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MAX DOMARUS

"THE DESTRUCTION OF THE OLD WURZBURG"

(In the Aerial War Against the Big German Cities)

Fourth Expanded Edition - Wurzburg 1978

Colonel Wolf, the defender of Wurzburg, about the fight in the ruins

Retired Colonel Richard Wolf, an excellent infantry officer decorated with the "Ritterkreuz" who had been charged by the army high command with the defense of Wurzburg, made to this writer on December 1, 1954 the following statements about the situation in Wurzburg at that time.

"Before the war, Wurzburg had become my second home - therefore I had spent the best time of my life, and therefore especially painful for me that I was destined to keep the enemy from the ruins, and thus to finish their sad demise.

After I had witnessed the destruction of the city on March 16, 1945 in a military hospital in Wurzburg, I was recuperating in Giebelstadt toward the end of that month.

As the American army approached Unterfranken, I reported - bound by the call of duty - to the contact liaison of the Seventh Army in Wurzburg, for a new assignment. By way of the Substitute General Command (Headquarters) XIII A.K. in Nurnberg, I was at first assigned to the staff of the Wehrmacht commandant in Wurzburg until the high command of the army would make use of me.

General Bornmann was the man in charge of the fighting force in Wurzburg. He accepted my presence but had no immediate task for me although each experienced man should have been welcomed in his situation.

It could be seen at a glance, that the staff was not up to par for the coming task and that an appropriate organization was lacking. Appropriate military maps did not exist. The General, to be sure, had memorized the most minute details after having reconnoitered the area around the city for a year. But besides him, there was no other officer in charge of supplies, replenishing weapons and ammunition. Amazed, I watched the hustle and bustle at headquarters.

On Maundy Thursday, March 29, toward noon there appeared at the general staff a major from the staff of the chief of staff of the high command to find out about the

city's defense preparations and the enemy's position. He treated the commandant with the most proper respect, but just as I, he could not comprehend what was going on. Watching the staff at work, he kept shaking his head again and again consulting with the general. He was also somewhat disconcerted by the defense situation on the defense lines. There was no established main front line with outposts and forward trenches. Before the envoy of the high command departed that afternoon, he talked to me once more. His verdict was harsh but unfortunately true.

On March 31 (Easter - Good Friday), the attack on Wurzburg began to take shape from the west.

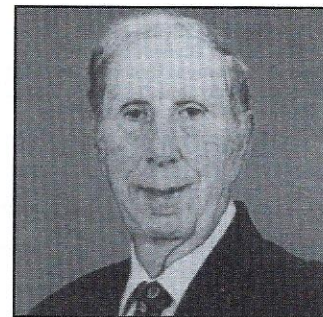
On the following day (March 31), the general staff awaited the attack, but most forward lines reported no contact with the enemy. On the other hand, American bomber formations bombed almost incessantly an area around the railroad and another area around the barracks in the Zellerau - both in the morning and in the afternoon.

Around noon, Major General Haverkamp reported to the commandant. He and I were to take part in defending the city. General Bornemann assigned to him the southern smaller area from Heidingsfeld to the Steinbachtal, while I was supposed to get the larger northern area from the Steinbachtal to Veitshochheim. Nothing happened beyond this new arrangement by word of mouth. The troops never learned about it.

In the afternoon of the same Saturday, the general and I rode to the front west of the city, especially to Waldbuttelbrunn. We came back quite dissatisfied. The front of Wurzburg was hanging in the air. To the left and to the right, there was no direct contact. All forces, above all, the heavy anti-aircraft guns stood on the western bank of the Main and would be lost through a sudden push by the Americans whose tanks were ready in the area of Graubuttelbrunn for an attack on the western parts of Wurzburg and on Giebel-

Continued on page 4

President's Message



Our President

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all.

I attended the New Jersey Chapter Reunion from October 18-22, and then the Pacific NW Chapter on October 26-29. Both of them were tremendous. My Co. K, 232-commander Dave Zillmer and his wife Madeline picked me up at the Philadelphia airport and we continued on to Ocean City, N.J. After the reunion we returned to their lovely home in Cherry Hill, N.J. and continued my visit two days. We fought the war over, saw the town, went to some fine restaurants and had a wonderful time together. I flew into Seattle and drove to Long Beach, WA in a rented car and had a fantastic time, as only Rainbowners can have. I have been to both east and west coasts many times in my life but never both in less than a week before.

The Birmingham Veterans Day Events, November 9 through the 11th, were outstanding. I have heard many times that this was true, but now I know personally that this is a fact. I hope this great tradition continues for many years and that the Rainbow people can be part as long as possible. I wish to thank everyone involved in the planning of Rainbow's part of this great event and especially Aleen Walker who has worked tirelessly to help make Rainbow's part such a success. It would be even greater if more Rainbow people would attend, in future years.

I hoped to have at least a preliminary report on the French Tour of May 2001, but have little more to offer yet. The travel agency has just not got on the ball on this project.

Another agency has been contacted and they are doing much better. At least I am hearing from them every few days on their progress.

There are quite a number of people interested in the tour. If you are interested please contact me at #124 - Hacienda

Continued on page 2

DUES 'R DUE !!!

Your Reminder

CUT-OFF-DATE

NEXT ISSUE

March 1, 2001

THE RAINBOW REVEILLE

Official Publication of the
RAINBOW Division Veterans

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SEND DUES' REMITTANCE SHEETS AND

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Franklyn Drive, Independence, MO 64055

Subscription \$10.00

Chaplain's Prayer

Eternal God, who makest all things new, and abidest forever the same - Grant us to commence this New Year with faith and optimism. Keep us from vain regrets, and let us face forward in the light of the best we have learned in years past. Purge our hearts both of shallow self-confidence and cowardly fears, looking always for Divine Guidance in all that we do. May the year 2001 bring in a new era of peace in all the World. In your Holy Name we Pray. Amen.

Norman P. Forde
CH (COL) USA ret.

RDVA Chaplain

Archivist's Column

Past National President of the Auxiliary Barbara Eberhart has for a number of years provided the Archivist with a copy of respondents to the Rainbow Family Members survey who have indicated they might have document/memorabilia for the archives. Each have been provided with a list of repositories and of the types of items searched for.

Unfortunately the productivity of these activities have been singularly unrewarding and it has been suggested to Mrs. Eberhart to discontinue the contact unless the respondent definitely indicates they are prepared to send items now.

During the past month, first person service stories continue to be sent to all four major repositories. As well, reports and recollections. Readers are urged to compile their stories and send them along to one or more of the entities requesting same i.e. your archivist and the Auxiliary.

Other than copies of the "RAINBOW REVEILLE" unit newsletters have been cleared from the files and sent to the University of Nebraska Archives. There are many missing issues in both types of publications. As you clean out your files and run across any back issues, please send them to your Archivist.

Desperately needed for our repositories and now the additional museums that have been created are books published about the Rainbow Division in two World Wars. Should your library contain such books please contribute them to our archives so that many more people will have access to them.

Keep well and happy,

Bill Keithan, Archivist

Editor's Whereabouts

Your editor will be in Florida from the last week in December 2000 until the middle of March 2001. Any correspondence should be sent to: 116 Granada Lane, Ponte Vedra, FL 32082. Tel: 904-285-1163 for that period of time.

**"The Final Crisis"
Continues to Draw Interest**

Dick Engler's "Final Crisis" continues to draw excellent reviews from important military publications. The latest is by Major Dominic Caracillo Infantry in Military Heritage Magazine: Aegis Consulting Group hits the mark with this intriguing memoir of a combat infantryman in Alsace during the American Operation titled "Nordwind." There is much more to this memoir than the usual "I was there" template. In fact, author Richard Engler, after conducting an extensive amount of research, superimposes his foxhole-type recollections with "The Big Picture." as a result, the reader is graced with an understanding of not only the action of a bar gunner in a rifle company of the 42nd Infantry Division's 222nd Infantry Regiment, but also, how as explained in the book's preface, "The exigencies of war at multiple echelons affected - or didn't - actions at the platoon and company levels." Excellent editing and a broad purpose makes this book a model for memoirs.

**The Final Crisis:**

**Combat in Northern
Alsace, January 1945**

by Richard L. Engler

To receive your copy,
please send a check made
out to Aegis Consulting Group for \$33.95
(\$29.95 for the book, \$4.00 for postage and
padded mailer) to:

Aegis Consulting Group
P.O. Box 629
Bedford, PA 15522

Send book to:

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Address: _____
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Phone Number: _____

President's Message

Continued from front cover

MHP, 15606 S. Gilbert Rd., Chandler, AZ 85225 as soon as possible and I will send you the proposed itinerary. The dates and places have been decided on. The group will arrive in Paris on May 26 and depart on June 3. The memorial ceremonies will take place on May 27 in the Chateau Thierry area of France. On the 28th the group will bus to the Strasbourg area spending three nights there and returning to Paris in time for a couple of days there. As soon as I get the cost figures from the travel agency, you will be contacted.

Remember the Mid-Year is coming up soon. Get your registration and your hotel reservations and join in the fun.

*President,
Pete*

National Reunion

July 11, 12, 13, 14, 2001 • Wichita, Kansas

The National Reunion will be held July 11-14, 2001, at the Hyatt Regency, 400 West Waterman, Wichita, Kansas 67202. Note change in phone number 1-800-333-1334; fax 316-293-1200. Rates are \$85 plus 11.9% for single, double, triple or quad occupancy. Rates are good for two days before and two days after the reunion. When making your reservations, be sure you arrange to leave the morning after the banquet which is Saturday night, the 14th. Reservations must be received by June 8, 2001. Registration will be \$40/person with an optional \$6 on a chance to win 4 nights accommodation. Forms were distributed in Cincinnati and are available by writing Harvey Snapp. Your check must be made out to RDVA Reunion 2001, and together with the form sent to: Harvey Snapp, 900 N. Poplar, P.O. Box 581, Newton, Kansas 67114: Tel. 316-283-9200 (office) and 316-283-4298 (home).

Parking is free and the airport shuttle is free. You may park your R.V. at the hotel but there is no hook-up available.

There is an agreement with United Airlines for reduced air transportation. Contact Menno Travel Service, Box 505, 717 Main, Newton, KS 67114. Tel. 1-800-835-0106. Fax 316-283-2397. E-mail: harold@mennoks.com. Specify Convention #593QD and mention Rainbow Division.

Tours:

Note change: Wednesday, July 11, 2001. **Cosmosphere & Space Center:** Motorcoach departs from the Wichita Hyatt and Broadview Hotel at 10:30 a.m. Stop in Yoder at the Carriage Crossing Restaurant for lunch, before arriving at the Center. The Center features the world's largest collection of space suites and exhibits of man's venture into space. You will tour the museum, see a feature in the Omnimax Theater and browse the gift shop before departing at 4:00 p.m. Tour rate \$52/person on minimum of 30. Contact Sunflower Travel to make arrangements: Sara Broadmore: STC, 1223 Rock Road, Bldg. G, Suite 200, Box 780448, Wichita, KS 67278-0448. Tel. 316-634-1700. Dwight D. Eisenhower Center: Depart Hyatt at 9:00 a.m. July 10, 2001. Motorcoach trip to Abilene. Lunch at the Brookville Hotel, a real Kansas fried chicken lunch. Tour includes a city tour and the Eisenhower Complex. Depart for the Hyatt at 3:00 p.m. Price \$40/person. Wheelchairs available if requested. Reservations: Cliff Summerfield, 820 West 4th, Halstead, KS 67056.

Chuckwagon Supper: Prairie Rose: The Prairie Rose Dinner Theater Group will depart from the Hyatt on Thursday, July 12 at 5:00 p.m. on air conditioned charter buses and return at 10:00 p.m. Cost is \$28/person. This tour includes three fulfilled hours of wagon rides and great food; all the barbecue you can eat and musical entertainment. For reservations: Cliff Summerfield, 820 West 4th, Halstead, KS 67056. Tel. 316-835-2167.

Directions to Hyatt Regency: If you are driving to Wichita from north or south, stay on I-35 until you get to Kellogg (Highway

54). Take the Kellogg exit at the Central Business District sign and proceed to Broadway. Take Broadway north to Waterman. Turn west (left) on Waterman; go 3 1/2 blocks to the Hyatt Parking Garage.

If approaching from the east or west, stay on Highway 54 and follow the same route as set above. Exit at the Central Business District sign and proceed to Broadway. Take Broadway north to Waterman. Turn left on Waterman and go 3 1/2 blocks to the Hyatt Parking Center.

Bury Me With Soldiers

I've played a lot of roles in life;
I've met a lot of men.
I've done some things I'd like to think
I wouldn't do again.

And though I'm young, I'm old enough
To know someday I'll die,
And to think about about what lies beyond,
Besides whom I would die.

Perhaps it doesn't matter much;
Still, if I had my choice,
I'd want a grave 'mongst soldiers when
At last death quells my voice.

I'm sick of the hypocrisy
Of lectures of the wise.
I'll take the man, with all the flaws,
Who goes, though scared, and dies.

The troops I knew were commonplace,
They didn't want the war;
They fought because their fathers and
Their fathers had before.

They cursed and killed and wept...
God knows, they're easy to deride...
But bury me with men like these;
They faced the guns and died.

It's funny when you think of it,
The way we got along.
We'd come from different worlds
To live in one no one belongs.

I didn't even like them all;
I'm sure they'd all agree.
Yet I would give my life for them,
I hope some did for me.

So bury me with soldiers, please,
Though much maligned they be.
Yes, bury me with soldiers, for
I miss their company.

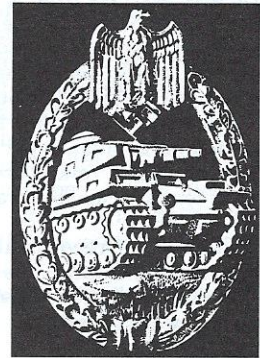
We'll not soon see their likes again;
We've had our fill of war.
But bury me with men like them
Till someone else does more.

Author Unknown

French Tour

Cost approximately \$1,900 per person, double occupancy; \$2,100 single occupancy. \$150 deposit (non-refundable) needed immediately; second deposit of \$250 due February 19. Make checks payable to: Rainbow Tour 2001. Mail to Pete.

German Badges



Panzer Assault Badge



Allgemeines Sturmabzeichen
(General Assault Badge)



Infanteriesturmabzeichen
(Infantry Assault Badge)



Verwundetenabzeichen
(Purple Heart)

Destruction of Old Wurzburg

Continued from front cover

stadt. This was learned from a German lieutenant who had been captured by the Americans and subsequently escaped.

The infantry units, including police units, that were to defend Wurzburg were numerically insufficient and for the most part not trained for combat, especially not for fighting tanks. The Volkssturm forces didn't amount to much, maybe to a company in strength.

There are no exact records about the strength of individual units. As far as I can recall, the total defense forces for Wurzburg that were available to fight were about 3,500 men.

The anti-tank defense was totally inadequate. There were, to the best of my recollection, five old tanks and two newer ones on hand.

With the commander of the anti-aircraft regiment, I had come to an understanding that the heavy guns, presently stationed west of Wurzburg should be taken back to the eastern bank of the Main. Originally used against airplanes, these guns were now to be used for fighting on the ground. One heavy and two light batteries were to remain in the western bridgehead of the Hochberg fortress.

That night, however, all anti-aircraft units retreated to an area on the right bank of the Main. On Easter Sunday the guns stood partially unprotected on passable roads behind the ruins of the city. A lack of gasoline and belated orders had prevented them from reaching their new positions.

During the night before Easter Sunday around 23:00 hours, General Bornemann arrived. He had come from his bunker in the area. He listened silently to my suggestions about regrouping the troops, then pulled a piece of paper out of his sleeve saying: "Here, I've been relieved of my post and must report immediately to the substitute General Command XIII A.K. in Wurzburg. You've been designated as my successor. Reasons were not given. Get ready so that I may introduce you to the Gauleiter. The dismissal at this moment grieved General Bornemann very much."

In the Hochbunker, the Gauleiter and his entire staff sat around a map table. After the introduction, I talked about the military situation. In the middle of it, a call came from the army with the query "Have you blown up the bridges yet?" I said no that I hadn't since all of the troops stood on the left bank of the Main. "Then your head is already in the noose. Take good care that the noose will not be tightened."

When I pointed out that the city would stand or fall with the dominance over the hills on the left bank of the Main, I received the order to pull back the defending front to the right bank of the Main that very night.

The Gauleiter and his staff listened a little longer to the dictation of the order concerning the regrouping before they

left. Around four in the morning, a messenger brought me a wireless according to which, on orders of Hitler, the Gauleiter had to go to Untermerzbach. Around eight o'clock, Dr. Hellmuth said goodbye to me.

As of April 1, the battle group Wurzburg was put under the command of the LXXXIII Corps. On Easter Tuesday, the commanding general of the XIII Tank Corps showed up with the order that henceforth I would be under his command. Two days later I was attached to a Battle Group "M."

During the night of Easter Monday, the Americans tried to reach the Main via Heidingsfeld, but they were stopped by the Waffenschule Doberitz.

After the bridges on the Main had been blown up by German bridge officers, as ordered by the army, during the afternoon of Easter Monday, the American troops reached the parts of the city on the left of the Main. The following night, the Americans prepared for the crossing of the Main and entered the city in the sector of the police units in the morning of Easter Tuesday. Systematically, the enemy took the downtown area and slowly reached the residence and railroad line of Wurzburg South.

Local pockets of resistance launched some counter attacks and repulsed the Americans at times. For the first time during these operations, I was advised that some white flags had appeared. At the beginning of operations, I had transferred my command post to the air base so that the Garnisons-lazarett and the Mari-anhiller church with its reserve-lazarett would not be endangered. Since the bunker could be observed by the Americans from the Frankenwarte heavy traffic would not have gone by unnoticed and thereby could have resulted in heavy artillery fire or more bombing.

After the Americans had penetrated the downtown area, the situation became quite unpleasant. The enemy took his time and massed his units for a new attack to push back the front of Wurzburg from the south.

For the following day, I planned a surprise counter attack, to try to rectify the situation. It was to take place before daylight. The troops knew the area well and especially in the left sector (Waffenschule Dobernitz and the NCO School). These men were still reliable, well trained and experienced in battle.

The attack was to consist of three driving wedges: from Schweinfurter Road over Grombuhl, the main railroad station to the Luitpold Bridge (now called Peace Bridge); from the railroad line "South" over the Palace of Justice, City Hall to the Alten Kranen, and finally along both sides of the Randersackerer Road, against massing American tank units there, to the Lion (Lowen) Bridge. The details of this plan had been thoroughly discussed with the commander of each sector, but preparations could not be completed by the three o'clock deadline in the morning, negating the element of surprise.

Apparently the Americans weren't

unprepared either. The thrust of the left wedge along Randersackerer Road met tanks ready for combat and failed where it counted.

In the morning, fighting started for the road leading to Gerbrunn and to the air base. Our tanks of an older type were no match for the attacking American tanks. One after another, our tanks were knocked out. For all that, it took the Americans until Thursday to break through around 14:00 hours.

Faced with the danger of encirclement, I gave the order to abandon the city. The units were to move back to the hills north of town and to block Schweinfurter Road with anti-aircraft guns and "sappers."

The command post of the combat commander was supposed to be moved to Oberdurrbach. Right in the midst of the preparations for regrouping, came the push of the American tanks toward the air-base from Keesburg and from Gerbrunn.

On the following day, April 6 (Friday), the defense group on the right still held the northern heights (Steinburg etc.) against the slowly advancing Americans. They too had to give up. THE FIGHT FOR WURZBURG WAS OVER AND THE ROAD TO RIMPAR WAS FREE FOR THE AMERICAN ADVANCE. I myself led the remnants of the battle group back and had them attached to the neighbor division on the North.

As things stood, it was impossible to hold the city with the forces available. The fight for the city still led to casualties but the damage to the buildings was only minor, except for the destroyed bridges. Still at the headquarters of the commander in chief, I was accused that Wurzburg had fallen too quickly.

After I had been captured by the Americans in Nurnberg, on the other hand, I was accused in endless interrogations again and again, that it was my fault that the American army had been detained for a full eight days: I noted this without any response.

However, I objected vehemently American assertions that I had been responsible for the hanging of soldiers and other excesses in the Franconian area.

When the insinuations did not stop, I asked the American officers to ask German prisoners in their camps over the loudspeakers if anyone could accuse me of any crimes against humanity and to report this immediately. My suggestions was carried out but no one made such accusation of me: from then on, they did not make any further allegations.

The battle for Wurzburg, my beloved home city of choice, weighed heavily on my soul. But I am a soldier and because of that I did what I could to fulfill my duty as a soldier to carry out military orders. Despite that, I decried fate for having chosen me to be the last battle commander of this beautiful old city.

May Wurzburg rise again, hopefully in a new and more peaceful world, and thereby keep its quaint uniqueness as a city.

P.B.I. (Poor Bloody Infantry)

(Taken from "Up Front")

Dig a hole in your backyard while it is raining. Sit in the hole until the water climbs up around your ankles. Pour cold mud down your shirt collar. Sit there for 48 hours, and, so there is no danger of your dozing off, imagine that a guy is sneaking around waiting for a chance to club you on the head or set your house on fire. Get out of the hole, fill a suitcase full of rocks, pick it up, put a shotgun in your other hand, and walk on the muddiest road you can find. Fall flat on your face every few minutes as you imagine big meteors streaking down to sock you. After 10 or 12 miles (remember - you are still carrying the shotgun and suitcase) start sneaking through the wet brush. Imagine that someone has booby-trapped your route with rattlesnakes which will bit you if you step on them. Give some friend a rifle and have him blast in your direction once in a while. Snoop around until you find a bull. Try to figure out a way to sneak around him without letting him see you. When he does see you, run like hell all the way back to your hole in the backyard, drop the shotgun and suitcase, and get in.

If you repeat this performance every three days for several months you may begin to understand why an infantryman sometimes gets out of breath. But you still won't understand how he feels when things get tough. One thing is pretty certain if you are in the infantry - you aren't going to be very warm and dry while you sleep. If you haven't thrown away your blankets and shelterhalf during a march, maybe you can find another guy who has kept his shelterhalf and the two of you can pitch a tent. But pup tents aren't very common around the front. Neither is sleep, for that matter. You do most of your sleeping while you march. It's not a very healthy sleep: you might call it a coma. You can't hear anybody telling you to move faster but you can hear a whispering whoosh when the enemy up ahead throws a shell at you. You don't feel very good when you wake up because there is a thick fuzz in your head and a horrible taste in your mouth and you wish you had taken out your toothbrush before you threw your pack away. It's a little better when you can lie down, even in the mud. Rocks are better than mud because you can curl yourself around the big rocks, even if you wake up with sore bruises where the little rocks dug into you. When you wake up in the mud your cigarettes are all wet and you have an ache in your joints and a rattle in your chest.

You get back on your feet and bum a cigarette from somebody who had sense enough to keep a pack dry inside the webbing of his helmet liner. The smoke makes the roof of your mouth taste worse but it also makes you forget the big blister on your right heel. Your mind is still

foggy as you finger the stubble on your face. Then you pick up your rifle and your pack and the entrenching tool and the canteen and the bayonet and the first aid kit and the grenade pouches. You hang the bandoleer around your neck and you take the grenades out of their pouches and you hang them on your belt by the handles. You look everything over and try to find something else you can throw away to make the load on your blister a little lighter.

Getting Older

Middle age is when you have stopped growing at both ends, and have begun to grow in the middle.

A man has reached middle age when he is cautioned to slow down by his doctor instead of by the police.

You know you're into middle age when you realize that caution is the only thing you care to exercise.

At my age, "getting a little action" means I don't need to take a laxative.

You're getting old when "getting lucky" means you find your car in the parking lot.

You're getting old when you wake up with that morning-after feeling, and you don't do anything the night before.

The cardiologist's diet: If it tastes good, spit it out.

It's hard to be nostalgic when you can't remember anything.

Interesting Prayer

Thought you might enjoy this interesting prayer given in Kansas at the opening session of their Senate. It seems prayer still upsets some people.

When Minister Joe Wright was asked to open the new session of the Kansas Senate, everyone was expecting the usual generalities, but this is what they heard:

"Heavenly Father, we come before you today to ask Your forgiveness and to seek Your direction and guidance. We know Your Word says, 'Woe to those who call evil good,' but that is exactly what we have done.

We have lost our spiritual equilibrium and reversed our values. We confess that.

We have ridiculed the absolute truth of Your Word and called in Pluralism;

We have worshiped other gods and called it multiculturalism;

We have endorsed perversion and called it alternative lifestyle;

We have exploited the poor and called it the lottery;

We have rewarded laziness and called it welfare;

We have killed our unborn and called it choice;

We have shot abortionists and called it justifiable;

We have neglected to discipline our children and called it building self-esteem;

We have abused power and called it politics;

We have coveted our neighbor's possessions and called it ambition;

We have polluted the air with profanity and pornography and called it freedom of expression;

We have ridiculed the time-honored values of our forefathers and called it enlightenment.

Search us, Oh, God, and know our hearts today; cleanse us from every sin and set us free. Guide and bless these men and women who have been sent: to direct us to the center of Your will and to openly ask these things in the name of Your son, the living Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen."

The response was immediate. A number of legislators walked out during the prayer in protest.

That Is How the Rainbow Got Its Name

(The following verses were written by Mrs. J. Monroe Johnson during the last World War. It breathes the spirit of devotion and enthusiasm for our beloved division that characterized the sentiments of the Rainbow Mothers and wives - who also served.)

Uncle Sam, he gave the call,
And they answered, one and all -
From every town and county, on they came;
They were every hue and color,
But not one of them was yellow -
And that is how the Rainbow got its name.

From the fields of golden poppies,
From the blue of southern skies,
From the gleaming silver wheat fields
on they came.
Don't forget the Fighting Irish,
With their brilliant snapping eyes,
For that is why the Rainbow got its name.

They were old and they were young,
Most of them were full of fun,
Mighty like a cyclone, for they came
With their heads held high in pride,
And their sweethearts by their side -
That's why the Rainbow got its name.

There were Jews and there were Germans,
There were many naturalized;
God's fighting Army, on they came,
Don't forget Father Duffy,
With his wisdom from the skies;
For that is how the Rainbow got its name.

'Tis the Rainbow of the Army,
And it lights up all the skies -
And from every clime and color
Will show Service till it dies.

MRS. J. MONROE JOHNSON, WWI WIDOW

(Col. Johnson was Chief Engineer of the 42nd in WWI. Later was Asst. Secty. of Commerce and Director of the Office of Transportation.)

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way Home from the War

by Bill Clayton, Co. E, 222nd Inf.

Nazi Germany had surrendered and the shooting war was over. The Triple Deuce was occupying an area in the Bavarian Alps in Austria. We were billeted in a small village which was fortunate to have been spared the shelling and bombing that seemed almost typical of France and Germany that we had become accustomed to seeing during the previous months. The weather was warm and pleasant; the mountains and lakes spectacularly beautiful.

One of our pleasures was indulging in the good, cold beer that was brewed in our area. Another was enjoying the countryside by Jeep on "sightseeing patrols." On one such outing, our driver lost control of the Jeep and went off the road and down a steep embankment. I was thrown from the Jeep, but my right foot caught under a seat and when the Jeep came to a stop, I was hanging over the table. Luckily, the Jeep did not turn over and squash me. The other guys got me untangled and one of them hiked for help. After an hour or so our rescuers arrived and I was taken to the 222nd Medical Station. My foot was quite swollen and the Medics decided that I probably had a couple of bones broken in the foot and a twisted knee.

So with no time for goodbyes to buddies, I was loaded onto the next convoy to Munich. My foot was put in a cast and in a couple of days I was taken to a nearby airport. There I was directed to one of several small groups of people who were waiting for planes to various places. One group was dressed in GI fatigues with no military identification. They came over to me and began chattering in a language that I could not understand. Finally, one of them kept patting the Rainbow patch on my shoulder and repeating "Dachau-Dachau-Dachau." Finally it sank through my thick head that these people were among those freed when we took the camp, and that they recognized the Rainbow. Once I showed that I understood all hell broke loose. They became very excited, yelling and slapping me on the back so hard that I was almost knocked off my crutches. Since I had been among our first group into Dachau and had seen the horror they had endured I was touched and proud of their regard for the symbol of the Rainbow. The Dachau group left first, after an emotional farewell; there were tears on every cheek. It must have taken all those weeks since we took the camp to get those people healthy enough to travel to their homes.

From Munich I was flown in a C-47 to Reims, France. The hospital in Reims was pure luxury. It was there that I met a T-5 who played accordion. He had been in a Special Services Entertainment Band. We became good friends and passed the time by playing ping-pong and making music. At that time, I made up the

first verse to "Foxhole Religion," a song that I would not finish until some years later when I became aware of RDVA and had my memory triggered by receiving copies of the "Badge" and "Reveille" and corresponding with other Rainbow Veterans.

When the cast was removed, I was encouraged to exercise and walk a lot. I was even allowed to leave the hospital every day after physical therapy. I could stroll around town as far as my cane would take me. On one of my walks I was approached by a Frenchman who spoke English with a strange accent. He expressed interest in the Rainbow insignia and invited me to lunch with him. At a little sidewalk cafe we talked for several hours over wine and cheese. The Frenchman was full of questions - Where was my home in America, where did the Rainbow train, where did we ship out from, where did we land, where had we been, etc. I tried to answer his questions and traced our route through France and Germany the best I could, mentioning the towns and events that came to mind. He was extremely interested in Rainbow. Then he told me an amazing story.

He was not French but American. He had been with the Rainbow Division during the First World War and was badly wounded during the final week of hostilities. When he regained his senses, he found himself being cared for by a French family on a small farm. By the time he recovered from his wounds the war was long over. During those weeks of recovery, he and the farmer's daughter had fallen in love. He did not want to leave her, so with the aid of the girl and her family he was able to assume French identity, learn the language, and settle down to the life of a French farmer. By his own choice he became a Frenchman. I could not imagine anyone giving up all ties to his American family and country. He went on to say that he had been very happy until the late 1930's when his wife died. Then came the German occupation when he was separated from his children and sent as forced labor to work in various factories. He had lived in fear that it would be discovered that he was an American and shot as a spy. Today it sounds like a plot for a low budget TV movie, but there I was in 1945 talking to a man who was trying to put his life's puzzle back together again. I did not ask his name, he asked me for nothing and I never saw him again. To this day, I believe his story.

While in Reims, one of my walks took me past a small hotel that had a small bar where I found that a pack of cigs could be traded for wine and counter food. Since I had no money, my daily ration of hospital cigarettes worked wonderfully as barter for lunch. One day while standing at the bar I was approached by a resident prostitute. After explaining that I was only out for a walk, we chatted in my limited French and her limited English. Before long I was sitting with her and her friends at a table in the back room playing a

friendly game of cards. After that, on my daily walks I would stop by for an hour or so for a game of cards and exchange language lessons with the ladies of the evening. Those girls were delightful company and we all had one goal in common - "get to Paris." The girls all had a similar story, everyone was from a small village or farm and had left home to make her fortune in order to return home to help Papa or marry the boy next door. Very touching. My French tutors were most entertaining but a couple of years later I would have to be very careful what I said in college French class.

From Reims I was sent to a RepoDepo a few miles from Paris. I was excited to be so close to the great city and immediately set about trying to get a pass. The answer was NO!, even my explanation that I intended to study art was met with a definite, military NO!

One day while having coffee and doughnuts at the RepoDepo Service Club I spotted a tall, lanky MP who looked familiar. I could hardly believe my eyes. We had been barracks buddies at Gruber. He had been the BAR man in my squad and I had not seen him since I left Co. E after the Haguenau Forest battle. We had a great reunion and he told me that he had been wounded and when recovered was assigned to MP duty. His detachment was billeted in the same area as the RepoDepo so I began spending time with the MP guys who were mostly ex-infantry. Before long a plan developed. The MP detachment had a Jeep patrol that went to Paris every day - and I wanted to see Paris. They taught me how to look and act in order to avoid arousing suspicion and even provided me with a GI information kit that was standard for soldiers on Paris leave. My MP buddies took me to Paris, dropped me off and I was on my own, to be picked up on the same corner in three days for a ride back to the RepoDepo.

At last I was in Paris. My mother had written that a girl I knew in high school was working at the American Embassy, naturally my first stop was the Embassy. She was happy to see someone from home and invited me to lunch at the Embassy Dining Room. After all the "where have you been, what have you been doing" conversation I told her that my visit to Paris was sort of on a "without pass" basis. At first she was a little shocked, then decided that it was great that the first thing I did was look up an old schoolmate. After lunch she introduced me to a friend of hers who was a junior officer in the French Army equivalent of our WACs. Charming lady. She was in charge of a hotel that was being used as a billet for French soldiers on leave in Paris. We became friends and she invited me to stay at the hotel as her guest while I was in Paris.

My new found French friend spoke the King's English, having lived much of her life in England. She got quite a kick out of

Continued on page 7

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way Home from the War

Continued from page 6

the street French that I had picked up in Reims. She knew Paris like a book, showed me all the historical points of interest, museums that were open, even the area where the Impressionists had lived and worked. A highlight of my tour was having dinner with her at the Allied Forces Restaurant in the Eiffel Tower, her job provided her to passes to all sorts of interesting places. Thanks to her I saw more of Paris than if I had been on a commercial tour. On my last evening she gave me a civilian jacket and we went on the town to see the real Paris. At first I was apprehensive about the "Off Limits" signs, but soon we were having dinner in a small, noisy cafe. Up strode a big dude who sat down with us and began speaking in fast fluid French to my friend. Then he addressed me in English with a definite drawl. He knew that I was a GI and if I wanted to stay in Paris he could fix me up with a job making beaucoup francs. I thanked him and explained that I intended to study art when I got home and that I just could not miss the opportunity of seeing the great city of art history. We had a few drinks, a few laughs and excused himself. My French friend later told me that he was a GI deserter who had driven a truck load of gas into Paris and gone into business for himself, and that he had become a power in the black market. She also said that I was wise not to have been tempted by his offer.

After a delightful visit in Paris, I said goodbye to my friend at the Embassy and to my French hostess. Then at the appointed time met my MP buddies for transportation back to the RepoDepo. I could not have had a better time had I been the personal guest of General DeGaulle.

A few days later I was told to pack up and be ready to ship out. Since I did not have enough points for a ticket home I expected to be assigned to occupation duty or hopefully some job in or near Paris. To my surprise and delight I was sent directly to the coast and boarded the hospital ship "Frances Y. Slanger" and sailed for the states. The luxury of the hospital ship was like "Love Boat" compared to the crowded troop ship "America" that we went over in.

We landed in New York with lots of hoopla and then we were sent directly to Percy Jones Hospital in Michigan. During the first week at Percy Jones I happened to meet a guy from Gruber that I remembered being in the 2nd Platoon, Co. E. Think about small world - after my chance meeting with the BAR man from my squad near Paris, the odds of meeting someone else from my old outfit seemed beyond reason. He was still in a wheelchair, recovering from a wound received when the boat he was in sustained a

direct hit while crossing the river during our assault on Wurzburg. After all those months he was still in a damned wheelchair! For me, Percy Jones was more like a vacation resort with physical therapy in the morning and arts and crafts in the afternoon. After several weeks I was surprised with a 30 day furlough, complete with back pay. I've never been so happy to be back on Kentucky soil. It was like one big month-long embrace with family and friends that had been so far removed. When it was time to return to Michigan I felt more homesickness than I had ever experienced before. Beware! The Army can be a tricky devil when it wants to get rid of you. After a few days back at Percy Jones, I was called in for a "Medical Review" and was told that a Medical Discharge would take months. However, if I would take an Honorable Discharge with the same disability I could be on my way home in a few days. The choice was easy. After tasting the pleasure of a 30 day furlough, I decided to become a professional civilian.

One thing has always bothered me. On the way home to Kentucky from Michigan, it was necessary to change trains in Chicago. Since I had a couple of hours between trains, I went into the station bar and ordered a beer. They would not serve me because I was not yet 21 years of age.

Muskogee Meeting

Bob Haggard informs us that their last Memorial meeting was held in October and the next one was to be on Veteran's Day. He includes two pictures, one of the entire group and one of six members. He states that Al Cahoon's daughter and son-in-law were there.

Below six are l to r: Nice, Haggard, Elsky, Owen, Smalley, Carter.



The American's Creed

I believe in the United States of America as a government of the people, by the people, for the people; whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed; a democracy in a Republic; a sovereign Nation of many sovereign States; a perfect Union, one and inseparable; established upon those principles of freedom, equality, justice, and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes.

I therefore believe it is my duty to my Country to love it; to support its Constitution; to obey its laws; to respect its flag; and to defend it against all enemies.

William Tyler Page, 1918

Typo

The typo haunts us all. We pass along the following poem, written by an anonymous author years ago. It may help put the typo in the proper perspective.

The typographic error is a slippery thing and sly,

You can hunt it 'til you're dizzy but it somehow still gets by.

'Til the forms are off the presses, it is strange how still it keeps;

It shrinks down in a corner and it neither stirs nor peeps.

The typographic error is too small for human eyes

'Til the ink is on the paper and it grows to mountain size.

The boss, he stares with horror, then grabs his hair and groans;

The copy reader drops his head upon his hands and moans.

The remainder of the issue may be clean as can be,

But the typographic error is the only thing they see.

See what I mean?

Dates to Display the U.S. Flag

Jan. 1	.....	New Year's Day
Jan. 20	.....	Inauguration Day
Feb. 12	.....	Lincoln's Birthday
3rd Mon. in Feb.	.....	Washington's Birthday (Variable)
2nd Sun. in May	.....	Easter Sunday
3rd Sun. in May	.....	Mother's Day
3rd Sun. in May	.....	Armed Forces Day
Last Mon. in May	.....	Memorial Day
June 14	.....	Flag Day
July 4	.....	Independence Day
1st Mon. in Sept.	.....	Constitution Day
2nd Mon. in Oct.	.....	Columbus Day
Oct. 27	.....	Navy Day
Nov. 11	.....	Veteran's Day
4th Thurs. in Nov.	.....	Thanksgiving Day
Dec. 25	.....	Christmas Day

(Such other days as may be proclaimed by the President of the United States: the birth-days of states (day of admission) and on state holidays.)



Contributions:

SCHOLARSHIP ENDOWMENT FUND

Robert R. Christian, 25; Rev. Paul B. Pierson, 50. "500" Club, Richard Besoncom, 100, second installment.

SCHOLARSHIP OPERATING FUND

Virginia Kilby, 20, in memory of Pfc. Whitey G. Colby, 242nd Inf.; Stephen Magocs, 52.52, in memory of Leroy Reynolds, 232nd Inf.; McGovern, 1000, in memory of Ed Moss and 31 Co. "B" 232nd Inf. men who died in Europe.

FOUNDATION ENDOWMENT FUND

Betty Owen, 10, in memory of Clarice Thaxton, WWI widow; Joel G. Wood, 50, in memory of James R. Wood, 232nd FA.

FOUNDATION OPERATING FUND

Rita S. Truax, 25; Frances J. Holmes, 25; J. Allen Neal, 50; Oklahoma City Chapter, 50, in memory of Evelyn Canster and Beryl Liles, 132nd Signal.

There's no better way to remember and honor your loved ones, than to send a contribution in their names to the Memorial Foundation.

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

Both inquiries and completed applications for scholarships must be addressed to Ted Simonson, 220 Highland Terrace, Los Gatos, CA 95030-7139 (Tel. 408-354-0718) E-mail: tigerted@ricochet.net. The postmark deadline for receipt of applications is May 1st.

Merger (Transition) RDVA / Memorial Foundation Committee Report

PNP Dee Eberhart, Chairman

The following RDVA and Foundation members have been asked to serve on the Merger (Transition) Committee for combining the RDVA and Memorial Foundation into a single organization in order to assure the future of Rainbow. Rainbow National Reunions and publications are to continue into the future as long as Rainbow veterans are willing and able to attend reunions. The Rainbow Reveille will be scheduled for publication into the indefinite future to serve veterans and family members.

Merger Committee appointments consist of PNP Romeo Fagiolo, PNP Donald L. Segel, PNP Fr. Bob Weiss, PNP John McGovern, PNP Ted Johnson, Millennium Chapter President Suellen McDaniel; RDVA President-Elect Ted

Simonson; RDVA Secretary Herb Butt; RDVA and Foundation Treasurer Jon Janosik and PNP Dee Eberhart, Committee Chairman. The merger Committee was instructed to coordinate its activities with the Auxiliary. Both Auxiliary President Dorothy Smith and Honorary President Barbara Eberhart have been invited to participate fully in all Committee meetings, as have RDVA President Pete Pettus, and Foundation Long Range Planner Bill Shurtleff.

Informal meetings by Committee members attending the September 2000 California Chapter Reunion in Laughlin, NV and the October 2000 Pacific Northwest Chapter Reunion in Long Beach, WA have been held. The first official meeting of all Committee members who attend the Mid-Year Reunion is scheduled for 9 a.m., Thursday, February 1, 2001 at the Dobson Ranch Inn, Mesa, AZ.

Progress reports will be presented to the RDVA Executive Committee and to the Foundation Board of Trustees at the Mid-Year Reunion. Progress reports to all RDVA members, who are also Memorial Foundation Members, will be presented periodically in the Rainbow Reveille.

With the growing losses of Rainbow comrades, including those who have worked long and hard in managing Chapter, Association and Memorial Foundation Rainbow affairs, it is apparent that accelerated merger actions should be taken in advance of the 2010 merger deadline mandated in the Constitution and By Laws of both the RDVA and the Foundation.

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