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The Octofoil, January/February 1971

Ninth Infantry Division Association

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AN "OLD RELIABLE"

William Finley answered your call to duty on May 1, 1942 leaving Decatur to join the Ninth Infantry Division at Ft. Bragg, N. C., a member of the 391st Infantry. He saw action in North Africa, Sicily, and the continent of Europe. On April 1, 1945, he was killed in Germany. Sgt. William Finley gave his life for his country. He was laid to rest in the American Military Cemetery at Margraten, Holland.

Before leaving the states Bill Finley told his mother, "If I should be killed, buy one where I fall because I want to be with my bucket." When Mrs. Finley received word of her son's death, she remembered his request and decided that the Military Cemetery in Margraten would be Sgt. Finley's final resting place. About Margraten she knew nothing, only that it was in the area of the German bookstore and the library.

DUTCH ADOPT G.L.'s

The people of Margraten consider the American soldiers buried there to be the sons of the city, each soldier lying in the cemetery has been adopted by a Dutch Family. On holidays and on the soldier's birthday the Dutch families visit the cemetery to place flowers on the grave of their adopted son. Sgt. William Finley was adopted by the Finley family and they began to correspond with Mrs. Finley. From their letters she knew nothing, only that it was in location of the Margraten area and she heard from a Dutch family who lived there.

IMPOSSIBLE DREAM

Many times during the past years, Mrs. Finley thought of her dream of burying a Dutch grave, but it always seemed to be the impossible dream. An article appearing in the Gold Star Mothers' paper, also in the March-April 1970 issue of the Octofold, made Mrs. Finley's dream come true. It mentioned the fact that the Netherlands War Graves Committee of Amsterdam would sponsor a third pilgrimage to the graves of American soldiers buried in Holland, the soldier's relatives would be the guests of the Dutch people, the only cost would be transportation to Holland.

At the time Mrs. Finley did not realize it, but the article together with her activities on behalf of hospitalized veterans would eventually lead to the fulfillment of her impossible dream. An Army Mothers' Tag Day, Mrs. Finley took a trip to a man who said he had some clothing to donate to the Veterans Administration. When he brought the clothing to her home Mrs. Finley happened to show him the article that
Taps Sounded

Harry O's Report

The New York Chapter wanted to know if it is getting started on their plans for 1971. At the February meeting they got together and selected the dates for the various activities planned for the coming year.

IMPORTANT DATES

The Past Presidents of the 9th Division will be honored on May 7, 1971. Past President Night is always a highlight on the Chapter's social calendar. This year it should be better than ever because President Harry Dennis has promised a special program for this meeting.

Every year the Chapter holds a Memorial Service at Fireman's National Cemetery. After the Memorial service, the members of the Chapter decorate the graves of those who have fallen. Those who are not able to come to the service can obtain a picture of the graves. Everyone will be able to assist in the service if they cannot come in person.

SAD TIDINGS

Unfortunately our mailman doesn't always deliver good news. Last month he brought us sad tidings about Mrs. Bullock. One of our Gold Star Parents, Mrs. Bullock's daughter informed us that her mother had suffered a heart attack and was confined to the hospital in critical condition. Her doctors say that she will be in the hospital for some time.

Mrs. Bullock is a patient at the Highsmith-Rainey Hospital at Fayetteville, N. C. She has been working for the organization and raising money for the cause. She has been a great help to our organization and we are sure that she will make a complete recovery.

EXTRA JOURNALS

We still have a few copies of the Silver Anniversary Journal on hand. Anyone who wants a copy can get it by writing to Walter J. O'Keefe at 1818 Woodbine St., Ridgewood, N. J. 11217.

GOOD NEWS

For a while quite a few members have been on the sick list but we are happy to report that most of them are getting back into shape. George Apay's hip operation was a success and the recent news reports said that he has recovered from the effects of his recent coronary. Charlie Larkins, who has been in the hospital for a little while longer, has been released from the hospital. His doctors say that he will make a complete recovery.

Grateful

Upon her return from London, Mrs. Finley sent us a letter in which she expressed her thanks to the many wonderful people both here in America and in Holland who had made her trip to Margraten possible. She had special praise for the Dutch people who took her into their homes and made her feel at ease. Mrs. Finley requested that we send Gold Star Parents that the War Graves Committee might be prepared to have other pilgrimages to Margraten and at Lange, Belgium and that these pilgrimages be on the lookout for notices pertaining to these trips.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

in the

LADIES' AUXILIARY

of the

NINTH INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION

I would like to become a member of the Ladies' Auxiliary to the Ninth Infantry Division Association. Enclosed is check or money order for $1.00 for 1971 dues. Please mail my membership card to:

Name

Street

City

State

Remember the Dates

1971 Reunion

Springfield

July 29-31

Michigan Doings

The Michigan Chapter's first meeting of 1971 was held on February 20th at Bob Delaney's home. The most important item on the agenda for that meeting was the election of officers. There were plenty of candidates and the members of the Chapter had a tough time deciding who to hold office during 1971. However, the candidates all did so well qualified that the Chapter won't go wrong no matter whom they elected. The men who are up for office are so commendable on the good job they did during 1970. They gave the Chapter a shot in the arm to bigger and better things.

OUT-OF-TOWN MEETING

The Chapter's decision to hold a yearly out-of-town dinner meeting has drawn favorable comments from the members. So far, October seems to be the month favored for the meeting. The prospective site of the meeting is still up for grabs. At the moment the following places are in consideration: intense-Butterfin Inn, East Grand Rapids; and Michigan Hills, Bay City, Mich. Everyone is looking forward to the meeting and the Chapter is sure to make a decision on the matter at the meeting on John Borowski would be like to hear from everyone.

NEWS LETTERS

The following items appeared in the Chapter's most recent Newsletter, June 1970, and sent under a story in January, Jim Brogden's mother passed away in California. At the time of the passing, the family was still in Los Angeles, but they were going to come to the Chapter's meeting. The family left without coming to the meeting. It is a great loss to the Chapter.

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NINTH INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Full Name:

Street Address:

City

State

Please send application to:

Mrs. Amelia Langer

5 Brentwood Drive

Morris Plains, N. J. 07950

paid your dues now!!

GOT A SUSPICION that aches or pains which keeps coming back and getting worse is the result of an old wartime injury or disease? If you've never had it checked out before, why not do it now. Your local State Veterans' Counselor can help you file your claim. There's no time limit for filing a compensation claim with the VA.

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NORMANDY

Now we really had a problem. As we had no room in the jeep to ride with our prisoners, we weren't going to walk. So, we rounded up the prisoners, walked in the jeep with their hands clasped behind their backs. Then the jeep was once entirely too slow and monotonous also; we were wanting something pleasant. After a while of this, the lieutenant appeared and he was figuring out where we were going to take these prisoners, which was to go to rendezvous. After talking with the lieutenant, it was decided that the 3rd Battalion would be sent, and the ground to the left of the road and the 1st had the 3d. I mentioned that we caught these prisoners on the side of the road and that they belonged to them. So, we let the prisoners in his care and we took off.

The Intelligence motor patrol after leaving the prisoners discovered a very small one. The attitude of the few French people we met was cold and difficult to love that town. However, when we reached and once was used as an enemy headquarters, we still knew there were no German personnel to be found. It was a short interval of time when all enemy resistance ended in the peninsula. The territory would be occupied by American troops of the 9th Infantry Division. The job of the time of the German personnel was finished and it was once. When the troops of the outfit the jeep was sent around the territory to search all houses. We discovered that the 1st Battalion, which was made up of the 111th of the 111th, and the 112th of the 112th, and the 113th of the 113th. All prisoners were searched and one was used as an enemy headquarters of some kind but there were no German personnel to be found.

There were so many prisoners and there were not enough officers to keep them all away. We loaded the trucks with about 500 prisoners, and the guards drove the trucks quickly forward and then stopped it short as he stepped on the brakes to stop the vehicle on a dime. This action made for about forty more as the prisoners already aboard were slammed against the door of the car. Again this procedure was followed and ten men were loaded in before the truck took off. At the destination, all prisoners were disposed of, thejeep loaded, and the guards returned to the headquarters. We were put up tents to our tour of duty. The guards were very friendly to us, and we had a feeling of being host.

We were arrived at a point which was in the town of Neuville St. Vaast. Now, we had the stuff piled in a field for disposal.

The hedgerow fighting was rough. The advance was two or three hedgerows a day or about a hundred yards. However, that's a joke being confortable in a fox-hole is another one of my suggestions. I back up one hedgerow right I dug another hole. The next morning I was awake in the shell crater. Observations were limited to the length of the fox-hole. The hedgerows were heavily lined by the troops and trees. Rain and the mud were other conditions. A little sometimes existed in a fox-hole which was half filled with rain. Fault was buried in the foot end of the entrenchment.

The hedgerow fighting which was slow moving presented very serious problems. Exploding shells left thousands of killed soldiers who were taken care of almost immediately. This is, as the Intelligence Section, tried their best to get the dead bodies out of the dangerous fissures. The cows and horses which were abandoned by the farmers were killed as well. For days these dead animal's holes would exist in the muddy fields and the stench was far from pleasant. Enemy dead that couldn't reach its buried and buried right away. I knew that why they called this a sticking a willy. In fact, the German soldier, who wore a grayish uniform in the field, had something in the goods which could be smelled many years after the battle. There was some truth in these things that the Allens had behind the German positions.

Old "PADDY" FLINT who was like a father to his boys and who risked his life many times to get his boys such things as cigarettes under fire was coming in on his knees. There was a battalion of tanks advancing about 30th but the tank commander quivered in his track. "PADDY" on, or was it the same track, it was a PADDY? The tank commander replied to an order issued to him by the "PADDY" that he didn't think it was such a good idea to go both hands to tank being worth so much money and he had abandoned it, right then to train and all that rest to them upon the road, but, he, the tank commander did not have to think in all this, he took seven semifluid with him and led the tanks forward until the tanks couldn't go no more. Then they turned around and lowered the 39th Infantry Division flag during the hedgerow campaign was the loss of Colonel V. B. Bond, FLINT, who was hit on July 23rd by a sniper's bullet and he died the next day, July 24th with a grin on his face. His memory, and his motto "A man would die for a friend," will never be forgotten especially by those people with a heart. Now a-SAO on their-
MAIL CALL

One of the benefits that accrue to an Editor of the "Octofoli" is having the opportunity to read the many letters that are received by the Association. Three letters are constant reminders that the "Old Reliables" have not forgotten their experience with the Ninth during World War II. These men spent with the famous Ninth Infantry Division. We are always happy to have these letters and we hope that more veterans and members will take the time to drop us a line. Here are some samples from this month's mailbag.

Casimir Mrzybilski
2042 Devon Ave.
Evanston, Ill. 60202

Floyd C. Kriski
Co. G 47th Inf.

Fred M. Allen
443 Ashburn Ave.
Posilica, Mich.

Co. G 47th Inf.

Fred sent us his thoughts and included the following note.

June 3 was a wonderful day at the 26th Memorial Service in Westminster, Colorado. Because we had first one that we attended and we are looking forward to attending many more.

It is that time of year when we remind you to check your mailing address. It is the time for annual renewal. Please make sure that you can receive your mail from us. We have been receiving replies to our mailing list that our address was not correct.

attains RANK OF

Casimir Mrzybilski
Evanston, Ill. 60202

It is entitled "The Paste." It is written by a military veteran in operating the vehicle. The picture of Schevenhutte which appeared in the Octofoli, October 29, 1971, issue of the "Octofoli," brought back to John Thornon, 15th Engineers, 1st Sgt. 9th Division, the 1st Motor Sapper of Co. K, stayed of both eyes to a prescribed degree while in service. Additional amounts are payable for the special equipment required to assist the disabled veteran in operating the vehicle. The new law authorizing the increase in the grant from $1,200 to $2,800 is not retroactive — in other words, a veteran who received his $1,600 grant to purchase a car in December cannot apply for the additional $1,200 now provided to qualifying veterans.

President. Ed says that Frank is the kind of a fellow who won't stop working until a job is perfectly done. He and a Lt. Heron formed the complement of the 9th Signal Division. He served with the Ninth from September until November 2, 1940. Clyde tells us that one of his many friends in the Ninth. John Thornon

Hennen. Let's hope that they all go to Kent State, Trumbul Branch, Philip Haher, son of our Harold, will graduate from Baldwin-Wallace this spring. Rose Kepple is enjoying retirement.

Scotty Hirst
Cleveland, Ohio

Reuben Hunt
Cincinnati, Ohio

Clyde is anxious to hear from his old buddies who served with him in the 39th.

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