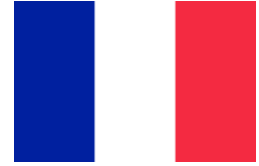




USA



USAREUR 7th US Army



FRANCE



3rd Inf. Div.



36th Inf.Div.



45<sup>th</sup> Inf. Div.



442<sup>nd</sup> RCT



USAAF

# **French-American Commemorations From Besançon to St-Dié**

**On the trail of the Soldiers of the 7<sup>th</sup> US Army and the USAAF**

## **September 2011**

### **Part VII : Vosges Mountains <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>**

- Vervezelle, in Memory of Staff Sergeant Rene Deltieure
- Belmont sur Buttant, Medal of Honor T. Sgt Charles H. Coolidge
- Les Rouges-Eaux :
  - Monplaisir,
    - Medal of Honor Staff Sergeant Clyde L. Choate
- Haut-Jacques Mountain Pass, “Crossroads of Hell”
- St-Jacques, Medal of Honor Private Wilburn K. Ross
- Saint Dié, Medal of Honor Staff Sergeant Lucian Adams

**Eric Vandroux**

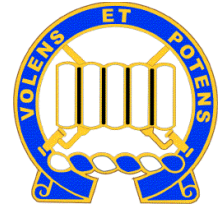


VERVEZELLE



3rd Inf. Div.

## S. Sgt René P. Deltieure



7th Inf. Regt

René Deltieure † Sept. 10th, 1996

Born in France in 1925, René Deltieure became American citizen when baby, his parents and him went to live in the USA. In 1943, he joined the Third Infantry Division, 7th Infantry Regiment, Company M.

His battles credits : Rome-Arno, Southern France, Rhineland, Central Europe

His medals :

- **Silver Star** : August 20<sup>th</sup>, 1944, at Hyeres (South of France)
- **Oak Leaf Cluster (Silver Star)** : September 11<sup>th</sup>, 1944, at Noroy Le Bourg (East of France)
- **Purple Heart with Oak Leaf Cluster** : September 15<sup>th</sup>, 1944, at Vy les Lure, and October 21<sup>st</sup> 1944, at Vervezelle (East of France)
- **Bronze Star** : January 30<sup>th</sup>, 1945, at Whir en Plaine (East of France)
- **European / African / Middle Eastern Campaign**
- **Army Good Conduct**

Staff Sergeant René P. Deltieure was very seriously injured in the village of Vervezelle (Vosges Mountains).

He died on September 10th, 1996 from the consequences of wounds received that day there. Passer-by, remember...





**Charles H. COOLIDGE**



**24-27 October 1944**



**36th Inf. Div.**

**141st Inf. Regt**

# **Charles H. COOLIDGE**

## **Technical Sergeant**

### **Company M**



## **MEDAL OF HONOR**

**“Rank and organization: Technical Sergeant, U.S. Army, Company M, 141st Infantry, 36th Infantry Division. Place and date: East of Belmont sur Buttant, France, 24-27 October 1944. Entered service at: Signal Mountain, Tenn. Birth: Signal Mountain, Tenn. G.O. No.: 53, July 1945.**



**Charles H. COOLIDGE receiving the Medal of Honor**

**Citation: Leading a section of heavy machineguns supported by 1 platoon of Company K, he took a position near Hill 623, east of Belmont sur Buttant, France, on 24 October 1944, with the mission of covering the right flank of the 3d Battalion and supporting its action. T/Sgt. Coolidge went forward with a sergeant of Company K to reconnoiter positions for coordinating the fires of the light and heavy machineguns. They ran into an enemy force in the woods estimated to be an infantry company. T/Sgt. Coolidge, attempting to bluff the Germans by a show of assurance and boldness called upon them to surrender, whereupon the enemy opened fire. With his carbine, T/Sgt. Coolidge wounded 2 of them. There being no officer present with the force, T/Sgt. Coolidge at once assumed command. Many of the men were replacements recently arrived; this was their first experience under fire. T/Sgt. Coolidge, unmindful of the enemy fire delivered at close range, walked along the position, calming and**

**encouraging his men and directing their fire. The attack was thrown back. Through 25 and 26 October the enemy launched repeated attacks against the position of this combat group but each was repulsed due to T/Sgt. Coolidge's able leadership. On 27 October, German infantry, supported by 2 tanks, made a determined attack on the position. The area was swept by enemy small arms, machinegun, and tank fire. T/Sgt. Coolidge armed himself with a bazooka and advanced to within 25 yards of the tanks. His bazooka failed to function and he threw it aside. Securing all the hand grenades he could carry, he crawled forward and inflicted heavy casualties on the advancing enemy. Finally it became apparent that the enemy, in greatly superior force, supported by tanks, would overrun the position. T/Sgt. Coolidge, displaying great coolness and courage, directed and conducted an orderly withdrawal, being himself the last to leave the position.**

**As a result of T/Sgt. Coolidge's heroic and superior leadership, the mission of this combat group was accomplished throughout 4 days of continuous fighting against numerically superior enemy troops in rain and cold and amid dense woods. “**

**From “U.S. ARMY CENTER OF MILITARY HISTORY”**

# “Monplaisir”

LES ROUGES-EAUX



3rd Inf. Div.



The monument is erected along RN 420, the road leading to the ‘Haut-Jacques’ mountain pass, at the named place “Monplaisir”, on the communal territory of “Les Rouges-Eaux”.

The names of French and American victims are engraved on the face of the monument. Also engraved is the following inscription :

“Here stood the “Monplaisir” sawmill, destroyed, on 25 October 1944, by a terrific explosion which took the lives of French civilians and American soldiers of the Third Infantry Division.”



601st T. D. Bn



25 October 1944



3<sup>rd</sup> Inf. Div.

# Clyde L. CHOATE

## Staff Sergeant

### 601st Tank Destroyer Battalion

#### Company C



## Medal of Honor

Clyde L. CHOATE † Oct. 5, 2001



Tank Destroyer of Staff Sergeant Clyde L. Choate, near Les Rouges - Eaux

hits. Ordering his men to abandon the destroyer, S/Sgt. Choate reached comparative safety. He returned to the burning destroyer to search for comrades possibly trapped in the vehicle risking instant death in an explosion which was imminent and braving enemy fire which ripped his jacket and tore the helmet from his head. Completing the search and seeing the tank and its supporting infantry overrunning our infantry in their shallow foxholes, he secured a bazooka and ran after the tank, dodging from tree to tree and passing through the enemy's loose skirmish line. He fired a rocket from a distance of 20 yards, immobilizing the tank but leaving it able to spray the area with cannon and machinegun fire.



Anna Cemetery, Illinois

« Rank and organization: Staff Sergeant, U.S. Army, Company C, 601st Tank Destroyer Battalion. Place and date: Near Bruyeres, France, 25 October 1944. Entered service at: Anna, 111. Born: 28 June 1920, West Frankfurt, 111. G.O. No.: 75, 5 September 1945. Citation: He commanded a tank destroyer near Bruyeres, France, on 25 October 1944. Our infantry occupied a position on a wooded hill when, at dusk, an enemy Mark IV tank and a company of infantry attacked, threatening to overrun the American position and capture a command post 400 yards to the rear. S/Sgt. Choate's tank destroyer, the only weapon available to oppose the German armor, was set afire by 2 hits. Ordering his men to abandon the destroyer, S/Sgt. Choate reached comparative safety. He returned to the burning destroyer to search for comrades possibly trapped in the vehicle risking instant death in an explosion which was imminent and braving enemy fire which ripped his jacket and tore the helmet from his head. Completing the search and seeing the tank and its supporting infantry overrunning our infantry in their shallow foxholes, he secured a bazooka and ran after the tank, dodging from tree to tree and passing through the enemy's loose skirmish line. He fired a rocket from a distance of 20 yards, immobilizing the tank but leaving it able to spray the area with cannon and machinegun fire. Running back to our infantry through vicious fire, he secured another rocket, and, advancing against a hail of machinegun and small-arms fire reached a position 10 yards from the tank. His second shot shattered the turret. With his pistol he killed 2 of the crew as they emerged from the tank; and then running to the crippled Mark IV while enemy infantry sniped at him, he dropped a grenade inside the tank and completed its destruction. With their armor gone, the enemy infantry became disorganized and was driven back. S/Sgt. Choate's great daring in assaulting an enemy tank single-handed, his determination to

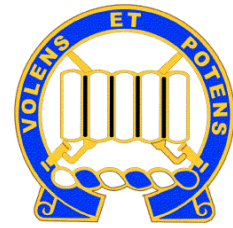
follow the vehicle after it had passed his position, and his skill and crushing thoroughness in the attack prevented the enemy from capturing a battalion command post and turned a probable defeat into a tactical success.”

From “U.S. ARMY CENTER OF MILITARY HISTORY”



3rd Infantry Division

# HAUT-JACQUES MOUNTAIN PASS « Crossroads of Hell »



7th Infantry Regiment



In mid October 1944, the strong defensive positions of the German Army, on the flanks of the Vosges Mountains, became a problem for the advancing US forces. To counter the problem, the Commander of the American 6<sup>th</sup> Army Corp decided to withdraw the 3d Infantry Division from the Cleurie Valley, where the division was engaged in a hard battle since almost a month, and moved it to the vicinity of Brouvelieures and progress along the Haute Mortagne Valley.

The goal of the manoeuvre was to help the 2 divisions, 36<sup>th</sup> and 45<sup>th</sup>, engaged in an offensive toward the Meurthe River.

The Germans put up a very strong resistance, which intensify regularly from the Bas-Jacques to reach a culminating point on the 2 hills overlooking the pass, especially on hill 652.

From 29 October on, it was a hand to hand combat for the men of the 7<sup>th</sup> Regiment. They had to take the German positions one by one in this heavily wooded area, to finally reach the top of the pass on 4 November 1944.

The 3d Infantry Division lost 148 dead and 822 wounded during the battle to take the Haut-Jacques Pass from the Germans.

Note : A monument is erected in memory of the Vosges Forest employees who gave their lives while fighting in the ranks of the French Free Forces. This monument was built with stones taken from the Forest House that had been destroyed during the battle.



From : - Records of the Committee of the “Souvenir Français” of Brouvelieures,

- “A History of the Seventh United States Infantry in World War II”.



3rd Inf. Division



30th Inf. Regiment

**Private Wilburn K. ROSS**



## **Medal of Honor**

**“Rank and organization: Private, U.S. Army, Company G, 30th Infantry, 3d Infantry Division. Place and date: Near St. Jacques, France, 30 October 1944. Entered service at: Strunk, Ky. Birth: Strunk, Ky. G.O. No.: 30, 14 April 1945.**

**Citation: For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at risk of life above and beyond the call of duty near St. Jacques, France. At 11:30 a.m. on 30 October 1944, after his company had lost 55 out of 88 men in an attack on an entrenched, full-strength German company of elite mountain troops, Pvt. Ross placed his light machinegun 10 yards in advance of the foremost supporting riflemen in order to absorb the initial impact of an enemy counterattack. With machinegun and small-arms fire striking the earth near him, he fired with deadly effect on the assaulting force and repelled it. Despite the hail of automatic fire and the explosion of rifle grenades within a stone's throw of his position, he continued to man his machinegun alone, holding off 6 more German attacks. When the eighth assault was launched, most of his supporting riflemen were out of ammunition. They took positions in echelon behind Pvt. Ross and crawled up, during the attack, to extract a few rounds of ammunition from his machinegun ammunition belt. Pvt. Ross fought on virtually without assistance and, despite the fact that enemy grenadiers crawled to within 4 yards of his position in an effort to kill him with handgrenades, he again directed accurate and deadly fire on the hostile force and hurled it back. After expending his last rounds, Pvt. Ross was advised to withdraw to the company command post, together with 8 surviving riflemen, but, as more ammunition was expected, he declined to do so. The Germans launched their last all-out attack, converging their fire on Pvt. Ross in a desperate attempt to destroy the machinegun which stood between them and a decisive breakthrough. As his supporting riflemen fixed bayonets for a last-ditch stand, fresh ammunition arrived and was brought to Pvt. Ross just as the advance assault elements were about to swarm over his position. He opened murderous fire on the oncoming enemy; killed 40 and wounded 10 of the attacking force; broke the assault single-handedly, and forced the Germans to withdraw. Having killed or wounded at least 58 Germans in more than 5 hours of continuous combat and saved the remnants of his company from destruction, Pvt. Ross remained at his post that night and the following day for a total of 36 hours. His actions throughout this engagement were an inspiration to his comrades and maintained the high traditions of the military service.”**

**From “U.S. ARMY CENTER OF MILITARY HISTORY”**



3rd Inf. Div.



28 October 1944



30th Inf. Regt

## Lucian ADAMS Staff Sergeant



**MEDAL OF HONOR**

Lucian Adams † 31 March 2003

“Rank and organization : , U.S. Army, 30th Infantry, 3d Infantry Division. Place and date: Near St. Die, France, 28 October 1944. Entered service at: Port Arthur, Tex. Birth: Port Arthur, Tex. G.O. No.: 20, 29 March 1945.

Citation: For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at risk of life above and beyond the call of



[Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery](#)

duty on 28 October 1944, near St. Die, France. When his company was stopped in its effort to drive through the Mortagne Forest to reopen the supply line to the isolated third battalion, S/Sgt. Adams braved the concentrated fire of machineguns in a lone assault on a force of German troops. Although his company had progressed less than 10 yards and had lost 3 killed and 6 wounded, S/Sgt. Adams charged forward dodging from tree to tree firing a borrowed BAR from the hip. Despite intense machinegun fire which the enemy directed at him and rifle grenades which struck the trees over his head showering him with broken twigs and branches, S/Sgt. Adams made his way to within 10 yards of the closest machinegun and killed the gunner with a hand grenade. An enemy soldier threw hand grenades at him from a position only 10 yards distant; however, S/Sgt. Adams dispatched him with a single burst of BAR fire. Charging into the vortex of the enemy fire, he killed another machinegunner at 15 yards range with a hand grenade and forced the surrender of 2 supporting infantrymen. Although the remainder of the German group concentrated the full force of its automatic weapons fire in a desperate effort to knock him out, he proceeded through the woods to find and exterminate 5 more of the enemy. Finally, when the third German machinegun opened up on him at a range of 20 yards, S/Sgt. Adams killed the gunner with BAR fire. In the course of the action, he personally killed 9 Germans, eliminated 3 enemy machineguns, vanquished a specialized force which was armed with automatic weapons and grenade launchers, cleared the woods of hostile elements, and reopened the severed supply lines to the assault companies of his battalion.”

**From “U.S. ARMY CENTER OF MILITARY HISTORY”**