



## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

On the night of January 9th, a bad anniversary for many who had been in Task Force Linden, I was reading a letter dated April 17, 1945 from General Harry J. Collins to Edward Weitzel, President of the Rainbow Division Veterans Association at that time. He opened the letter with the following paragraph:

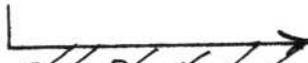
"Sufficient time has elapsed now so I can tell you a bit of our story; as you probably know, in the defensive phase at Gamsheim, Sessenheim, Kilstett, Hatten and Hagenau we lost many of the cream of the crop of our doughboys (35% of total infantry—50% riflemen)—those fine, young, intelligent, strong men; the pick of the division."

ALL IN ONE MONTH  
JANUARY 1945

MORNING REPORT OF COMPANY A, 232ND INFANTRY, JANUARY 19, 1945  
- MISSING IN ACTION -

		PLT.	
1. Morisette, Kenneth C	01288938	1st Lt. 4th	(1), (2)
2. Bartlett, Jack	35074578	Pvt. 1st	Killed at Roeschwoog
3. Bledsoe, Charles M.	35481429	Pfc. 4th	(1)
4. Boldi, George J.	35243640	Pfc. 1st	(3)
5. Campanella, Silvo C.	32739715	Pfc. 3rd	(1), (4) DOW 1/31/45
6. Chavez, Plascido	37353766	Pfc. 1st	(3), (8)
7. Davis, Redmond S.	33889085	Pfc. 4th	(1)
8. Dinkins, John A.	34678885	S/Sgt. 1st	(3)
9. Forbis, Richard S.	38323416	Pfc. 4th	(1)
10. Goertsen, Bob P.	39833555	Pvt. 1st	(3)
11. Hilterbrand, Harold J.	35671322	Sgt. 4th	(1), KIA 1/18/45
12. Hinckley, John	20751639	Pfc. 4th	(1)
13. Howard, John C.	34979775	Pvt. 4th	(1), KIA 1/19/45
14. Hurych, Charles Jr.	35140650	Pfc. 4th	(1)
15. Johnson, Harry G.	35071318	Pfc. 1st	(3)
16. Justice, Audie	34947441	Pvt. 4th	(1)
17. Kettner, Kay J.	36456572	Pfc. 1st	(3)
18. Knezovich, Steve F.	35741128	Pfc. 4th	(1)
19. Krauch, Arthur F.	32040058	S/Sgt. 3rd	(1), KIA 1/19/45
20. Kuznetz, Stanley	42033276	Pfc. 4th	(1) Died 1948
21. Lott, Johnnie E.	34207254	Pfc. 4th	(5) KIA 1/18/54
22. McHugh, Charles T.	39114273	Pfc. 4th	(1)
23. Miller, Howard	15358803	Pfc. 4th	(1)
24. Mireles, Edmundo	38671802	Pfc. 4th	(1)
25. Murphy, Matthew F.	35210262	Pfc. Co.Hdqs.	(1), KIA 1/18/45
26. Nichols, James F.	16088323	S/Sgt. 3rd	(1), (6)
27. O'Brien, Gerald R.	11370273	Sgt. 4th	(1)
28. Parker, Howard J.	37435862	Sgt. 1st	(3)
29. Pasco, Carl L.	36613244	S/Sgt. 4th	(7)
30. Pederson. John A.	36983602	Pvt. 3rd	(1)
31. Penne. Harold G.	36673279	Pfc. 1st	(3)
32. Polis, Samuel	13201344	Pfc. 4th	(1)
33. Porter, Melvin F.	31210677	Pfc. 3rd	(1), (9)
34. Rice, Leonard W.	38431651	Pfc. 1st	(3)
35. Rutelenis, Joseph J.	32106175	S/Sgt. 4th	(1)
36. Schkade, Brenard W.	38080030	Pvt. 3rd	(9) KIA 1/18/45
37. Schmude, Nroman G.	36802244	Pfc. 3rd	(1)
38. Schosser, William V.	36419936	Pfc. 4th	(1), KIA 1/18/45
39. Seal, Lon P.	38312568	Pfc. 4th	(1), (4) DOW 1/31/45
40. Shearer, Melvin	35071118	Pfc. 3rd	(1)
41. Slinn, Arthur N.	16118558	Pvt. 4th	(1)
42. Smith Harry E.	11 13908	T/Sgt. 3rd	(1), (10)
43. Smith, Stuart L.	12103275	Sgt. 4th	(1)
44. Thompson, Dean L.	36073470	Pfc. 4th	(1)
45. Thompson, William N.	38683368	Pvt. 1st	(3)
46. Weinman, George I., Jr.	13201371	Pvt. 1st	(3) Died 1995
47. Wendler, Donald J.	38215949	Pfc. 4th	(1)

Continued on page 2.

  
See facing page  
See attached page  
for explanation

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## Footnotes:

1200

- (1) Surrendered approximately 1500 hours 18 January 1945 at Sessenheim, France while being blasted to smithereens by an unopposed German Panther tank and Panzerfaust rocket launcher fire as promised American help had not arrived.
- (2) Commander of US forces in southeastern sector of Sessenheim during the ill-fated night of 17 JAN & morning of 18 JAN 1945. Probably wounded since it is rumored that he died a few years after the end of the war.
- (3) Captured at Roeschwoog, France 17 JAN 1945. The 3rd & 4th Platoons Co. A could have prevented its 1st PLt. squad being captured. Instead the 3rd Plt. was sent on a wild goose-chase during this time to supposedly aid I Co. of the 3rd Bn but immediately upon arriving were asked why we had been sent.
- (4) Note that two were listed as Died Of Wounds 31 JAN 45 (Campanella and Seal). The ground may have been frozen too hard for burial 1/18/95.
- (5) Killed by enemy tank machine gun fire while attempting to surrender to enemy infantry. He was the Jeep Driver for 4th Platoon Leader, 1st Lt. Morisette. Lott's Pay Book turned up at the German Regimental Headquarters at Dalhunden which led other American captives to hope that he was still alive.
- (6) Led group from Main House of Defense in the southeastern sector of Sessenheim to surrender at approximately 1500 hours 18 January 1945.
- (7) The unsung hero in the defense of the Main House in the southeastern sector of Sessenheim by holding the defense group together until he was mortally wounded by unopposed enemy tank fire and Panzerfaust rocket launchers.
- (8) Chavez, Plascido. Things were so confused at that time Chavez was not reported as missing until the 28 JAN 45 Morning Report.
- (9) Other Co. A 232nd killed in Sessenheim during the periods 17 JAN 45 - 18 JAN 45. Porter was listed as Missing In Action (MIA). He was wounded, captured, and official German records show he died 3 MAR 45 while in Prisoner Of War camp.
- (10) Platoon Sgt. and Leader, 3rd Platoon Co. A for only 3 days before he was captured at Sessenheim on 18 Jan 1945.

Personal notes obtained over the years:

Morisette, Kenneth may have died about 1950.

Bartlett, Jack noted as 'Honored Dead'. Howard Parker could probably shed some light on this comment. Jack may have been shot down by the Germans as he attempted to surrender with the rest of his squad of the 1st Platoon, Company A, 232nd Infantry Regiment.

Boldi, George "gave pants". He had jumped out of the top of a burning barn and fell into a cistern (?). George Weinman gave his second pair of pants to Boldi after they were captured because Boldi was soaked with wet manure.

Howard, John C.- Plot K, Row 34, Grave 39-Lorraine American Cemetary at St. Avoild (Moselle), France.

Kuznetz, Stanley died about 1948. Wounded by same enemy tank machine gun fire that killed Johnnie Lott.

Lott, Johnnie - Lott was 4th Plt. Leader 1st Lt. Morisette's Jeep driver. As noted above, killed by enemy tank machine gun fire.

Murphy, Matthew interned at the Lorraine American Military Cemetary at St. Avoild, (Moselle) France. Plot E, Row 11, Grave 9. He having children had been sent to Company Hdqs. as a cook by his Platoon Lieutenant Chuck Mohler as a safer refuge as the 3rd Plt. arrived overseas.

O'Brien, Gerald R. 'Obie' died October 31, 1966. He provided the most complete results of the Sessenheim 1/17/45-1/18/45 action through his 9/6/45 affidavit to the War Crimes Office. He had also originally been separated with eight others from the larger group of surrendering Americans, when the German in charge noticed that he was bleeding from both eyes was obviously of no use for the intended mission. He was waved back to rejoin the larger surrendering group. Luck of the draw or ?

Chavez, Palscido - Things were so hectic and confused at that time Chavez was not reported as missing until the 28 JAN 45 Morning Report.

Porter, Melvin died of wounds 03 MAR 45. The Report Of Death indicates that he was Missing In Action 19 Jan 45. From official German Government records, He died 3 MAR 45. He had a wife and a daughter.

Rutelenis, Joseph died April 4, 1980.

Schkade, Bernard W. reported Killed In Action 19 JAN 45.

Seal, Lon reported Died Of Wounds 31 JAN 45 (?).

Plot K, Row 36, Grave 23, St. Avold, France American Cemetary.  
Murdered by German soldiers after capture 18 JAN 45 along with  
six other American soldiers in Sessenheim.

Slinn, Arthur died February 17, 1976.

Sotak, George was the only survivor of the eight separated from  
the larger group of surrendering Americans on 18 JAN 45 in  
Sessenheim. He played dead for twelve hours until he managed  
to escape while seriously wounded. He died August 8, 1982.

During this action of January 16-20, 1945, Company A Platoon  
Sergeants Pauli, Smotrys, Thompson, Vidor and Worley had been  
sent back to receive their battlefield commissions as 2nd Lts.

Company Executive Officer, Simeon Lieber took over the command  
of Company A, 1st Bn., 232nd Inf. Regt. on 19 JAN 45 relieving  
Howell Price. Price was sent to the 95th Hospital 24 JAN 45.  
My personal opinion was that he should have been removed while  
we were in Drusenheim or before we left the States.

The 19 JAN 45 Company A Morning Report indicated that 45 Enlisted  
Men and 1 Officer were missing between 1/17/45 and 1/18/45. Nine  
Enlisted were captured and one killed (Bartlett) in Roeschwoog.  
Thirty-five Enlisted Men were killed, captured or murdered in  
Sessenheim. One officer, 1st Lt. Morisette was captured.

Company A received 31 replacement enlisted men on 1/25/45.

Company B, 232nd reported 69 Enlisted and 3 Officers missing in  
and around Sessenheim during approximately the same period of  
1/17/45 and 1/18/45.

# SAM POLIS

## REVISION

(BASED ON LATER INFORMATION)

CO. A, 232nd REGIMENT, 42nd "RAINBOW" DIVISION

( ALL THESE MEN WERE MISSING IN ACTION,  
SESENHEIM, ALSACE, FRANCE, JANUARY 18, 1945 )

<u>SECOND HOUSE</u>	<u>MAIN HOUSE</u>	
<u>4th PLATOON HQ.</u>	<u>CO. HQ.</u>	<u>WITH THE 3RD PLATOON</u>
LT. MORISSETTE	HINCKLEY	T/SGT. HARRY SMITH (PLATOON SERGEANT)
	(COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST - VOLUNTEERED)	SGT. KRAUCH *
<u>MORTARS</u>		(SQD. LDR)
S/SGT. RUTELONIS (SECTION LEADER)	<u>4th PLATOON</u>	PIEDERSON
	<u>MACHINE GUN SECTION</u> *	SHEARER
Mc HUGH (SQD. LEADER)	S/SGT. PASCO (SECTION LDR.)	CAMPANELLA *
MILLER		MURPHY *
MIRELES	SGT. HILTEBRAND (SQD. LDR.) *	(A COOK OR A RUNNER)
	BELCHER	SGT. NICHOLS
WENDLER	FORBIS	(PLATOON GUIDE ?)
BLED SOE	DAVIS	
KNEZOVICH	<u>POLIS, SAM</u>	ALSO MISSING
THOMPSON, DEAN L. (?)		IN ACTION BUT
	SGT. STUART SMITH (SQD. LEADER)	PROBABLY ELSEWHERE
<u>DRIVERS</u>	SLINN	SCHKADE *
LOTT *	HURYCH	PORTER (1) *
KUZNETZ	JUSTICE	SCHMUDE
	<u>MORTAR SQUAD</u>	
	SGT. O'BRIEN (SQD. LDR.)	(1) wounded, Captured and died as a POW 3 MAR 45
	SCHOSSER *	
	SEAL *	
	SOTAK	
	HOWARD, JOHN C. *	

\* KILLED IN ACTION OR DIED OF WOUNDS LATER

SEPT. 6, 1991

S. POLIS A-232nd, 42nd Div.