



Extraordinary Events We Have Survived and Overcome

Junior's War Service 1942-1944. He was assigned as a paratrooper to go to the South Pacific War zone. The day he was to go over via boat, peace was declared and he went as an occupational troop. Went to Phillipines, and to Sendi, Japan.

Parents

Junior's house burned at Ellis, Gilmer Co W.V. His mother and dad lived in the cellar house until they could build a house on the main road.

1942 Justine's parents house burned at Sand Fork, W.V. My sisters new clothes they were going to wear on a trip to Wash. D.C. and for graduation from Sand Fork High School. ^{burned} We had to live in John Mark's garage til we found a house. The community was great to us.

Justine
&
Junior

Into each family come those unforeseen events. Many have survived natural disasters (floods, tornados) and many times families were forced to move or lives were altered for the better as a result. Here is space for you to record whatever you feel is appropriate in relation to your own family's experiences.

1927 Dad's illness was a blow to all of us. He became ill 3 months before I ^{→ Justine} was born. He was working in the Good-year Rubber plant in Akron, Ohio. We didn't know what caused his illness but relatives told us various causes - the chemicals used at the plant, he was thrown from a horse and landed on his head, while in the infantry in Texas in World War I he had a mental illness, or he had a stroke. Anyway, my Aunt Mollie Dad's sister, took care of him the rest of his life and mom took care of us 5 children on a teacher's salary.

Junior's dad was seriously injured in a rock quarry at Upper Ellis ^{working} for the State Road Commission. T.N.T. blew up in his face and he was off from work for over a year. Broke his hands and injured his eyes - for a long time, he couldn't stand much light. Your Uncle Carl Radcliff was the "boss" on the job at that time.

Justice

CPL. SHEETS, RAY HERSMAN Jan. 16, 1945
MISSING IN ACTION, MURPHY
LT. BARNETT WAR PRISONERS

For gallantry in action in France, Pfc. Edward Hersman, son of Mrs. Hazel Hersman of Sand Fork has been awarded the Silver Star. After being wounded in action in France July 11, 1944, Hersman returned to duty August 25. About his performance on duty a post mimeograph magazine said this to say, in part:

Democrat left 18/11/44

"Completely alone in intense enemy fire, Pfc. Hersman, attached to an intelligence section, directed the entire front gathering of ammunition materially instrumental in reducing enemy counter fire. In the course of his work he was struck by shell fragments in the head and neck, but before submitting to evacuation he located two enemy machine gun positions and reported them to the commanding post."

Incidentally, his infantry company is a part of the 8th Division that captured a Nazi general and 20,000 Germans in France recently. Pfc. Hersman's mother, Hazel Hersman, returned to Camp Blanding, Va., Sunday after a furlough with his mother and sisters.

Is Prisoner Of War In Germany

Word was received here the past week that T/5 Ernest Ray Hersman, listed missing since December 16, is a prisoner of war in Germany.

His mother, Mrs. Hazel Hersman, A. E. '38, teacher in the Sand Fork Elementary School, received a letter

from him the past week in which he stated he was a prisoner and was physically well.

DEPARTMENT OR SHIP:

One former student and three College graduates were reported missing in action or war prisoners the past week.

Cpl. Linn Sheets, brother-in-law of Miss Erma Edwards, financial secretary, was reported "missing in action" since December 16. His wife, the former Miss Oletha Edwards, student here in 1931-32, and three small sons, James Edward, Donald and Clarandine, live at Auburn. Teacher in Cairo High School at the time of his entering the service, Cpl. Sheets had been overseas about five weeks previous to the time he was reported missing.

Also missing in action is T/5 Ray Hersman, son of Mrs. Hazel Hersman, College graduate, of Sand Fork. A War Department telegram, received by Mrs. Hersman Monday, Jan. 11, stated that her son, student here in 1941-42, has been missing in Germany since December 16, 1944.

Two letters received by his family from Pvt. James Murphy, son of Mr. and Mrs. Earl Murphy of near Glenville, stated that he is a prisoner of war in Germany. The letters were dated November 22 and December 3. Pvt. Murphy took his basic training at Camp Blanding, Fla. Married and the father of one child, he was coach at Tanner High School at the time he entered the service.

Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Barnett, of Weston, have been notified that their son, Lt. Denver R. Barnett, College graduate, previously reported missing in action on October 17, is a prisoner of war in Germany. A War Department announcement stated that the information had been received through the American Red Cross.

The War Department communication stated that a report of his being missing had been sent when the Flying Fortress of which he was bombardier had been forced down in enemy territory; the ship had fallen behind formation and was lost to sight following a bomb run on a mission over Vienna, Austria. It also stated, that, "in recognition of his meritorious work," Lt. Barnett had been awarded the Air Medal and one Oak Leaf Cluster.

Lt. Barnett's wife, the former Miss Rose Amos, of Burnsville, and small son reside with his parents. At the time of his enlistment January 27, 1943, he was a teacher in the Sutton grade school.

Hazel Hersman

Written by mom

*Pfc. Edward Hersman
Co. G, 329th Inf
A.P.O. 83rd Division
A.S.N. 35 521321
Camp Breckenbridge Ky.
A.S.N. 35521321
Camp Breckenbridge Ky.*

*T/5 Ernest R. Hersman
A.S.N. 35751954*

*B. Battery
E.C.P. A.A.A.T.C.
Camp Davis N.C.*

*Iris and Lenore like
their schools in Clay
Co. fine. Hazel,*

OVERSEAS SERVICE:

URN DATE

BATTLES, ENGAGEMENTS, SKIRMISHES, ETC.

WOUNDS RECEIVED IN SERVICE; SICKNESS

IMPORTANT LEAVES OR FURLONGHS:

DISCHARGED AT OR SEPARATION:

Ed + Ray Kersman fought here in World War II

Justice

WORLD WAR II

Battle of the Bulge recalled in Belgian city of Bastogne

Philip Williams

BASTOGNE, Belgium (UPI) — They show tacky movies at the George S. Patton picture palace in Bastogne. Patton's battered features have pride of place in the Cafe Patton next door.

Forty years after U.S. troops held onto the Ardennes capital despite Adolf Hitler's desperate, last counter-offensive of World War II, Gen. Anthony C. McAuliffe beams down in full battle dress from the walls of the Cafe McAuliffe on McAuliffe Square, which is dominated by a bronze bust of McAuliffe and a Sherman tank.

The Cafe Washington and Cafe Kennedy are within a stone's throw. With one eye on history and the other on something else, hardly a bar owner in town has failed to put up an American flag or a picture of a U.S. soldier.

Hitler launched the "Battle of the Bulge" offensive against the Americans Dec. 16, 1944, in a frantic gamble to reverse Allied advances toward the Rhine.

Twenty-five German divisions smashed from the Eifel — the German extension of the rolling, pine-clad Ardennes — into the thinly manned U.S. positions along a 48-mile front in Belgium and Luxembourg.

It was the worst American reverse of the European campaign.

Intelligence had failed the hapless GIs manning frozen foxholes in the snow. The scale, intensity and surprise of the German onslaught paralyzed the American war machine. Everyone had thought the war was over.

Within 72 hours of the breakthrough, President Franklin D. Roosevelt had made up his mind that if Hitler's last throw succeeded in the Bulge, the United States would use the atomic bomb on Germany to shorten the fighting.

The plan remained a plan. The German salient (bulge) was squeezed out of existence well before August 1945, when the bomb was finally perfected for the U.S. arsenal.



UPI photo

German troops dart across a Belgian road after Adolf Hitler launched the Battle of the Bulge offensive on Dec. 16, 1944.

Fanatical units of elite, armored Waffen SS spearheaded the German attack. The fastest was commanded by SS Lt. Col. Jochen Peiper and had orders to stop for nothing.

It tore its way toward the Meuse River, the preliminary target in a Nazi campaign designed to choke off the Allied supply port of Antwerp.

Peiper's men, brutalized after service on the Russian front, fell on a retreating American artillery column at the Baugez crossroads, on a tree-fringed plateau southeast of Malmedy on Dec. 17.

About 80 American prisoners from the column were butchered by SS machine gun and pistol fire in the scrubby grassland where, today, flocks of geese and squat Belgian cattle graze in the bitterly cold winds.

The Malmedy massacre was not the last. The official U.S. Army history chronicles the killings of a total of 300 American prisoners and at least 117 Belgian civilians at 12 locations along Peiper's line

"That day I saw the highest-ranking traffic cops I have ever seen," said one American witness.

The American lines held at Bastogne, a rock in the midst of the German advance. About 18,000 American soldiers, including 11,840 from McAuliffe's 101st Airborne Division, braved all the initial 40,000 the surrounding enemy could throw at them.

On Dec. 23, Bastogne was cut off and a ceaseless bombardment began from around the compass. McAuliffe was sent a demand under truce that he surrender. His reply, a monosyllabic "Nuts," passed into folklore. Bastogne today styles itself "Nuts City."

Bastogne held out until armored units of Patton's 3rd Army, racing from Luxembourg in a remarkable display of agility and mobility over narrow ice-covered roads, broke through Dec. 26. But still fiercer fighting continued around the shattered town until Jan. 18.

The story of Bastogne was the story of the Bulge and the beginning of the end of the war. By

AT AGE

of advance before he was finally halted and turned back Dec. 19 at Stoumont.

Peiper and 42 other SS officers were sentenced to death for the murders by a U.S. military tribunal in 1946. Almost all the sentences were commuted and many of the Germans were later freed when it was proved that American interrogators had used brutal methods, including mock executions, to extract confessions.

But the end of Peiper's advance was not the end of the fierce campaign for the German armies struggling through the snow in his wake.

For the first three days of the German offensive, the American forces reeled in retreat. The efforts of American commanders to plug the gaps with reinforcements were frustrated by winding roads choked with fleeing U.S. units.

The example of an armored column trying to reach the front in the St. Vith area Dec. 16 became a pattern for both sides in the campaign. Senior officers from majors on up scrambled into the mud to clear a way and turn back the tide of retreat.

Jan. 27, German lines were back where they had been Dec. 16 when the offensive began. On Jan. 20 the Soviets broke onto German soil in East Prussia. U.S. forces crossed the Rhine into the German heartland March 7.

An estimated 15,000 people — 13,000-plus Germans, 1,000 Americans and 500 Belgian civilians — are thought to have died in and around Bastogne. The Bulge campaign claimed 120,000 Germans, killed, wounded and missing. American losses were also severe: 8,000 killed, 48,000 wounded, 21,000 captured or missing.

Guy Lutgen, who was 8 then and is Bastogne's mayor now, said

Justine

NAME

ENLISTE

BRANCH

TRAININ

DIVISION

COMPAN

PROMOTI

CLASSIFICATION:

YEAR: AT AGE

TRANSFERRED

EIGHTY-THIRD

INFANTRY

DIVISION

OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING GENERAL

OVERSE



Citation

BATTLES

AWARD OF SILVER STAR MEDAL

Private First Class Edward R. Hersmann, 35523521
Infantry, 329th Infantry, United States Army

WOUNDS

IMPORTA

DISCHAR

For gallantry in action on 26 July 1944, near Sainteny, France. Completely disregarding intense enemy fire, Private First Class Hersmann acting as a member of the battalion intelligence section covered the entire front gathering information which was materially instrumental in reducing enemy counter fire. In the course of his work he was struck by shell fragments in the head and neck, but before submitting to evacuation he succeeded in locating two enemy machine gun positions and reporting them to the command post. By his fearless performance of duty and disregard for personal safety he contributed greatly to the progress of his battalion. Private First Class Hersmann's conspicuous devotion to duty reflects great credit upon himself and the finest traditions of the military service. Entered military service from West Virginia.





Junior
Junior McHenry

Military Service Records

1944 -
 1946

NAME: Junior Wee McHenry
 SERVICE NUMBER: 35785486
 JOB CLASSIFICATION: Clerk-typist
 ENLISTED OR INDUCTED: Ashland, Ky
 MONTH: Nov. DAY: 10 YEAR: 1944 AT AGE: _____
 BRANCH OF SERVICE: Army Airborn GRADE: PFC

TRAINING CAMPS: ① Fort Bragg, N.C. SERVICE SCHOOLS ATTENDED: _____
② Fort Benning, Ga. - Paratrooper
③ Alabama Area of Fort Benning - Demolition
 DIVISION: 11th Airborne Division - 187th Infantry Platoon DEPARTMENT OR SHIP: _____
 DATES: 1943 - Oct. 1946

PROMOTIONS AND DATES: ① Took basic training in Field Artillery at Fort Bragg, N.C. Junior was on the boxing team and had matches with other divisions.

OVERSEAS SERVICE: _____ DEPARTURE DATE: _____ PORT: _____ RETURN DATE: _____ PORT: _____
② Went to Fort Benning, Ga. to paratrooper jump school. Jumped from mock airplanes, then 34' tower on a cable, then 250' tower with a parachute that they released and you went to the ground. Training jumps - 4 daylight jumps and 1 night jump.

WOUNDS RECEIVED IN SERVICE: _____ SICKNESS OR HOSPITALIZATION: _____
③ Went to advanced training at the Alabama area of Fort Ben.

Junior McHenry

Jumped 75 pack housers (guns).
Went on to demolition school in
Alabama and jumped with 24 pounds
of T.N.T. on each leg.
④ Rode train from Alabama to Fort Ord,
California, ready to go to the war
in the South Pacific. Junior shipped
out Aug. 16, 1945 2 days after the
Japanese surrendered, Thank God.
He was on board ship 21 days
going from California to Manila,
Philippines (was deathly seasick).
Was stationed in Clark Field Air Base
and was on night "KP" duty and learned
to pinnoce.
⑤ Left Clark field and went to Manila,
at the 24th Replacement Depot - and
was shipped via railroad car that
had no seats or roof - just open. 15 of us -
Engineer outfit had already been shipped
to Japan - so we stayed overnight and
went back to the Replacement Depot.
Stayed there 1 week, then they sent
us back to the same place that we
knew the engineer outfit had already
gone to Japan. Again, we stayed 1 night
and went back to the Replacement
Depot at Manila. Later they put 15
of us on a merchant ship to Japan.
While going through the North China Sea,

continued to P. 86

Junior McHenry

Military Service Records

CONTINUED

continued from p.85



we got into the "tail-end" of a typhoon. Seas were very rough! The boat would dip from one end to the other, taking water each time.

TRAINING CAMPS

SERVICE SCHOOLS ATTENDED:

⑥ We arrived in Yokohama, Japan, Dec. 29, 1945. We were shipped by train to Sendi, Japan - Camp Schimmel-

DIVISION:

REGIMENT:

DEPARTMENT OR SHIP:

DATES

COMPANY:

TRANSFERRED

PROMOTIONS AND DATES:

OVERSEAS SERVICE:

DEPARTURE DATE

PORT:

RETURN DATE

PORT:

BATTLES, ENGAGEMENTS, SKIRMISHES, EXPEDITIONS:

COMMANDING OFFICERS:

CITATIONS:

Went back to a desk job with his outfit and assigned men to various jobs.

WOUNDS RECEIVED, IN SERVICE, SICKNESS OR HOSPITALIZATION:

⑦ Shipped back to the states the latter part of September, 1946.

IMPORTANT LEAVES OR FURLOUGHS:

We were coming into San Francisco

DISCHARGED AT OR SEPARATION: