



In memory of
John E. Wilcox, Jr.



Past National Commander
2004 – 2005

Paul C. Winters



Past National Commander
1992 – 1993

THE TWENTY-NINER

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Autumn / Winter 2020

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MG Rhodes succeeds MG Epperly as 29th Infantry Division Commander



Maj. Gen. John M. Rhodes takes command of the Fort Belvoir-based 29th Infantry Division from Maj. Gen. John M. Epperly Oct. 3, 2020, at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. (U.S. National Guard photo by Cotton Puryear)

FORT BELVOIR, VA — Maj. Gen. John M. Rhodes took command of the Fort Belvoir-based 29th Infantry Division from Maj. Gen. John M. Epperly Oct. 3, 2020, at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. Lt. Gen. Jon A. Jensen, Director of the Army National Guard, presided over the change of command ceremony and the exchange of organizational colors signifying the transfer of command from Epperly to Rhodes.

“For both Maj. Gen. Epperly and Maj. Gen. Rhodes, being a leader comes natural,” Jensen said. “Your ability to balance both your civilian and military roles serve as a testament to the concept of the Citizen-Soldier.”

With COVID-19 health protections limiting the number of personnel attending the ceremony, Jensen recognized the brigade

command teams present and thanked them for representing the thousands of Soldiers assigned to and affiliated with the 29th. He also recognized the “encouragement, support and sacrifices” made by family members, and on behalf of a grateful Guard nation, thanked them for their service and patriotism.

Jensen recognized Epperly for his 31 years as a maneuver warfare leader with successful commands at the company, battalion, brigade and division level including two combat deployments, and said his hard work, dedication, leadership and mentorship would have a lasting effect on the 29th Infantry Division and the National Guard for years to come

“You have displayed an unparalleled

(Continued on page 15)

Message from our National Commander: Peter C. Hinz

A recurring theme of Association meetings and comments is concern for the future of the Association – so strong a concern that we have a Futures Committee. How will we get new members; how we will keep members; how can we develop and maintain a positive direction of support and financial health; what changes to our purpose and mission should we consider?

We are aware that the Association has strong purpose in remembering and honoring the past. But our Purpose (Article II of our National Constitution) does not suggest the past to be our primary focus: "...The promotion of friendships among its members; the perpetuation of the record of the 29th Division in all Wars; and the memory of our honored dead; to comfort their survivors; the promotion of the welfare of its members; their families; and the families of members of the Division who lost their lives in service of our Country..." The language certainly implies consideration for future 29th soldiers and their families.

But the uncertainty of the future frightens many. Especially now, as for all of us, the turmoil and challenges we have been enduring in 2020 have slowed our normal way of doing things, are making us change our daily routines and our ways of doing even the simplest things. We are uncertain what the future holds because life will not return to the way it was. But

we "soldier" on; we cope, adjust, adapt, and so must the Association. We, individually, and the Association need to acknowledge and accept changes and find ways to accomplish and excel.

I look forward to the Futures Committee, under the guidance of its new chairperson, Jimmy Kilbourne, continuing its great work to guide the Association forward.

To that end, neither is our Association limited to a focus on matters directly related to the 29th. Our Purpose goes on: "...to assist disabled and needy war veterans; and members of the U.S. Armed Forces..." So while there are many organizations serving the community of veterans and currently serving military members, we can be ready to step forward to meet an immediate or crucial need or to fill a gap not addressed by those many organizations.

And finally, as our nation appears to be moving past a period of significant political turmoil, we can look to our Purpose for guidance for the Association for the future: "...to sponsor and participate in activities of a patriotic nature; the consideration of questions concerning the military policy of the United States of America; and to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America."



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The 29th Division Association, Inc.

"29 Let's Go!"

Peter C. Hinz

National Commander

29th Division Association, Inc.

Donations Requested

Please consider making a donation to help with the publication of the *Twenty-Niner*. This is the greatest expense that our association has. Checks should be made payable to:

The 29th Division Association, Inc.
and mailed to:

29th Division Association, Inc.
National Headquarters
5 Shore Drive
North East, MD 21901-3397

Your generosity is greatly appreciated and we thank you for your patronage.

The Editor

Donations to the *Twenty-Niner*

We extend our heartfelt thanks to our membership for their generosity in contributing to the *Twenty-Niner* for this Autumn/Winter issue. From 9 July 2020 through 23 November 2020, these donations totaled \$1,725.00 Note our cut-off date. If your contributions did not reach our National Executive Director by 23 November 2020 then it will not be listed until the next issue.

Donation checks must be made payable to the 29th Division Association.

Barden, Patricia, Post 94, Daughter, Maidens, VA

In memory of her Father, Norman Duncan, E/116

Buterbaugh, Janice, Post 94, Daughter, Lancaster, PA

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Freund, Kemp A., Post 110, 29MP, Ellicott City, MD

In memory of CSM (R) Frank Wright, MDARNG

Gaskin, William, Post 110, HHB/DIVARTY, Montgomery, PA

In memory of "Those who gave their all"

Gerhardt, Charles H., III, Post 94, Grandson, Cincinnati, OH

In memory of MG Charles Gerhardt, CG, 29th Division

Green, Colleen, Post 94, Daughter, Simms, MT

In memory of PNC John Wilcox

In memory of John O'Neil, A/116

Jones, Helena, Post 88, Widow, Stevensville, MD

In memory of her husband Robert W. "Bob" Jones

Krauss, Mike, Post 1-72, Son, Goldsboro, NC

In memory of PNC Sam Krauss

Kruhm, Fred, Post 94, C/121Eng., Burtonsville, MD

McNamara, Margaret, Widow, Missoula, MT

In memory of John O'Neil, A/116

Post 78 "Cresap's Rifles", Frederick, MD

In memory of PNC John Wilcox

Post 85, North East, MD

In memory of PNC John Wilcox

Shaughnessy, Flora, Daughter, Metairie, LA

In memory of Louis F. Marziale

Stapleton, Gregory, Post 94, Grandson, Lexington, KY

In memory of his grandfather COL James Morris

Stapleton, Rebecca, Post 94, Daughter, Lexington, KY

In memory of her father, PFC John C. Coulter

Veteran Corps, Fifth Regiment Infantry, Baltimore, MD

In memory of PNC John Wilcox

In memory of 2LT Patrick F. Hackett, III

White, Claire, Daughter, Wenham, MA

In memory of Eugene D. White, Sr, F/175

Zang, PNC Joseph, Post 110, Sykesville, MD

In memory of PNC John Wilcox

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL POSTS

All posts are requested to submit one of the two items below to the National Finance Officer at the end of the calendar year. It must be received by the National Finance Officer **NLT 15 January 2021**.

1. A letter signed by either the Post Commander or Post Finance Officer stating that the post's "normal revenue stream" is less than **\$50,000** a year; or,
2. A copy of a current financial statement that shows the "current revenue stream", signed by proper post authority.

Failure to provide either of these documents will result in National not filing the annual IRS form and it will then be the responsibility of the Post to file.

If a Post has a "normal revenue stream in excess of **\$50,000** per year" they will be required to file **IRS Form 990 EZ**.

The National Finance Officer filed all **IRS 990-N's** last year except one Post that was notified.

Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me via email or phone.

Email: NFO29thDivAssoc@gmail.com,

Phone: 410-688-6307.

Tom Knight

National Finance Officer

Legion of Honor Recipients

In recognition of the French government's noble effort to award the Legion of Honor to veterans who participated in the liberation of France during the Second World War, the editorial staff of the *Twenty-Niner* wishes to publish the names of those recipients in the upcoming issues.

29th Division veterans who have received this award must submit the following information to the address listed below:

Name:

Unit served in:

Current address (City and State):

Post number:

Date award was received:

William S. Mund, Jr.

441 Chalfonte Drive

Baltimore, MD 21228

duster197329@gmail.com

Note: If you've already submitted your name and it has been published, please do not submit it again.

TAPS

The following list shows names of known 29ers and their ladies or family members who died and their deaths reported from 9 July 2020 through 23 November 2020. We are indeed saddened and mourn their passing. We extend our deepest sympathy and love to their families and loved ones. We pray that they and all of our earlier deceased 29ers and ladies may rest in peace. Amen.

LAST ROLL CALL

Bell, Richmond R., Post 93, B/116, Wellfleet, MA 6/14/20
 Coffin, Robert H. Sr., Post 88, I/115, Salisbury, MD 8/2/20
 Cogan, Gene, Post 2, B/115, Avilla, IN 1/29/20
 Cook, Robert M., Post 110, HHB/110FA, Royal Oak, MD 9/15/20
 Estey, Edward A., Post 93, CAN/116, Holbrook, MA 12/16/19
 Hurley, James M., Post 88, C/2/115, Cambridge, MD 6/12/20
 Kennedy, John M. Sr., Post 110, 29 SPT, Sykesville, MD 5/7/20
 Marziale, Louis F., Post 94, K/115, New Orleans, LA 7/8/20
 McDonough, Donna, Post 64, Associate, Nottingham, MD 6/29/19
 Paul, Edith, Post 175, Widow, Berkshire, TX 7/8/20
 Pickett, Russell, L., Post 64, A/116, Soddy Daisy, TN 8/2/20
 Robinson, Russell, Post 64, Associate, Roanoke, VA 10/19/20
 Wilcox, PNC John E. Jr., Post 78, A/115, Frederick, MD 10/3/20
 Winters, PNC Paul N., Post 110, F/116, New Holland, PA 10/11/20
 Wolf, William D., Sr., Post 48, HHC/29th, Westminster, MD 7/27/20

Legion of Honor Recipients

29th Division veterans who have received the Legion of Honor from the Republic of France are encouraged to submit their names for publication in the *Twenty-Niner*.

Please include the following required information:

Name:

Unit served in:

Current address (City and State):

Post number:

Date award was received:

William S. Mund, Jr.
 441 Chalfonte Drive
 Baltimore, MD 21228
duster197329@gmail.com

Note: If you've already submitted your name and it has been published, please do not submit it again.

LEST WE FORGET

It was decided long ago, that as long as two 29ers survive, we shall remember and honor our comrades and ladies who have passed to the great beyond.

You have just read a list of 15 comrades who have died and whose deaths were reported to us since our last publication.

We ask survivors, friends, Post and Region Officers to forward information, as complete as possible, on the deceased to the National Executive Director, so that we can include them in the next issue of "The Twenty-Niner" and in the National Reunion Memorial Service. This will only be possible with your help.

Valerie Simmers
 National Executive Director
 5 Shore Drive
 North East, MD 21901-3327
 E-mail: vhawk0926@gmail.com

Update from the NFO on the "Official Class B Hat"

Several months ago, a decision was made to begin looking into a Class B Hat. A small group met and recommended to the Commander that a blue hat embroidered with the official Association logo become the Class B Hat.

Then it was suggested that we also have the same hat in grey, which again was approved, so the result was 2 versions of the Class B Hat.

Shortly after this was announced and a few sales were made, there was additional discussion by some as to why we as an organization needed two versions when we are one association.

A suggestion was made to have one hat and that it be a black hat with the Association logo embroidered on the front center. At the NEC I the hat was brought up and after several minutes of discussion it was agreed that the "Official Class B Hat" would be the black one as pictured here.



The Blue and Grey hats can still be ordered and worn, in fact with our online store you can order any color you want, and it can be embroidered with the logo but the Official Class B Hat to be worn as prescribed by the Commander will only be the Black version.

Be sure to check out our new and improved website at: www.29thdivisionassociation.com

“I Can’t Tell You Everything.”

Part 5

Writing Home From the War Front — 1942 - 1945

A collection of family letters compiled and transcribed by Carlton and Mary Nabb.

Note: Punctuation and grammar inaccuracies have not been edited.

My Dearest Georgia & Georgie Boy:

This is Saturday night again. When I write I often wonder what you two are doing at that time. It is just a little after nine o'clock. I suppose at that time you are thinking of bed. They are having a dance here tonite. We were unable to get an orchestra so are using a nickelodeon. I don't think it will be much.

Say that boy must be quite a bird. I'll bet he did have a time when that rooster flew into him. I'll bet that tamed him for a while didn't it? So he pinches Carol Ann and pulls Ramona Lee's hair does he? Tell them they will have to gang up on him. Maybe both of them can tend to him. I'm afraid that what he needs is some switch.

Too bad about the bugs being so bad, especially when they have to buy the plants. I have certainly killed quite a few of those in my day. I don't believe they know what they are over here. At least I haven't seen any or heard of them.

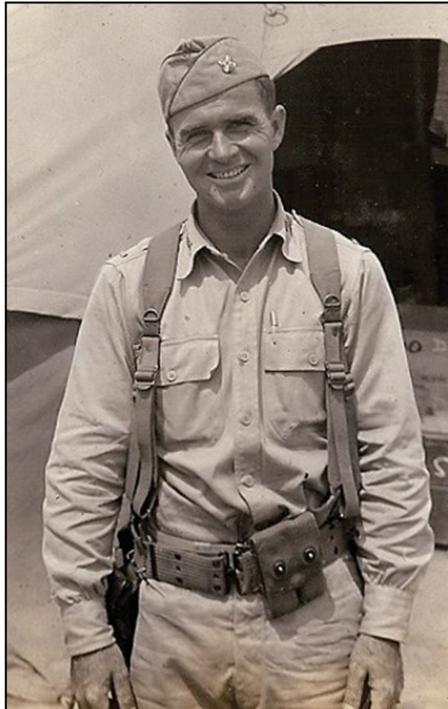
Tell Georgie to keep pulling those pig's tails. That will make them grow. And he wants to ride Joe Boy does he. Remember how I used to ride him on Lady. And how he never wanted to get off. Does Martin ever give him a ride now on her?

I haven't received any mail today, but did receive three letters after I wrote you last night. All were air mail letters. I'm about out of anything to write. So will close. I love you both and miss you so much. Love

Junior & Daddy

postmarked June 11, 1943

5 June 1943



6 June 1943

My Dear Georgia & Georgie Boy:

I have just received a nice long letter from you dated the 26th May. I was lying down on the bed asleep and Lt. Anderson brought it in. I have a slight cold and my nose has been hurting some all day. Do you know what time I got up this morning? 12:30, just in time for dinner. We have Sundays off now. I like it better than the old system where we worked Sundays and had two 48 hr. passes a month.

I wrote to you once before about the apartment. If you are sure that is what you want to do, why go ahead. You will be lucky if you find just what you want at this time without paying two prices

for it. If you do decide to do it how will you manage Georgie. He has been used to running outside whenever he liked and he won't change overnight. If he does that in town he will be run over.

Has Papa given the farm up yet? What does he intend to do? He is not able to work at anything else. I hope and pray this will soon end and I can get back. By the time I get back everything will be so changed that it won't even seem like the same place I'm coming back to.

About the amount which the Gov. overpaid you. Wait until the checks are coming in the right amount before trying to get it straightened out. If they keep on sending it in the wrong amount write and tell them about it.

Keep me posted from time as to what the bank balance is. I have a little book here I try to keep it in, but with the amounts varying as they have, it doesn't coincide with the amounts you gave me.

Yes I should have 4 bonds now and another one the way. I wrote you about that a day or two ago. Also there is a \$100.00 money order in the mail to you.

It is 10:15 and the sun has just gone down behind the hills. If you want to get some sleep you have to go to bed in the middle of the day so to speak.

Georgie must have made quite a hit down to Elliotts Island. Tell him to catch me some soft crabs and send to me.

Tell Sara that her sewing kit is the handiest thing I have. I'm always losing a button. I'm quite a seamster by now.

I feel kind of down in the dumps today, though I can't think of any particular reason why I am.

Tell Georgie he will have to get a can and get after those bugs. I would like to see him so much.

I wrote to Tommy last night. Don't know whether he will ever think to write or not.

I'll bring this to a close as I must put up my blackout shades by eleven o'clock.

With all my Love

Junior & Daddy

P.S You might put in a septic pencil in that package if you haven't already sent it. You know what I mean don't you? It's one of those pencils to stop bleeding and cuts after shaving. If you have already sent the package don't mind as its unimportant.

8 June 1943

V MAIL

Dear Georgia & George:

I received your letter last night with the pictures of you and Georgie. What was the trouble with Carol Ann? She looks like she is about ready to cry. She is certainly a hefty looking kid.

I also received a letter from Aunt Anna and a card from Ramona Lee. Aunt Anna writes that she has torn a ligament in her knee and has to undergo an operation.

Those pictures were taken down to Elliotts Island weren't they? Those are good of you. Did Georgie go down on the shore while he was down there. I can remember when I was small that as soon as I got near the water I wanted to go down to the shore right away.

I can't think of much that is new. We are having a pretty monotonous period.

Are they putting a draw bridge over the Transquaking? Sure need one for those big boats.

I would like to save some of that bread chicken and strawberries you were writing about. So Georgie doesn't like strawberries. You tell him that there is something wrong with him. Well, write again soon. Lots of Love
Junior & Daddy

10 June 1943

My Dear Georgia & Georgie Boy:

I wrote you a two page v-mail last night, but will follow up with this as these are sometimes quicker.

I am feeling o.k. again. My cold is not all gone, but feel much better. About that check from Richmond. I can't think what it can be for. Might be some back pay of some kind, but I can't think of what it could be. The only solution I know is write to them and ask what it is for. Address the letter to the same place from which it came and give them the number of the check (lower left hand corner). If you have already deposited it and they get the matter straightened out we will probably have to mail them a return check. Don't worry about it as the mistake will be found out if it is a mistake. Maybe its back pay for work I did a long time ago. I don't know. Its got me puzzled. Make sure you keep a record of all these overpayments, the amounts of over payment and the date of the check. We will certainly have to straighten it up some time.

Now about the Insurance policy. I did not renew it. If you want to continue with it I think it is worth the cost. That one instance where Ramona Lee fell out of the car could have made a big difference. I can't remember the exact amount, but had she been killed, they would have had to paid \$5,000 I believe. I suppose we might have gotten the hospital bill as it was, but I never once thought of it until I received your letter yesterday.

So Georgie feeds the turkeys does he? And steals Obie's shoes. I know you must have quite a time with him. Didn't he help you put on the screen wire? Do you remember how he helped me last year when I was putting some on? I couldn't find hammer, nails or anything else for him. Bless his heart. I'd like to see him.

I'm about out of anything to write at this time. Everything is pretty dull. Will write again when I have something to tell you.

I haven't been out of camp for a month. We have a 48 hr. pass coming up the 22 I believe. Haven't had a chance to go see the Doctors yet.

Too bad Papa had to give the place up. Keep me up on the news.

Lots of Love Junior & Daddy

12 June 1943

My Dear Georgia & Georgie Boy:

Another Saturday night is here. And pretty quiet too. Fifty percent are allowed out on pass and I think they are taking advantage of it.

It has been beautiful here today, the first one though in quite a while. I'm sure it seldom if ever gets very hot here. Here is the middle of June and overcoats don't feel bad at night, so you can imagine how it is.

I received an air-mail letter from you yesterday written the 1st of April. Quite a time in coming wasn't it? I also received a v-mail written the 28th of May I believe. Excuse this paper. I have other, but have quite a bit of this lying around so will try to use it up.

I suppose by the time you receive this, farmers will be thinking of cutting wheat. I don't know at what time they cut over here, but they still have some that hasn't been threshed from last years crop. They put it up in large stacks out in the fields and thresh it later one. They have been threshing ever since we arrived over here.

I saw in the Banner where Salem was having a Childrens Day Service. Did they have one at Friendship You wrote too that you had no preacher now. Where is he?

The gas situation must be pretty serious there when farmers can't get it to run their tractors.

I received the v-mail from Georgie and the cards from you both. So you do think of me once in a while don't you?

I understand Capt. Powell who is commanding Co. D is leaving soon, but I haven't heard anything about going back there. It will probably be some one else. I don't know that I care too much one way or another.

I think I shall go over to the Company and see if I can find a book to read. I don't think I shall stay up very late as I'm pretty tired. We have had rather a busy day. Here's hoping I get a letter from you in tonights mail. Lots of Love

Junior & Daddy

P.S. Hello George Nabb. How's tricks? OK? postmarked June 13, 1943

June 15, 1943

My Dearest Georgia & Georgie Boy:

Here is another month half gone. I don't think I ever saw the time go by as fast as it has since we have been over here. There is one respect though in which it drags and that is being away from you and the little man. You often ask me how much longer it will be. Dear I only wish I knew, but things look like it might not last too much longer. I hope it comes fast.

Well the chance of going back in command of Co. D has blown up. A new officer who just came into the Co. before I left has been put in command. So you see where that leaves me. Capt. Powell left yesterday. I don't understand it unless

they consider me unfit and the goat besides. He was just one of the boys I suppose.

I received a letter from Tommy last night. He is up for his Captaincy. Sure hope he gets it. You know I'm the only one left now of the old gang who hasn't moved up. I'm beginning to believe that I'm not much good myself sometimes. Don't pay any attention to this. I'm just letting off steam. I have to tell it to someone.

I had a nice letter from Major Todd a day or two ago. Said he saw you and the boy quite often and that you both looked better every time he saw you. He wrote that Mr. Marshall (the armory janitor) had been brought out there sick in mind as well as body, and asked us to write to him. I'll have to get his address from some of the boys in the Co. and write him.

So Johnny has rented the place has he? Maybe with so much more to do he won't find so much time to run around. I do know that if he will go there and go to work he can do better than he has been doing. Any why in the name of the Almighty doesn't he leave that bottle alone. He could own one end of a mint and never any- thing as long as he fools with it.

You were asking how many cows I had. Honestly I can't tell you for sure, but I believe there are five now as one that died last winter was mine. Papa can tell you. One of these is yours, the Guernsey.

If he wants to keep them and give me the calves, he can or you can send any of them to your father's since he offered to keep them. Of course don't do anything with them until Papa has the sale. Bill can keep the saddle mare if he wants her. I'm pretty certain that is what he wants her for isn't it?

I'll let you know about the others later on.

That hot weather you write about must be pretty fierce. It is cool enough here to wear a jacket all day. In fact I went out this morning without mine and had to come back and get it.

You know we are allowed to take pictures over here now. I'm going to try to borrow a camera and get some films and make a few snapshots so I'll have some- thing to remind me of these days over here. Although I don't believe I'll need anything to do that. There is one thing I could use. That is a small alarm clock, a cheap one and one that doesn't take up too much room. You know you can send packages up to five lbs now don't you?

That boy of mine must be quite a trump. So He was clear down to the river was he? Better watch that he doesn't fall in. I surely would have given most anything to have seen him chasing those colored boys with a switch How is Papa feeling? And Sara" Is she as big as ever? Tell Fanny Boob is fine. It is 10:30 and I'm writing this in my room without a light so you see we have to go to bed in the middle of the day so to speak. I've received the Father's Day cards. Thanks ever so much. Have you received the \$100.00 money order yet? Lots of Love
Junior & Daddy

P.S. This writing is a little worse than usual. I cut my thumb on a razor blade this morning and it's sore a little.

21 June 1943

V MAIL

My Dearest Georgia & Georgie Boy:

I wonder how you are tonight. I have just gotten back from a show that was put on here tonight. It was a U.S.O. show. Really

good and we all enjoyed it immensely. It was the first of its kind that we have had since we have been over here.

This is the first time I've written for or three days. I've been on the go so much that I just didn't get to it. Will try to do better for a day or two now.

What Leve wrote to June is true, but it is supposed to be a secret and he should not have wrote about it.

I received two v mails yesterday from you and one from Frances. She says that the baby is growing nice and that Georgie had to take her in his arms when she was down to Papa's. I told Boob about it and he said to tell Georgie to be careful and not drop that girl of his. I'm sure he has a time with her doesn't he? Is Papa's asthma any better? I know it must be bad in the hot weather you are having.

So you got straightened out on the check you received did you. Hope they got the allotment check to you on time. I should write them again about the correct address. Will write again tomorrow night. Lots of Love
Junior & Daddy

22 June 1943

V-MAIL

My Dear Georgia & Georgie Boy:

How are you tonight? Yesterday and today have been rather pretty but today somewhat cold. And about an hour ago the fog began rolling in. Now it blankets everything, one can only see a few feet.

So you do have a birthday next month don't you. I'm going to try and find something to send you. It probably won't reach you by your birthday though. Papa also had one this month. Give him my best wishes! I would have sent a card but haven't been anywhere where I might get one.

Gosh, but I'd love to see you all. I can't tell you how much. It will soon be a year since I saw you. If I ever get home again it's going to be quite a job to get me away from there again. I'll be willing to stay there the rest of my life.

Does Georgie still like Aunt Hester's cake? I would surely like to have a piece of it now. Our meals are very good though and I'm sure it's our imagination more than anything else that makes us want something else. Write soon.

Lots of Love, Junior & Daddy
postmarked June 30, 1943

29 June 1943

My Dearest Georgia & Georgie Boy:

I received a V mail letter from you last night. It was a nice long one, the kind I like.

In it you said you were worried about our moving to some other place because you hadn't been receiving as much mail as before. You shouldn't worry as I'm all right. Still in England and just as safe and sound as ever. As for our move there seems no more indications than at any other time. So please don't worry.

The weather over here has been beautiful the last few days. I saw some farmers getting up hay today and it reminded me of what you wrote about Georgie and the boys hauling hay. He is a regular old farmer isn't he.

You were asking me about the corn crusher. I only paid \$25.00

on it so it isn't mine, or at least only partly so. Yes, I did pay \$285.00 on the tractor. I think I should have something in return for it. You may say something about it, but don't push it if they aren't willing. My horses & colts were raised there and that is worth something though Papa has had the use of the horses.

If Johnny wants to keep the stock there it is all right. If he doesn't want the saddle mare, Bill can keep her as I told you before. As for your buying feed for the horses. The oldest colt will be old enough to work next spring and they should be worth their keep. If he wants the cows. I shall expect the calves.

Boob was asking me today about Emily and Peanut. He said that Frances wrote that they were about to part. You have never said anything in your letters about it.

He has some pictures of Carol Ann and the baby and one of Frances and the baby. They are not very clear, but do show that the baby is growing and Carol Ann too. She sure is sour looking in the picture.

Look about those trunks. I have already wrote to you telling you not to send them but as for weight you can send packages up to five pounds. What is the matter with that post office. All you have to do is to show the letter requesting the parcel.

I'm glad to hear that Bill is getting along all right. He had his almost at the same time as mine

So everyone thinks we have a nice looking son do they. I'll bet his mother doesn't think so does she? Not much. Who does he take after? you or I? Gosh how I would like to see you both.

We have a dog around our camp that I wish Georgie could see. It is the largest one I ever saw. A Great Dane. It stands all of three feet high and is as large as an ordinary sized man. He comes in the dining room and is so tall he stands along side and can put his head right across the table, but he never does. He is one of the best behaved dogs I ever saw, but is so large he is really a curiosity. No one over here keeps them anymore as it takes too much to feed them.

Well will finish now. I have just returned from supper. We had meat loaf, canned corn, potatoes, beets, peaches and the best coffee we have had since we have been over here.

Tell your mother I would like to have some of those hot rolls that she makes and some of her fried chicken. Hope you have received your check by this time. Since tomorrow is pay day I will probably be sending another Bond or money order home. Will write and tell you which to look for.

Here's hoping I get another letter tonight from you.

With all my Love

Junior & Daddy

postmarked Jun 29, 1943

30 June 1943

My Dearest Wife and Darling Son:

I sit here writing this and wonder what you are doing tonight. I hope you are all well and getting along fine.

I am much better of my cold and my nose is not bothering me of any amount.

But it sure did give me a fit there for about three days.

We have surely been having beautiful weather here for the past few days It is cool enough in the early morning and in the eve-

nings to wear a jacket comfortably and during the middle of the day to go around in one's shirt sleeves.

I received three letters from you last night and one had the clipping in it. I also received one from Aunt Belle and Harry. She writes that they are very busy, with carrying on both places. She says that Harry's leg has a drain in it and that it will probably always be there. I didn't know that. It's too bad.

You were writing in your letter that when I received my Captaincy you were going to give it a big write up. Well don't worry. You won't have a chance. The way things are now I'm standing right against a wall and not much chance of my moving either. I'm going down tonight and talk to the Colonel. I think they at least owe me an explanation of so many lies and backing up.

I've half a mind to ask for a transfer from the Regiment, but then I don't know where I would end up. If it were not for you and the boy I'd do it anyway, but I've got to think of you.

Did you get the letter asking you to send me an alarm clock. Just a small one that won't take up much room.

I can hardly realize that tomorrow is the 1st of July. What do you say we go down to Atlantic City for the 4th. Remember the year we went to Tolchester. Wasn't that one of them? And you left the bag of napkins in the lobby of the house. Rained the whole time we were there didn't it?

Let's hope that we will be able to spend the next one together. I hope and pray so anyway.

Don't know whether I will get a letter tonight or not. I will go over to mail this one and find out. I'm looking for one anyway.

How are Sambo's freckles coming on? I'll bet he is as brown as a berry. Has he been hauling any more hay? Have you received the allotment check yet and the money order?

Write often as you can. Your letters mean the world to me. Love

Junior & Daddy

P.S. Hello George Nabb have you been swimming in the horse trough lately? Take one for me.

postmarked July 1, 1943

3 July 1943

VMAIL

My Dearest Georgia and Georgie Boy:

I wonder what you are doing tonight the night before the 4th of July. With us it will be just another day. At least its Sunday otherwise we would be working. I shall spend the day resting for we have some hard work coming up. This is the first letter I have written you for three days as we were in the field and I didn't get a chance to.

I received two v mails from you tonight dated the 24 June. In them you said that you had not received the allotment check yet. I can't figure it out at all. In one previous letter you wrote that you had received the bond I bought in June, but you didn't say anything about the money order for \$100.00 which I mailed to you the same date about the 4th of June. Have you received it or not. Let me know. I have also bought another bond this month and in addition am sending you fifty dollars. It is to be sent by some form of cable or v mail and you should receive it much quicker than by the usual means of letter.

You were writing about the apartment. Anything you get now is going to cost outrageously I'm thinking. If that is what you want though look and see what you can do. You know the rent isn't all to those. There is the water, gas & electricity in addition.

Honey I know it must be pretty hot there from what you write. We haven't had anything like that here, but today was the warmest day we have had.

I went to see a movie here tonight. "Syncopation". It was pretty good for passing time away, but not much else.

The wheat over here is still green as poison. Some has just headed out. There is no corn grown here that I have seen, but they certainly go in for potatoes.

Our meals for the most part are excellent. We get all anyone could want - with- in reason, but like the little boy, we just want something we can't get. Like fried chicken for instance.

I'm beginning to get sleepy now so will close before I drop off. Will write again tomorrow. With all my Love
Junior & Daddy

4 July 1943

V-MAIL

My Dear Georgia & Georgie Boy:

Well how has the fourth been? As dull as mine? I have spent the greater part of the day censoring mail. These boys certainly do some writing over the weekends.

Today has been cooler. I hope you are having cooler weather back there by now. Boob tells me that Emily is expecting again. Is that so? How is your mother?

You wrote that she wasn't feeling so well.

We have a radio in our room, but can't seem to get much on it. Right now there is a negro spiritual on it.

This will be a short letter as I have to go now and make a bed and blackout check. Give my Love to all and kiss the boy for me.

Lots of Love

Junior & Daddy

postmarked July 9, 1943

7 July 1943

V MAIL

My Dear Georgia & Georgie Boy:

I received two letters from you today, the ones of the 26th & 27th of June. In them you said that you had not received the allotment yet. I haven't written about it as I felt it would be straightened out in a few days. If it continues to be late I'll write. Though you should get action quicker if you write as it won't take so long for them to get it. If you haven't received it by the time this last money order comes use it if you need it. I know it is aggravating especially when we thought it was straightened out at last. If you felt like managing the trip it might help if you went up there. It isn't so terribly far by train. This is just a suggestion however.

I also received two v mails today dated the 7th of June. They have certainly been quite a time coming haven't they?

You were speaking of the hot weather there. It is nothing like that here. Last night I slept under three blankets and wasn't any too warm either. I will write a longer letter later. Tell Sambo Hello for me. With all my love -
Junior & Daddy

8 July 1943

My Dearest Georgia & Georgie Boy:

I received your air mail letter of the 24th this morning. They certainly come along at irregular intervals. I received one written the 28th two days ago.

So the young man is swearing is he? I know it must worry you no end, but I can't help laughing every time I read that letter. Tell him that if he doesn't stop that I will wash his mouth out with soap when I come home. I'll bet he does have a time taking water out in the fields. So he didn't want Grandpop to smoke his pipe except on Sundays eh? Gosh how I would love to be back there and see some of the things he does.

That hot weather must be something fierce that you are having now. Today is downright cold here.

No I have not had the allotment changed at all. I was afraid to because it might cause another mix up, but apparently it got mixed up anyway. Hope they have straightened it out by now. I'm glad to hear that Papa is feeling better. How about you? Are you feeling all right now.

Lots of Love

Junior & Daddy

8 July 1943

My Dear Georgia & Georgie Boy:

This is the second letter today. I have just received an air mail letter of July 1 talking about the allotment checks but it wasn't really clear to me. Did you receive two checks for \$208.67? You said that you had deposited one of them to your account as you would probably have to return it. Better wait a while. It might be that they sent both June & July's check at the same time. This thing has got me buffaloed for sure. I can't keep up with it. Just try to keep it straight as best you can. There is nothing I know that might do to straighten it out.

Tell Georgie to keep those boys awake at dinner time. I know he must have a time with them. Sure would love to have some of those tomatoes you are talking about.

I thought from your previous letters that Johnny had definitely rented the place. Keep me up on the news. Lots of Love

Junior & Daddy

postmarked June 14, 1943

10 July 1943

V MAIL

My Dearest Georgia & Georgie Boy:

I received another v mail from you last night talking about receiving the two checks. You had better wait a while as one of those might be the check you would have received the 1st of July. I should at least wait until it is time for the month to get there. If it is an overpayment they will discover it and hold back a month's pay.

Too bad about Johnny and Elizabeth. I can't think what he can be trying to do. Hope it will come out all right. That will certainly mean that he will have to give the farm up if he has rented it won't it?

I received a nice letter from Aunt Bertie last nite. I'll have to answer it soon.

Frank is still working in an airplane factory. Lucky Boy Eh!

Glad to hear that it is cooler than it was back there. I know the

heat must have been pretty bad. I can't seem to make by bookkeeping jive with what you say I have in the bank for some reason.

Hoping to get a letter tonight. All my Love
Junior & Daddy

10 July 1943

My Dear Georgia & Darling Son:

This is another Saturday night and just about as dull a one as one could imagine. No place to go and nothing to do. I think I'll go down to the seashore tomorrow for a while that is if it isn't raining.

Honey if within the next few days my mail slows down quite a bit don't worry. I'm leaving Monday morning for a short period of duty with a British unit. It is a custom of exchange of officers that is carried out between the Americans and British. We send officers to them and in turn they send them to us. It is for the purpose of studying the training methods and tactics of units of each side. I expect to be there for about two weeks as that is the usual length of duty with them. It should be interesting and will give me a little change of scenery. So if you don't receive as many letters as you have been you will know what is causing it. I'll probably have to drink their tea, but by now I have become accustomed to it more or less. Lt. Ligon who rooms with me was at the same place (which I can't tell you) that I am going for about two weeks and enjoyed it very much.

I have never had a leave yet but think I will ask for one when I get back. He and I plan on going together if possible.

I don't know whether you will receive this in time or not, but anyway here's wishing you a happy birthday and I pray God I'll be with you by the time another rolls around.

I finally received your letter today telling of receiving the two checks for

\$208.67. I should wait until it is time for the next checks before doing anything about it as it may be the next months check. They should discover the mistake and will either ask for a refund or will withhold one months check. I know such a mess must worry you, but at least you are getting the money. I don't know of anything that I might do to straighten it out, as every time I write it seems to become more confused.

So you don't want me to write to anyone but you Jealousy! I have written cards to nearly everyone I know and as for receiving letters I'd be glad to receive one from anybody. They are one thing that brightens up an otherwise pretty dull and drab existence. Honey you don't know how I long to see you and everyone else at home. As long as I'm busy it doesn't seem to worry me, but when I'm idle I begin thinking and that is when I remember you and how sweet you are and what I would give to hold you in my arms and be able to tell you how much I love you. Dear I know you don't have any easy time, but I'm sure we will be repaid in the end by knowing that we did all we could.

I hardly know what to say about Johnny & Elizabeth. If they can't get along they are better apart, but I don't believe they will either be satisfied that way either. Too bad that he won't stop his drinking if that is at the root of the trouble. On the other hand there may be something causing him to do what he does. I don't know but surely hope all turns out for the best.

I must close as I'm so sleepy that I can hardly hold my eyes open. With all my Love to the Dearest wife and the most darling son in the world. I am your

Junior & Daddy
postmarked July 13, 1943

14 July 1943

Dearest Georgia & Georgie Boy:

It has been several days now since I have written to you. I'm not certain that I shall be able to mail this as I'm now attached to a British unit. I don't know how long this will be for, but expect it to last about two weeks. So hope you won't be worried if the mail is slow in coming. I'll have to do without any until I get back I suppose. If I were to have it forwarded here, by the time I began receiving it I should probably be gone. I think I'm going to enjoy my stay here. Of course there is quite a difference between their organization and our own, but I'm beginning to catch on I think. I've been here since Monday. Had a nice, but tiresome trip. Left camp about eight in the morning and arrived here about eight thirty in the evening. I passed thru Plymouth and Southampton on the way. Both of these towns have been pretty badly battered by bombs, but the greatest part of it happened over a year ago. There is one thing here I can't get used to and that is the number of times they eat during the day. My botman or orderly as we know them calls me at 6:30 each morning and hands me a cup of tea. We then have breakfast at 7:30. Tea and sandwiches again at 10 o'clock. Lunch at 1:00. Tea and sandwiches again at 4:30 and supper at 7:00 in the evening. Can you imagine me having tea in bed? Its really not bad though. It sort of takes the sleep out of ones eyes.

I'll write you more from time to time as to how I'm getting along. Even if I don't mail them until I get back I shall still write from time to time as it gives me something to do. How is my little man? I suppose he is all through with the wheat threshing now isn't he? Papa certainly got a small crop of wheat didn't he? Is everybody's turning out as poorly as that? Over here the wheat is just beginning to turn. It will be some time before there is any threshed here.

On the train Monday there was a little boy 8 1/2 yrs. old in the same compartment with me. He reminded me of George. He talked a blue streak nearly the whole time. I don't know where George gets his talking ability from certainly not from me.

Has the farm been rented yet and if so who rented it? So Frances is going to stay with Johnny. I thought she was working, or has she decided not to go back to work. What would she do with the baby if she should go to work. I hope it all turns out for the best. You were speaking of Ramona. She is better off if they were constantly at odds with each other.

I suppose by now you are having plenty of tomatoes. I had one for supper on Monday night. They are very small and don't have the flavor that ours do. In fact they raise most all of them in greenhouses.

Is the weather still hot there. It is cool enough here for to wear a heavy jacket all day. I went out this morning without mine and I shivered and shook until I got back. In fact a fire wouldn't feel too bad tonight.

You should have your birthday present by the time you receive

this. I'm sorry about not sending you something other than candy, but was not in a position to get anything else. Will try to later on. Must close now as it is time for supper. All my Love

Junior & Daddy

P.S. Hello George Nabb. How's tricks? no envelope

17 July 1943

My Dearest Georgia & Georgie Boy:

I wonder what you are doing now. Probably still in bed as I'm writing this at 8:30 in the morning. I waiting until 9:00 before I go out for a ride with a group of carriers or armored cars. I am enjoying myself very much here. Quite a few of the officers here have served in France, India and Africa and it is quite interesting to hear them tell of their experiences. By the way there is a Capt. Gray and a Lt Fleming in this Bn. Maybe some distant relations of yours from way back. They are all a swell bunch of fellows and treat me wonderful.

We are quartered in a beautiful home that was the property of civilians before the war, but was taken over by the army. It is right near the water and one gets a wonderful view from here.

Have you ever heard any more from the allotment? and have you received the last money order I mailed or rather it wasn't a money order at all. I'm not certain as to just how it was to be sent as it was the first time I had used it, but I imagine you will receive a check from the Treasury Department for the amount \$50.00. I also have another \$100.00 Bond on the way.

How is my little man? Busy as a hen with one chicken I suppose and never still a minute. Does he help to pick tomatoes. I know they have a time with him out there if he goes in the tomato field. I hope Papa gets a good crop and that they are a good price. I'm certainly going to have a lot of readings to do when I get back. It will be two weeks between the last mail I received and the next I receive. I have been here nearly a week now though.

Well I'll begin again. This is now Sunday morning. I went to a movie, or cinema as the English call them last night. It was some crack pot picture called Old Mrs. Kelly the Detective. What a show. It was the kind of show one would have seen in the states ten years ago. The English films are for the most part pretty poor and nearly all the English prefer the American films.

I don't suppose I shall do much today. The unit here is having an athletic meet this afternoon at two o'clock, quite a few of the officers are in the events. I shall go to that. It looks as though we might have a rainy afternoon though. It is cloudy and cool. You should see the people especially the soldiers swimming in this cold weather. I thought once I might go in, but it has got to get a lot warmer than it has been in the past. This morning feels like an October morning back home.

Has Aunt Hester been able to get any meat yet without paying for it? Guess what I had, a real egg for breakfast this morning. Surely was good. Last night we had a tomato and lettuce salad for supper. The tomatoes were about as large as a small egg. I don't believe they grow them any larger than that over here.

I expect it will be quite a job to get them picked at home this year because of the scarcity of help won't it?

I suppose Bill will soon be going to camp or isn't he going after his operation? I remember the year that I went immediately following mine. Spent the whole two weeks doing nothing. Must close now.

With all my love Junior & Daddy

24 July 1943

My Dear Georgia & George:

This is Saturday morning. I have had breakfast and of all things I had another fresh egg. This is probably the last time I shall write to you until I return to my own unit. I expect to go back about Monday.

I don't know of much that might interest you. The weather here for the past week has been rainy, but this morning looks as though it might be a nice sunshiny day. I surely hope so. We don't know how fortunate we are in the states with a climate like we have. I know it gets unbearably hot at times and pretty cold at others, but at least we have plenty of sunshine from time to time.

I am going down to this little town here today and see if I can't find a little gift or souvenir of some kind to send you.

I suppose by now most of the farmers have finished with their wheat, haven't they. I have seen one or two pieces that have just been cut here.

I suppose Sambo is busy picking tomatoes isn't he? I dreamed about you last night. What I wouldn't give to see you all even if only for a few minutes.

I'm anxious to get back to get those letters of mine so that I can catch up on the news. Otherwise I'd like to stay here longer.

I haven't heard from Tommy for quite a while now. I owe him a letter and will have to get it off as soon as I get back. I wish you could have read the one I did receive from him. It was a circus. Will close.

Lots of Love Junior & Daddy

27 July 1943

V-MAIL

My Dear Georgia & Georgie Boy:

This is my first letter since my return to my own unit. I came back yesterday. Spent the greater part of the day reading, and of all places to ride I rode in the baggage coach. It was impossible to get a seat on the train. Last weekend and this coming weekend are national holidays over here. Everyone who can tries to get to some resort of some kind, and since very few autos are used the trains are packed and jammed. In Waterloo Station in London over 2000 people waited there all Saturday night. They had been unable to get a train out of there.

When I got back yesterday I had quite a little pile of letters waiting for me, about ten I think. I'm sorry to hear that you are feeling badly again. Why in the world don't you go to see a doctor. Nearly every letter I get you complain of not feeling well.

I have a little present for you. I shall mail it as soon as I get something to wrap it in. It is not much, but a present just the same. Hope you like it. It was all I could find there. I am well. Haven't been troubled with the sinus trouble any lately. Will write again tonite.

Love

Junior & Daddy

postmarked August 2, 1943

30 July 1943

My Dearest Georgia & Son;

I wonder how you are tonight. I have just finished supper. I have to go out tonight at 10:30 so I have some time on my hands til then. We have tomorrow morning off so it won't be too bad I guess.

I have written you several v-mails since I have been back, but this is the first regular letter I have written. I received a v-mail from you last night, dated the 19th and one from Frances.

I have your little present all ready to mail. I couldn't find Georgie or Ramona a thing that I thought they would like. I have asked for a leave beginning the 5th of Aug. and if I get it which I am in doubt of, I shall try and find something then. There is an English penny in the box that is his. I have a piece of heather in bloom that I want to put in there too if possible. I don't know what you think of some of the things I send you, but they are just souvenirs to look back on. I have not received the last pictures you sent. That is if you have sent any within the last month.

Just think it has been just about a year since we arrived at Camp Blanding.

Boy that was a hot place to be sure.

If you will look at a map of England you will see where I was during the stay with the British, The Isle of Wight.

So Georgie sticks fizzes in his feet does he? I certainly have stuck many a one in mine in that old lane.

I thought sure you would have received the money order and bond before this as that was supposed to be a quicker way. It will come along soon though. I suppose you probably won't receive any check this month as you received two last month.

I'm glad to hear that Johnny and Elizabeth have gone back together. If he will slow down on the drinking maybe everything will be all right. Let me know what to do about the horses, as if I have to sell them I want to know.

I'll write to Papa if you had rather I did it. I shan't insist on it as he will have little enough to go along on I'm afraid with nothing coming in. Don't misunderstand me, we could use it well enough, but we can manage if we don't get it. We have made out so far haven't we dear? You know my goal is \$5000.00 by Xmas. Think I will make it? That is bonds and everything. So you have \$160.00. You are not doing so bad either. You deserve it certainly. I haven't been able to give you much as compared to what some have had. At least we have been happy and contented together which means more than all the rest put together. Just wait till I get home. We will make up for all of it.

What is Aunt Mary going to name the baby? Last chance? Tell Georgie Boy I say How's tricks?

Lots of Love,
Junior & Daddy

postmarked August 2, 1943

31 July 1943

My Dear Georgia & Georgie Boy:

I am writing this Saturday night after supper. I have just finished writing to Tommy. I should have done so a month ago, but just neglected it. I thought that perhaps I'd stop in and see him for a few minutes while on leave. That is if I get it.

Is the weather still warm there? We have had the prettiest

week of weather here this week that we have had since we landed over here, but it began raining about an hour ago.

Did you say my name was in the paper, what paper and what about?

I hear that tomatoes are fifty cents a basket. I hope they will stay at that and people can get a good crop. And watermelons a dollar a piece, that is some price. I don't suppose they even know what a watermelon is over here. The only fruit I have seen here are apples and they call them good. Ye Gods they are as sour as vinegar.

I received a card from the Smiths, Rita and Dan several days ago. I didn't get a letter from you yesterday and so far haven't received one today. Maybe there is one down in the Co. for me by now.

How is my little man? I haven't received the pictures of him yet. So he goes barefoot does he. Remember how he would stand when we used to take his shoes off. He wouldn't take a step.

Tomorrow, being Sunday I think I shall rest. Maybe I'll get up early enough to go to church. I haven't been now for quite a while. Write soon.

Lots of Love Junior & Daddy

postmarked Aug 2, 1943

1 August 1943

My Dear Georgia & Georgie Boy:

How are you all tonight? Is it still hot there as it has been? Today has been windy and raining off and on.

I got the package off to you after a while. Had to get one of the boys to build a box for it. I have never received The Country Gentleman. Looks like I should have gotten it by now.

If you can't find an alarm clock why don't bother to send that one. It's not that important. We have one here in the room so I really don't need it right now. I thought perhaps I'd be somewhere sometime when we wouldn't have one.

There is one thing you can send me. That is razor blades. I understand that no more Schick blades are being sent over here. I haven't been able to buy any now at the PX. I have another razor if worse comes to worse that I can use and I still have 2 or 3 packs for the one I'm using. They seem to be handling blades for Gillette razors entirely, but I don't have one. If you can send me about two or three suits of summer underwear I could use that too as I am getting pretty low on it and though I have tried on several occasions to get it I haven't been successful.

The Co. received some cigarettes from the Cambridge Wholesale Grocery yesterday. I believe I wrote to you in a letter before this and told you they were from Easton. That was a mistake. We have been getting all the cigarettes we need and they cost us about 5 cents a pack, quite a difference from what they are in the states isn't it?

Did you go on the Sunday School picnic. If you did I'm sure George had a time in the water, or is he still afraid of it. Remember how he was when we took him down to Handleys last summer? scared to death.

I was reading a circular yesterday on Officers being sent back to the states. After serving a year or more overseas they may be sent back to help train other units or else sent back because of inefficiency. I'm not anxious to be sent back for the latter reason,

but it would be pretty nice wouldn't it. And they get 20 days leave on landing. I'll never be one of that lot though. In fact I haven't heard of anyone from this Division being sent back. Its nice to think about anyway.

I suppose Johnny will soon be thinking of doing some work up on the farm won't he? He will have his hands full, but he can handle it if he tries.

By the time you receive this I suppose the tomato season will be in full blast. I'm sure the picking of them will be quite a problem. Did Mr. Fountain sell his farm? You wrote once that he was trying to sell it to Mr. Barnes I believe. Haven't received a letter now for three days. Lots of Love

Junior & Daddy

P.S. Hello George Nabb. How is Joe Boy & Sally? OK?

postmarked Aug 2, 1943 and the envelope and first page postmarked Aug 10 in Cambridge, MD

10 Aug 1943

V-MAIL

My Dearest Georgia & Georgie Boy:

I suppose by the time you receive this you will be wondering why I haven't written before. I just got back from my leave today. So there are five days in which I didn't write.

I had a pretty good time, but it was such a problem to get anywhere that I don't know whether I am much better off. After buying a ticket to London which cost 3 pound 17 shilling (about 15.50) we had to stand up nearly all the way and it took us around 6 hours. So you know how we felt. On reaching London couldn't find a place to stay, finally did get a room a long way out and the next day were able to get one at the London Officers Club (a Red Cross Club). We spent all our time going to shows. I think we saw most of them. I didn't get George a single thing as usual. Tell him I'll find something one of these days. I have received all the pictures you sent. If you haven't mailed the underwear don't do it as I am able to buy some in London at the PX I shall write to you air mail tonight too so I can tell you more. Lots of Love

Junior & Daddy

postmarked Aug 17, 1943

Aug 12, 1943

V-MAIL

My Dear Georgia & Georgie Boy:

Didn't receive any letter today, but did receive my first copy of The Country Gentleman. I have just finished looking through it. Seems like old times to be looking at it.

I'm so sleepy that I can hardly hold my eyes open so this will probably be a short letter. Today has been rather cool. I suppose you are still having hot weather there as it usually stays hot until September.

Glad to hear that Aunt Mary is better. I wrote to them just before I went on leave. Too bad about Mr. Edgar Phillips wasn't it?

How is Sambo? That was certainly amusing about him going home with Martin and playing with those colored children. I'll bet he was having a time. Sure wish I could have seen him.

It looks as though I may get a chance to use my trunks after all. Sure hope it stays warm. I won't be sending a bond, the early part of this month. I'll have to wait until I collect some of my bills. Hop-

ing to receive a letter tomorrow. Lots of Love
Junior & Daddy

postmarked August 18, 1943

14 August 1943

V-MAIL

Dear Georgie & Georgie Boy:

Well here is another Saturday. I wonder what you are doing back there. I haven't received a letter now for three days. Maybe I'll have better luck tonight.

Used my trunks the other day. Got a fairly good sunburn too, but nothing like I would have gotten back in the states. Have you been in swimming much. I don't suppose you have on account of the gasoline shortage. Did you go to Ocean City? Remember the time we were last down there? I had George down on the beach in the sand. He got sand all in his hair and finally got some in his eyes. Sara went with us.

Have you received your present yet? I'm not going to tell you what is in it. If I did it wouldn't be much of a surprise. Don't forget Georgie's penny in there. I suppose you are having watermelons to eat now. I don't suppose they know what they are over here. I wouldn't mind having a big slice right now. Will write a longer letter tomorrow Write when you can. Lots of Love

Junior & Daddy

postmarked Aug 23, 1943

This concludes the publication of "I Can't Tell You Everything". The Editorial Staff of the "Twenty-Niner" would like to thank the Nabb family for allowing us to publish this collection of family correspondence that they so tirelessly compiled and transcribed.

Those of you who would like to continue reading this book, please contact the Nabb's at: nabbfamily@aol.com for more information.

The Editor

The Preamble

*To perpetuate the friendships
we cherish; to keep alive
the spirit that never knew
defeat; to glorify our dead;
and to further keep
before our country
the record of the
29th Division
in all the wars;
we associate ourselves
in an organization
known as the
29th Division Association.*

Virtually yours:

NEC I on Zoom

It was a little over a year ago when the convention committee set out on a journey to Hagerstown and Frederick, MD, and Gettysburg, PA to search for a sight for the 2020 29th Division Association reunion and convention. Just as in past years, the committee was looking for the perfect venue to reconvene and reunite with our comrades.

After visiting the three hotels, there was no doubt among the committee as to the 2020 location: the Wyndham Hotel in Gettysburg, PA. For many years, members hoped that one day they would meet in Gettysburg, one the most historic military sites in the country and for that matter in the world.

Gettysburg had much to offer. It was here that the Union and Confederate armies met in July 1863 to fight a cataclysmic battle that ultimately led to the final capitulation of Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia at Appomattox. Shops and fine restaurants abound and these are just two of the many attractions nearby in Adams County.

The imaginations of everyone on the committee were running at warp speed with plans for special events, exclusive tours, excursions throughout the area, and speakers who would reflect upon the military history that oozes from this sacred ground. It was even possible that such giants of US history as Abraham Lincoln and Clara Barton would be there.

But alas, it was not to be, at least in 2020. As everyone knows COVID-19 struck with a fury in March and it became apparent in late spring that the convention could not be held in September. Consequently, National Commander Pete Hinz moved rapidly to cancel the event in 2020 and reschedule the convention in 2021 at the Wyndham. The plans would have to be delayed for a while.

However, NEC I always takes place at the convention as the new National Commander leads his first meeting. This year would be no different, except that without a convention, NC Hinz would continue to be our leader through 2021. But there was a bit of a dilemma: how could we build some of the aspects of the convention into the meeting day as we advanced the Association's business?

Zoom came to the rescue along with two outstanding historians who would share their presentations with any member, anywhere in the world who joined the meeting. Consequently, in the afternoon of the NEC I meeting we scheduled our own historian Joe Balkoski to speak on the planning for D-Day and author Mitch Yockelson to speak on the US paratrooper generals on D-Day.

Joe led off at 1:00 PM with his presentation, *The Road to D-Day: The Genesis of Operation Overlord*. He recounted that it was of importance in the planning in Europe that the US could not take unilateral action as was the case in the Pacific. The two pillars of US wartime policy were Europe first and unconditional surrender by Germany. How this would be achieved was another matter. Britain was the major US ally on the Western Front and consequently, all planning must take into account their capabilities and objectives.



Joseph Balkoski

The Casablanca Conference in 1943 between the US and the UK led to the birth of Operation Overlord. However, the British insisted on securing the Mediterranean first, before assaulting northwestern Europe. But the wheels of planning were now in motion as the Allies established "COSSAC," which stood for "Chief of Staff to the Supreme Allied Commander." The very capable senior officer in the British army, LTG Frederick Morgan, spearheaded the mission and was critical to its success.

Morgan & his staff completed the plan in July 1943 selecting the Normandy beaches for the landing site as opposed to the much closer Pas de Calais. It was at the lesser-known Quebec Conference that the COSSAC plan was approved in August and the landing date set for May 1, 1944.

Now the plan was in place, but it was obvious that one important piece missing when none other than Joseph Stalin posed the question at the Tehran Conference in November: "Who will be the commander in this Operation Overlord?" Although Winston Churchill wanted Sir Alan Brooke to lead the operation, the US



Tehran Conference: Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill.

insisted that it be an American due to the preponderance of US troops. Thus, with the Pyramids in view in Cairo, George C. Marshall and Franklin D. Roosevelt put their heads together and decided that Dwight D. Eisenhower would be the commander.

When Churchill showed Field Marshal Montgomery the plan on New Year's Eve 1944, Joe indicated that Monty was not happy. There was not enough "punch" in the initial landings. And through his insistence the Invasion frontage of 25 miles was doubled to 50 miles, five invasion beaches, rather than three, targeted with Utah and Sword Beaches added to the plan, the airborne forces quadrupled.

With these necessary changes incorporated into the plan Ike and his staff pushed the date back to June 1, 1944. Of course, the actual date of the invasion to be forever known as D-Day would depend upon the weather and the tides. Initially, it was set for June 5 but ultimately became the date that we will forever remember: June 6, 1944.

When Joe finished his presentation, there was a short break and at 2:00 PM we launched into Mitch Yockelson's presentation, *The American Airborne on D-Day based on his book, The Paratrooper Generals: Mathew Ridgeway, Maxwell Taylor, and the American Airborne from D-Day Through Normandy.*, which was released in June and available on Amazon.

(Continued on page 20)

MG Rhodes assumes command of 29th Infantry Division

(Continued from page 1)

ability to successfully manage multiple organizations through difficult times of uncertainty, budgetary constraints, all the while meeting crucial operational commitments," he said. "This experience as a division commander will serve you and us in the National Guard well as you assume your next assignment as the Deputy Commanding General, Army National Guard, for Army Futures Command."

Jensen told Epperly he was leaving the division in very capable hands with Rhodes as the new commander

"You have our complete trust and confidence as you assume command of the 29th Infantry Division," Jensen said to Rhodes. "I know your operational and deployment experiences will serve you well as you take this division forward."

He also thanked all the Soldiers of the 29th on behalf of the Chief of Staff of the U. S. Army and the Chief of the National Guard Bureau for the tremendous service and sacrifice and continued support for the Army National Guard, the division and the entire nation.

Jensen presented Epperly with the Distinguished Service Medal to recognize his outstanding tour of duty as the 29th ID commander.

"In the past 30 months, the division has been involved in three corps and division level Warfighter exercises," Epperly said. "Both our infantry brigade combat teams have completed eXportable Combat Training Capability rotations and trained for Joint Readiness Training Center rotations, and our armored brigade combat team is completing a deployment in support of Operation Spartan Shield. In a 'Back to the Future' moment, the 111th Field Artillery provided the division a capability thought to be lost to the sands of time: the ability to provide fire support from amphibious craft in littoral operations."

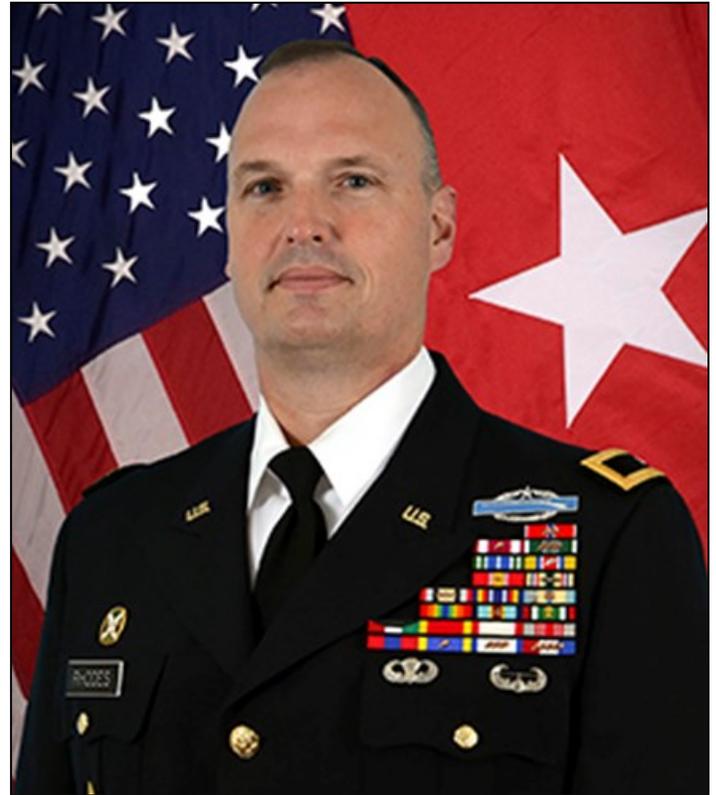
The list of achievements goes on and on, he said.

"Over the last four years, the 29th Infantry Division has served as the vanguard of the National Guard's eight combat divisions that represent 44 percent of the U.S. Army's total combat power," Epperly said. "The Blue and Gray Division was the first National Guard division to lead Operation Spartan Shield in the Arabian Gulf Region as a counterweight to malign Iranian influences in the Gulf."

Epperly said perhaps the most significant accomplishment of the division has been the reorganization to prosecute large-scale ground combat operations against a peer adversary

"After nearly two decades of counter-insurgency operations, the division has been re-born as the decisive echelon," he said.

"A regional consortium of eight states with support from National Guard Bureau came together to reform the 29th Infantry Division into a fully capable combat division comprised of six brigades that include the 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team from Virginia and Kentucky, the 53rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team from Florida and Alabama, the 30th Armored Brigade Combat Team from North Carolina and West Virginia, the 29th Combat Aviation Brigade from Maryland and Virginia, the 226th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade from Alabama, the 113th Sustainment Brigade from



Major General John M. Rhodes

North Carolina and the 142nd Fires Brigade from Arkansas. Reforming the division by re-aligning the brigades was no easy task, but today it impacts everything from how we select our leaders to how we train, equip and fight. By creating a fun division of cohesive brigades, we have created a far more lethal and survivable unit for the modern battlefield."

Epperly credited the support of Gen. Daniel R. Hokanson, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, when he was the director of the Army National Guard as well as the Adjutants General from the states contributing brigade formations to the division.

Rhodes served as the 29th's deputy commander for operations for three years, and Epperly described him as "an inspirational leader of Soldiers, an outstanding tactician and true practitioner of maneuver warfare."

He further described him as a seasoned combat leader with multiple combat tours, and said, "Having seen him in action, I am confident he will be a superb division commander, and I am proud to have served with him."

Rhodes said the opportunity to serve as the 29th ID commander is both an honor and a privilege, and he recognized Epperly's leadership and strategic vision set the conditions for success as the division prepares for upcoming missions.

"Maj. Gen. Epperly's efforts and contributions have made the 29th a combat ready force, and my objective is to build on what he has established," Rhodes said. "I thank the dedicated Soldiers, NCOs and officers and families of the 29th Infantry Division and our line brigades, both past and present. The Blue and Gray patch we proudly wear on our left shoulder tells its own story."

Everyone knows the history of this proud division, and you are carrying on the tradition of those who served before us, and your service to America and the National Guard speaks for itself. I look forward to our continued service together.”

Epperly and Rhodes both thanked their families and their employers for their support throughout their careers.

The Troutville-based 29th Infantry Division Band provided ceremonial music for the event, and Soldiers assigned to the Sandston-based 2nd Battalion, 224th Aviation Regiment, 29th Infantry Division conducted a flyover.

Biographical summaries:

Rhodes was commissioned a second lieutenant, Infantry in May 1987 through the Reserve Officers' Training Corps at Mississippi State University. Currently he serves as the Deputy Commanding General of Operations for the 29th Infantry Division. Prior to transferring to the Virginia Army National Guard in 2018, he served as Mississippi National Guard Assistant Adjutant General – Army and the commander of the 66th Troop Command. He also commanded a Joint Task Force in response to natural and man-made contingencies in support of homeland security and defense operations. From 2010-2013, he served as the commander of the 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team.

His combat assignments include mortar platoon leader for the 6/6th Infantry Battalion, 1st Armored Division during Operation Desert Storm in 1991, commander of 1/155th Infantry Battalion during Operation Iraqi Freedom III in 2005, and deputy commander of 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team during Operation Iraqi Freedom 9.2 in 2009-2010.

His military awards and decorations include the Bronze Star Medal with two Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters, the Meritorious Service Medal with one Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster, the Army Commendation Medal with three Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters, the Army Achievement Medal, the Combat Infantry Badge with one Bronze Service Star, the Expert Infantry Badge, the Parachutist Badge and the Air Assault Badge.

Rhodes earned a Bachelor of Business Education from Mississippi State University in 1987, a Masters of Business Administration, Military Management from Touro University International in 2003 and Master of Strategic Studies from the United States Army War College in 2010.

Rhodes and his wife Debbie work and reside in Corinth, Mississippi where he is the general manager of the City of Corinth Gas and Water Department.

—

Epperly is a 1989 graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in General Engineering and International Relations. He also holds an MBA in Finance from Drexel University and is a graduate of the U.S. Army War College Class of 2010.

He received a Regular Army commission through West Point as an armor and cavalry officer and served on active duty until 1997. He joined the Virginia Army National Guard and branch transferred to infantry. Over the last 21 years, Epperly has commanded at every level in the division to include command of the 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

Notably, Epperly completed two battalion commands. Epperly commanded the Lynchburg-based 2nd Battalion, 116th Infantry

Regiment and later deployed the battalion in support of Operation Vigilant Relief to assist civil authorities in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. Following the 116th's transformation to a brigade combat team, Epperly took command of Winchester-based 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment and deployed the battalion for combat operations in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Under his command, the battalion was recognized with both the Reckord Trophy and Kerwin Award as the best National Guard battalion in the U.S. Army during training year 2007 as well as earning a Meritorious Unit Commendation.

Epperly has extensive experience in division operations having served as the 29th Division G3 operations officer on two occasions. Most recently, Epperly served as the deputy commanding general for operations for the division. He deployed to the Arabian Gulf Region with the 29th Infantry Division in 2016 and 2017 as part of Operation Spartan Shield.

Epperly's military education includes the Airborne School, Air Assault School, Armor Officers Basic Course, Scout Platoon Leader's Course, Infantry Mortar Leader's Course, Armor Officers Advanced Course, CAS3, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and the U.S. Army War College.

Epperly resides with his wife Kim in Fredericksburg, Virginia. In his civilian capacity he is President for IT Concepts Inc., a technology company located in northern Virginia. He is a native of Fairlawn in Pulaski County, Virginia, and is a 1985 graduate of Pulaski County High School.

About the 29th Infantry Division:

Known as the Blue and Gray Division, the 29th Infantry Division is an Army National Guard operational-level headquarters located at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. Its wartime mission is to provide mission command to subordinate brigades and forces tailored for an assigned mission. It is one of eight divisions in the Army National Guard.

Its origins date back to World War I and is most known for its participation in the D-Day landings at Omaha Beach in World War II. The 29th recently mobilized Soldiers to participate in Operation Spartan Shield and Operation Inherent Resolve, both in the U.S. Central Command area of operations.

The 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, the 2nd Battalion, 224th Aviation Regiment and the 29th Infantry Band are aligned under the 29th. The division currently has training relationships with the 53rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team from Florida and Alabama, the 30th Armored Brigade Combat Team from North Carolina and West Virginia, the 29th Combat Aviation Brigade from Maryland and Virginia, the 226th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade from Alabama, the 113th Sustainment Brigade from North Carolina and the 142nd Fires Brigade from Arkansas.



MG John M. Epperly

By Mr. Cotton Puryear



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 29th INFANTRY DIVISION
9810 FLAGLER ROAD
FORT BELVOIR, VA 22060

NGVA-DIV-CG

28 OCT 2020

Dear 29th Division Association:

Having the opportunity to serve as the Commanding General for the 29th Infantry Division is a tremendous honor. The "Blue and Gray" patch proudly worn on our left shoulder echoes the pride, tradition, and history of the 29th. The 29th Infantry Division is comprised of proven ready forces across multiple states. We are a revolving door for deployments, domestic operations, and major training exercises. We have units that recently returned from deployments, others are currently conducting real-world operations, and more are preparing for upcoming operations that includes the Division Headquarters. Over the past 6 months, many of our Soldiers have been supporting and assisting our State and Commonwealth in response to COVID, major storms, and security while providing aid and comfort to our fellow citizens.

Per a recently published article, the Army National Guard is turning back the clock reminiscent of World War I and World War II when it trained to deploy as a division-aligned force for large-scale combat operations. The 29th Division and their Brigade command groups will actively participate in this historical initiative by building and shaping an enduring division aligned for training (AFT) plan that will develop habitual command relationships across state boundaries, enhance our training and combat readiness, and develop our future leaders at all command levels. Below are the 29th Infantry Division's aligned brigades:

29th ID HhBN (VA/MD)
30th ABCT (NC/SC/WV)
116th IBCT (VA/KY)
53rd IBCT (FL/AL)
29th ECAB (MD/FL/VA/AL/IA)
113th SUST BDE (NC)
226th MEB (AL)
142nd FAB (AR)

Our Soldiers are carrying on the proud tradition of the 29th Infantry Division and the brave Warriors who served before us. The 29th's service to America and the National Guard speaks for itself. Again, it is a great honor to serve as the Commanding General of this great Division and to represent the 29th Division Association.

29 Let's Go!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John M. Rhodes".

John M. Rhodes
Major General
29th Infantry Division

FOG Men restore a 1955-dated M42 Duster for display at DSCR

RICHMOND, VA — After more than a year of painstaking work by a group of dedicated volunteers, a 1955-dated M42 Duster is now on permanent display outside of the Sgt. Bob Slaughter Headquarters at Defense Supply Center Richmond, Virginia.

The Duster, a tracked, self-propelled 40mm anti-aircraft gun, was moved into place on a concrete pad Oct. 28, 2020, with help from Virginia National Guard Soldiers assigned to the Maneuver Area Training Equipment Site at Fort Pickett, Virginia.

The artifact was obtained in early 2019 through the efforts of Maj. Gen. Timothy P. Williams, the Adjutant General of Virginia, and retired Chief Warrant Officer 4 Al Barnes, the Virginia National Guard command historian. It was restored by Barnes and a group of retirees and veterans Williams has dubbed the Friends of the Guard, or “FOG Men” for short. The group met once a week for more than a year to scrape rust, sand and paint the Duster to get it ready for display.

The group worked on the vehicle in a maintenance area behind the headquarters building, several hundred yards from its permanent display site. The 25-ton vehicle challenged the MATES Soldiers and their equipment as they prepared for and executed the movement, partially because the tracked nature of the Duster meant that it has no steering capability of its own. The Soldiers executed skillful use of winches to steer the Duster as it was loaded and unloaded in its new location.

“Adding to the complexity of the mission was the nearby presence of a large solar panel field on one side, and the 155mm’s display pad on the other,” said Barnes, referring to a 155mm howitzer the FOG Men also worked to restore and preserve. “Nevertheless, the MATES crew safely carried out the lift and delivery of the Duster to its new home.”

The Duster holds a unique spot in Virginia National Guard history, according to Barnes.

“The Duster came from the armory in Portsmouth, which used to be 3-111th Air Defense Artillery,” said Barnes. “It’s a 1955-dated M42 Duster. When the mission changed and the Cav took over from the ADA guys, it no longer appealed to them to have an air defense artillery piece on display. So we took it off of their hands.”



The 1955-dated M42 Duster at DSCR.

The Duster suffered from years of exposure to the elements, an issue compounded by the open nature of the turret on top. So Barnes and his crew of volunteers, most of whom knew each other from working together at the Combined Arms Support Command at Fort Lee, Virginia, worked weekly to scrape and chip away at layers of rust before preserving and painting the relic.

The FOG Men were assisted by two period field manuals/instructional manuals donated by Chris Christoff, father of Virginia Defense Force Lt. Col. (Va.) Nick Christoff. The manuals helped bring the Duster back to life.

“Restoration of the vehicle is almost complete, lacking only the final touchup and appropriate unit/tactical markings,” said Barnes. “When it and the 155mm howitzer are both finished, they will be dedicated in a ceremony to honor all of Virginia’s Vietnam veterans.”

The M42 Duster was built using the same chassis as the M41 Walker Bulldog tank and is armed with two 40mm antiaircraft guns. Some 3,700 Dusters were made between the 1951 and 1956. Though manufactured too late for most of the Korean War, Dusters saw extensive combat service in Vietnam with Army and Marine Corps units. Originally designed to counter enemy aircraft and helicopters, its relatively light weight and powerful dual-40mm cannons made it a good fit for fixed base defense and convoy support.

“The Duster received its name from its original design in which its mission was to ‘sweep the skies,’” said Barnes.

In 2019, starting in April, the FOG Men donated 627 hours of work on the artifacts, a number that will be surpassed this year even with COVID precautions in place. The members include two former Ordnance Corps colonels, a Transportation Corps colonel, a Medical Service Corps colonel, an Aviation major, a combat engineer NCO, a military intelligence NCO, a Navy and Army chief warrant officer 4, an Army command sergeant major and an Army master sergeant. Together they include two Vietnam veterans, three Desert Storm veterans and an Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran. They also include three Defense Language Institute graduates and three former CASCOM directors. Altogether the group represents more than 300 years of U.S. military service. They generally meet once a week in Richmond to work on restoring artifacts.

“The willingness of these volunteers to work on these pieces of equipment in all sort of weather is pretty inspiring when you consider that they are donating their time and efforts to support the Virginia National Guard Historical Foundation,” said Barnes.

By Mike Vrabel



Maj. Gen. Timothy P. Williams, the Adjutant General of Virginia, sits in a 1942 Dodge command and reconnaissance car being restored in the MATES facility at Fort Pickett, Virginia. (U.S. National Guard photo by Mike Vrabel)

Rebirth of the divisions

To better prepare for future fights, Army Guard leaders are reforming the force to look more like the Guard of a century ago.

Under the National Guard's division alignment plans, the current eight division headquarters are adopting training-oversight relationships with other units to include brigade combat teams, aviation brigades, sustainment brigades and other support elements that would be part of a more traditional division structure.

The goal, officials say, is to build out enough full Guard divisions to effectively give the Army 18 true, combat-ready divisions.

Lt. Gen. Jon A. Jensen, the director of the Army Guard, says the changes are being driven by the National Defense Strategy and the need to prepare for great power competition, which could include more large-scale combat than what was seen during the fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Such a shift means the Army is focusing on the division as the key combat formation, instead of the brigade combat team.

Currently, Guard divisions are divisions in name only.

"Divisions, as we refer to them [now], are really division headquarters, not division formations," Jensen says.

The units typically include about 300 soldiers. They have deployed regularly in recent years to support overseas and stability operations, to include Operation Spartan Shield, which covers all U.S. Army forces across the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility.

Guard division headquarters have commanded the Spartan Shield mission since 2016. The headquarters of the 42nd Infantry Division from New York has the responsibility now. The headquarters of the 36th Infantry Division from Texas mobilized recently to take the mission next.

Jensen says reforming the Guard to more look like its active counterparts — with intact divisions of approximately 20,000 soldiers each — is important not just for future fights, but also for ongoing modernization efforts.

"We need to look and operate like the active Army," Jensen says. "We need to make sure that as the Army moves forward, we do as well. "The Army Guard is strongest when we look like the Army," he adds.

"The Army Guard is strongest when we are moving along with the Army as a full partner. When we get left behind — either by our own inactivity or by the Army moving forward without us, that's when we're at risk. We're at risk to force structure, we're at risk to relevancy and we're at risk at home in our ability to conduct our domestic missions."

The Guard's division headquarters are in California, Indiana, Kansas, Minnesota, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Texas.

A COMPLETE GUARD DIVISION has not deployed into combat since Harry Truman was president, when California's 40th Infantry Division and Oklahoma's 45th Infantry Division were sent to fight in Korea.

But Guard divisions have a distinguished combat history.

The Army created 18 Guard divisions from state regiments in 1917 as it prepared to enter World War I. All of them deployed to Europe; three were among the first five U.S. Army divisions to reach the front lines. And many won the respect of their enemy.

Six of the eight U.S. divisions rated "superior" or "excellent" by the German General Staff were Guard divisions.

During World War II, 19 Guard divisions saw action, including the first five full divisions to enter the fight. They distinguished themselves with storied fighting across Pacific jungle islands, onto the beaches of Normandy and amid the push to Germany to end the war.

Guard divisions also likely would have been critical to turning back a Soviet invasion of Western Europe had the Cold War turned hot.

Guard leaders, including the chief of the National Guard Bureau, Gen. Daniel R. Hokanson, often reference the accomplishments of past Guard units when discussing the ongoing transformation of the force.

"Like those who have served before us, we must be prepared to fight and win our nation's wars," Hokanson said during NGAUS virtual conference late last month. Hokanson announced the division alignment while serving as the director of the Army Guard last year.

Reconstituting the Guard divisions will better prepare the force for potential large-scale operations like those in World War I, World War II and Korea, he said. It also provides an opportunity to improve readiness and talent management across the entire Guard, not just in states that house one of the eight current Guard divisions.

"Through coordination between adjutants general and division commanders, our soldiers will have opportunities for key leader development positions previously hampered by geography," Hokanson said.

The opportunities will work both ways. Soldiers previously limited by opportunities in their own state will be available to serve at the division level. And divisions will welcome a larger pool of candidates for their top positions.

Jensen says the alignment provides the opportunity to develop a more diverse cast of Guard leaders and provide young leaders more opportunities to build careers that could eventually lead to senior positions at the top of the Guard.

"The opportunity to serve at a division level, I think it can change your career," says Jensen, who had four assignments in the 34th Infantry Division, culminating as the division commander.

Such assignments can increase a soldier's understanding of the Army and complex battlespace, he says. "It's an opportunity for the 54 to come together and really contribute to each other's success."

SOME GUARD DIVISIONS already have formed the ties that will be the basis of the ongoing alignment.

The Virginia-based 29th Infantry Division has training and readiness oversight with the 53rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team from Florida and Alabama, the 30th Armored Brigade Combat Team from North Carolina and West Virginia, the 29th Combat Aviation Brigade from Maryland and Virginia, the 226th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade from Alabama, the 113th Sustainment Brigade from North Carolina and the 142nd Fires Brigade from Arkansas.

The units greatly expand the footprint of a division that has historically been comprised largely of units from Maryland and Virginia, but they are in keeping with the plan to align brigades with divisions in their general regions of the country.

Jensen issued instructions for the alignment as one of his first actions as Army Guard director. He said building training relationships and developing the necessary relationships between lead-

ers in all states were necessary first steps before the Army Guard can field a fully deployable, combat-ready division force.

He said aligning for training was the first step in a process that would likely see the first combat-ready Guard division formations in decades be fully operational in 2024.

Alignment will only be a success if the concept is embraced by senior leaders — including both adjutants general and division commanders, Jensen says.

But the new alignment will not change the roles of either group, Jensen stresses.

“The adjutant general is responsible for manning, equipping and training for all forces in their state,” he says. “This doesn’t take away any authority or responsibility of the TAG.”

The division commanders will be working to support the adjutants general of all 54 states, territories and the District of Columbia, Jensen says. “They’re working to support the TAG, not the other way around.”

A former adjutant general of Minnesota and former commander of the 34th Infantry Division, Jensen says fully developed divisions will make the Guard a better combat reserve.

We need to look and operate like the Army,” he says. Doing so ensures that the Guard is not only an interchangeable combat reserve, but also a part of modernization efforts and is included in new doctrine, like multidomain operations.

Multidomain operations against China and Russia are the focus of Army leaders and a driving force behind the push for combat-ready Guard divisions.

Unlike the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, in much brigade combat teams were the primary fighting force, multidomain operations require a higher level of complexity and command that positions the division as the key element.

It involves navigating several combat domains simultaneously, including land, air, sea, cyber and space. And requires more specialized skillsets and units than those typically found at the brigade level.

The focus on a higher echelon is prompting a return, of sorts, for the Army Guard, Jensen says.

“Prior to 9/11 we were a division-centric Army. We had division formations, we had brigades assigned to divisions. We were a division-centric organization, just like the larger Army,” he says. “But we became a much more focused, brigade-centric organization.”

Organizing the force more like the active component will allow Army officials to use Guard and active divisions interchangeably, Jensen says. Ultimately, Guard divisions could be deployed with active brigades assigned to them, or vice versa.

“After nearly two decades of counter-insurgency operations, the division has been reborn as the decisive echelon,” Maj. Gen. John M. Epperly said on Oct. 3, as he left command of Virginia’s 29th Infantry Division.

“Reforming the division by realigning the brigades was no easy task, but today it impacts everything from how we select our leaders to how we train, equip and fight,” he said. “By creating a full division of cohesive brigades, we have created a far more lethal and survivable unit for the modern battlefield.”

This article was written by Drew Brooks and is reprinted here with the permission of the “National Guard” magazine.

NEC I on Zoom

(Continued from page 14)

Both Taylor, commander of the 101st Airborne and Ridgeway, commander of the 82nd Airborne, would drop with their men on the night before D-Day. Although they did not have to do this, both chose to be on the ground leading their troops on this dangerous mission. Those were the kind of officers that were leading these men into battle.

The operation was officially known as the Neptune Airborne Mission. The objectives of the US mission were threefold: (1) secure the roads and bridges inland from Utah Beach; (2) disrupt the surprise German forces; and (3) link up with the 4th Infantry Division.

The IX Carrier Command under General Lewis H. Brereton would be responsible for delivering the paratroopers to their jump zones using the Douglas C-47 Troop Skytrain and the Waco CGA-4 glider for the glider troops. Since many of the C-47 pilots and crew were very new and the mission would take place at night, many in the Allied command were concerned that casualties could be massive even before the men reached the ground.

The first men to drop were the “Pathfinders” who would mark the drop zones for the transport and glider pilots. Mitch recounted the story of one of these brave men, Captain Frank L. Lillyman, the 29-year-old, cigar-smoking paratrooper who was the first Pathfinder to jump from the lead plane into the night at Normandy.



Mitch Yockelson

Mitch recounted one of the many tragedies in the airborne operation. In this case it involved BG Don F. Pratt, 101st Airborne, who commanded the division train that was to be landed by sea. In the event, however, he sought and received permission to join the airborne assault and flew as a passenger in one of the division’s Waco gliders. He was sitting in his jeep when the glider landed successfully but skidded uncontrolled across the wet grass sliding into a hedgerow and killing Pratt who suffered severe whiplash, breaking his neck.

In the end, both of the airborne divisions met their objectives but with heavy losses. There were 13,100 paratroopers in 800 C-47s, 3,900 glider troops in 100 gliders and 5,700 air crew involved in the operation. Of those 1,003 were Killed in action, 2,657 wounded and 4,490 missing.

The Association is very grateful for the outstanding presentations that Joe and Mitch provided. Although the attendance was sparse, we learned a lot from the session that we will carry forward to the next time; and there will be a next time. Technology is allowing us to not only adapt to the current environment, but plan for future events beyond COVID to bring our members together.

If you would like to see these presentations, we will let you know as soon as the recordings are available on the Association website, Facebook page and at the Stonewall Museum.

By Frank Armiger, Assistant Editor

Silent witness to Omaha Beach donated to D-Day Memorial

A recent donation to the National D-Day Memorial tells a story—a story of heroism and tragedy, camaraderie and heartbreak. The simple piece of paper, scrawled with dozens of names, is a silent witness to the events of June 6th, 1944 and the role of the 116th Regiment, 29th Division.

Clarence Eugene Huffman was a native of Roanoke, VA who enlisted in the Virginia National Guard as a teenager in the late 1930s, like a lot of young men during the Depression. Alongside the rest of the Guardsmen, Huffman was called up into the regular army in February 1941. Their one-year stint, however, was suddenly extended to the duration when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor later that year.

Now part of the Blue and Gray Division, Huffman and his regiment were shipped to England to train for the inevitable Cross-Channel Invasion. In 1943, Huffman was one of a few hundred 29ers given the opportunity to train as part of the new 29th Ranger Battalion in Scotland. But by the end of the year the army cancelled the program and put the men back into the infantry. Although they wouldn't be Rangers, the exemplary training they had received would serve many of the men well when the battle was joined. On D-Day, the would-be-Rangers were smart, fit, strong, confident—elite in every way even if they looked no different than the raw recruits next to them.

Gene Huffman was re-assigned to HQ Company of the 1st Battalion, 116th Regiment. By 1944 he was a Tech 5 corporal.

Now jump forward to June 5, 1944. The long-planned invasion was imminent, although delayed 24 hours due to weather. The 116th Regiment was aboard troop transports in the English Channel, waiting through the storm apprehensively, fighting seasickness.

Some of the men were issued small amounts of French currency, supposedly to use for barter once they landed and encountered civilians. Many of the men scoffed at the brightly colored bills—where are we supposed to spend this? Huffman, however, looked at his 100-franc note (worth about \$2 at the time) as a souvenir to keep. The young soldier, facing a battle that could well be the first and last for himself and his buddies, passed his bill around and had his buddies sign their name.

[This calls to mind Huffman's fellow Roanoker and 116th soldier, Bob Slaughter, who had his buddies sign his copy of Eisenhower's Order of the Day. Many men realized that this was the most historic day they would ever witness, and solicited their buddies' signatures to memorialize the event.]

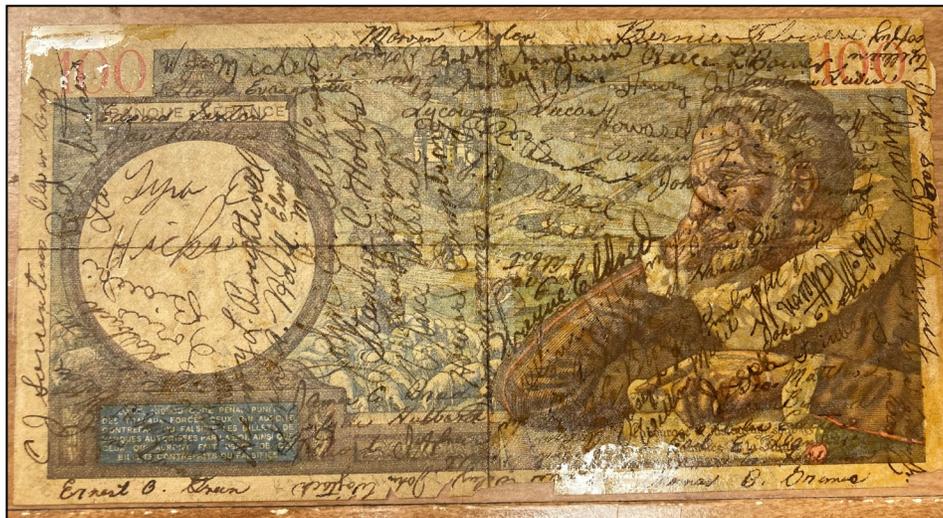
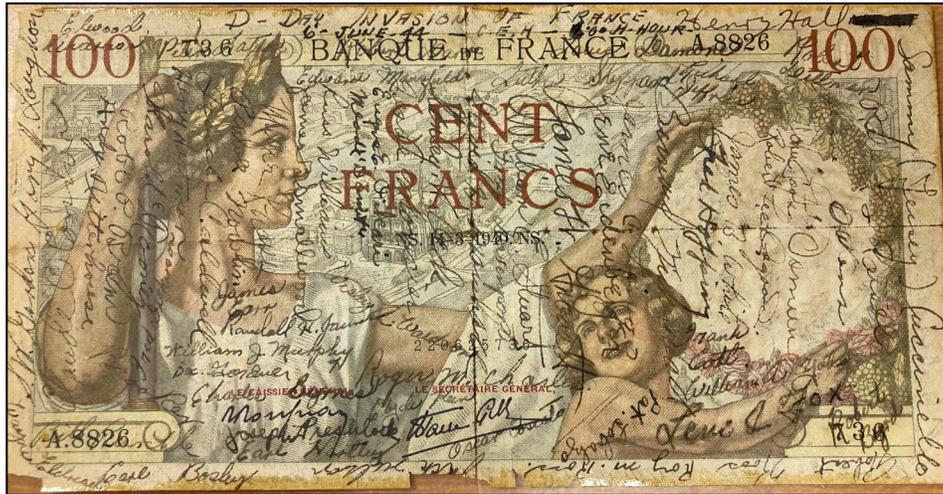
Nearly a hundred men signed Huffman's Cent Francs note (some signatures are faded and difficult to read; research continues to identify as many as possible). Included are at least five who died on Omaha Beach on D-Day. Huffman himself survived the day, but was wounded later near St. Lo and evacuated stateside. He returned to Virginia, raised a family, and died in the 1980s.

Last fall the stepson of Gene Huffman contacted the National D-Day Memorial to discuss donating the relic to the collection (along with a rare British medallion featuring Queen Victoria which had been given to the soldier during his Ranger training by a host family in Scotland). When Director of Education John Long spoke to the family, he noted that the Memorial already had a similar 100-franc note signed by D-Day participants. It had belonged to a New York soldier named Louis Biacchi.

Upon researching the two pieces, Long discovered some amazing coincidences: Huffman and Biacchi were in the same unit: HQ Company, 1st Battalion, 116th Regiment. Obviously the two men had the same idea of collecting the signatures of comrades in arms on the eve of the most historic day of their lives. Many names of men in their unit appear on both bills; and in fact a close analysis of the signatures revealed that Biacchi and Huffman signed each other's notes!

Now the two historic collections of signatures have been reunited, whispering ghostly names to us across seven and a half decades. They will soon be on display together. Every name the two buddies collected tells a story; together the rosters, scrawled across old currency, tell another. The National D-Day Memorial exists to tell their stories and to preserve their legacy of valor, fidelity and sacrifice.

By John D. Long, Director of Education, National D-Day Memorial



Overdue Review

THOUSANDS OF NATIONAL GUARDSMEN remain deployed for pandemic response. They are screening food-industry workers, building and outfitting treatment facilities, augmenting hospital and nursing home staffs, managing logistics operations, and performing many other critical tasks.

For the local and state authorities, front-line workers, and citizens they serve, Guardsmen are an essential and trusted example of our government and our people at their best. Throughout history, the Guard has proven to be a versatile, vital and uniquely American tool for protecting domestic tranquility, providing for the common defense and ensuring the general welfare.

In the midst of an unprecedented pandemic, when the Guard is again proving indispensable, it may seem strange to question our capabilities or call for a searching self-evaluation and potentially far-reaching transformations. Yet we believe it is long past time for a fundamental review of the Guard's domestic missions and capabilities, and the development of a roadmap for deliberate and decisive change.

Thinking in time, preparing well and acting with forethought are the only ways to ensure America's National Guard can continue to meet its responsibilities to the nation and remain relevant, ready, responsive and resilient.

This type of fundamental review has been done before, with significant results. In 1998, Congress directed the chief of the National Guard Bureau to conduct a weapons of mass destruction study to identify and clarify its roles in response to growing WMD threats. The final report concluded that "there is an overall lack of capability and resources to cope with WMD attacks, especially ... biological agents."

The 1998 WMD study had a significant impact on Guard missions and capabilities. The analysis, recommendations and resulting framework for action has served the nation well. Eight role-implementation packages were developed, validated and budgeted for phased execution over a five-year period. All of the missions and over half the packages were implemented by 2005.

Today, the Guard fields 57 Civil Support Teams — detachments that are trained and equipped to respond to chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosives events, and to assist state and local first responders. The Guard also has 10 battalion-sized Homeland Response Forces, one in each Federal Emergency Management Agency region. These are augmented by 17 CBRNE Enhanced Response Force Packages.

Much has changed since the 1998 WMD study. Today's threats differ in profound and lasting ways. The current pandemic is a vivid example; others abound. Emergent threats include electromagnetic pulse, asymmetric tactics and adversaries, new chemical and biological threats, unmanned aircraft systems, cyberwarfare, and more.

Meanwhile, governmental reorganizations since September 2001 have altered the nation's decision-making and management structure. When the 1998 study was completed, the Department of Homeland Security did not exist, nor did the assistant secretary of defense for homeland defense or the military's Northern Command, Cyber Command and Space Force.

Forward deployed in 3,000-plus locations, the Guard already has boots on the ground nationwide. More important, the unique ability to operate in three distinct legal statuses makes Guard capabilities readily accessible to governors and local leaders.

Much of the Guard force structure is already multipurpose: ground and air transportation; nuclear, biological and chemical reconnaissance and patient decontamination, medical, cyber and communications, engineer, military police, and other capabilities serve America's interests overseas and meet our needs at home. Every year, Guardsmen perform 25,000-plus missions supporting state and local authorities.

Will we always do it well? It is tempting to believe that, based on the Guard's performance since September 2001, everything is as it ought to be. However, our adversaries will not rest, and the dangers from pandemics, natural disasters and other threats will only increase with time.

What's needed today is not some academic study to sit on a dusty shelf, but a searching self-examination and an action plan that will protect America's interests, her citizens and today's Guardsmen, who will always run toward the sound of the guns.

The threats are real, the need is urgent and the stakes are high. The time to act is now.

This article was written by Lt. Gen. H Steven Blum (Ret.) & Gen. Craig R. McKinley (Ret.), and is reprinted here with the permission of the "National Guard" magazine. The authors are former NGB chiefs — Blum from 2003 to 2008 and McKinley from 2008 to 2012. They can be reached via magazine@ngaus.org.

The Wyndham Gettysburg in Pennsylvania



**is the site of our
2021 Annual Convention.
More information
will follow in
upcoming editions
of the *Twenty-Niner*.**

Back from the front – between the lines

Part 2

By James A. Frick, E/175

Brest

It was mid-August when we arrived on the outskirts of Brest. The terrain looked about the same as Normandy to me—hedgerows and sunken roads. The first day we advanced we took heavy casualties trying to take Hill 103. We had to stop, but we held our ground, and a day later we attacked again and got our objective.

There was a night hand-to-hand fight with the Jerries. I captured a Sergeant and got his P-38 pistol. The next day the Captain saw it tucked in my belt and told me to give it to him. I told him, “I killed a man to get it and I would kill another to keep it” (not true). “If you want one, get your own.” I did, however, give it to our cook to keep for me.

The Company, being so shot up, was assigned to patrol duty. I think I took out a patrol every night for two weeks. Some of them were really scary. One time five of us crawled right past a German machine gun. They were talking and did not hear us. Another time, when our lines were at an angle, I was sent to get an overlay of the 115th Regiment’s position so we would not fire on them in the dawn attack. Well, I had to go through enemy territory to get to the 115th. It was touch and go but I made it.

I asked for the operations Sergeant and I was told he was in a certain hole. I lifted a shelter-half and told him who I was and what I wanted. It was invited in and told the Sergeant to give me an overlay. He said, “Have a smoke and I’ll get it ready.” He did, on a thick piece of tissue paper which I folded up and put in my watch pocket for safe keeping. He wished me luck getting back and we made it.

I told my men where the paper was, and if we got captured or I get killed, to eat it rather than let it fall into enemy hands. I found out later that it was a General that gave me the overlay. He never let on as I called him Sergeant all the time I was there.

As we were advancing, I was told to take my squad on line with F Company. We went up the hedgerow and fanned out. Just as I got my gear loose and started to dig, all hell broke loose. We got grenades, machine gun and rifle fire. We could not stay, so we leaped over the hedge into F Company’s field. Well, F Company was getting out too, so I dropped into a hole and gave covering fire so the men could get out. I told the F Company Sergeant to set up a machine gun on the back hedge and give me some covering fire so I could get out.

As I was lying in the hole with my head and shoulders out, firing at the gate opening, trying to keep anyone from firing on the men retreating, so smart German figured there was only one rifle firing so he jumped out and gave me a burst with his burp gun. Well, he hit the barrel of my rifle and smashed it up. It cut my finger pretty good. I lay still until I heard the heavy 30 machine gun open up, then I got up and ran back with the rest of the men. I had to get a new rifle and a medic put a bandage on my finger.

I took out many patrols just to try and find out where the enemy

was and report back my findings. But one stands out in my mind. I had five men with me and was scouting deep into enemy territory when we spotted a P-38 fighter plane. He spotted us and circles back. I put the men against the hedgerow and went out in the middle of the field with a 1-foot square of fluorescent orange panel (used to designate front line troops). I stood facing him and waved the panel as he dove.

I thought he would wiggle his wings and keep on going, instead, he opened fire on me, cutting a furrow in the ground with 50 calibers about a foot on each side of me. I was so scared my knees buckled and I went to the ground. My men thought I had been cut in half. When they picked me up they could not believe I was all right. We made our way back and I reported it but never could find out who the pilot was.

Due to the fact that the 2nd Battalion, 175th had so few men left, part of us were assigned to a task force with the 2nd Rangers. It was called Task Force Sugar. I think we were to attack and wipe out stubborn pockets of resistance. One day, we were held up by a Jerry machine gun. I was ordered to take my squad and make a frontal attack on it.

We fanned out and started to creep and crawl forward. They spotted us and opened fire, spraying the whole area. We could not advance, so I ordered them back. We all made it safely. The gun was taken the next day by a flanking movement. We pushed on slowly with the Germans retreating. It was September and the nights were going to get cool. We got a break about the 8th of September and were told we were going to get a shower.

Well, that was good news to me for I had not had my clothes off since I left England the first part of June. We were trucked to a river where an outfit had rigged up a tent with showers. We were told to strip down and throw all our clothes on a big pile, for we were to get new ones. Well, we went into the showers and stood, and the Sergeant said when I blow the whistle, you will get water. He blew, water came and in one minute it went off. The Sergeant said “soap yourselves.” I was barely wet but I soaped, hair and all. He blew again and another one minute of water and out. Hell, I still had soap all over me. I thought I felt worse than when I went in.

I dried off and told the Private my sizes for new OD’s. He said, “Man, we don’t have any OD’s that size and gave me a pair of green fatigues and a brown field jacket, shoes two sizes too big and nothing seemed to fit. I went back to my outfit, but I was afraid to get out of my hole for fear one of my men would shoot me. I looked like a Kraut. I wrote all my sizes down on a piece of paper and sent it back to the kitchen with our Company runner. Late the next day, they sent up a whole new outfit, long johns, OD’s and a green field jacket, new shoes that fit and I felt fine.

During my patrolling one day we were sneaking down a sunken road. I had a scout ahead of me and four men behind me. The lead man went around a large bush and motioned me forward.

Just as I started around the busy carrying my rifle against my hip at the ready, a bullet hit the butt plate and blew the whole stock off the rifle. It is a good thing it blew away from me and not inward or I would have been hurt bad.

Well, when that shot went off, the scout passed me by and then I started to run back too. The sniper fired right rounds me as I ran zigzagging in the sunken road. I could see the dirt spattering around my feet but he missed me every time. You may think I was crazy but when the eighth round went off, I stopped and said, "Why don't you learn to shoot?" I must have been nuts.

I reported back to the Battalion Commander and he said, "You were not carrying that rifle." I said, "Sir, I sure as hell was not dragging it." He said, "You better go like down for a while before you go back to your company." I did and I got the shakes. I shook in every muscle in my body. My runner fed me black coffee and rubbed me until I fell asleep. When I awoke, I was OK and went back to my unit. Again, the Lord was with me.

That night everything seemed calm on the front line. So, I asked my 2nd in command to let me sleep without pulling guard duty of two on and two off. He said, "You have earned it." "If nothing happens, I won't wake you." Well, I slept sound until 0600. I woke to a cold foggy morning. I decided to check the posts on the hedgerow. Like a nut, I did not take my rifle. The left side was fine, always one man up. As I went to the last hole on the right side, I saw a rifle propped against the hedge but could not see anyone. I looked in the hole and it seemed empty.

So, I started to look around and I saw a soldier about ten yards away lying face down in the grass. I walked over and lifted his helmet and asked, "Are you OK?" Well, he put out a spiel of German. I dropped his hat and made one leap for the rifle on the hedgerow. Before he could get to his feet, I had him covered and told him to come here with his hands up. He obeyed and then another one got up behind him and surrendered too.

I called for help and then went to see where my two men were. I found them both asleep. They had dug down, sideways and down again. Well, I wrestled them out and told them they had company. I told them they should be court martialed. But I did nothing about it. I don't think they would ever go to sleep on guard again.

I got my own rifle and put my bayonet on and said, "I'll take these two back to the C.P." We had to cross an open field about 100 yards. We got about half way across when our artillery started firing. Every time a shell went over, this one guy hit the ground. I told him to keep running or I would stick him in the ass. Well, he ran by in a crouch; it was rather comic.

We got to the C.P. and the Captain told me to take them back to Regiment for interrogation. There was a jeep there with a small metal trailer attached. The driver and I loaded them in it and started off. The driver said, "Watch me lose these guys." Well, he hit every bump, rut and hole he could, going as fast as he could. I was watching them try to hang on. It was all they could do to stay in. When we stopped, one crawled under the jeep and the other patted the hood saying "prima Volkswagen." It was really funny.

The driver took me back to the Company C.P. and the Captain said, "Take your men and advance to the next hedgerow and dig in."

I saw a German throw a potato masher in the hole where I had just left my man. I ran and told the men the enemy was

right on the other side of the hedge. We tossed a few grenades to keep them down.

I sent one man back to tell the Captain of our plight. While he was gone a barrage of about twenty hand grenades came over the hedge. We all hit the ground and no one was hurt, and the man came back with his arms loaded with grenades and said the Captain said, "hand grenade the hell out of them."

I said, "I'm going back and see if he will give us some support. I went back and the Captain threw a whole box of grenades on my shoulder and said, "Get back up there and hold them back."

So, I went running back to my men. I took out my bayonet to break the steel band on the box of grenades and just then we were hit with two mortar shells. The concussion smacked me dizzy.

When the smoke cleared, I could see that everyone was hit. I thought, "Not again, everyone but me." I said, "Let's get out of here." The three who could walk started out, then one man said, "I can't walk." So, I got him in a fireman's carry over my shoulder and started to carry him out. As I was running, my rifle felt slippery and I looked down and saw it was covered with blood. I thought I must be hit too, although I did not feel anything. I tossed my rifle and tried to run a little faster.

I got back to the C.P. and told the medic to take care of him. He said, "He can wait, you're the one who is bleeding." He took the scissors and cut my new field jacket, shirt and long johns off at the shoulder. He put my first aid bandage on my forearm. There was about a two-inch piece missing. He rigged a tourniquet for me with my hanky and a stick and told me which direction the aid station was. The 1SG saw me with blood all over me. I told him to put LWA on the morning report, not SWA. I did not want my folds to worry too much.

I walked pass the battalion C.P. and the offers there said, "Don't tell me, they finally got you?" One of them said "Just a minute, I have your Captain on the phone, he wants to talk to you." I could not believe it when he asked, "How many men do you have with you?" I said, "Two, besides myself." I took off for the aid station. I walked about 1.5 miles and found it. They wanted to know if I wanted a shot of morphine. I said, "No, I want something to eat."

It was 12:00 p.m. They gave me a K ration, which I ate, and they loaded me in an ambulance to take me to a field hospital. It was a 60-mile ride. I was hit about 11.30 a.m. on September 11th and Brest fell on September 8th.

I was on the operating table about 7:00 p.m. I will never forget, they gave me pentothal and told me to count. I could feel someone taking off my new combat boots, but I could not do anything about it. I counted to 125 as I remember. The next morning, the surgeon came over to my cot and asked if I was alright. I said, "I think so, why?" He said, "You were the hardest guy I ever tried to knock out. I just had to see if you were o.k."

I was in a big tent with the cots just sitting on the grass. I decided I would read a little from the Readers Digest my mother had sent. When I took it out of the right side pocket of my field jacket, it had a hole clear through it. I took some letters and writing paper out and they had a hole in the, too. I felt around in my jacket and found a piece of shrapnel about as big as the end of my little finger. It had gone through my jacket, all the letters and paper, through the magazine and was lying in my pocket.

I might have had that piece of shrapnel in my body somewhere? Another incident where the Lord was looking after me. I wrote a V-mail letter to my wife, telling her just what happened to me, and told her not to worry. I gave it to a soldier who was going back to the front and told him to mail it up there where they don't censor the mail, for I had said things that were not allowed (it got through).

The next morning, I got into an ambulance and we drove to an airfield. We hung around a while and they said it was too foggy to fly out, so we loaded up and drove to the sea, where an L.S.T. was waiting.

The tide was coming in, the driver backed up the ramp and we scrambled out onto the tank deck. He barely made it to shore without getting swamped. They closed the big front doors and we took off. I had a ticket on me. The medics took it off and tied it to a stretcher mounted on the wall. It was up close to the front doors and the wind and water came in and the up and down movement of the flat bottom boat made it miserable to stay there.

I took a walk back to the tank deck. I saw a lot of men lying on the steel floor. They were wounded Germans. They said there were 110 American and 50 German wounded on board. As I was passing a German officer raised himself on his elbow and said to a sailor, "My men will have toast and tea." The sailor gave him a hard kick and said, "Your men will eat K rations like the rest."

I found my way up on deck and was enjoying the sear air, when I spotted a sailor with McKeesport, stamped on the rim of his white cap. I stopped him and asked if he was from McKeesport, Pennsylvania? He said, "Yes" I told him, "I am from Irwin, Pennsylvania, buddy buddy."

We talked of home for a little and I asked him if there was a chance of getting something hot to eat. I told him I had not had a hot meal in three months. He said, "I'll see the cooks and find out." He came back and said after everyone in the crew had eaten, I could go in and eat. It seemed like a long time but I was told to come in.

I had a big steak, covered with mushrooms and onions, potatoes, and everything that went with it. (I always said it was the best meal I ever had the whole time I was in the service.)

The sailor from McKeesport was Kaski. We were "b.s.'ing" at the mess table when another sailor came in and said, "Let's play three-handed pinochle." We played a while and I said, "I hate to go down to the tank deck and try to sleep." The other sailor said, "I'm going on watch, why don't you sleep in my sack." "Sounds good to me," I said, "I have not been in a real bed for a long time." He took me to the crews' quarters, and I crawled into a soft bed with a white blanket and I died!

About 6 a.m. I was awakened by a corpsman and he asked, "Are you a soldier?" and I said "Yes." He said, "I have been hunting you all night. We thought you might have gone overboard. Your ticket was on your bunk but we could not find you."

He had a whole hand full of needles. He said I was to get a shot every four hours and take sulfa pills. He gave me all of them. He said, "You are charged out for them and you are

going to get them" I asked if he wanted me to get up and he said, "As long as I know where you are, you can stay as long as you want." I went back to sleep. Later, I went down where my ticket was and ate a K ration breakfast.

I got into a conversation with a German boy who spoke very good English. He said he had two years of college, and he was wearing a German Air Corps uniform. He said he had been bayoneted in the leg by a soldier wearing the same patch as I had on. He said he was put into the infantry because they had no flying machines.

I asked him if he thought Germany would win the war. He said he thought they would but it may take longer since American came into it. I told him no way. When Hitler denounced God, your country lost. He pulled me into a corner and reached in his watch pocket and pulled out a crucifix. He said, "Hitler may have denounced God, but I haven't, and I'll bet most of the German people have not either." He had a nice pair of Air Corps boots on. I tried to trade him but he would not. They would have been nice to have.

Later that day, the ship docked at Plymouth, England. I got off and was trucked to Blandforth and admitted to an American General Hospital. There were about 20 men in my ward. They cleaned up my wound and packed the hole with sterile waste and wet it with a diluted solution of penicillin. They wet it a couple of times a day. I was fortunate that it did not pain much.

When they took the bandage off to change it, I would make a fist and you could see the muscles sneaking in between the bones in my arm. Some of the fellows could not look at it. It did not bother me because it did not hurt. I was there about one month before they decided to sew it up. They let it grow from the inside out.

I was called down twice to the chief surgeon of the hospital to show my arm to different doctors. Someone must have done a good job to want to show me off. There was not much to do. I played cards, but the only game everyone knew was Hearts. You got tired of playing the same game all the time.

One of my nurses was Winnie Brant, from Somerset, Pennsylvania. It was nice to have someone close to home to take care of me. Also, Gertrude Zetter, from Irwin, a nurse from another ward, came to see me when she saw Frick on the roster. She went to school with my brother. We had a nice talk.

Late in my stay, some of us got a pass to go into Bournemouth, England, a resort town. The pass was from 12 noon until 12 midnight. The bus came at 12, but the office would not issue a pass until 12, so we all missed the bus and had to wait until 1:00 p.m.

There was nothing to do in town. We looked around, had a few beers, and at 11:00 p.m. we went to the motor pool to get a ride back. The officer on the 2-1/2 ton truck said there was no room. I said, "You've got to be kidding," and we three jumped on the tailgate. He ordered us off saying all the bench seats were taken and we are not riding this truck. I got his name and rank and went to the MP's. They left me to call the hospital. I told them what had happened and the said to get a bed at the Red Cross and catch the first bus back in the morning.

We caught a bus but it was late afternoon when we got back. We caught a little hell but it blew over. That was the first pass I had had. The doctor decided I should give the

men in the ward exercises. Well, some were in shape and some were not. So, I gave them eye and finger exercises. I counted 1-2-3-4 real loud as they opened on one, closed their eyes on two. Later in the week the doctor said I was doing a really good job. If he only knew?

I was there about a month when they took me to the operating room to sew up my arm. The doctor wanted to know if I wanted to watch. I said ok, but every time he touched the wound with his scalpel, I would tighten up my arm. He told the nurse to cover my eyes with a towel, and he proceeded. When he was done, the nurse leaned over and kissed my forehead and said I did good. My arm felt funny being pulled, sewn and taped so it would heal.

A few days later, I was put on a train and taken to Coventry, England. There, a truck took me to a rehab hospital at Packington Park. It was a big estate about half way between Coventry and Birmingham. The quarters were Quonset huts with double decker beds. One stove but there were enough men in it to keep it fairly warm.

It was winter and there was not much to do. We were graded when we arrived and I was put in C grade. They went from E to A and out you went. Each week you took a hike. C grade went five miles. The next day you were evaluated. They had a long barracks with a bunch of little rooms and a doctor in each one. You never knew which doctor you would get each week.

The first doctor said, "Well, I see you made the hike. I'll put you in B grade." I told my buddies what happened and they said, "You are stupid if you don't speak up to the doctor; you will be gone in a couple of weeks." Well, the next week, I made the ten-mile hike and when the doctor said, "Well, I see you made the hike." I spoke up and said it was my arm and not my leg that was hurt. He looked and said, "I'll leave you in B grade." That was great, for almost every night, we could fine someone with a little money, we would climb over the fence and walk 1-1/2 miles to a pub called the Bull's Head. We had a few English beers and came back. Something to do.

The next week, I asked the doctor to send me to physical therapy. I went and asked for a ball to squeeze so I could build up my arm. They had none, only stuff for your legs. Well, I took the cellophane off a new gas mask and rolled it in a ball and tied it with my dog tag chain. I carried it in my hand and pocket, squeezing it whenever I could. When I went in to see the doctor, he asked what I had in my hand. I showed him and told him my story. He said, "Of all the thousand G.I.'s that I've seen, you are the first one to want to help himself. I like your attitude. I'm going to put you back in C grade." Well, that meant at least three more weeks at the hospital!

It was hard to get an overnight pass to go to Birmingham, so one nice evening, I decided to go and see what the place was like, and then come back. I had gotten an old type army blouse. I sewed my stripes on and pinned on my Purple Heart ribbon. At least the coat kept my arm warm, for as I said, my shirt and underwear were cut off. I had to walk about eight miles, and as I got to the city, an M.P. stopped me and said, "Let me see your pass, Sgt." I flicked my Purple Heart

ribbon and said, "Here is my pass." He said, "Go ahead, but don't get into any trouble." I had a few beers and walked back. It wasn't worth it.

Christmas was like any other day, except we had turkey for supper. On New Year's, I went to the 1SG to try to get a pass. When I went in, he said, "You are just the guy I'm looking for." Pack your bag, you are leaving right after chow."

They loaded me in a truck along with a lot of other G.I.'s and we ended up in a large warehouse in Southampton. They let us go into town that evening and three of us went to the movies and saw William Bendix in the "Hairy Ape." I had seen it about four times before. It seemed it was the only American movie in England. The next morning, we were to get a physical. I walked up to a desk where a doctor was sitting. He asked, "How do you feel soldier?" I said, "OK." He said, "Next," and I was on my way up a gang plank onto a British freighter.

We started across the English Channel, but about half way across we got fogged in, and we sat there. The damned British fed us a half can of salmon and a boiled potato with a cup of tea. We ate the same thing for three meals for two days. I'm sure there were American rations on board for us, but they probably saved them for themselves.

We landed in LeHavre in a blinding snow storm. We had to hold onto each other's belts as we climbed the steep hill to a tent camp. They assigned eight men to a tent. There were no cots or anything in the tent. Someone had left the top flap open and there was a pile of snow in the middle. They gave us a blanket and said we will be moving out after breakfast. We fell out about 5 a.m. There was snow everywhere. They had 1x6 boards nailed between trees to set your mess gear on to eat. Well, I set my canteen cup full of coffee down in six inches of snow and it got like ice. Dumb me.

We marched to the train station in LeHavre. There waiting was a line of box cars, (40 x 8's). We had a little time to kill before we left, so I went into town see if I could buy some Calvados to keep me warm on the trip. Every place was off limits to Allied troops, but I conned a guy into getting me a little.

To be continued.

Donations Requested

Please consider making a donation to help with the publication of the *Twenty-Niner*. This is the greatest expense that our association has. Checks should be made payable to:

The 29th Division Association, Inc.
and mailed to:

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National Headquarters
5 Shore Drive
North East, MD 21901-3397

Your generosity is greatly appreciated and we thank you for your patronage.

The Editor

Minutes

of the Business Meeting/NEC I
held virtually on 31 October 2020.

National Commander Pete Hinz called the National Executive Committee (NEC I) Meeting to order at 0905 hours. Due to the fact that the meeting was online, Commander Hinz waived the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance. Since National Chaplain Bill DeHaven was not present NC Hinz offered the opening prayer. The group then recited the 29th Division Association Preamble.

Commander Hinz began by welcoming all to the NEC and advised everyone to vote on 3 November if they had not already done so. He also indicated that there would be special Zoom presentations at 1300 and 1400 featuring guest speakers Joe Balkoski and Mitch Yockelson.

Commander Hinz then asked Adjutant Frank Armiger for the roll call. It was noted that a quorum was present.

The minutes of the previous meeting (NEC III, on 18 June 2020) had been published and were distributed in the Summer 2020 edition of the *Twenty-Niner*. Since there were no amendments or additions, the minutes, as published, were approved.

Correspondence: Adjutant Armiger read a piece of correspondence from the Normandy Allies. Marsha A. Smith, President, informed all friends of the organization that Normandy Allies ceased offering educational programs in July 2020 and that their Board voted to stop soliciting and/or accepting donations effective March 2020. Ms. Smith also announced her retirement as Normandy Allies winds down operations. Her organizations selected their colleague organization, EDU Trips, to continue these programs in 2021. The Association will wait to hear from EDU Trips and at the same time look at potential programs working with NSVC Ted Shuey and the 116th Regiment Tours. NFO Tom Knight received a letter from the family of John Wilcox thanking the Association for its donation in his memory. The letter came from the Post 78 Finance Officer.

Officer's Reports

National Commander: We are still on schedule for the convention in Gettysburg in October 2021. There will be no memorial service this year and we will remember all those who have passed in 2020 and 2021 at the national convention memorial service next year. There are currently two vacancies. One is for the National Historian. NC Hinz is open for suggestions and presented his sincere gratitude to outgoing NH Joe Balkoski for all the years of his service. The other open position is Futures Committee Chairman that is addressed later in these minutes.

National Senior Vice Commander: NSVC Shuey reported that with things on the downswing he has been working on his PhD with the emphasis on D-Day. He has been in touch with the 30th, 35th and 42nd associations but they also are quiet at this time. In the future he plans to look at combining efforts with regimental associations such as the 30th that were at one time divisions.

National Junior Vice Commander: NJVC Dick Snyder attended the Post 110 and Maryland Regional meetings.

Southern Regional Vice Commander: SRVC Kilbourne and Buddy Faulconer visited the Post 64 meeting in Roanoke. There were 25 present and they seemed to be functioning well under the circumstances and are continuing their fundraising. Post

116 continues to meet but Post 29 in Richmond may not have met this year due to COVID.

Maryland Region National Vice Commander: Maryland Region Commander Mund held a Zoom meeting in September and the report for that meeting was in the *Chin Strap*. There were 14 in attendance and the quorum voted to donate funds to the Military Family Relief Fund, Mid-Atlantic to provide monetary support for the 729th CSC. This unit is currently in Poland in support of operation "Atlantic Resolve." The printing of *Chin Strap* at the Fifth Regiment Armory is going smoothly thus far.

At Large Region National Vice Commander: PNC Ginsburg was not present. No report.

National Executive Director: NED Simmers attended the burial for PNC John Wilcox along with National Commander Pete Hinz and Editor Mund. She also attended the Warrant Officer school graduation ceremony and presented our 29th Division Association Inc. leadership plaque to the outstanding graduate. She recruited two new members and handed out a number of applications. In turn, they presented the Association with their leopard mascot complete with a mask. Some online orders were placed in October for the physical store. These need to be addressed. Post 85 will hold a Veterans Day ceremony at the Doughboy statue with a 21-gun salute. NED Simmers will read the names of the Association deceased at the ceremony.

Membership Chairman: Membership Chairperson Mund indicated that at this time Post 48, Post 29, and Post 2 are below average in membership renewals. However, he does not see a major issue and expects that these posts will be near 100% by year end. Overall membership renewals should be around 88%. We have eight more members at this time than last year for a total of 1,625.

Editor 29er: The upcoming issue will contain an article on the change of command to MG John M. Rhodes. There will be two continuations of WWII stories and an article about the NEC I meeting that features two online presentations.

Finance: National Finance Officer Tom Knight reported that he met with Brian Becker for the audit. The report showed that there were no issues with financial management and reporting. A motion was made and passed to approve the audit report. In 2020 NFO Knight moved \$7K from savings to take into account that more was spent than received for the year to balance the books. This will probably continue into upcoming years, meaning that savings will be continually diminished unless there are fundraising efforts to counter this trend. In 2021 NFO Knight is projected a \$11.9K shortfall. Revenue in 2020 was inversely impacted by the fact that we did not make any money on the convention. The money that is in the savings account primarily comes from lump transfers from the investment account. The Association is considering a new IRS code for fraternal organizations that would allow contributors to deduct donations on the personal and/or business return(s). This initiative was discussed at NEC III in June and documented in the minutes of the meeting.

Chaplain: Chaplain DeHaven was not present. No report.

Service: No report.

Surgeon: NS Dr. Howard Bond reported that the 29th lost SGT Aubrey Mitsch who died in a motorcycle crash. SGT Mitsch was a health care specialist in HQ Company, 29th Combat Aviation Brigade. Dr. Bond advised that everyone get a flu vaccine, pray for a COVID-19 vaccine, wear a mask and wash your hands. He also recommended reading the article in *The Maryland Line* that compared the SARS COVID-19 to the 1918 flu pandemic.

Welfare: NWO Becker said that it is hard to determine when people are in need of help and welfare during the pandemic. He also asked for a moment of silence for those that are ill and those who do not know they are ill.

Historian: The position is vacant. No report.

Sergeant-at-Arms: Randall Beamer not present. No report.

Property: NPO Franklin Shilow not present. No report.

Parliamentarian: NP Thomas Insley not present. No report.

Judge Advocate: NJA Houston Matney had no report.

Committee Reports

2021 National Convention: The Association executed a new contract for 2021 with the Wyndham. NC Hinz plans to visit the Wyndham in the near future to see what contingencies are in place for COVID-19 2021.

Awards/Grants Committee: The Association received the request from the Maryland Museum for Military History for \$10K to restore the colors for the 115th. After receipt of the grant there was an online vote to approve the request. The Maryland Military Historical Society will receive the grant and in turn provide the funds for restoration to the museum in keeping with Maryland code.

Futures Committee/Association Website: PNC Ginsburg resigned as head of this committee and Jimmy Kilbourne agreed to take the position for one year. The Committee recently held a meeting via Zoom and discussed other areas to address in addition to membership, such as mission, status, organizations and programs to assure that Association is still viable 10 years from now. NC Hinz directed that the strategic planning effort be incorporated under this committee. NC Hinz, PNC King and Adjutant Armiger volunteered to participate. The project should initiate in early December. For the website, the committee is planning to have a members-only section that will require a password to access. The content for this part could contain Morning Reports, unit histories and other documentation and media of special interest to members. Adjutant Armiger is planning to provide the videos for the afternoon talks to be available for the website and Facebook page.

Old Business

Future D-Day Normandy/Bedford Representation: NC Hinz advised that we will hold this initiative in obedience while the pandemic restricts events at these locations.

Future Wreath Laying Events: Postponed for the time being.

Uniform: PNC Hayden indicated that after a discussion with PNC King, they both agree that the Association should use a black hat similar to the blue hat for the Class B uniform. We should also consider reimbursing Bruce Kahl for any stock of blue caps left in his inventory. NFO Knight made a motion that the black hat with logo become the Class B hat for official functions and that other color hats with the logo be available for sale. The motion was seconded by PNC King and approved without opposition.

New Business

NPO Shilow has been contacted to discuss moving the physical inventory to the virtual store. Bruce Kahl indicated that we should see what we have and determine what is sellable and

consider giving away books, store remainder elsewhere and sell at the convention. Editor Mund plans to work with NPO Shilow to lay out all of inventory so that he, NC Hinz and NFO Knight could go over it to determine storage requirements and next steps. NFO Knight indicate that Bruce Kahl should be there as well.

NED Simmers has 6 orders outstanding. The old link to the physical needs to be removed from the website to stop these orders. 6 orders outstanding. NWO Becker indicated that the outstanding orders could be sent to him to see if he can fill them. Dr. Bond and PNC Hayden volunteered to help with inventory.

NC Hinz indicated that he will follow up on 29th Division representation at the new Army Museum in Ft. Belvoir, VA. As part of that effort, he will contact the new Division commander to determine if there are any plans on his side. If the Association plans to provide funding for a monument/plaque Editor Mund said that we should consider member donations to support the effort.

We will plan to have a decision brief on the change in IRS status for the Association before the NEC II meeting so that the NEC can approve a recommendation. This may require a bylaw amendment. NED Simmers will conduct research on tax side in support of this effort. Jimmy Kilbourne will prepare and send the brief to NC Hinz, NFO Knight and Adjutant Armiger for review prior to presenting to a select committee for decision.

SVC Shuey advised that we all should be aware of the challenges related to the Stonewall Brigade and Confederate heritage in Virginia that may affect Guard units in that state, as well as the use of "Stonewall" Jackson's name. SVC Shuey is also receiving communications from Europe on Association planning and participation in the 80th anniversary of D-Day. We will need to be aware and place this topic on the NEC agenda going forward.

Deaths, Sick and Distressed

Past National Commander and Past National Executive Director John Wilcox passed away on 3 October 2020. Past National Commander Paul Winters passed away on 11 October 2020.

Good of the Association

The NEC II will be held in the January – February timeframe. NWO Becker recommended that the Association consider Bruce Kahl as the new Property Officer. PNC Bill King indicated how Post 64 was handling its annual Christmas party that is usually attended by 60 – 70. The party will be held meeting at Masonic Lodge as usual, but they will have to bring in their own ready-made meals. The monthly meetings continue to be held at the Roanoke Restaurant with some adjustments in the restaurant but they are served meals.

Post 64 is using Zoom for their meetings.

Closing Ceremony and Adjournment

NC Hinz adjourned the meeting at 1103 hours.

Respectfully submitted,

*FRANK A. ARMIGER
Adjutant*

NEC Members please note:

These minutes are not distributed individually.

This is your copy.

John E. Wilcox, Jr.

1 January 1936 - 3 October 2020

Past National Commander — 2004-2005

Mr. John Elmer "Moe" Wilcox, Jr., 84, died Saturday, October 3, 2020 at home in Frederick, MD. Born on January 1, 1936 in Frederick, MD, he son of the late John Elmer Wilcox, Sr., and the late Bessie Jane (Marshall) Eppley Wilcox; and the loving husband of Christina Irene (Bell) Wilcox, whom he married on May 1, 1954.

He was in the FHS Class of 1954, but received his diploma with a G.E.D. on November 29 1975. In his early years worked at several service stations, for Storm & Shipley and for Cappello's Food Market.

He joined Company A, 1/115th Infantry Regiment, 29th Division, Maryland Army National Guard on February 15, 1954 until October 1970 and from April 1980 until July 9, 1982, retiring as First Sergeant (E-8).

John began his Postal career at the Frederick Post Office in November 1966 as a clerk. He worked as the Safety Officer and the Quality Control Officer, progressing to the position of Director of Mail Processing, Level 20. He transferred to U S Postal Headquarters in Washington, DC as a Dispatch and Routing Analyst in July 1981. He was a Master Instructor at the Management Academy in Potomac, MD from April 1982 until April 1984. He became a Transportation Specialist at Postal Headquarters and was responsible for airmail transportation in Alaska.

John was a Life Member of Cresap's Rifles, Post 78, 29th Division Association, Frederick. Past Commander of Post 78 - 1993-1994, had served as Adjutant and editor of the "Cresap's Rifle" from June 1994 until December 2019. He was also Past Maryland Region Adjutant - 1998-2000, Past Maryland Region Commander - 2001-2002; Past National Adjutant - 1997-1998 & 2008-2009; and Past National Commander - 2004-2005. He served as



National Executive Director, 29th Division Association from June 2002 until October 2014; and was editor of the Maryland Region newsletter, "The Chin Strap" (April 1998- April 2004 and June 2006 until June 2014).

He had devoted his life to the 29th Division Association, but due to failing health had to give up his duties in 2019.

He was a member of the Pleasant View Church of the Brethren.

He is survived by his wife of 66 years, Christina Irene (Bell) Wilcox; two sons, Douglas Alan Wilcox and wife Abigail Grace Richon of Hagerstown, and John Elmer Wilcox, III, of Salisbury; and one daughter, Cynthia Lorraine Wilcox, of Frederick.

Several members of the 29th Division Association provided the following comments:

"John will be missed, he was an icon of 29th Division Association and a great loss to us all." *Dick Snyder-National Junior Vice Commander.*

"So sorry to learn of this huge loss! In just the few years I got to know him, I

quickly realized how much he meant to our 29th Division Association family. He will be sorely missed." *Ted Shuey-National Senior Vice Commander.*

"As we all know, John was a dedicated 29er who loved the blue and gray." *Bob Finn-Past National Commander.*

"John was the primary steadying hand for both the Maryland Region and the National for many years." *Charles Foreman-Past Maryland Region Commander.*

"John was one of the individuals who everyone liked. There isn't anyone who worked harder for his post or the 29th Division Association than John. He nominated me for leadership in our association and was always available when I needed advice. I'm so glad that I was able to talk to John recently. I'll forever cherish his memory." *Bob Wisch-Past National Commander.*

"John was one of the first to welcome me to the National level. He always had a kind word and was willing to help in any way he could. I am honored to be able to have called him my friend. He will truly be missed!! RIP John and prayers for his family." *Valerie Simmers-National Executive Director.*

"I was blessed to have John as a friend, from our days of service in A/115. He was a dedicated and first class soldier, and a man I always respected. We traveled to meetings together, along with Buck Lockard. John and Chris were the back bone of the Post 78. If you needed anything done, John was the man. His wife, family and the 29th were his pride and joy. Our lives are better because along our journey we had the privilege of knowing John Wilcox and having him as a friend." *John Schildt-Past National Chaplain.*

The editor wishes to thank those members who provided their comments of PNC John E. Wilcox, Jr.

Paul C. Winters

15 March 1924 – 11 October 2020

Past National Commander — 1992-1993

Paul C. Winters, 96, a resident of Garden Spot Village, passed away on Sunday, October 11, 2020.

He was the husband of the late Louise Riggin Winters who died in 2007. Born in Boston, MA he was the son of the late Paul G. and Mary Margaret Cary Winters.

Paul retired as the Sales Manager at G. O. Carlson Steel Company in Coatesville, after 30 years of employment. He was a member of Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church in New Holland. Paul had been a Boy Scout leader for many years and was awarded the Silver Beaver Award by them.

Paul served in the U.S. Army during World War II and had served with the 29th Infantry Division where he received 2 Purple Hearts. He was a medic as part of the group that stormed the Beach of Omaha on D-Day. He was a member of the American Legion, the VFW and was a past national commander of the 29th Infantry Association.

Surviving is a daughter, Deborah W. wife of Jack Hook of Spotsylvania, VA; two grandchildren, Drew C. Hook husband of Theresa Hook, and Kavin Hook Miller wife of Mark Miller; four great grandchildren, Jack and Sydney Hook and Rory and Abigail Miller. He was preceded in death by a daughter Betsy Landon, a brother, James Winters, and a sister, Evelyn Strickland.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held on Friday, October 16, at 11:00 A.M. at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church, 150 Water Street, New Holland, PA with the Rev. Steven Fauser as Celebrant. Final Commendation and Farewell in the Sunny Ridge Memorial Park, Crisfield, MD.

Jay Garrison, Commander of Post 94 recalls "I first heard about PNC



Winters early in my membership in the Association. I should start out by saying that PNC Winters just wanted me to call him Paul.

"Somewhere in my papers I have a letter from Paul to my father. You see, for a while they both served in the Clearing Company of the 104th Medical Battalion.

"The story of how I was able to put a face to a name was a bit strange. It was at our annual reunion and convention in Harrisburg, PA. I was alone on this trip as my wife stayed behind to take care of some things.

"It was late in the evening and as I was walking to my car I saw a rather tall man sitting on the curb next to his car. I went to help him up and saw that he had a cut on his face. I took a look and said that we needed to go the ER. As we're waiting for the ambulance I introduced myself and said that my dad was in the 104th. Out of the blue he says "oh, I know your father!" And that's how we connected.

"That night in the ER more than one doctor came by to shake his hand as

they had learned that he was a D-Day Veteran. Paul was an aid man with F/116. In 1992/93 he was the National Commander of the Association.

"During the following months I would stay in touch with Paul from his home in New Holland, PA. It was amazing to hear him mention the names of people that my father was close to.

"He knew more about what happened to them after the war such as where they lived and who they married. I tried to take notes as fast as I could on what he was telling me.

"He was a great story teller not only about the invasion but his other experiences. He still had the helmet that he wore overseas. No red cross on "you didn't want to be a target."

"I listened with interest when he spoke about some of the 29th conventions and how some were a little rowdy. His memory of names and places was amazing.

"So, I was sad to see him pass. I would call him about every few months or so. We would chat about how his health was, who he had coming to see him from time to time and what the food was like where he was living.

"He never seemed to be in a hurry to get off the phone and was a very good at keeping the conversation going. He answered all my questions about my dad's unit and I thanked him for that.

"On our last conversation I told him that I wanted to write down his story. He had already been interviewed a dozen times and written about in local paper, and with a chuckle, he told me "I'm not doing anymore interviews." I'll miss him and his wry humor. It was my honor to have known him and to hear his stories."

The Major of Saint-Lo

I well remember my first trip to Staunton, Virginia. Located in the breadbasket of the Old Dominion, the Shenandoah Valley is in any season of the year a beautiful section of the state. On my first visit the spring season was complete with new foliage. The air was clean following a light rain.

The 116th Infantry Regimental headquarters is stationed in the town's armory. Known as the Virginia Army National Guard's "Stonewall" Brigade, I knew about the "Stonewallers" and the regiment's lineage, but I was about to learn much more of its rich heritage and association with the valley.

Upon arriving I noted that the facility was named for Thomas D. Howie, of whom I had no knowledge. Walking down a hallway I encountered a bronze life-size bust of Major Thomas D. Howie. Who was this celebrated officer? I had to know.

My duty finished for the day, I changed into jogging clothes and joined several members of the regimental staff for a run. Several of us were long-distance runners, the first few miles were for warm up with little conversation. As we moved into a steady rhythm, I asked about Major Howie and was eagerly enlightened. The following is a little of what I learned on that late spring afternoon run.

Howie was born in the South Carolina midlands, a town called Abbeville. He enjoyed the virtues of small-town living. He attended The Citadel and was a star athlete in several sports. Graduating in 1929, Howie moved to Staunton, VA where he taught English, coached sports and was the athletic director for the Staunton Military Academy. Here he met and married Elizabeth Payne. In time, a daughter, Sally, was born. The family became a thread in Staunton's community fabric.

In 1934 Howie joined the VA Army National Guard and was stationed at the regimental headquarters in town. Howie drilled with the national guard in Staunton until the unit was federalized in 1941, his life forever changed.

The 116th Infantry Regiment was assigned to the 29th Infantry Division. In 1942 the division crossed the Atlantic Ocean. Once in the United Kingdom, it trained hard for a future invasion to push the Germans out of France. The "Stonewallers" were the spearhead for the famous D-Day amphibious attack on June 6, 1944.

With the beachhead secured, the division quickly moved inland. A month later, Howie was given command of 116th's 3rd Battalion. Several days later his battalion was assigned the mission to break through German lines to rescue a sister battalion that had become surrounded and cut off from resupply. Howie instructed his commanders to fix bayonets. They launched an attack using only hand grenades and the spirit of the bayonet in a successful linkup with the 116th's 2nd Battalion.

"After resupplying his fellow soldiers he then left the 2nd Battalion to defend their position, reporting that they were "too cut up", and planned to use the 3rd Battalion alone to push ahead and liberate Saint-Lo. On the morning of July 17, Howie spoke

to the division commander saying, "See you in St. Lo!"; then issued orders for the attack. Moments later he was killed by shrapnel during a mortar attack."

The loss was personal for the soldiers under Howie's command. The next day, men of the 3rd Battalion entered Saint-Lo. During the previous day's progress reports, the division commander ordered that Major Howie's body be the first to enter Saint-Lo after it was secured. On a gurney and draped with an American Flag, the body was placed on the hood of a jeep and was at the head of the column that entered the town. It was placed in the debris of the destroyed Saint Croix Cathedral in the heart of Saint-Lo.

Ordinarily Howie's story would end here had it not been for a photographer. Graves registration would have processed the major's body for burial. A replacement commander would have been identified and the 29th Division in France would continue to fight the Germans. But a photograph of Howie's flag-draped body lying in repose became widely circulated in the United States and ultimately was one of the most iconic images in the European Theater of WW II. Wartime security prevented Howie's name from being released. The photograph immortalized him as The Major of Saint-Lo.

Major Thomas Dry Howie was buried in the Normandy American Cemetery in France. For his actions he was awarded posthumously the Silver Star and Purple Heart.

Years following the war:

- The Staunton Military Academy unveiled a bust of Major Howie at Kable Hall.
- The Citadel erected the Howie Bell Tower next to its chapel and a mural of his body being carried into Saint-Lo is displayed in Daniel Library.
- Collier's magazine printed a story, "The Major of St. Lo" by Cornelius Ryan; it was made into an episode of the TV show *Cavalcade of America*.
- As part of the 25th anniversary of the D-Day invasion, the town of Saint-Lo dedicated a memorial to Major Howie at the Saint Croix Cathedral.
- The character of Captain John Miller in the movie *Saving Private Ryan* was largely based on Major Howie.
- Thomas Howie was enshrined in the SC Veterans Hall of Fame.
- A historical marker was placed in front of the Howie home in Abbeville, SC
- A granite monument in Abbeville's town square reads the inscription "Dead in France, Deathless in Fame."
- A South Carolina Army Reserve center is named for him as is the Virginia Army National Guard armory in Staunton, VA.

Sources:

1. Personal interviews with regimental staff members, 1985
2. Balkoski, Joseph (1989). *Beyond the Beachhead: The 29th Infantry Division in Normandy*.
3. Wikipedia

By Joe E. Harris

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The Association is open to anyone who wants to keep the history and spirit of the 29th alive - soldiers who served in the 29th, currently serving soldiers, families of those who served, and anyone who wants to keep the 29th alive.

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Post (optional) – please indicate if you have a preference on what Post you are assigned to: _____

I want to join the 29th Division Association and help keep the history of the 29th Division alive. The \$12 dues includes the National Membership, the monthly *Chin Strap* and the *Twenty-Niner* newsletter three times a year.

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Applications and payments can be completed online or mailed to our National Headquarters address below. If you do not choose a post, one will be assigned for you based on your current or former unit or your home address. Dues vary from post to post but a check for \$12.00 made payable to the 29th Division Association will suffice. You may also make application and pay dues at our National web site: www.29thdivisionassociation.com.

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MD Post 48	Westminster, MD	NE Post 93	New England	MD Post 729	Waynesboro, PA