

Monday, 16 March 1998

Dear Rudd:

Thank you so much for the copy of your Ardennes march schedule. My! 6.75 KM per hour is a very fast pace. I have a very good map of Belgium/Luxemburg and plotted out your march. The only town that was not on my map was Joubieval.

You asked what was meant by where we were in the "Battle of the Bulge?" As you will remember, my name is on the memorial wall of all the soldiers that were at the Christmas eve mass in 1944. At the time my battery ['C' Btry. - 127th AAA Gun Battalion] was stationed just about 1 mile southwest of Gravenvoeren in an open field. The whole battalion was stationed around VISE at that time from 19 December to the 9th of January. We were part of the 'Defense of VISE' and was officially designated as part of the 'Ardennes Campaign.' During that time our battalion engaged 41 German aircraft. Destroyed six, and probably destroyed one more. A German plane also dropped a cluster of bombs on my battery one night, but no one was hurt. Prior to that time 'C' Btry. was just west of Gulpin from November 27th to December 19th; and was outside of Eijsden from Jan 9th to March 2nd. Paul Alexa was in 'B' Btry. and was in different villages than I was. What I meant in my last letter was that Paul and I would rent a car and visit the various places we were at [Gulpin, Eijsden ...etc] in Holland and Belgium during the time of the "Battle of the Bulge" We were not in the main part of the battle as such. We could have helped out with field artillery or anti tank missions but we were not called upon to do so. The 90mm gun weighs 9 1/2 tons and it is a little bigger and better than the famous German '88.' There are four guns to a battery and four batteries, 16 guns, to a battalion. Primarily our assignment was anti aircraft. We shot down over 69 pilotless aircraft ["Buzz Bombs"] while we were at Dover, England earlier in August and September of '44.

Oh, by the way, I'm 73 and in good health. I will come back to Maastricht one day, but it may turn out to be several years from now.

Chow for now..... Sincerely

Alton English
127th AAA Gun Btry.