# *Battle of the Bulge*
## *Complete Program Transcript*

**Ed Stewart, Sergeant, 84th Infantry:** Nature is not friendly, it's an adversary, and yet you must admire the beauty of it and also you must admire the danger. It is so efficient as a danger.

**Bart Hagerman, Private, 17th Airborne**: Both the enemy and the weather could kill you, and the two of them together was a pretty deadly combination.

**H.W.O. Kinnard, Colonel, 101st Airborne**: The snow was very, very heavy. The cold was down around zero. The fog was dense, so you really couldn't see much beyond grenade range.

**Oliver Patton, Second Lieutenant, 106th Infantry**: At night it was so quiet, anything that made noise, you could hear it. And the stillness -- and the snow sort of insulated everything and then, too, the trees were thick and you couldn't see very far. You were lucky if you could see sometimes 20 or 30 feet.

**Ed Stewart, Sergeant, 84th Infantry**: There was nothing out there in the woods and in the trees that have any compassion towards me.

**Roger Rutland, First Sergeant, 106th Infantry**: It seems that you were in this deadly struggle under miserable conditions and the whole universe is united against you.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] In August of 1944, as American GI's swept into Paris, a gruesome winter campaign seemed unimaginable. Gene Derekson of the 28th Division wrote home to his wife: "The roads we journey now -- and we are traveling fast on foot -- are

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littered with Nazi equipment, burned and destroyed. Along the road, I've eaten blackberries, carrots, apples and pears. Then a good night's sleep -- soft sleeping on flax."

Four months before the Battle of the Bulge, Derekson and his division led the parade through Paris past the reviewing stand where the brass stood, and where the brass stood was clear. Hitler was now on the run. Ike had a standing bet the war would be done by Christmas.

**Ben Kimmelman, Captain, 28th Infantry:** To be present when this triumphal march took place was as though it was a reward for the victories won and the enemy defeated. People were hugging and kissing and giving people things. It was a kind of a delirium.

**Norm Plumb, Private, 28th Infantry:** The troops came down to Chantesquieu Place and progressed to the Place de la Concorde, and we alternated playing marches with Frenchmen. There was just wall-to-wall people at the quay, cheering and grabbing the soldiers and hugging them.

**Clyde Burkholder, Private, 28th Infantry:** You know, that was beautiful.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] After five hard years of war, the Allies had won back Casablanca and Tripoli, Naples and Rome, Cherbourg and St.-Lo. The list of victories seemed to grow each day.

**Ben Kimmelman, Captain, 28th Infantry**: It looked to us as though we had certainly turned a corner -- we were now so triumphant -- and our show of strength and of moral position and moral strength was so astonishing, was so inspiring, it was very hard to be objective about it.

**Chet Hansen, Major, Aide to General Omar Bradley**: One afternoon, I was sitting, having a glass of wine and watching our traffic stream by, just a steady procession of tanks, trucks, tank carriers, unbroken for hours -- loaded with troops and everything under the sun. It was a

feeling that, "By golly, any nation that can produce all of these things, ship them all the way across the Atlantic, all the way across France and chase the German, this was a country that could do anything."

We had a grand ride right across France -- we were not held up anywhere -- and we went all the way onto the Siegfried line. The German was running very, very hard.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] Once the Gestapo was ushered out of Paris, Allied staff officers and war correspondents reclaimed the bar at The Ritz. Restaurants reopened. Fashion shows came back. Women could hope for silk stockings again. The War Department was shifting troops over to the Pacific. For the first time in years, U.S. production of tanks, ships and ammunition was allowed to dip.

**Oliver Patton, Second Lieutenant, 106th Infantry**: From late October through November and early December, they were building up for this attack. Their production level reached its highest in the fall and winter of 1944, so how'd they do that? I'm talking about tanks, artillery, trucks, ammunition. They were cranking it out in these underground factories that had somehow evaded our Air Force.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] The German counterattack was conceived and planned by one man, the Reichsfuhrer Adolf Hitler. Hitler was, by his own lights, a man of destiny. For him, Germany's suffering was merely a test of its will. He'd seen four million Germans killed, wounded or taken prisoner. No matter, he would create a new army with a fancy name, the people's infantry, the Volksgrenadier. What it was was an army of cripples and convicts, children and grandfathers, but the fuhrer was in a state of euphoria. His Volksgrenadier would join the very best troops he had, the Waffen SS in a surprise attack in the West. "Everything must be set aside for this," Hitler confided, "it will lead to collapse and panic among Americans."

**Oliver Patton, Second Lieutenant, 106th Infantry**: Hitler knew that something was wrong. Back in October-- September, October, he knew that he was leaking. Orders that he gave were reaching the Allies. He thought he had spies in his staff, but he did the one thing that made it impossible to do anything with it and that is shut up -- radio silence, in effect. And when it stopped coming, it just happened to stop coming in a period when we figured, "Well, there isn't anything to say. These guys are losers."

**H.W.O. Kinnard, Colonel, 101st Airborne**: We had a preconception that they were unable to launch a counterattack and they did everything they could to make us believe that. So you could say it was a case of self-delusion on our part.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] Allied planes were bombing Berlin at will. The Russians were destroying the Wehrmacht in the east. There was speculation that Hitler was already dead. In fact, he had retreated to an underground bunker, but off from even his highest commanders, pouring over maps, planning his last great attack down to the smallest detail.

**Oliver Patton, Second Lieutenant, 106th Infantry**: The Battle of the Bulge -- the base of it, really -- was an 80-mile front running from southern Belgium down to Ettelbruck in the middle of Luxembourg, the Ardennes forest here between my thumb and forefinger. Hitler's concept was to attack on that 80-mile front, swing north and seize the port of Antwerp. He was going to split the British and American forces and capture those people surrounding in there.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] Hitler's real target was the alliance. There had to be frictions between the British and the Americans. If he could hit them hard enough and set them to quarreling, then he could negotiate a favorable peace. From October, Hitler starting massing soldiers at the border. They didn't know why they were there. Not even the commanders knew. One of the few who'd been told was Hasso von Manteuffel. The Prussian general went to the Ardennes front to take the measure of the U.S. division he was to attack.

**Oliver Patton, Second Lieutenant, 106th Infantry**: Now, the 28th, of all the four on the line, was the most thinly spread, so thinly spread and literally during the day they outposted across the border into Germany, but come dark, they came back over the river. Von Manteufel came down, got in the front line, watched this process and said, "Hell, man, we don't need an hour's artillery preparation on these guys. The smart thing to do is walk through them while they're just getting up and having breakfast because there are big gaps between these outposts and we'll walk through them and when we hit resistance, then we'll call in the artillery."

**Roger Rutland, First Sergeant, 106th Infantry**: We arrived there on December 11th. We had been told that the division that was there before us had been there five to six weeks and had only had two casualties in that time, so we expected for it to be a quiet front.

**Oliver Patton, Second Lieutenant, 106th Infantry**: We thought just what they told us. "You're here on a quiet front to do patrols." You learn your trade. You get your feet wet, and it's not a situation of any great urgency. The Second Division, whom we replaced-- the Second said to us, "Man, this is the ghost front. There's nothing out there."

**Marguerite Lindenmeyer, of Luxembourg**: [through interpreter] We saw that something was going on -- lots of German military everywhere in the streets, but not on the main roads. There were machine guns, tanks, trucks, cannons. You can't name it all, but lots, lots of equipment.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] Marguerite Lindenmeyer was a Luxembourger who'd been picked up by a German patrol and taken behind enemy lines.

**Marguerite Lindenmeyer**: [through interpreter] We did not give ourselves away as Luxembourgers. We posed as Germans from Bauler. They told us that if we possibly could to get away because something was about to happen. They didn't know when, but they said,

"Something is going to happen. Something's going to happen for sure. We're *vollen nieder nacht Paris*," they said, "We're on our way to Paris."

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] Lindenmeyer made her way back across the border to Luxembourg and reported what she'd seen to the American forces. Other civilians trickled in, bringing the same story. Intelligence officers passed the reports up to the line of command and warned of a German build-up. The warnings were dismissed.

**Oliver Patton, Second Lieutenant, 106th Infantry**: We did hear tanks moving, trucks moving, all sorts of noises indicative of the assembly of strength and when we reported it, we were told -- from Corps, I think, certainly from Division -- "They're playing phonograph records. They know we're a green division and they're just trying to put the scare on you."

And I'm sure they had played phonograph records of tank movement before and gotten some result. These weren't phonograph records, they were tanks, but we accepted that because of our mindset that, "These people can't really launch a serious attack."

**Guy Franz Arend, "Nuts" Museum, Bastogne**: [through interpreter] It was an atmosphere of jubilation. Every evening in every village in every town, there was a ball -- dances there were organized by the local population or by the Americans themselves. The best way to sum up that situation is this: husbands were even proud to see their wives flirting with the Americans who, believe me, did not hold back at all.

**Jannye Marx**: [through interpreter] The word went 'round: the Americans are collecting all their rations to give a party for the children on December 6th, St. Nicholas Day. Mother Superior came into class to tell us about it and that two of us could be his angels, and I was one of them. We were put into a Jeep and driven through the whole town. When we were ready to go home, St. Nicholas took each one of us angels in his lap and gave us a kiss.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] A quarter of a million Germans waited at the border. On December 16th, a Saturday, clouds and fog covered the valleys. It was the weather Hitler said he needed to keep the American bombers off his back. That day, a message went out to the 5th Panzer army: "Soldiers of the West Front, your great hour has arrived."

**Ben Kimmelman, Captain, 28th Infantry**: I was a Division Special Troops dental officer and I was stationed about 10 miles from the front in Wiltz, Luxembourg. And Sergeant Paul Gifford was late. And I sort of was a wise guy and I told him he's late and he said, "Well, Captain, I'm sorry, but I lost my tank." And I said, "Boy, they're expensive as hell. You better go get that tank," and he said, "Well, the Germans took it." I said, "Well, now you better go back and get that tank. I mean, you can't go losing a tank to the Germans 'cause it's bad business."

So I got the usual laughter and I said, "What happened to Colonel So-and-so? He's going to give it to you." He said, "He lost his artillery piece." I said, "What's happening?" He said, "The Germans are pushing." Division headquarters, of which I was a part, was aware that there were now an increase in the artillery-- enemy artillery fire and all that, but nothing terribly dramatic except there was a hush that seemed-- really and truly, you could feel a hush as though the civilians sensed what we didn't comprehend.

**Norm Plumb, Private, 28th Infantry**: We were going to Ettelbruck to play for the troops, and we begin to see all these soldiers that they brought in there, GI's that were all banged up and wounded. So we went to inquire and see what it had planned, and there were so many wounded soldiers lying in this hospital while they called off our performance because there was too many-- it was the beginning of the Bulge. We didn't know it at the time.

**Clyde Burkholder, Private, 28th Infantry**: Yeah, that's right. That was the beginning of it.

**Norm Plumb, Private, 28th Infantry**: The shells were flying all night long as we were trying to sleep and when we come down the next morning, that was something else. They said, "How'd you sleep?" "Not very good," you know.

**Roger Rutland, First Sergeant, 106th Infantry**: I went to bed and the next morning at six o'clock, one of my messengers came over to waken me and he said, "Everything's poppin' loose," and I said-- I told this man to-- "Oh, go on and leave me alone," I said. And then, at that time, I heard the screamin' meemies start coming in, the artillery and all types of artillery. That was December 16th. That was a very, very rough day.

And by that night, Germans were all over us, within 10, 15 yards right in front of us. If you could see a bunch of wild cattle running wild, that's what it reminds you of. I believe they were doped. I believe that the German soldiers were doped to a certain extent, because they were-- they were acting as if, "I don't care if I get killed or not." They were like wild men. That's the best I could describe it of that first night.

**Oliver Patton, Second Lieutenant, 106th Infantry**: I thought that my division had been hit by what we'd been taught in the fancy language of military academy books as "a spoiling attack," and that it just amounted to getting our act together and we'd throw them out. I certainly never believed that we'd been hit by a force that was really going to tear us up, never.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] The men on the front line were hunkered in foxholes, cut off from each other. They had no idea they were being hit by one of the largest German artillery attacks of the war or that they were outnumbered in some places by 10 to one.

**Roger Rutland, First Sergeant, 106th Infantry**: We lost many men that first day. An infantry company was approximately 200 men. A Company was 21 men after that first day. C Company could account for 59 men, and in my company, I only lost 28 men the first day. Every

company commander was missing the first day except my company's commander. It's really hard to believe, but it happened.

And some of my better men in garrison were some of the first men to crack under combat conditions. They were like hugging each other and just shivering, from scared. They never had seen such a thing before.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] Dwight Eisenhower and Omar Bradley, the two most powerful commanders in Europe, got word of the attack on the 16th at Versailles, but the news had little impact that first day. Ike went to a reception to toast his orderly's new bride and his own promotion to five-star general. The British commander, Field Marshal Montgomery, was briefed while on the golf course.

**Chet Hansen, Major, Aide to General Omar Bradley**: On the afternoon of the 16th, there was no real worry or concern about the severity of the attack. Those worries started on Sunday morning. And I remember General Bradley walking up into the War Room that afternoon, looking at the map, and he said, "Where in the world has this son of a bitch gotten all of this stuff?" He preceded that by saying, "Pardon my French." He was a mild-mannered man in his speech. But, yes, everyone was genuinely surprised by the force of the German attack at that point.

**Ben Kimmelman, Captain, 28th Infantry**: By Monday, refugees were streaming down the streets with their household possessions, and their faces are absolutely grim and there's no greetings of any kind. And you know that you're looking at a classic kind of thing, refugees before the enemy.

And one of the first things I did was to go up to headquarters up the hill and there it looked as though it was a recently disturbed anthill. People were running in all directions. Soldiers were

running in all-- and seemingly haphazard, jumping on vehicles that were taking off. At that time, it was-- there seemed to be nobody in charge, nobody in charge.

I saw one higher officer absolutely lose his wits, and he seemed to be trying to crank a Jeep. Now, there hadn't been cranks on cars for a long time. He was just absolutely panic-stricken, and that disturbed me a lot. That shook me up.

**Roger Rutland, First Sergeant, 106th Infantry**: It was not an orderly retreat. We were just doing what we thought was best at that particular time. Primarily, we were backing up. We didn't really know where we were going, but it was primarily backing up.

**Norm Plumb, Private, 28th Infantry**: Nothing was organized in the way of retreat.

**Clyde Burkholder, Private, 28th Infantry**: Nothing was.

**Norm Plumb, Private, 28th Infantry**: No, because we were too spread out and too confused, to begin with.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] Norm Plump and Clyde Burkholder made up the better part of the trombone section of the 28th Division Dance Band. Clyde was a five-foot-one crooner with a voice reminiscent of Eddie Cantor, but with little talent for soldiering. He and Plump were part of the ad hoc assembly of rearguard troops now charged with engaging the Panzer troopen.

**Norm Plumb, Private, 28th Infantry**: And they divided us up, the band, with others -- a quartermaster, people from finance -- and a lot of them had weapons they didn't even know how to use properly.

**Clyde Burkholder, Private, 28th Infantry**: Including the band.

**Norm Plumb, Private, 28th Infantry**: Yeah, when they-- in fact, I think some of the band, I heard, had a bazooka, or somebody had one—

**Clyde Burkholder, Private, 28th Infantry**: You got to be kidding. We were lucky we could load a carbine, let alone a machine gun and everybody—

**Norm Plumb, Private, 28th Infantry**: Well, that's all we had is carbines, you know.

**Clyde Burkholder, Private, 28th Infantry**: Yeah, but I was thinking that-- I brought the bullets there and everybody kept saying, "What are they for?"

**Oliver Patton, Second Lieutenant, 106th Infantry**: Well, starting at noon, we went to hell in a hand basket. As soon as we got into the woods, we ran into Germans and as we pushed forward, we ran into more and more Germans until by the time we got to the road that we were supposed to cut and go across, we were just backed up. It was a heavy firefight. There was a lot of fire. My platoon was just melting away.

I went back and found the company first sergeant, who said, "There's an order for us to pull out, come back." And in the dust, I saw a man and I yelled at him to -- I'm sure fairly obscenely -- to get his "act" out of there, that we were leaving, and he wasn't mine, he was a German and he shot me.

And I was put in the aid station and I remember during the night the chaplain came to me and said, "Ollie, we got to go, and we're going to leave those of you who cannot walk in the aid station under the care of a medic, a soldier who's volunteered to look after you." And it dawned on me then that things had gotten serious, that-- you don't abandon-- you don't leave your wounded, you get them out. And what he was telling me is, "We can't get you out."

**Roger Rutland, First Sergeant, 106th Infantry**: On the eve of the 18th or 19th, which would have been the third or fourth day, the senior colonel called back to division headquarters and said, "We have no ammunition," 'cause they only had 48 rounds per man to begin with, and that was gone after the three days. He called back to the division commander and said, "We have no choice but to surrender."

**Oliver Patton, Second Lieutenant, 106th Infantry**: Encircled and under artillery and even tank fire and many Germans on either side, the remnants were surrendered. We lost two-thirds of the infantry strength of the division on that day.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] More than 4,000 of the 106th were given up. Only the American surrender at Bataan was larger. These men had been on the line eight days, in combat for three. Alan Jones, their general, was stunned. "I've lost a division faster than any other commander in the U.S. Army."

**Ben Kimmelman, Captain, 28th Infantry**: After we surrendered, the German corporal took me over and then they put me on the hood of a car. I was sitting with my legs dangling over the grill, and he had a pistol to my head. And so we went up and down some hills, and I was like a trophy on the hood of this car with this pistol on my head.

And to my absolute astonishment, I was looking at droves and herds of beautifully uniformed young, healthy-looking well-fed, well-equipped German troops, and my heart sank. God, they did it. I mean, they surprised us. They've got stores of people that we didn't know about. Wow. And they came by, these young, good-looking kids, laughing at me as the trophy. We had been surprised and were in trouble.

**Singer**: This is the GI jive, man alive / It starts with the bugler blowing reveille over your bed when you arrive. / Jack, that's just the GI jive. / Rootle-de-toot, jump in your suit, make a salute, voot.

**Bob Dunning, Private, 101st Airborne**: I had a friend, Herb Spence, and another friend, Jack Manley . Of course, we were real thrilled that we had a pass, you know, could get out like that. We got to Paris, a big city unknown to us. We hadn't been there before, you know, or anything like that. And we were looking for a good time and we didn't have any trouble finding girls and like that.

And I remember staying in a hotel, a place called Place de Clichy , and a nice little hotel there, and they-- plenty of supply of cognac and this sort of stuff, you know. So we would sit around and talk and the girls would come in. And the particular girl that I had had little short legs about so long, and I think she weighed probably-- oh, I guess, in the neighborhood of 140 pounds and she did a pretty good job with you when-- you know, when you were in the action, let's say, when you were in action, in combat. Let me put it that way. She was a country girl and she was come in from the farm. Now, I know Spence's girlfriend was a real-- she was a real model. Manley didn't care.

**H.W.O. Kinnard, Colonel, 101st Airborne**: We had men on leave in passes in England. We had lots of people in Paris, so we were thinking about everything except the fact that we might have to go back to combat. I was having a party in my quarters in Morbelon, and it was a good party because we were only-- we were in the middle of the champagne country there. And I went over to the headquarters where General McAuliffe informed me that he had just had a call that there had been a breakthrough in the Ardennes. He knew little more than that about it, but that we were probably going to be moving out the following morning. Surprise would be to put it very, very mildly. We were flabbergasted.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] By the evening of the second day of battle, the Allied commanders understood the enormity of their situation. Twenty-five German divisions were on the attack against only four and a half U.S. divisions. Eisenhower and Bradley reached for the only reserves they had, the 82nd Airborne and the 101st. The 101st and were paratroops.

They'd led the way in Normandy and then Holland. They figured their next action would be the triumphal jump into Berlin.

**Bob Dunning, Private, 101st Airborne**: Well, we were told by P.A. systems, you know, broadcasting-- you would hear it. And they'd come down the street and say, "All Airborne" -- and that meant everybody Airborne, not only 101st, but anybody else -- and it was to get back to your outfit, no questions asked, right now. And if you didn't within so many hours, they'd pick you up and escort you back. And they told us that-- "Get everything ready to go." And we didn't know whether we were going to jump or what was going to go on. It was sort of a hang situation, so we just-- when we got back to camp, then we found out. And of course, we didn't really know until we got in the trucks and they said, "You're headed for Bastogne." "Well, where's Bastogne?" you know. We weren't even sure where it was.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] The main fight now was for 22-foot strips of pavement -- the major roads -- most of which ran through two towns, St. Vith in the north and Bastogne in the south. A quarter of a million Germans, plus tanks, Jeeps, horses and trucks squeezed through the Ardennes. Generals stood on their staff cars for hours, directing traffic. While the remains of the American front retreated, the Wehrmacht moved onto St. Vith and Bastogne at a crawl.

**Bob Dunning, Private, 101st Airborne**: Well, we were told to move out and move into Bastogne, and I mean, we were spread out on each side of the road right into a battle formation. All along the road, you would see dead guys, you know. You could hear the guns going off. You could hear the Germans firing. You'd hear a little bit of small arms and it sound like it was, oh, maybe two or three miles away or kilometers away.

**H.W.O. Kinnard, Colonel, 101st Airborne**: The scene at 18th Corps headquarters in Bastogne was one of semi-organized confusion. The Germans were at the gates, almost literally, and

the Corps headquarters was bugging out, were moving to another location because they didn't want to be overrun.

**Bob Dunning, Private, 101st Airborne**: And I saw people coming back. They had a look of, "Well, I've been beaten, but I don't want to be," and a confused, glassy-eyed look. I mean, they were sort of dazed, like. And you would ask them a question -- "What's happening?" -- and they really couldn't tell us. They really couldn't tell us because they didn't know.
It happened so fast and some of them were just plain scared. I mean, they were just-- they'd had it. I mean, they were just-- they didn't know what to do. I remember one young guy kind of jogging along and slogging along, and he-- no weapons or anything and he was actually crying.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] The 101st dug itself into the fields and forests around Bastogne. Its job was to hold the town. To the far north, SS tankers had broken through and they were searching frantically for gas reserves. Americans kept a fragile grip on St. Vith, but in the soft middle, the Germans had split the line wide open.

On the 21st, the first day of snow, Bastogne was surrounded. Heavy clouds grounded the American bombers. C-47's loaded with supplies sat on runways, unable to reach the town.

**Bob Dunning, Private, 101st Airborne**: We weren't what you call well prepared to go into a winter situation. I mean, we had a supply of normal combat fatigue-type things, but that's about all we had. Gloves and things like that we didn't have. Footwear was mainly what we needed. We had combat boots that had the buckles on the side. We had those and we needed something to cover them because they were-- we had worn those through Normandy and Holland, a lot of them, and they were worn pretty thin, see? Some of us had even cut holes in them for air where we'd impregnated those things with that gook we used to put on them to waterproof them, see?

And your feet would sweat in those things, so we'd cut holes in those. Well, that was a stupid thing to do going into Bastogne because the snow would get in there and like that. We had limited ammunition and that was one of the things, too, that we lacked, was ammunition. We just didn't have time to get supplied full ammo.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] Bastogne needed relief. General Patton's army was a hundred miles to the south. George S. Patton had a sense of history and the will to make himself a place in it. He was already preparing his main chance -- an attack that could propel him into Berlin. When he got wind of the German breakthrough, he feared Ike and Bradley were going to steal away his troops to plug holes in the Ardennes, but it didn't take him long to recognize an opportunity for glory. He told Ike he could pivot most of his attack force within 48 hours and sent word to Bastogne his army was on its way.

**H.W.O. Kinnard, Colonel, 101st Airborne**: On the 22nd of December when we were totally surrounded, some German officers, under a white flag of truce, came into our glider regiment with a paper demanding our surrender and telling us all the bad things that would happen if we didn't. Then we went into General McAuliffe, who was taking a little much-needed nap at that point, and General McAuliffe mistakenly thought that this was some Germans who wanted to surrender to us, but we disabused him of that thought very quickly and said, "No, they want us to surrender." And Tony McAuliffe then said, "Us surrender? Aw, nuts."

And then he went on and he said, "Well, I wonder if we ought to answer them," and we all felt that it required an answer. And I spoke up and said, "Well, what you first said would be hard to beat," and Tony said, "What do you mean?" And I said, "You said, "Nuts," so he took a pencil and wrote to the German commander, "Nuts," exclamation point, "A.C. McAuliffe, Commander."

When the surrender ultimatum was learned of, it was apparently a good morale-booster for the American public. The American press every day was showing a picture of the Bulge with

only Bastogne in the white and all the rest of it was German and we were still holding out and that was about the only good news there was.

**Guy Franz Arend, "Nuts" Museum, Bastogne**: [through interpreter] The town of Bastogne had no military importance. The proof of it was in the plan of attack. There wasn't even a plan to take the town itself. The Germans got taken into the game. Once they saw Bastogne was becoming for America a symbol of resistance, then the Germans set out to destroy that symbol.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] Hitler made it plain to his commanders: Bastogne must be taken. He released every spare man to the cause. German artillery flattened the town. Tanks and infantry attacked from every side. There was no way to evacuate the American wounded. Medical supplies were used up. Doctors operated behind makeshift curtains. For anesthetic, they used cognac. This growing drama was not lost on Patton. He radioed ahead. He would crack through on Christmas Day.

**Chet Hansen, Major, Aide to General Omar Bradley**: Patton was a rather mercurial kind of a guy, very flashy. They used to say that he was the best ass-kicker in the United States Army.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] From his command post in Luxembourg City, Patton ordered his men to attack night and day. His army neared the southern flank of the Bulge at Agala, but two days before Christmas the weather upstaged him.

**Roger Rutland, First Sergeant, 106th Infantry**: The weather cleared and the planes could start flying again. Planes were coming over by the hundreds. You'd see 36 in a group, 36 more, 36 more, and I don't know how many hundreds. And we'd just look up in the sky and say, "Thank goodness they're flying again."

**Bob Dunning, Private, 101st Airborne**: And to see those guys diving down and strafing, we knew they were hitting tanks and that's what was keeping the Krauts moving and keeping them busy and this happened from daylight to dark.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] Hitler had gambled everything in the Ardennes -- his best troops, his new reserves, hundreds of new tanks and his meager supply of fuel -- but he'd always known that wasn't enough. He'd also counted on bad weather and after seven days, his luck had run out.

**Oliver Patton, Second Lieutenant, 106th Infantry**: The German offensive stalled out. The Allies held the northern shoulder. In the south, the southern shoulder was held. The Germans were constricted to that 80-mile base and driving toward Antwerp, they got no farther than just within sight of the Meuse River. Matter of fact was it died right there. That was the end of it.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] Patton's army got to Bastogne the day after Christmas and they opened up enough of a hole for the press to squeeze through along with the morale troops and the medal-pinners. McAuliffe and the 101st were the pride of the American Army, but the price of an earlier pride was also on display.

An army which had held itself unstoppable had suffered 4,000 dead in the Bulge by Christmas. Thirty thousand more Americans had been wounded or taken prisoner. The SS had executed hundreds of unarmed American prisoners and, in the town of Stavelot, more than a hundred Belgian civilians. The Americans had given up a pocket of land 50 miles deep. It would take them a whole month to win it back.

**Bart Hagerman, Private, 17th Airborne**: Your imagination kinds of runs away with you, I guess, especially when you hear noises and, of course, at night it was worse because you really didn't know what was happening.

**Ed Stewart, Sergeant, 84th Infantry**: We were very much afraid of the dark. You couldn't see the danger.

**Oliver Patton, Second Lieutenant, 106th Infantry**: And so, as the light begins to come, it's beautiful. It provides you at least a view of what's going to happen, and you know what's going to happen in terms of the battle.

**Newsreel Announcer:** To meet the German drive, General Eisenhower here at Supreme Headquarters, resourcefully regroups his forces, giving Field Marshal Montgomery complete command over the entire northern sector. With Britain's famous Monty cleverly holding Rundstedt back in the north, his American counterpart, General Bradley, blocks the Nazis in the south.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] The first order of business once the Germans had been stopped was closing the hole in the American line where the First and Third Armies were wedged apart. Eisenhower's plan was to join the two armies quickly and then push east. Patton wanted to make a bolder move, but Eisenhower held him back.

**Oliver Patton, Second Lieutenant, 106th Infantry**: Patton wanted desperately to drive right back up the original line and be met by a counterattack from the north and thus bag all of the Germans who'd gotten themselves forward in the Bulge, so-called Bulge. He wanted to cut them off and bag this lot.

I still don't understand exactly why the decision was made, but rather than trying to cut these people off in a bag, the decision was made to push them out. So, in effect, reserves were committed from the south, from the north and from here and the American Army simply stood up and slugged its way back toward the start line -- slow, dogged, costly advance.

**Bart Hagerman, Private, 17th Airborne**: Both the weather and the enemy could kill you. If you were hit, you could go into shock and in that temperature you could freeze to death before they could get to you.

**Jim Foster, Sergeant, 17th Airborne**: The first time I dug in-- and I was digging me a foxhole and I throwed my first shovel full of snow over and I hit something and I cleared the snow and there lay a dead American soldier, froze, see? I mean, you say, "That could have been me. I'm here now, we're here. This is the real thing."

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] The Americans attacked into the worst European winter in memory, but Eisenhower maintained his good cheer. He was a man who lived by numbers and he knew those were on his side. In the European theater, the Allies held a 10-to-one advantage in tanks, three-to-one in aircraft, two-and-a-half to one in troops. Ike poured half a million men into the Ardennes. The Battle of the Bulge would become the biggest, costliest battle in U.S. history, for many young Americans, their introduction to the raw experience of war.

**Bart Hagerman, Private, 17th Airborne**: Our first attack-- major offensive was on January 7th. We moved up under artillery fire to an attack position, and we were hit from behind. And actually, it was one of our own companies in our battalion had gotten a little bit off-line and in the confusion that was going on at that time, they mistook us for the Germans and start firing at us from the rear.

After that was straightened out, then we began our attack on the woods, and then we came to a large open field. On the other side of the field was a large tank giving devastating fire into our ranks and I think the Army terms it "strategic withdrawal," but it really-- we really just beat it out of there. And I was seeing people ahead of me falling and being hit, so I went down on my face and I looked at-- right in front of me, there was a friend of mine that had-- I could see he had been killed.

We probably had in the neighborhood of 200 people in the company and at the end of that day I understand about 64 were present. It was a real turning point in our life 'cause I don't think any of us have ever been the same after that day.

**Bob Conroy, Private, 75th Infantry**: About midnight I was sleeping -- my buddy was on duty -- and somehow or other, the Germans got within 20 yards of our position. Gordon got ripped by a machine gun from roughly the left thigh through the right waist. He then found-- told me that he was hit through the stomach as well. Well, when you're that far from your home base and it's snowing and the temperature's zero, you don't have a chance. We were cut off. The Germans had overrun our position and we were in the foxhole by ourselves, so basically we both knew he was going to die.

We had no morphine, we couldn't ease it, and so I tried to knock him out. The-- I took off his helmet, held his jaw up and just whacked it as hard as I could, because he wanted to be put out. That didn't work and so I hit up by the head with a helmet and that didn't work. Nothing worked. He slowly froze to death, bled to death. The next morning, as we looked at our gear, it looked as if I'd have spent a day in a butcher shop. My clothes were all covered with blood. His clothes were all covered with blood and the territory we were in was all covered-- he just-- it was a butcher shop.

**H.W.O. Kinnard, Colonel, 101st Airborne**: The really hardest part of the fighting for the 101st was not during the time that we were on the defensive, even though we were surrounded. The most difficult fighting that we really had was when we were asked to go on the offensive. By this time, the Germans were on the defense and they were trying their best to keep an opening so they could get their people out of the Bulge and back to Germany.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] The German generals knew their army was overextended and badly exposed. They wanted to pull their men quickly across the Rhine to the safety of the homeland. Hitler refused. On January 8th, he reluctantly allowed his men to inch back, but

there would be no easy retreat. They were to fight as they went. The German army had fought through Russian winters. Its commanders understood winter warfare. They set up defensive positions on the high ground and in the warmth of the towns. The Americans lived out in the woods.

**Jim Foster, Sergeant, 17th Airborne**: Most of the time we were in a foxhole by ourself. Occasionally we'd be with some-- and we were in foxholes probably scattered out anywhere from 30 to 50 yards apart. You had very contact with anybody.

**Bart Hagerman, Private, 17th Airborne**: Well, the ground was frozen, in the first place, to such a depth that you could hardly get down the first eight inches or so. It was just frozen like concrete, and you just had to chip it away. Consequently, we found ourself using old foxholes, ones that had been-- or slit trenches that had been dug either by the enemy or by ourself. Of course, if you were occupying enemy holes, they knew where they were, so there was a certain amount of risk either way you went.

Once you got in, if you were there any period of time -- and we usually weren't -- you start trying to improve it by putting logs over the top of it to shield you from tree bursts of artillery.

**Jim Foster, Sergeant, 17th Airborne**: They just shelled us continuously. If you got out of your hole, you was liable to get blowed away.

**Ed Stewart, Sergeant, 84th Infantry**: There's a screaming sound to the 88's which was a major artillery on the part of the Germans, and at first it was absolutely frightening, a nightmare. I eventually get accustomed to it and begin to make judgments about it. Is it coming in close, is it going to go far or what? And you begin to be able to estimate pretty much where it's going to hit.

**Bart Hagerman, Private, 17th Airborne**: You can't fight back. Most people just kind of double up like that and hunker down, as they say, and hope that somebody else, not you, gets it.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] The Americans were now on the attack. Each day, the men had to come out of their holes and advance into artillery fire. The Germans had superior guns and still plenty of them. Artillery accounted for half of all American casualties in the Bulge.

**Ed Stewart, Sergeant, 84th Infantry**: You had people killed in many different ways. And you would see hands around, arms, bodies. You'd see a whole body there, horribly chopped up.

**Bart Hagerman, Private, 17th Airborne**: People didn't crumple and fall like they did in the Hollywood movies. They were tossed in the air. They were whipped around. They was hit to the ground hard and their blood splattered everywhere. And a lot of people were standing close to people and found themself covered in blood and flesh of their friends, and that's a pretty tough thing for anybody to handle, and we were no exception to that.

**Chet Hansen, Major, Aide to General Omar Bradley**: We had a staff meeting every morning on the operational situation, the intelligence situation and always a manpower report on the casualties from the day before.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] As the GI's crept forward in the Ardennes, their generals sifted reports from the front. They were grim. Patton's army, known for its speed, was covering less than a mile a day. The attack from the north was even slower. Ike remained 200 miles back at Versailles. The front was not his only worry. He was trying to keep the peace within his command.

**Chet Hansen, Major, Aide to General Omar Bradley**: There were severe strains during the Battle of the Bulge. Montgomery was perceived in the American Army as a rather arrogant,

stubborn little fellow. I think General Bradley and others feared that if Monty ever got his hands on our armies, he'd never let go.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] For months, Monty had been badgering Eisenhower for control of the ground war. After the German breakthrough, Ike had reluctantly given him command of Bradley's troops in the north, but Monty wanted more. He demanded permanent control of all American ground troops. Ike was sick of the field marshal and threatened to have him fired. On the 9th of January, an angry Bradley made the dispute public. Hitler was delighted. This was just the fight he'd hoped for. It took a stirring speech by Winston Churchill to get the Allied generals back in line.

**Chet Hansen, Major, Aide to General Omar Bradley**: The war went along and every day was like the day before. It was a seven-day-a-week job. It went on forever. For relaxation, General Bradley did algebra problems, and he worked at integral calculus when he was flying an airplane-- or flying in his airplane. He said it relaxed him, made him think.

**Bart Hagerman, Private, 17th Airborne**: We were always thinking about food. We were always thinking about the cold and how to get warm or how to get dry. And we were always thinking about sleep. You were lucky if you got two or three hours' sleep and if the sun ever did come out -- and it did finally during the latter part -- it almost put you to sleep just immediately.

**Bob Conroy, Private, 75th Infantry**: You got extremely tired. When you're marching, carrying a pack, and you're going 10, 20 miles up toward the front, you're numb, you're tired, and you can go to sleep walking. It's been. It's been done a lot, except if the road takes a turn, you're going to end in the ditch.

**Ed Stewart, Sergeant, 84th Infantry**: It's very difficult to sleep if you're shivering with cold. One of the things that you do, you lie down on your side and bring your knees up. And you'd

be paired with another guy who is facing you so your knees would go into his stomach and your head around his head. You have two people in the womb position taking advantage of that position to preserve body heat and life.

Another way of doing it -- to keep you off the snow -- is you take three persons, three men, and you put your arms around each other's shoulders so that you got three bodies, if you will, propping each other up. And then you lower your head and you go to sleep standing up. You never really went off into a deep sleep -- sort of half-awake, half-asleep.

**Bart Hagerman, Private, 17th Airborne**: I would go to sleep at night and my feet would get cold and I would wake up and they were numb and I'd start kicking them together and get circulation started again, and I was good maybe for another hour or so.

**Roger Rutland, First Sergeant, 106th Infantry**: I had frozen toes. My big toes were as big as a-- much bigger than a golf ball, and I had many men that I had to send back and that had feet amputated at the ankles. Some of them would just lose their toes.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] Halfway through the Battle of the Bulge, the Army was still waiting for its main shipment of winter boots. Men suffering from frozen feet were given whiskey or distilled alcohol to drink, which only made things worse. Some 15,000 soldiers were taken off the line with frostbite.

**Jim Foster, Sergeant, 17th Airborne**: We went out at dark as close to the German lines as we could get, and I was to report back to Lieutenant Clausen and just report what we've seen or heard that night. So I went back to the house and told Lieutenant Clausen we didn't hear or see anything. He called-- my name was "Porkchops" in the Army, and he said, "Porkchops, you go ahead and lay down here and go to sleep and I'll wake you when I need you." So this was like seven o'clock in the morning, and I didn't wake up till about 12 o'clock that night.

And when I woke up, I almost instantly noticed there was something wrong with my feet, and they had swollen up about a third bigger than they were, you know, and hurt then. And within three days, I was back in England in the hospital.

**Bart Hagerman, Private, 17th Airborne**: I saw people there being evacuated with frozen feet, and their feet were just as black as coal, kind of-- maybe a gun-steel blue if you want to put it that way. And in the first stages, they swell quite a bit, but then after that, when they start turning blue and everything, they get almost flat. It kind of turns your stomach, I guess. It was a bad sight.

**Jim Foster, Sergeant, 17th Airborne**: If you didn't get circulation back in X number of days -- I can't remember, four or five days -- then there was a good possibility that gangrene was setting in or had set in. And if you went another three or four days and you didn't start getting feeling, they amputated feet. And I do know there was one boy just about three bunks from me, he'd been there a few days before, and when they informed him that he was going to have to have his left foot removed, I remember that boy like to went crazy.

**Chet Hansen, Major, Aide to General Omar Bradley**: People do get hurt, people get wounded, people die in war and there always had to be a stream of replacements coming in, particularly for the rifle companies. Dreadful situation -- and we were not getting the replacements that we needed.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] Infantrymen made up only 10 percent of the total American Army, but they took 70 percent of the casualties. Eisenhower was anxiously combing out the rear echelons, looking for men. He didn't need more fancy hardware. In this weather, a lot of it didn't even work. The high command understood. There was only one way to take ground.

**Chet Hansen, Major, Aide to General Omar Bradley**: The key to the fighting ability of a force is the guy who picks up a rifle, the infantrymen, and there aren't that many infantrymen in a division. There are only about 3,200 infantrymen who pick up their rifles and go forward.

**Bob Dunning, Private, 101st Airborne**: From Normandy to Bastogne, I would guess probably our rate of casualties and this type of thing-- I have heard the figures of anywhere from 250 to 300 percent. And that seems a little fantastic because we had a terrific amount of turnover and this type of thing. You'd be there one day and you'd have all new guys the next day.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] The arithmetic was simple. The Army had been losing 2,000 men a day for almost a month. New men had to be found to take their place. Physical standards were lowered, training cut short. Many of the recruits were just out of high school. They were ill-prepared and little encouraged. As one assigning officer was fond of telling them, "Most of you aren't coming back. Just as well get used to it now."

**Chet Hansen, Major, Aide to General Omar Bradley**: They were suddenly loaded into trucks by the numbers and sent off to a division somewhere. And particularly in the Battle of the Bulge, we had men who were sent in as replacements joining a unit, sergeants never even got to know their names before they were wounded or killed the next day.

**Bart Hagerman, Private, 17th Airborne**: We really didn't get to know them. We just kind of tolerated them, so to speak, and as I look back on it now, I realize that we probably treated them pretty shabbily and I feel sorry for them. A lot of them were killed and we never even knew who they were. Somebody said, "We got a couple of casualties. Who were they?" And they said, "Oh, a couple of new guys. I don't know what their names are." So somebody had to check the dog tags to find out who they were.

**Roger Rutland, First Sergeant, 106th Infantry**: On January 13th, we were almost to this little town of Coulis and the artillery started coming in. I had at least 15 of my new men that

I had-- I knew the names on paper, but I hadn't put the name and the face together yet, 'cause I'd only had them a week or 10 days. And about 15 of those men were killed just like that in a period of 10 minutes or less.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] The Americans were taking back the Ardennes one small town at a time. First, gunners blanketed the towns with artillery. Then the ground soldiers came out of the woods on foot and in tanks, shooting as they went. When GI's fought their way into a town, the civilians were never in sight.

**Josef Scheer**: [through interpreter] We lived our lives in the cellars. You tried to live there with the means you had, with what you could get to eat. I remember that the water mains had been destroyed. There was no water. So I remember my father went out -- it was winter, everything was frozen -- and he brought back the snow and people melted it to drink it. And this water was black, black from gunpowder, from all the shells exploding in the area.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] While civilians prayed in their basements, their towns were falling around their ears. The Belgian town of Houffalize was particularly unlucky. Eisenhower had picked it as the place where the divided armies would join. U.S. forces pulverized Houffalize, trying to get the Germans out. On January 13th, Patton began his final assault. His men were "chasing a sinking fox," he insisted, and "babbling for the kill."
**Oliver Patton, Second Lieutenant, 106th Infantry**: The German Bulge -- driven into the Allied lines, the American lines -- had a start line and we were pushing them back toward that start line, literally with two hands, one from the south and one from the north. And on the 16th at Houffalize, those two hands joined. So you had rejoined-- you now had a solid American front, but it still had to go 10 or a dozen miles to win back to the German start line.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] The day after Houffalize was taken, Patton congratulated his corps commanders on their victory at the Battle of the Bulge, but whatever the papers said, this fight was not over. It would take two weeks to go the last 10 miles. The men at the front

were getting almost no replacements. Platoons of 40 had been ground down to eight or 10. Still, the command ordered them to turn and fight their way east.

**Bob Conroy, Private, 75th Infantry**: And so the fellows-- there were a hell of a lot less of them and they were in terrible shape. A Boston guy, McCarthy, was suffering from both dysentery and upset stomach and he was throwing up-- he was working both ends and he got awfully weak. And the one attack they went into, he was the sergeant. He passed out right in the middle of the attack. His guys took him over to a haystack, pulled it apart, put him in it, packed him down to keep him from freezing, finished off the attack and came back and got him later on. It was very tough. They wouldn't send him back. He tried to go back. Nothing sent you back except big holes or death.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] "The first quality of a soldier," Napoleon said, "is constancy in enduring fatigue and hardship. Courage is only second." In the final stages of the Battle of the Bulge, the men on both sides were spent. Their armies' resources dwindled. All that was left was survival of the most primitive kind.

The German troops were in tatters, but they kept fighting. If they tried to surrender, they'd likely be shot. German dead were left to freeze where they fell. Past the point of pity, American soldiers sat on them like logs to eat their rations.

On the 22nd of January, Patton called Bradley and urged that all armies attack, whether they were fatigued or had losses or not. Blood was so short that American field hospitals had to bleed healthy enlisted men. Penicillin was recycled from urine. The instructions to the doctors never changed. Throughout that fall and winter, they salvaged anyone they could and shipped them back to the front.

**Ben Kimmelman, Captain, 28th Infantry**: Men who were wounded and were redeemably were in a very bad position. There was a kind of a merciless rule about sending them back in

if they're able to go. And as far as they could tell, it would be repeatedly if they weren't killed or so badly wounded that they were destroyed.

It's very hard to forget the expressions on their faces. They have a kind of a hollow-eyed, lifeless, slack-jawed expression, and they almost don't see you as you go by. And you don't--after a while, you learn not to greet them because their minds are elsewhere. It's almost as though they're going to a hopeless doom and there's a phrase for these men. They were called "rag men." These were infantrymen or infantry medics or such, going back up to a hopeless future or no future, and having no choice in the matter, determined, and their practice march and their practice step is, as always, back up where they must go.

**Bart Hagerman, Private, 17th Airborne**: It just looked almost endless, like you were going to be there the rest of your life. If you were wounded, you could be out of it for a while. At least that was time that you'd be back in a hospital and could warm up and get something to eat and be able to take a bath and that sort of thing. But then you knew that you had to go back up.

**Bob Conroy, Private, 75th Infantry**: If you're lucky, it's going to be a leg wound. If you're not lucky, it'll be worse. And if you're very, very lucky, you'll take it through the head, because after you're in combat a while, dying is a lot easier than living.

A friend of mine, Ollie, he fell into a depression in the ground -- it hardly qualified as a foxhole -- and we were both numb, absolutely numb with exhaustion. And all he could say for about 24 hours a day was, "We got to shoot ourselves. We got to take a bullet through our arm or our leg or somewhere. We get out of here 'cause we're never going to make it." He said, "We're just never going to make it."

And what happened to me is my stomach started to curl up as if I was going to start to cry, and I was afraid I was cracking up. When the enemy's 500 yards away and you got support

troops behind you and you're sitting there in a hole with a guy who wants to shoot himself and you're ready to cry? It's not normal, and the other fellow's already cracked.

**Narrator**: [War Department Film Bulletin] For every four men wounded, one soldier will become a psychiatric casualty. Such men may be shaking or crying, but more often they are just very tired and dirty and depressed. They are unnerved and have no initiative. They're not quitters, but are truly ill.

**1st Medic**: So, soldier, what's your trouble?

**Soldier**: I can't stand seeing people killed.

**1st Medic**: What were you afraid of?

**Soldier**: Everything.

**1st Medic**: What, in particular? What, in particular?

**Soldier**: Dead.

**1st Medic**: What?

**Soldier**: Dead.

**1st Medic**: Dead what?

**Soldier**: Dead people. Can't stand seeing them.

**1st Medic**: I can't hear you.

**Soldier**: Can't stand seeing dead people.

**Ben Kimmelman, Captain, 28th Infantry**: People who were not necessarily severely wounded but who were no longer in charge of themselves, they would put them in a detachment or an installation to put them through a kind of a very quick and dirty process in which they were given sodium amytal or one of these other-- it's a sort of a truth serum-thing, but it was in the form of tablets. And this would give them a very deep, deep sleep, sort of almost a trance-like sleep for 24, sometimes or 48 hours.

During this time, the enlisted men and myself would sometimes go by. We had to supervise it, because there'd be screaming and they would be deep, deep asleep and there'd be terrible expressions of their fear and their fright.

**2nd Medic**: You're back on the battlefield now. Watch out, those shells are coming. Watch out! Duck!

**Ben Kimmelman, Captain, 28th Infantry**: The assumptions were that this would have some kind of cathartic effect, the sodium amytal, which the men called "blue 88's." You know, the most effective artillery piece of the Germans was the 88 and this was "blue 88's," because the sodium amytal was a blue tablet.

And then they would-- they would come out of this in, depending on the dosage, 24, 48, 72 hours, and they'd be walking around, completely numb. Sometimes they would be slipping and falling. That took a few more hours. And then they would be given a shower, new clothes and a pep talk and the attempt was made to send them back. I say the attempt because it didn't always succeed. They weren't suitable to be returned.

And in a sense, the thing that repelled me so badly was that you were talking to men who weren't quite yet still in charge of themselves and you were sort of shepherding them back to the front.

And one time, the chief of staff asked me to go out and talk to them. He said, "You're good at that, you go out and talk." I said, "Colonel, I really don't want to do it." He said, "I know, Ben." He said, "Do it, anyhow." And I went out and I tried haphazardly to try to get them-- to persuade them to get in the trucks and go back. They'd finished with their 72 hours, they'd gotten their clothes, and they just looked at me. And half of them looked as if they couldn't focus.

And finally one of them said, "Don't you guys understand? If you can still walk and see, they'll keep shipping you back." So I didn't do that again, and I told my commanding officer I wouldn't.

**David McCullough**: [voice-over] In the last few days of January, American troops made their way back to the original lines, the ones they'd held before the German offensive began. The books on the Battle of the Bulge were closed. Sixteen thousand Americans had been killed, 60,000 more wounded or captured. German casualties were said to be twice that. There was no ceremony to mark the end of the battle, not even a headline. The GI's simply kept moving forward into Germany.

**Chet Hansen, Major, Aide to General Omar Bradley**: The Battle of the Bulge would be remembered as the great surprise of the campaign in Europe. I think General Bradley would hold that it speeded the end of the war, because the German took so many casualties and when he was as severely defeated as he was in the Battle of the Bulge, it helped end the thing by May. An intelligence failure? Certainly, we didn't know he was coming. When you look back on the record now, you can say, "Hey, you should have seen this," or "You should have seen that or anticipated it." I don't think anyone did.

**Guy Franz Arend, "Nuts" Museum, Bastogne**: [through interpreter] When we started to make our way back into the Ardennes, it was something quite amazing. Emerging from the snow, the white, were two things: houses that were destroyed because the villages were practically destroyed, and huge black holes, vast numbers of them in the fields. It was an apocalyptic landscape. Really, a madman wouldn't have been able to imagine such a landscape.

**Josef Scheer**: [through interpreter] People had been buried, but very summarily, because in winter everything was frozen. It was frightening, and our parents, of course, tried to keep us from those places. Still, they were everywhere, these bodies half-buried. It was two or three years before they managed to find the bodies of all the soldiers that had fallen.

**Bart Hagerman, Private, 17th Airborne**: Every time it snows or something, I'll think about those days during the Bulge. It brings back memories of the friends that I lost and the desperate feeling that we had in those days, and it kind of irks me that, after 50 years, I still think that way. I should forget it and go on about my life, but I guess it made such an impression. Well, it'll always be with me, I guess.

**Bob Conroy, Private, 75th Infantry**: These memories are there a lot more vividly, even after 50 years, than probably what I did yesterday. I can tell you how deep the snow was. I can tell you the color of the snow and the blood the next morning. I know what equipment I had on. I know the words that we said. They stay with you.

**Ed Stewart, Sergeant, 84th Infantry**: It doesn't go away. It sleeps sometimes, but then it awakens you again. Things are happening, people are doing things that you never dreamed you'd ever see or hear about. It's an enormity of an experience, and everything after that has been a footnote.