



Press Release

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Storied WWII tank “found” in Vilseck

Heidelberg, Germany – A World War II era M4 Sherman tank on display at Rose Barracks, Vilseck, has been confirmed to be "Cobra King," the famous C Company, 37th Tank Battalion tank, the first tank to enter American lines Dec. 26, 1944 in the relief of the besieged 101st Airborne Division Soldiers defending Bastogne during the Battle of the Bulge.

U.S. Army Europe historians, working in conjunction with historians from the U.S. Army's Patton Museum of Cavalry and Armor, Ft. Knox, Ky., used serial and registration numbers to verify the tank's identity.

The M4A3E2 Assault Tank, which is the official designation of the Sherman "Jumbo," was built in mid-1944 at the Detroit Tank Arsenal. Only 254 of the tanks were built. Because of the short run, and because they were on a built-up hull, all 254 tanks were issued serial numbers in sequential order.

When U.S. Army registration numbers were assigned to the vehicles, they too were issued in sequential order – allowing historians to confirm a direct match with the two sets of numbers.

The tank has been recognized by Army historians as a significant piece of World War II history, it is expected to go on display at the National Museum of the U.S. Army upon the museum's completion.

The Battle of the Bulge was the powerful German counterattack in December, 1944, in the Ardennes forest of Belgium, designed to divide Allied forces and bring about a negotiated peace between Germany and the western allies. The defense of Bastogne during the Battle of the Bulge has become a symbol of stubborn defensive action against overwhelming odds. The successful defense against the counterattack set the stage for the eventual victory over Hitler's Nazi Germany.

For more information about the Battle of the Bulge and "Cobra King's" role in the relief of Bastogne, follow these links:

<http://www.history.army.mil/books/wwii/Bastogne/bast-21.htm>

http://www.history.army.mil/books/wwii/7-8/7-8_cont.htm