



Charlie Battery 3rd Missile Battalion 71st Artillery

Stockheim ♥ Haberschlacht ♥ Niederhofen ♥ Kleingartach

WINNING THE PEACE WITH PEACE THROUGH
VIGILANCE - STRENGTH - HONOR - RESOLVE

After exhausting and rigorous virtual archeological investigation using our state of the art imaging satellite, the Charlie Battery Team announces the discovery of the ruins of the original Charlie Battery Nike Ajax & Hercules Guided Missile base on the Stocksberg Plateau, near Kleingartach, Germany.



Even though it's been 50 years, the vague traces of the Charlie Battery Guided Missile site ruins are still clear to our imaging satellite. This image map is taken from an altitude of 15,000 feet.

The barracks and launching areas are still fairly discernible, however, the IFC has been completely obliterated due to 50 years of plowing and agriculture, so I've had to estimate its location. The battery certainly does have an impact on the areas landscape, but because two of the three areas are tucked back off the primary agricultural fields, they are not immediately seen.

Charlie Battery was only about 3-7 minutes from the East West border, so there were always crews on duty 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. There were ready rooms in both the IFC and Launching Area for these duty crews, so when an alert was activated firing time was almost immediate.

The geography of the area is really quite fascinating. With thousands years of agriculture, it has been sculpted and shaped into its present state.

Vineyards are the name of the game in our neighborhood. They cover many of the south facing hill sides, and in studying each hillside, it seems as though each village has it's own vineyards that the residents tend.

The road into Haberschlact running along the ridge, has below it, a hillside of grapes that extends almost right into the village it



self. And of course, the hillsides below the Schloss Stocksberg that surround Stockheim are quite evident.

Even the slope below the wooded area of the barracks seems to be the focus of Kleingartach, as well as the vineyard along the hill side below the launching area seems to run right down into the area of Niederhofen.

Kleingartach seems to be the closest village to the barracks. I never did take any of those paths down in to the village, and there is no way one could find their way back after dark. So usually the main focus on that side of the plateau was Niederhofen and the Gasthaus Rose.

It's interesting, the Americans liked their beer cold, so the gasthauses of choice would keep some cold ones in the cooler for the GI's. I used to see some of the old timers keep their flip top bottles beer close to the warming stove and drink it warm.

As we move in a little closer we begin to see a little more detail in the site areas and the roads. The elevation in this image map is about 8500 feet, and the Niederhofen/Haberschlacht road can be clearly seen running, first into the forest down the hill towards Niederhofen, and conversely, along the tree lined ridge above the vineyards, down into Haberschlacht.

I can remember riding in the back of a duc and a half coming out of the tree lined road into Haberschlacht seeing old ladies with head scarves dressed in black, sweeping



the early morning streets getting started with their day.

Seeing these old ladies bent over all day working in the fields was a regular event, and it always made a real impression on me. And those tractors towing trailers of steaming mounds of horse and cow manure in the early morning, are still clearly etched in my mind.

They all worked very hard because they had to. Even at those old ages everyone had to contribute to get the job done and to survive.

From Haberschlact one could turn right and go to Stockheim and to Kleingartach, or continue on through to Brackenheim, on the way to a large kaserne in Heilbronn.

Heilbronn was where one had to go on sick call and do real Army things. It's a large city on the Neckar River and once in a while we would go there on pass, but that was a rare event, because it was so far away.

In viewing the agricultural landscape from an altitude of 8,500 feet, I find it interesting how the growing fields were molded in with the forest areas. This seems to intentionally connect the various forested areas so that wildlife and woodlands have reproductive continuity, thereby insuring the survival of both.

Also, I think these woodlands acted as buffers to the wind and weather, thus lessening their impact. The tree line that runs



along the ridge from the Schloss Stocksborg up the page to the larger forest area on Image Map 2, is a perfect example of a wind break protecting the vineyards below from the winds that sweep across the top of the plateau.

There were real winters on that plateau, and it got really cold. Walking back to the barracks at twelve or one o'clock in the morning was a real challenge.

However, a snowy winter night was one of my favorite times to pull guard duty around Alpha Section. The reason was mainly, because it was very light out and it was easy to see what was going on. As long as one was dressed for the weather, along with your pair of Mickey Mouse Boots, one was all set.

I can see that the woodlands seem to have diminished in size on the plateau. I guess the increase in population has put pressure on forest areas to become farmlands in order to provide food and resources for their needs.

In this image map the altitude is 3,300 feet, an gives real close-up detail to the barracks area. Clearly defined is the road to and into the battery area through the main gate.

The reservoir and over-flow parking area are also well defined. The road then turns left passed where the barracks, physical plant, and the motor pool garage were, as well as the jog to the right on the woods side to accommodate the fueling station,



and then on to the motor pool vehicle parking area at the far end of the barracks area.

It was very narrow in width and long enough for all the administrative and motor pool needs.

From an altitude of 3,000 feet, the Launching Area is still the most clearly defined of all the areas.

The Main Gate entrance and the perimeter road to the LCT, Ready Room, and Missile Maintenance is very evident. Although it's not clear to me what is going on below the main gate. That area is torn up for some reason.

Also, the inner perimeter section service roads, as well as the section locations themselves are all very discernible. The LCT/Ready Room area seems a bit less evident, with signs of replanting or forestation.

The Niederhofen vineyards below Bravo Section is still as I remember it, and is illustrated on the website, second image down on the link that follows. [Click Here](#) to view the image.

For the most part the site is going back to nature, which is as it should be rather than being destroyed in some sort of conflict or conflagration. It served its time and now it's done.

