

GEORGE S. PATTON, JR
GENERAL THIRD ARMY
CALIFORNIA DEC 21, 1945

TRUNCATED WAR NOTES

by

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28 July 2016



GENERAL GEORGE S. PATTON, JR

Abstract: This short study is to show some of the interesting details of General Patton (GSP, JR.) and answer some questions about his last five years as taken mostly from the book *The Patton Papers: 1940-1945* by Martin Blumenson¹. The task is to mark where he was, what he commanded, and who he fought during WWII and perhaps to use some of his most famous quotes – noting they will be coming from his diary and notes – at least reported by Blumenson – and a few others. Perhaps a better way of saying this is to point out after seeing the movie and reading other books all my life I needed to have the big picture from his side so here is my study honestly pointing out my hero is worthy of a life time of study. Patton was ‘the’ soldier, ‘the’ leader, and ‘the’ winner of them all. He gets ‘the’ SALUTE.



Photo by Capt Jon McBride, USAF (G.Heart Country FOI Grad #458 – March 2004)

Questions: These general questions are used as guidance in this study.

1. When did he make his rank/stars?
2. Where did he fight in WWII and what battles did he lead?
3. What were some of his most famous quotes and his worthy comments about himself and others?
4. How about his destiny? Did he ever attain what he wanted?
5. How should we look back on this man and his record for military history?

¹ Blumenson, Martin. (1974). *The Patton Papers, 1940-1945*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Chronology

1940 July Colonel, assigned Commanding Officer, 2d Armored Brigade

October 2 Promoted to Brigadier General

November Assigned Acting Commanding General, 2d Armored Division

1941 April 4 Promoted to Major General

April 11 Assigned Commanding General, 2d Armored Division

June Tennessee maneuvers

Oct-Nov Carolina maneuvers

Aug-Sep Louisiana-Texas maneuvers

December 7 * Pearl Harbor

1942 Jan 15 Assigned Commanding General, I Armored Corps

Mar 26 Designated to command the Desert Training Center

April 10 Arrived Desert Training Center

July 30 To Washington to prepare for Torch

Aug 5-21 To London for Torch planning

Nov 8 - Torch landings in French North Africa

1943 Mar 6 Assigned Commanding General, II Corps in Tunisia

Mar 12 Promoted to Lieutenant General

April 15 Relieved from command of II Corps

July 10 Invasion of Sicily; activation of Seventh Army; assigned Commanding General, Seventh Army

Aug 17 - Capture of Messina

1944 Jan 22 Ordered to United Kingdom

Jan 26 Appointed Commanding General, Third Army

Feb 3 Orders revoked; attached to Third Army as Acting Commanding General

March 26 Assigned Commanding General, Third Army

* June 6 Invasion of Normandy

July 6 Arrival in France

- Aug 1 Third Army becomes operational in France

Aug 16 Appointed Brigadier General, Regular Army, with date of rank from September 1, 1943; appointed Major General, Regular Army, with date of rank from September 2, 1943

* December 16 German Ardennes counteroffensive

1945 April 14 Promoted to General

May 9 End of war in Europe

June 4- Leave in the United States

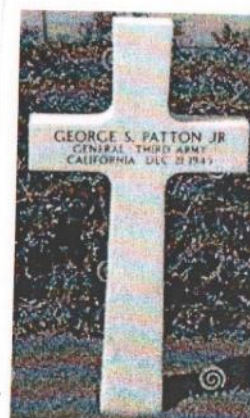
July 4 Relieved of command of Third Army; assigned Commanding General, Fifteenth Army

October 6

December 9 Automobile accident near Mannheim; hospitalized in Heidelberg

December 21 Death

December 24 Interred at Hamm, Luxembourg



From pages 863-864 of *The Patton Papers: 1940-1945*.

Patton 'made' his rank:

Brigadier	2 Oct 1940	It took 31 years of service for him to make general.
Major	4 April 1941	
Lieutenant	12 Mar 1943	
General	14 April 1945	

1940 – Fort Benning, Second Armored Division



"Hell on Wheels"

When he was made BG he was elated. "All that is now needed is a nice juicy war" (p. 13).

1941 – War Maneuvers, Second Armored Division

June – Tennessee Maneuvers "Hell on Wheels" and "Hold 'em by the nose and kick 'em in the pants" (p. 35).

August/September – Louisiana and Texas Maneuvers. "Remember that war exists...Next time you will be opposed not by white flags but by hot lead" (p. 45).

1942 – Fort Benning and Desert Training Center, I Armored Corps



I Armored Corps

Fort Benning

"I know nothing of my immediate future, but trust that I'll have a chance to kill somebody soon" (p.54).

"When we meet the enemy, we shall be in a position to utterly destroy him."

"It thus became necessary for Americans to learn how to fight in the desert" (p. 58).

Desert Training Center

March 4th Patton reconnoitered the vast wasteland including parts of California, Nevada, and Arizona.

"He decided there would be nothing fancy, no soft living. The men would live in tents, without electric light, sheets, for their cots, heat, or hot water...They had no time to do anything, Patton said, except learn to fight" (p. 59).

"The first troops at the Center called it 'the place that God forgot' and suggested returning the land to the Indians" (p. 61).

"If you can work successfully here in this country, it will be no difficulty at all to kill the assorted sons of bitches you will meet in any other country" (p. 64).

"The shoulder patch invented in the World War was devised because it was a demonstrated necessity to know to which division a man belonged" (p. 65).

June 21st Patton was sent to Washington to find out Rommel was pushing the British forces into Egypt so he was ordered to get ready to go overseas.

"Sitting on a tank watching the show is fatuous – killing wins wars" (p. 74).

August – London for the planning of *Torch*

Flew over in a “four-motored stratoliner” - Had with him BG Jimmy Doolittle and Hoyt Vandenberg.

The invasion was set up as “three major landings with the Eastern and Central Task Forces, both sailing from the United Kingdom, were to come ashore, respectively, near Algiers and Oran, Algeria...Patton’s Western Task Force would sail from Hampton Roads, Virginia, and land near Casablanca” (pp. 86-87). Back in the states to inspect the loading at Norfolk he stopped at West Point to say farewell to his son George on 4 October.

In his diary 21 October he wrote “Called on General Pershing. He did not recognize me until I spoke. Then his mind seemed quite clear. He looks very old. It is probably the last time I shall see him, but he may outlive me.”

(It turned out that Patton was right on both counts.)

“I put on my hat and saluted when I left, and he returned it like he used to, and 25 years seemed to drop from him. He said that when he started World War I, he was just my age. A truly great soldier” (p. 93).

“When I think of the greatness of my job and realize that I am what I am, I am amazed, but on reflection, who is as good as I am? I know of no one” (p. 95).

November – Torch Landing North Africa

On the Augusta enroute. In letter to Beatrice “This afternoon Sgt. Meeks, Stiller, Jensen, Gay, Lambert, and I did a lot of shooting on the stern. The carbine is a lovely [sic] little thing and very accurate” (p. 97).

Beatrice’s letter on Nov 11: “That must have been a splendid birthday for you: Casablanca taken...I expect you will go for Rommel now...The newspaper has just said that you took it at 3 am our time. Funnily enough, I woke up in the night for no reason and looked at the clock. It was just three. I thought, what is G. doing, I wonder...I did not feel worried, but just lay thinking about you for some time. This has happened to me so many times in my life” (pp. 112-113).

Patton was spending his time as the general in charge of the North African Campaign and as the movie showed he watched parades and visited with a number of Arabs, the Sultan, and Moroccans. The war was not doing too good Algeria so he was waiting and fretting because he was not at the front. He inspected the front lines. “The men were glad to see him. They said that Patton was the only general officer they had seen in the 24 days that had been at the front” (p. 137).

“Returned to Algiers, Patton found ‘Ike and Clark were in conference as to what to do. Neither had been to the front, so showed great lack of decision. They are on way out, I think. [They] have no knowledge of men or war. Too damned slick, especially Clark” (p. 138).

1943

January - Casablanca Conference

The Casablanca Conference was code-named Symbol. The Allies had expected to have all of the French North Africa in hand by the end of 1942 and now it looked like the spring of 1943. The question of what to do after the campaign was the reason for the meeting of FDR and Churchill. Stalin was too busy bringing the battle of Stalingrad to “its climatic close.” Patton was in charge of the logistics, security, billeting, and comfort of the visitors. We all have seen pictures of him and FDR for instance but he took no part in the “formal discussions of strategy” (p. 152).

His diary showed on January 16th “Ike pinned second DSM on me at plane” (p. 154). He talked about everybody and there were a lot of folks there – interesting insight on politics, people, and the war. “My guest book, had I kept one, would be an envy to all lion hunters” (p. 160).

Patton during this ‘off stage’ position is being held back by Ike. Although they are best of friends the whole book is a bickering commentary on their relationship. On February 8th one of his West Point classmates John Lee told him that Eisenhower had his fourth star. Patton’s reaction: “Happy Day.”

This time in history, February 14-22, is where Rommel won the battle of Kasserine Pass. The four day attack from Sbeitla to Sbiba and also penetrating Kasserine Pass set up losing the battle in Tunisia. Ike’s buildup caused Rommel to break off his offensive and he retreated back to southern Tunisia. “Although Rommel failed to gain a strategic victory, he nevertheless considerably damaged the Allies and particularly American morale” (pp. 173-175).

***FINALLY, he can fight! “His long wait has ended” (p. 179). ***

“God help me and see to it that I do my duty,
but I must have Your help. I am the best there is,
but of myself I am not enough.”

“Patton was to replace Fredendall because the fighting in Tunisia ‘was primarily a tank show and I know more about tanks...Eisenhower scribbled a note in pencil and handed it to Patton as authority to assume command of the II Corps as soon as he arrived there...Thus Patton was to command a separate and wholly American sector” (p. 180).



II Corps

March 6th to Beatrice “By a strange coincidence the day I got the phone call to come here was a year to a day from the time we hit the desert first” (p. 182).

Eisenhower's memo said Patton's "immediate task was to rehabilitate the American forces and prepare them for attack...He had brought Omar Bradley to the theater 'to serve as my personal representative in a very broad capacity' and Bradley was available to Patton 'for any duty you may desire' " (p. 182).

[The part I left out but must be mentioned is Patton being placed by Eisenhower under General Alexander's "orders exactly as if they were issued by me. I want no mistake about my thorough belief in unity of command" (p. 182) and, of course history will reflect, the no end of problems and how much it cost to keep the British happy.]

However, watching Patton show up at Diebel Kouif (were ever that is - probably Tunisia) to replace Fredendall, get the soldiers clean shaven, ties tied, helmets on, mess hall closed at 07:30 upset the troops more than the war – which was good. **"It is absurd to believe that soldiers who cannot be made to wear the proper uniform can be induced to move forward in battle"** (p. 181).

"When Patton inherited Bradley, he was quick to terminate the ambiguity of his assignment. **'I'm not going to have any Goddamn spies running around my headquarters.'**" Patton got Eisenhower to appoint Bradley II Corps Deputy Commander. Ladislav Farago pointed out in his book² "Tunisia thus brought together the legendary American Triumvirate which became instrumental in winning the war in Europe – the three great soldiers Marshall had picked with sure eyes...an ideal distribution of labor – Eisenhower the coordinator, Bradley the thinking machine, Patton the fighter" (p. 239).

March 8th Diary "He was touched to receive from French Morocco a sheet of paper with a typed heading: 'Good luck and God Bless you. If it isn't a private fight we would all like to go with you. From your staff.' Fifty-one officers of the I Armored Corps headquarters had signed" (p. 185).

Patton announced to II Corps on March 11th:

"Soldiers...All of us have been in battle...Our duty...is plain. We must utterly defeat the enemy...Our bravery is too negative. We talk too much of sacrifice, of the glory of dying that freedom may live. Of course we are willing to die but that is not enough. We must be eager to kill, to inflict on our enemy – the hated enemy – wounds, death, and destruction. If we die killing, well and good, but if we fight hard enough, viciously enough, we will kill and live. Live to return to our family and your girl as conquering heroes" (p. 187).

His four divisions: Ward's 1st Armored, Allen's 1st Infantry, Eddy's 9th Infantry, and Ryder's 34th Infantry.

II Corps in Tunisia, four divisions, March 17-31 in Tebessa, Kasserine, Gafsa, and El Guettar.

"Wars can only be won by killing, and the sooner we start the better" (p. 203).

1 April - He wrote Beatrice "Darling B. Dick Jenson was killed this morning" (p. 203). This was a poignant part of the Patton book (and movie) showing his burial. Jenson was killed from the concussion of a bomb from a German airplane. GSP complained to the British that they were not getting air cover.

² Farago, Ladislav. (1963). Patton: *Ordeal and Triumph*. New York, NY: Dell Books.

Later, Chief Air Marshall Tedder and Lt. General Carl Spaatz arrived to straighten things out. In the movie this section was done brilliantly. For example, as they were arguing about the lack of allied air cover, the Germans flew right down the street firing machine guns and dropping small bombs. Tedder asked how Patton had arranged for the demonstration to which he replied *“I’ll be damned if I know, but if I could find the sonsabitches who flew those planes, I’d mail each one of them a medal”* (p. 207).



“Those Boche Fokker’s are flying Messerschmitts!”³

Patton thought he was fighting Rommel for the likes of Gafsa and El Guettar but the Desert Fox had left for Germany on 9 Mar so all the slugging until about the middle of April was not against him.

After about 22 days of fighting they won the battle to get El Guettar. Then another controversy developed when Alexander wanted to Shift II Corps to the First Army. Patton failed to get Alexander to change his mind while in Washington Eisenhower was having a problem with the “Husky” plans so he sent Patton back to I Corps and Bradley got his Corps to finish up North Africa⁴.

15 April – “Before leaving Gafsa I picked some nasturtiums in the yard, and Gay, Sgt. Meeks, and I went to the cemetery to tell Dick goodbye. There are more than 700 gravers there now” (p. 221).

19 April – Back in Casablanca he wrote *“During the attack, infantry must not dig in until the final objective is reached”* and *“In night attacks, the more noise and light produced the better”* (p. 225).

³ He is shooting his Remington Mode 51 .380acp in the movie but also carried a Colt Pocket Model hammerless.

⁴ Farago actually does a better job of explaining some of the details about Patton and the history behind some events so I will suggest an interested reader will compare copies of writers to determine how the flavor, smash, and delicate handling is accomplished even to include the movies I have and will discuss. See also the bibliography.

See his treatment of Patton being replaced by Bradley where he says Patton felt the end was coming in his bones and it only took another 30 days. While there was a cloud over him to not “crash through to the sea and bag the Afrika Korps in the Mareth Line – Bradley was now getting all the praise for this successful end run for which, in fact, Patton had laid the groundwork.” Eisenhower did invite Patton to attend the celebration of the victory held on May 20th in Tunis. Patton brought Bradley with him but neither got invited to the reviewing platform by Eisenhower (Farago, pp. 255-256).

He wrote he was gone 43 days, commanded 95,800 men, and gained a third star. Note: On 12 March when he got the third star he said “When I was a little boy at home, I used to wear a wooden sword and say to myself, ‘George S. Patton, Jr., Lieutenant General.’ At the time I did not know there were full generals. Now I want, and will get, four stars” (p. 188).

23 April – Invasion plans for Sicily or “Husky.” (One newcomer for this was Troy Middleton who commanded the 45th Division.)

24 April letter to Beatrice “We left the US just six months ago today and I have been in actual combat...29 days of that time, which shows how slow war is” (p. 232).

5 May – “The more I see of Arabs the less I think of them. By having studied them a good deal I have found out the trouble. They are the mixture of all the bad races on earth, and they get worse from west to east, because the eastern ones have had more crosses [mixture]” (p. 243).

Lieutenant Colonel Charlie Codman was appointed as Aide to Patton in place of Jenson. “Has ability with languages” and in the movie portrayed an interesting beginning with a French conversation with Patton. He was a proper Bostonian and a WWI aviator decorated for heroism. A big plus for Patton (p. 243).

12 May – “The training we do over here is very much more realistic than anything I have ever seen. We actually fire ball cartridges over each other’s heads, actually blow up wire...” (p. 250).

17 May – “Ike called me to say we will probably do Husky as an Army. I have never asked him to do this, but am glad he is going to” (p. 251).

Jun 1943 - Commanding General, Seventh Army



Seventh Army

4 June – letter to Ayer: “The other day one of our chaplains, a venerable and holy man, was waling down the street. An Arab woman kept following him and saying, ‘Chocolate, chocolate.’ Finally, in very bad French, he said that he had no chocolate. To which she replied in very good English, ‘No chocolate, no fuck, go to hell!’” (p. 260).

5 June – Letter of Instructions (selected from pages 261-262).

There is only one sort of discipline – perfect discipline.

Never attack [enemy] strength [but rather his weakness]...

Our mortars and our artillery are superb weapons when they are firing. When silent, they are junk – see that they fire!

Never take counsel of your fears.

IN CASE OF DOUBT, ATTACK! We can conquer only by attacking...

21 June – “All ‘top flight officers’ were present, except for Montgomery, for the final plans... Eisenhower talked for ten minutes – rather badly I thought... Tedder slept through the entire performance... Air Commodore Beamish... talked for forty-five minutes at the rate of five words and three ah’s every minute... I talked for six minutes... staff next for a total of 22 minutes and 30 seconds which was 30 seconds longer than rehearsed... Ike was pleased and, for a change, said so” (p. 267).

22 Jun – “I had a letter... from a preacher... He hoped I thought about Jesus and reminded that I would die and go to hell if I did not. I wrote him that I was amazed at his temerity in writing me such a letter when I was a far better Christian than he was” (p. 268).

5 July – “I am leading 90,000 men in a desperate attack and eventually it [my Army] will be over 250,000 [men]. If I win, I can’t be stopped! If I lose, I shall be dead” (p. 272).

July 1943 – The Landings Seventh Army

Sicily Invasion July 10 – August 17, 1943, was planned for Montgomery and his Eighth Army to land and go up the east side of Sicily, around Mt. Edna, and capture Messina while Patton and his Seventh Army to land on the southwest and go north to protect Montgomery.

“Patton had formed a Provisional Corps with Keyes in command. From Agrigento, Keyes sent the 82nd Airborne Division westward to Marsala and Trapani and the 2nd Armored and 3rd Divisions to Palermo. Meanwhile, Bradley’s II Corps was advancing through the middle of Sicily toward the northern shore, heading for the coastal town of Termini Imerese” (Blumenson, p. 294).

Course, Patton beat Montgomery to Messina. Patton was ecstatic, Bradley upset over Patton pushing like he did to win the race, and Eisenhower gave credit to Bradley for the “planning.” Bradley was not at the finish line and the movie showing the entry was “apocryphal fantasy⁵” (as good as it was) according to D’Este (p. 531).

July – The stories about the mule(s) [Jackasses].



Water color insert⁶ by G. Scherrer, in the book.

⁵ D’Este, Carlo. (1995). *Patton: A genius for war*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.

⁶ Patton, George S. (1947). *War as I knew it*. New York, NY: Bantam War Book - Jan 1980. Part of this picture is on the cover of the 1980 Bantam Book. Beatrice was the editor and the one who cleaned up the language of Patton.

Patton writes to Beatrice that it was near Licata (south shore town) where he came to “‘a one way bridge with half the Hell on Wheels being delayed by a mule cart and a fight [battle] going on.’ Patton had the mule killed and, along with the cart, pushed off the bridge to get the traffic moving, ‘Actually, I broke my stick over the driver. Human rights are being exalted over victory’” (Blumenson, p. 296).

D’Este reports “...a Sicilian farmer was unable to budge two obstinate mules blocking the road. Patton pulled out his pistol, shot the two animals through the head, and, as the farmer wailed in protest, ordered the animals thrown off the bridge” (p. 530).

Movie⁷ Scene - As depicted in the movie⁸, Patton becomes enraged upon discovering that a column of American troops, tanks, and vehicles has been held up and exposed to enemy fire because two mules hitched to an Italian peddler's cart are blocking a narrow bridge. The bellicose general angrily turns on the soldiers who have been trying, ineffectively, to pull the stubborn animals off the bridge, shouting at them: **"Jackasses? You let a whole column get stalled and strafed on account of a couple of jackasses? What the hell's the matter with you?"**

The subsequent killing of the animals is presented through inference rather than graphically: the audience sees Patton pull out and aim a revolver, hears the sound of a gunshot, views quick cuts to the peddler's anguished reaction and a long shot of the bridge, hears another gunshot, then sees the two mules lying prone on ground (but with no visible wounds or bleeding). This is followed by Patton's barking at the soldiers to **"Get 'em over the side and clear this bridge,"** and a long shot showing the animals being dumped over the side of the bridge and plunging into the water below.

Kelly and I watched the TV movie of *Patton* when she was about 10 years while we were in Dallas on 5454 Emerson. I wanted to impress her with my hero, war, and a good movie. I set her up for watching the issues of troops being strafed by saying she needed to see how combat problems were solved in WWII. ABC cut the whole scene...I actually got into my tertiary language I was so upset. This was half the reason for watching the movie! Patton would have been proud of my language - but Jeanne wasn't.

D’Este’s final mule comments: “Patton’s critics have cited this incident as an example of his brutal nature. But generals are paid to make difficult and often unpleasant decisions such as this one; and, as Patton later explained, he did not enjoy killing mules but preferred it to the alternative of having the Luftwaffe arrive to strafe the column and kill large numbers of his men” (p. 530).

Aug 1943 - The Slapping Incidents

II Corps, 15th Evacuation Hospital outside Nicosia,” Pvt. Charles H. Kuhl of Company L, 26th Infantry Regiment (1st Division), who evinced no visible wounds. Patton asked him why he was being admitted, and the soldier replied he was not wounded: **"I guess I can't take it."**

“A week later on August 10 Patton arrived unannounced at the 93d Evacuation Hospital...Paul G. Bennett, an artilleryman assigned to the 13th Field Artillery Brigade, who was shivering on a cot. In response to Patton’s query as to what his problem was, Bennett replied: **"It's my nerves."**

⁷ McCarthy, Frank & Schaffner, Franklin (Producers) Coppola Francis F. & North, Edmund H. (Screenplay). (1969). *Patton*. [Motion Picture]. United States: Twentieth Century Fox. Note: Frank McCarthy according to Blumenson was working as an aid for General Marshall in Washington toward as an Army Lt. Col. It took 20 years to get approval from Beatrice Patton to make a movie. Of course, we all know, it got eight Oscars.

⁸ <http://www.snopes.com/movies/films/pattonmules.asp>

Bradley couldn't go over Patton's head with a letter from the surgeon, but the II Corps surgeon did go through medical channels, a Public Affairs boyfriend of a nurse passed on information to the American correspondents attached to the Seventh Army, who passed it on to Bedell Smith who told Eisenhower.

Eisenhower said he would not let this end Patton's career: "Patton is indispensable to the war effort – one of the guarantors of our victory" (D'Este, pp. 533-536).

Patton: "I was a damned fool" (D'Este, p. 545).

"The indignity of an army commander apologizing to his men might have overwhelmed a lesser man, but Patton managed to retain not only his self-respect but even a sense of humor. At his first public appearance in September, the Chairman of the American Red Cross introduced him to a large gathering of GIs. Patton announced 'I thought I'd stand here and let you fellows see if I am as big a son-of-a-bitch as you think I am.' The assembled troops erupted in cheers" (D'Este, p. 546).

In spite of the trouble this caused Patton, the questions are whether he was justified in slapping the soldiers or why he did it. More than one person/researcher/biographer has commented but what really needs to be promoted is Patton's attention he gave the wounded and sick in his visits to the hospitals. He should be remembered for his kneeling, medals, prayers, and kissing the foreheads of the troops that fought under him.

He spent the rest of 1943 more or less in limbo not knowing what was next for him – if anything.

1944

Diary, January 1 – "Received an 'eyes only' radio from Natoussa [NATOUSSA] saying that I will be relieved from command of the Seventh Army today and report to Algiers for further instructions" (p. 394). "But he was moving toward his greatest adventure, his greatest success, and – he was sure of it – the fulfillment of his destiny" (p. 403).

"I look forward with considerable pleasure to landing without the necessity of wetting my pants."

Diary, January 26, London – "Called on Ike at office and found out I am to command Third Army" (p. 407).



Third Army

"During March and April Patton indoctrinated his subordinates in his methods of making war" (p. 423).

"All I need is another war" (p. 426).

Here is the report from a young man who was present when Patton greeted some new arrivals.

"...when General Patton walked out on the little terrace...we stood transfixed upon his appearance...Most of us had never seen him in the flesh, and when the drum, ruffles, and bugles sounded the General's march, not one square inch [of everyone there was] not covered with goose pimples. It was one of the greatest thrills I shall ever know...that towering figure impeccably attired froze

you in place and electrified the air. The march ended and the General took one step forward. In a somewhat boyish, shrill yet quiet voice, he said quickly, 'At ease gentlemen...I can assure you that the Third United States Army will be the greatest Army in American history. We shall be in Berlin ahead of everyone. To gain that end, we must have perfect discipline. I shall drive you until hell won't have it, but a pint of sweat is worth a gallon of blood. We are going to kill Germans bastards – I would prefer to skin them alive – but, gentlemen, I fear some of our people at home would accuse me of being too rough.' At that point General Patton slyly smiled. Everyone chuckled enjoyably.

He talked on to us for half an hour, literally hypnotizing us with his incomparable, if profane eloquence. When he had finished, you felt as if you had been given a supercharge from some divine source. Here was the man for whom you would go to hell and back" (p. 428).

1 May – "His presence in England was being kept secret as part of a huge and well –organized deception plan named 'Fortitude'" (p. 439). However, after the Knutsford Incident he was in hot water again with Ike. He said "My final thought on the matter is that I am destined to achieve some great thing – what, I don't know, but this last incident was so trivial in its nature, but so terrible in its effect, that it is not the result of an accident but the work of God. His Will be done" (p. 451)

3 May – Eisenhower decided to retain Patton in command "solely upon my conviction as to the effect upon Overlord. By admitting that Patton was indispensable for the success of Overlord, Eisenhower could have extended no finer compliment"...He said to Patton: "Go ahead and train your Army" (p. 452).

17 May – He began to give his famous **Third Army speech** to the troops and there are several versions but the message was always the same: "the necessity to fight, the necessity to kill the enemy viciously, the necessity for everyone, no matter what his job, to do his duty" (p. 456). A few words to reflect this sentiment for this paper is below (course, remember, he always put on his "war face" fully set):

"Men, all this stuff we hear about America wanting to stay out of war - not wanting to fight - is a lot of bull-shit. Americans love to fight!... All real Americans love the sting and clash of battle."

"I'm not supposed to be commanding this Army, I'm not supposed even to be in England. Let the first bastards to find out be the Goddamn Germans. I want them to look up and howl, 'ACH, IT'S THE GODDAM THIRD ARMY AND THAT SON-OF-A-BITCH PATTON AGAIN!'"

[Pause]

"There's one great thing you men can say when it's all over and you're home once more. You can thank God that twenty years from now, when you're sitting around the fireside with your grandson on your knee and he asks you what you did in the war, you won't have to shift him to the other knee, cough, and say, 'I shoveled shit in Louisiana'" (p. 458).

June, 1944 – Overlord

"Bradley's First U.S. Army was to seize Cherbourg and drive to Avranches. There, at the entrance to Brittany, Patton's Third Army was to become active and subdue the province" (Blumenson⁹, *Patton*, p. 223).

"The invasion seemed to have bogged down...the hedgerows promised a bitter campaign that would be measured in yards...Montgomery had failed to take Caen...On July 3, Bradley opened the grinding,

⁹ Blumenson, Martin. (1985). *Patton: The man behind the legend, 1885-1945*. New York, NY: William Morrow.

agonizing battle of the hedgerows, which would last two weeks and result in relatively small gains at a cost of 40,000 casualties” (Blumenson, *Patton Papers*, p. 471).

“It is funny that I have never had any doubts about licking the Germans any place I meet them. The only question in my mind is being able to survive the lapses between campaigns when I always seem to get myself in trouble” (*Patton Papers*, p. 472).

“A month to the day after the invasion, on July 6, he was summoned to France...At noon on August 1, almost two months after the Normandy landings...Patton’s Third Army became active” (*Patton, the man behind the legend*, pp. 223, 228-9).

Patton is about to show the Germans – and the world – his version of blitzkrieg

Patton sent Middleton’s VIII Corps into Brittany where it would take up three infantry divisions three weeks of hard fighting to capture the place...Patton was to turn his three other corps eastward and southeastward from Avranches and head for the Seine and Loire rivers. ..Patton sent “Haislip’s XV Corps, his next formations, through the corridor, to the southeast and east around the German open end, then Walton Walker’s XX Corps to the Loire River...In less than a week, Haislip advanced seventy-five miles and was at La Mans (pp. 230-231).

Third Army: Middleton **VIII** Corps, Haislip **XV** Corps, Walker **XX**, and Eddy (from Cook) **XII** Corps.

Over all plan was for the Germans to have a way to withdraw from Normandy perhaps through France as the commanders believed their left flank was open. Hitler counterattacked on August 8th at Mortain on the way to Avranches to cut off Patton’s Army.

1. However. Patton was using the secret Ultra to stay ahead of the German plan – that, and his sixth sense for war...
2. The Canadians were to attack on the 8th from south of Caen to Falaise which would threaten a cut off of the German attack n Mortain.
3. If Haislip drove through Alencon to Argentan and the Canadians were at Falaise there would be a 15 mile narrow gap for the Germans, if they sought to escape with their 150,000 troops of their two field armies in Normandy.

Patton argued for a deeper development by letting Haislip go to Dreux and Chartres or even to the Seine River the then turn north to capture all the Germans. Enter Montgomery and Bradley. To keep the Canadian and Patton Armies from intermingling Bradley instructed Patton to halt short of Argentan.

“Bradley’s decision was one of the most controversial of the war. His motivation stemmed from prudence. Ultra had cautioned about a German intention to attack in the territory between Patton and Hodges and against Haislip’s open flank” (p. 233). Bradley was waiting on Montgomery; the Canadians had bogged down and were only half way to Falaise – eight miles short.

Patton thought Bradley’s halt at Haislip was wrong and talked him into letting him go deeper. Patton left three divisions at along the Argentan line and sent Haislip’s XV Corps to Dreux, Walkers XX Corps to Chartres, and Eddy’s XII Corps to Orléans.

“Patton called the advance ‘**probably the fastest and biggest pursuit in history,**’ and indeed it was so: No army had ever moved with such speed and dash” (p. 233).

“On that day Eisenhower released Patton’s name to the press. The newspapers could now reveal Patton’s movements and achievements, and the headlines and columns were full of excitement and praise”. Hitler finally permitted the withdrawal of his forces in Normandy through “the partially closed Argentan-Falaise pocket” (p. 233). Bradley imposed a delay of five days which let the Germans from August 13 to 18th to withdraw. “Americans and Canadians made tenuous contact on August 19, but were unable to close the pocket firmly until August 21. The Germans lost about 50,000 men, but around 100,000 other soldiers, perhaps more...fled eastward” (p. 236).

“Instead of pulling off a Cannae and bringing the end of the war close at hand, the Allies had botched the encirclement...From Dreux, Haislip, guided by Patton, skipped to the Seine River at Mantes, thirty miles from Paris” and asked if he could turn downstream and prevent the Germans from fleeing. Course, his superiors said it was too dangerous. “Substantial remnants of the Germans defeated at Argentan and Falaise and harassed at the Seine River would reappear and again face the Allied armies” (p. 236).

“Patton headed eastward toward the World War I battlefields, which he knew well. Troyes, Reims, and Chalons fell quickly. The German resistance in France appeared to have collapsed. Patton was hoping to get across the Moselle River between Nancy and Metz, less than 100 miles from the Rhine River, when the ax fell” (p. 237).

They had outrun their supplies and even the Red Ball Express couldn’t get them gas. “Patton’s lightning march sputtered to a halt. He was unable to go farther than the Meuse River, and Walker and Eddy crossed at Verdun and Commercy on August 31” (p. 237). Patton pleaded with Bradley and said with 400,000 gallons he could be in Germany in two days and drive to Frankfort and beyond.

“The prospect of ending the war was bright.”

“No fuel was available for Patton.”

Eisenhower had decided to sustain Montgomery’s advance “and other objectives were more important like the great port at Antwerp, launching sites of the V-1 and V-2s.”

[More than one person has said if Patton had been given the fuel to fight the war just might have ended earlier – to say nothing of how much quicker if they had closed the gap and bagged the two German armies...]

“He is an outstanding soldier...He maintained control over his army while it sped off in three directions, west, south, and east, like the old cavalry story –

**The soldier went out and charged
in all directions at once,
with a pistol in each hand
and a saber in the other.**

“Six hundred miles separated Middleton at Brest from Walker and Eddy at the Meuse. And now when Patton had an opportunity to enter Germany and bring the end of the war within sight, he was denied his supreme chance” (p. 238).

The Lorraine Campaign – The Moselle – The Saar Campaign

Outline

These three battles start on/about 1 September to 23 September for The Lorraine Campaign, on/about 23 September to 7 November for The Moselle, thence through 15 December for the Saar Campaign.

“The conditions of the campaign changed suddenly and profoundly. Rain and winter weather came early that fall...Because of what Patton called Eisenhower’s ‘fatal decision’ to stop Patton, the Germans were fighting hard” In a press conference on 7 September Patton told newspaper correspondents “When you slow anything down” – meaning his own progress beyond the Meuse – “you waste human lives” (p. 240).

15 September – Eddy’s XII Corps seized Nancy. Metz, “the strongest fortress in the world...held out against Walker’s XX Corps until mid-November, the last fort capitulating in mid-December” (p. 240). Patton was held back in what was called the October pause as Antwerp had to be opened and after Montgomery got his supplies Eisenhower wouldn’t give Patton fuel or ammunition giving his howitzers only seven rounds a day.

Patton used most of October to tour his troops making sure the mail was delivered, socks replaced for the problem they were having with trench foot, and rotating units for visits to rear-area towns.

8 November – Finally ten divisions were to attack and they got a break in the weather. “Then at 5:00 P.M. the rain started again. During the following five weeks in November and December, the Third Army fought in depressing conditions resembling the battle of the hedgerows in Normandy” (p. 244). On Patton’s 59th birthday (11 Nov) Devers reached the Rhine at Mulhouse and Strasbourg.

About this time in Patton’s diary (Blumenson, Patton Papers, p. 582) he was complaining of not having XV Corps and called Bradley and got nowhere. “His thesis is that all four American Armies should consist of 12 Divisions. This is absurd. An Army should be the size necessary to accomplish its task in the theater of operations where it is committed.”

[Notice his next sentence shows his tenacity for fighting, his sixth sense, and what will complete his destiny for the war.]

“Furthermore, the First Army is making a terrible mistake in leaving the VIII Corps static, as it is highly probable that the Germans are building up east of them.” Blumenson says “Of all the many remarkably prophetic statements made by Patton, none was more astute than this one. As he expected, the VIII Corps would be struck by the Germans in their Ardennes counteroffensive launched in December” (p. 582).

What follows next are some short comments and quotes on the three and half months leading up to Bastogne and the Battle of the Bulge.

Short Quotes and Comments

8 September, letter to Beatrice - “P.S. God deliver us from our friends. We can handle the enemy.” “I was at Pannes [and] Essey on the 12th of September, 1918...I was shot there that day; I ought to remember it. I was shot in the ass” (p. 539).

"After all, a God damn Army commander doesn't do anything but sit around and curse...It is rather a disadvantage to be large and florid and profane, because people say all kinds of things about you which are not true" (p. 542).

At a press conference 23 September he was asked about "a limited advance or a static situation"

"The best way to defend is to attack, and the best way to attack is to attack. At Chancellorsville, Lee was asked why he attacked when he was outnumbered three to one. Lee said he was too weak to defend.

Question: Will the Nazis go underground when the Allies get to Germany?

Patton: Six feet...

9 November – "Walker's XX Corps opened an attack on Metz that would continue for twelve bloody days of fighting" (p. 572).

17 November – Diary. "Eddy's allowance of shells for tomorrow is 9,000, so I told him to use 20,000. If we win now, we will not need shells later; if we do not use the shells now, we will not win the war" (p. 575).

20 December, to Beatrice – "A German general in Metz sent word that he would not surrender but would fight to the death. 'We are trying to satisfy him'" (p. 577).

"I have great respect for the German soldiers; they are gallant men, but not for Nazis" (p. 578).

29 November – Diary. "The shortage of replacements for the Third Army is this day 9,000, and none in sight. I cannot see why Eisenhower could be caught short on both men and ammunition, because after all, these are the two elements with which wars are fought. I will have to withdraw 5% of the headquarters personnel of the Army and make infantrymen out of them" (p. 583).

30 November – Letter to Hughes "I am like Sherman – I would not run if nominated, nor serve if elected. As you know, at the close of the war, I intend to remove my insignia and wrist-watch, but will continue to wear my short coat so that everyone can kiss my ass" (p. 584).

7 December, to Beatrice – "Regrouping is the curse of war and a great boon to the enemy" (p. 588).

9 December, to Beatrice – "It is still raining. The Saar usually 50 feet wide is now 300, but that won't stop us. Willie and I have two green leather chairs in my room where we sit of evenings. When he snores too much I give him a nose drop" (p. 588).

15 December – "The Germans launched their Ardennes counteroffensive, a massive attack against the VIII Corps of the First Army, and quickly pushed a salient or a bulge into the American lines" (p. 591). This "German offensive brought to an end the long, dismal period of grim and relentless warfare" and as Patton had failed to penetrate the Siegfried Line or West Wall this turn of events gave "Patton his greatest opportunity for professional and personal achievement" (p. 591).

Bastogne

"We have to push people beyond endurance in order to bring this war to its end."

Diary, 17 December - "Had the V and VIII Corps of the First Army been more aggressive, the Germans could not have prepared this attack: one must never sit still" (p. 595).

Patton's movement north of his Third Army with the Battle Line for 22 Dec 1944

18 December, Luxembourg, 10:30 A.M. – Bradley had Patton and his staff report to headquarters to show them a detailed map of the bulge. Patton “was surprised at the size and extent of the German gains.” When Bradley asked what he could do he said he could start three divisions north within 24 hours. Patton promptly ordered his staff to alert II Corps and III Corps saying “this is the real thing.”

18 December, 8 o'clock – Bradley told Patton over the telephone “The situation up there is much worse than it was when I talked to you...You and a staff officer me for a conference with General Eisenhower at Verdun at approximately 1100. I understand from General Eisenhower that you are to take over VIII Corps as well as the offensive to be launched by the new troops coming into the area.”
At 8:15 Patton discussed the plan...and routes the 4th Armored and 80th Divisions would use to move against the Germans” (pp. 597-598).

“In conformance with Hitler’s bold concept, the Germans assembled 25 divisions and committed 20 to attack along a 60-mile front between Monschau and Echternach. Taking advantage of a heavy fog on the morning of December 16...three German armies, totaling 200,000 troops, struck about 80,000 Americans of the VIII Corps – composed of newly arrived divisions breaking in and battered divisions recuperating in a quiet sector – rolled westward...headed for Antwerp, about 100 miles away. Within a few days they pushed a bulge into the American lines, a salient stretching about 50 miles almost to the Meuse River...It was a stroke of genius on the part of the Fuehrer...” (p. 598).

“Three divisions had virtually been wiped out by the Germans.”

At the 11:00 meeting Ike said “When can you attack?

I said, “On December 22, with three divisions: the 4th Armored, the 26th, and the 80th.”

“This was the sublime moment of his career.” (p. 599).

“Patton’s proposal was astonishing, technically difficult, and daring. It meant reorienting his entire Army from an eastward direction to the north, a 90-degree turn that would pose logistical nightmares...Altogether, it was an operation that only a master could think of executing. Eisenhower approved” (p. 600).

“Ike said in departing, ‘Every time I get a new star I get attacked.’ He had been promoted just before the battle of Kasserine Pass. And now he had recently received his fifth star to become General of the Army. I said, ‘And every time you get attacked, I pull you out’ ”(p. 600).

Movie Scene. During one of the late evenings while enroute to Bastogne, Patton was in a command post and was given the ‘more snow for tomorrow’ weather report. One staff person mumbled ‘there goes our air cover’ and then another said ‘Sir, we may have to pull up and wait for better weather.’
Patton’s response was immediate:

Brave men are dying up there. We’re not gonna wait!

Not an hour – not a minute! We’re gonna keep moving!

IS THAT CLEAR?

We’re gonna attack all night! We’re gonna attack tomorrow morning!

[Pause]

If we are not victorious...let no one come back alive!

Letter, GSP, Jr., to Beatrice, December 22, 1944

"I think that this move of the Third Army is the fastest in history. We moved over a hundred miles starting on the 19th and attacked today all ship shape and Bristol fashion.

John Millikin is doing better than I feared. I told him he had to go up and hear them [the shells and bullets] whistle. I think he will."

In his diary he wrote "The situation at Bastogne is grave but not desperate" (p. 604).

"Some people call it luck, some genius. I call it determination" (p. 609).

25 December - Diary

"A clear cold Christmas, lovely weather for killing Germans, which seems a bit queer, seeing Whose birthday it is...I left early this morning to try to visit all the divisions in contact with the enemy...All were very cheerful. I am not, because we are not going fast enough...

After super Brad and I had a talk. Monty says that the First Army cannot attack for three months and that the only attack that can be made is by me, but that I am too weak; hence we should fall back to the Saar-Vosges line or even to the Moselle...

I feel that this is disgusting and might remove the valor of our arm and the confidence of our people. It will have tremendous political implication and probably condemn to death or slavery all the inhabitants of Alsace and Lorraine if we abandon them to the Germans.

If ordered to fall back, I think I will ask to be relieved.

26 December – Diary

Why in hell the SHAEF thinkers hold the 11th Armored, 17th Airborne, and 87th Infantry Divisions at Reims is beyond me. They should be attacking.

The German has shot his wad. Prisoners have had no food for from three to five days. We should attack.

27 December – Diary

Bradley left at 1000 to see Ike, Montgomery, and Smith. If Ike will put Bradley back in command of the First and Ninth Armies, we can bag the whole German army.

If I could get three more divisions, I could win this war now.

29 December – Letter to Beatrice

The relief of Bastogne is the most brilliant operation we have thus far performed and is in my opinion the outstanding achievement of this war.

Now the enemy must dance to our tune, not we to his.

31 December – Letter to Beatrice

Darling B. Happy New Year! I hope I am home for the next one.

"He would be dead before the end of the next year."

31 December

"Bradley submitted an efficiency report on Patton's performance and characterized him as 'Superior,' recommended him for command of an Army or Army Group, and among all others he knew of Patton's grade, listed him Number 1 as an Army commander in combat" (p. 610).

[Most of the previous reports have him as Number 5 in grade by his superiors.]

1945

1 January 1945, *Third Army General Orders I*

"To the officers and men of the Third Army and to our comrades of the XIX TAC:
From the bloody corridor at Avranches, to Brest, thence across France to the Saar, over the Saar into Germany, and now on to Bastogne, your record has been one of continuous victory...
The speed and brilliancy of your achievements is unsurpassed in military history...
In closing, I can find no fitter expression for my feelings than to apply to you the immortal words spoken by General Scott at Chapultepec when he said, '*Brave soldiers, veterans, you have been baptized in fire and blood and have come out steel*' " (p. 611).

3 January, Diary

"It was suggested Eisenhower had too much work to do and that "Montgomery should be made Deputy Ground Forces Commander of all troops in Europe. If this occurs, I will ask to be relieved. I will not serve under Montgomery and neither, I think, will Bradley" (p. 614).

4 January, Diary

"We can still lose this war.

However, the Germans are colder and hungrier than we are, but they fight better."

6 January, Diary

"The 90th is doing a very clever piece of work in registering its guns. As the guns come in, they register, and similar guns from the 26th Division cease firing. In this way, I believe, we can wholly deceive the enemy as to the arrival of a new unit" (p. 616).

Battle of the Bulge

8 January, Diary

"At supper Middleton called to say the 87th and 17th Airborne could not attack tomorrow, and that the 101st Airborne and 4th Armored should, if possible, wait until the 10th. I told him everything would go on as ordered and that all units would attack on the 9th, tomorrow, with the understanding the 87th and 17th Airborne would probably not be able to put on a very good show.

Next, Gaffey called u and made the same recommendation and got the same answer" (p. 619).

12 January, Diary

"Wherever we attack, one thing is certain; we should attack, because if we don't, the Germans will" (p. 623).

Press Conference, Luxembourg

"The operation at Bastogne is finished...I am very much satisfied with this operation so far, and I am hopeful that these sons-of-bitches attack somewhere soon. If they do, I won't be able to hold myself, for I will attack them...There are two things that the enemy can do. He can hit from around Metz or further down, and in either case he is shit out of luck!" (p. 623).

13 January, Diary

"Wrote the Editor of the Stars and Stripes protesting against his paper as subversive of discipline...I will not permit the paper to be issued in this Army...It is a scurrilous sheet" ["What he didn't like was Bill Mauldin's cartoons, showing Willie and Joe...as unshaven and dirty"] (p. 624).

20 January, Letter to Beatrice

"The 101 Air Borne calls themselves the triple B's – 'Battered, Bastards, of Bastogne.' They did well but like the Marines of the last war, they get more credit than they deserve" (p. 626).

28 January, Letter to Beatrice

"I think the Germans are in a bad way and that we will be able to get through. Unfortunately we have to storm the Siegfried line as a starter."

Blumenson: "By that date the bulge had been eliminated. The Germans had been expelled from the salient. The front had been restored. Now everyone could get on with the old business of cracking the Siegfried Line and driving to the Rhine" (p. 630).

Paper Pause

Actually the war is about over. The fighting hasn't stopped and the Germans will fight till the end. However, except for a few stories and comments, Patton's destiny is complete. He does not know it yet. He will get his fourth star, get his portrait painted, end the war, go home for a month, 'occupy' Bavaria, be relieved of his Third Army, and not get the Roman Warrior parade he wanted after the war – actually he got the parade but didn't know it was his last.

The end of the paper is to highlight some of the pertinent events and then discuss a few comments on his destiny and his life and maybe answer some of the final questions given at the beginning of this paper.

General Patton is in his last quarter and deep into his two-minute warning.

The End of the War

1 March, Diary – "Walker called...to announce that the 10th Armored was in Trier – netted over 7,000 prisoners" (p. 649).

14 March, Diary – "Visited Trier...So did Caesar...whose Gallic wars I am now reading...Driving into Trier, he followed Caesar's old road and 'could smell the sweat of the legions" (p. 655).

"Radio news broadcasts announced the promotions of nine officers to full – four-star – general rank. On the list were Bradley, Devers, and Clark...Marshall and Eisenhower had discussed including Patton and Hodges on the list of promotions, but to have done so would have been a slight to Bradley and Devers. Eisenhower seemed to imply regret that Patton did not command the 6th Army Group, which would have made him eligible for promotion – but would have put him ahead of Devers" (p. 655).

AF 4★	Army	NAVY	WWII 4 Stars MADE
Hap Arnold 19 Mar 43	Ike (10)	Nimitz (10)	Chapman 44
Joseph McNamara 7 Mar 45	Stewart Somerset McNair Dewey	Bingsoel Halsey 18 Nov 42	Horn 44
Geo Kennedy 9 Mar 45	Clark Bradley Hawley	Spurnell 44	Edwards 44
Carl Spaatz 11 Mar 45 (4)	Patton 14 Apr 45 Hodge 15 Apr 45	Turner 45	Turner 45

Draft of four starred generals in WWII

"As Patton told Beatrice, Ike was quite apologetic about the 4-star business, but has, however, good reasons - that is, you must maintain the hierarchy of command or else relieve them, and he had no reason for relieving them" (p. 656).

17 March – Press Conference, Luxembourg

"Do you know – you can put it out today – the Third Army will have been operational 230 days and we have 230,000 prisoners – that is a thousand a day" ... We were going to have a picture of the last man but they said it would be humiliating to show the face of a prisoner of war. This time we will take a picture of his ass... (p. 657).

23 March – Letter to Beatrice

"Last night in a surprise crossing, I got a whole division...over the Rhine near...Oppenheim."

22 October, Letter to son George (note date)

"I did not know until you told me that Napoleon crossed near Oppenheim. I picked this when I was still in England as the place to cross the Rhine because the terrain on my side dominated that on the other side" (p. 660).

24 March, Diary

"Drove to the river and went across on the pontoon bridge, stopping in the middle to take a piss in the Rhine, and then pick up some dirt on the far side...in emulation of William the Conqueror... I do not see how the Germans can keep it up much longer" (p. 661).

26 March, Diary

"I told Grow if he did not get into Frankfurt tonight, I would relieve him..." (p. 662).

17 April, Letter to Beatrice

"Sometimes I feel that I may be nearing the end of this life. I have liberated John Waters and licked Germans, so what else is there to do?

Well, if I do get it, remember that I love you."

"At 11 P.M. , Gay heard over the radio that President Harry S. Truman had nominated Patton for promotion to full general" (p. 689).

8 May, Letter to Beatrice

"Two and half years ago today we landed in Africa and now it is all over..." (p. 699).

"So ended the war for George Patton, not with a bang but a whimper" (p. 702).

"He was tired, discouraged, burned out, and apparently of little use to anyone. The world had gone to hell. Redeployment and demobilization were dissipating the immense force that the United States had acquired during the war, the Russians seemed about to win the peace, and no one cared – no one except him" (p. 729).

2 September 1945 – "In order to amuse himself and also to instruct coming generations of soldiers, he was writing a book entitled 'War as I Saw It,' soon to be renamed 'War as I Knew It.' It was a compendium of observations, lessons learned, strictures, and the like, all derived from his experience, all set forth with the usual Patton verve, clarity, and bravura" (p. 747).

22 September – Diary

"The more I see of people I regret that I survived the war" (p. 766).

7 Oct – *Speech to the Officers and Men of the Third Army on the Occasion of his Leaving*

Last lines (it was short anyway) *"A man of General Truscott's achievements needs no introduction. His deeds speak for themselves. I know that you will not fail him. Goodbye and God bless you" (p. 793).*

His 30 day leave to the US in July of 1945

7 June – Boston [D'Este notes.]

"For some twenty-five miles through the suburbs of Boston, flags fluttered in tribute. As young women tossed flowers at him, Patton stood proudly (alternating from smiles to grimaces) in an open car, his helmet clutched to his chest or in his right hand, waving, as an enormous crowd, estimated at one million, cheered his triumphal return. Many wept openly. In downtown Boston a snowstorm of confetti and paper descended on him. Addressing a crowd of thirty thousand (some accounts put the number at nearly fifty thousand) from the Hatch Shell on the Esplanade of the Charles River, Patton said, *'My name is merely a hook to hang the honors on. This great ovation by Boston is not for Patton the general, but Patton as a symbol of the Third Army.'* He spoke of those who would never return home, buried in cemeteries from Normandy to Austria... (p. 746).

Later in the Los Angeles Coliseum, filled to a capacity crowd of one-hundred thousand, he was watching a mock tank battle and was in tears as he watched. Someone had neglectfully left his microphone "live," over which was heard *"Magnificent. Almost as good as the real thing. And God help me, I love it [war].* As Charles Codman writes: 'The General's phrasing was clear, distinct, and coast to coast' " (p. 748).

"With their wives sitting on the stage, Patton and Jimmy Doolittle delivered a series of speeches. At the Hollywood Bowl, Doolittle spoke first and ended by saying: 'If General Patton and I have achieved any success in fighting the war, these two lovely ladies are responsible for that success.' Their wives stood to a deafening applause. Once again failing to realize the mike was open, Patton said with 'glorious amplification' to his friend: *'You son of a bitch, I wish I'd said that'* "(p. 748).

Ruth Ellen, who had been working in Walter Reed Army Hospital, told about the visit to the amputee ward. "But that ward was a shock to Ma and Georgie. He strode down to about the center of the rows of beds. All of the patients were looking at him with their hearts in their eyes. Suddenly, he whipped out a

large white handkerchief and burst into tears. He looked around and said, ‘**Goddammit, if I had been a better general, most of you would not be here.**’ He turned on his heel and walked rapidly out the door with the crowd of officials scrambling after him” (p. 749).

“Before departing Washington, George and Beatrice were invited to lunch at the home of daughter Bee. While Beatrice was upstairs, Patton somberly turned to Bee and Ruth Ellen and said in a conversational tone: ‘**Well, I guess this is goodbye. I won’t be seeing you again. Take care of your little brother, and tell John and Jim to take care of you.**’ Pausing, he said: ‘**I think I’ll see your mother again.**’” Both women were shocked saying the war was over but Patton said his luck had run out. “**It’s too damned bad I wasn’t killed before the fighting stopped...So be it.**” This was the last time they ever saw him (p. 750).

“In Berlin, Truman presided over the raising of the American flag in the new U.S. sector of the now-divided former German capital. Among those present was Patton, a man whom Truman was wholly incompatible. Patton, the flashy dresser who ‘seemed to glow from head to foot,’ and his antithesis, the short Missourian in a plain business suit and panama [sic] hat. Of Patton, Truman’s biographer observes: ‘There were stars on his shoulders, stars on his sleeves, more stars than Truman had ever seen on one human being. He counted twenty-eight.’ Soon after assuming the presidency, Truman noted in his diary: ‘Don’t see how a country can produce such men as Robert E. Lee, John J. Pershing, Eisenhower, and Bradley and at the same time produce Custers, Pattons and MacArthurs’” (p. 755). [*Two words for HST.*]

9 December 1945

“This is a helluva way to die.”

Statement, Horace L. Woodring, no date

“I was stationed at Bad Nauheim, Germany with the Fifteenth Army as a Private First Class driving for General George S. Patton. On a Sunday morning, 9 December 1945, General Patton went pheasant hunting with Major General Gay. I was driving at the time in a 1938 Cadillac, 75 Special Limousine. I had driven for General Patton for four months...I noticed a GMC [truck] coming close from the opposite direction. The driver made no hand signal. He just turned into my car...I saw him in time to hit my brakes but not in time to do anything [else]...

The car was knocked back approximately ten feet.

It was approximately 11:45 in the morning...

The General was conscious at the time and swore a little.

Within five minutes the MPs were there.”

“The left front end of Cadillac was crushed and demolished, but when the military police learned that the truck was traveling at 10 miles per hour, the car at 30, they placed no charges against Woodring or T/5 Robert L. Thompson, who was driving the truck. In letters Gay later wrote to both drivers, he absolved them of any blame. The accident apparently just happened” (Blumenson, *Patton Papers*, pp. 817-819).

“What chance have I to ride a horse again?” Patton asked.

Spurling answered directly. “None.”

“In other words,” Patton said, **“the best that I could hope for would be semi-invalidism.”**

“Yes.”

Patton thought a moment, then said gravely, **“Thank you Colonel, for being honest”** (p. 825).

"When she was not with her husband, Beatrice was answering the messages that stacked up in piles. Throughout her stay at the hospital she kept her equanimity. Nothing seemed to ruffle her. Spurling thought that her devotion to her husband was evidence of an exceptionally beautiful human relationship. 'She had lived her life for him'" (p. 826).

"He told his nurse several times during the day he was going to die" (p. 830).

"He had simply expired at five minutes to six. The cause was 'pulmonary edema and congestive heart failure'" (p. 831).

"...no deceased American soldier had been sent home since the beginning of the war. From among three large American military cemeteries...Mrs. Patton selected the one at Hamm, Luxembourg" (p. 833).

The Legend, Destiny, and the Man

**"I can't decide logically if I am a man of destiny or a
Lucky fool, but I think I am destined...I feel that my claim
to greatness hangs on an ability to lead and inspire...
I am a genius – I think I am."**

- November 3, 1942 (p. 836).

I really do not want this paper to end; for sure, this means there is more. Like I said earlier this is the start because the study of Patton is more than just a short paper highlighting some pithy quotes and trying to nail down his legacy...some have done a pretty good job and, as you have seen, they have been noted. I would tout again Blumenson, D'Este, and Patton himself for the most direct route. I just found out about Charles Codman – knew I liked him in the movie – See his two page epilogue at end of this.

Harry Semmes¹⁰ who fought under Patton in two world wars and hunted with him between, delivered a short address at the American Legion memorial service on 20 January 1946: "George Patton, your old comrades-in-arms and friends, both living and dead, salute you. A thousand years of unborn Americans will look down on what you have done and find it good" (p. 839).

Codman remarked "In his attitudes and appearance he seemed to be a perpetual adolescent, and eternal juvenile, rash, impetuous, boyish. 'He was so very young in spirit...he was: 'a real and literal *enfant terrible* – *enfant*...in his candor, intuitiveness, shrewdness, his self-discipline, and all the Spartan virtues. And a marvelous Thespian gift'" (p. 840).

"Two-gun Patton¹¹, wearing his .45 Long Colt Single Action revolver and his .357 Magnum Smith & Wesson revolver in matching holsters, personified the image to perfection. In the American mind he was a throwback to the cowboy folk hero" (p. 840).

"'Why, no real gunman would carry a pearl-handled pistol. It's bad luck...Besides, I wear that particular gun because I killed my first man with it.' With that his grin expanded to Cheshire-cat dimensions" (p. 689).

¹⁰ Semmes, Harry H. (1964). *Portrait of Patton*. New York, NY: Paperback Library.

¹¹ Let the record reflect he could shoot too, having killed in the Mexican war with Pershing, and shot pistols in the 1912 Olympic games in Sweden. "The tale of the so-called 'lost round' is apocryphal" (D'Este, p. 133).

Hazen H. Ayer, with the question "What kind of a man was George?" answered with "He was vain, even childish. Yet so thoroughly was he an actor that one never knew for certain whether a statement or an act was genuine or for effect. The revolvers and helmet were trademarks and part of the show. But under that brash exterior was a soft-hearted, sensitive man, a profound student of history, an intelligent mind, a dedicated professional soldier, brave, generous, and religious" (p. 845).

"Among Americans, Patton probably most resembled Admiral William Halsey, who was impetuous, colorful, and difficult to keep in check.

Among his contemporaries, Patton probably came closest to Rommel, who led his troops in combat and shared their dangers and who in the end seemed to repudiate Hitler, not because the Fuehrer was evil but because he was losing the war" (p. 848).

On the issue of seeing him in the movies and hear the historians say over and over about Patton loving war, this clip below explains the true meaning best:

"Undoubtedly, as I. D. White remarked, he loved war. But not the death and destruction. The concentration camps and the ruined cities sickened him, and the losses of his soldiers hurt him. Even the bodies of the enemy, no longer an abstraction of warfare, saddened him.

He loved the excitement of war, the responsibility of war, the prerogatives of his position, and, most of all, the opportunity that war presented to use the skill, leadership, and courage required by his profession – in the same way that a surgeon loves his calling but not the disease, illness, and injury he treats" (p. 858).

Did he meet his destiny? Some say he met more than one. My guess because he did not get the glorious ending by fighting the Mongrel Russians he died thinking he may not have gained his destiny. However, "most historic figures have the single moment when they achieved what no one else was capable of... Patton had several that no one could have done so well, if at all:

During the training period in the United States,

During the landings near Casablanca,

During the aftermath of Kasserine Pass in Tunisia,

During the invasion of Sicily, and subsequent drive to Messina,

During the weeks when he catapulted the breakthrough in Normandy into the breakout to Germany,

During the days when he turned his Army toward Bastogne.

These were his great moments, and they demonstrated his military genius...That is the legend of Patton" (p.859).

Here is one good ending. As I was watching the movie the other night, my appreciation for the young German intelligence officer was raised, as he spent his time reading and studying about Patton. After the counteroffensive was turned back, von Runstedt (the German Montgomery) was closing his headquarters as the shells were coming down and the Intel officer was looking at an 8½ by 11 photo of Patton and he titled it with "*Er war ein Anachronismus*" ("He was an anachronism") [defined as "a thing belonging or appropriate to a period other than that in which it exists."]

It is fitting to say here, from an old proverb, and for the few people lucky enough to read this paper about my hero, "*There ain't many of us left!*" [a little humor – author]

Final Comments

Did you ever ask about what happened to Willie? He was sent to California to be with the family.

Did you know his son also flunked out his first year at West Point? The *letters from GSP, Jr., to son George* were of interest. He changed his name to George Smith Patton and became a Major General with combat time in Vietnam.

My guests for fantasy supper will be: George S. Patton, George C. Scott, and George A. Custer.

This research, reading, and writing brought out some material I had missed or had forgotten but during the movie "The Last Days of Patton" I was taken aback by the girl Jean Gordon played by Kathryn Leigh Scott. It seems, depending on who you read, Patton and Jean were pretty close starting when he was about 50 (she was about 20) and continued through the war. The affair was treated well in the movie but the ending of her life and the misery it caused the family is less than spectacular.

Addendum

The captain of the Red Cross Club mobile crew of about 25 girls was Betty South. In Blumenson's main book on Patton he records some impressions of Betty about Patton - and Jean Gordon.

"I looked at the great Third Army field commander proposing the toast. His magnificent, tall figure...excited my admiration, but I was surprise at the thin, high-pitched voice that so poorly matched his striking looks and impressive bearing. The brick-red face, with its round, receding forehead sparsely framed by silver-white hair, magnetized me chiefly because of the eyes. For in those blue eyes there was an intensity that burned with white-hot heat...

Belief in himself, proved by his superb feats of generalship, was supreme in George Patton's eyes. While he was speaking, his eyes were keen and shrewd, so telescopic it required no small amount of courage to stand his gaze. The tremendous surge of vitality and life that came from him exhilarated everyone present...

Yet...while we were still in the drawing room, I had furtively watched this great general, fascinated to be so near him, and I saw a tired, aging man...I saw a showman aware of the necessity of drama...

And then when I met him and had my turn of conversation with him, I sensed the sandy, shallow places of his being, as well s the stormy depths. I tried earnestly to grasp the meaning of a man who could knock the camera from the hands of an accredited reporter and kick it to pieces, and the man who had picked up a GI in his arms and wept over him because he had fallen from a pole while doing his job of stringing wire to the general's mobile war van...

His agility in leaping back and forth between vulgar and shocking profanity and cultured, gentlemanly speech bewildered me. I was particularly hard-pressed to know what to do or say when he turned tearful eyes to me and spoke about God and prayer...

Jean was a lovely young woman of great charm, intelligence, and sensitivity. I think it was a happiness for General Patton to have a member of the family with him. She understood and loved him...She spoke fluent French and they often spoke it together...

In the rather austere and lonely life he led during the war, she was a bright, warm touch, a feminine touch I am sure he needed and appreciated...

He was no 'palsy-walsy' type of older man chucking the Red Cross girls under the chin or pinching our fannies. He was first, last, and always General Patton...(pp. 852-855).

Blumenson toward the end of his book shows finally where Patton was: "The world was supposed to be an ordered entity, where class, wealth, and breeding conferred special privileges automatically on certain favored individuals. As for the rest, so long as everyone was dignified, clean, neat, and did his job well, he was entitled to respect – like Sergeants Mims and Meeks, one white, the other black.

But the times had changed, and he was an anachronism" (p. 857).

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THIRD U S ARMY CORPS AND DIVISIONS

1 AUGUST 1944 TO 9 MAY 1945



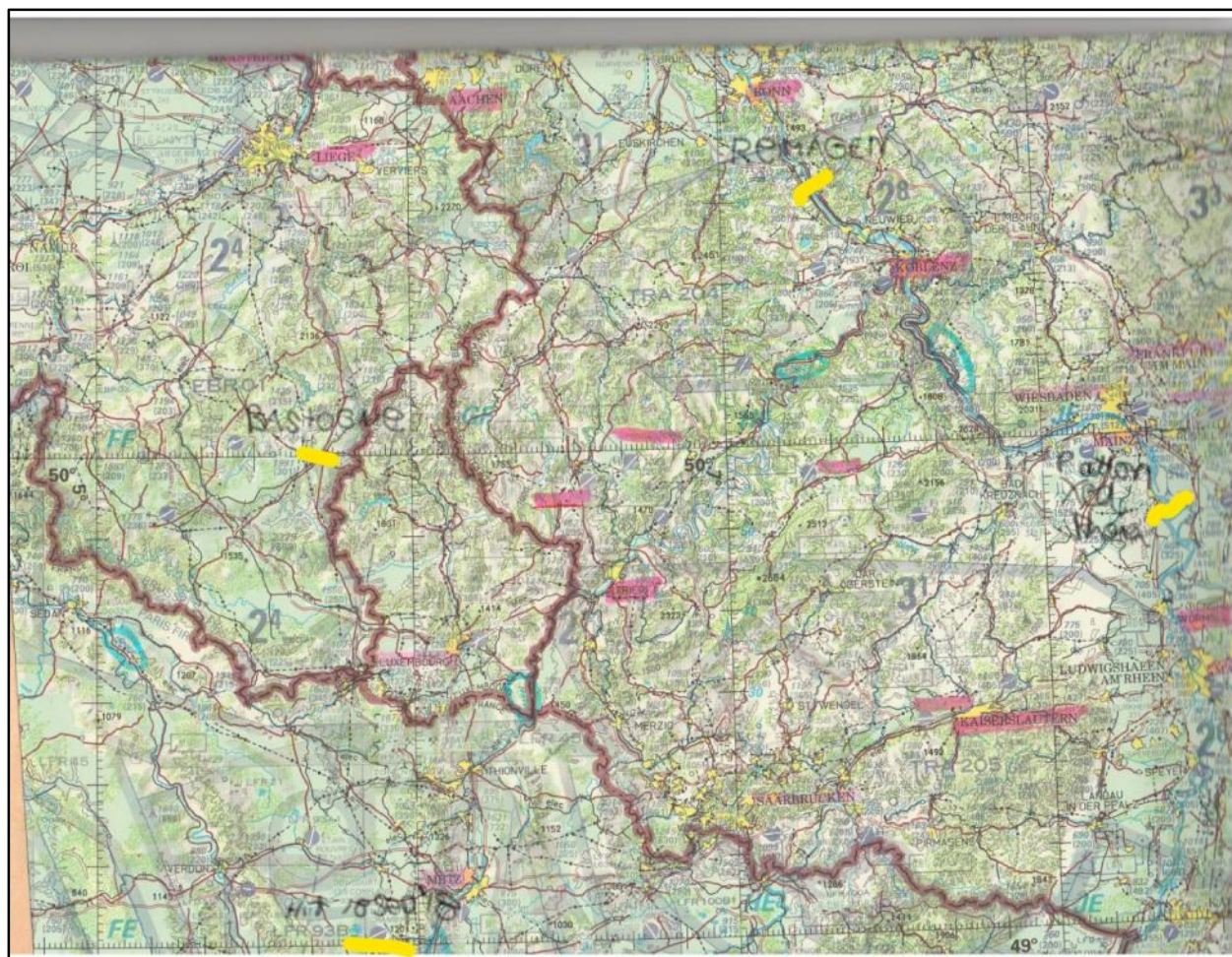
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70th INF DIV	71st INF DIV	76th INF DIV	79th INF DIV	80th INF DIV	83d INF DIV	84th INF DIV	87th INF DIV	89th INF DIV	90th INF DIV

94th INF DIV	95th INF DIV	97th INF DIV	99th INF DIV	4th ARMD DIV	5th ARMD DIV	6th ARMD DIV	7th ARMD DIV	8th ARMD DIV	9th ARMD DIV

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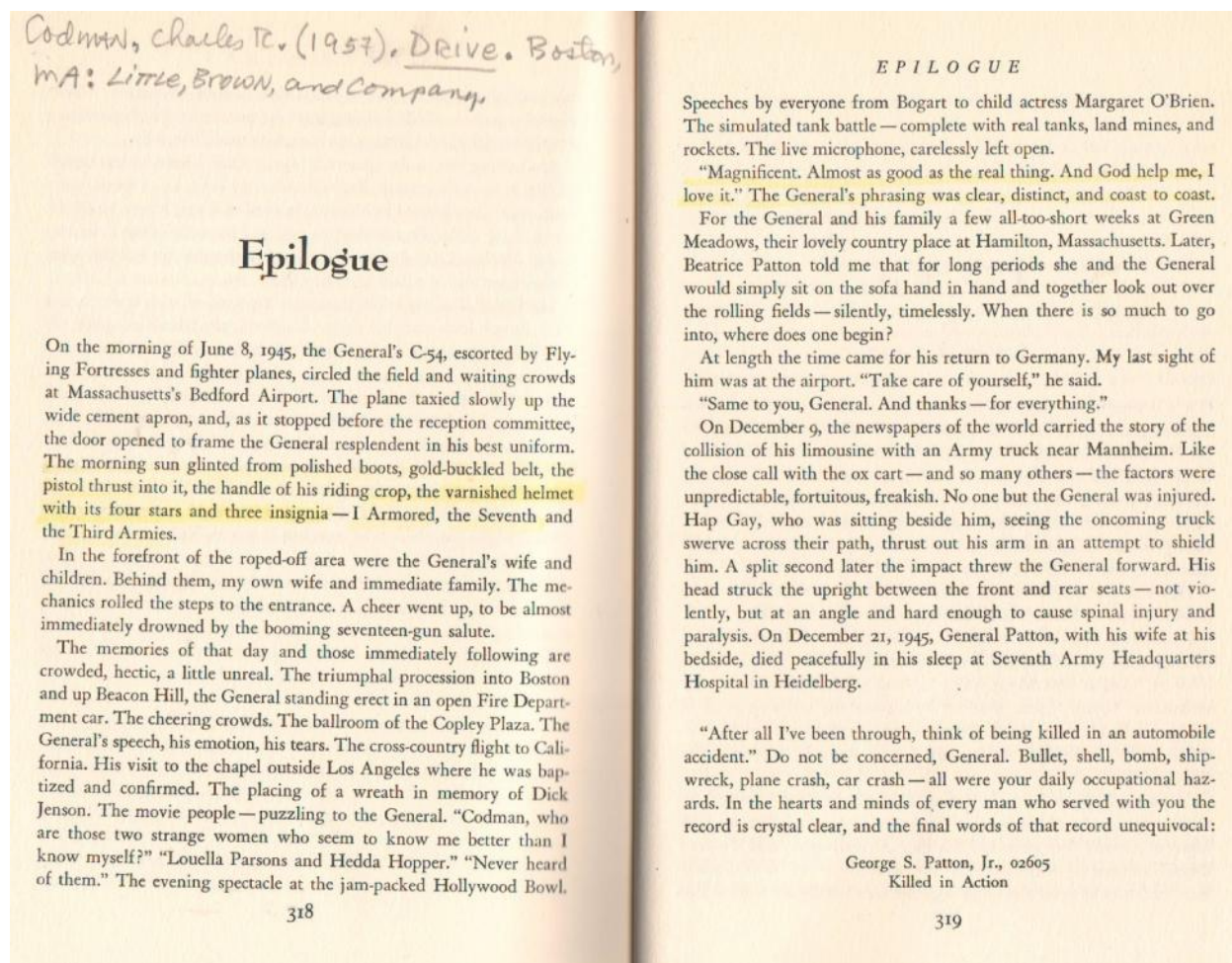


Map shows four places (crude markings) of interest in yellow.

1. Remagen Bridge between Bonn and Koblenz (seems like they made a movie about this).
2. Bastogne, Belgium. (God bless Tony McAuliffe, Commander of the 101st with his famous "Nuts.") On December 30 and passing within 1,000 yards from the Germans, Patton decorated Brig. Gen. A. C. McAuliffe with the DSC. "They were delighted and wanted me to drive slowly so the soldiers could see me" (Blumenson, *The Patton Papers*, p. 609).
3. Patton crossed the Rhein (Rhine) River at Oppenheim (about 10 miles west of Darmstadt) on March 24, 1945. Although his command was crossing by divisions for two days "the total casualties in killed and wounded were only 28" (his diary).
4. This spot should be, according to D'Este (p. 251), between Varennes and Cheppy, France during The Meuse-Argonne Offensive (a bit west of my spot on the map, which would be about 10 miles west of Verdun). **"His date with destiny, so long anticipated and dreaded, came on September 26, 1918."** Ruth Ellen Totten (D'Este, p. 248). [Of course, this was his first date...Bastogne was still to come.]

Addendum One: This page added 10 May 2017 as the paper is being sent to my Web Site.

Codman's Epilogue is to show the devotion of his aid-de-camp. He started off in his book referring to General Patton as "the boss." He changed that. Not out of respect for rank, but for the man he was.



Addendum Two:

My youngest brother Jim has shared my appreciation for General Patton; for sure, he is my most favorite general and he is pretty high up on Jim's list. We both have respect for winning wars and General Patton absolutely excelled in this area: a soldier who became a combat military genius.

Jim gave me the first and third Blumenson books and the gifts really started me on the way to do some more study and finally get around to writing this short paper on his destiny and to determine what his track was during the big War.

Jim also has an appreciation for patches. I wrote this with him in mind, as you can see with the pictures of the patches General Patton wore and then on one page all the patches in the Third Army.

Jim and I learned what a 'peep' was and a few more things from the book. **I dedicate this paper to him.** Oh, and by the way, I have added a fourth to my supper with the Georges. It will be my brother Jim.