

106TH INFANTRY DIVISION

World War II

Activated: 15 March 1943. *Overseas:* 10 November 1944. *Campaigns:* Northern France, Rhineland, Ardennes-Alsace. *Days of combat:* 63. *Distinguished Unit Citations:* 1. *Awards:* DSC-6 ; DSM-1; SS-77; LM-9; SM-26 ; BSM-352 ; AM-10. *Commanders:* Maj. Gen. Alan W. Jones (15 March 1943-22 December 1944), Brig. Gen. Herbert T. Perrin (22 December 1944-8 February 1945), Maj. Gen. Donald A. Stroh (February 1945-August 1945), Brig. Gen. Francis A. Woolfley (August 1945 to inactivation). *Returned to U. S.:* 1 October 1945. *Inactivated:* 2 October 1945.

Combat Chronicle

The 106th Infantry Division arrived in England, 17 November 1944, and trained briefly, then moved to France, 6 December. It relieved the 2d Infantry Division in the Schnee Eifel on the 11th. The Von Rundstedt attack was thrown in force at the 106th on 16 December. The 422d and 423d Infantry Regiments were encircled and cut off from the remainder of the Division by a junction of enemy forces in the vicinity of Schonberg. They regrouped for a counterattack but were blocked by the enemy and lost to the Division, 18 December. The rest of the Division withdrew from St. Vith on the 21st under constant enemy fire and pulled back over the Saint River at Vielsalm, 23 December. On the 24th, the 424th Regiment attached to the 7th Armored Division fought a delaying action at Manhay until ordered to an assembly area. From 25 December 1944 to 9 January 1945, the Division received reinforcements and supplies at Anthisnes, Belgium, and returned to the struggle, securing objectives along the Ennal-Logbierme line on the 15th after heavy fighting. After being pinched out by advancing divisions, the 106th assembled at Stavelot on the 18th for rehabilitation and training. It moved to the vicinity of Hunningen, 7 February, for de-

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fensive patrols and training. In March, the 424th advanced along the high ground between Berk and the Simmer River and was again pinched out at Olds on the 7th. A period of training and patrolling followed until 15 March when the Division moved to St. Quentin for rehabilitation and the reconstruction of lost units. For the remainder of its stay in Europe, the 106th handled prisoners of war enclosures and engaged in occupational duties.

Assignments in the ETO*

29 November 1944: VIII Corps, First Army, 12th Army Group. *20 December 1944:* XVIII (Abn) Corps, First Army (attached to the British 21st Army Group), 12th Army Group. *18 January 1945:* XVIII (Abn) Corps, First Army, 12th Army Group. *6 February 1945:* V Corps. *10 March 1945:* Fifteenth Army, 12th Army Group. *15 April 1945:* Fifteenth Army, 12th Army Group, but attached to the Advanced Section, Communications Zone.

General

Nickname: Golden Lion Division. *Shoulder patch:* A golden lion's face on a blue circular background encircled by white and then red borders respectively. *Association:* 106th Infantry Division, Inc., 237 South Manning Boulevard, Albany 3, N. Y. (D. S. Price, president). *Publications:* *History of the 106th Infantry Division;* by unit members; *The Infantry Journal,* Washington 6, D. C.; 1947. *Pictorial Review;*

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*See footnote, 1st Infantry Division.

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Boyce Brice

A Soldier's Story

May 18 has been set aside for the remembrance of our American Armed Forces. This week the Fairfield County Museum will exhibit the belongings of a Fairfield boy who left home to arrive in Luxembourg at the first onslaught of the Battle of the Bulge in December of 1944. He did not live to see the end of his first week on foreign soil, dying a few days before Christmas on the 16th. Two regiments of his division were taken as prisoners by the Germans until the end of the war.

From his early boyhood, William Boyce Brice dreamed of getting an appointment to West Point. He was the Salutatorian of the 1936 graduating class at Mt. Zion, a highly motivated achiever in the last class to graduate from the old 1920s brick building that burned to the ground twenty years ago. When his appointment to the military academy did not materialize, he began his studies at Erskine College, moving on to West Point after his sophomore year in Due West. During his first class year at the Academy, he attained the high rank of cadet captain. Upon graduation, he was commissioned in the infantry and took his first and ultimate assignment with the 106th Division.

Boyce was born in 1919 and grew up in Winnsboro's Zion street neighborhood. His widowed mother, Mrs. Eugene D. Brice, raised four boys and three girls in the ancient James Carlisle house on the west corner of Washington and Zion Sts. beside the Methodists' graveyard. The Scots-Irish Brices were Fairfield County settlers who were given land grants in the old Douglas community just after the Revolution. Boyce's grandfather had practiced law in the then-flourishing rural community, his father moving into town to settle in the Carlisle house in 1923.

Classmate J.M. "Brother" Lyles remembers how Boyce helped with the family finances by delivering the State Newspaper. He and his brother made quick deliveries from a cart pulled by the family's pet Shetland pony. Two of his sisters, Misses Zelma and Maurice, never married and stayed on in the old house until they went to nursing homes. Mr. and Mrs. Ross Burton bought the house from the estate in the 1990s, finding there a trunk containing Boyce's medals, correspondence, and West Point uniform. These items will be on display at the museum throughout the summer.

The body of Lieutenant W. Boyce Brice is buried in the United States Military Cemetery in Neuville-en-Condroz, which is located nine miles southwest of Liege, Belgium.



The Battle of the Bulge --

The Ardennes Offensive



The Battle of the Bulge which lasted from December 16, 1944 to January 28, 1945 was the *largest land battle* of World War II in which the *United States participated*. More than a million men fought in this battle including some 600,000 Germans, 500,000 Americans, and 55,000 British. The German military force consisted of two Armies with ten corps (equal to 29 divisions). While the American military force consisted of a total of three armies with six corps (equal to 31 divisions). At the conclusion of the battle the casualties were as follows: 81,000 U.S. with 19,000 killed, 1400 British with 200 killed, and 100,000 Germans killed, wounded or captured.

In late 1944 Germany was clearly losing the war. The Russian Red Army was steadily closing in on the Eastern front while German cities were being devastated by intense American bombing. The Italian peninsula had been captured and liberated, and the Allied armies were advancing rapidly through France and the Low Countries. Hitler knew the end was near if something couldn't be done to slow the Allied advance. He soon came up with a plan to do this.

In September of 1944 Wilhelm Kertel and Alfred Jodle attended a meeting at Hitler's headquarters in East Prussia. At which time Hitler gave a status of Germany's current military position. During this meeting Hitler presented Jodle with the task of coming up with a strategic plan for a major offensive on the Western front. Hitler assigned the attack to be somewhere between the Aachen area and the southern Luxembourg-France boundary. This location was favorable because there was only one armored and four U. S. infantry divisions at this location. Dietrich's Sixth Panzer-Armee would set out from a small town twenty miles southeast of Aachen. Manteuffel's Fifth Panzer Army would launch from the Scher Eifel plateau. Brandenburg's Seventh Army would launch itself from the south close to the Siegfried Line. The Sixth and Fifth armies would drive to Antwerp, with the Seventh and other units protecting the flank. At this meeting Hitler planned to launch the offensive between November 20 and November 30. He was confident the Allies would not be able to react in time to stop the offensive. His plan was dependent upon speed and accuracy. The speed would be provided via the terrain

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and the woods would provide the cover. Also key to the plan was the weather. Hitler was hoping the attack would occur during weather which would prevent the Allied Air forces from being effective.

The plan Hitler had requested was returned to him by Jodle on October 9. This plan had five possible avenues of attack, with the northernmost coming from the area near Dusseldorf for thirty-one divisions with one-third of these consisting of armored infantry. The estimation for fuel called for between four and five millions of gallons along with fifty trainloads of ammunition. Also Hitler enlarged the plan to include the two northern most attack routes.

This plan was code named Wacht am Rhein with the strategy of driving on Antwerp while encircling the Allied armies west of the Meuse River. Hitler thought the name of the plan would confuse the Allies into believing it was a defensive operation. The Ardennes was selected as the location for the offensive because the area provided enough cover for a massive buildup of troops and because it was the location where in 1940 Hitler had initiated a surprise attack on France. Hitler believed that by retaking Antwerp the Allies would become irritated with each other and would lead to disputes between the members of the Allies. He believed the bond between the Allies was unstable and could easily be diminished. In doing so Hitler would be able to buy some much needed time to work on secret weapons and build up troops.

During the months between October and November the Watch on the Rhine was Renamed Autumn Mist. Hitler changed the name after several of his military commanders tried to convince him to change the plans. The commanders in charge of the offensive, von Runstedt (Commander of the West), Field Marshall Model (tactical commander), Josef "Sepp" Dietrich (leader of the Sixth Panzer Army), and Hoss von Manteuffel (commander of Fifth Panzer Unit) all were skeptical about Hitler's plan. They felt that taking Antwerp was something that just could not be accomplished by the German army at the time. Field Marshall Model was quoted as saying "This plan hasn't got a damned leg to stand on". Hitler was presented with a new smaller plan which changed the objective to only launching a small attack to weaken the Allied forces in the area rather than launching an all out attack to retake Antwerp. His general's pleaded with him to change the plans but Hitler refused.

Many people think that Hitler was unstable by this time in

the war. He would not listen to his advising commanders. An assassination attempt had been made on his life and this caused him to trust almost no one. Hitler's plan to retake Antwerp was irrational in that the German's would have no air support and the supplies that they would need were lacking. Also what Hitler expected to result from retaking Antwerp was irrational. The bond between the Allied powers might not have been strong, but they were definitely unified in one goal-destroying the German regime.

At 5:30 A.M. on December 6, 1944 eight German armored divisions and thirteen German infantry divisions launched an all out attack on five divisions of the United States 1st Army. At least 657, light, medium, and heavy guns and howitzers and 340 multiple-rocket launchers were fired on American positions. Between the 5th and 6th Panzer armies which equaled eleven divisions they broke into the Ardennes through the Losheim Gap against the American divisions protecting the region. The 6th Panzer Army then headed North while the Fifth Panzer Army went south. Sixth Panzer army attacked the two southern divisions of U. S. V Corps at Elsborn Ridge, but accomplished little. At the same time the 5th Panzer Army was attacking the U. S. VIII Corps some 100 miles to the south. This corps was one of the greenest in Europe at the time and their lack of experience was exploited by the Germans. They were quickly surrounded and there were mass surrenders.

On December 17 American 7th Armored divisions engaged Dietrich's Sixth Panzer Army at Saint Vith. Saint Vith was a major road that led to the Meuse River and to Antwerp. The American division was successful in halting the German advance and this caused the Germans to take a path that was out of the way. This slowed the Germans down and altered the timing of the German attack plan. The same day some Americans were taken prisoner at Baugnez and were shot by Colonel Peiper's unit while on a road headed for Malmmedy. Of the 140 men taken prisoner 86 were shot and 43 managed to survive to tell the story of what had happened. Rumors of this event spread quickly through the American divisions causing the Americans to fight much harder and with more resolve.

Bastogne was a strategic position which both the Germans and Americans wanted to occupy. This lead to a race between the American 101st Airborne divisions and the Germans. The Americans managed to get there first and occupy the city. The Germans were not far behind and quickly surrounded and laid siege to the city. This city was

an important strategic location for the Allies because this city could be used as a base to launch a counteroffensive. On December 22 German officers under the flag of truce delivered a message from General der Panzertruppe von Luttwitz Commander of XLVII Panzerhops, demanding the surrender of Bastogne. After receiving the message Brigadier General McAuliffe exclaimed "Aw, nuts" which was his official reply to the request for surrender. This message was delivered by Joseph Harper to the Germans. He told the Germans it meant they could all go to Hell. With that they parted and the siege continued. Because the Americans were surrounded the only way they could get supplies was by air drops. However because it was the winter and the weather was bad for a long time planes could not fly. The Americans had to survive the best they could until the weather finally cleared up. The Americans at Bastogne were relieved when the VII Corps moved down and enlarged the U. S. line. This allowed Patton's Third Army to counterattack the Germans surrounding Bastogne. The Third Army was then able to push the Germans past the border of Bastogne.

Bastogne was not out of danger however, and on December 29 troops from the 101st Airborne division left Bastogne to fight the Germans. At this time the weather had cleared up which allowed Allied air support for the first time. At the same time General Hodges 2nd Armored divisions repelled the 2nd Panzer division short of the Meuse River at Celles.

The Allies launched a counteroffensive two days before the New Year. This counteroffensive involved the U.S. Third Army striking to the North while the U.S. First Army pushed to the South. They were supposed to meet at the village of Houffalize to trap all German force. The Germans did not go easily however and the Americans had a rough time. Day after day, soldiers wallowed through the snow. Newspapers were put under clothes as added insulation.

On January first, Hitler launched a plan he called "The Great Blow." The goal of this plan was to eliminate Allied air power. At 8:00 A.M. German fighter airplanes swarmed over Belgium, Holland, and northern France. For more than two hours Allied airfields were bombarded. By 10:00 A.M. 206 aircraft and many bases layed in ruin. Hitler's plan had a great deal of damage to Allied aircraft. However, the price he paid for this was devastating. The German Luftwaffe lost 300 planes and 253 trained pilots.

On January 8, Hitler ordered his troops to withdraw from the tip of the Bulge. This indicated that he had realized his offensive had failed. By January 16, the Third and First Army had joined at Houffalize. The Allies now controlled the original front. On January 23, Saint Vith was retaken. Finally, on January 28 the Battle of the Bulge was officially over.

The 106th division played a major role in the success of the Allies. They were credited with holding the Germans back. Timing was a major part of the Germans offensive to break through to the Meuse River and capture Antwerp. The first three days of the battle were the most important for the Germans. However, the 106th division slowed the Germans down at St. Vith. The battle that ensued at St. Vith would cost the Germans much in terms of resources. The delay and extended battle would cause the Germans to lose the advantage they had in many of their previous campaigns.

The Battle of the Bulge was very costly in terms of both men and equipment. Hitler's last ditch attempt to bring Germany back into winning the war had failed. During this battle the Germans had expended the majority of their Air power and men. The Allies however had plenty of men and equipment left. With few forces left to defend "The Reich" the Germans could not prolong the inevitable. Germany's final defeat was only months away.

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BATTLE of the BULGE

December 16, 1944 to January 25, 1945

On 16 December 1944 the Germans started their *ARDENNES OFFENSIVE*. The 106th Infantry Division, in place on a salient jutting out into Germany were hit with full force. After three days of battle, two of the Regiments, the 422nd and the 423rd were surrounded. The 424th, south of the other two regiments, was able to withdraw and join with the 112th Regiment of the 28th Infantry Division. They formed a Regimental Combat Team and were successful in the oncoming days of January 1945 in helping counter the German attack driving the Germans back through the same area where the 106th had been in position in mid-December 1944. This German Offensive became known in the U.S. Forces journals as *The Battle of the Bulge*.

BATTLE FACTS

- The coldest, snowiest weather "in memory" in the Ardennes Forest on the German/Belgium border.
- Over a million men, 500,000 Germans, 600,000 Americans (more than fought at Gettysburg) and 55,000 British.
- 3 German armies, 10 corps, the equivalent of 29 divisions.
- 3 American armies, 6 corps, the equivalent of 31 divisions.
- The equivalent of 3 British divisions as well as contingents of Belgian, Canadian and French troops.
- 100,000 German casualties, killed, wounded or captured.
- 81,000 American casualties, including 23,554 captured and 19,000 killed.
- 1,400 British casualties 200 killed.
- 800 tanks lost on each side, 1,000 German aircraft.
- The Malmedy Massacre, where 86 American soldiers were murdered, was the worst atrocity committed against American troops during the course of the war in Europe.
- My division, the 106th Infantry Division, average age of 22 years, suffered 564 killed in action, 1,246 wounded and 7,001 missing in action at the end of the offensive. Most of these casualties occurred within the first three days of battle, when two of the division's three regiments was forced to surrender.
- In it's entirety, the "*Battle of the Bulge*," was the worst battles - in terms of losses - to the American Forces in WWII.

Short History

On a wintery mid-December day in 1944, three powerful German armies plunged into the semi-mountainous, heavily forested Ardennes region of eastern Belgium and northern Luxembourg. Their goal was to reach the sea, trap four allied armies, and impel a negotiated peace on the Western front.

Thinking the Ardennes was the least likely spot for a German offensive, American Staff Commanders chose to keep the line thin, so that the manpower might concentrate on offensives north and south of the Ardennes.

The American line was thinly held by three divisions and a part of a fourth, while the fifth was making a local attack and a sixth was in reserve. Division sectors were more than double the width of normal, defensive fronts.

Even though the German Offensive achieved total surprise, nowhere did the American troops give

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ground without a fight. Within three days, the determined American stand and the arrival of powerful reinforcements insured that the ambitious German goal was far beyond reach.

In snow and sub-freezing temperatures the Germans fell short of their interim objective - that of reaching the sprawling Meuse River on the fringe of the Ardennes. All the Germans accomplished was to create a Bulge in the American line. In the process they expended irreplaceable men, tanks and material. Four weeks later, after grim fighting, with heavy losses on both the American and German sides, the Bulge ceased to exist.

Battle Action Credits: The 106th Infantry Division was credited with a holding action that used much of the precious time of the German Offensive. Time was an important and vital ingredient in Hitler's plan to break through to the Meuse River and then to go for Antwerp. The first three days of battle were vital and the 106th Infantry Division slowed his advance in the St. Vith area. By doing so the 106th played a large role in the final defeat of the German Army. The delay and extended battle used so much of the precious resources of the German Army that they were never again able to recoup and fight the style of war they had in earlier days. This delay in time was a big key in the final downfall of the German plans for their *ARDENNES OFFENSIVE*. The loss of their resources, both human and equipment accelerated their final defeat and caused an early end to the long war in Europe.

On 16 December 1944, the day the battle started, I was a 19 year old Sergeant, heavy machine gun squad leader (30 cal water cooled) turning twenty on January 10, 1945.

The 106th Infantry Division, my division, was spread over a 21 mile front. Normally a division covers five miles. We received the initial thrust of the German counter-offensive. I was captured on 19 December, 1944. I spent four months as a Prisoner of War, walking over 525 miles, with a loss of 50 pounds of "fighting" body weight. I was only in a sheltered camp for one month and one week... John Kline

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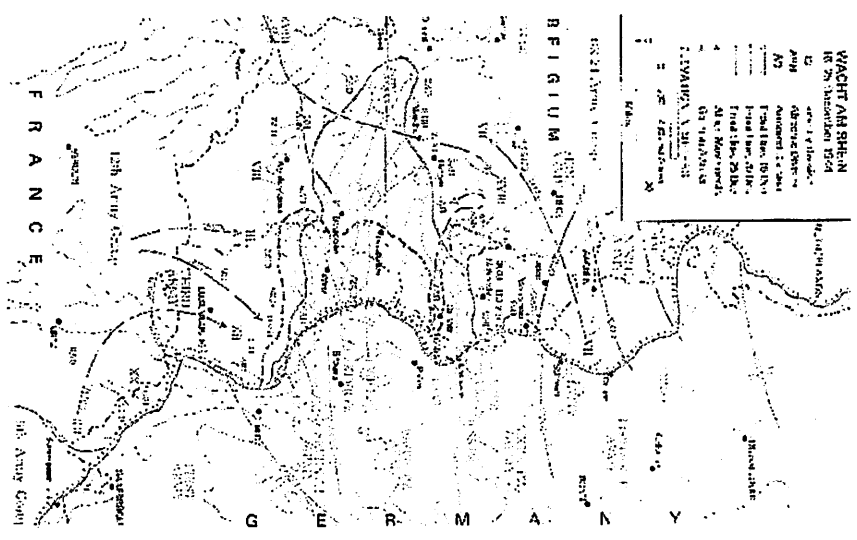
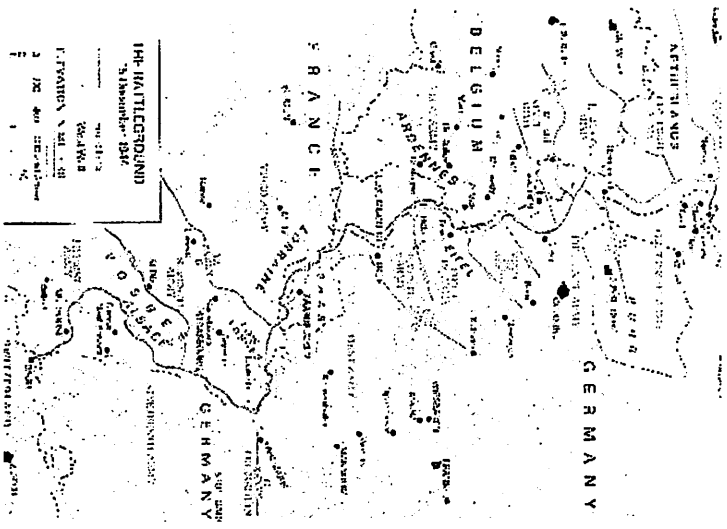
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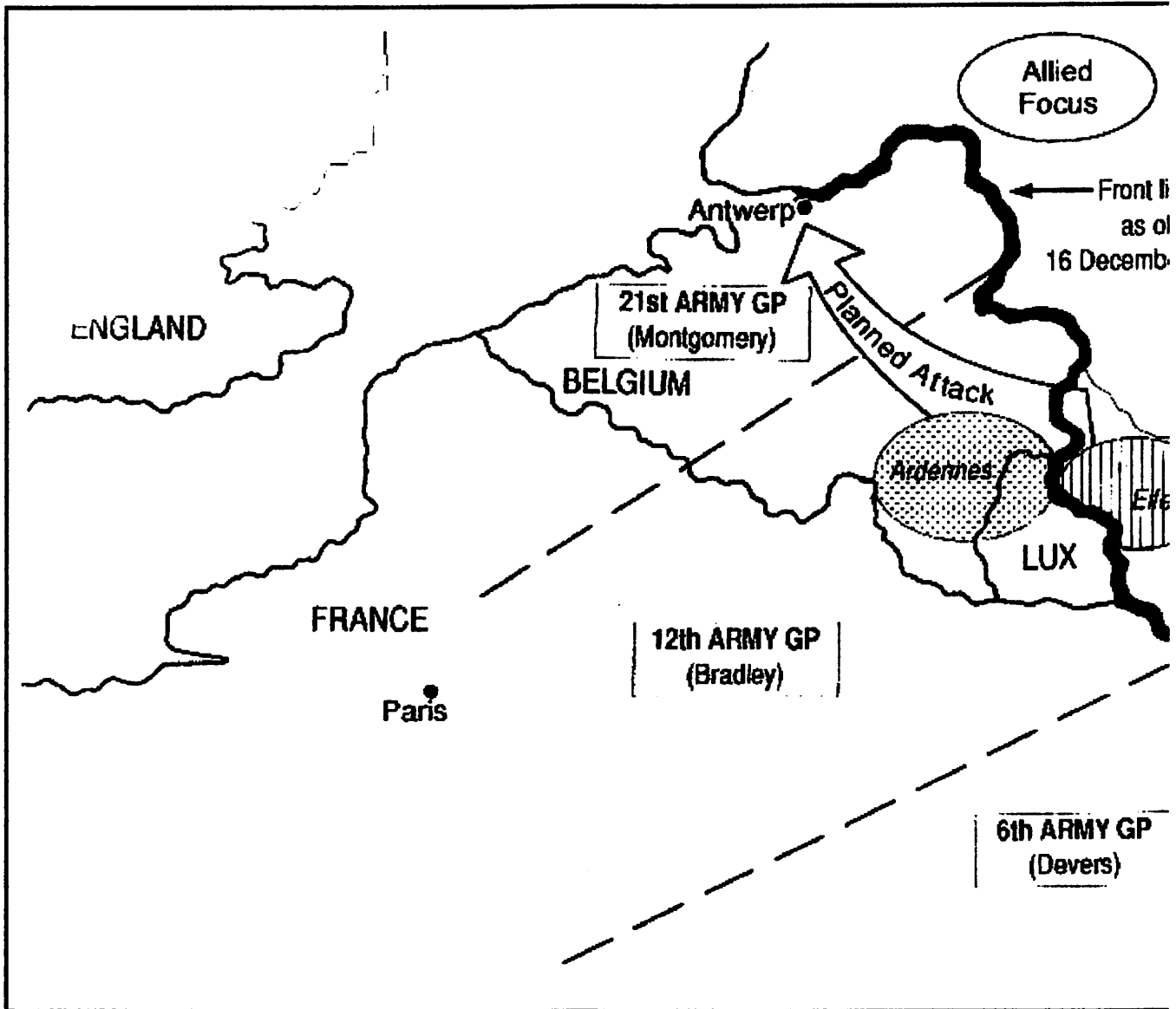
Bulge, Battle of the

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Bulge, Battle of the (December 1944-January 1945), last German offensive in the west during World War II. Following the Normandy invasion (June 1944), Allied forces swept rapidly through France but became stalled along the German border in September. On December 16, taking advantage of weather that kept Allied aircraft on the ground, the Germans launched a counteroffensive through the hilly and wooded Ardennes country and advanced 50 km (31 mi) into Belgium and Luxembourg. Their aim was to divide the Americans and the British and retake the vital seaport of Antwerp. They created a "bulge" in the Allied lines, but their advance was halted near the Meuse in late December. Managing to avoid being cut off by an Allied pincer movement, the Germans withdrew to their own lines in January, but heavy losses, including some 220,000 casualties, contributed to their final collapse in the following spring.

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Fairfield County History

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From his early boyhood, William Boyce Brice dreamed of getting an appointment to West Point. He was the Salutatorian of the 1936 graduating class at Mt. Zion, a highly motivated achiever in the last class to graduate from the old 1920s brick building that burned to the ground twenty years ago. When his appointment to the military academy did not materialize, he began his studies at Erskine College, moving on to West Point after his sophomore year in Due West. During his first class year at the Academy, he attained the high rank of cadet captain. Upon graduation, he was commissioned in the infantry and took his first and ultimate assignment with the 106th Division.

Boyce was born in 1919 and grew up in Winnsboro's Zion street neighborhood. His widowed mother, Mrs. Eugene D. Brice, raised four boys and three girls in the ancient James Carlisle house on the west corner of Washington and Zion Sts. beside the Methodists' graveyard. The Scots-Irish Brices were Fairfield County settlers who were given land grants in the old Douglas community just after the Revolution. Boyce's grandfather had practiced law in the then-flourishing rural community, his father moving into town to settle in the Carlisle house in 1923.

Classmate J.M. "Brother" Lyles remembers how Boyce helped with the family finances by delivering the State Newspaper. He and his brother made quick deliveries from a cart pulled by the family's pet Shetland pony. Two of his sisters, Misses Zelma and Maurice, never married and stayed on in the old house until they went to nursing homes. Mr. and Mrs. Ross Burton bought the house from the estate in the 1990s, finding there a trunk containing Boyce's medals, correspondence, and West Point uniform. These items will be on display at the museum throughout the summer.

The body of Lieutenant W. Boyce Brice is buried in the United States Military Cemetery in Neuville-en-Condroz, which is located nine miles southwest of Liege, Belgium.

CLASS OF SERVICE

This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.

WESTERN UNION

1201

SYMBOLS

DL=Day Letter
NT=Overnight Telegram
LC=Deferred Cable
NLT=Cable Night Letter
Ship Radiogram

A. N. WILLIAMS
PRESIDENT

NEWCOMB CARLTON
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

J. C. WILLEVER
FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

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CFY10 43 GOVT=WUX WASHINGTON DC JAN 12 518P

MRS LAURA J BRICE=

201 EAST WASHINGTON ST W~~B~~ **Windsboro, S. C.**

THE SECRETARY OF WAR DESIRES ME TO EXPRESS HIS DEEP REGRET THAT YOUR SON FIRST LIEUTENANT WILLIAM B BRICE HAS BEEN REPORTED MISSING IN ACTION SINCE SIXTEEN DECEMBER IN GERMANY IF FURTHER DETAILS OR OTHER INFORMATION ARE RECEIVED YOU WILL BE PROMPTLY NOTIFIED=

DUNLOP ACTING THE ADJUTANT GENERAL.

Boyce Brice

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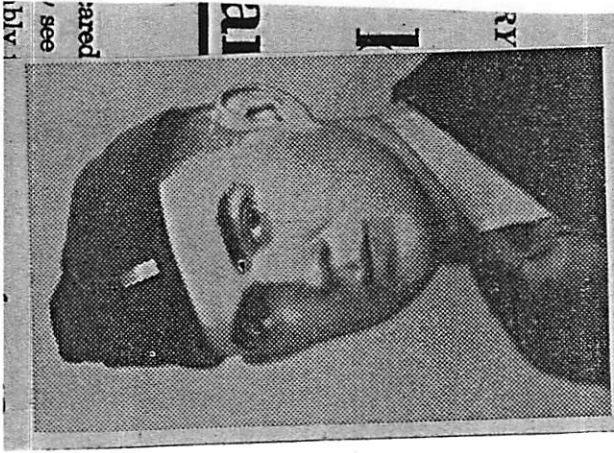
THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE



LT. BRICE

Among the cadets graduating from the United States Military Academy Tuesday was William Boyce Brice, son of Mrs. E. D. Brice of 201 East Washington St., Winnsboro. Graduating from Mt. Zion Institute, Brice attended Erskine College for two years and prepared for his entrance examinations to West Point at the Sulivan School, Washington, D. C., before receiving his appointment from Representative J. P. Richards of the Fifth Congressional District. During his first class year at the Academy he attained the high rank of cadet captain. He was also a member of the Board of Governors, was on the first class club, and was mule rider. Following graduation he was commissioned in the infantry.

His mother, Mrs. E. D. Brice, and two sisters, the Misses Pauline and Maurice Brice, attended the graduation exercise.



THE LATE LIEUT. BRICE

A Comrade Said, "It Was An Honor to Serve Under Him." 61

First Lieutenant William Boyce Brice, 25, son of Mrs. Laura J. Brice of Winnsboro, was killed in action in Germany December 16, 1944, according to a recent communication from the War Department. He had previously been reported as missing. The telegram to Mrs. Brice was as follows:

"It has now been officially established from reports received in the War Department that your son Lieut. William B. Brice who was previously reported missing

PLOTT EE, ROW 1, Grave 2, in the United States Military Cemetery Neuville-en-Condroz, Belgium which is located nine miles South west of Liege, Belgium.

cut this out + send back

Cadet Brice In "Life"

Pictured in last week's Life (page 35, bottom, center) was Cadet Boyce Brice, son of Mrs. E. D. Brice of Winnsboro, who is a rising senior at the United States Military Academy. Cadet Brice was an attendant at one of the 25 West Point weddings that took place on graduation day. Three hundred seventy-four "Pointers" received diplomas, became 2nd lieutenants. This is the second time that a Life photographer has snapped Cadet

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