

87TH INFANTRY DIVISION

GOLDEN ACORN NEWS



LEGACY EDITION



THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE 87TH INFANTRY DIVISION LEGACY ASSOCIATION

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SEPTEMBER 2026



2026

ARDENNES • RHINELAND • CENTRAL EUROPE
VETERANS OF GENERAL PATTON'S 3RD ARMY & THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE



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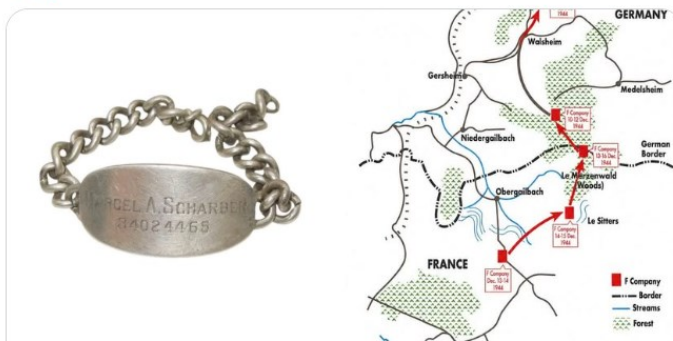
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Over the last few months, we have shared a lot of posts from the [87th Division Museum Facebook Page](#). The stories and belongings of our 87th soldiers are impressive to hear and see.



87th Infantry Division Legacy Association

August 30 at 10:25 PM · 🌐



87th Infantry Division Museum

August 30 at 8:35 AM · 🌐

🇺🇸 Pfc. Marcel A. Scharber — F Company, 347th Infantry Regiment



87th Infantry Division Legacy Association

August 10 · 🌐



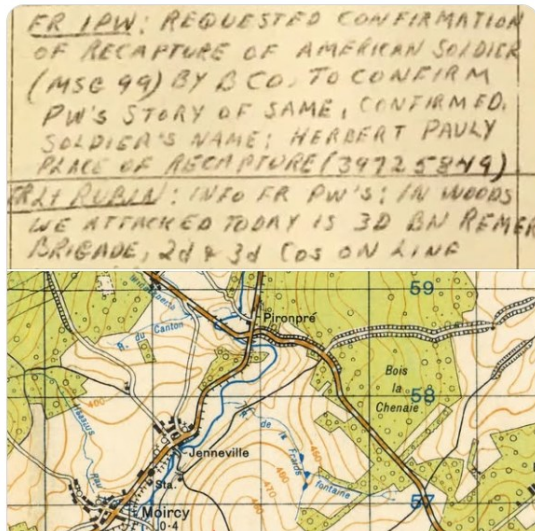
87th Infantry Division Museum

August 10 · 🌐



87th Infantry Division Legacy Association

August 3 · 🌐



87th Infantry Division Museum

August 3 · 🌐

🇺🇸 A HUMAN ACT UNDER FIRE

Among the reports recorded by the 345th Infantry Regiment in January 1945 is a remarkable story of humanity in the midst of the fighting in the Ardennes.

During the night, Private First Class Herbert Pauley, a soldier of I Company from Washington, Iowa, was wounded and fell into German hands.

Rather than leave the wounded American exposed to the freezing cold, a German soldier treated Pauley's wounds, placed him in a slit trench, and covered him with an overcoat.

A short time later, that same German soldier was captured during an American patrol. During his interrogation, he explained that he had cared for a wounded American and had left him sheltered in a trench.

Meanwhile, B Company recovered Herbert Pauley and brought him back to Regimental Headquarters.

There, Pauley confirmed the German prisoner's account.

The enemy soldier standing before him was the very man who had treated his wounds only a few hours earlier.

The surviving records do not identify the German soldier by name, nor do they explain what happened to him afterward. Yet these few lines preserve an extraordinary moment: on a frozen battlefield, a soldier chose compassion and helped save the life of a wounded enemy.

Pfc. Herbert Pauley
F Company, 345th Infantry Regiment
Washington, Iowa

Sometimes, the briefest entries in wartime records reveal the most human stories.

— 87th Infantry Division Museum

The Regimental Unit Journal records Pauley's recovery by B Company during the early hours of January 10, 1945.

A vintage black and white photograph with a decorative, scalloped border. It depicts a man and a woman sitting on a large log in the foreground. The man is on the left, wearing a dark jacket and light-colored pants, looking towards the camera. The woman is on the right, wearing a light-colored dress, looking slightly away from the camera. In the background, there is a small, simple wooden cabin with a gabled roof, situated on a rocky, uneven shore. The water is visible in the foreground, and the overall scene suggests a remote, possibly island, location.

PRESERVING THEIR HISTORY.
KEEPING THEIR STORIES ALIVE.

Original Archives · Historical Artifacts · Veteran Stories · Battlefield Research



87th Infantry Division Museum

1.4K followers • 78 following

Preserving the history of the 87th Infantry Division through original archives, historical artifacts, veteran stories and battlefield research.

Reference Website



Following

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After more than fifteen years of interest in the 87th Infantry Division, I am turning that passion into an ambitious series of books.

My goal is to cover several months of the division's campaigns in detailed volumes, bringing together unique photographs, maps and in-depth archival research to tell the story of these men and their experiences.

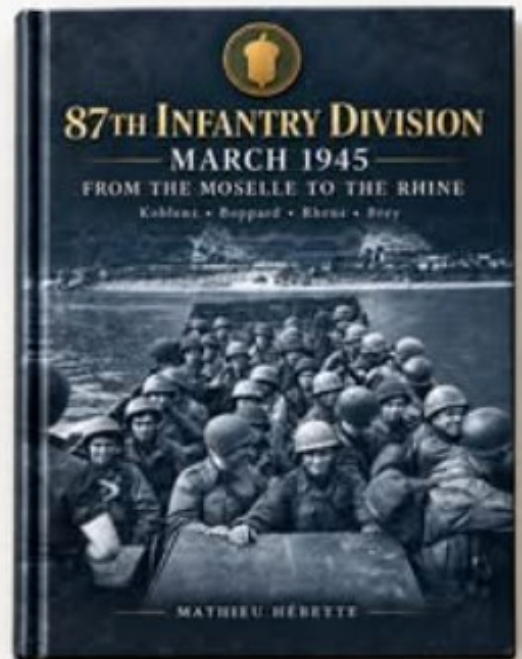
Three volumes are currently in progress: Ardennes, Siegfried Line, and Crossing the Rhine. The latter is now in the proofreading and layout stage.

Your donations will help speed up archival checks and provide access to previously unpublished photographs. They will also help cover printing and other self-publishing expenses, including professional software subscriptions and related production costs.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who has already donated. Your generosity and trust mean a great deal to me, and I'm deeply grateful for your support.

Even a small contribution can make a difference. Sharing this campaign is also a valuable way to help.

Support the project : [Go Fund Me Link](#)



The 2026 Tim Higgins Scholarship Winner—Austin Peters

Austin Peters, the Great Grandson of Charles Yesline (HQ- 912th FA) is the winner of the 2026 Tim Higgins Scholarship Award. See below his essay detailing Sgt. Yesline's service in the 87th.

Honoring the Golden Acorn:

The Legacy of the 87th Infantry Division and the Men Who Served

History is carried in the stories passed down through generations, in the sacrifices of ordinary men who answered an extraordinary call. My great-grandfather, Technical Sergeant Charles George Yesline, was one of those men. Born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on April 13, 1924, he served in the Headquarters of the 912th Field Artillery Battalion of the 87th Infantry Division — the division proudly known as the Golden Acorn. His story, and the story of the 87th, are full of courage, honor, and sacrifice.

The 87th Infantry Division played a pivotal role in the Allied victory in World War II. Activated in 1942, the division deployed to Europe in late 1944, arriving just in time to be thrust into some of the war's most brutal fighting. The Golden Acorn distinguished itself during the Battle of the Bulge, the largest land battle fought by the United States Army in World War II. Alongside General George S. Patton's Third Army, the 87th pushed through the Siegfried Line, helped relieve pressure at Bastogne, Belgium, and drove deep into Germany. Their courage and resilience under the most punishing conditions helped turn the tide of the war in Europe.

My great-grandfather's journey to that frozen battlefield is a story in itself. In September of 1944, he was sent to Fort Jackson, South Carolina, for cadet pilot training — a promising path that was abruptly interrupted by the urgency of war. Before he could complete his training, General Patton issued the call: all trainees were needed immediately in Germany for the critical push at Bastogne. The men were shipped overseas with virtually no preparation for the brutal European winter. They arrived without winter clothing, snow boots, or any cold-weather gear. In temperatures that plunged well below freezing, they were forced to dig foxholes into the frozen ground with little more than determination and their will to survive.

TSgt. Yesline served as a Radio Operator for the Headquarters of the 912th Field Artillery Battalion, a role that was essential to battlefield coordination. Radio operators were the lifeline between frontline units and commanding officers, transmitting critical fire missions, troop movements, and intelligence under fire. Without men like my great-grandfather maintaining communication, the artillery support that the 87th depended upon could not have functioned. He performed this duty under conditions that were, by any measure, nearly unbearable.

Miraculously, he came home without frostbite — a fate that claimed countless others around him. On July 30, 1945, he married my great-grandmother, Odette Clifford, to build a life and a family whose very existence is a testament to his survival and sacrifice. He passed away on May 17, 1977, but his legacy endures.

I am applying for this scholarship not only to further my own education, but to honor a promise I feel I owe to men like TSgt. Charles George Yesline and the entire Golden Acorn Division. Their story deserves to be told, taught, and remembered. I intend to carry that legacy forward with pride, gratitude, and a deep sense of responsibility to history. Those unbelievably brave men gave us every freedom we take for granted today. I hope they all found peace, and may God grant them eternal life in the kingdom of heaven.



Necrology

*In Memory of The 87th Veterans
Who lived their lives
In devotion to their families,
In service to their communities, and with true patriotism for
The United States of America*

Philip C. Kretschman	D-345
Eugene Max Bulian	B-345



Stalwart and Strong



Philip C. Kretschman (D-345), age 100, passed away peacefully on May 31st, surrounded by the love of his family. He was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather who lived a remarkable life filled with faith, strength, and care for those around him.

He was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Lucille F. (Adamczyk) Kretschman; they were married 64 years until her death in 2017. He was also preceded by his sister, Sister Marie Fatima Kretschman, and his grandson, Philip R. Kretschman.

Born in the Olney section of Philadelphia, he was the son of the late Philip J. and Edna M. (nee. Lamont) Kretschman.

Phil was a proud World War II veteran who served with the 87th Infantry Division, known as the "Golden Acorn," and bravely fought in the Battle of the Bulge. Following his military service, he became a Penn State graduate and later received a masters from the University of Pennsylvania. After settling in Horsham Township and then later Montgomery Township, he built a distinguished career as a structural and civil engineer, dedicating himself to his profession and continuing to work until the age of 82. Phil was known for his strong work ethic, intelligence, and commitment to excellence.

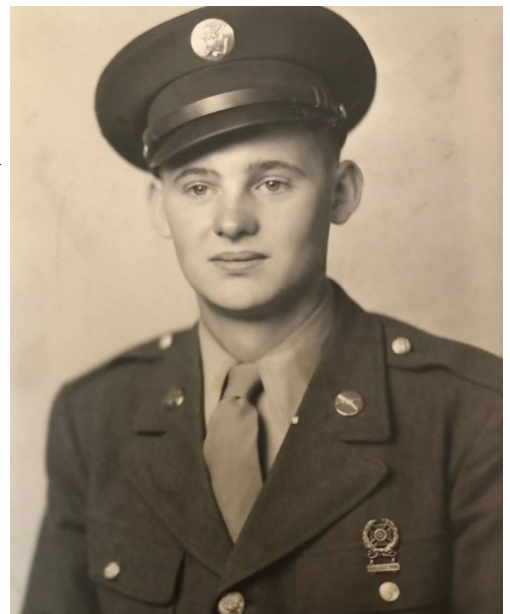
Outside of work, he found great joy in coaching Little League, fishing, boating, working on cars, and spending time at the shore and in Florida. He cherished these pursuits and the memories made with family and friends along the way. In his later years he was happy to live independently in his retirement community of Arbour Square, where he was affectionately known as Uncle Phil. He will be remembered for his service to his country, his lifelong dedication to his work, and his love of the simple pleasures in life.

Surviving are his 5 loving children: Philip (Jeanne) Kretschman of North Wales, Kenneth (Suzanne) Kretschman of Pittsburgh, Stephen (Marianne) Kretschman of Beaver Falls, PA., Karen (Donald) Dietterich of Skippack, and Christopher (Virginia) Kretschman of Glenside; 16 grandchildren: Dana (David) Cam, Brendan, Casey (Sarai), Kyle (Rebecca), Emily (Patrick) Hodges, Allison, Genevieve (Michael) Lincheck, Kimberly (Dan) Brown, Stephen, Nicole (Ryan) Onysheczak, James (Liz) Dietterich, Rebecca (Martin) Noble, Paul, David and Christopher. And 20 great grandchildren: Fletcher, Nora, Benjamin, Patricia, Maddox, Chase, Callie, Miles, Jordan, Beau, Alesa, Adam, Cameron, Kyron, Brinley, Annabelle, Amelia, Luca, Jake and Wally.

A Viewing was held on June 9, 2026, at Mary, Mother of the Redeemer Church in North Wales, PA. Philip's Funeral Mass followed with internment at St. John Neumann Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations in Phil's memory may be made to the Wissahickon Valley Public Libraries at <https://www.wvpl.org/>.

Eugene Max Bulian (B-345), age 100, beloved husband, father and grandfather, passed away peacefully Sunday, June 7, 2026 at the Avera Sister James Care Center in Yankton, SD. Mass of Christian Burial was held on July 7, 2026 at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Yankton SD with Rev. Bob Lacey officiating. Burial was in the Sacred Heart Cemetery, Yankton, SD, with military honors by the Ernest-Bowyer VFW Post # 791 Honor Guard and the SD Army National Guard Honor Guard. Visitation was held July 6, 2026 at the Opsahl-Kostel Funeral Home & Crematory, Yankton, with a rosary followed by a Scripture service.

Gene was born on May 3, 1926 to Max and Rose (Brill-Schultz) Bulian in Groton, SD. Growing up in rural South Dakota during the depression, he walked two miles to and from school. The blown dirt and sand were so thick the teacher drove them home in a Model T two miles on the rim and didn't know it. She would put towels in the windows to keep the dust out of the home. The James River was so dry there were only puddles. He loved to eat his mother's warm bread. They would put cream and radishes on top. He was very proud of his military service, serving during WWII in Europe, sharing his military experience in classrooms at Sacred Heart School and par-



ticipating in the Honor Flight. Gene was drafted in September, 1944, and trained at Camp Fannin. He was assigned to the 3rd Army, 87th Infantry (the “Golden Acorn”-too green to fight, too yellow to run.”), 345th Regiment, Company B. His company pushed off across the Moselle River, into the Rhine River at Koblenz. While on a scouting mission, they would listen to the artillery; if it whistled, then it toppled end over end, causing an explosion. They would bunk in German fox holes, in the shape of a horseshoe. On another scouting mission he was shot by a sniper, receiving the Purple Heart, but rejoined his unit near the Czech border, near Oelsnitz, where he celebrated his 19th birthday. He was Honorably Discharged in July, 1946, receiving the Victory Medal, American Theater Ribbon, European African Middle Eastern Theater Ribbon with 2 Bronze Battle Stars, Army of Occupation Medal, and Good Conduct Medal.

Following his military service, he returned to Aberdeen, SD, and began a career with National Tea and Piggly Wiggly Grocery Stores, managing a store in Aberdeen, Mitchell and Yankton.

Gene met Evelyn Emma Heinz in Aberdeen and were married January 2, 1951 at Sacred Heart Church, Aberdeen, SD. Since 1968, Yankton was their home. Following retirement, Gene and Evelyn owned and operated the Go-In Café for 10 years. As a business owner, Gene was active in the Yankton Chamber of Commerce. Being of strong faith, they were active members of Sacred Heart Church, where Gene served on the church council, Knights of Columbus and volunteered for many years at Sacred Heart Hospital and Avera Sister James distributing communion. He enjoyed golfing, fishing, hunting, gardening and his family. Together they raised seven children, Deborah Susan (Earl) Wright, Brodnax, VA, Michael Eugene (Judy) Bulian, Davenport, IA, Carmen Rose (Gary) Hansen, Rapid City, SD, Vicki Marie Munoz, Hot Springs, AR, James Edward (Karen) Bulian, Sioux Falls, SD, Kathryn Jo (Jeff) Healy, Weatherford TX, and Alan Francis (Vickie) Bulian, Yankton, SD.

In addition to his children, he is survived by fifteen grandchildren, Erika Atchinson, Tabitha Bryant, Sean Bulian, Jennie Anderson, Kari McCord, Anna Bulian, Warren Hansen, Christina Ward, Chris Bulian, Brady Bulian, Jamie Hegge, Matt Healy, Andrew Healy, Nick Bulian, Stephanie Brodeur; 29 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild; and sister-in-law, Ella Heinz.

Those that have gone before him are his parents, siblings August Bulian, Gertrude Lee, Edward Bulian, Helen Sheldon, a sister at childbirth, Harrold Bulian, and great-grandson Emmitt Bulian. Eugene Bulian will be remembered for his hard work, perseverance, and dedication to family. Pallbearers were his grandchildren. The family of Eugene Bulian request memorials be directed to Yankton Catholic Community Foundation, 509 Capitol, Yankton, SD for the Eugene and Evelyn Bulian Sacred Heart School Scholarship Fund.

87th IDLA Members Pay Their Respects

Eugene Max Bulian



Rick Cross · 4d

The same division, regiment, and company as my dad. He was in a few months earlier than my dad.

Like Reply Send message Hide 4



Carmen Hansen · 3d

My father was very proud of his service.

Like Reply Send message Hide 2

87th Infantry Division Legacy Association · 4h · Author

Carmen Hansen Who is your father?

Like Reply

View 3 replies



Mary Ann Smith · 2d

Thank you for your service. 🇺🇸

A gold star daughter.

Mary Ann Coates Smith

Battle of the Bulge Association

Like Reply Send message Hide 1



Bob Powell · 3d

RIP SIR. Thank you

Philip C. Kretschman



Bob Brown · 4w

Recent visit a few weeks before his passing



Like Reply Hide 5



Mary Ann Smith · 4w

Rest in peace. 🇺🇸 thank you for your service 🇺🇸

Like Reply Hide 1



Bob Powell · 4w

Rest in peace. Thank you.

Like Reply Hide 2



John W Mead · 4w

Rest in Peace and thank you for your service . My father served with the 345th , B . SSGT

We Remember. . .

Those Who Made The Ultimate Sacrifice

Killed in Action: **1154**

Died of Wounds: **141**



Luxembourg American Cemetery, Luxembourg

(Photo credit: ©ABMC)

We will continue to publish in chronological order information on those who were Killed in Action/Died of Wounds/Missing in Action with the 87th Infantry Division. Information was obtained from the records of Paul Nessman (F&M-347), www.findagrave.com, www.newspapers.com, www.ancestry.com, and 87th General Orders and History.

Compiled by Barbara Strang (daughter of Ted Anderson, B-912FA)

February 8, 1945

History of the 345th Infantry Regiment:

The First Battalion moved from Auw at 0055 on February 8th. Following the Second Battalion's original route into the Siegfried, they turned right at the first crossroad, through the village of Wascheid, to a fork in the road – one road led to Olzheim, the other to the main crossroads now held by the Second Battalion. Here C Company moved north to meet G Company and strengthened the line.

By 1400 that afternoon, F Company was in position 2000 yards northwest of Olzheim; Company G was on the road, 1700 yards to the south; and the First Battalion was sweeping around behind the Second to take the high ground overlooking the town.

At 1430 Lt. Col. Matlack issued orders for Companies F and G to attack. Artillery shelled the town in a preliminary “softening up” bombardment. The two companies, supported by tanks and tank destroyers, moved forward. With 800 yards still to be covered. F Company was held up by heavy sniper fire, and at 1530 was subjected to an intense artillery barrage.

Shortly thereafter, Company G was likewise caught in the hail of enemy shells. Lt. Theodore Knusman, commanding the company, became a casualty....

As the First and Second Battalions converged on Olzheim. Lt. Col. Moran's Third Battalion moved into Regimental reserve in the vicinity of the crossroads and prepared to reinforce either of the two forward Battalion and guard against a possible enemy counterthrust. They closed in by noon on February 8th and began patrolling the area north of newly captured Olzheim.

[A very detailed description of the action of this day can be found in the History of the 345th Infantry Regiment.]

Pfc. Albert Billodeaux, HQ1-345

Birth: April 10, 1911
Hometown: Lake Charles, Louisiana
Parents: Ardus and Alice Billodeaux
Siblings: 1 brother and 2 sisters
Wife: Venice Billodeaux
Burial: Orange Grove Cemetery,
Lake Charles, Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana



Pfc. Anthony Bracciante, G-345

Birth: November 20, 1911

Hometown: Brooklyn, New York

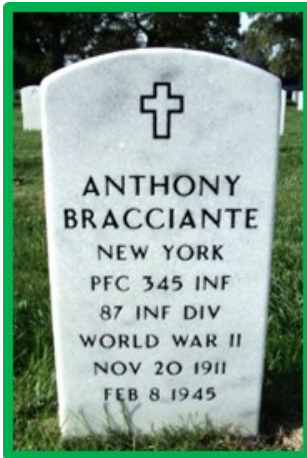
Parents: Giovanni and Agata Bracciante

Siblings: 3 brothers and 4 sisters

Spouse: Sylvia Bracciante (m. 1938)

Children: 2 sons

Burial: Long Island National Cemetery,
East Farmingdale, Suffolk County, New York



Pfc. Harold W. Brown, G-345

Birth: November 27, 1910

Hometown: Bellwood, Illinois

Parents: May Elizabeth Blado

Siblings: 1 sister

Burial: Henri-Chapelle American
Cemetery and Memorial, Henri-
Chapelle, Arrondissement de
Verviers, Liege, Belgium



Pfc. Elio Crecco, G-345

Birth: February 21, 1921

Hometown: New York, New York

Parents: Anna Crecco

Burial: Interred in Italy

2Lt. Stanford L. Arnold, E-345

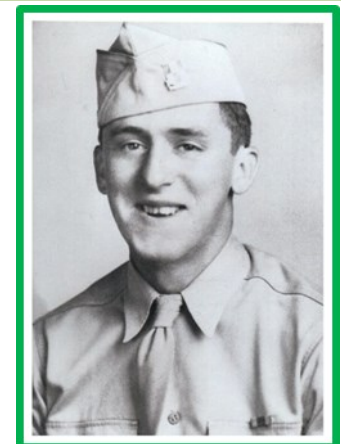
Birth: August 15, 1923

Hometown: Benevolence, Georgia

Parents: William and Emma Arnold

Siblings: 3 brothers

Burial: Brooksville Cemetery,
Randolph County, Georgia



AWARD OF SILVER STAR (POSTHUMOUSLY)

Stanford L. Arnold, 02000101, Second Lieutenant, Company E, 345th Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action against an armed enemy of United-States on 7 February 1945. Lieutenant Arnold set up a telephone in a building near *****, Germany and, realizing the immediate necessity of filling the position when the artillery observer was delayed, took over and telephoned vital information to friendly artillery. Enemy tanks moved up and fired point-blank at the building and enemy artillery was directed against it. With great courage and devotion to duty, Lieutenant Arnold ordered his men to the comparative safety of the cellar, while he remained at his post and continued to transmit information until he was killed by a direct hit. Lieutenant Arnold's acceptance of responsibility and self-sacrificing devotion to duty, exemplify the highest traditions of the military service. Entered military service from Georgia. General Order 47



Pfc. Manuel Estrada, G-345

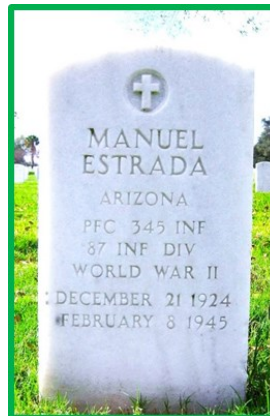
Birth: December 21, 1924

Hometown: Pirtleville, Arizona

Parents: Manuel and Maria Estrada

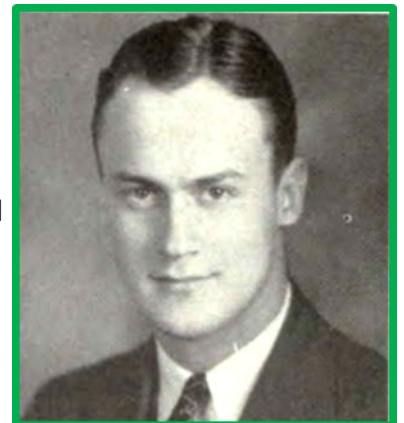
Siblings: 1 brother and 5 sisters

Burial: Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery,
San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas



AWARD OF SILVER STAR MEDAL (POSTHUMOUSLY)

Theodore J. Knusman, 01310717, First Lieutenant, Company G, 345th Infantry Regiment, for gallantry in action against an armed enemy on 7 February 1945, During the attack on *****, Germany, First Lieutenant Knusman was following the leading platoon of his company, when the entire company became subjected to heavy enemy artillery and mortar fire. Without regard for personal safety, and refusing medical attention to a wound which he had incurred, First Lieutenant Knusman continued to direct his men toward their objective. He was later mortally wounded, but his men were so inspired by his superior leadership and courageous action that they stormed the enemy with increased vigor to take the objective. The gallantry and devotion to duty of First Lieutenant Knusman are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Army. Entered military service from Illinois. General Order 31



Pfc. Paul M. March, G-345

Birth: February 16, 1911

Hometown: Pottstown, Pennsylvania

Parents: Charles and Violet March

Siblings: 1 brother and 5 sisters

Spouse: Ida May March (m. June 1935)

Children: 1 daughter

Burial: Highland Memorial Park, Pottstown,
Montgomery County, Pennsylvania



Body of Pfc. March En Route Here From Overseas Cemetery

The body of Pfc. Paul M. March, husband of Ida M. (Kelly) March, of 1025 Queen street, will arrive this week for reburial in Pottstown, it was announced by the U. S. Army.

Pfc. March was killed in action at the age of 34 near Olzheim, Germany, Feb. 8, 1945, less than a year after he was inducted. His family was not given details of how he was killed.

A son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles March, 437 Chestnut street, he was born in Anselma, Chester county, but came to Pottstown as a youth.

He had been a driver for Sunny Slope dairies for ten years, and then was a driver for Frank A. Smith, beverage distributor, the job he held when he was inducted March 16, 1944.

After basic training at Camp Wheeler, Ga., he went overseas in October of 1944, and saw action as an Army infantryman in France and Belgium. Pfc. March was buried in a U. S. military cemetery in Foy, Belgium.

HE AND HIS WIFE were married in June of 1935, and they had a daughter, Dorothy May March, now 12 years old. Before his death, they lived at his parents' home.

Pfc. March was a member of Pottstown Post 780, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Empire Hook and Ladder company.

Surviving in addition to his wife, daughter and parents are a brother, Roy W., of 426 Walnut street, and five sisters:

Elizabeth, wife of Paul Gordon, Berwyn RD. 1, Chester county; Mabel, wife of Paul Antosh, Camden, N. J.; Mary, wife of Burris Hixson, Spring City; Mae, wife of Ralph Schick, Phoenixville RD. 1, and Bernice, of 437 Chestnut street.

Funeral arrangements will be in charge of the funeral home at 112 North Washington street.

Pfc. Dennis O. Nissen, G-345

Birth: October 20, 1923

Hometown: Alamosa, Colorado

Parents: Irvin and Clara Nissen

Burial: Henri-Chapelle American Cemetery and Memorial,
Henri-Chapelle, Arrondissement de Verviers, Liege, Belgium



Pfc. William C. Shields, G-345

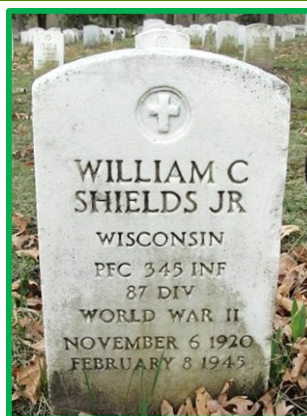
Birth: November 6, 1920

Hometown: Madison, Wisconsin

Parents: William and Alvina Shields

Siblings: 3 sisters and 4 brothers

Burial: Forest Hill Cemetery,
Madison, Dane County, Wisconsin



Pfc. W. C. Shields Killed In Action

Pfc. William C. Shields, Jr., 24, was killed in action Feb. 8 in Ger-

many, the war department has informed his parents, Mr. and Mrs. William F. Shields, 1857 Baird st. He was an infantryman.

Another son of Mr. and Mrs. Shields, Pvt. Harold J. Shields, was wounded in Belgium recently.



Shields Death of William broke up plans of the brothers for a meeting overseas.

William entered service Aug. 20, 1943, and went to England last August. He was employed by the Ideal Body Co. when he entered the army.

Pfc. Joseph C. Zubeck, G-345

Birth: August 21, 1917

Hometown: Flint, Michigan

Parents: Joseph and Anna Zubeck

Siblings: 1 brother and 2 sisters

Burial: Henri-Chapelle American

Cemetery and Memorial, Henri-Chapelle,
Arrondissement de Verviers, Liege, Belgium



Capt. Howard J. Wall, L-345

Birth: December 8, 1917

Hometown: Troy, New York

Parents: Michael and Anna Wall

Siblings: 4 brothers and 1 sister

Spouse: Mary Elizabeth Frank

Children: 1 son (born February 9, 1945)

Burial: Henri-Chapelle American Cemetery
and Memorial, Henri-Chapelle, Arrondissement
de Verviers, Liege, Belgium



DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress July 9, 1918, takes pride in presenting the Distinguished Service Cross (Posthumously) to Captain (Infantry) Howard Joseph Wall (ASN: 0-1299654), United States Army, for extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations against an armed enemy while serving as Commanding Officer of Company L, 3rd Battalion, 345th Infantry Regiment, 87th Infantry Division, in action against enemy forces in Belgium, on 7 February 1945. At mid-morning Company L attacked to assist in taking the 3rd Battalion's objective. As they began their march eastward along the highway, they were pinned down by machine gun fire. Captain Wall ordered two Tank Destroyers supporting his company, to move forward. As they came up, he fell in beside the vehicles, directed fire on the fortification, and put it out of action. Company L continued to advance until stopped again by a second pillbox. Directing two men to cover him, Captain wall worked his way forward alone until he reached the entrance of the bunker. Throwing in a hand grenade, he awaited the explosion, dashed inside and emptied his submachine gun at the occupants. His heroic actions resulted in two enemy killed, six prisoners taken, another pillbox destroyed. Later that day a concentration of enemy artillery fire fell on the advancing company, sounding several men; two of who were left lying in an exposed position. Captain Wall, again setting a stirring example of fearless leadership, single-handedly moved across the open ground and removed the two men to a sheltered area where they could be treated and evacuated. Captain Wall's outstanding leadership, personal bravery and zealous devotion to duty at the cost of his life, exemplify the highest tradition of the military forces of the United States and reflect great credit upon himself, the 87th Infantry Division, and the United States Army. General Orders: Headquarters, Ninth U.S. Army, General Orders No. 266 (1945)

T4 James M. Whipple, L-345

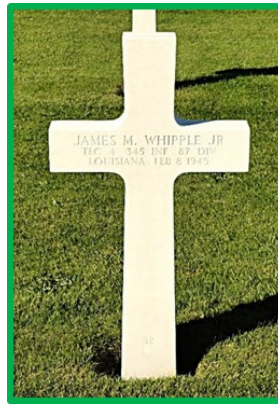
Birth: October 16, 1916

Hometown: Springfield, Louisiana

Parents: James M. and Mary Whipple

Siblings: 2 brothers

Burial: Henri-Chapelle American Cemetery
and Memorial, Henri-Chapelle,
Arrondissement de Verviers, Liege, Belgium



Pvt. William J. Helfrich, M-345

Birth: April 16, 1918

Hometown: Richmond Hill, New York

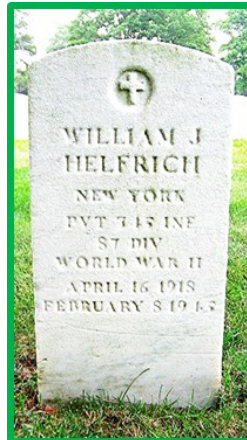
Parents: William L. and Loretta Helfrich

Siblings: 2 brothers

Spouse: Bertha Helfrich

Children: 1 daughter

Burial: Long Island National Cemetery,
East Farmingdale, Suffolk County, New York



In Third Army
Pvt. Helfrich, father of a daughter, Patricia, was killed in action in Germany on February 8 while with Gen. Patton's 3rd Army. He was born in this city, but was raised in Ashley where he attended the public schools and was graduated from St. Leo's High School in 1936. He attended Wilkes-Barre Business College, and before entering service was employed as salesman for the Dodge agency, and by the Murray Construction Company of New York City.
He was inducted into the Army on June 19, 1944, and was trained at Camp Blanding, Fla. He had been overseas since January 15. His wife is the former Bertha Padden of Forty Fort, now residing with her daughter in New York.
Besides his wife, daughter and parents, he is survived by two brothers, Leonard and George, both at home.



346th Infantry Regiment (3 Killed in Action)

History of the 346th Infantry Regiment:

The following few days were spent moving to forward positions around Auw, Krewinkle, and Weckerath; and then on February 6 at 0400 hours the Second Battalion jumped off on the attack once more under heavy artillery, mortar and small arms fire, taking many prisoners along the way as they went. The First Battalion, supported effectively by tanks and TDs succeeded in driving the enemy from pillboxes in their sector's objective. Strong patrols were sent ahead to get an idea of activity there. The going was rough and casualties were heavy. Company C seized the main road beyond Roth but were counterattacked strongly and were forced to withdraw to Krewinkle. Col. Curtis D. Renfro assumed command of the Regiment 8 February at Roth, Germany. For the next 18 days the Division held defensive positions.

Pfc. Albert Wesolowski, G-346

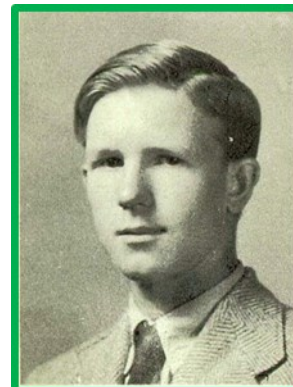
Birth: October 18, 1925

Hometown: Linden, New Jersey

Parents: Stanley and Anna Wesolowski

Siblings: 2 brothers and 3 sisters

Burial: Rosedale Memorial Park, Linden, New Jersey



Pvt. Frederick R. Petros, G-346

Birth: April 27, 1926

Hometown: Lowell, Massachusetts

Parents: James and Nora Petros

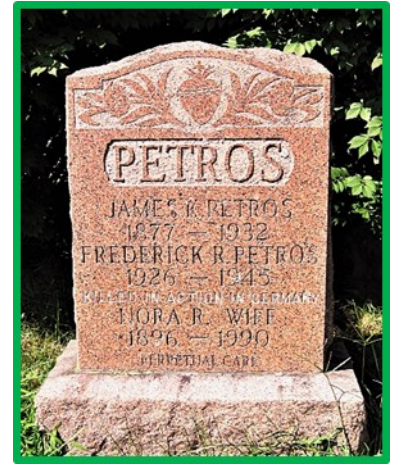
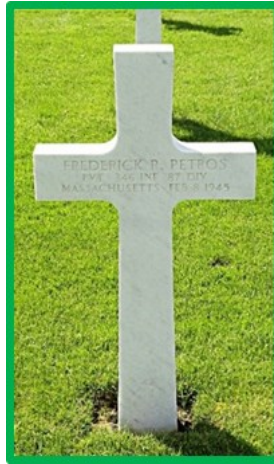
Siblings: 2 sisters and 5 brothers

Burial: Henri-Chapelle American Cemetery
and Memorial, Henri-Chapelle,

Arrondissement de Verviers, Liege, Belgium

Cenotaph: Saint Patrick Cemetery,

Lowell, Middlesex County, Massachusetts



Pvt. Howard Teeple, E-346

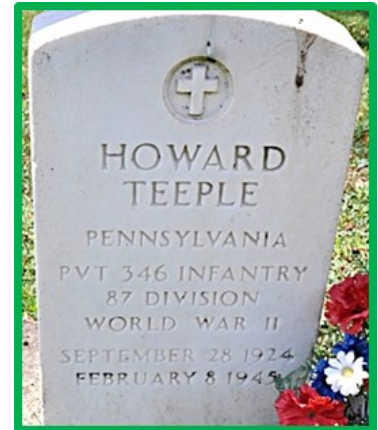
Birth: September 28, 1924

Hometown: Equinunk, Pennsylvania

Parents: William and Ada Teeple

Siblings: 2 brothers and 1 sister

Burial: Pine Mill Cemetery,
Wayne County, Pennsylvania



Stalwart and Strong

The 87th POW Experience: Private Thomas E. Grove, Jr.

Moses Claar, one of our members, published this story about his great grand-uncle a year ago in Medium. He was kind enough to share it with us for this edition of the Golden Acorn News

[Life of a POW](https://medium.com/@lmclaar00/life-of-a-pow-dcb5f1e7987e) <https://medium.com/@lmclaar00/life-of-a-pow-dcb5f1e7987e>

Life of a POW by M. Larry Martin Claar

Thomas Edgar Grove Jr, a Hollidaysburg Native war veteran who was captured at the Battle of the Bulge. He was my great-granduncle. The brother to my Great Grandmother Ada Catherine (Grove) Hileman Garman. I miss him every-day. I wanted to publish a short editorial to highlight the man whom I had the greatest admiration for.

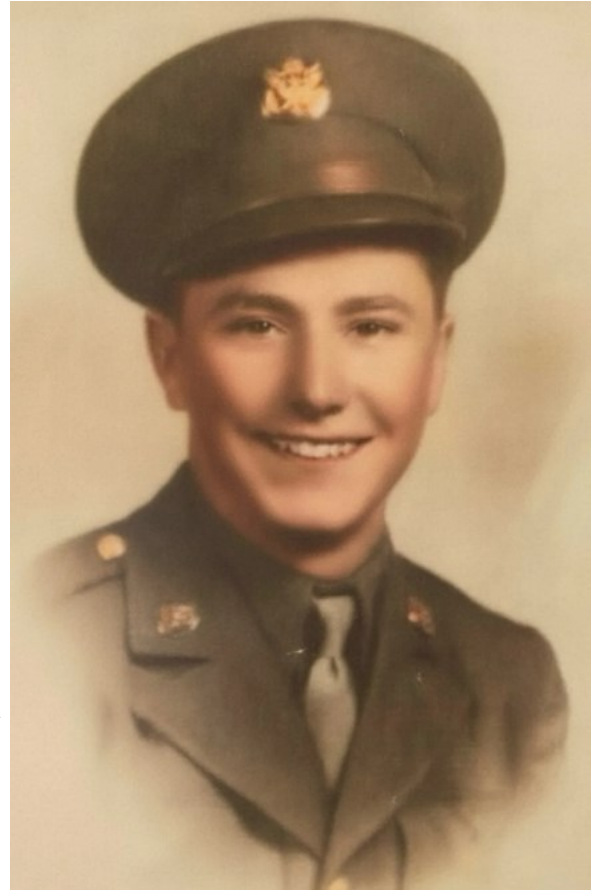
A Survivor (Not a Hero)

Thomas Edgar Grove Jr was born in Hollidaysburg PA on January 16th 1925. Son of Thomas E Grove Sr and Ethel M Shively. The family resided in a very small home on Brush Mountain Road. He was the third of four children. All of whom are now deceased. His father. and mother were both employed by The Altoona Mirror at one time. He was floored when Pearl Harbor was bombed on December 7 1941 and it was the deciding factor that led him to enlist in the United States Army. On his 18th birthday, January 16, 1943, he enlisted with the Army. “We were going to win the war, a bunch of kids,” he recalled in an interview with a newspaper in South Carolina. Uncle Tommy was trained as a machine gunner. He first saw action in the Aleutian Islands before being attached to the 87th Division, part of Gen. George S. Patton’s Third Army. Shipping to France in October 1944, his unit was a spearhead in the counterattack against the German offensive. Combat, he said, “was terrible and miserable, and I hated it. And I hated the Germans.”

Capture

On January 5, 1945, in the war-torn town of Bonnerue, Belgium, U.S. Army Pvt. Thomas E. Grove Jr faced what he believed was his final moment. From a second-story window, the machine gunner stared down the long 88-mm cannon of a German Panther tank. It was the height of the Battle of the Bulge, Germany’s last major offensive, and Grove’s unit was in full retreat. “Death was inevitable for me,” he recalled, decades later. “Shooting that tank with a 30-caliber would be like throwing rubber balls at it. I thought, “This is it.””

The tank fired, the shell bursting through the wall below him. The blast killed or wounded most of his platoon and peppered him with debris. As survivors from Company D, 345th Regiment, 87th



U.S. Infantry Division, scrambled into an inner room, the cacophony of artillery and small-arms fire intensified. They were surrounded.

Soon, German infantry stormed the house. One of his fellow soldiers, his ammunition-bearer, declared the Nazis weren't getting him and ran through a hole in the wall where the shell had hit, only to be killed instantly. Another soldier started to do the same, but Sgt. Ralph Carver pulled him back inside. They knew their only options were capture or death. "I chose not to be killed," Grove said. "I wasn't going to run out there and just get murdered."

As German soldiers burst through the door shouting commands, a sinking realization washed over him. He remembers thinking, in a moment he wishes he could forget, "Oh, my God, I'm a prisoner of war."

POW Death March

The Germans forced the captured Americans on a brutal five-day march of more than 120 miles from Belgium into Germany, through what was Europe's worst winter in a decade. Many soldiers were stripped of their shoes and forced to walk through the snow. "If anyone fell out of line, the Germans would shoot them or beat them mercilessly with their rifles," Grove said. "That will get you back in line quick." Rations were bleak, consisting mostly of frozen turnips dug from roadside fields.

The march ended at Stalag 12-A in Limburg, Germany, a holding facility in a factory-like building whose roof had been blown off by Allied bombs. "When it rained or snowed, you would get rained and snowed on," Grove recounted. "Our bed was an armload of straw on a cobblestone floor."

After several weeks, the worst was yet to come. Grove and 85 other men were forced into a single railroad boxcar designed for 40. For days, without food, they traveled across Germany while Allied planes bombed the tracks around them. The conditions were subhuman. Men defecated in their helmets or urinated on the floor. "We all were sick and had diarrhea," Grove said. "That was the most hellish spot in my captivity." The prisoners came to call it a "chapel on wheels" for the frightened hymns they sang to endure the ordeal.

Life and Lice in Stalag 9-B

The train finally stopped at a cattle station near Bad Orb, Germany. From there, the prisoners marched three miles up a mountain to Stalag 9-B. There, 150 POWs were housed in wooden barracks with a single hole in the ground for a toilet. But the worst enemy, Grove said, was not the cold or the filth. "Our worst enemy was these little white lice and they were all over us. Every wrinkle on our bodies was filled with white lice. Our brown uniforms became white with lice."

Starvation was constant. The daily ration was a small piece of black German bread and a single cup of watery soup, supposedly potato, though they never saw a potato. Grove's weight plummeted from 155 pounds to less than 100. "All we thought of was food. Not women or anything like that. Just food," he said. He managed to hide a small notebook where he would write down fantasy meals, with one entry listing a quart of orange juice, a box of cereal, one dozen eggs, and a pound of bacon. The experience left a permanent mark; decades later, he said that pouring raisins on his cereal was enough food to have fed 20 men in the camp.

Liberation and a Promise Kept

Easter Sunday April 1st 1945, the prisoners heard the distant rumble of artillery. The regular German soldiers disappeared, replaced by older guards who brought extra rations before they, too, vanished. Soon, the prisoners heard the unmistakable roar of American tanks. The next day April 2nd 1945 after four months in captivity the POW's were liberated.

"They ran down the fence and the four machine-gun towers and we were free," Grove remembered. "We kissed those American tanks like they were beautiful blonde girls." Speaking to a crowd of Air Force service members years later, he relayed the message, "Your grandfathers helped me and kept me safe through World War II. They saved me when I was in combat. So I say thank you."

Upon liberation, a chaplain told the emaciated survivors, "You all made a lot of promises to God, and He expects you to keep them." Grove took those words to heart. After returning to the United States and briefly working as a traveling salesman, he had a conversion from the Presbyterian denomination. He went to Bible college and dedicated his life to serving others, working for more than 40 years as a hospital chaplain and Southern Baptist preacher. He preached in numerous churches from New York to South Carolina.

He married his first wife, Dorothy, who passed away from cancer in 1965. Dorothy and Uncle Tommy had three boys. In 1968, he married second wife, Mary Kay. He and Aunt Kay had one daughter.

After the war, trauma lingered in the form of decades-long nightmares. I think that he suffered from PTSD but it was never diagnosed. PTSD was not viewed in the public eyes until after Vietnam.

Healing finally came in 1998, when he and Aunt Kay traveled back to Bonnerue. They visited the house where he was captured and the prison where he was held. He brought back a scrap of wallpaper and a splintered board, which hung framed on his study wall. "That trip, 1998," He paused, lowered his glasses, wiped his tears and whimpered, "is when the war ended for me." Uncle Tommy never considered himself a hero, but would describe himself as "a survivor." To me, he was the greatest hero of all. He would never compare himself to the many men who lost their lives in the fight for freedom. A humble man. Him and many others from the WWII time period are referred to as the "Greatest Generation" but they don't mesh well with that. They are too humble to accept that term.

He passed on March 6th 2016 in Lexington South Carolina at the age of 91.

Tommy Grove with his brother Tommy pictured to the right



The 87th POW Experience: Private James Martin

This article appeared in the September 2003 Edition of the Golden Acorn News

Contributed by Gene Littlefield, HQ2-345, this article was taken from a newspaper clipping that is now yellowed with age. Pfc. James Martin is a retired Forester and lives in the vicinity of Sandpoint, Idaho.

Martin was captured near Saarbrücken on December 11, 1944 and liberated by forces on May 2, 1945. This is his story:

"Our company had been making good progress in our sector of the Third Army front," said Martin, with little opposition and little expected. We topped a bare knoll and ran smack into five German tanks. The tanks just surrounded us and cut our platoon to pieces. Out of 40 men in our platoon there were six of us left when the shooting stopped and we were taken prisoners. We didn't have a chance against those tanks".



Martin was wounded in the hand and an infection developed while he was in the first prison camp at Limburg. The prisoners, along with others taken in the sector were removed to Limburg on December 23. While there, the prison camp was inadvertently made the target of the RAF and a number of American officers were killed by direct British Bomb hits. "Bombs fell around our barracks" he said, but fortunately we were not hit. We eyed every alien plane with suspicion after that experience. Of course no way of their knowing who we were and it was just one of those things that happened in this War.

On December 31, Martin was removed to Luckenwald with about 1500 other American prisoners. The camp had a population of between 8,000 and 10,000 men. There were about 1500 Russians, some French, English and Irish and some Norwegian soldiers. "Food was scarce, fuel was hard to obtain and bedding was not enough to keep us warm", he said. "In addition there were plenty of bugs and lice. Our ration was one bowl of weak, very watery soup and a piece of bread per day. There was no typhus, however. We all had our typhus shots and the Germans gave us more shots. Evidently they were as afraid of it as we were."

"There was practically no other medical attention. There were a few of our medical corpsmen and they did what they could but there were no medicines and they were practically helpless. It was mighty tough on some of the boys who got sick. Fortunately, I didn't and my hand began to heal."

About weeks after the landed at Luckenwald, Martin was sent with about 100 other men to work camp, 125 miles away and they arrived on January 17, 1945. While on their way to Limburg, Luckenwald and the work camp, the prisoners were herded into box cars. "That was a bad time for us" the ex-prisoner said. "We were tickled to death when we got to the end of the trip because our planes were bombing and strafing anything that moved on the railroads, and we were afraid we would be the target. We were fortunate however, and our trains were never attacked." The men in the work camp were put at various jobs, including getting out logs for German road blocks to slow up the American and British advances. To get fuel for use in the barracks the men had to pack whatever they were going to bum three miles from the

place they were working to the camp. "We could not lay anything down once we picked it up", Martin said, "when we started back to camp, so we had to be careful about how big a load we started.

About the middle of April when the Americans and British began to get closer to their camp the prisoners were herded out of their barracks and started on a long march toward Lubeck and Hamburg. At this time the prisoners included 100 Americans and 1100 British, many of whom had been prisoners for five years.

When asked if he had any experience with the SS storm troopers he said, "Just as we were about to pull out on our 10-day march toward Lubeck, an SS officer came by the camp where four British prisoners were working on the road. This officer made the men line up and march up the road to a side road where he ordered them off. They were machine gunned to death. There seemed to be no reason for their execution as they had done nothing out of the ordinary."

As Martin marched toward Lubeck, they were afraid that they might be strafed by our own planes. This had already happened to some prisoner columns. However, it was apparent that we had been recognized by a squadron of our fighter bombers because they came over and failed to make a pass at US.

"One day we had a ringside seat at a dogfight between Spit fires and German fighters which had been using a field near where we were moving along. Our planes came over in groups of three and they succeeded in knocking 12 German planes out of the air that we saw happen."

"When the planes went into dogfights we were on the lookout because bullets were being fired at all angles. Empty 50 caliber and 20mm shell casings landed among the soldiers in our column many times as the planes fought overhead. Thank heaven, none of the planes turned their guns on us men on the ground. On May 2nd, an American tank column, attached to the British army caught up with us and we were free. We swarmed all over those tanks, shaking hands with those guys and were ever happy to see them!"

The prisoners were liberated at Scherwin and taken by truck to Hanover. "From there we were flown in C-47's to LaHarve, France where we were to board Liberty ships for the voyage back home to the U. S." They landed in New York City on June 11th and Martin arrived in Sandpoint, Idaho on June 18, 1945, with a 60-day leave which he said he was going to make good use of. After the leave Pfc. Martin was to report to Santa Barbara, California for re-assignment. Fortunately for Martin and thousands of our troops were saved when President Harry Truman ordered the atom bombs to be dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which ended the war on August 12, 1945.

Jim Martin was just barely 18 years old when he went into the service. He had just graduated from High School.

When he arrived home his mother invited some of the neighborhood girls over for a birthday celebration for her son. None of the boys he knew were home yet so it was an all-girl party for Jim Martin. The local photographer was there to capture the essence of his home coming birthday party for her son. All this took place 59 years ago.

The picture taken by the photographer appears on the previous page.

87th Infantry Division Monuments

Location/Description	GPS Coordinates	Address	Notes
Atlantic City, NJ	39.351667, -74.425639	3504 Atlantic Ave, Longport, NJ 08401	Monument In front of Headquarters Building
Camp McCain, MS	33.698058, -89.712572	3152 James H. Biddy Rd, Grenada, MS 38901	Monument in front of Headquarters Building
Carlisle, PA	40.127213, -77.347398	803 Centerville Rd, Newville, PA 17241	Monument
Charlotte, NC	35.222917, -80.845639	501 S College St., Charlotte, NC 28202	Monument at the Charlotte Convention Center with other units
Ft Belvoir, VA	32.7249, -77.17036	1775 Liberty Dr, Fort Belvoir, VA 22060	National Museum of the US Army, stone at the Warrior's Plaza
Ft Benning, GA	32.385315, -84.954157	Fort Benning Road, Columbus, GA 31905	Monument
Ft Jackson, SC	34.025850, -80.937700	13000 Jackson Blvd, Columbia, SC 29206	Sign
Rochester, NY	42.919922, -77.694475	I-390, Avon, NY	87th Memorial Highway
Bastogne, Belgium	50.009657, 5.739167	Rue de Clervaux, 6600 Bastogne, Belgium	Mardasson Memorial
Bonnerue, Belgium	50.004664, 5.486372	La Tourette, 6680 Sainte-ODE, Belgium	Piempre Crossroads
Boppard, Germany	50.231467, 7.602306	Rheinallee 8, 56154 Boppard, Germany	Rhein Crossing Plaque
Hamm, Luxembourg	49.611356, 6.18565	Val du Scheid, Luxembourg	General Patton's & 87th ID Soldiers Graves
Huldrange, Luxembourg	50.161503, 6.024044	1-23 Op d'Burrigplat 9964 Troisvierges, Luxembourg	
Moircy, Belgium	49.994236, 5.474636	Rue de Jenneville 2, 6800 Libramont-Chevigny, Belgium	Plaque at the Moircy Church
Obergailbach, France	49.06359, 7.12432		
Rhens, Germany	50.283619, 7.618331	Am Rhein 7. 56321 Rhens, Germany	Rhein Crossing Plaque
St Hubert, Belgium	50.027222, 5.373611	Rue de Jenneville 2, 6870 Saint-Hubert, Belgium	St Hubert Town Hall
St Hubert, Belgium			Contact Olivier Gillard: olivier041@hotmail.com to visit
Tennevillesaufei, Belgium	50.107734, 5.484762	Rue Grande Champion 98, 6971 Tenneville, Belgium	Sign with photo of 87th link up with the British Army
Tillet, Belgium	50.010797, 5.530639	Tillet 18, 6680 Sainte-Ode, Belgium	Shoup Plaque, Tillet Church
Vesqueville, Belgium	49.998787, 5.381058	Rue des Rouge Fosses 6, 6870 Saint-Hubert, Belgium	Private Monument restored in 2004
Vesqueville, Belgium	49.993008, 5.406087	Rue de Freux 32, 6870 Saint-Hubert, Belgium	Private Monument not yet restored
Wasserbillig, Luxembourg	49.712725, 6.496453	18 Route de Luxembourg, 6633 Mertert, Luxembourg	Plaque in Memorial Garden
Wasserbillig, Luxembourg	49.710894, 6.491208	Rue de la 87e Division, 6620 Mertert, Luxembourg	Rue De 87th Street Sign

87th Infantry Division Monument—Obergailbach, France

The 87th IDLA has joined with the Best Defense Foundation and their executive director, Amanda Thompson (granddaughter of Jimmie Bordelon F-347) and Jack Johnson, local historian, to establish a monument to the 87th Infantry Division at Hill 360 outside of Obergailbach, France.

September 26th Update - The memorial stone has been delivered, and we expect the stonemason to complete his work in a week or so. The towns people have started building the stone wall which will surround the memorial. Of course once we have the memorial in place and everything else is finalized we will come up with an appropriate unveiling date so hopefully some of you guys can fly over for the unveiling. The local towns people have provided benches which will sit next to the memorial for visitors. There will be an educational board with a QR code to scan to hear a short interview with Jack Moran and Jack Foy. Flag polls, will be installed prior to the stones installation in aid to speed up the project.

[Donate to the 87th Division Monument](#)

To learn more about the Best Defense Foundation visit their website at

<https://bestdefensefoundation.org/>



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GOLDEN ACORN NEWS

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