



THIS MONTHⁱⁿ
MILITARY HISTORY

- 1640 Revolution in Portugal led to independence from Spain.
- 1804 Napoleon Bonaparte was crowned Emperor of France.
- 1823 Monroe Doctrine officially introduced to Congress by President James Monroe.
- 1859 Abolitionist John Brown executed for treason at Charles Town, WV.
- 1862 Battle of Fredericksburg, VA.
- 1865 The 13th Amendment to the Constitution, abolishing slavery, ratified by Congress.
- 1936 King Edward VIII abdicated the throne of England to marry an American named Wallis Warfield Simpson.
- 1941 The Japanese attack the U.S. Naval Base at Pearl Harbor
- 1961 President John F. Kennedy approves additional support to South Vietnam.
- 1989 U.S. Invasion of Panama *Operation Just Cause* takes place.

TRIVIA

1

What was the lowest temperature that was reached during the Battle of the Bulge?

2

Who coined the term “Battle of the Bulge?”

3

What term did BG McAuliffe use to respond to the German request for surrender during the siege of Bastogne?

ANSWERS FOR NOVEMBER 2019 QUESTIONS

1

Known for its signature sound, what was the name given to the gun fitted to the A-10 *Thunderbolt*?

» Avenger

2

What was the name of the research laboratory that was located at Rock Island Arsenal through the 1970s?

» Rodman Laboratories

3

About how many small arms are housed within the Rock Island Arsenal Museum? (To the nearest hundred)

» 1226



U.S. Soldiers watching an aerial dog fight on 26 December 1944.

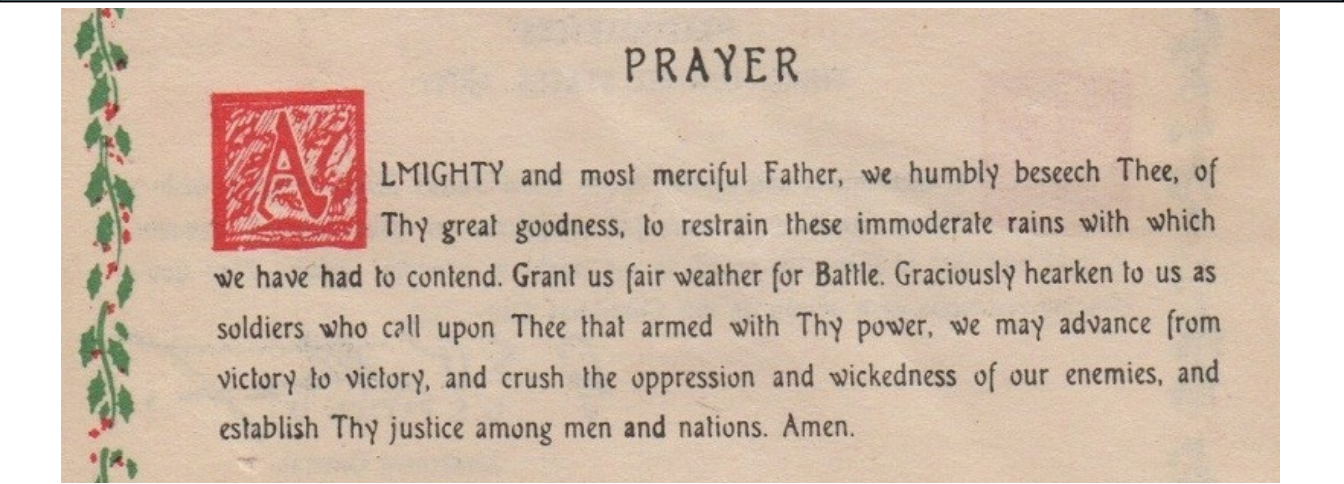
For answers to trivia, information on this month’s artifact spotlight, digital copies of old newsletters and more, visit the ASC History Office website at:
<https://aschq.army.mil/About-Us/History>



Battle of the Bulge

<p>On the morning of 16 December 1944 shivering Soldiers of the U.S. Army woke to the sounds of a massive, but short lived, artillery barrage and blinding lights coming from the German lines. To make things worse the morning was bitterly cold. Their initial fear quickly turned into feelings of sheer terror as the heavy clanking sounds of hundreds of tanks could be heard approaching the American lines. The German Operation, code named Wacht am Rhine, had begun.</p> <p>The foxholes that these American Soldiers were sitting in were located on front lines winding their way through the Ardennes forest in Belgium and Luxembourg and what they did not realize at the time was that the artillery and lights signaled the start of what would become known as the Battle of the Bulge. The battle would last for approximately five weeks and would involve over 700,000 Allied Soldiers and more than 450,000 German Soldiers.</p> <p>The plan for this battle had been personally devised by Adolph Hitler as a last ditch attempt to split the Western Allied armies, potentially seeking separate negotiated peace agreements with the Western Allies as well as to potentially re-capture the port city of Antwerp. The senior German Army command advised against continuing with the battle plans at the same time aggressively working to reduce the lofty goals set by Hitler. Their new main focus was to disrupt ongoing Allied plans for future offensives into Germany by causing massive casualties as well as capturing or destroying Allied supplies being stockpiled in the area. The new goal was quietly set at the Meuse River less than half way to the original</p>	<p>objective of Antwerp. The assault would begin in utter confusion for the U.S. Army with initial reports of localized probing German counter attacks eventually growing and became consolidated reports of attacks across almost the entire Ardennes front line.</p> <p>While confusion and miscommunications about the assault were taking place in the American line the German attack was not going fully as planned. Traffic jams, poor road conditions, inexperienced Soldiers were slowing the advance costing the German Army valuable time that it did not have. Additionally, there were pockets of strong American resistance that were further forcing the Germans to throttle their plans.</p> <p>The attack would continue on, causing a large bulge in the American lines almost reaching the German commands goal of the Meuse River. By the 25th of December lines had stabilized enough for Soldiers from the U.S. First Army in the north and U.S. Third Army in the south to launch counter attacks relieving Bastogne and slowly reducing the size of the bulge. By 25 January 1945 the counter attack was considered over and the American lines had roughly returned to their starting points prior to the attack.</p> <p>The Battle of the Bulge would was one of the largest battles that the U.S. Army has ever been involved in as well as one of the costliest. The Americans had taken 89,500 casualties but inflicted approximately 95,000 to 110,000 German casualties. Most importantly the back of the German Army had been broken and with the renewal of Allied spring offensives the Nazi government would only to last another roughly four months.</p>
--	---

Good Weather Prayer



On one of the occasions that Hollywood displays a historical event correctly the “good weather prayer” became well known after the movie Patton was shown in theaters. The movie showed LTG George S. Patton requesting his Chaplain write a prayer for good weather during the battle so that the Third Army could continue their attack. The above note is a copy of an original that was printed and distributed throughout Third Army on 22 December 1944. On the opposite side was a note from Patton “*To each officer and soldier in the Third United States Army, I wish a Merry Christmas. I have full confidence in your courage, devotion to duty, and skill in battle. May God’s blessing rest upon each of you on this Christmas Day.*” G. S. Patton, Jr. Lieutenant General

"This is undoubtedly the greatest American battle of the war, and will, I believe be regarded as an ever famous American victory."
Sir Winston Churchill

THE ASC HISTORY NEWSLETTER

Volume 10, Issue 3

December 2019

Presented to you by your friendly ASC History Office. Feel free to call or stop by our office for any of your history needs.

Kevin Braafladt
Mark Struve

Historian
Assistant Historian

kevin.d.braafladt.civ@mail.mil
mark.j.struve.civ@mail.mil