

MEDAL OF HONOR

(Army)

RAY G. TURNER

E - 10 - 72

Sergeant, U. S. Army

Company B, 319<sup>th</sup> Infantry, 80<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division

Birth: Berwick, Columbia County, Pennsylvania

Entered service at: Nescopeck, Pennsylvania

Place and date: At Dahl, Luxembourg, 8 January 1945

General Order Number 49, 28 June 1945

Chation: He commanded a 9-man squad with the mission of holding

a critical flank position. When overwhelming numbers of the enemy

attacked under cover of withering artillery, mortar and rocket fire, he

withdrew his squad into a nearby house, determined to defend it to the

last man. The enemy attacked again and again and were repulsed with

heavy losses. Supported by direct tank fire, they finally gained entrance,

but the intrepid sergeant refused to surrender although 5 of his men

were wounded and one was killed. He boldly flung a can of flaming oil at

the first wave of attackers, dispersing them, and fought doggedly from

room to room, closing with the enemy in fierce hand-to-hand encounters.

He hurled hand grenade for hand grenade, bayoneted 2 fanatical

Germans who rushed a doorway he was defending and fought on with

the enemy's weapons when his own ammunition was expended. The

savage fight raged for 4 hours, and finally, when only 3 men of the

defending squad were left unrounded, the enemy surrendered. Twenty-

five prisoners were taken, 11 enemy dead and a great number of

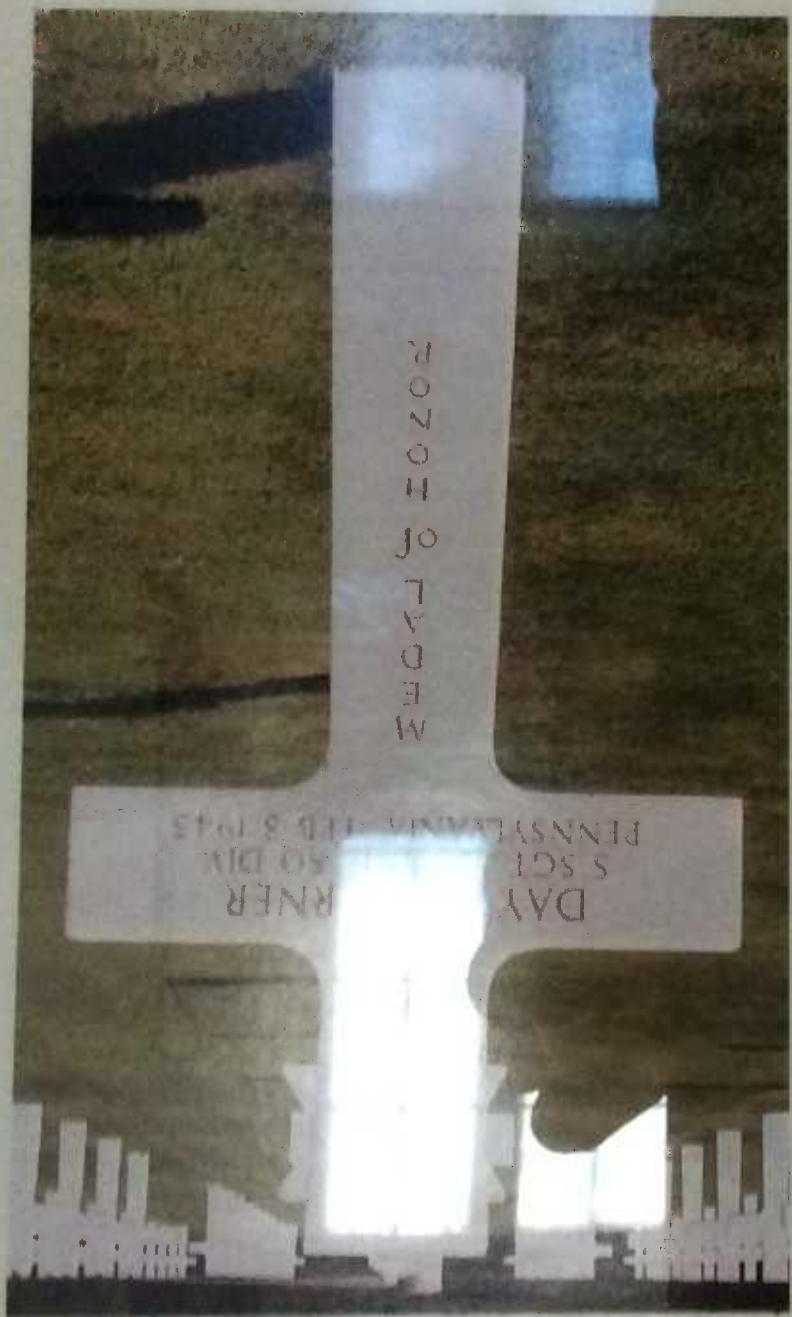
wounded were counted. Sergeant Turner's valiant stand will live on as a

constant inspiration to his comrades. His heroic, inspiring leadership, his

determination and courageous devotion to duty exemplify the highest

tradition of the military service.

Sgt. Turner died exactly one month after this battle, on 8 February 1945.





DAY G. TURNER  
S SGT 319 INF 80 DIV  
PENNSYLVANIA FEB 8 1945

MEDAL OF HONOR



MEDAL OF HONOR  
(Army)

WILLIAM D. MCGEE

C-7-13

Private, U.S. Army  
Medical Detachment, 304<sup>th</sup> Infantry, 76<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division

Birth: Indianapolis, Marion County, Indiana

Entered service at: Indianapolis, Indiana

Place and date: Near Mulheim, Germany, 18 March 1945

General Order Number 21, 26 February 1946

Citation: A medical aid man, he made a night crossing of the Moselle River with troops endeavoring to capture the town of Mulheim. The enemy had retreated in the sector where the assault boats landed, but had left the shore heavily strewn with antipersonnel mines. Two men of the first wave attempting to work their way forward detonated mines which wounded them seriously, leaving them bleeding and in great pain beyond the reach of their comrades. Entirely on his own initiative, Private McGee entered the minefield, brought out one of the injured to comparative safety, and had returned to rescue the second victim when he stepped on a mine and was severely wounded in the resulting explosion. Although suffering intensely and bleeding profusely, he shouted orders that none of his comrades was to risk his life by entering the death-sown field to render first aid that might have saved his life. In making the supreme sacrifice, Private McGee demonstrated a concern for the well-being of his fellow soldiers that transcended all considerations for his own safety and a gallantry in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service.



WILLIAM D. MC GEE  
PVT 304 INF 76 DIV  
INDIANA MAR 19 1945



MEDAL of HONOR





The most beautiful and graceful of the birds of the tropic zone is the  
the beautiful bird of the tropic zone, the "Toucan," which is found in the  
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A TROPIC BIRD  
BY H. W. H. W.

*In the Company of Friends*



*In the Company of Heroes*

A SILENT REUNION

by Matt Hall

On a cold December day, veterans of the Battle of the Bulge reunite at the American cemetery in Luxembourg. Here, guarded by tall pines, rest the mortal remains of some 5,000 American boys who died fighting to liberate Europe. As the veterans reflect amidst the gently falling snow, their willing emotions confirm their often-stated belief: "The real heroes never came home." Here, they feel a presence, a warmth amidst the cold. Something tells them they are not alone and this silent reunion is not the last.



ERWALD L. SCHROEDER  
PIC. 112 1917 28 DIV  
TEXAS SEPT 20 1914





Nico Schneider was born in Luxembourg City in 1934, he had just reached elementary school age when Hitler's troops invaded and occupied Luxembourg in May 1940. The Nazis lightened their control of the country in the following years, declaring that Luxembourg was German, changing all French names to German, forbidding the teaching of French and executing many people who opposed them. Later they forced young Luxembourg men to join the German Army and sent them off to fight in Russia, where many perished. Those who hid or deserted were summarily executed if caught and if not they were deported. The fairly large Jewish community in Luxembourg was almost completely annihilated in Nazi death camps. In September 1944 American troops of the 5th Armored Division and the 28th Infantry Division entered Luxembourg City from the southwest after German forces retreated to the east. Local residents, including Nico's family, welcomed their liberators with great jubilation. Ten-year-old Nico and other kids in his neighborhood, through which the Americans passed on their way to the city center, were very curious about the impressive uniformed men who started handing out chocolate. Nico today remembers how he and two friends watched one day as some of those soldiers went to a nearby park and hung 60 was buckets filled with water from the branches of a tree. The men showered under those buckets. A very surprising turn of events came 60 years later when bringing back Nico's memory of this minor incident.

Two months after the liberation of Luxembourg the Nazis launched a huge counter-offensive across the northern part of the country and into Belgium, breaking through the lines of the US First Army, which had driven them from this region. Gen. George S. Patton, Jr, whose US Third Army was pushing from France into the German homeland southeast of here at the time, turned some of his forces north to attack the flank of the Nazi onslaught. The resulting battle in the harsh winter of 1944-45 would come to be known as the Battle of the Bulge. The Americans suffered over 60,000 casualties in that 6-week battle. In late December 1944, as the fighting raged in the north, the Third Army started to push some of its dead in a parade east of Luxembourg City that year later would become the Luxembourg American Cemetery. The Third Army joined with other forces of the First Army to wipe out the German bulge and went on to cross the Rhineland in much heavy fighting through March 1945. Hitler's "death" was brought to an end in May of that year.

In the years after the war many Luxembourgers visited the graves of the American soldiers who had driven the Nazis from their soil and now remained behind in this cemetery. Nico was one of them. He was fascinated by the place, because he had come to truly admire the soldiers who saved his country.

At some point, during one of his visits, he found the grave of a soldier whose name matched his own, with the exact same spelling. He decided to "adopt" the grave but could not find out much about that soldier other than the short entry on him in the cemetery burial register.

The soldier's name was Ewald Schroeder, and he was from Texas and had been a member of the 112<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment 28<sup>th</sup> Division. He had died during a river crossing under enemy fire on the German border on 20 September 1944, exactly 10 days after Luxembourg was first liberated.

For many years afterwards Nico tried in vain to find more information on this soldier. In 2004 the World War II Memorial was opened in Washington DC, and Americans were invited to submit names of people they knew who had served in the war for inclusion in an online registry. Sometime later a friend of Nico's found Ewald's name listed in that registry, with a photograph of him in Army uniform. The person who had submitted his name was a Mrs. Minnie Schloft, a cousin. As her family name was uncommon it was not difficult to find her in Texas, Ewald's home state. Another friend of Nico's found Minnie's address and telephone number online in the US White Pages.

Minnie was very surprised and happy the first time Nico called her and told her he had 'adopted' Ewald's name. It turned out Minnie had in her possession most of Ewald's affairs including photographs and letters he wrote to his family from Europe in the days before he died.

She told Nico she was getting old and there was no one else in the family who wanted to keep these memories. So she offered to send them to him for safekeeping. Nico was only too happy to receive them. When he went through Ewald's letters he found one dated 17 September 1944, three days before he was killed. For some reason Ewald's family had never opened it as it arrived only after they learned of his death. Nico was stunned when he read it, because Ewald mentioned that he and some of his buddies had showered under canvas buckets hung from a tree in a Luxembourg City park as boys from the neighborhood watched them. This is when Nico realized he must have been one of those boys.

12 July 2013. Written by Erwin Franzen, ABMC Guide (21 years at the time of this article) and long-time, dear friend of Nico Schroeder.

US WW II Cemetery, Luxembourg.



US WW II Cemetery, Luxembourg.

