



During the 1943 season the baseball team took up where the basketeers left off, going on to win the Fort Benning-Cusetta League Championship and losing out to the 3rd Tank Regt in the final game of the 10th Armored Division Championship playoffs. With the added strength of Hurly Martin on the mound, and some new faces like Bob Klein at short and Jimmy Lucas in the outer garden, the 774th coached by Lt William Murphy, chalked up 13 victories against 3 losses for the season. By virtue of a 9-1 win over the strong 455 AAA Battalion, which won the league title, the TDs went into the Division finals facing the "Tigers" highly favored 3rd Tank Regt Team. Losing the opening game of the playoffs 5-3, the nine bounced right back to tie the series at one game apiece when Martin shut out the Tankers with three hits and Shoemake's bat drove home the only tally of the game in the sixth inning with a sharp single to right. In this game Martin chalked up his 41st consecutive scoreless inning of league play. The final game of the playoffs found the TDs unable to solve the slants of "Lefty" Butt, and dropped a well played game, 4-2. Trailing by two runs going into the sixth inning, Jimmy

Lucas doubled home the tying runs. In the seventh however, the Tankers bounced right back to tally two runs which later proved the deciding margin and gave them possession of the trophy. When Martin took the mound in the eight and ninth innings of that last game after Shoemake was forced to leave, he ran his total scoreless innings up to forty-three by blanking the opposition and set a Post and Division record. Outstanding during the season that produced so many fine ball players was Tully Folis behind the plate, Junjulas at first, Klein at short, Murphy at third, Lucas patrolling the outer garden and Johnson at second.

Awarded

By Direction Of The President

For Gallantry in Action

The Silver Star



SERGEANT JOSEPH L. V. ST. PIERRE



On 6 March 1945 in Germany, when his position was repeatedly attacked by numerically superior enemy forces, he distinguished himself by his fearless and bold leadership. After repulsing one vicious attack he pursued the enemy and closing with the foe, he destroyed one enemy machine gun position and captured eighteen Germans.

PFC GLENN FREEMAN



On 6 March 1945 in Germany, when a member of his platoon was severely wounded and lying exposed to heavy enemy fire, he dashed to his side, rendered first aid and under enemy fire carried him to a position of comparative safety.

PRIVATE HAROLD W. JOHNSON (Posthumously)



On 6 March 1945 in Germany, when a numerically superior enemy force counter-attacked the town his platoon had recently captured, he, with complete disregard for his own personal safety, tenaciously defended his position. Bravely exposing himself to enemy artillery, mortar and small arms fire, he fiercely engaged the enemy and killed fifteen Germans. While making this heroic stand he was mortally wounded.

SERGEANT SHERMAN T. NORTON



On 6 March 1945 in Germany, having learned that his unit commander had been wounded and that he was lying helpless in a position fully exposed to enemy machine gun and artillery fire, he went to his rescue. With complete disregard for his own personal safety, he crossed the fire swept terrain and carried the wounded officer to a position of safety.

CORPORAL JOSEPH SICIGNANO (Posthumously)

On 12 October 1944 in France, while in support of the attacking 5th Infantry Division troops, several men were wounded during the fierce German artillery barrage. He, displaying great courage, crawled from the comparative safety of his shelter and picked his way across the shell ripped terrain to obtain a first aid kit. He again crossed the dangerous area, exposed himself to enemy fire, reached the casualties and while administering first aid was struck by a flying shell fragment which caused his death.

LT CHARLES L. SMITH

On 27 December 1944 in France, although suffering from five wounds inflicted by an enemy strafing plane and from bruises and loss of blood resulting when his jeep overturned, he sought for and administered to his seriously wounded driver every possible aid and comfort before permitting medical attention to be applied to himself.

CAPTAIN JAMES D. BUTLER (Posthumously)



On 3 February 1945 in Germany, during an attack on heavily defended woods, he voluntarily employed his TDs against enemy pillboxes in an effort to aid attacking infantry. With utter disregard for his own personal safety he moved forward under heavy enemy artillery, mortar and small arms fire to personally select gun positions that would successfully permit direct fire against the nearby pillboxes which were delaying the infantry. He successfully accomplished his mission, but before he could withdraw he was mortally wounded.

MAJOR WADE D. JONES



On 4 December 1944 in Germany, while assault infantry units were preparing to make a river crossing, he, under cover of darkness, moved his company to positions along the river directly opposite the enemy. With first light of dawn, fierce enemy artillery and mortar fire rendered gun communications useless. With total disregard for his own personal safety, he moved under intense enemy fire from position to position and directed

fire on enemy installations which greatly facilitated the successful establishment of the bridgehead.

TECHNICIANS GRADE 5 JOHN D. BLAIR & JACK E. FEGER

During the period from 1 February to 6 February 1945 in Germany, when incessant artillery and mortar fire rendered the only available supply route and means for evacuation of the wounded untenable, they volunteered to break through with their half-tracks. Constantly under enemy fire they made numerous trips evacuating 75 casualties and returning with vitally needed supplies and ammunition for the attacking forces.

SERGEANT LAFAYETTE H. PELLERIN



On 6 March 1945 in Germany, when the enemy launched a strong counter-attack in an attempt to retake a German town, he, fearlessly disregarding incessant enemy small arms fire, ran forward and engaged the enemy with an automatic rifle, killing 3 Germans, knocking out one automatic weapon and pinning down the entire attacking unit. In so doing he gave his unit time to reorganize defensive positions which aided materially in repelling the enemy assault.

SERGEANTS WALTER RANTILLA & EUGENE A. THORN, JR.

On 6 March 1945 in Germany, during an intense artillery barrage, the tarpaulin of an explosive-laden trailer was ignited. Aware that a number of wounded men had been placed under the trailer for protection, they dashed from their positions of cover and succeeded in removing the blazing tarp and carrying several burning boxes of high explosives shells to a nearby field. Their prompt action undoubtedly saved the lives of the wounded and prevented the loss of valuable government property.



PRIVATE ORVILLE OWENS



On 6 March 1945 in Germany, when counter-attacking Germans maneuvered to outflank the main defenses of his unit, he armed himself with an automatic rifle and rushed forward to a position from which he engaged the enemy, knocking out one enemy machine gun position and pinning down the remainder of the attacking troops until additional support could be brought up.

LT WAYNE L. DILTZ



During the period from 17 March 1945 to 21 March 1945 in Germany, he distinguished himself on numerous occasions. Discovering a well camouflaged enemy self propelled gun covering the route of attack, he calmly maneuvered his TD into position and destroyed the gun and crew. Sustaining painful wounds, he refused to be evacuated and continued to lead his platoon in the fierce assault. During the intense action his platoon destroyed 6

ammunition trucks, killed or captured 100 of the enemy and was instrumental in the reduction and capture of a garrison manned by 1,500 Germans.

PRIVATE MARTIN P. KELLY



On 5 December 1944 in Germany, during the crossing by the 95th Infantry Division of the Saar River at Lisdorf, as the last elements of the infantry ran over a small foot bridge an officer was hit by a burst of enemy machine gun fire and fell into the icy water. Without hesitation, he stripped his clothing and plunged into the swirling river. Braving the raging current and machine gun fire, he swam toward the officer, pulled him to the river's bank and then

carried him to the shelter of the nearest aid station.

STAFF SERGEANT CHARLES ANDRUNAITES (Posthumously)



On 23 January 1945 in Germany, during a night attack by numerically superior forces, one of Sgt Andrunaites' gun sections became dispersed when their position was overrun by attacking enemy infantry. At daylight he was able to locate ten of the eleven missing crew members four of whom were wounded. Ignoring severe sniper and small arms fire he alone evacuated the wounded to a place of relative safety. In searching for the remaining

man he came upon an enemy machine gun position. Calmly dismounting a machine gun and firing as he charged forward, the courageous Sgt knocked out the enemy gun. A moment later he was killed by an enemy sniper.

CAPTAIN JOSEPH W. ROOD



On 9. December 1944 in Germany, in preparation for an assault on strong German fortifications, Capt. Rood entered alone a town swept by enemy fire to make a reconnaissance of enemy installations and locations for his guns. In doing so Capt. Rood was painfully wounded, but refused medical attention until he had briefed his subordinate commanders and completed all preliminary phases for the attack.

For Heroism

The Soldiers Medal

PFC ISAAC A. WINNINGHAM

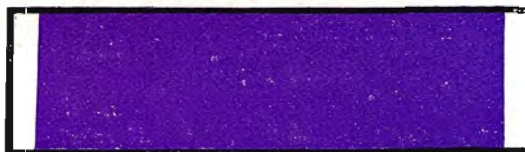


For heroism in France on 9 November 1944 not involving conflict with the enemy. Pfc Winningham was on guard on the east bank of the rain swollen Moselle River. One man was on duty nearby maintaining a smoke screen on the bridge. Suddenly the bridge, weakened by the strain of the rushing waters, collapsed and he was thrown into the water. Although the water was freezing and the current treacherous, Pfc Winningham, with utter disregard

for his own safety, dived into the turbulent waters, swam to the soldier and dragged him to safety.

*Awarded For Wounds Received In Action Against
The Enemy*

Purple Heart



Capt Joseph W. Rood
Lt Wayne L. Diltz
Lt Walter E. Gerding

T/5 Tony Elchook
T/5 Noel W. Frakes
T/5 Johnny W. Mitchell

Lt Paul J. Clifford
Lt Joseph A. Bognani
Lt Weldon D. Griffin
Lt Donniss A. Fields
Lt William Murphy
S/Sgt Laval R. Gendron
S/Sgt Hugo W. Latti
Sgt Nick Giordiano
Sgt Howard M. Hamilton
Sgt Otha E. Joyner
Sgt Louis D. Laning, Jr.
Sgt Frank L. Smotrilla
T/4 Nevelle R. Pike
Cpl Louis L. Ballestrieri
Cpl Vincent J. Gilberto
Cpl William Grimaldi
Cpl Leo G. Handy
Cpl Walter P. Kalvio
Cpl LeRoy A. Madison
Cpl John J. Wozniak
T/5 John D. Blair


Pfc Leslie L. Barth
Pfc Gravers C. Christensen
Pfc Joseph R. Duquette
Pfc Edward R. Ernschaw
Pfc Edward Elliot
Pfc Richard H. Fifield
Pfc Henry Kudej
Pfc Albert Margolies
Pfc Arthur A. Provencher
Pfc Douglas H. O'Brien
Pfc Roy L. Robinson
Pfc Kenneth R. Unferth
Pfc Luther Williams
Pvt Dominick D. Aulivolo
Pvt Michael A. Drap
Pvt Dennis J. Driscoll, Jr.
Pvt August Gabbinelli
Pvt Harry A. Hall
Pvt Louis W. Koch
Pvt Louis Rivera

*Awarded For Heroism Or Meritorious Service Against
The Enemy*

Bronze Star

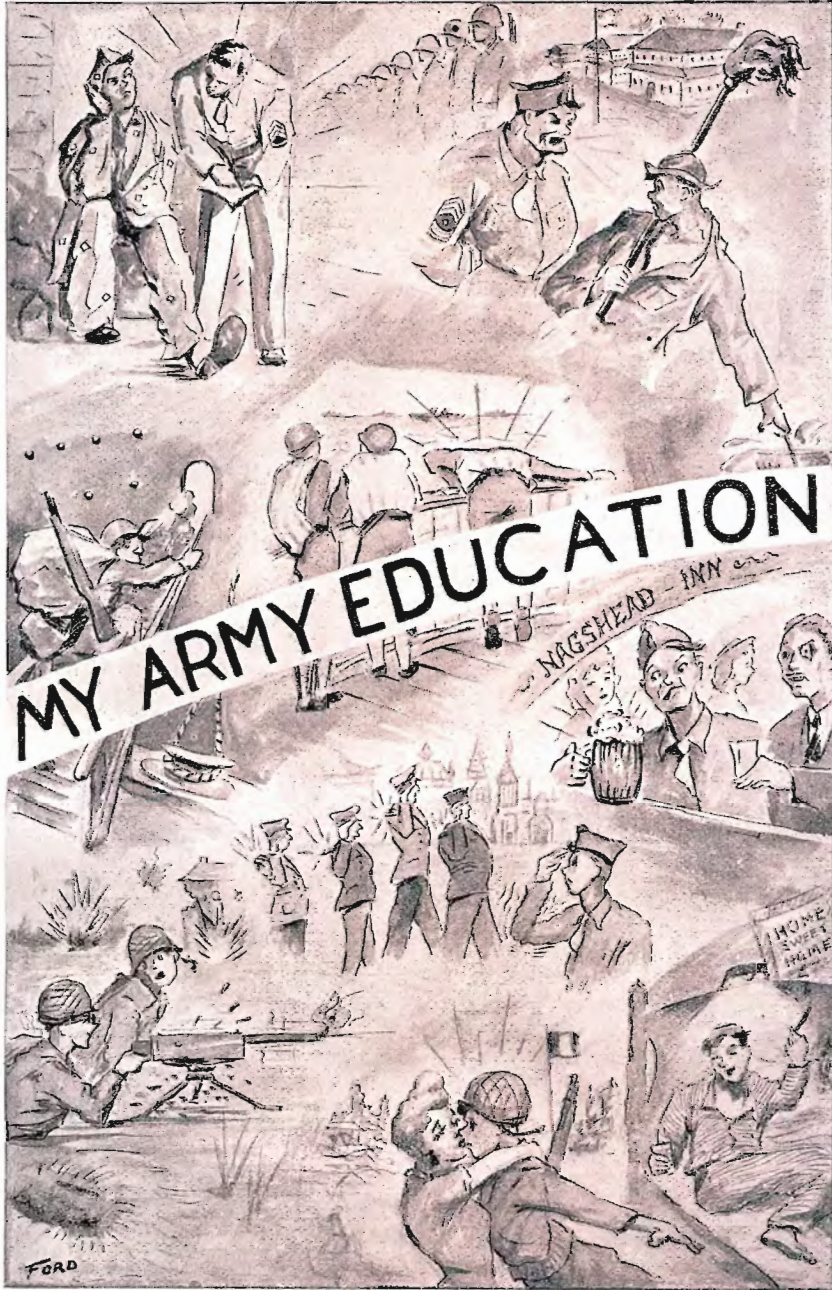


Lt Col Conrad B. Sturges	S/Sgt Ernest J. Robinson
Sgt James R. Durbin	T/4 Louis H. Dumon
Lt Paul J. Clifford	Lt Archie H. Craig
Sgt Weldon D. Griffin	S/Sgt Claude W. Horne
Pvt Joseph R. Duquette	Pfc Robert E. Price
Pvt Carl J. Resig	1st Sgt Joseph P. Jackson
Sgt Carl G. Parsons	Lt Henry J. Baltz, Jr.
Sgt James A. Lucas	Capt Joe I. Elliot
Maj Edward J. Bellamy	Capt Carson B. Murdy
M/Sgt John E. Peterson	Lt Frank H. McCartney
Sgt Frank C. Gross	Pfc Welbert H. Rogers
Sgt Wesley E. Streetman	Pvt Benjamin B. Gerstner
S/Sgt Donnis A. Fields	Lt William Murphy
Capt Carl A. Black	Pfc Pellogrino A. Orso
Maj Steve M. Cullens	Pfc Edward E. Cross
Sgt Gordon B. Horsford	Pfc Vincent A. James
Pfc Richard H. Fifield	Lt John A. Stewart
Pfc Henry Sloan	S/Sgt Daniel J. Niedzwiecki
S/Sgt Ralph G. Coriell	Cpl Ralph V. Melbourne
Capt Lum A. Ingram, Jr.	M/Sgt Roy C. Head, Jr.
Lt John Hendricks	Lt Warren J. Scidmore
Pvt William Bergeron	Lt Harry L. Shaner



Pfc Roy M. Arendall
S/Sgt William J. Murphy
S/Sgt Thomas G. Monahan
Lt Nick D. DeMaria
Sgt Martin J. McDonough
Pfc Grover C. Fennell
Sgt Martin E. Urban
T/5 Marcel G. Gagnon
Pfc Albert A. Rene

Pvt. Walter Wiechnik
Sgt George W. LaRue, Jr.
Sgt Arthur A. Goodseit
Capt Wilbur C. Anderson
CWO Carl R. Peterson
T/Sgt Edward P. Troy
T/Sgt Harold S. Loewell
Lt Julius J. Holbrooks
Sgt Frank Hantke



I thought I had learned a lot as a civilian, but I had a lot more to learn in the Army.

In a pouring rain, I learned what it was like to take the gloomiest train ride in the world away from my loved ones into an unknown land of khaki and unsympathetic drill sergeants. The word “geretings” had lost its last ounce of charm. Next I learned to live in neat, white, two-story barracks arranged in unoriginal rectangles; hot dirty tents in sun-baked rows; and finally in scattered pup-tents badly camouflaged with dead leaves and drowning in a sea of mud. I learned that a latrine is an Army public information center which also serves to give civilian modesty its final bash on the head.

I learned that the “hook” wasn’t fatal. I learned that you remembered the guys you went through basic with better than anyone else in the Army except maybe the guys you fought with. Both, in their own time, were ordeals. And from close order drill I learned the beauty of coordinated moves.

I never really believed I was going to get into battle, and this enabled me to take a good-humored view of everything that happened — none of which was actually funny.

I learned that what you had done in civilian life didn’t have much bearing on what you did in the Army — unless you were a baseball player. I found that preparing chow for the Company three times a day was not only a “privilege” but a hell of a job especially when you did it for three straight days: that dust in an inaccessible place was a crime; and that an order was still an order even if George Washington did forget to rescind it.

I learned that the best place to keep away from (until you got to know the man who prepared the duty roster) was the orderly room — there was always that one man short for a guard or latrine detail. I learned that an occasional rumor was just small talk, but that a hail of them almost always meant action.

I learned that once in a POE your chances of going overseas are better than good and I became suspicious that maybe the Army was going to use me for more than a threat. I learned that, unlike the movies I had

seen, you sneaked aboard ship at night, and you took turns sleeping in a space a medium sized rabbit on a diet couldn't have turned around in. Boat drill was like reshuffling sardines in a can.

But at sea I first learned the feel of the enemy — I knew he was there under the water waiting for a clean crack at ME. I learned that in overseas operations the only thing that stood between me and death was the Navy. I learned, aboard ship, that the only way you could get any elbow room was to turn green.

In Scotland I learned how good it was to get off a ship and how hard it was to carry what would normally be a load for a six-by-six. In England I learned that the British were glad to see us, but that they weren't particularly impressed by the fact that the Americans were winning the war. And when I saw places like Coventry and Birmingham, I wasn't so sure myself.

I tried plenty of bitter and mild, but I found nothing that would lure me permanently away from Pabst, Budweiser, Schlitz or even sugar-head corn.

I learned that the British were, after a five-year beating, still working and punching grimly away, saving strength for the final round. I found that MPs meant what they said and that buttons were worn with a shine and the right hand firmly attached to the forehead, one inch over the eye.

I learned that the British did things differently, but that they got them done. I learned that the British trains were fast and that their grade crossings were safer than the ones at home. I found that the British were not quite sure that the telephone was here to stay. I learned that the British were glad of our help, leary of our boasting and dead set against any sympathy at all.

I learned that the English Channel isn't very wide, but that it was too rough and too wide for Adolf and just the right distance for Americans and British working together. I learned that Utah and Omaha were peaceful looking sands — where thousands of Americans had died and where tens of thousands more would break their backs unloading millions of tons of supplies.

I learned that a hedgerow may be nice for a Normandy farmer, but that it is a death trap for a fighting man. I learned that some of the quiet boys of what he will do in battle and that they are three hundred times more afraid when they get into one. I learned that some of the quiet boys whom I thought couldn't fight their way out of a paper bag had more guts than four of me. And when I learned how tough a battle was I began to see how big a thing Liberty might be.

I saw all the French kids and mademoiselles, with their backs to their ruined homes, smiling and giving the "V" sign as we pulled through. That made me feel good and taught me more about the value of freedom.

I learned that France was proud and touchy, that Frenchmen could watch parades every day and twice on Sunday, and that they could fight like hell if they had something to fight with. I learned that Jerry was a good fighter but that we were better. I learned to be kissed en route and that eight different swigs out of eight different bottles changed the appearance of the scenery. I learned that during the first week of liberation all our drinks were free, but that the French made up for it afterwards. I learned that the French were sure that the telephone was not here to stay. I learned that in a battle it doesn't make any difference what color a man is, what language or accent he uses, or what he had said or done in calmer spots. And I learned that in split seconds, men can decide that buddies' lives are worth more than their own.

I learned that when a battle stretches out, there is no longer any thought of democracy, freedom, communism, or who's running for president — but only the question of "How much longer will I be alive?"

I learned that Americans know how to act when wounded, know how to fight, know how to die, and although they can't probably tell you about it, they know, deep down, what they are fighting for. I learned that the Tommy fights for King and Country, that the Russian fights for revenge, but that the American fights for a lasting reason that doesn't fit easily into words.

I learned that Germany was beautiful and clean but that the stench of the concentration camps hung over the entire land. For those Yanks who saw the bodies, both living and dead, the smell never blew away. The Nazis had loused up a lot of nice scenery.

The smiling "other" Germans, none of whom ever approved of the Nazis, some of whom even gave us the "V" sign, had lived within hearing distance of Gestapo torture chambers and worked in factories beside "imported labor" which daily grew thinner and one disappeared forever. I learned that people like these "other Germans" might, in future years, force my son onto a battlefield.

I learned that Germans are efficient but that efficiency is not good unless it is directed along wholesome lines. I learned that we must not try to set up a world based on peaceful intentions because peace at any price gives the aggressor the first crack. I learned that we must decide rather, what people's rights are and at exactly what point we are willing to fight for them.

I learned that no one who has not been in battle can ever be told what one is like. And I learned that whatever happens during peace time is what makes war.

I learned that "Somebody" had better stop the next war because I didn't want my son in it.

And I'm beginning to learn that "Somebody" is me.

Courtesy Army Talks.



Like the emblems on the shields worn by the knights in the days of old, it is only fitting that this battalion, dedicated to the service of God and Country, also has its own insignia. Tried and tested on the field of battle, the battalion, symbolized by the cunning, stealth, strength and tenacity of the panther, sought the enemy, struck him many hard blows and thus fulfilled its mission to help destroy him.

The emblem represents more than an insignia. In it, by means of designs and color schemes, has been incorporated the countries on whose battlefields our comrades gave their full measure of devotion; the number of campaign stars earned by the battalion as well as its inspiring motto. The colors used in this battalion shield are those of the official tank destroyer insignia, namely, orange, red, black and white. In shape the shield resembles that of the shield of our National Emblem. The banner, suspended from the base of the shield bears the battallion motto, "Seek, Attack, Destroy".

The Field Artillery from which we originated, is represented by the red field in the center left section of the shield. The black panther at the top is symbolic of the Tank Destroyers.

The four campaigns in which the battalion participated are represented by the four campaign stars. Each country that the battalion has been to, is indicated in some manner on the shield.

The United Kingdom is represented by the red lion at the lower left. This design is similar to the one shown on the British Royal Standard and its currency.

The Republic of France is represented by the Fleur de Lis surmounted by the Croix de Lorraine which was used throughout the Crusades and lately by the French resistance.

Luxembourg is represented by the Mace (which is a crowned staff), appearing to the lower right of the French symbol.

Belgium is represented at the top right section by the three colors of its flag.

Czechoslovakia is represented by the left half of the shield with the exception of the lion and the four stars. The panel has the general shape as that of the flag if it were hanging downward from its base. The colors red and white were used, purposely omitting the blue because when the flag was established by law, red and white were for Bohemia and blue for Moravia.

Germany is represented by the black stripe on the bottom of the shield. Black was used by Hitler as the color for the Swastika on the flag of the Reich. Previously black was used for the cross on the "Naval Ensign and Jack" Flag. Now it is symbolic of that nation, in complete and utter defeat.



Five Star Final

Over two months has elapsed since work on the publication of the Battalion History was started in Czechoslovakia, until the book came off the press on September 15, 1945. This last page was written for the purpose of informing the men that have left of the events of the last few days.

Our fifth Battle Star — for the Normandy Campaign — came through a few days ago. None of us will ever forget the race for time, as we sweated out the fifth star, and the extra five points that meant “everything” to so many of us.

From time to time a small number of our high-pointers left us to join outfits headed for the States. However, on September the first, there was a mass exodus of over 350 men. At dawn on that day, goodbyes were said to these men that we had lived with, and fought beside, for three years. Suddenly, our category was changed, and men with less than the required points were transferred.

Should you return to the Battalion today, you would see mostly new faces, since less than one hundred and fifty of the original personnel remains. The Battalion has been filled with high point men from various units.

Now we are counting the days, even the hours until we shall make that first move in the right direction — the move towards the States — and home.

14 September 1945

Nurnberg, Germany