

Chapter Eight

Military Service

The Great War (later referred to as World War I) began in August 1914. It pitted principally England, France and Russia against Germany and Austria-Hungary. The German's exploitation of unrestricted submarine warfare beginning in February 1917 resulted in America entering the war the following April. However, American troops did not enter combat until the fall of 1917.

For Iowans, the first American casualty due to combat was Merle David Hay from Glidden. He, along with James Bethel Gresham of Evansville, Indiana and Thomas F. Enright of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, died in the early hours of November 3, 1917, while serving sentry duty in the trenches near Artois or Bathelemont, France, close to enemy lines. Hay may have been the first American killed as the Germans conducted a surprise attack on inexperienced American troops. As a result, the Westlawn Cemetery west of Glidden was renamed in his honor.

During 1917 and 1918 about 24 million men born from September 11, 1872 to September 12, 1900 registered for the draft. Three registration days were held in which the registrant completed the registration card. Only a small percentage of these men were actually called up for military service based upon three draft lotteries. The registrants whose numbers were drawn were subject to military duty unless they could show good cause why they should not be inducted.

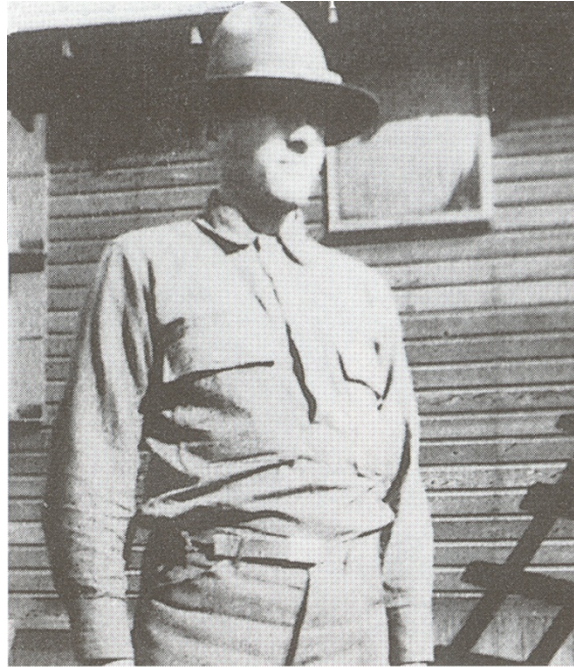
The June 5, 1917 registration was for men born from 1886-1896. About ten million men registered on this date with 18-20 year olds exempted. The June 5, 1918 registration was for men born in 1896-97. This group of about one million men who had recently become old enough to be drafted during the preceding year registered on this date. Finally, on September 12, 1918, 14 million men born between 1873-1886 and 1897-1900 registered.

The draft registration for Henry Frederick Herbolzheimer, later husband of Meta (nee Koehler) whose mother was Louise (nee Sporleder) Koehler, reveals that he registered in the first registration on June 5, 1917. He was a single, self-employed farmer, age 25, with no one dependent upon him for support. William and Marie Sporleder's sons "Henry John Carl Sporleder" born September 4, 1889 and "John L. Sporleder" born August 7, 1879 both from Pierce, Nebraska also registered.

In *One of Ours* (1922), Willa Cather chronicled the fictional life of Claude Wheeler whose ancestors were first generation immigrants. With the United States entry in the Great War, Claude joined the Army and served in France where he was killed in action. The story was based upon the actual experiences of her cousin, G. P. Cather, which Ms. Cather gleaned from his family correspondence. She depicted the first and second-generation American soldiers serving in the military after maturing to manhood in the Midwest. In like manner, Sporleder descendants and their spouses served their country during its time of need.

Those Who Served in World War I

Arnold August Friedrich Sporleder (Army, 1890-1971)



In 1918, Arnold Sporleder was assigned to military duty at Camp Dodge, Iowa. Carl Sporleder (1907-1992), then age 11, wrote him this letter.¹

Dear Uncle Arnold,

Carroll, Ia. Sept. 30²

¹ Arnold Sporleder kept the letter until his death in 1971 when his family found it when going through his personal belongings. The family gave it to Carl Sporleder who kept it until his death in 1992 when his family found it when going his personal belongings. The letter is now in the possession of his oldest son, James.

² The exact address was "Priv Co. – 12 Bon. 163 D B, Tent City, Camp Dodge. The postage was three cents.

Well how are you? I am fine and Ervin just went to bed. I am going to school every day now, but only missed 1 day and that was when we shelled our corn and your corn. I don't know what it brought.³ We were fishing Sunday and caught 4 big carp and 1 big one got away. For Papa, it sure was dandy. I didn't but if I had all the fish that I had on my hook, I think I would had a whole sack full. Ed Berns was fishing too. They caught 7 lbs. and Elmer caught a pickerel. He said it weighed 2 lb. We were down and helped Grandpa dig potatoes. Ed Berns helped them too. We got a good load of late potatoes and a load of early ones. They are though grading our place now. It sure is a dandy road. It is a whole lot wider.⁴ Today was the fourth Liberty loan drive.⁵ Papa had to go to the schoolhouse this morning and is not back. It is pretty late already. The school children will have a vacation in corn picking time.⁶ We are going to dig potatoes tomorrow and then I will stay home from school. My teacher's name is Lottie Juerglins from Glidden. She is a pretty good teacher. There are 14 of us kids at school.⁷ We sure have lots of fun. We play ball and everything. Henrietta Margaret got a little sister. They weren't to school for three weeks.⁸ I am getting pretty sleepy now so I guess I will go to bed. So good night. Let me hear from you soon.

Carl Sporleder
Carroll, Ia. R#6

³ The process to remove the corn kernels from the corncob was referred to as "shelling." What the corn "brought" meant how many bushels of corn there was and the price per bushel.

⁴ An unimproved road then was at the same level as the fields on both sides of the road. To "grade" a road meant ditches were dug along both sides of the road with the excess soil used to build the roadbed at an elevation higher than the road.

⁵ World War I officially ended on November 11, 1917. The United States government issued Liberty loans to finance the war effort.

⁶ It was customary for the rural schools to not meet during the harvest seasons.

⁷ The 14 children would not have been in one grade, but for the entire country school and consisted of grades kindergarten through 8th grade.

⁸ It was customary for the girls to stay home from school and help out after the birth of a new child.

Otto Charles Wilhelm Buckendahl (Navy, 1900-1951)⁹



Henry Fredrich Herboldsheimer (1892-1975)

Meta Koehler's husband was Henrich Fredrich (Henry, 1892-1975) Herboldsheimer (*Herboldsheimer*) whose parents were Lucas Fredrich (1838-1909) and Rosina (nee Stanzel, 1847-1903) Herboldsheimer. Lucas was born in the Civil Parish of Schmalnbach, District (*Kreis*) of Ansbach, Province of Mittelfranken, Kingdom of Bavaria (*Bayern*) to Johann Sebastian and Eva Barbara (nee Schulein) *Herboldsheimer*. The Evangelical (or Reformed) Parish (*Evangelisch*) was Lehrberg. Lucas had 16 brothers and sisters. The family came to the United States in 1869 first settling in Illinois. Rosina was born in Germany in 1847. In May 1870, Lucas and Rosina were married in Bureau County, Illinois. They lived five years near Peoria, Illinois before moving in 1875 to Carroll County, Iowa where they lived for 17 years. In 1892, they relocated to a farm three miles east of Pierce, Nebraska where Henry was born April 1, 1892. Lucas and Rosina were the parents of five daughters and seven sons. The parents are interred in St. John's Lutheran Cemetery east of Pierce.ⁱ

⁹ The photo was taken by Duane Luebe in June 2005.



Lucas and Rosina
Herbolsheimer
circa 1893

(nee Stanzel)
Family

Front Row: Rose, Rosina, John, Lucas, Henry
Middle Row: Ludwig, Bill, Fred
Back Row: Katherine, Elizabeth, George, Barbara, Christ, Mary

The photo is from Vicky DeJong's website.

Henry Herbolsheimer served in World War I and upon returning home received his due recognition.

“Soldiers Coming Home. Henry Herbolsheimer arrived Tuesday afternoon from Camp Dodge, Iowa, having received an honorable discharge from the Army. Henry wears the overseas stripes. After months of training, he set sail and arrived in Liverpool, England on July 10, 1918. Shortly afterward the boys were sent to France and immediately sent to the front line trenches. This was at a time when the Allied commander needed every American soldier we could spare to help stop the German drive. Henry was in the motor transport service. His work kept him exposed to fire of the enemy about all the time. He relates one instance where he was covered with earth and debris that was caused by a German shell striking nearby, killing over thirty of his comrades. Henry said the more heard the screening of the enemy shells, the more it gets on a person's nerves. He does not think much of France. Many of the American boys have taken French wives and are bringing them home. Henry was a member of the American Army of occupation and was at Coblenz (*Koblenz*), Germany for several months prior to receiving orders to return home. Henry says there were many wounded soldiers on the ship. He says Nebraska and the good old U.S.A. sure look good to him.”
Pierce County Call, March 27, 1919ⁱⁱ



After the German's surrender, the German cities of Mainz, Coblenz and Cologne remained in Allied hands as headquarters for their occupation forces with the British at Cologne, the French at Mainz and the Americans at Coblenz. The city of Coblenz is located where the Moselle River makes its confluence with the Rhine River.ⁱⁱⁱ

By November 11th, 1918, an armistice was declared and diplomatically the war officially ended later with the execution of the Treaty of Versailles. The history of European peace accords followed the maxim “to the victors belong the spoils.” The Treaty of Versailles after World War I continued this pattern. The victorious Big Four of France, England, Italy and the United States imposed a harsh settlement on Germany. Territorially, Germany forfeited the Alsace and Lorraine regions to France; Schleswig-Holstein to Denmark; Eupone and Malmedy to Belgium; and regions around Czechoslovakia to create this new country from the old Austro-Hungarian Empire. The German city of Danzig was declared an open city and Poland was provided a corridor to the Baltic Sea. Germany was forced to pay enormous reparations for the damages it caused. The most humiliating provision required Germany to assume the total culpability for causing the war.^{iv}

Adolf Hitler ascended to power in Germany in 1932. The Germans loathed the terms and conditions imposed under the Versailles Treaty after the Great War and he fed on their discontentment and anger. He sought regions of the countries around Germany with ethnic German population to become a component of Germany. First, Teutonic Austria joined with Germany. This positioned Germany for the annexation of the Czechoslovakian Sudetenland largely inhabited by the German-speaking population. England and France did not oppose Germany’s expansion.

The war in Europe commenced on September 1st, 1939 when Germany invaded Poland. Similar to the Sudetenland, Germany sought territory returned that it was forced to cede to form Poland after World War I. This included the seaport city of Danzig (now identified as Gdańsk) that was heavily populated by inhabitants of German heritage. Also, a corridor on German territory was created that provided Poland access to the Baltic Sea via Danzig. Hitler alleged the Poles were mistreating the ethnic Germans in Danzig and the Polish Corridor.^v Britain and France responded by declaring war on Germany.

In the fall of 1941, negotiations continued between America and Japan with trade relations as leverage to force Japan to cease its invasion of the Chinese mainland. Open hostilities broke out in 1931 in the Sino-Japanese conflict and escalated by 1937 with Japan’s Chinese mainland incursion. Japan was willing to offer concessions, but President Roosevelt was adamant on three points. First, Japan’s complete withdrawal from China. Second, the Japanese government’s repudiation of the Chinese “Nanking Government” Japan established as a rival to the Nationalist Chinese Government. Third, Japan could not be a member of the Tripartite Pact with Germany and Italy. Japan concluded these demands could not be met. On December 7th, 1941, the Imperial Japanese forces preemptively attacked the American Navy Base at Pearl Harbor and on December 8th, the United States declared war on Japan.

Germany and Italy declared war on the United States on December 11th and America countered by declaring war on both of them on the same date. Italian dictator, Benito Mussolini, proclaimed from the Piazza Venezia in Rome that the “powers of the pact of steel” were determined to prevail against the United States and its Allies. Adolf Hitler appeared at the Reichstag in Berlin and declared that under the Tripartite Agreement, Germany was obliged to join with Italy to defend its partner Japan. He boasted, “After victory has been achieved, Germany, Italy and Japan will continue in closest co-operation with a view to establishing a new and just order.”^{vi}

Those Who Served in World War II

Ruben Reinhold Buckendahl (Army, 1911-1989)

Vernice George Gray (Navy, 1913-2000)

Arnold Herman Jonas (1921-1977)

Lt. Col. Harvey Herman Jones ((a/k/a Jonas 1909-1976)

Harvey Herman Jones, although American born, changed his name to Jones prior to beginning his career in the military. Family legend says that he didn't want to be confused with "one of them" meaning the Germans, if he was ever stationed overseas. Therefore he changed his name. Harvey enlisted in the Air Force at the age of 17.

By 1930, he had completed basic training and at the age of 22 he was serving at Fort Davis, Cristobel District, Panama Canal Zone. The Panama Canal Zone was a strip of land and "land under water" five miles wide on either side of the Panama Canal.^{vii} Air Force, Army, and Navy military bases and posts were built in the area in the early 1900s to help defend the channel and keep it under U.S. authority. Those living in the Panama Canal Zone had the same basic rights as U.S. citizens, however there were no elections, voting, elected officials or government. Only those connected with the administration, operation, maintenance or defense of the Zone were allowed in the area. U.S. government employees were provided housing. Electricity and other utilities were also provided free or at low cost. Fort Davis was located near the Atlantic entrance to the canal.

Harvey was a career soldier and served in World War II. His veteran service for the Korean War is recorded as entering service on 11 December 1951 and ending 30 November 1957. During his service in the Korean War, Lt. Col. Harvey Jones served as a member of the 58th Fighter Bomber wing. From January to March, 1953 he served as assistant director of personnel, as wing executive officer from March to May and as director of personnel from May to July of 1954. The 58th wing was reorganized in March of 1954. Two combat wings were consolidated and Lt. Colonel Jones transferred personnel without interrupting combat operations at the base which, during this period of open hostilities launched F-84 Thunderjets round the clock to bomb Communist positions throughout North Korea. He received the Bronze Star Medal for meritorious service while acting as Director of Personnel and Executive Officer with the 58th Fighter Bomber wing. The ceremony took place at the Fifth Air Force base Korea with Col. Joseph Davis Jr., Deputy Wing Commander, presenting the medal. Harvey was cited for his efficiency and outstanding ability in the execution of all tasks put before him.^{viii}

In February 1955, Harvey was awarded the Korean Ulchi by Maj. Gen. Chang Duk Change, Vice Staff Chief of the Republic of Korea Air Force at Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. The Korean award, which is the equivalent to the U.S. Legion of Merit, was given to Col. Jones in recognition of "his outstanding performance of duty which materially aided the Republic of Korea in its fight against Communist aggression." At the time of the award Harvey was serving as Assistant Adjutant at Headquarters, Air Material Command.^{ix}

Harvey retired from the Air Force and lived out his years in San Antonio, Texas. He died March 19, 1976 and was interred with full military honors on March 23, 1976 in Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery in San Antonio, Texas, Section X, Grave 173.

Walter Reinholdt Jonas (1916-1998)



Luebe brothers and two Luebe cousins
 Left to right: Waleen, Loren, Donald, Delmar, Orville and Lester
 The photo and information on his brothers were provided by Duane Luebe

Loren William Albert Luebe (1917-1985)^x

Loren Luebe entered the Army during World War II and served at Camp Lee in Virginia and the African Campaign. His duties were operating heavy equipment and military police.

Orville John Martin Luebe ((1918)^{xi}

Orville Luebe was inducted into the Army at Fort Crook, Omaha on February 17, 1941 for a one-year tour of duty. He received his Basic Training at Camp Robinson, Arkansas. Orville departed aboard the USS *Johnson* on December 27, 1941 transporting troops from San Francisco to Honolulu, Hawaii. Until September 14, 1942, he made six additional trips as a security guard.

On one of the trips, they relocated the inhabitants of Christmas Island located in southeastern Asia. It is a very small atoll in the Indian Ocean south of Indonesia. It is about three-quarters the size of Washington, DC. The island was discovered in 1643 and named for the day of its discovery. England annexed the uninhabited island in 1888 and settlements begun. Phosphate mining was conducted in the 1890s.

With the beginning of World War II, a Japanese submarine torpedoed and sank a Norwegian freighter, *Eisevold*, as it was loading phosphate in Flying Fish Cove. Japanese aircraft also made numerous bombing raids. Mostly of the women and children were evacuated. On March 31, 1942, a Japanese Fleet bombarded the Cove shoreline and more than 900 troops then invaded. The remaining Europeans were imprisoned and the Japanese captured about a thousand Malays and Chinese who had fled to the jungle. All were forced to work in the phosphate mines. The Japanese attempted to mine the phosphate, but sabotage by the islanders and Allied submarine attacks prevented effective production. By 1943, the Japanese were unable to maintain the island's food supplies and deported about half the island's remaining population to prison camps in Indonesia. The island continued under Japanese occupation until the end of the war in 1945.

In 1958, England transferred sovereignty to Australia. Almost two-thirds of the island is a national park. As of the 2001, the population is about 1,500.^{xiii}

Later, Orville served in France, Germany and Czechoslovakia until Victory in Europe (VE Day) and then was transferred to Japan for occupation duty after its surrender. His one-year commitment was over after four years and ten months! His decorations and citations include the Bar with Japan, American Campaign Medal, and Army of Occupation Medal.

Waleen Carl Henry Luebe (1922)

Waleen Luebe was inducted in the Army on November 28, 1942 at Fort Crook, Omaha. He received his Basic Training at Drew Field, Florida. He departed for the Pacific Theatre on April 9, 1944, where he was involved in the New Guinea, Southern Philippines and Luzon campaigns. His decorations and citations included the American Service Medal, Asiatic Pacific Service Medal, Philippine Liberation, Bronze Service Star, World War II Victory Medal and Good Conduct Medal.

Delmar Marbin Luebe (1926)

Delmar Luebe was inducted into the Army on May 26, 1944 at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. He received his Basic Training at Camp Hood, Texas and Camp Machkell, North Carolina. He was stationed at LeHarve and Sens, France as member of the 325th Glider Infantry. His decorations and citations included the American Theater Ribbon, European EAMET Ribbon, Good Conduct Medal and Victory Medal.

Evans G. Meier (1921-1965)



The photo was provided by Duane Luebe.

Frederick Arnold Sporleder (Army, 1920-2001)^{xiii}



June (nee Bachman) Sporleder





Frederick (1920-2001) and June (nee Backman, 1924-_____) Sporleder
Immanuel Lutheran Cemetery
Lidderdale, Iowa^{xiv}

Henry G. Sporleder (1920-1989)

Raymond J. Sporleder (1919-1981)¹⁰



¹⁰ The photo was provided by Duane Luebe.

Waldo Sporleder (1914-2003)

Waldo Sporleder¹¹ entered the Army on April 3, 1942 and was assigned to Camp Barkeley.^{xv} He was attached to the 90th Division and trained as a radio operator. Its birth was explained in the Division's official publication.



The 90th Infantry Division was born on the soil of Texas, drew its strength from the North and South and East and West, grew to lusty manhood on the beaches of France, and fed itself on victories plucked from the forests and wrenched from the rivers of Europe. The new division was born quietly but proudly at Camp Barkeley, Texas, on March 25, 1942... *A History of the 90th Division in World War II*, page 1^{xvi}

Waldo arrived in England on April 5, 1944 and landed on Utah Beach on D-Day (June 6, 1944) plus one with the 90th Division.^{xvii} Later, it was a part of General George Patton's Third Army. In the July 1944 timeframe, the 90th Division was in the Periers, France neighborhood.^{xviii} After it liberated this village on the 27th of July, the 90th Division advanced south to Avranches and next southeast to Lemans. It executed a left flank and shifted north to Chambois.

As the American Army, including the 90th Division, liberated the small French towns, they were greeted with enthusiasm by the local residences.

St. Hilaire was hilarious. Only a brief struggle with German rearguards ensued, then the town belonged to the 90th Division. The town and the people too. They stood in the streets and cheered and waved and yelled until their throats were hoarse. They laughed until the tears rolled down their cheeks. Here and there a few tears dropped quietly, tears of thanksgiving and reverence and gratitude for the deliverance of *la belle France*.

American troops, riding in jeeps, on tanks, were pelted with bouquets of flowers, presented ceremoniously with wine and cider. If the wine happened to be sour or cider watered down, it made no difference...

It was the same in every town and village. The little girls dressed in their Sunday best, tightly gripping a bouquet of daisies and reciting hesitantly welcome to *les Americans*, while their proud parents looked on and prompted them when they forgot.

A History of the 90th Division in World War II, page 19

Waldo reported to his sister on the events and she gave the letter to the local newspaper.

From somewhere in France, Waldo Sporleder, brother of Mr. Wm. Thede, L. C., writes: I know there are a lot of things you are wondering about. It isn't so bad. Of course, there is a war going on, but we manage to get along. Plenty to eat, more cigarettes than we can carry, and sometimes we run into cider and wine. Not too much time for that, but there it is anyway. Caught a cow last night and got a little milk to make some hot chocolate.

Lake City Graphic, July 1944

On August 24th, the 90th Division was regrouping and resting as later chronicled in its official publication.

¹¹ The photo of Waldo Sporleder in the summer of 1941 was provided by his niece Gladys (nee Thede) Alcox, daughter of Emma (nee Sporleder) Thede.

Riding hard on the heels of the retreating enemy, the 90th spent only a few days in the vicinity of Chambois, days devoted to rehabilitation of personnel and equipment. And now the Division was assigned to the XX Corps and the Third Army once more. Never again, for the duration of the war, was the 90th to be separated from General Patton's command, a command which was shortly to create a legend among friend and foe alike for its spirit and bravado, a legend comprising all the elements of Peck's Bad Boys,^{xix} Robin Hood,^{xx} Sir Galahad^{xxi} and the Cannonball Express^{xxii} all rolled into one. On August 26th the 90th began to move. Swinging slightly south of Paris the combat teams of the Division moved eastward through Fontainebleau and on toward the cathedral of Reims. The names of disputed battlefields of the previous war were briefly noted and passed ... the Marne, Chateau Thierry, the Aisne and Reims at last. Verdun and the river Marne fell to advance elements of the XX Corps farther to the east.

A History of the 90th Division in World War II, page 26

Later, Waldo's brother Ernest received word that Waldo had been wounded.

Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Sporleder Tuesday received a package containing the Purple Heart medal which was awarded recently to his brother, T-4 Waldo Sporleder in France. In a letter from Waldo he stated he was sending the award which he received for a 'nick in the leg.' Word of his being wounded was received September 23, but the extent of the injuries was not learned.

Fonda (Iowa) Times, 1944

Waldo Sporleder was wounded while General Patton's Third Army commenced its advance into the Metz region on September 7th. Patton's forces to seize Metz consisted of three divisions including the 90th assigned to the northern sector. The 357th Infantry Regiment of the 90th advanced on Trieux and the 358th Infantry Regiment on Briey. Both cities are northwest of Metz. The 90th participated in the siege of Metz from September 14th through November 19th and was instrumental in its capture on October 30th.^{xxiii}

The western approaches to Metz are ringed by an imposing circle of hills, hills which must be taken by storm if at all. On these hills were erected powerful mutually protecting fortresses capable of withstanding unlimited aerial and artillery poundings. From the fortresses the defenders boasted of ideal observation and an open field of fire. This was the outer ring of defense. Inside that ring lay another similar arc, more powerful, if possible, than the outer. It was against the outer ring of the Metz fortifications that the 90th now pressed.

As the difficulties of the reduction of Fortress Metz became evident, the Division altered its plans radically. Frontal assaults on the city, which had successfully resisted such assaults for nearly one thousand years, were out of the question. The new plan called for attacks of limited nature, aggressive patrols, constant nibbling into the impregnable ring.

A History of the 90th Division in World War II, page 28

In December 1944, the 90th Division was marching eastward to the Moselle and Saar Rivers. They crossed the flooded Moselle River at Thionville en route to seizing Fort Koenigsmacher to breach the ring of defenses around the German city of Metz. They achieved the first capture of Metz in modern history. Next, they crossed the Saar River without the benefit of bridges to launch their attack on the Siegfried Line.

In the fighting that followed, the 90th pushed resolutely into the city of Dillingen, clearing block after block of the enemy. The densest portions of the Siegfried Line had been successfully negotiated, and Dillingen was in process of falling to the 90th. House by house and room by room the 90th pushed through the city. In spite of the fact that no bridge has been built to span the Saar River, the Division had succeeded in crushing one by one the defenses that constituted the 'invincible' Siegfried Line. The shadow of the 90th had fallen squarely on the heartland of Germany.

A History of the 90th Division in World War II, page 47

On December 16, 1944, the Germans launched a major counter offensive in the Ardennes Forest. They planned to separate the Allied forces and advance to the Dutch seaport of Antwerp. The Americans were taken by surprise and suffered significant casualties in stopping the Germans. The German counterattack famous as the Battle of the Bulge, temporarily halted the 90th Division's advance into Germany.

General George Patton mobilized the Third Army, including the 90th Division, to assist in impeding the German offense. Waldo Sporleder, still a soldier with the 90th Division, endured the Battle of the Bulge that in essence ended by the third week of January 1945.

And suddenly the picture changed. In the north in Luxembourg and Belgium, (German) General (General Karl Rudolf Gerd) von Rundstedt hurled his best divisions into a final counteroffensive. Before the fury of the attack the American lines bent back. In the Moselle-Saar triangle another enemy assault was in preparation. The spearheads across the Saar (River) were exposed and vulnerable. In view of these rapid altering developments, the 90th was ordered to disengage, to return its force to the west bank of the Saar (River).

Never before in the history of the Division had it disengaged, and its first experience was fraught with difficulty and danger. Only one ferry, one footbridge and few assault boats were available for the maneuver that was to move the entire Division across the river under enemy observation.

On December 19th the withdrawal began. As the troops retired they destroyed all equipment which might possibly be of aid to the enemy, mined the areas they abandoned and moved slowly westward. For three days the operations continued, while the enemy remained in complete ignorance of what was occurring.

A History of the 90th Division in World War II, page 48

* * *

Christmas of 1944 found the 90th in the area between the Moselle and the Saar rivers in light contact with the enemy. The Division's mission was mainly to prevent the German forces in that zone from reinforcing von Rundstedt's offensive in the north. New replacements had arrived, filling in the badly depleted ranks and it was vitally important that the newly arrived troops receive additional training and combat orientation.

On the night of January 5th orders were at last received. 'Be prepared for movement.' Bitter cold had descended on the area, and freezing winds drifted the snow aimlessly and treacherously, obscuring the roads and rendering them into icy sheets. No one yet knew the Division's destination, its mission, the obstacles which lay before it. The orders were brief and pointed. 'Be prepared for movement.' The 90th Division prepared.

The following day the 90th, now assigned to III Corps, began its highly secret trek toward its assembly area in Luxembourg. Identification on vehicles was obscured, relieving troops assumed the T-O patch in order to keep the enemy in complete ignorance and the 50 mile march began.¹²

Southeast of armed Bastogne the enemy had thrust a salient contained for the past several weeks by the 26th and 35th Infantry and 6th Armored Division.¹³ These units had successfully prevented further penetration, but the strength of the enemy, the terrain and wintery weather combined to make their operations difficult in the extreme. Corps plans called for an assault along the perimeter of the enemy salient with the 90th making the main effort with the object of reducing the salient and destroying the enemy contained therein.

On January 9th all was in readiness for the attack. The 90th examined the terrain which stood in its way and saw endless reaches of towering hills coated with snow and ice. From this day until the end of combat the 90th was destined to conduct its activities in the hills of Europe.

¹² Initially the "T-O" patch stood for the fact that most members of the 90th Division were from Texas and Oklahoma. With the inclusion of soldiers from all states, the patch later meant "Tough Ombres." The emblem is superimposed on a map of the route taken by the 90th Division from D-Day to the end of the war on May 7th, 1945 as displayed in at the end of this Chapter.

¹³ Contextually, "salient" is a military term designating a specific military unit that is holding a section of the battlefield.

The weather was also a formidable foe. For now the January winds swept paralyzing through the exposed valleys, the temperature hovered around the zero mark, armor and other vehicles ground helplessly on the ice for traction, and the spectre of trench foot and frost-bite hung night-marishly over the American troops.

The enemy, with mobile reserves of SS Panzer units, was well dug in on the sides of the hills, ready to resist fanatically any encroachment on their main supply roads running east from Bastogne itself. And so the 90th Division arranged itself against the hills, the winter, and the Germans. With the 357th on the left, the 359th on the right, and the 358th in reserve, the assault was launched on the morning of January 9th from a line running generally from Bavigne northeast to a crossroads north of Nothum.

Where precious gains in the area had been measured in terms of yards, the 90th provided the added impetus required to shrivel the salient to nothing. Nebelwerfer (Editorial note: rockets) barrages of unaccustomed intensity roared menacingly overhead; artillery and tank fire added their bit in an attempt to halt the rising tide that threatened to engulf the salient. Berle fell to the 90th the first day; on the third day Sonlez and Doncols were taken.

The speed and power of the assault was a decided surprise to the Germans. On the third day of battle alone more than 1,200 prisoners were captured. So devastating was the attack that enemy communications were almost completely shattered. Captured documents revealed the great respect accorded the 90th by the enemy...

'It is imperative (said one directive) that steps be taken to ascertain whether or not the American 90th Infantry has been committed. Special attention must be given to the numbers 357, 358, 359, 343, 344, 345, 915, and 315. Prisoners identified with these numbers will immediately be taken to the Regimental G-3.' (Intelligence unit)

The 358th Regiment was committed on the fourth day, sweeping rapidly northward as far as Bras itself. The 90th had fought through Luxembourg and was now in the soil of Belgium. On that day, also, contact was established between the 90th and the 35th Infantry Divisions as well as with the 6th Armored. The enemy salient had been liquidated, the objectives attained.

A History of the 90th Division in World War II, pages 49-52



On April 2nd, 1945, Waldo Sporleder and the 90th Division were in Germany when they crossed the Werra River and approached the community of Merkers located east of Frankfurt. On April 6th, the 90th Division achieved another notable accomplishment in the history of World War II.

It was at Merkers that the 90th discovered the end of the rainbow. Two German midwives, hurrying to deliver a neighbor's child, informed a guard that in the subterranean tunnels below the local salt mine was hidden a vast supply of gold. The report was immediately investigated, and the subsequent discovery amazed the world. For here was Germany's entire gold supply and a great portion of its wealth and stolen treasures.

An inventory of the mine revealed that it contained: 100 tons of gold bullion, 5,000,000,000 German marks, 2,000,000 American dollars, 4,000,000 Norwegian pounds, 100,000,000 French francs, 110,000 English pounds, plus Spanish, Italian, Turkish and Portuguese currency. In addition there were 1,000 cases of paintings and statues, priceless art works of inestimable value. Included were the works of Raphael, Rembrandt, Van Dyck, Durer and Renoir. Invaluable tapestries and engravings looted from the art centers of Europe were found hidden in the underground chambers of the unassuming salt mines at Merkers.¹⁴

A History of the 90th Division in World War II, pages 78-79

A month later, the 90th Division was at the outskirts of Prague, Czechoslovakia posed to free the city from German occupation when the hostilities between the Allies and Germany ended on May 7th.

Waldo Sporleder served in the European Theater of Operations including Normandy, Northern France, Ardennes, Rhineland and Central Europe. He was overseas from April 5, 1944 until October 7, 1945 and discharged October 30, 1945. Waldo was awarded the American Theater Ribbon, European-African-Middle Eastern Ribbon, Bronze Service Arrowhead, and Purple Heart. His final rank was Staff Sergeant.^{xxiv}

When Waldo was discharged and returned to farm with his brother Ernest. His homecoming was like a scene from a Norman Rockwell portrait for the *Saturday Evening Post* magazine. Waldo traveled by train to the small Iowa town of Fonda where his brother farmed and he was given a ride by a neighbor to the end of the farm lane. He started walking up the lane with his duffel bag when his nephews, Elmer and Dale, ran to meet him. Elmer, who was about age eight at the time, took Waldo's Army duffel bag and tried to carry it up the lane for Waldo. The duffel bag's dimensions and weight were about the same as Elmer's!

Waldo Sporleder returned to Fonda, Iowa and farmed with his brother Ernest for several years. Later, he was employed as an automobile mechanic in Fonda. In the midst of advanced age, he lived in the Fonda Care Center. Waldo died July 4, 2003 at the age of 89.^{xxv} He was interred with military honors by the Carroll American Legion in the Carroll Cemetery alongside his parents, Henry and Wilhelmina (nee Boell) Sporleder.

Kenneth M. Martin Tess (1925-___)

Wallace R. Reinhold Tess (1920-1992)

Willard Gilbert Tess (Army, Killed in Action, 1921-1945)

¹⁴ The photo of the salt mine and its treasure trove is courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

Ivan William Thede (1921-1944)¹⁵



Called upon to defend his country, he was willing to pay the supreme penalty. And as true Americans, we should bow our head in his memory for it was us he fought and died.

Ivan Thede's obituary

Lake City Graphic, November 9, 1944

Ivan Thede was the son of William and Emma (nee Sporleder) Thede and Waldo Sporleder's nephew. He was a Technical Sergeant with the 79th Squadron of the 496th Troop Carrier Group with the Army Air Force. After the D-Day invasion of France on June 6, 1944, Ivan was recognized for his support.

Ivan W. Thede Is Awarded Air Medal. T/Sgt. Ivan W. Thede, son of Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Thede, of Lake City, has been awarded the air medal for his part in the recent invasion. Flying as a crew chief on a paratroop-hauling glider-towing C-47, Sgt. Thede received the medal for the part he played in helping to make the mission successful. Since arriving in the European theater early in 1944, Sgt. Thede's unit has been assigned to the Ninth Troop Carrier Command, a part of the Ninth Air Force and a member of the Allied Expeditionary Air Force.

Lake City Graphic, August 31, 1944

¹⁵ The photo of Ivan Thede is taken from the *Service Record Book of Men and Women of Lake City, Iowa and Community* sponsored by the American Legion Post No. 31 and assisted by the Lake City and Community Business Men. (July 4th, 1947). The photo of Allied paratroops landing in Holland in September 1944 is courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). His sister, Gladys (nee Thede) Alcox provided the photo of Ivan's grave marker.



As a crew chief, Ivan Thede's airplane was dropping paratroopers behind enemy lines in Operation Market Garden when his aircraft was strafed by German anti-aircraft fire. He and the pilot assured the troops were out of the plane before they bailed out. They were to near the ground for their parachutes to open. Ivan died on September 17th, 1944 and is interred in the Netherlands American Cemetery in Eindhoven, Netherlands.^{xxvi} Ivan Thede served in the European Theater of Operations where he was awarded the Presidential Citation, Purple Heart, Air Medal and Distinguished Flying Cross.^{xxvii}

The Netherlands American Cemetery and Memorial published a booklet describing where Ivan Thede is interred.

The booklet also includes a description of the events leading up to September 17th and subsequently when Ivan was killed in action.

Three months after successfully landing on the beaches of Normandy, Allied forces had advanced farther than they had thought possible. By mid-September 1944, the US First Army had crossed Luxembourg; captured Liege, Belgium; reached the German frontier near Aachen; and entered the Netherlands near Maastricht. The U.S. Third Army sweeping across France on the right had reached the Moselle River and made contact with the U.S. Seventh Army driving northward from Southern France. The British Second Army on the left had liberated Brussels and Antwerp, as the Canadian First Army kept pace with it along the coast liberating Ostend and Bruges; both armies then found themselves astride the Netherlands frontier.



At this point, enemy defenses began to stabilize around the Siegfried Line, the heavily fortified cities in front of that line to the west, and the more easily defensible natural barriers provided by the numerous rivers and canals in the Netherlands to the east.

In an attempt to outflank the north end of the Siegfried Line, the Allies launched a combined airborne-ground assault along a narrow corridor across the three major rivers (the Meuse, the Rhine and Neder Rijn) and several canals, the success of which among other things depended heavily upon surprise. At the 1400 hours on 17 September 1944, elements of three divisions of the First Airborne Army were landed by parachute and glider in column along the main road from Eindhoven to Nijmegen to Arnhem, a distance of 64 miles from the starting point of the supporting British 30 Corps. Almost immediately, 30 Corps, consisting of one Armored and two Infantry Divisions, encountered stronger resistance than was anticipated. Therefore, its

progress was much slower than planned.

Aided by air cover from the U.S. Eighth and Ninth Air Forces and the Royal Air Force, the landings on the drop zones were extraordinarily successful. In the Eindhoven area, the U.S. 101st Airborne Division captured all bridges except one that was destroyed by the enemy. Contrary to plans, the supporting ground column did not reach Eindhoven until the second day and it was early on the third day before the destroyed bridge was replaced.

South of Nijmegen, the U.S. 82nd Airborne Division quickly seized the bridge over the Maas (Muese) River. It was not until the 4th day (20 September), however, that the bridge over the Waal (Rhine) River was captured and not until the 5th day that all defenders were cleared from the area and ground troops were able to cross. The most important bridge of all the Neder Rijn (lower Rhine) was still ten miles away.

Enemy reaction at Arnhem was swift and telling, as it quickly separated the battalion of the British 1st Airborne Division that had seized the north end of the Arnhem bridge from the remainder of the division and encircled the drop zones west of the city. Harsh weather further complicated the problem by preventing the cutoff battalion from being supported from the air. On

the 5th day, a Polish Parachute Brigade made a valiant but unsuccessful attempt to reinforce it. Even when ground troops arrived on 23 September (the 7th day), all attempts to send reinforcements north of the river failed. After dark on 25 September, the battalion's remnants, less than one-quarter of those who had landed, were evacuated to the south bank.

Netherlands American Cemetery and Memorial, pages 4-5^{xxviii}

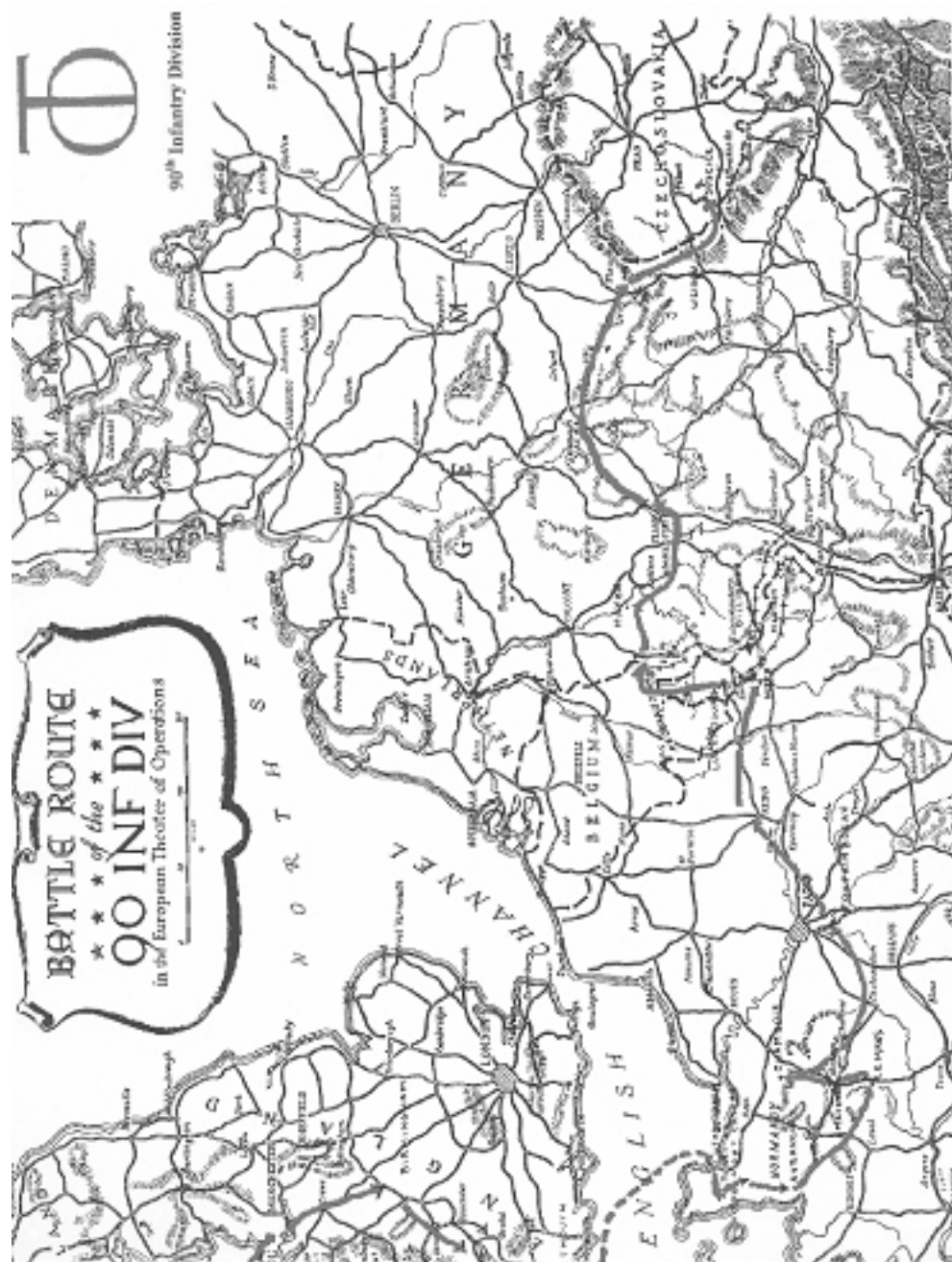
A Bridge to Far (1974) by Cornelius Ryan was based upon Operation Market Garden. The title was taken from the exchange between Field-Marshal Montgomery and Lt. General Browning who was the Deputy Commander of the First Allied Airborne Army. When Montgomery inquired how long it would take for the reinforcements to reach the bridges, Browning responded, "Sir, I think we may be going a bridge too far" because it was his opinion it would require two days. Over 17,000 American, British and Polish troops were casualties. The total casualties were greater than on D-Day.

A motion picture by the same name was produced in 1977. The notable cast included Dirk Bogarde, James Caan, Sean Connery, Gene Hackman, Anthony Hopkins, Laurence Olivier, Robert Redford and Liv Ullman.

Lloyd Thede (Navy, 1926-1994)

Raymond Carl Thede (Navy, 1927-1985)

Route of
Infantry



Battle
the 90th
Division

ⁱ Vickie's Genealogy Page, (Pierce County, Nebraska) Herbolsheimer, Beyer, Buckendahl/Warneke, Korth, Stanzel/Stangel and (Wayne County, Nebraska) Meyer – Grimm, Doose," by Vickie DeJong, 216 South Brown, Pierce, NE 68767, Last Updated: September 16, 2002, as retrieved on Aug 28, 2005 10:57:24 GMT, <<http://www.ptcnet.net/dejong/>>.

Bavarian Gazetteer by U. Petra Seuss, Last Modified: 23 Aug 2003 © Gary T. Horlacher, as retrieved on Aug 31, 2005 16:40:42 GMT, <<http://www.progenealogists.com/germany/bavaria/>>.

ⁱⁱ **"Last Rites for H. Herbolsheimer.** Services were held Monday, March 10 for Henry Herbolsheimer, 82, who passed away March 7 at Pierce Manor where he had been residing. Rev. Jordan Arft officiated at the last rites which were held at St. John's Lutheran church east of Pierce. Mrs. Marlin Zautke accompanied the congregational singing of hymns. Burial was in the church cemetery with Lloyd Herbolsheimer, Arthur Herbolsheimer, Marlin Herbolsheimer, H.W. Herbolsheimer, Eldon Herbolsheimer, and Earl Herbolsheimer as pallbearers. Tomek-Otto Legion Post #72 conducted graveside services. Henry Frederick (Henrich Fredrich) Herbolsheimer was born April 1, 1892 to Lucas Herbolsheimer and his wife, Rosina Stanzel. March 5, 1918 he was united in marriage to Meta Koehler at Pierce. They farmed east of Pierce until 1960 when they moved into Pierce. Mr. Herbolsheimer is survived by two daughters, Mrs. George (Elaine) Ehlers of Hoskins and Mrs. Dean (Delilah) Frank of Verdigre; four sons, Myron, Darrel, Dale and Donrel, all of Pierce; 20 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his wife in 1967, his parents, a son Lowell, two grandchildren, six brothers and five sisters. Mr. Herbolsheimer was a veteran of World War I and a member of St. John's Lutheran church." *Pierce County Leader*, Pierce, Nebraska, Thursday, March 13, 1975

"Vickie's Genealogy Page, (Pierce County, Nebraska) Herbolsheimer, Beyer, Buckendahl/Warneke, Korth, Stanzel/Stangel and (Wayne County, Nebraska) Meyer – Grimm, Doose," by Vickie DeJong, 216 South Brown, Pierce, NE 68767, Last Updated: September 16, 2002, as retrieved on Mar 15, 2005 19:49:03 GMT, <<http://www.ptcnet.net/dejong/>>.

ⁱⁱⁱ "Day by Day Summary of 2nd Division Movements from the Meuse to the Rhine, 11 Nov to 13 Dec 1918" by Lt. George R. Strott, USN, extracted from his history *The Medical Department of the United States Navy with the Army and Marine Corps in World War I*, as retrieved on Feb 19, 2005 11:38:09 GMT, <<http://www.scuttlebuttsmallchow.com/marchy1.html>>.

^{iv} "European History Essays, Treatment of the Weaknesses of the Versailles Settlement, 1919," <<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Cyprus/1169/history/versailles> >.

^v "The Avalon Project at the Yale Law School Address by Adolf Hitler – September 1, 1939," © 1997, The Avalon Project: Address by Adolf Hitler - September 1, 1939 was last modified on: 02/15/2003, <<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/wwii/gp2.htm> >.

^{vi} "Congressional Declaration of War on Germany, December 11, 1941, The President's Message," The University of Oklahoma Law Center, as retrieved on Nov 16, 2004 11:29:59 GMT, <<http://www.law.ou.edu/hist/germwar.html> >.

"Chronology of International Events, March 1938 to December 1941, Issued by the Department of State, December 18, 1941," as retrieved on Dec 12, 2004, 5:36:08 GMT, (Department of State, Bulletin, December 27, 1941, p. 590), <<http://www.ibiblio.org/pha/events/events.html> >.

^{vii} "An American Legacy in Panama," by Suzanne P. Johnson, as retrieved on Aug. 11, 2006 12:38:02 GMT, <<https://www.denix.osd.mil/denix/Public/Library/NCR/note8.html>>. A Brief History of the Department of Defense Installations and Properties, The Former Panama Canal Zone, and Republic of Panama

^{viii} Two Rivers Reporter, date unknown

^{ix} Two Rivers Reporter, Feb. 10, 1955.

^x **"Services for Loren Luebe.** Funeral services for Loren Luebe, 67, who died Saturday, April 6, at an Omaha hospital, were held Tuesday, April 9, at St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Pierce. Father John Connelly officiated and organist was Mrs. Eugene Ronspies. The church choir sang, 'Yes, I Shall Arise,' 'How Great Thou Art,' 'Ave Marie,' and 'Be Not Afraid.' Interment was in the St. Joseph's Catholic Cemetery, Pierce, with military rites by

American Legion Tomek-Otto Post 72. Casket bearers were Leonard Hoffman, Gerald Pint, August Nave, Ron Kramer, H. Sterling Morton and Will Ronspies. Honorary bearers were Mrs. Luebe's grandsons, Tom and Tim Leathers, Steve and Bruce Mills, Chris Raff, and Tobias Tomasek. Loren A. Luebe was born April 29, 1917 at Pierce. His parents were Edward and Esther (Koehler) Luebe. He attended school through eighth grade at Pierce. He entered the U.S. Army during World War II and served at Camp Lee in Virginia and in the African Campaign in the military police and heavy equipment divisions. After his discharge from the service, he worked for 17 years as Pierce County Deputy Sheriff. He married Rose Koval February 8, 1945 at St. Joseph's Catholic Church. Mr. Luebe also worked as a truck driver. Survivors are his wife, Rose of Pierce; three daughters, Mrs. Wayne (Jeanette) Mills, Pierce, Mrs. Lyle (Patricia) Raff, Lincoln, and Mrs. Bruce (Angela) Tomasek, Aurora; ten grandchildren; four brothers, Orville, Delmar and Waleen of Pierce and Duane of Clinton, Iowa; two sisters, Mrs. Vernon (Mardell) Riggert of Pierce and Mrs. Merle (Elvira) Whitney of Sioux City, Iowa. Mr. Luebe was preceded in death by one daughter and one son, his parents and one sister." *Pierce County Leader*, April 11, 1985

"Rose Luebe Laid to Rest. Funeral services were conducted for Rose Theresa Luebe, 70, of Pierce, at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, October 12 at St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Pierce with interment in the parish cemetery. The Rev. Thomas DeBacker was officiant. Music was provided by Kathy Sullivan singing 'How Great Thou Art' and 'I Believe for Every Drop of Rain that Falls.' The congregation sang 'Be Not Afraid' and 'On This Day O Beautiful Mother' accompanied by organist Linda Peekenschneider. Casket bearers were Chris Raff, Steve Mills, Tobi Tomasek, Chris Hunke, Tom Leathers, Bruce Mills, Tim Leathers, Susie Raff, Mandi Tomasek, Gina Mills and Ann Mills. The daughter of the late Vasil and Mary (Jeanke) Koval, she was September 21, 1984 at Hopewell, Virginia. She passed away Saturday, October 8, at Immanuel Medical Center in Omaha. She attended nurses' training for one year. On February 8, 1946, she married Loren Luebe. After their marriage they lived in Pierce. She was employed at the Nebraska Veterans Home for several years as a nurses' aide. She had been a housekeeper at St. Joseph's church parsonage the last eight years. Mrs. Luebe was a member of St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Pierce, Legion of Mary Altar Society, St. Joseph's Church Choir, American Legion Auxiliary and a volunteer at Pierce Manor. Survivors include three daughters, Mrs. Wayne (Janette) Mills of Pierce, Mrs. Lyle (Patricia) Raff of Lincoln, and Mrs. Bruce (Angela) Tomasek of Hastings; ten grandchildren; five great-granddaughters; one great-grandson; and close friend Carolyn Hunke of Lenexa, Kansas. She was preceded in death by her husband on April 6, 1985, one daughter, Margaret, one son, Thomas Francis, parents and 17 brothers and sisters. She was the last surviving member of the family." *Pierce County Leader*, October 13, 1994

The obituaries were provided by Duane Luebe.

^{xi} **"Services for Orville Luebe.** Last rites were conducted at 10:30 a.m., Tuesday, July 7, for Orville John Martin Luebe, 73, of Pierce, at Zion Lutheran Church, rural Hoskins, with military rites by Tomek-Otto Post #72 American Legion, Pierce. The Rev. Verl Gunter officiated. Burial was in Prospect View Cemetery, Pierce. Susan Meyer accompanied congregational singing 'Just As I Am,' 'Amazing Grace' and 'Rock of Ages.' Casket bearers were Tom Meyer, Mark Luebe, Dan Meyer, Doug Luebe, Roger Meyer and David Riggert. Honorary bearers were Harold Strelow, Darrell Kruger, Delbert Nathan, Arnold Warneke, Ralph Kruger, Gerald Kruger and Duane Kruger. Mr. Luebe passed away Saturday, July 4, at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital of an apparent heart attack. The son of Edward and Esther (Koehler) Luebe, he was born August 18, 1918, at Pierce. He was baptized and confirmed at St. John's Lutheran Church at Pierce. He attended Pierce Public Schools through eighth grade. He served in the Army during World War II from February 18, 1941 to December 6, 1945 in the Pacific Theatre, crossing the ocean a number of times as a guard on a troop ship. He also served in the European Theatre. After his discharge, he drove truck for Abler Transfer. On June 3, 1949, he married Bernice Meyer at Zion Lutheran Church, rural Hoskins. They farmed east of Wee Town until retiring in 1980 and moving into Pierce where he drove truck and worked for farmers. He was a member of Zion East Lutheran Church, Hoskins. Survivors include his wife of Pierce; two sons, Kent Luebe and Kirk Luebe, both of Pierce; five daughters, Mrs. Bill (Gayle) Sporleder of Randolph, Mrs. Kip (Debra) Thompson of Norfolk, Mrs. Jim (Diane) Herian, Julie Luebe, and Mrs. Jim (Jane) Peters, all of Pierce; 13 grandchildren, two step-grandchildren; three brothers, Waleen Luebe and Delmar Luebe, both of Pierce and Duane Luebe of Clinton, Iowa; two sisters, Mrs. Merle (Elvira) Whitney of Sioux City and Mrs. Vernon (Mardell) Riggert of Pierce. Preceding him in death were his parents, brother, Loren, and sister, Mrs. Vern (Ellie) Peterson." *Pierce County Leader*, July 9, 1992

"Bernice Luebe Laid to Rest. Funeral services were held for Bernice E. Luebe, 78, of Pierce at Zion East Lutheran Church, rural Hoskins, Monday, April 15, 1996. Interment was at Prospect View Cemetery, Pierce. Visitation was from 3-8 p.m. Sunday at Stonacek Memorial Chapel in Pierce. Pallbearers were Mark Luebe, Dan Meyer, Roger Meyer, Tom Meyer, David Riggert and Leon Thompson. Honorary bearers were her grandchildren, Mike Sporleder, Jill Sporleder, Chris Luebe, Kristy Luebe, Kerry Luebe, Eric Newman, Britney Newman, Jared

Thompson, Trent Thompson, Adam Thompson, Mikkal Herian, Jaima Herian, Matt Herian, Kylie Herian, Jason Peters and Jodi Peters. The Rev. Peter Cage officiated the 10:30 a.m. service. Organist was Susan Meyer with the congregation singing 'Just As I Am,' 'Amazing Grace,' and 'Rock of Ages.' Bernice Emma Luebe was August 17, 1917 in Randolph to Fred and Emma (Dooze) Meyer. She attended and graduated from Randolph High School in 1934 and attended Wayne Normal College one year. She was baptized in 1917 and confirmed in 1930 at Zion East Lutheran Church, rural Hoskins. She married Orville Luebe June 3, 1949 at Zion East Parsonage, rural Hoskins. After her marriage, they farmed east of Wee Town. She worked one year at the Pierce Manor. In 1969, she started working at the Lutheran Community Hospital in Norfolk as a nurses' aid. She retired from the hospital in 1982. She was Pierce Librarian from 1982 to 1991, then did home work for Social Service people. She was a member of Zion East Lutheran Church, rural Hoskins, its Ladies Aid, LWML, Lutheran Hospital Auxiliary, Golden Rod Extension Club and Lutheran Hospital Retirees. She is survived by two sons, Kent and wife Sue Luebe of Pierce and Kirk and wife Kathy Luebe of Pierce; five daughters, Gayle and Bill Sporleder of Randolph, Debra and Kip Thompson of Norfolk, Diane and Jim Herian, Julie Luebe, Jane and Jim Peters all of Pierce; 14 grandchildren; two step-grandchildren; three brothers, Albert Meyer of Randolph, Wilfred Meyer of Randolph and Marvin Meyer of Pierce; three sisters, Irene Titgen of Aurora, Doris Greeno of Magnet and JoAnn Stratton of Kingman, AZ. She was preceded in death by her parents, husband Orville in July 1992, one sister Francis Thompson and one brother Lawrence in infancy." *Pierce County Leader*, April 18, 1996

The obituaries were provided by Duane Luebe.

xii "Christmas Island History" as retrieved on Jul 6, 2005 19:06:42 GMT, <<http://www.christmas.net.au/history.html>>.

"CIA - The World Factbook -- Christmas Island" as retrieved on Jul 20, 2005 05:12:13 GMT, page was last updated on 14 July, 2005, <<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/kt.html>>.

xiii <www.rootsweb.com/~iacarrol/cem_immanuel_luth.htm>.

xiv <www.rootsweb.com/~iacarrol/cem_immanuel_luth.htm>.

xv *Service Record Book of Men and Women of Lake City, Iowa and Community* sponsored by the American Legion Post No. 31 and assisted by the Lake City and Community Business Men. (July 4th, 1947)

xvi The 90th Division's book is among the Sporleder Collection. A website with additional information on the 90th Division is "The 90th US Infantry Division 'Battle Babies,'" All of the information at this website is from the book *War from the Ground Up - The 90th Division in W.W. II* by John Colby, <<http://users.pandora.be/dave.depickere/Text/90th>>.

xvii *Service Record Book of Men and Women of Lake City, Iowa and Community* sponsored by the American Legion Post No. 31 and assisted by the Lake City and Community Business Men. (July 4th, 1947)

xviii "**Statue Immortalizes WW II Soldiers Who Liberated French Town** by Jocelyn Gecker, Associated Press. PERIERS, France—World War II veterans and their families honored the U.S. 90th Infantry Division on Sunday, commemorating a monument to the more than 1,000 it lost in bloody battles to liberate this Normandy town. Aging veterans saluted as a U.S. Army cloth was lifted from The Four Brave—a life-sized bronze statue of four young Americans killed near Periers before Hitler's army was driven out on July 27, 1944. Relatives, some of whom knew the four soldiers only from black-and-white photos, stood weeping as they took video of the unveiling. 'I never knew my father. I've only seen pictures of him,' Ann S. Giese, 55, Oahu, Hawaii, who was born six months after her father, Sergeant Andrew Speese, died. She laid a wreath around the neck of the statue modeled after her father. * * *

In Periers, the monument was unveiled on a grassy plot in front of the town hall. It depicts Virgil Tangborn, a medic from Bemidji, Minn., helping the wounded Speese, a Philadelphian. Watching over them is soldier Richard Richtman of Minneapolis, as Sgt. Tullio Micaloni of Oneida, Penn., gestures for his tank crew to roll forward. The four represent the approximately 1,140 soldiers from the 90th Division who died in the assault to push German troops from the area around Periers. 'These men gave so much to us.' Said Henri Levaufre, 70, a lifelong resident of Periers, a town of 2,600, and president of a French-American group named after the 90th Division. The group raised \$50,000 to fund the monument's construction. 'This is a memorial to every soldier who has taken up arms against tyranny,' said U.S. Gen. David Bockel. On Sunday, a U.S. Army marching band led some 50 veterans and family members through the town. Some 600 people gathered for the monument's unveiling, part of a three-day ceremony

ahead of the 56th D-Day anniversary**** *Indianapolis Star*, June 5, 2000.

A website with photos of the dedication is posted on the Internet at "90th Division Memorial Tour Periers, France," June 1-8, 2000, Wendell Tangborn and Andrea Lewis, Seattle, Washington, <<http://www.hymet.com/memorial.htm> >.

^{xix} *Peck's Bad Boy* (1921) was a silent movie starring Jackie Coogan. The story was based upon a newspaper series of articles first published in 1882 by George Wilbur Peck. Fictional Henry Peck was a mischievous boy epitomized by the expression that "It takes four pecks to make a bushel but only one small Peck to start a riot." *Peck's Bad Boy* (1921), © 2000 by Tim Lussier, <<http://www.silentsaregolden.com/featurefolder2/peckfeature2.html> >.

^{xx} The legend of Robin Hood was of his well-known gallantry exemplified by his robbing from the rich to feed the poor and fighting against injustice and tyranny. The tales of Robin portray him as a fearless outlaw leading his band of "merry men" against the tyranny of Prince John, the Sheriff of Nottingham and Sir Guy of Gisbourne. "The Legend of Robin Hood," <<http://www.robinhood.ltd.uk/robinhood/> >.

^{xxi} Sir Galahad was associated with the quest for the Holy Grail for which he was referred as the Grail Knight in writings such as Malory's "Morte d'Arthur" and Lord Alfred Tennyson's "Idylls of the King." In his poem "Sir Galahad," Tennyson portrayed Galahad as the perfect knight whose "strength was as the strength of ten" as his "heart is pure." "Sir Galahad," ©1996-2002, dthylton@hotmail.com, <<http://www.geocities.com/Area51/1567/galahad.html> >.

^{xxii} The Cannonball Express was more than a fable about Casey Jones (1864-1900) and his effort to run his train on schedule. The legend of his reckless high-speed bravery typified General Patton's military tactics. "Casey Jones," <http://www.uqp.de/cjr/casey_jones.htm >.

^{xxiii} *The Army Almanac: A Book of Facts Concerning the Army of the United States*, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1950, pp. 510-592, last updated 3 October 2003, <<http://www.army.mil/cmh-pg/lineage/cc/090id.htm> >.

^{xxiv} *Service Record Book of Men and Women of Lake City, Iowa and Community* sponsored by the American Legion Post No. 31 and assisted by the Lake City and Community Business Men. (July 4th, 1947)

^{xxv} **"Waldo Sporleder, 89, Fonda, died July 4, 2003 at Buena Vista Regional Medical Center, Storm Lake.** Memorial services will be held at a later date. Lampe Funeral Home, Lake City, is handling arrangements. Waldo Sporleder was born June 17, 1914 in rural Carroll County, Iowa to Henry Carl and Wilhelmina (Boell) Sporleder. He was baptized into the Lutheran faith. In 1921, the family moved to a farm near Lake City. He was confirmed with the first confirmation class of the Pilgrim Lutheran Church that was founded in 1928. After graduation from Lake City High School, he farmed with his parents and later his brother Ernest. During World War II, he entered the United States Army and was trained as a radio operator. He was assigned to the 90th Division that participated in the invasion of Europe through France and Germany. The 90th Division was a member of the Third Army commanded by General George Patton. Waldo landed with the 90th Division at Normandy on D-Day plus one in June 1944. In December 1944, Waldo endured the Battle of the Bulge. During his military service he received the Purple Heart for a wound he received in combat. After the war, Waldo farmed with his brother Ernest at Fonda. Later, he worked as an automobile mechanic with Emmett Chevrolet in Fonda. In recent years he lived at the Fonda Care Center in Fonda. He was preceded in death by his parents, infant sister Cora, brothers Albert and Carl and sisters Clara Heuton, Emma Thede, and Laura Thede. Survivors include one brother Ernest of Lake City. Cards may be sent to Elmer Sporleder, 126 West Adams St., Lake City, IA 51449." *Lake City Graphic*, July 16, 2003, page 5

^{xxvi} **"Ivan Thede Reported Missing In Action.** Mr. and Mrs. Thede this morning were notified by the War Department that their son, Tech. Sgt. Ivan W. Thede, has been missing over Holland since September 17." *Lake City Graphic*, October 5, 1944

"Sgt. Ivan Thede of L.C. Reported Killed in Action. Son of Wm. Thede's has been missing since September 17. Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Thede were notified Friday morning by the War Department that their son, T/Sgt. Ivan W. Thede, was killed in action over Holland. He had previously been reported as missing since September 17. Thede, who was 23 years old, was on duty with the First Air Force and nine months of his early years of service had been overseas. Other than his parents, his family survivors are three sisters and two brothers; Mrs. Frank Alcox, and Mrs.

Martin Devries of Lake City; Mrs. Floyd Bowie of Carroll; Sgt. Eugene Thede with the Army in France and Raymond Thede of Lake City; his grandmother Mrs. J. B. McCrary of Carroll.” *Lake City Graphic*, October 26, 1944.

“**Memorial Service.** Memorial services will be conducted at 2 o’clock Sunday afternoon at Pilgrim Lutheran Church for T/Sgt. Ivan Thede who was killed in action over Holland on September 17. Ivan was born April 16, 1921, the son of Wm. Thede and his wife Emma (nee Sporleder). He was baptized in infancy and later instructed in the fundamentals of the Christian religion and received into the Lutheran church by rite of confirmation in 1935. Ivan attended schools in Lake City, passing through four years of high school, but lacking a few credits necessary to gain his diploma. He attended the aircraft school at Omaha, and after graduating from this school, he worked up to the time of his induction for the Boeing Aircraft Co. at Seattle, Washington. October 23, 1942, he received his notice to report for his examination preliminary for induction into the U.S. Army. Soon after, he left for Miami Beach, Florida and his preliminary training. From there, he was transferred to Gulfport, Mississippi. Then he went to Chanute Field for schooling in airplane propellers. After completing his course here, he was sent to Alliance, Nebraska for further schooling in airplane mechanics. He was then transferred to Maxton Field, N.C., where he spent some time before leaving for Bear Field, Indiana. Here the crew was assembled, and in December of 1943 left for Africa by the way of South America. He served in combat duty as a mechanic on a transport plane in Africa, Italy, England and finally over the invasion coast. It was in this last field that he met his untimely death when his plane was shot down over Holland on September 17, 1944. T/Sgt. Ivan W. Thede was a young man who was known and lived in the community. He was one who unstinting gave of his time and talents for any worthwhile cause. Called upon to defend his country, he was willing to pay the supreme penalty. And as true Americans, we should bow our head in his memory for it was us he fought and died.” *Lake City Graphic*, November 9, 1944

^{xxvii} The information on Ivan Thede’s awards and medals is from the *Service Record Book of Men and Women of Lake City, Iowa and Community* sponsored by the American Legion Post No. 31 and assisted by the Lake City and Community Business Men. (July 4th, 1947).

^{xxviii} *Netherlands American Cemetery and Memorial*, pages 4-5

The booklet was provided by Gladys (nee Thede) Alcox, Ivan’s sister.

Operation Market Garden was an Allied failure. Information as to the action is available at “Operation Market Garden,” *From Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, last modified 02:25, 25 Mar 2003, <http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Market_Garden >.

An analysis of whether the operation should have undertaken can be found at “Chapter 19, The Decision to Launch Operation Market-Garden,” by Charles B. MacDonald, <http://www.army.mil/cmh-pg/books/70-7_19 >.