

U.S.—WERETH MEMORIAL  
FOR THE 11 WWII SOLDIERS OF  
THE  
333<sup>rd</sup> FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION  
( COLORED )

WORLD WAR II  
MEMORIAL DEDICATION



20 SEPTEMBER 2008  
WERETH, BELGIUM

# U.S.—WERETH MEMORIAL DEDICATION



## *The Ceremony*

PROCESSIONAL MARCH

PROZESSIONSSTRABE MARZ

INVOCATION

INVOCATION

WELCOME

WILLKOMEN

REENACTMENT

NACHSPIELEN

MEMORIAL COMMITTEE REMARKS

GEDENKSTÄTTE AUSSCHUSS  
BEMERKUNGEN

MAIN SPEAKER REMARKS

HAUPTREDNER BEMERKUNGEN

LAYING OF WREATH

KRANZ ZUR

TAPS

TAPS

CLOSING REMARKS

SCHLUSSWORT

BENEDICTION

SEGNUNG



### Members of the 333rd Field Artillery

#### Battalion killed at Wereth

- ◆ CURTIS ADAMS
- ◆ GEORGE DAVIS
- ◆ THOMAS J. FORTE
- ◆ ROBERT GREEN
- ◆ JIM LEATHERWOOD
- ◆ BRADLEY MEAGLER
- ◆ NATHANIEL MOSS
- ◆ GEORGE W. MOTEN
- ◆ WILLIAM M. PRITCHETT
- ◆ JAMES A. STEWART
- ◆ DUE W. TURNER

## *The Wereth 11*

ON DECEMBER 17TH, 1944 THE SECOND DAY OF THE BATTLE OF BULGE, 11 MEMBERS OF HEADQUARTERS AND SERVICE BATTERY (HSB) WERE SEPARATED FROM THEIR UNIT WHILE ESCAPING AND EVADING PURSUING GERMAN ARMOR AND INFANTRY UNITS DURING THE GERMANS LAST MAJOR COUNTER-OFFENSIVE OF WWII, THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE. THESE MEN CHANCED UPON THE LANGER FAMILY FARM IN SEARCH OF FOOD AND SHELTER. THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY, MATHIAS LANGER, OFFERED THE SOLDIERS SOME OF THE FAMILY'S LAST FOOD STUFFS. AT DAWN A GROUP OF NAZI SS STOPPED IN FRONT OF THE LANGER HOUSE. THE 11 SOLDIERS SURRENDERED TO THE NAZI SS, WHO FORCED THEM TO SIT IN THE COLD AND MUD IN FRONT OF THEIR JEEP WHILE THEY DECIDED THEIR FATE.

THE 11 HSB SOLDIERS WERE THEN MARCHED IN FRONT OF A NAZI SS JEEP TO A COW PASTURE BEHIND THE LANGER HOUSE WHERE THEY WERE TORTURED AND BAYONETED TO DEATH. THE SOLDIERS' BODIES WERE COVERED BY THE SNOWFALL OF AN UNUSUALLY HARSH WINTER, TO BE DISCOVERED AFTER THE SPRING THAW. UNLIKE SIMILAR SUCH WAR-CRIMES COMMITTED DURING THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE BY GERMAN FORCES, THE SLAYING OF THE "333RD FA BN 11" WAS NOT AS WELL DOCUMENTED AS THOSE AT MALMEDY, WHERE 73 SS SOLDIERS WERE PROSECUTED FOR THE MURDER OF 84 SOLDIERS KILLED IN CAPTIVITY. THE LANGER FAMILY MARKED THE SITE OF THE TRAGEDY AND MAINTAINED IT SINCE THE END OF WELTRIEG II, OVER 60 YEARS AGO.



**CREST:** THE LION, FROM THE ARMS OF BELGIUM, BEARING THE RED AND BLUE SHIELD FROM THE ARMS OF BASTOGNE, COMMEMORATES THE ACTION FOR WHICH BATTALION WAS AWARDED THE DISTINGUISHED UNIT CITATION EMBROIDERED "BASTOGNE." THE WHITE BORDER AROUND THE SHIELD REPRESENTS THE ENCIRCLEMENT OF THAT CITY BY THE ENEMY AND ALSO REFERS TO THE SNOW COVERED TERRAIN OF THE "BATTLE OF THE BULGE." THE "SWORD-BREAKER" WAS A MEDIEVAL WEAPON WITH BARBS OR TEETH WHICH ADMITTED THE SWORD BUT PREVENTED ITS WITHDRAWAL. IT REPRESENTS THE BREAKING OF THE MILITARY POWER OF THE ENEMY IN EUROPE. THE FIVE BARBS STAND FOR THE UNIT'S PARTICIPATION IN FIVE EUROPEAN CAMPAIGNS IN WORLD WAR II.



### *Thanks and Dedications*

THE EUROPEAN CHAPTER OF THE ROCKS, INC. EXPRESSES SINCERE THANKS TO THE LANGER FAMILY AND ALL ATTENDEES FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND COMMITMENT TO THE MEMORY OF THE 11 AFRICAN AMERICAN WWII SOLDIERS.

### *Dank und Widmungen*

DIE EUROPEAN CHAPTER OF THE ROCKS, INC. ÄÜBERT HERZLICHEN DANK AN DIE LANGER FAMILIE UND ALLEN TEILNEHMERN FÜR IHRE UNTERSTÜTZUNG UND IHR ENGAGEMENT FÜR DIE ERINNERUNG AN DIE 11 AFRICAN AMERICAN ZWEITEN WELTKRIEG SOLDATEN.

