his withdrawal from the Reich was seen as a great success." The 254's dual operations around WALLENDORF ended 22 Sep according to a "Journal" posting: S-3 to all Co's: "Move today is anticipated - make preparations." A 60 km march northward parallel to the German border brought the Bn back into Belgium for a 22 Sep-2 Oct encampment followed by a further northerly move to BULLINGEN where the weary troops settled in for a supposedly winter-long stay. This 9 week bivouac, by far the Bn's longest on the Continent, was abruptly terminated on 17 Dec when the CG 99th Inf Div ordered it to defend the town in B of B action. But that's another story. At WALLENDORF the highest WWII citation awarded to

a 254th man was a Distinguished Service Cross (DSC) to 1st Lt Sanford P. Hall, 01112192 (then Plt Ldr Co A - later Capt as Co A CO) by order of Lt Gen Courtney H. Hodges, CG FIRST US ARMY. for his extraordinary heroism in action against the enemy on 19 Sep 44 in Germany. Additionally cited for distinguished deeds during WALLENDORF action were Silver Stars for Gallantry in Action per Hq V Corps to: Tec 3 Raymond A. Anders, 20638023 (Med Det 107 R & 254) and Captain Ames T. Minor, 02040822 (Co Cmdr Co B). Bronze Stars for Meritorious Achievement per Hq V Corps were awarded to: S/Sgt Louis S. Barraza, 39163445 (D 107 R - Rcn Sgt H&S 254); Pvt Joseph A. Bova, 35050123 (2nd Plt Co A); Pvt Donald Meyer, 36599907 (3rd Plt Co A-UL); Capt Reginald R. Fairfax, 01113196 (Co C CO); Sgt L.V.E. Smith, 36156540 (Wpns Sgt Co C); Cpl Louis J. Chimera, 32173058 (107 R-Co B) Tec 5 James R. Scalzo, 32099926 (107 R-Co C); Pfc Freeling W. Peck, 20635930 (107 R-Co C); & posthumously, 1st Lt John B. Davis, 01115896 (Plt Ldr Co A), Cpl Arthur L. Douglas, 39556016 (Co unknown) and Pfc Harold R. Abbey, 12173851 (Co C). Awards truly and well deserved. Aged but applicable personals combined with post-war publications and war-dated records loosely pulled together provided a platform for OPERATION WALLENDORF all the while keeping focus on the 254's role there. Clearly, today's sadly few survivors will understandably have their own, even maybe conflicting versions of what transpired during that eventful 8-day period. Whatever, ye' editor is most grateful for all solicited contributions, written and verbal, with apologies to any deserving man not specifically or falsely recognized. But, no apology is made for unintentional departure(s) from the actual. Updates gratefully accepted.



WALLENDORF scene? Note pillbox at right and apparent roadblock. Article concluded with the official "Synopsis of Events, Sept. 1944" reproduced "as is" in the following two pages.

HEADQUARTERS
254 ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION
APO 230, c/o POSTMASTER
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

JCS/jc

Synopsis of Events to accompany History Report for the month of
September 1944

During the first seven days of September 1944, this battalion was in close support of the 8th CT of the 4th Infantry Division under the direction of the 1121 Engineer Combat Group. In addition to routine road repair and maintenance two partially destroyed bridges at LA FERRE were repaired and 30 trucks were used to carry personnel of the 8th CT.

From the 8th to the 10th of September, road maintenance and routine engineer work was carried on the rear areas of the 5th Infantry Division. A Treadway Bridge was repaired at FUMAY and later removed by Company A on orders received from Corps Engineer. Forty trucks were employed in carrying personnel of the 22nd CT.

For the next three days of the month the battalion was under the direct control of V Corps Engineer and carried out repairs and improvement of bridges in the rear portion of the 5th Armored Division area. Again our trucks were used to carry personnel of the 4th Infantry Division.

On the 15th of September this battalion was directly attached to the 5th Armored Division and carried out engineer work under the direction of the Commanding Officer, 22nd Armored Engineer Battalion. Engineer work consisted of the complete destruction of 43 enemy pillboxes, part of the Siegfried Line, in the vicinity of Wallendorf, Germany; the construction of a Class 40 timber bridge across the OUR River in the same vicinity and the construction of 24 feet of Treadway bridge and approaches at NEIDERSGEGEN, Germany. On the morning of the 22nd of September the enemy destroyed the timber bridge and layed mines on the road approaches. An American vehicle was destroyed by one of the mines and blocked the road. Company B under the direction of Captain Minor removed the vehicle and mines while under small arms fire, clearing the road and making it passable to armored traffic.

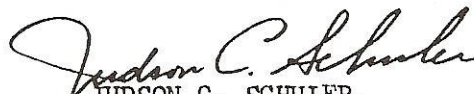
While attached to the 5th Armored Division various elements of the battalion were from time to time in close contact with the enemy. Security forces had not been placed in the border towns and often times the enemy infiltrated during the night. On the nights of the 19th and 20th of September one platoon of Company B was ordered to guard the bridge previously built by Company A at Wallendorf. On the morning of the 19th the enemy made an attempt to demolish the bridge but was driven off. Another attempt was made on the morning of the 20th when enemy engineers, with prepared charges, were discovered approaching our positions. In the exchange of fire which followed two of the enemy were killed, and two others wounded and captured.

On September 19th the entire battalion was ordered to Wallendorf and employed as infantry for the next twenty hours. Mission was to protect bridgehead over OUR River in vicinity of Wallendorf. Companies dug in on

hill overlooking the river and the town. Company C was the recipient of heavy machine gun and mortar which resulted in heavy casualties. During the entire time of attachment to the 5th Armored Division our casualties were as follows: four killed, three missing in action and twenty-four wounded. Company B, while demolishing enemy pillboxes, captured 102 prisoners. Battalion was relieved of attachment the 22nd of September.

On September 23rd the battalion returned to control of 1121 Engineer Combat Group and was immediately placed on a two hour alert for use as infantry. Alert was increased to four hours on the 27th and the battalion again engaged in routine engineer work.

For the Commanding Officer:


 JUDSON C. SCHULER,
 1st Lt, 254 Engrs.,
 Adjutant.

RETYPE FROM BATTALION HISTORY - MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 1944

Losses in Action; Officers and Men

Additional Comments Added

1st Lt John B. Davis, O-1115896	DOW (Co A);	"Jack"; asgd to 254 at Saunton Sands, England
Pfc James F. Robinson, 20645644	KIA (Co A);	WI NG asgd 107 R from 127th Inf at Livingston
Cpl Arthur L. Douglas, 39556016	KIA (?);	where/when asgd to 254th unknown; from Calif.
Pfc Harland R. Abbey, 12173851	KIA (Co C);	where/when asgd to 254th unknown; from Wis.
S/Sgt Ken. H. Rohrabacher, 36114154	KIA (Co C);	"Pinky"; believed asgd 107 R at Livingston
Sgt Myron A. Casteel, 34614984	KIA (Co C);	where/when asgd to 254th unknown; from unknown
Pvt James L. Lahr, 20645877	MIA (Co B);	"Bert"; asgd 107 from 127th Inf at Livingston
Capt Allison B. Ware, O-1113040	WIA (Co A);	CO; evac, no return; asgd 254 at Saunton Sands
Sgt Edward K. Rokos, 36155565	WIA (Co A);	evac., ret'd; asgd 107 R at Camp Livingston, LA
Pfc Joseph R. Nicholes, 32681541	WIA (Co A);	evac., ret'd Jan 45; asgd 112th R at Devizes
Pfc Joseph Pataconi, 36226052	WIA (Co A);	evac., no return; asgd to A 107 R at Livingston
S/Sgt Maurice S. Syrjala, 36225979	WIA (Co B);	evac., no return; asgd to E 107 R at Livingston
Sgt L.V.E. Smith, 36156540	WIA (Co C);	evac., ret'd; D 107 R from 127th Inf at "
Sgt John C. Longmire, 31270983	WIA (Co C);	"Sam"; later status, where/when asgd unknown
T/5 George E. Finlayson, 31332474	WIA (Co C);	"Finny"; ret'd to duty; asgd to Co C at Newquay
Pfc Nicholas Pigan, 35750277	WIA (Co C);	later status, where/when asgd unknown; W. Va.
Pfc Leo F. Schiltz, 37558664	WIA (Co C);	evac., no return; asgd Co C at Newquay, England
Pvt Ralph C. Arthur, 34574041	WIA (?);	later status, where/when asgd 254th Bn unknown
Pvt Andrew J. Divencenzo, 35060100	WIA (?);	later status, where/when asgd 254th Bn unknown
Pvt Jackson H. Martin, 39297041	WIA (?);	later status, where/when asgd 254th Bn unknown
Pvt Theodore Poulos, 16170561	WIA (Co C);	later status, where/when asgd 254th Bn unknown

IRONWOOD'S 3rd - ASSOCIATION'S 37th ASSEMBLY

Appropriated from a post-reunion letter, General Leonard C. Ward to LTC Tibor J. Lanczy, CO 107th Engr NG Bn: "A very pleasing measure of that event (Ironwood reunion) was its strong impact on the two first-timers and WWII members, Colonels (Ret) Brown (Robert G.W.) and Hall (Sanford F.) from Connecticut and vicinity where militias have great community stature indeed. Both had broad and long exposure to affairs in eastern states. They both expressed themselves as absolutely blown-away by all aspects, leaving out nothing; unit, organization, facility, community involvement, program, re-

union crew, personnel, esprit de corps, morale, quality and accomplishments." No way can that be expanded upon. And we won't even try. Suffice it to say that the prime movers behind Ironwood's total success were these past and present members of Company B (-) 107th Engr Bn: SFC (Ret) James "Stretch" Sertich, Association President and Reunion Chairman; SPC Jon M. Trolle, Memorial Service; SSG David J. Czerneski, Jack of all Trades; SSG Scott R. Cleary, Association Vice President and Program MC; SSG Joe A. Fairfield, Mess Section; SGT Ronald A. Poquette, Refreshments and SFC Brian W. Smith, Decorations & armory preparation, plus numerous other unnamed members of the unit who contribu-

ted substantially and effectively. Due in part to the city's relative remoteness, the numbers were down from normal and the anticipated. Disappointing too was the smallest showing from the WWII ranks since the Association's organization in 1961 - 36 reunions ago. Realistically, however, this is accepted as a cold hard fact because these surviving 107/254/522/1121 vets are now in the 70 and 80 age grouping. For a grand THIRTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL, we salute you IRONWOOD - from each deserving individual to the community at large. The 38th at BARAGA next up.

COMPANY A 254th WALLENDORF PATROL WIPED OUT

By: Pfc Joseph R. Nicholes

"Near WALLENDORF the morning of 16 Sep 44, we mounted a recon patrol in 2 jeeps - authorization/purpose unknown. The first jeep carried Capt (Allison B.) Ware (Co Comdr), 1st Sgt (Augustin) "Augie" Gagnon (A 107 R NG), Mail Clerk (Nicholas W.) Leslie and driver Joe Pataconi (A 107 R). The second jeep carried 1st Lt (John B.) Davis (Asgd A 254, Saunton Sands), Wpns Sgt (Edward K.) Ed Rokos (107 R), myself as Plt Rcn Man-Asgd D112 R at Devizes) and driver believed to be either (Gaylord R.) "Gabby" Walters (107 R from L 128th Inf) or (Burkett O.) Hardenburgh (107 R). After traveling some distance into Germany, we stopped at a large house having an attached archway and outbuildings. Capt Ware walked back informing us that a German soldier ran into the house and ordered us into position while he called out for the man to surrender. With that the first jeep was hit maybe by a panzerfaust (bazooka) whereupon Ware and Pataconi took cover alongside the jeep. I'm not sure what hit them but know they suffered leg wounds. The firing increased so we took cover. At the end of the archway was a garden about 75' wide. A wall ran parallel to the road and a bleeder ditch was at the base of the wall. Some patrol members took cover in the ditch. I ran alongside the wall towards a hedge and tried to get through it but couldn't because there was a screen inside the hedge. In backing off I was hit in the right buttock knocking me down by the hedge with my feet towards the wall. Within a very short time, Lt Davis came running towards me. He too was unable to breach the hedge so he decided to go over the wall. As he did so he was hit (I'm guessing by rifle fire) in the back. I will never forget Lt Davis. He was a man, 26 years old, and was fearless. It's a crime that he didn't make it. Somehow he fell in the corner formed by the hedge and wall with his knees against his chest. The firing stopped and we soon heard German voices. Lt Davis started moaning and asked me if I could pull his legs down so as to ease his pain. I crawled backwards and hooked my feet one at a time and got his legs off his chest. I asked him to stay as

quiet as possible hoping we'd have a chance to get away. Soon 2 Jerries came up to us and after determining that we were unarmed, they dragged us across the garden to the back of the archway. Behind the house there was a barn with a pile of cordwood alongside it. To that spot they brought Capt Ware, Pataconi, Lt Davis and myself surrounded by a dozen or so Jerries. They searched us and a Jerry sergeant questioned us in English while observed by a German officer to whom the sergeant reported in German after questioning each one. Capt Ware told the sergeant to surrender because our armor had them surrounded. When he reported this to the officer, the officer hollered, 'Nein, Nein.' The sergeant searched me finding in the left pocket of my fatigue jacket the following: a German Army paybook, a membership book to the Hitler Jugend and a couple of tickets to a hockey match in Berlin. The reason I had these on me was the day before in late afternoon I searched a dead Jerry and took these items off his body. I intended on turning them in to S-2 but didn't have a chance to that day and not knowing about going on patrol the next. The dead Jerry's name was Wolfgang Weiss, a Panzer Grenadier. Some hollering went on between the officer and sergeant - the officer accused me of being German and a traitor while training his luger on me - while I was praying. Then I gave them some ID which evidently convinced them I was American. Then a couple German medics gave me first aid and covered my wound with clean cloth. Meanwhile Lt Davis was still hurting but I don't recall who else was given first aid. This group I believe was all Wehrmacht and not the S.S. Lucky for us. Sometime later we heard engines. The Jerries became agitated and the next thing the brick chimney was shot off the house showering us with brick fragments. The engine noise increased and the Germans took off leaving the two medics. Another shell hit the house and I think the medics took off then. Through the archway I saw 2 US halftracks approaching. The lead one pushed one jeep off the road so it could cover the second one with .50 caliber MG fire as it backed into the archway. Prior to that I had asked Pataconi if he could crawl to the cordwood pile which we could use for protection from shrapnel and debris while the tank shelled the house. While piling cordwood on us a couple of good sized pigs were sniffing around, so I threw some wood at them while hollering, 'don't fire on the barn.' The halftrack backed into the archway and picked up Capt Ware and Lt Davis. After doing so it drove into the road to cover the other track which backed into the archway and loaded up Pataconi and myself. I believe we were all taken back to our Bn aid station. From there Capt Ware and I shared an ambulance - I don't know where Davis and Pataconi went to

but I ended up in a field hospital in PHILLIPVILLE, Belgium for a couple of days. We were in tents and I was on a stretcher. I saw Ed Rokos there and he told me he suffered from concussion and was having memory lapses. I think it was on the next day they loaded me on a C-47 which flew us to a General Hospital in MARLBORO, England. Within a few days they operated on me and later told me I would be ZI'd (Zone of Interior) to the States. I had 14 stitches and the last one was only an inch from my spine. Lady Luck was with me. I regained my strength and started rehab, exercises at first and then longer and longer walks. Next was a light field pack and rifle. This took place at PHEASY FARMS, England into early December. After the Battle of the Bulge started I was told I'd be going back to my outfit. I got to FONTAIN-BLAU, France, on Christmas Eve and from there back to Co A 254 then at ELSENBORN. There I learned that 1st Sgt Gagnon got out OK going back to an armored outfit for help getting us out which they did with the 2 tracks and a tank. I believe we were captives for about 4-5 hours." Joe Pataconi, Niagara, WI contributes: "My jeep carried Capt Ware, Lt Davis and one other man. Before departing on the recon towards BITBURG my buddy Eugene L. Leardi (both from Iron Mountain, MI) (E 107 R-A/C 254) cautioned Lt Davis about roving Germans. Gene thought Davis was a 'gung ho' type of officer with no respect for dangerous situations. About a mile in from our bivouac area, heavy woods on both sides of the road, we saw 4-5 Germans near several buildings like an abandoned farm - including a barn with a big opening facing the road. On order I stopped the jeep close to the barn and Lt Davis hollered out for the Germans to come out and surrender. Instead they opened up and a grenade (?) hit my jeep but did not explode but a second one did blasting my feet and wounding Capt Ware." Wpns Sgt Lester H. Doro adds: "Ware, Davis and driver Pataconi led off. After the patrol ran into trouble, Capt (Reginald) Fairfax (CO Co C) sent me and Lt (Adolph) Silberman (C 254 at Newquay) up to assist. A short distance from the scene, a panzerfaust exploded in front of our jeep and we bailed out, one right, one left. I also heard a burst of bullets hit the ditch above me. The two half-tracks arrived and then a Sherman tank came roaring up, stopped, and I pointed hollering 'Krauts.' The tank sgt ducked down the hatch and the tank began firing its guns. A few minutes later Capt Fairfax (asgd H&S at Saunton Sands) arrived but I don't remember who his jeep driver was. I crawled up the ditch to where 4-5 of our men were hunkered down and we took up positions covering the barn opening while the wounded were placed in the tracks."

107th WHEEL TO TRACK CONVERSION ON SCHEDULE

By: Captain Michael T. Lee,
OIC, Ishpeming Armory

On 2 September 1999, the 107th Engineer Battalion (C)(W) will reorganize as heavy divisional engineers. Listed below are the highlights of the conversion.

EQUIPMENT: Each line unit will receive eight M113 Armored Personnel Carriers and one M577 Command Post; the 577 is similar to the M113 and serves as the unit's tactical operations center (TOC). The battalion headquarters will receive three M577's and two M113's. All of this equipment will be stationed permanently at its respective armory. Engineer equipment found in active duty, heavy divisional engineer battalions, such as the ACE, CEV and AVLB are not scheduled for fielding by the 107th as most of this equipment is being phased out of the army's inventory. The battalion does not expect to receive newly fielded engineer equipment such as the Grizzly or Wolverine any time in the near future.

Scheduled for deletion is the battalion's six loaders, nine graders and 54ea. 5 ton dump trucks. The battalion will dedicate much of its AT-99 effort toward the preparation and turn-in of these items. The battalion will retain its 12 dozers as a substitute for the ACE.

PERSONNEL: Personnel turbulence associated with the reorganization will be moderate. The battalion is currently authorized 529 soldiers. This will decrease to 444 on 2 SEP 99. Personnel authorizations in the line units decrease from 118 to 103. The HHC is the hardest hit, decreasing from 175 to 135. Listed below are the personnel authorization changes by rank:

RANK	CURRENT AUTHORIZATION	AUTHORIZED AS OF 2 SEP 99
LTC	NO CHANGE	1
MAJ	NO CHANGE	2
CPT	9	10
LT	NO CHANGE	13
WO	2	1
CSM	NO CHANGE	1
1SG	NO CHANGE	4
MSG	3	2
SFC	26	20
SSG	52	40
SGT	106	83
SPC	198	125
PFC	112	143

Upon conversion, each line unit will deploy with two line platoons instead of three and an assault and obstacle platoon (A&O platoon). At the battalion headquarters, the S-1 and S-4 sections will now combine to form the admin/log section. The S2-3 section will be split into three sections, the operations section the tactical section (TAC) and the assistant brigade engineer section (ABE). The current maintenance platoon in the HHC is hardest hit. It converts from a platoon of 72 soldiers to a section of 47. Four of the current MOS's will be lost due to the conversion, 62F, 96B, 51T and 71L. This is countered with the addition of two new MOS's, 63Y and 45E.

MISSION: The battalion's new mission, to increase the combat effectiveness of the heavy division by accomplishing mobility, counter-mobility, and limited survivability engineering tasks, will move the battalion's soldiers to the forward edge of the battlefield. This new mission will require the 107th to be a functional member of a combined arms team. Primary functions will be almost exclusively, mobility and counter-mobility. This will be accomplished simultaneously with maneuver elements and will task the battalion's ability to plan and synchronize their actions with these forces. Equipment authorizations limit the ability to undertake specific survivability missions and most sustainment engineering tasks that have been the focus in the past.

TRAINING: Soldiers of the 107th have already begun training in new MOS's. In JULY 98, each unit implemented an aggressive M113 drivers training program designed to teach basic operation, PMCS and safety skills. The battalion's full-time OMS mechanics completed a course of instruction on the service and repair of the M113. All officers in the battalion have received task force engineer training for offensive and defensive operations and more training is scheduled for August 1999 for staff officers and senior NCO's. Tactical training during AT-99 will focus on individual and collective skills for tracked vehicle movement, demolitions and staff operations.

ATTENTION TO ORDERS - BULLINGEN WARRIORS

Space is short and the situation critical. The time has come for you aged but still vigorous Battle of the Bulge vets to answer up. Why? We urgently need your input about what happened to you, your comrades (name names, please) and immediate unit on 17 Dec 44. The 254th's defen-

sive stand at BULLINGEN will be featured in BULL SHEET No. 43, Year 2000. Wanted are personal reports whether ordinary-extraordinary, serious-humorous or whatever. Reports from members of all companies and the Rear Echelon men who evacuated trucks/equipment to WAIMES Belgium, then to SPA. Here's your opportunity to unload with information about that fateful day - information/news perhaps known only to yourself and beyond the official. Stuff that will be forever lost unless we together get it documented for posterity and the 107th's archives via the BULL SHEET. Write or call Ed Vickstrom at 906-486-4804. URGENT.....
 \$ H @ R T \$ N @ R T \$ took a trimmin' this year. Lots of news, no space.



FINIS.

OFFICIALLY REGISTERED - IRONWOOD REUNION

Clyde C. Asplund (107 R-A 254) Ironwood, MI
 Tom. C. Bardowski (A 107 R-A 254) Stephenson, MI
 Herbert S. Bastion (E 107 R-A 254) Clawson, MI
 Jos. B. Battaglia (1121 Gp Hq) New Brighton, PA
 Joe Battisfore (A 107 NG Bn) Houghton, MI
 Barbara Blowers (Clarence, A 107 R-C 254),
 Fort Madison, IA
 Orlando Bongli (A 107 R-A 254) Iron River, MI
 Gary E. Brown (A 107 NG Bn) Calumet, MI
 Joe Brown (HHC 107 NG Bn) Greenland, MI
 Robert G.W. Brown (1121 Gp-C 254) Ellington, CT
 Donald J. Bussiere (A 107 NG Bn) Ontonagon, MI
 Robert F. Byczek (B 107 NG Bn) Iron River, MI
 Raymond Chartre (HHC 107 NG Bn) Negaunee, MI
 Scott R. Cleary (B 107 NG Bn) Marquette, MI
 Warren O. Crow (D 107 R-C 254) Wellston, MI
 John L. Culliton (C 107 NG Bn) Gladstone, MI
 Dennis M. Cummings (C 107 NG Bn) Escanaba, MI
 Donald L. DeRoche (HHC 107 NG Bn) Ishpeming, MI
 Joseph P. DeSantis (B 107 NG Bn) Oak Lawn, IL
 Thomas E. Doman (B 107 NG Bn) Ironwood, MI
 Howard W. Duncan (B 107 NG Bn) N. Vernon, IN
 Fred. W. Ehrhardt (HHC 107 NG Bn) Ishpeming, MI
 Charles J. Ellsworth (B 107 NG Bn) Ironwood, MI
 Charles S. Emerson (HHC 107 NG Bn) Negaunee, MI
 George L. Eyster (A 107 R-H&S 254) Trenton, MI
 Michael J. Floriano (D/HHC NG Bn) Quinnesec, MI
 Leonard J. Ford (C 107 NG Bn) Gladstone, MI
 Frederick E. Fontaine (A NG Bn) Calumet, MI
 Keith B. Freeze (B 107 R-B 254) Shepherd, MI
 Dennis J. Gassittie (A 107 NG Bn) Laurium, MI
 Arthur J. Gibour (A 107 R-A 254) Waukegan, IL
 Sanford F. Hall (A 254 Bn) Bloomfield, CT
 George J. Hansen (HHC 107 NG Bn) Mission, TX
 John E. Hendra (A 107 NG Bn) Calumet, MI
 James L. Hutcheson (HHC 107 NG Bn) Ishpeming, MI
 Edwin J. Jachimski (HHC 107 NG Bn) Negaunee, MI
 Leonard L. Janssen (B 107 NG Bn) Wakefield, MI
 Linnell Johnson (D 107 NG Bn) Manistique, MI
 William R. Kangas (HHC 107 NG Bn) Negaunee, MI

Reino E. Kiminki (107 R-A 254) Mass City, MI
 Gerald Kinnunen (B 107 NG Bn) Ironwood, MI
 Frank Kurta (B 107 NG Bn) Ironwood, MI
 Richard A. LaChance (HHC NG Bn) Rapid River, MI
 Tibor J. Lanczy (CO 107 NG Bn) DeWitt, MI
 Patricia D. Larsen (Bill, B NG Bn) Big Bay, MI
 Mitchell R. LeClaire (CO 46th Gp) Big Rapids, MI
 Michael T. Lee (HHC 107 NG Bn) Ishpeming, MI
 James W. Lienau (A/HHC 107 NG Bn) Green Bay, WI
 William E. Luokkanen (A 107 NG Bn) Mohawk, MI
 William A. Luoma (HHC 107 NG Bn) Wakefield, MI
 John R. Maki (A/C/D/HHC NG Bn) Escanaba, MI
 Robert W. Marchant (B 107 NG Bn) Ironwood, MI
 Gary F. Marcotte (A/C 107 NG Bn) Hubbell, MI
 Jeremy S. Maynard (B 107 NG Bn) Ishpeming, MI
 Harold A. Menapace (D 107 R-C 254) Gwinn, MI
 Robert K. McGuire (C 254 Bn) Centerville, IA
 Robert W. Miller (C 107 NG Bn) Gladstone, MI
 Walter A. Mokszycke (C 107 NG Bn) Bark River, MI
 James F. Moulds (HHC 107 NG Bn) Munising, MI
 Russell F. Myers (E 107 R) Southgate, MI
 John A. Neno (H&S 254 Bn) Ithaca, NY
 James E. Noel (C 107 NG Bn) Gladstone, MI
 Richard J. Oja (HHC 107 NG Bn) Republic, MI
 James W. O'Toole (A 254 Bn) San Jose, CA
 Joseph Paraventi (B 107 R-522d Co) Iron River, MI
 Joseph Pataconi (A 107 R-A 254) Niagara, WI
 Joseph H. Patrick (B/C/D/HHC NG Bn) Wells, MI
 Thomas E. Perry (A/HHC 107 NG Bn) Roscommon, MI
 James A. Peterson (A 107 NG Bn) Laurium, MI
 Franklin A. Phillips (A/C/D NG Bn) Houghton, MI
 Michael Recla (B 107 NG Bn) Ironwood, MI
 Paul D. Rogers (A/C/HHC NG) Farmington Hills, MI
 Warren L. Romain (D 107 R-B 254) Milwaukee, WI
 Ronald F. Ross (HHC 107 NG Bn) Gladwin, MI
 Albert M. Salo (D 107 R-C 254 Bn) Ironwood, MI
 Aloysius R. Sever (HHC 107 NG Bn) Laurium, MI
 Robert E. Sexton (B/D/HHC 107 NG) Kingsford, MI
 James W. Sheldon (A/HHC 107 NG Bn) Baraga, MI
 William D. Sheldon (HHC 107 NG Bn) Ishpeming, MI
 Calvin Shirkey (B 107 NG Bn) Ironwood, MI
 Brian W. Smith (B/C 107 NG Bn) Gladstone, MI
 Doris Switzer (Comelc, A 107 R-A 254 Bn),
 Bessemer, MI
 Richard A. Strand (B/HHC 107 NG Bn) Ishpeming, MI
 Maurie S. Syrjala (E 107 R-B 254 Bn) Ramsay, MI
 Clyde Taivalmaa (B 107 NG Bn) Ironwood, MI
 Timothy K. Tebby (A/B/HHC 107 NG) Ishpeming, MI
 Martin Terzaghi (D 107 R-B 107 Bn) Negaunee, MI
 Helen Toerpe (Edw., A 107 R-H&S 254) Mercer, WI
 Jon M. Trolla (B 107 NG Bn) Bergland, MI
 James W. Turunen (A 107 NG Bn) L'Anse, MI
 Paul J. Van Abel (E 107 R-A 254 Bn) L'Anse, MI
 Robert D. Van Sickle (B/HHC NG Bn) Quinnesec, MI
 William C. Viau (C 107 NG Bn) Escanaba, MI
 Ed. C. Vickstrom (D 107 R-H&S 254) Ishpeming, MI
 Leonard C. Ward (A 107-1121-HHC NG Bn) McLean, VA
 David R. Wesoloski (A/C/D/HHC NG) Grayling, MI
 Douglas L. White (A 107 NG Bn) Calumet, MI
 Richard H. Wills (D 107 R-B 254 Bn) Negaunee, MI
 Robert C. Wills (HHC 107 NG Bn) Rockford, MI
 Kimberly A. Witczak (HHC 107 NG) Bay City, MI

Memorialization! What's happening? Lots of Action!

To pay tribute to our Comrades! To honor the living and the dead! To contribute to public knowledge! To preserve organization history!

To influence retention of the 107th Engineers in present and future Force Structure!

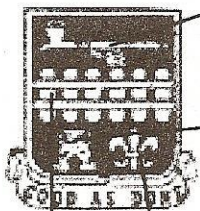
107th Engineer Regiment 107th Engineer Battalion 52nd Engineer Company 112th Engineer Regiment 254 Engineer Battalion 1121st Engineer Group 1437th Engineer Company

Belgians Honor the Battalion!

1st Inf Div Color Team carries 107th Engr Colors

BELGIUM. After fifty-four years, at ceremonies 17 December 1998 in Büllingen and Bütgenbach, the Mayors of these communities honored the 107th (then 254th) Engr Bn and received framed commemoratives of desperate *Combat-as-Infantry* action and of the five months which the battalion remain in their vicinity, after arrival from PARIS in early September 1944 and before the spring breakout into Rhineland plain in March 1945.

After arrangements by the Defense Attache, United States Embassy in Belgium, Colonel Jeffery Donald, the documents were presented by the 107th Engineer Association, past and present members of the battalion, with the hope that exchanges of friendship develop. The Mayors and the Association are exploring transformation of the document into a permanent marker to join existing monuments to the 99th Div Inf (Rockerath-Krinkelt) which they hastily assisted and the 1st Division (Dom Bütgenbach) which relieved them.



- Calumet Light Guard
- Company B, 2d Battalion of Infantry
- Company H, 3rd Infantry Regiment
- Company D, 5th Infantry Regiment
- Company D, 34th Michigan Volunteer Infantry
- Company E, 3rd Infantry Regiment
- Co A, Michigan Engineer Corps
- Co A, Provisional Engineer Regiment
- 1st Engineer Battalion
- 1st Bn, 107th Engr Rgmt, 32d Inf Div
- 1st & 2d Bns, 107th Engr Rgmt, 32d Inf Div
- 107th Engineer Battalion, 32d Inf Div
- 2d Battalion, 112th Engr Rgmt, V Corps
- 254th Engr Cmbt Bn, FIRST ARMY, V Corps
- 107th Engineer Combat Battalion
- 107th Engineer Battalion
- Michigan National Guard

Since 1881

SOME LINEAGE

Brigadier General Leonard C. Ward, a veteran of the unit, stated that the Battalion and the Association wished to mark the heroic action, to pay tribute to the Belgium people for their shared trials and to express pleasure for their regained freedom and their heart-warming remembrances.

The Mayors jointly hosted five ceremonies, including three wreathlayings at nearby monuments to Eisenhower, 1st Inf Div, and the 99th Inf Div and honored their American guests with gifts, a battlefied bus tour, and a gala evening dinner.

General Ward located 254th positions/bivouac, briefed a 1st Arm Div team studying North Shoulder combat actions, and, for the Association, visited 254th graves at Henri-Chapelle and took part in Bastogne observances.

Memorialization Activities To Date

Commemorative Presentations

- Framed commemorative documents are presented to St. Laurent, Vierville, and Isigny in FRANCE; Pilsen in CZECH REPUBLIC; and Büllingen and Bütgenbach in BELGIUM. Others are considered for 2d Fr Arm Div (PARIS); 1st Inf Div (GERMANY); Moneymore (NORTHERN IRELAND); Sauton Sands and Slapton (ENGLAND); Muskegon, Seney, and Au Train (MICHIGAN).

- Two-page News Release on 1944 heroic Combat-as-Infantry action and its marking in Belgium distributed to foreign, national, state, and local media.

- Fifty announcement and invitation letters with enclosures on the Belgium commemoration to key military and civilian leaders and history-keepers. Twelve acknowledgements including seven national addressees and Gladstone and Sault Ste Marie Mayors.

- 107th Engineer Belgium Trip AFTER-ACTION REPORT 1998 consisting of details on official matters on the days of the eight-day visit: Bastogne Observance; Embassy Call; Media Work and Travel; Reconnaissance and Verbal Presentation; Joint Reception and First Presentation, Outside Ceremonies and Battlefield Tour, Second Presentation and Joint Dinner; Official Visit, Henri-Chapelle American Cemetery and Memorial, Invited Private Visit, REMEMBER MUSEUM 39-45; Departure Calls, Bütgenbach as well as Unofficial Matters, Belgium Trip; Follow On Items, Contacts and Enclosures, Conclusions, and Recommendations. The report includes twenty enclosures and an official distribution list to over one hundred addressees in Belgium, U.S. Belgium Embassy, Henri-Chapelle Cemetery, U. S. Army EUROPE, and National, State of Michigan, and Michigan Upper Peninsula leaders. Seventy-five copies are distributed to date by mail or fax.

- Two 107th Engineer Web Sites are established for visiting: <http://www.angelfire.com/mi/107th/bulge.html> by Webmaster LTC Dan Rodeck (eMail:107th@angelfire.com); The second site is by Webmaster Ted Stevens at <http://www.107thengineers.org/history/BattleoftheBulge.html> (eMail:tstevens@up.net). Gia Stevens is instrumental in spreading the word.

- Memorialization Office eMail: bgicward@aol.com.

Fund Raising Action

- The 107th Engineer Memorialization Endowment Fund (107E-MEF) has grown to \$9,285.65 as of 8Feb99. Expenditures are for products only, not operating costs; None to date as yet.

- Endowment gift sources to date: Individuals, Thirteen individual gifts including three repeaters: \$1,291; Bn Initiatives, \$3,733, \$3,418; 10; Bn Officers Club, \$500; CoA NCO Club, \$250; Other Initiatives (Co, Plat, Sqd, Sec, Club, Each Soldier), \$0; Bank Interest, \$73.65; Outside Support, Not yet approved.

- 107th Engineer Memorialization Operating Fund (107E-MOP) is proposed for approval and receipt of gift income.

- With much to be done for the five purposes at page-head above, the need for continuing memorialization income looms large

What's next?

- Continuing to spread the past, present, and future of 107th Engineers to all strata of local, state, and national leadership, the organization, and the general public.

- By annual remembrance publicity releases, deliberate ceremonies, speech-making, arranged visits, and direct communication keep all in the fabric of the community appraised of the stature and the past and present involvements of this U. S. and state Constitution-based organization in their midst.

- Install metal or advanced plastic plaques, 24x30 in, of WWII involvement at present armories or armory grounds, 1940 armories or community parks, Lake of the Clouds, and other sites as approved. Patches of divisions supported chronologically and corps and army patches are included in plaque margins.

Will you now help with the MEANS and the PUSH? Need time, talent, and treasure. Write/call: 1628 Maddux Lane, McLean VA 22101, 703 356-7031

My Endowment.

I understand the continuing need for this work of honoring comrades and informing everyone as well as preserving lineage and the very being of the organization we respect. I understand the continuing need for funds as each alleviating undertaking is developed and properly approved. I will consider annual or monthly participation. Please accept this willing endowment of funds at this time. It is given (as a memorial to) (in memory of) (to honor) (to advance the cause and purposes.) (in respect.) (in willing support.)

(honoree) _____

(who served in) _____ (when) _____

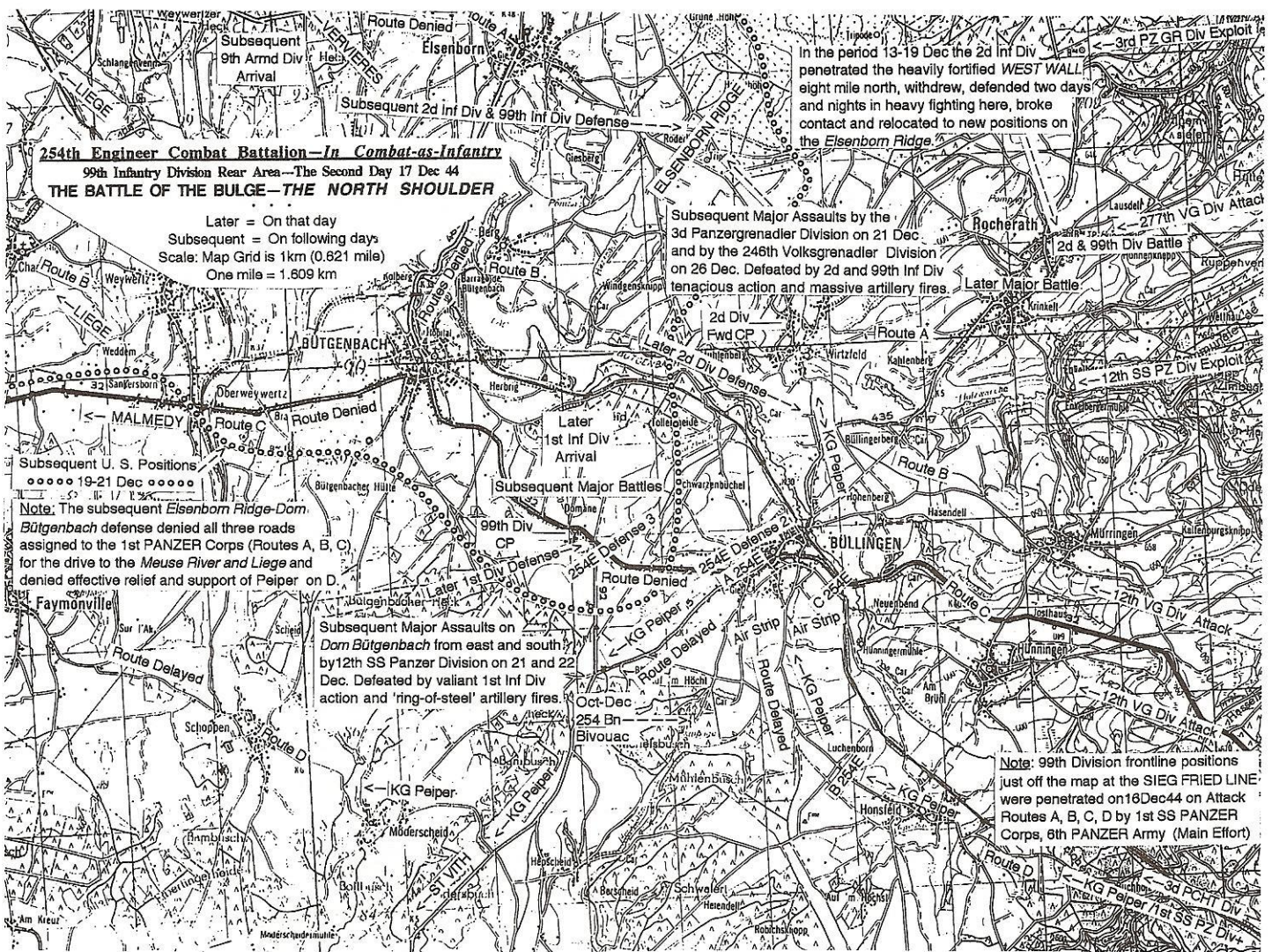
Amount _____ By _____ For _____

Contact Name _____ Phone _____

Mail Address _____

Please make checks or money orders payable to 107th Engineer Memorialization Endowment Fund and mail to 107th Engineer Association, 900 Palms Avenue, Ishpeming, MI 49849. No cash! Use separate sheet if you wish. Your letter, advice, comments, and update welcomed!

Clip and mail with your endowment. Thank you!



SIGNIFICANCE OF BN COMBAT ACTION AT BULLINGEN IN THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE 17DEC44

Quotes in italics are from the Presidential Unit Citation, *WD GO 32, 1945.*

It was Hitler's own strategic direction of attack and main effort—Northwest to Liege (The Small Solution!) and further to Antwerp and the sea (The Large Solution!), splitting the Allies! The 254th deflected that direction, South and Southwesterly, and it was never regained!

Earliest seizure of Meuse River crossings was the obvious objective for Hitler's success; hence, the strategic direction to the closest point—Liege and its twelve or so Meuse River crossings—only 31-miles away! The 254th "denied him the use of three vital routes of approach"—the routes Northwest, and West from Büllingen and Bütgenbach, the routes to Liege! By this, the 254th also denied "large stores of gasoline and rations sorely needed by the enemy." These were denials to the units and commanders designated by Hitler for the main effort: Peiper's attacking column and its 1st SS PANZER Division (Hitler's Own) (Mohnke), 1st SS PANZER Corps (Priess), and 6th PANZER Army (Dietrich). Hitler's Routes A, B, C and refueling were denied!

And, while the bulge ranged 45-miles wide and penetrated 60-miles deep in nine-days, Von Rundstedt never reached the Meuse—with either the 5th or the 6th PANZER Armies! On the right-center, in the 6th PANZER Army which was the heaviest effort, Peiper got only half-way! (Route D.) Liege was not approached! The three routes of approach remain blocked, not to be regained! (Routes A, B, C.) Hitler's chosen Army and Corps—the main effort—remain stopped at the North Shoulder.

Battalion resistance in successive positions, from 0600 to 1500 hours, secured the V Corps right flank and "prevented the enemy from penetrating the corps' rear areas" to the North, through Büllingen or deeper through Bütgenbach, thereby completely entrapping the 2nd and 99th Infantry Divisions. The battalion became and held the North Shoulder of the Battle of the Bulge! Route C and access to Routes A and B, behind the 99th and 2nd defensive battle, were denied!

It delayed Peiper nine-hours! The nine-hours "enabled successful measures to be taken to secure the safety of the corp' right flank." The battalion was relieved in place by the 26th Regiment, 1st Infantry Division, at 1500 hours, arriving from rest areas 35-miles away! In the nine hours, the 1st Inf, 9th Armd, 30th Inf divisions, and Corps and Army Arty moved to anchor the North Shoulder (Dom Bütgenbach)

THE ACTION After midnight the 254 Bn was ordered into three road-blocking positions as Infantry. Before daybreak at 0600, Co B repulsed two advances. Overrun by tanks they fell back to a battalion position at Büllingen and deflected a light advance. Facing a strong attack by armor-heavy mechanized force and in the midst of deliberate artillery preparation, the battalion moved back to a stronger terrain on Dom Bütgenbach until relieved by arriving 1st Infantry Division forces at 1500 hrs. This position was and remain the North Shoulder and still blocked the three routes of Hitler's Main Effort. In the morning skirmishes soldiers of several platoons of two companies were overrun, captured, faced execution, used as human shields in an air attack, subjected to deliberate friendly artillery, escaped, KIA, WIA, MIA, or evacuated as POW.

and the adjoining frontal Elsenborn Ridge and to extend the corps flank defense more deeply to the rear, also denying the strategic direction of attack.

Thus, the nine-hour delay of Peiper was a gift to the Supreme Commander, the 12th Army Group Commander, the FIRST Army and V Corps Commanders, and other commanders for actions to contain the vital North salient of the thirty German division penetration as well as that on the South.

The nine-hours enabled propitious arrivals of the 1st Infantry Division and the 9th Armored Division to continue and to reinforce the valiant blockage of the 1st PANZER Corps and other 6th PANZER Army forces by the 99th, 2nd, and 1st Divisions—the northern shoulder.

By these consequences, "this successful action (by the 254th Engineers) against a powerful enemy armored force, despite high losses, • • • contributed materially to the ultimate failure of the counterattack."

"Although armed only with small arms, machine guns, and rocket launchers, and completely unsupported," and with open flanks, the 254th Engineer Combat Battalion (Corps) (of the 1121st Engineer Combat Group, V Corps, FIRST Army) in Combat-as-Infantry held the North Shoulder of the Battle of the Bulge and limited the extent of the Battle of the Bulge, the largest battle ever fought by the United States Army!!

What would have been the course of the whole battle if these results of denial, delay, and deflection from this "extraordinary heroism" and this "gallant and courageous action" had not been caused to happen by "the determination, heroism, and esprit de corps displayed by the individual officers and men of this battalion?"