

OMAHA BEACH MEMORIAL REMARKS

MR. PRESIDENT, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS:
WE STAND TODAY AT A PLACE OF BATTLE, ONE
THAT 40 YEARS AGO SAW AND FELT THE WORST OF
WAR. MEN BLED AND DIED HERE FOR A FEW FEET
OR INCHES OF SAND AS BULLETS AND SHELLFIRE
CUT THROUGH THEIR RANKS. ABOUT THEM,
GENERAL OMAR BRADLEY LATER SAID: "EVERY MAN
WHO SET FOOT ON OMAHA BEACH THAT DAY WAS A
HERO."

NO SPEECH CAN ADEQUATELY PORTRAY THEIR
SUFFERING, THEIR SACRIFICE, THEIR HEROISM.
PRESIDENT LINCOLN ONCE REMINDED US THAT --
THROUGH THEIR DEEDS -- THE DEAD OF BATTLE
HAVE SPOKEN MORE ELOQUENTLY FOR THEMSELVES
THAN ANY OF THE LIVING EVER COULD, THAT WE
CAN ONLY HONOR THEM BY REDEDICATING
OURSELVES TO THE CAUSE FOR WHICH THEY GAVE A
LAST FULL MEASURE OF DEVOTION.

TODAY, WE DO REDEDICATE OURSELVES TO THAT CAUSE. AND AT THIS PLACE OF HONOR, WE ARE HUMBLLED BY THE REALIZATION OF HOW MUCH SO MANY GAVE TO THE CAUSE OF FREEDOM AND TO THEIR FELLOW MAN.

SOME WHO SURVIVED THE BATTLE ON JUNE 6TH, 1944, ARE HERE TODAY. OTHERS WHO HOPED TO RETURN NEVER DID.

"SOMEDAY, LIS, I'LL GO BACK," SAID PRIVATE FIRST CLASS PETER ROBERT ZANATTA, OF THE 37TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION, AND FIRST ASSAULT WAVE TO HIT OMAHA BEACH. "I'LL GO BACK AND I'LL SEE IT ALL AGAIN. I'LL SEE THE BEACH, THE BARRICADES, AND THE GRAVES."

THOSE WORDS OF PRIVATE ZANATTA COME TO US FROM HIS DAUGHTER, LISA ZANATTA HENN, IN A HEART-RENDING STORY ABOUT THE EVENT HER FATHER SPOKE OF OFTEN: "THE NORMANDY INVASION WOULD CHANGE HIS LIFE FOREVER," SHE SAID.

SHE TELLS SOME OF HIS STORIES OF WORLD WAR II, BUT SAYS FOR HER FATHER "THE STORY TO END ALL STORIES WAS D-DAY."

"HE MADE ME FEEL THE FEAR OF BEING ON THAT BOAT WAITING TO LAND, I CAN SMELL THE OCEAN AND FEEL THE SEASICKNESS. I CAN SEE THE LOOKS ON HIS FELLOW SOLDIERS' FACES, THE FEAR, THE ANGUISH, THE UNCERTAINTY OF WHAT LAY AHEAD. AND WHEN THEY LANDED, I CAN FEEL THE STRENGTH AND COURAGE OF THE MEN WHO TOOK THOSE FIRST STEPS THROUGH THE TIDE TO WHAT MUST HAVE SURELY LOOKED LIKE INSTANT DEATH."

PRIVATE ZANATTA'S DAUGHTER SAYS:

"I DON'T KNOW HOW OR WHY I CAN FEEL THIS EMPTINESS, THIS FEAR, OR THIS DETERMINATION, BUT I DO. MAYBE IT'S THE BOND I HAD WITH MY FATHER...ALL I KNOW IS THAT IT BRINGS TEARS TO MY EYES TO THINK ABOUT MY FATHER AS A 20-YEAR-OLD BOY HAVING TO FACE THAT BEACH."

THE ANNIVERSARY OF D-DAY WAS ALWAYS SPECIAL FOR HER FAMILY; AND LIKE ALL THE FAMILIES OF THOSE WHO WENT TO WAR, SHE DESCRIBES HOW SHE CAME TO REALIZE HER OWN FATHER'S SURVIVAL WAS A MIRACLE.

"SO MANY MEN DIED. I KNOW THAT MY FATHER WATCHED MANY OF HIS FRIENDS BE KILLED. I KNOW THAT HE MUST HAVE DIED INSIDE A LITTLE EACH TIME. BUT HIS EXPLANATION TO ME WAS 'YOU DID WHAT YOU HAD TO DO AND YOU KEPT ON GOING.'"

WHEN MEN LIKE PRIVATE ZANATTA AND ALL OUR ALLIED FORCES STORMED THE BEACHES OF NORMANDY 40 YEARS AGO, THEY CAME NOT AS CONQUERORS, BUT AS LIBERATORS. WHEN THESE TROOPS SWEEP ACROSS THE FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE AND INTO THE FORESTS OF BELGIUM AND LUXEMBOURG, THEY CAME NOT TO TAKE, BUT TO RETURN WHAT HAD BEEN WRONGLY SEIZED.

WHEN OUR FORCES MARCHED INTO GERMANY, THEY CAME NOT TO PREY ON A BRAVE AND DEFEATED PEOPLE, BUT TO NURTURE THE SEEDS OF DEMOCRACY AMONG THOSE WHO YEARNED TO BE FREE AGAIN.

WE SALUTE THEM TODAY. BUT, MR. PRESIDENT, WE ALSO SALUTE THOSE WHO, LIKE YOURSELF, WERE ALREADY ENGAGING THE ENEMY INSIDE YOUR BELOVED COUNTRY -- THE FRENCH RESISTANCE. YOUR VALIANT STRUGGLE FOR FRANCE DID SO MUCH TO CRIPPLE THE ENEMY AND SPUR THE ADVANCE OF THE ARMIES OF LIBERATION. THE FRENCH FORCES OF THE INTERIOR WILL FOREVER PERSONIFY COURAGE AND NATIONAL SPIRIT; THEY WILL BE A TIMELESS INSPIRATION TO ALL WHO ARE FREE, AND TO ALL WHO WOULD BE FREE.

TODAY, IN THEIR MEMORY, AND FOR ALL WHO FOUGHT HERE, WE CELEBRATE THE TRIUMPH OF DEMOCRACY.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Colleville Sur Mer, France)

For Immediate Release

June 6, 1984

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT U.S.-FRENCH CEREMONY COMMEMORATING D-DAY

Omaha Beach
Colleville Sur Mer, France

4:33 P.M. (L)

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. President, distinguished guests, we stand today at a place of battle, one that 40 years ago saw and felt the worst of war. Men bled and died here for a few feet of -- or inches of sand as bullets and shellfire cut through their ranks. About them, General Omar Bradley later said, "Every man who set foot on Omaha Beach that day was a hero."

No speech can adequately portray their suffering, their sacrifice, their heroism. President Lincoln once reminded us that through their deeds, the dead of battle have spoken more eloquently for themselves than any of the living ever could. But we can only honor them by rededicating ourselves to the cause for which they gave a last full measure of devotion.

Today, we do rededicate ourselves to that cause. And at this place of honor, we are humbled by the realization of how much so many gave to the cause of freedom and to their fellow man.

Some who survived the battle of June 6, 1944, are here today. Others who hoped to return never did.

"Someday, Lis, I'll go back," said Private First Class Peter Robert Zanatta, of the 37th Engineer Combat Battalion, and first assault wave to hit Omaha Beach. "I'll go back and I'll see it all again. I'll see the beach, the barricades and the graves."

Those words of Private Zanatta come to us from his daughter, Lisa Zanatta Henn, in a heart-rending story about the event her father spoke of so often. "In his words, the Normandy Invasion would change his life forever," she said.

She tells some of his stories of World War II, but says of her father, "the story to end all stories was D-Day."

"He made me feel the fear of being on that boat waiting to land. I can smell the ocean and feel the seasickness. I can see the looks on his fellow soldiers' faces, the fear, the anguish, the uncertainty of what lay ahead. And when they landed, I can feel the strength and courage of the men who took those first steps through the tide to what must have surely looked like instant death."

Private Zanatta's daughter wrote to me, "I don't know

now or why I can feel this emptiness, this fear, or this determination, but I do. Maybe it's the bond I had with my father. All I know is that it brings tears to my eyes to think about my father as a 20-year-old boy having to face that beach."

The anniversary of D-Day was always special for her family; and like all the families of those who went to war, she describes how she came to realize her own father's survival was a miracle.

"So many men died. I know that my father watched many of his friends be killed. I know that he must have died inside a little each time. But his explanation to me was, 'You did what you had to do and you kept on going.'"

When men like Private Zanatta and all our Allied forces stormed the beaches of Normandy 40 years ago, they came not as conquerors, but as liberators. When these troops swept across the French countryside and into the forests of Belgium and Luxembourg, they came not to take, but to return what had been wrongly seized. When our forces marched into Germany, they came not to prey on a brave and defeated people, but to nurture the seeds of democracy among those who yearned to be free again.

We salute them today. But, Mr. President, we also salute those who, like yourself, were already engaging the enemy inside your beloved country -- the French Resistance. Your valiant struggle for France did so much to cripple the enemy and spur the advance of the armies of liberation. The French Forces of the Interior will forever personify courage and national spirit; they will be a timeless inspiration to all who are free, and to all who would be free.

Today, in their memory, and for all who fought here, we celebrate the triumph of democracy. We reaffirm the unity of democratic peoples who fought a war and then joined with the vanquished in a firm resolve to keep the peace.

From a terrible war we learned that unity made us invincible; now, in peace, that same unity makes us secure. We sought to bring all freedom-loving nations together in a community dedicated to the defense and preservation of our sacred values. Our alliance, forged in the crucible of war, tempered and shaped by the realities of the post-war world, has succeeded. In Europe, the threat has been contained, the peace has been kept.

Today, the living here assembled -- officials, veterans, citizens -- are a tribute to what was achieved here 40 years ago. This land is secure. We are free. These things are worth fighting and dying for.

Lisa Zanatta Henn began her story by quoting her father, who promised that he would return to Normandy. She ended with a promise to her father, who died 8 years ago of cancer: "I'm going there, Dad, and I'll see the beaches and the barricades and the monuments. I'll see the graves and I'll put flowers there just like you wanted to do. I'll feel all the things you made me feel through your stories and your eyes. I'll never forget what you went through, Dad, nor will I let anyone else forget. And, Dad, I'll always be proud."

Through the words of his loving daughter, who is here with us today, a D-Day veteran has shown us the meaning of this day far better than any President.

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 5/25/84 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: 10:00 A.M. TUESDAY, 5/29SUBJECT: REMARKS: OMAHA BEACH MEMORIAL REMARKS(5/25 - 3:00 p.m. draft)

	ACTION FYI			ACTION FYI	
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	McMANUS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MEESE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MURPHY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BAKER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	OGLESBY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DEAVER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ROGERS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
STOCKMAN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SPEAKES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SVAHN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
FELDSTEIN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	VERSTANDIG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
FIELDING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	WHITTLESEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
FULLER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ELLIOTT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
HERRINGTON	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	TUTWILER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HICKEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	WIRTHLIN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
McFARLANE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	HENKEL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS:

Please provide any edits directly to Ben Elliott by 10:00 a.m. Tuesday, May 29th, with an information copy to my office.

Thank you.

RESPONSE:

Richard G. Darman
Assistant to the President
Ext. 2702

MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

May 31, 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR BEN ELLIOTT

FROM: ROBERT M. KIMMITT ^{Bob}

SUBJECT: Omaha Beach Remarks

The NSC concurs with the latest draft of the Omaha Beach remarks. However, given the time guidelines (3-5 minutes) for the speech, we have indicated where we feel the remarks could be trimmed, including a suggested revised and shortened conclusion.

Tab A - Omaha Beach Remarks w/suggested revisions

cc Dick Darman

(Dolan/RR)
May 30, 1984
4:00 p.m.

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: OMAHA BEACH MEMORIAL REMARKS
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6, 1984

Mr. President, Distinguished Guests:

We stand today at a place of battle, one that 40 years ago saw the worst of war. Men bled and died here for a few feet or inches of sand as bullets and shellfire cut through their ranks. About them, General Omar Bradley later said: "Every man who set foot on Omaha Beach that day was a hero."

Words do not do them justice. Speeches cannot portray their suffering, their sacrifice, their heroism. President Lincoln once reminded us that -- through their deeds -- the dead of battle have spoken more eloquently for themselves than any of the living ever could, that we can only honor them by rededicating ourselves to the cause for which they gave a last full measure of devotion.

Today, we do rededicate ourselves to that cause. And in this place of honor, we are humbled by the realization of how much many have given to the cause of freedom and to their fellow man.

Some who survived the battle on June 6, 1944 are here today. Others who hoped to return never did so.

"Someday, Lis, I'll go back," said Private First Class Peter Robert Zanatta of the 37th Engineer Combat Battalion of the first assault wave to hit Omaha Beach. "I'll go back and I'll see it all again. I'll see the beach, the barricades, and the graves. I'll put a flower on the graves of the guys I knew and on the grave of the unknown soldier -- all the guys I fought with."

Those words of Private Zanatta come to us from his daughter, Lisa Zanatta Henn, in an essay written about an event her father spoke of often: "the Normandy Invasion would change his life forever," she said.

She tells some of his stories of World War II, but says for her father "the story to end all stories was D-Day."

"He made me feel the fear of being on that boat waiting to land. I can smell the ocean and feel the seasickness. I can see the looks on his fellow soldiers' faces, the fear, the anguish, the uncertainty of what lay ahead. And when they landed, I can feel the strength and courage of the men who took those first steps through the tide to what must have surely looked like instant death."

[Private Zanatta's daughter says: "I don't know how or why I can feel this emptiness, this fear, or this determination, but I do. Maybe its the bond I had with my father. (I was really lucky -- we never got tired of talking to each other.) All I know is that it brings tears to my eyes to think about my father as a 20 year old boy having to face that beach."]

She went on to say how the anniversary of D-Day for her and her family was always special; and like all the families of those who went to war, she describes how she came to realize her own father's survival was a miracle.

"So many men died. I know that my father watched many of his friends be killed. I know that he must have died inside a little each time. But his explanation to me was 'You did what you had to do and you kept on going.'"

["My dad won his share of medals. He was a good soldier and fought hard for his country. He was just an ordinary guy, with immigrant Italian parents who never really had enough money. But he was a proud man. Proud of his heritage, proud of his country, proud that he fought in World War II and proud that he lived through D-Day."]

When men like Private Zanatta and all our allied forces stormed the beaches of Normandy 40 years ago, they came not as conquerors, but as liberators. When these troops swept across the French countryside and into the forests of Belgium and Luxembourg, they came not to take, but to restore what had been wrongly taken. When our forces marched into a ruined Germany, they came not to prey on a brave and defeated people, but to nurture the seeds of democracy among those who yearned again to be free.

We salute them today; we also salute those who were already engaging the enemy inside this country -- the French Resistance -- whose valiant service for France did so much to cripple the enemy in their midst and assist in the advance of the invading armies of liberation. These French Forces of the Interior will forever offer us an image of courage and national spirit, and will be a permanent inspiration to those who are free and all those who would be free.

This day, we celebrate the triumph of democracy. This day, we reaffirm the unity of democratic peoples who fought a war and then joined with the vanquished in a firm resolve to keep the peace from that time on.

From a terrible war, we learned that unity made us invincible; now, in peace, that same unity can make us secure. We sought the inclusion of all freedom-loving nations in a community dedicated to the defense and preservation of our sacred values. Our alliance, forged in the crucible of war, tempered and shaped by the realities of the post-war world, has succeeded in this end. In Europe, the threat has been contained. The peace has been kept.

* Recommend drop last three paragraphs, substitute shorter paragraph [see insert]

[Today, the living here assembled -- officials, veterans, citizens -- are a tribute to what was achieved here 40 years ago. This land is secure. We are free. These things were worth fighting -- and dying -- for.]

| Lisa Zanatta Henn began her essay with a quote from her father, who frequently promised he would return to Normandy. She ended her essay with a quote from herself, promising her father, who died eight years ago of cancer, that she would go in his place and see the graves and the flowers and the ceremonies honoring the veterans of D-Day. She promised him, " . . . I'll feel all the things you made me feel through your stories and your eyes."

"I will never forget what you went through, Dad, nor will I let anyone else forget -- and Dad, I'll always be proud."

Through the words a loving daughter -- who is here with us today -- a D-Day veteran has given us the meaning of this day far better than any President can. It is enough for us to say about Private Zanatta and all the men of honor and courage who fought beside him four decades ago: We will always remember. We will always be proud.

(Insert for Page 4)

As I look out on the sea of gravestones, my final thoughts dwell on the heroism, patriotism and supreme sacrifice of our men and women buried here. They are fittingly honored by this memorial. For those, such as Private Zanatta, who bravely fought and returned from these shores, we rejoice in their return to the hopes and dreams they had left behind. Yet, I cannot help to look into the faces of the living here assembled -- officials, veterans, citizens -- and say this is the greatest tribute of all. We are free. This land is secure. And our peoples are enriched because democracy was worth fighting -- and dying -- for.

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Document Five

L: Familiar Quotations

*A collection of passages, phrases and
proverbs traced to their sources in
ancient and modern literature*

FIFTEENTH AND 125TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION
REVISED AND ENLARGED

John Bartlett

Edited by EMILY MORISON BECK
and the editorial staff of Little, Brown and Company



LITTLE, BROWN AND COMPANY • BOSTON • TORONTO

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forever applaud and God must forever bless.
Ib.

Beware of rashness, but with energy and
sleepless vigilance go forward and give us vic-
tories.

Letter to Major General Joseph
Hooker [January 26, 1863]

The Father of Waters again goes unvexed
to the sea.

Letter to James C. Conkling
[August 26, 1863]

I have endured a great deal of ridicule
without much malice; and have received a
great deal of kindness, not quite free from
ridicule. I am used to it.

Letter to James H. Hackett
[November 2, 1863]

Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers
brought forth on this continent, a new na-
tion, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to
the proposition that all men are created
equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war,
testing whether that nation or any nation so
conceived and so dedicated can long endure.
We are met on a great battlefield of that war.
We have come to dedicate a portion of that
field, as a final resting place for those who
here gave their lives that that nation might
live. It is altogether fitting and proper that
we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate
— we cannot consecrate — we cannot hallow
— this ground. The brave men, living and
dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it
far above our poor power to add or detract.
The world will little note nor long remember
what we say here, but it can never forget
what they did here. It is for us, the living,
rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished
work which they who fought here have thus
far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be
here dedicated to the great task remaining
before us — that from these honored dead we
take increased devotion to that cause for
which they gave the last full measure of devo-
tion; that we here highly resolve that these
dead shall not have died in vain; that this
nation, under God, shall have a new birth of
freedom; and that government of the people,
by the people, for the people, shall not perish
from the earth.¹

Address at Gettysburg
[November 19, 1863]

¹See Wycliffe, 143:12; Webster, 450:14; Disraeli, 501:6;
Carrison, 805:19; and Parker, 537:15.

The President last night had a dream. He
was in a party of plain people and as it be-
came known who he was they began to com-
ment on his appearance. One of them said,
"He is a common-looking man." The Presi-
dent replied, "Common-looking people are
the best in the world: that is the reason the
Lord makes so many of them."

From Letters of John Hay and Ex-
tracts from His Diary, edited by
C. L. HAY [December 23, 1863]

I claim not to have controlled events, but
confess plainly that events have controlled
me.

Letter to A. G. Hodges [April 4,
1864]

The world has never had a good definition
of the word liberty. And the American people
just now are much in want of one. We all
declare for liberty; but in using the same
word we do not mean the same thing. With
some, the word liberty may mean for each
man to do as he pleases with himself and the
product of his labor; while with others the
same word may mean for some men to do as
they please with other men and the product
of other men's labor. Here are two, not only
different, but incompatible things, called by
the same name, liberty. And it follows that
each of the things is by the respective parties
called by two different and incompatible
names, liberty and tyranny.

The shepherd drives the wolf from the
sheep's throat, for which the sheep thanks
the shepherd as his liberator, while the
wolf denounces him for the same act. . . .
Plainly the sheep and the wolf are not agreed
upon a definition of liberty.

Address at the Sanitary Fair,
Baltimore [April 18, 1864]

I do not allow myself to suppose that either
the convention or the League have concluded
to decide that I am either the greatest or best
man in America, but rather they have con-
cluded that it is not best to swap horses while
crossing the river, and have further con-
cluded that I am not so poor a horse that they
might not make a botch of it in trying to
swap.

Reply to the National Union
League [June 9, 1864]

Truth is generally the best vindication
against slander.

Letter to Secretary Stanton, refus-
ing to dismiss Postmaster-General
Montgomery Blair [July 18, 1864]

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

FYI

Mr. President:

I ran this by Dick Darman and he thought that page 4 of this letter might be useful to speechwriters for possible use in Europe or for radio speech from Europe. Any objections?

NOT AT ALL.

Col. Caulfield already answered Lisa so no reply from you is necessary.

If Lisa's problem is inability to afford transportation how about a ^{Kathy} fed. initiative to raise money for some people like this? RR

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 10, 1984

Dear Lisa:

Thank you for your letter to President Reagan.

The President has requested the Secretary of Defense to include you and your family on the United States Invitation List for the Omaha Beach commemoration on the 6th of June.

You should receive an official invitation from the Secretary of Defense in a few days. Unfortunately, intercontinental travel and accommodations cannot be provided by the United States government. However, you will be given whatever assistance is required once you arrive in France.

Please provide me as soon as possible the names and addresses of other members of your family who desire to attend the commemoration.

If you have any questions or there is anything else I can do for you, please write or call me on (202) 456-2150.

Sincerely,



M. P. CAULFIELD
Colonel, U. S. Marine Corps
Deputy Director
White House Military Office

Ms. Lisa Zanatta Henn
1100 Elmwood Drive
Millbrae, California 94030

27
March 15, 1984

Ronald Reagan, President
United States of America
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I am writing this letter to ask for your assistance.

I have read recently that you are planning to attend the 40th Memorial of D Day.

My father, Peter Robert Zanatta, PFC, 37th Engineer Combat Battalion, landed on the First Wave on Omaha Beach on D Day. This event was probably the most important event of his life. He always planned to go back someday. Since he is no longer living - my mother, brothers and I are planning to attend. We would like to attend not just as tourists but as representatives of the United States. I don't know if there will be any special envoys to Normandy, but if there are, we would like to be part of them. We plan to get there any way we can, but it would be nice to be part of a group of proud Americans who although may not have been there know the anguish and pride of those who faced that day.

I would appreciate it if you would forward this letter to anyone that could possibly help my family realize this dream. Please know that I am available to help you in anyway I can. I am enclosing a short story I wrote about my father that explains how deeply I feel about attending this Memorial.

I can be contacted at:

Lisa Zanatta Henn
1100 Elmwood Dr.
Millbrae, California 94403
(415) 588-6609

OR

1340 North Dearborn, Apt 16E
Chicago, Illinois 60610
(312) 440-9395

I would appreciate any assistance you can give me.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Lisa Zanatta Henn

"Someday, Lis, I'll go back."

"Someday, Lis, I'll go back. I'll go back and I'll see it all again. I'll see the beach, the barricades, and the graves. I'll put a flower on the graves of the guys I knew and on the grave of the unknown soldier — all the guys I fought with."

I heard my father say these words hundreds and hundreds of times for as long as I can remember. When he said them, he always looked like he was somewhere else, remembering something painful yet something he was so proud of.

My dad landed on "the beach"—First Wave, Omaha Beach, The Invasion of Normandy, June 6, 1944. The infamous D-Day. Not many people my age know or even care about this day but I always will—I can't remember when it wasn't important to me.

I know most fathers tell their kids war stories. The kids start to roll their eyes and say "oh no, not again. We've heard them all a million times." My brothers and I never said that in our house. No matter how many times we heard the stories, we never got tired of them. I tried to figure out why my dad's stories were different. The only thing I came up with is that he made you see it all, made you feel how it must have been.

My dad was 18 years old when he went into World War II. Eighteen — when I was 18, I graduated from high school and the only heavy decisions I had to make were what college I wanted to go to or what kind of car I wanted my parents to buy me. Real life and death situations. But when my dad was 18 he had no choices, he went and fought for his country and was proud to do it. He never even thought twice about it. But those three years and the Normandy Invasion would change his life forever.

I can only remember a few of the stories he told us. There was one about a castle in Europe that had a long winding staircase. I guess my dad and his division were camping there for the night. Most of the guys were my dad's age, so being kids they slid down the banister. This always struck my brothers and me so funny — that my dad slid down some banister, in some castle in some strange city in Europe during the war. It seems they found a moment to be kids in a situation that would turn them old before their time.

I also remember the story about how he had to lay for a long period of time on top of a dead soldier without moving as German troops plowed by. He told us of how he was afraid to breath because the Germans might see him; of how the smell of the dead man made him so sick. We just looked at him with awe and without really comprehending it all. Not then anyway.

There were many stories — Christmas over there when the shooting stopped for a few minutes at midnight and turkey dinners fell from the sky; of giving his food to starving children so they would stop eating garbage; of being injured and then sent right back to the front; of the beauty of Paris even with the destruction of war; of the guys he knew — who lived and fought right next to him and those who died; of the songs they sung (that he taught us to sing); and of being afraid and yet going on every day — just trying to live and make it back to the glorious place called home.

But the story to end all stories was D-Day. No single incident in my dad's life ever meant more to him and I can understand why.

As I said earlier, my dad landed on Omaha Beach — on the First Wave. Even when I was small and he would tell us about D-Day, I could tell by the look in his eyes that this was different — this was the biggest thing that had ever happened in his life.

He made me feel the fear of being on that boat waiting to land. I can smell the ocean and feel the seasickness. I can see the looks on his fellow soldiers' faces, the fear, the anguish, the uncertainty of what lay ahead. And when they landed, I can feel the strength and courage of the men who took those first steps through the tide to what must have surely looked like instant death. I don't know how or why I can feel this emptiness, this fear, or this determination, but I do. Maybe its the bond I had with my father. (I was really lucky — we never got tired of talking to each other). All I know is that it brings tears to my eyes to think about my father as a 20 year old boy having to face that beach.

When I grew older, I read everything on D-Day that I could find. As it turned out, the fact that my father lived to tell his children about it was a miracle. So many men died. I know that my father watched many of his friends be killed. I know that he must have died inside a little each time. But his explanation to me was — " You did what you had to do and you kept on going."

My dad won his share of medals. He was a good soldier and fought hard for his country. He never considered himself or what he had done as anything special. But I always did. I guess most kids put their fathers on pedestals, but I truly believe my father belonged on one. He gave up three years of his life and when he came back, everything was different. But he went on. He was just an ordinary guy, with immigrant Italian parents who never really had enough money. But he was a proud man. Proud of his heritage, proud of his country, proud that he fought in World War II and proud that he lived through D-Day.

June 6th is a special day at my family's house. When we were younger, my dad's best friend would come over, and he and my dad would just sit in our kitchen and drink and talk about old times until the early hours of the morning. They had been friends since they were eight years old and had both fought in the war.

They talked of the war of course; of their lost childhood (you can't ever be the same can you?); of the friends they had lost. Some people would say that they made too much of it or hung on to the memories too long. But how can anyone forget something like that? I never will and it all happened 12 years before I was even born.

My dad is gone now. Its been eight years. He died fighting a war against cancer. Even then the experience of D-Day was on his mind. When he was just about ready to go into surgery, I asked him how he was doing. He looked at me and said, "Lis, I feel just like I did at the Invasion of Normandy, I don't know if I'll live or die."

Maybe he made it too big a thing in his life. Maybe my family and I hang on to this part of my father's life and make it more than what it was. I've tried to make my friends understand what I feel, but they all just look at me like I'm kind of strange. Maybe if they had listened to my dad, they would feel the way I do. I guess most people my age feel that it all happened so long ago, why should they think about it.

But it was and always will be a big event. It changed everyone's lives —then and now. Everyone takes it for granted. Maybe that's what made my dad different. After he fought one of the most important battles in our nation's history, he could never take anything for granted again.

It will always affect me too. War movies, old songs, stories of the war, all of it gets to me. I know a lot of it is because my dad is gone now, and these things were so much a part of his life. But it was those events that made him the man he was — the man that came to be my father.

When I talk of Dad, I always say he landed on the First Wave at Omaha Beach. People are amazed that I even know or care about that day or event at all. But I'm just so proud of it and I always will be.

"I'm going there someday, Dad, and I'll see the beaches and the barricades and the monuments. I'll see the graves and I'll put the flowers there just like you wanted to do. I'll see the ceremonies honoring the veterans of D-Day and I'll feel all the things you made me feel through your stories and your eyes. I'll never forget what you went through, Dad, nor will I let anyone else forget — and Dad, I'll always be proud."

Lisa Zanatta Henn
March, 1984

Army of the United States



Honorable Discharge

This is to certify that

PETER R ZANATTA 39 130 513 Private First Class

37th Engineer Combat Battalion

Army of the United States

is hereby Honorably Discharged from the military service of the United States of America.

This certificate is awarded as a testimonial of Honest and Faithful Service to this country.

Given at SEPARATION CENTER
Camp Beale California

Date 8 December 1945

L. E. Goecker

L E GOECKER
MAJOR QFC

1. LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL Zanatta Peter R		2. ARMY SERIAL NO. 39 130 513	3. GRADE Pfc	4. ARM OR SERVICE CE	5. COMPONENT AUS
6. ORGANIZATION 37th Engr Combat Bn		7. DATE OF SEPARATION 8 Dec 45	8. PLACE OF SEPARATION Sep Cen Camp Beale Calif		
9. PERMANENT ADDRESS FOR MAILING PURPOSES 806 22nd St San Francisco S F Co Calif		10. DATE OF BIRTH 8 Jul 24	11. PLACE OF BIRTH Elk River Idaho		
12. ADDRESS FROM WHICH EMPLOYMENT WILL BE SOUGHT See 9		13. COLOR EYES Brown	14. COLOR HAIR Brown	15. HEIGHT 5' 7 1/2"	16. WEIGHT 155 lbs
17. NO. DEPENDENTS 0	18. RACE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WHITE <input type="checkbox"/> NEGRO <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (specify)		19. MARITAL STATUS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SINGLE <input type="checkbox"/> MARRIED <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (specify)		20. U.S. CITIZEN <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
21. CIVILIAN OCCUPATION AND NO. Stage Builder 5-25.64					

MILITARY HISTORY

22. DATE OF INDUCTION 9 Apr 43	23. DATE OF ENLISTMENT 16 Apr 43	24. DATE OF ENTRY INTO ACTIVE SERVICE 16 Apr 43	25. PLACE OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE San Francisco Calif
26. REGISTERED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	27. LOCAL S. BOARD NO. 77	28. COUNTY AND STATE San Francisco Calif	29. HOME ADDRESS AT TIME OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE See 9
30. MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY AND NO. Jackhammer Operator -188		31. MILITARY QUALIFICATION AND DATE (i.e., infantry, aviation and marksmanship badges, etc.) Sharpshooter M1 Rifle 1943	

32. BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS Normandy Northern France GO 33 WD 45 Central Europe Rhineland GO 40 WD 45			
33. DECORATIONS AND CITATION Distinguished Unit Badge GO 64 Hq 1st US Army 27 Sep 44 European African Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with Bronze Arrowhead Croix De Guerre Purple Heart GO 10 Hq 5 ESB 14 Aug 44 Good Conduct Medal (55)			
34. WOUNDS RECEIVED IN ACTION Normandy 6 Jun 44			

35. LATEST IMMUNIZATION DATES				36. SERVICE OUTSIDE CONTINENTAL U. S. AND RETURN		
SMALLPOX Jul 45	TYPHOID Aug 45	TETANUS Feb 44	OTHER (specify) Typhus Aug 45	DATE OF DEPARTURE 21 Oct 43	DESTINATION European African Middle Eastern Theater US	DATE OF ARRIVAL 2 Nov 43
37. TOTAL LENGTH OF SERVICE				38. HIGHEST GRADE HELD		
CONTINENTAL SERVICE		FOREIGN SERVICE		Pfc		
YEARS MONTHS DAYS 0 6 16	YEARS MONTHS DAYS 2 3 7					

39. PRIOR SERVICE None

40. REASON AND AUTHORITY FOR SEPARATION Convenience of the Government RR 1-1 (Demobilization) AR 615-365 15 Dec 44
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41. SERVICE SCHOOLS ATTENDED None	42. EDUCATION (Years) Grammar 8 High School 4 College 0
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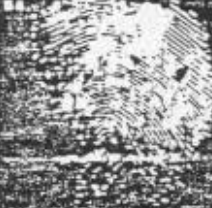
PAY DATA

43. LONGEVITY FOR PAY PURPOSES YEARS MONTHS DAYS 2 8 0	44. MESTERING OUT PAY TOTAL THIS PAYMENT \$ 300 \$ 100	45. SOLDIER DEPOSITS None	46. TRAVEL PAY 7.43 215.87	47. TOTAL AMOUNT NAME OF DISBURSING OFFICER W L VIERS Capt FD
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INSURANCE NOTICE

IMPORTANT: IF PREMIUM IS NOT PAID WHEN DUE OR WITHIN THIRTY-DAY PERIOD AFTER, INSURANCE WILL LAPSE. MAKE CHECKS OR MONEY ORDERS PAYABLE TO THE TREASURER OF THE U. S. AND FORWARD TO COLLECTIONS SUBDIVISION, VETERANS ADMINISTRATION, WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

48. KIND OF INSURANCE Nat. Serv. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> U.S. Govt. <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/>	49. HOW PAID Assignment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Direct to V. A. <input type="checkbox"/>	50. Effective Date of Allotment Discontinuance 30 Nov 45	51. Date of Next Premium Due (One month after 50) 31 Dec 45	52. PREMIUM DUE EACH MONTH 6.40	53. INTENTION OF VETERAN TO Continue <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue Only <input type="checkbox"/> Discontinue <input type="checkbox"/>
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54.  RIGHT THUMB PRINT	55. REMARKS (This space for completion of above items or entry of other items specified in W. D. Directives) Lapel Button Issued Inactive Service ERC 9 Apr 43 to 15 Apr 43 ASR Score (2 Sep 45) 77 (93) World War II Victory Medal TWX 23 Oct 45
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56. SIGNATURE OF PERSON BEING SEPARATED <i>Peter R. Zanatta</i>	57. PERSONNEL OFFICER (Type name, grade and organization - signature) K H KOLLEY 1st Lt AC <i>K H Kolley</i>
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