***Ardennes* by Antony Beevor—Gorham Notes**

US shoots prisoners -24

“’We took enough prisoners’ reported an officer, ‘to work on the river edge where the Germans were hitting our medics trying to get wounded back in assault boats. They shot and riddled wounded soldiers that could have pulled through. We made the prisoners expose themselves for this work and they even shot them. Finally we said, “To hell with it, ” and shot the whole damned bunch.”

Seeing Dead US Soldiers -28

“’As we pass a pillbox,’ wrote a soldier in the 30th Infantry Division, ‘I see a GI sprawled pitifully on the ground, his face in the dirt – helmet on the ground near his head. Bulging from each hip pocket is a never-to-be-eaten K ration’”

US Fight = E Front – 33

“The Americans laid down artillery barrages of such intensity that many an old combat soldier from the East was dazed.’ The writer himself was wounded with a hole in his foot the ‘the size of a fist’ and was now lying in hospital.”

Joke on Berlin suffering – 43

“’What is cowardice?’ Ran a typical example of the city’s gallows humor. ‘When someone in Berlin volunteers for the Eastern Front.’”

Good men ill-prepared as soldiers- 54

“Front-line divisions were furious with the lack of training before their arrival. ‘Replacements have 13 week basic training,’ a sergeant in III Corps commented. ‘They don’t know [the] first thing about a machinegun, don’t know how to reduce stoppage or get a gun in action quickly. They are good men but they have not been trained. Up in the fights is no place to train them.’ Another sergeant said that, in training back in the United States the raw recruits had been told that ‘enemy weapons could be silenced and overcome by our weapons’. They arrived thinking the only danger was from small-arms fire. They had not imagined mines, mortars, artillery and tanks. In an attack, they bunched together, offering an easy target. When a machine gun opened up, they would throw themselves flat on the ground, exposing themselves to major bursts, when the safest course was to rush forward.”

Success of Panzer Division -86

“’surprise, when it succeeds,’ he explained, ‘is a decisive part of the success of the panzer formation. Slackness, softness. Etcetera amongst all ranks must be sternly put down.’

Toughness of Germans- 99

“’If we were fighting a reasonable people they would have surrendered a long time ago,’ he said. ‘But these people are not reasonable.’”

American Troops -112

“Some American troops lost their heads and began to save themselves. In many cases, frightened civilians begged to be allowed to accompany them. A few of the German-speakers still loyal to the Reich, on the other hand, watched the chaotic scenes with undisguised satisfaction. ‘If in places there was panic,’ an officer in the 99th Division reported, ‘in other places there was supreme valor.’ These feats of extraordinary courage would slow down the German onslaught with critical results.”

Bravery of 28th infantry- 125

“The 28th Division fought on even after its line along the high ground and road known as ‘Skyline Drive’ has been broken. What had not been expected, he wrote later, ‘was the fact that the remnants of the beaten units did not give up the battle. They stayed put and continued to block the road.’ This forced the German command to accept that ‘the infantry would actually have to fight its way forward’ and not just open a way for the panzer divisions to rush through to the Meuse. ‘At the end of the first day on the offensive, none of the objectives set by the [Fifth Panzer] Army were reached.’ The ‘stubborn defense of Hosingen’ Lasted until late in the morning of the second day.”

Ike to Patton -129

“Bradley remarked that Patton would not be happy giving up with his offensive about to start in three days. ‘Tell him’, Eisenhower snarled, ‘that Ike is running this war’.”

Hemmingway/Ritz- 156

“Hemmingway was determined to rejoin the 4th Infantry Division. He started to pack and assemble his illegal armory. ‘There’s been a complete breakthrough,’ he told his brother Leicester, who was passing through Paris. ‘This thing could cost us the works. Their armor is pouring in, They’re taking no prisoners . . . Load those clips. Wipe every cartridge clean.”

**Panzers twisting over foxholes -158**

“But then another attack overran the front line. Panzers fired down into the foxholes, and twisted back and forth to bury the men in them. Only twelve soldiers from one platoon of around thirty men emerged alive.”

Seeger poem -161

“The Sixth Panzer Army had underestimated both the power of the American artillery and the commanding position of the Elsenborn ridge. The SS divisions were sharply disabused of the arrogant assumptions about the low quality of American infantry units.”

**American Order- 162**

“Following the Malmédy massacre of the day before, the American command issued an urgent warning to all troops: ‘It is dangerous to at any time surrender to German tank crews, and especially so to tanks unaccompanied by infantry; or to surrender to any units making a rapid advance. These units have few means for handling prisoners, and a solution used is merely to kill the prisoners.’ The lesson was ‘Those that fought it out received fewer losses. Those that surrendered did not have a chance.’”

Gen Middleton to Colonel Roberts- 167

“’Move with the utmost speed,’ Middleton told him. ‘Hold these positions at all costs’”

**Terrific quote -191**

“Colonel Herman of the 7th Tank destroyer Group took over the defense of Libramont, southwest of Bastogne. Nobody there knew what was happening, so he stopped all stragglers and even an artillery column passing through the town. ‘Where are you going?’ he demanded.

‘We’re retreating sir,’ came the reply.

‘The hell you are,’ said Herman. ‘This is where you turn around and fight’”

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Ammo -212

“’We stressed to every man’ wrote Major Boyer of the 38th Armored Infantry Battalion, that “no ammunition could be wasted – that for every round fired a corpse must hit the ground,”

Anti US quote- 219

“’You cannot imagine what glorious hours and days we are experiencing now,’ a Lieutenant wrote to his wife. ‘It looks as if the Americans cannot withstand our important push. Today we overtook a fleeing column and finished it . . . It was a glorious bloodbath, vengeance for our destroyed Homeland, Our soldiers still have the same old zip. Always advancing and smashing everything, The snow must turn red with American blood, Victory was never as close as it is now. The decision will soon be reached. We will throw them into the ocean, the arrogant big-mouthed apes from the New World. They will not get into our Germany.”

Forward quote -220

“’The old principal of tank warfare: “forward, forward, forward!”

**No prisoners quote- 235**

“For the first time they heard of the massacre near Malmédy. ‘The line troops vowed that no prisoners would be taken in their sector,’ wrote one of them ‘Two of the platoon, on liaison to one of the companies, were visiting the front line foxholes of one of the rifle platoons. Across a fifty-yard gap in the woods a white flag appeared, whereby a sergeant stood up and motioned the Germans to advance. About twenty men emerged out of the woods. After they had advanced closer to the line, the sergeant gave the command to open fire. No prisoners were taken.’”

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Urinating on guns -281

“On the morning of plunging temperatures, when the wind whipped particles of snow off the frozen crust like sea-spray, paratroopers resorted to urinating on their machine guns to unfreeze the mechanism”

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Horrors of war -336

“Women and children, forced into the snow by the Germans, were in many cases maimed or killed by mines or artillery from both sides, or simply gunned down by fighter-bombers because dark figures against the snow were frequently mistaken for the enemy. GIs found wounded livestock bellowing in pain, and starving dogs chewing at the flesh of lacerated cows and horses before they were even dead. Water sources were poisoned by white phosphorus. The Americans did what they could to evacuate civilians to safety, but all too often it was impossible in the middle of battle”

**scary scene for platoon – 342/343**

“They (the Germans) kicked each of the prostrate infantrymen, and if one groaned he was shot in the head. After rifling the pockets of their victims the Germans left. When darkness fell, the sergeant staggered back to safety, half frozen and half shocked out of his mind. Of 27 men in the platoon he was the only one to come out alive. When kicked he had played dead.’”

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“The fear of Russia will keep Germany fighting to the bitter end”

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lavish offices -359

“The provincial governor was made to move out of the magnificent Palais de Namur and Bradley established himself in vice-regal style. Simpson, visiting on 30 January described it as ‘a tremendous palace, replete with satin wall covers, velvet drapes, too many full-sized oils of the royal family, thick carpets and polished marble floors.”

**Destruction of town -361**

“In La Roche, which had been bombarded by both sides, 114 civilians had died and only four houses out of 639 remained habitable. The town was a mass of rubble. American bulldozers had to be called in to clear paths down the main streets”

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