

War Era Story Project 2012

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A Survivor's Story: Bastogne WWII

In the Battle of the Bulge, during 1944, I was an 18-yearold G. I. serving in General Patton's 3rd Army. I was assigned to the 41st Reconnaissance Squadron of the 11th Armored Division. In late November, we traveled through parts of France and Germany, observing how German troops massacred our tanker troops at Malmedy, rather than capturing them. We were then ordered to not capture German troops except some for intelligence purpose. It was the coldest winter in 44 years in Germany and Bastogne, Belgium. As we were approaching Bastogne, we were constantly under siege by the German Luftwaffe planes, which were strafing us, and our Air force, who mistakenly were putting us under friendly fire. Our troops were suffering with frostbitten hands and feet.

(Battle of the Bulge, 1944)



During the days and nights, German tanks, SS troops and Wehrmacht were putting our Armored and Reconnaissance troops under attack. We were then ordered to retreat and regroup. Another soldier and I found refuge in the Bastogne Gendarmerie building to get some sleep and warmth in the attic. We were awakened from our sleep due to loud noises coming from German troops who now were occupying our building, and they were going from room to room. Our heartbeats increased and we were terrified for fear of being captured. Fortunately, these troops did not check our attic hideout. Unknown to us, our assigned troops had withdrawn further back from the front lines. Perhaps my fears were greater than my comrade soldier, because I was Jewish. Suddenly our troops counter-attacked the city, and all of the German troops fled, including those in our building. "There for the Grace of God," I survived. Later, we were able to rejoin our assigned forces.