

RAINBOW TRAIL

The Millennium Legacy (Rainbow Family) History Newsletter
of the 42nd Infantry "Rainbow" Division
August 2025 Volume 25, Issue 2

"To Find, Preserve and Share Rainbow Division History"



THE SOLDIER



In the voice of the Rainbow Soldier –

For the past 15 years, I have stood watch over this small piece of land —the same land that cost the lives of 162 young Americans, the equivalent of the entire population of Sergy wiped out during WWI.

I am the masterpiece of James Butler, who came here before creating me to fully absorb the spirit of this place.

I was born in England, and my first public appearance was in London on June 6, 2011, in the prestigious setting of the Royal Academy of Art. It was a great honor for me and the beginning of my career.

A few days later, after crossing the Channel and a journey by truck, I found my place where I have now stood for 165 months and 19 days—I'll spare you the hours. I have braved heat waves, freezing cold, rain, and snow, always standing proud for my admirers. I have lost count of the photos, films, and encounters.

Speaking of encounters, people don't suspect I'm listening, so I hear their confidences. Some compare me to Michelangelo's Pietà, right here in the land of Camille Claudel. I am quite proud of such a compliment. I welcome visitors from all

Charlie Diaz, superintendent of Oise-Aisne American Cemetery, Seringes-et-Nesles, FR raises the American flag over the Croix Rouge Farm Memorial July 26, 2025; below, flags respect and remember the fallen on 26 July 1918.



Speech from Jean-Paul Roseleux, Mayor of Fère-en-Tardenois, at the 42nd Division WWI Memorial on the occasion of the 106th anniversary of the Battle of Croix Rouge Farm at the 42nd Division WWI Memorial. Translated from the French by Dr. Monique Seefried.



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over the world—Americans searching for a piece of their history, the curious, and history buffs. All are captivated by the emotion that fills this place.

I owe thanks...

First and foremost, Monique. Pardon me—Doctor Monique Brouillet Seefried. She was the driving force who made my arrival at this battlefield possible, a place that, as I said, was a scene of heroism but also of carnage. With masterful hands, she overcame every obstacle: purchasing three parcels of land when, here, selling a piece of earth is like losing a limb. Yet she succeeded where others failed. She found the sculptor, convinced the Town Hall to support the project, and she is also the one who gave me my name: *THE SOLDIER*.



I cannot forget Rod Frazer, always with his beret pulled tight on his head and his coat collar turned up. He has left us. His father, Sergeant William Johnson Frazer, Company D, 167th Regiment, Rainbow Division, was among the 1,100 wounded in those battles. Out of filial gratitude, he established the foundation that made my creation possible.



Naturally, my creator James Butler, who said: “I created the statue of a dead soldier carried by his comrade. This statue came to life, with eyes and a powerful spiritual meaning. I wanted to represent the angel of mercy.”

After my grand inauguration on November 12, 2011, the centenary of the armistice was an unforgettable moment. I smiled seeing your Senator climb into a Marne taxi whose seat collapsed. That Senator remains loyal to this tribute. I have many more anecdotes to share, but I won't weary you.

Thank you, residents and officials of the Tardenois, for being faithful to this ceremony, as well as the flag bearers and veterans.

A special salute to the superintendent of the American cemetery of Seringes-et-Nesles, and its Deputy Mayor. And to Béa Dahm, the faithful photographer of these commemorations.

I'll see you next year, with a new team at the Town Hall who, I am sure, will be eager to continue these ceremonies.



Let's not forget that my presence here is, above all, to honor the Boys from Alabama who came to fight and gave their lives so that we may live in peace.

My dearest wish is to serve this purpose: to prevent the madness of humankind and help keep our world at peace!

Top photo: Dr. Monique Brouillard Seefried standing as Mayor Roseleux speaks; center: those gathered together in respect; bottom: our message from young Pierrick Boidin - the youth of France will not forget!

A Personal Message from Dr. Seefried

Jean-Paul Roseleux has been the mayor of the city of Fère-en-Tardenois since 2008, and, between 1996 and 2014, was also president of the former community of municipalities of the Tardenois. These two positions made him an extremely important facilitator when Nimrod Frazer, the son of an 167th Alabama Soldier (42nd Division) wounded at the battle of Croix Rouge Farm, asked me to help him honor his father, the 167th Alabama and the 42nd Rainbow Division, on the site of this battle.

A former owner of a bookstore and a very cultured man, Jean-Paul Roseleux is a native of Fère-en-Tardenois. He had always cherished the memory of Camille Claudel, a great sculptor in her own right and also the mistress of Rodin. She was born in Fère-en-Tardenois where her memory is very much present, thanks to no small parts to the initiatives of Jean-Paul Roseleux.

It was the mayor's idea to request from the Croix Rouge Farm Memorial Foundation that it gifts the statue of the Rainbow Soldier to the city of Fère-en-Tardenois, liberated in August 1918 by the 42nd division. Under his care, and the care of his administration, the site and the statue have been beautifully maintained and cherished. Every year, on a Saturday at the end of July, a beautiful ceremony is held to commemorate the Rainbow Division soldiers who lost their lives on this battlefield. Local and regional officials attend the ceremony as well as flagbearers, old and young, showing respect and gratitude to the Americans who came to liberate them.

Jean-Paul Roseleux will retire from his position next year, when local elections will take place in France, and the beautiful speech he delivered was his farewell to the Rainbow Soldier, his farewell as mayor but not as a private citizen. Upon ending his powerful speech, which he delivered taking the voice of the Rainbow Soldier, speaking as if he was the Soldier himself addressing us, he told the audience and all the officials present, including Senator Antoine Lefevre, that, as a private citizen, he will attend this ceremony as long as he physically can.

His commitment to honoring the Rainbow Division and to this powerful sculpture from renowned British sculptor James Butler is an outstanding example of the gratitude so many French people have for the Americans who liberated them. This gratitude is transmitted, in regions who saw combat, from one generation to the next and young children every year place little American flags on the tombs of American soldiers in ABMC cemeteries. More and more, they are replacing elderly veterans as flagbearers, as you can see from the pictures of the ceremony this July 26, on the 107th anniversary of the battle of Croix Rouge Farm, the first of the battles of the Ourcq River.

Soldiers of the Rainbow Division continue to speak to new generations, and the Rainbow Soldier is speaking to you.



Photos left to right; Eric Gauthier with Charlie Diaz; Jean-Pierre and Marine Risbeck; Christophe Delannoy leading the way in charge of the Association of Flag Bearers in the South of the Department of the Aisne; Antoine Lefevre, senator of the Aisne with Mayor Roseleux; Gilles Lagin, battlefield historian with Monique Seefried. All photo presentations are the work of photographer Béatrice Dahm who faithfully records this history each year.



p. 203 “The highlight of the 42nd’s activities at this time would seem to be that terrific battle at La Croix Rouge Farm. This farm was a low, widespread group of stone buildings connected by walls and ditches. The Germans had made an enormous machine gun nest of this natural stronghold, and had defied several earlier determined efforts to dislodge them from this key position.

The 167th and 168th Infantry regiments, old Alabama and Iowa troops,

respectively, struggled all day on July 26, against this nest of horrors. It was practically impossible to rush this enemy stronghold across the open; endeavors to work around the edge were thrown back by flanking fire; an accurate, punishing shellfire from the German artillery ripped through the wet underbrush; gas, made doubly dangerous by the moisture, swirled around in terrible gusts.

Wounded lay in the mud and muck. There were no roads to the rear through which ambulances could be brought up to remove those wounded. Snipers picked off many officers. The men, deprived of leadership, still went forward as best they could, but each successive repulse was more costly than the last.

At last, two platoons of assembled casualties – volunteers – all from the 167th and 168th, led by two lieutenants, squirmed their way forward, Indian fashion, and closed upon the farm buildings with grenades and bayonets. The raid, staged at dusk, was successful. The 42nd possessed La Croix Rouge Farm by nightfall; but at a fearful cost of dead and wounded.



From The Story of the Rainbow Division by Raymond S. Tompkins (Boni and Liveright, New York, 1919)

Photo left, Sergeant Victor Dunlap Wallace Machine Gun Company, 167th (Alabama) killed at La Croix Rouge Farm on 26 July 1918; photo from his Findagrave page maintained and contributed by Mark Schmidt.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56640968/victor-dunlap-wallace>

(p.76) ...and directly in front of the 167th [Alabama] and 168th [Iowa] Infantry Regiments, as the Rainbow took over the job from the Yankee Division and the French, lay the Boche in one of the finest little nests in France. They called it La Croix Rouge Farm; it was in a clearing surrounded by forests on four sides, and a road ran diagonally through it from southeast to northwest. The far side of the road was lined with German machine-guns; the woods on three sides were lined with them, and you couldn’t see them.

The division completed all its dispositions during the day and night of July 25, and without wasting a moment of time the 168th attacked La Croix Rouge Farm early on the morning of the 26th.

Two platoons of F Company, commanded by Capt. Charles J. Casey, took it. They discovered a little ditch leading up to it, and sneaking through this in the morning mists, surprised the Germans, killed or captured them and turned the machine-guns eastward upon the enemy on the woods.

All that afternoon the wooded slopes around La Croix Rouge Farm formed the ring in which a terrific battle went on. The men of the Rainbow – Alabamians on the left of the farm and Iowans on the right – had their first experience with those withering blasts of machine-gun fire with which the German army protected its masterly retreat during all the days that followed.



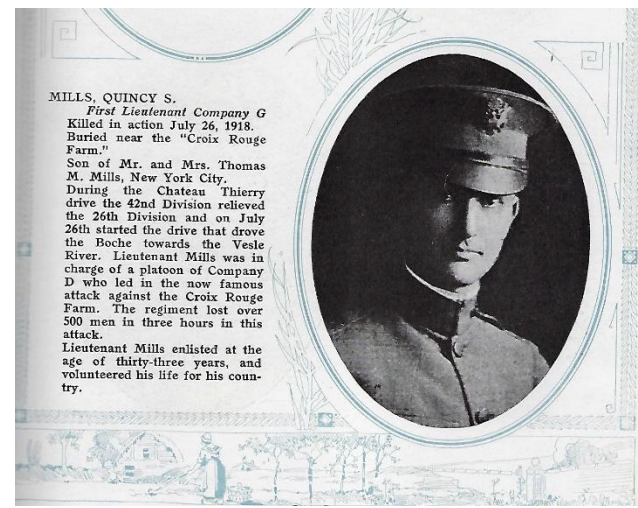
This Photo inset is of First Lieutenant Quincy S. Mills, Company G, 168th (Iowa) killed at La Croix Rouge Farm 26 July 1918 while leading a platoon of Company D... “a political reporter for the New York Evening Sun who volunteered at the age of 33....” Information from his findagrave.com page and *The Price of our Heritage* (by Chaplain Winfred E. Robb, 1919); photo(s) found both in this book and added to his findagrave page -

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/24973257/quincy-sharpe-mills>

This online page also holds a letter from Lt. Mills to his mother dated June 18, 1918.

Dear Mother:

Even the trenches can be beautiful when they are trimmed with flowers, and the barbed wire forms a trellis for rambling vines, and shelter for innumerable thrushes and other songsters – one explanation, no doubt, of why the cats have a penchant for No-Mans-Land. The birds warble all the time, even when there is considerable activity, and it seems to me that their voices never sounded so sweet before. A number of them inhabit the six small trees, two birches and four wild cherry, which rise on the central island (entirely surrounded by trenches) of my strong point, or groupe de combat as the French call it. At the base of one of the birches is a flourishing wild rose bush, literally covered with blossoms, some of which I sneaked up and picked – keeping not only head but also the rest of me carefully DOWN during the process...Here are some of them for you, and also some daisies and yellow asters from the edge of one of my trenches.



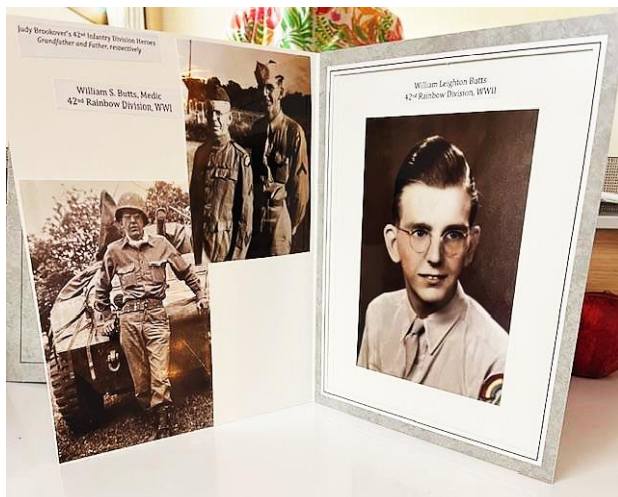
The graves of both men are under the care of Oise-Aisne American Cemetery, Seringes-et-Nesles, France.

Conclusion to the speech delivered by the Hon. Horace M. Towner of Iowa in the House of Representatives, February 12, 1919 (pub. *Washington Government Printing Office, 1919*)

“We in America have a just right to be proud of our part in this great struggle and this great victory. While neither in point of time and service nor in numbers was our contribution so great as that of other nations, ours was the final reinforcement which, flung in the decisive campaigns, brought final success. If our boys came late, they came in time. If their numbers were not so great, they brought to the war-weary veterans who held the line, that vigor, that intrepid spirit, that indomitable energy which demanded victory and would not be denied, which put new life into the long line from the Channel to the Alps, which stirred it to a new enthusiasm and a new hope, which changed four years of defensive warfare, and thus brought victory swift and sure.

“In this proud and high achievement, the Forty-Second, the Rainbow Division, bore a conspicuous part, and for its service and its sacrifice merits and will receive both the praise and honor of the world and the gratitude and love of the Nation under whose flag it served so well.”

Photo Memories from the 80th anniversary of the Liberation of Dachau Concentration Camp April 27 – May 4, 2025

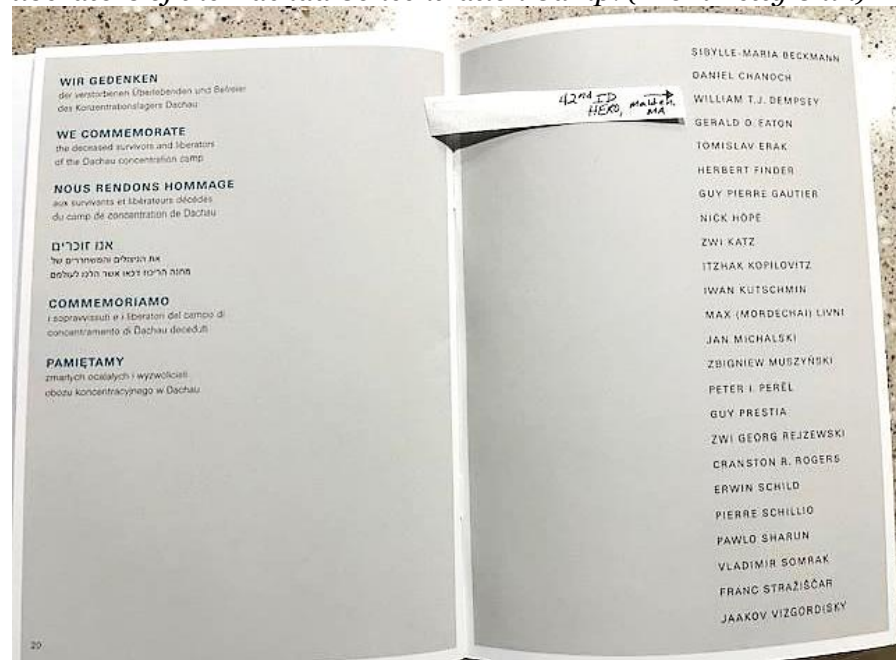


A great deal of preparation and planning went into the 42nd Infantry “Rainbow”, 45th Infantry “Thunderbird,” and 20th Armored Divisions’ experiences at this event – too many to give proper recognition to all; included here are just a few glimpses of the friendships formed and special touches of appreciation, planned; see the July 2025 issue of REVEILLE for a broader view of this commemoration and other photos. Photographers were Robert Giordano, LTC (Ret.) and Betty Chin, daughter of Thomas Chin, WWII Rainbow Division veteran; Betty provided the captions. *The Rainbow REVEILLE is online at <rainbowvets.org>.*

Special Thanks to Judy Brookover for her generous donation in honor of two generations of 42nd Infantry Division members, grandfather WWI William S. Butts and father WWII William Leighton Butts; photo/caption from Betty Chin

A salute from Members of the 42nd "Rainbow" Division (Robert Giordano)

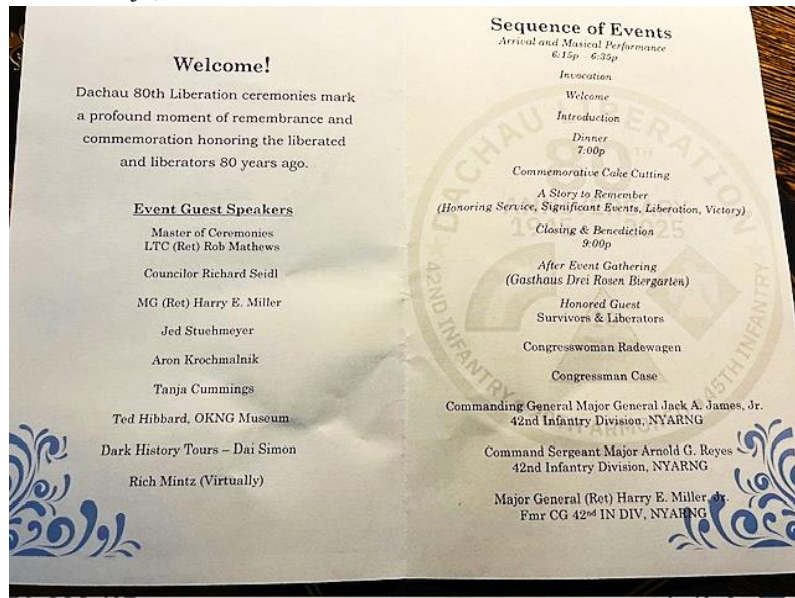
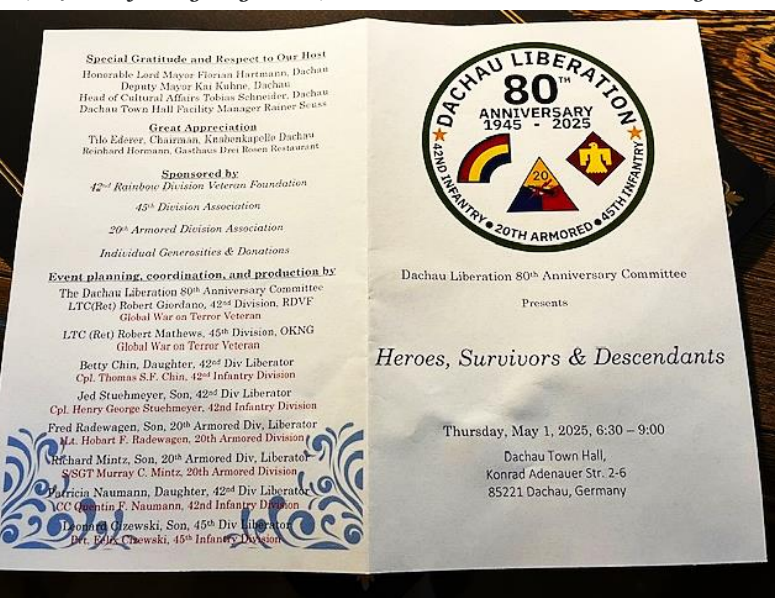
A page from the program, May 1, titled, "Heroes, Survivors, and Descendants," reads: *We Commemorate the deceased survivors and liberators of the Dachau Concentration Camp. (From Betty Chin)*



Logo flag at Dachau Town Hall with 42nd ID family L-R: Mark Burrell, son of Kathy Hammer Gill, and her brother, Michael Hammer



Awards presented by the 42nd Division Delegation, Major General Harry Miller (Ret.), Command Sergeant Major Arnold Reyes, and Major General Jack James to (left to right) Dachau Director of Cultural Affairs, Tobias Schneider; Jeremy "Jed" Stuehmeyer, son of WWII Rainbow Division veteran, Henry Stuehmeyer, Cannon Company, 232nd Infantry Regiment; Aron Krochmalnik, descendant of Dachau Survivor, Joseph Krochmalnik; Betty Chin, daughter of WWII Rainbow Division veteran, Thomas S.F. Chin, Companies M and L, 242nd Infantry Regiment; Honored RDVF Member Ludwig Stoeckl and his wife, Evelin.



From Betty Chin: in collaboration with the 45th ID and the 20th AD we designed the logo for the 80th anniversary events at Dachau. We are rather proud of this logo and it has been useful. The D80th Committee organized a social event on Thursday, May 1, 2025 at Dachau Town Hall, facility use was courtesy of Dachau Mayor Florian Hartmann.



We had breakfast every morning at our hotel, the Plaza Inn Dachau --

Betty Chin center; left to right, Darlene Parma, Pat Naumann, Mark Burrell, Mike Hammer, Sister Kathy Hammer Gill, and Laura Munson. The Dachau 80th Anniversary flag hangs proudly in the hotel dining room and we broke bread with as many as we could, Members of the Knabenkapelle were invited to



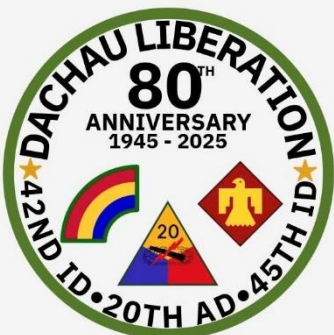
eat with us and a few from the community as well. Also, I arranged for the Dachau Knabenkapelle (youth orchestra) to perform a welcoming set as the guests arrived. The Dachau 80th Committee presented an award of appreciation to Mr. Eduard Civeja, musical director and the Dachau Knabenkapelle. The set concluded with the National Anthems of the USA and Germany.



This is Michael Bohnen, his father was Major Eli Bohnen, assigned to Division HQ as the 42nd ID Chaplain, and he received direct orders from Generals Collins and Linden. Michael attended the 80th Anniversary events with his daughters Sharon and Debbi.



L-R: Major General Harry Miller Jr. (ret), Debbie Palethorpe LeClair, Rick Baum, Randy Day, Emily Miller, 20th Armored Div Liberator Dr. Richard Baum, Pat Naumann, Gabe Giordano, Kathie Palethorpe Swenson
photographer: Robert Giordano



Commemorating the life and service of Dan Dougherty, Member of Company C, 157th Infantry Regiment, 45th "Thunderbird" Division. Dan passed away on June 6, 2025 at age 100.

From the Dachau Memorial Site staff posted on their website:

<https://www.kz-gedenkstaette-dachau.de/nachrichten/dan-dougherty-1925-2025/>

"...The Dachau Memorial Site loses not only an important eyewitness with Dan Dougherty but also an exceptional person whose optimism, warmth, and passion for history will be deeply missed by the entire team...." [English translation of the last paragraph of this obituary.]

Photos shared from the May 2025 Rainbow Trail followed by Chris Stavros in honor of his father, George Stavros Company B, 232nd Infantry Regiment, 42nd Infantry “Rainbow” Division

With great personal preparation in learning the history of his father’s service and the men with whom he served, in late May 2025, Chris and his family visited the key locations he knew these Soldiers traveled on the World War II Rainbow Trail. With captions by Chris, here are photos of some of these and they are worth more than a thousand words –



George Stavros Company B
232nd Zurich Switzerland,
1945

Chris Stavros May 2025



(left)
Memorial to French and American troops in the
Alsace Campaign Nov-Dec 1944, outside Colmar,
France 2025.

(right) We laid a yellow rose at Epinal American
Cemetery for William J. Woolley who served with
George Stavros.
Also at Epinal are three other men of Company B
and roses were left for them, too.
David G. Shaw
Richard D. White
James R. Metcalfe (still MIA)
William J. Woolley



[editor: 109 Rainbow Division Soldiers of WWII are
honored at Epinal American Cemetery; four of these
are on the Tablets of the Missing]

(Left)
[ed. SESSENHEIM, January 1945 saw intense combat
here and in its environs.]

(Right)
Plaque at entrance to Dachau concentration camp
Memorial Site 2025.



A STEYR, Austria Rainbow Division History Connection
learned from the AUSTRIAN MEMOIRS OF
Lieutenant John Henning Linden (son of BG Henning Linden)
A Battery, 392nd Field Artillery Battalion, 42nd Division, USMA Class of 1945



In these observations from COL (Ret.) John H. Linden's *Austrian Memoirs October 1945 – 1948*, he describes his assignment in STEYR, Austria. The July 2025 issue of the Rainbow REVEILLE carried the story of the STEYR Rainbow painted on a city wall and commemorated by the city with a stele on May 9, 2025. *Photo is from Roberto Medrano, son of Juan Medrano, WWII Rainbow Division veteran; Roberto is standing seventh from the left with city officials, U.S. military presence and his family members.*

Here are set down only the basic sequence of events and facts taken from his personal and keenly observed memoirs, that describe the reasons for the U.S. presence in STEYR in 1946 and the unit organization there.

In May 1946, Lt. Linden closed his duty with the 42nd Infantry Division as the last battery commander of A Battery, 392nd Field Artillery Battalion. Following division orders, his new assignment began on June 1, 1946 when he reported for duty to the Headquarters, 4th Constabulary Regiment in Linz (Landkreis Oberoesterreich). The American Zone in Austria consisted of Landkreis Salzburg and Landkreis Oberoesterreich. The Russian, French and British zones occupied other Landkreis (Provinces) in Austria which had been assigned to them.

The 4th Constabulary Regiment consisted of two Constabulary Squadrons: the 4th and the 24th. Both had been cavalry reconnaissance squadrons and had participated in the campaigns in France, Belgium and Germany in WWII. The 4th had been part of the assault wave in the Normandy D-Day landing, June 6, 1944.

The 4th Cavalry became the 4th Constabulary Squadron in May 1946.

Lt. Linden was assigned to Baker Troop in STEYR which was then in reserve, training 200 replacements for the two squadrons, 4th and 24th. An 8-week training course was undertaken to prepare them to maintain law and order in the American Zone.

“The troop was billeted on a bluff just outside the town of STEYR in requisitioned civilian buildings; the officers in one home; the NCOs in another, fifty meters away; the troop headquarters, orderly and supply/arms rooms in another larger home 50 meters away, making a rough, equilateral triangle; the 200 replacements, (still arriving from the States) in two, three-story apartment buildings, half a kilometer distant, and the motor pool, 1 kilometer distant, in a multi-stall garage facility for our 10 M-8 armored cars and 30 jeeps with pedestal mounted .30 caliber light machine guns.”

One of Lt. Linden's secondary duties was of troop Motor Officer.

As motor officer he met with the manager of the STEYR Auto Works to discuss the need for replacing the king pins in the steering columns of the old jeeps. Lt. Linden observed that this business was undamaged by the war and was currently not manufacturing; that before WWII, they had made fine automobiles and during WWII they had made German tanks and ball bearings.

After precise measurements were taken of the one king pin in good condition he had brought to show the manager, he was told that the job could be performed and he was asked how many such pins he needed. Lt. Linden asked for 30 and the cost. The answer came, “Ten cartons of cigarettes for 30 pins.” John Linden observed that, for the time and place, the equivalent was about \$1000.00. The transaction was made, and the needed pins engineered to perfection.

AN UPDATE since the April 2024 Rainbow REVEILLE article, *Dog Tags Find Their Way Home*, by Christophe Viller.

Continuing the search: a story of Lt. Dallas B. Hartwell, Company A, 222nd Infantry Regiment,
42nd Division,
Missing in Action since January 6, 1945.
By Christophe Viller

GAMBSHEIM, France, On May 8th 2025 a plaque dedicated to the MIA Lt. Hartwell and the liberators of the village was inaugurated.



Following an article published in the REVEILLE newsletter in 2024, the affair of the ID Tags of Lt. Dallas B. Hartwell came to a new turn. In September 2023, the ID Tags were given to Lt. Colonel Downard's family in view to be returned to the nieces of Lt. Hartwell. In the meantime, researches investigated by Christophe Viller, Eric Schell and Zachariah Fike brought to an X-File that could match to the Missing in Action Lieutenant.

The Information given to Hartwell's family gave way to an identification procedure requested to the DPAA.

Meanwhile, the project of erecting a plaque honoring Lt. Hartwell and troops who fought for the liberation of Gambenheim was under work in collaboration with the

townhall.



The Mayor, Mr. Hubert Hoffmann agreed to cover the project presented by Christophe Viller. It has been then decided to realize the plaque to be inaugurated for VE-Day. A distant cousin of the Hartwell's family could be there to attend the ceremony. Gary Hess, not only a family member is also retired from the US Air Force and so both the family and the Army were represented. At 9am, the ceremony started under a Glenn Miller's standard "In the Mood". The US Consul of Strasbourg shared with the community this ceremony completed with a French Army outfit, the local Firemen, the commander of local gendarmerie. We sure hope that someday the family can come!



Chronology of events and

general context of 7th Army troops by early January 1945

By early January 1945, the situation for the 7th Army Troops is fragile as the Units have to cover extensive lengths of ground. Boundaries are from the sector of Sarreguemines to the German Borders in Northern Alsace, until the south limits of the Vosges near Mulhouse.

After the German attack in the Bulge mid-December 1944, the high headquarters decided to take more Units of both the 3rd and 7th Armies to counterattack and push the Germans back in Germany. IN the following, General Eisenhower decided the Alsatian front was not crucial and ordered the US troops to prepare for a pull-back of the Northern Alsace to the Vosges mountains' boundaries. In this context, US Divisions were quite disorganized in Alsace, starting movements by end of December 1944 and early January. After a meeting with General de Gaulle and Churchill on January 3rd 1945, it was finally decided to limit the withdrawal to only part of northern Alsace. That saying, most of the population started to evacuate villages and were on the road among the moving troops. In addition, snow had started to fall widely in the Vosges and Alsace in the New Year's Eve. The weather element made even more uncomfortable the situation of the troops on the ground.

This very same day, January 1st 1945, operation "Nordwind" was launched by the Germans. First attacks occurred in 2 sectors of Sarreguemines and Bitche, and the second on January 5th with a bridgehead between Offendorf and Gambsheim.

Under this unfavorable context, American troops are having a hard time reorganizing and filling the gaps. Therefore, E Company, 222nd Rgt of the 42nd ID is ordered for truck movement from Illkirch, at South of Strasbourg to Soultz-sous-Fôret in northern Alsace on January 5th. Motor pool cannot provide enough vehicles for all troops of the 222nd Rgt.

En route to the north of Strasbourg, in the afternoon of January 5th, the Convoy of E Company is rerouted by the MP's in Hoenheim to report at CP 232nd Rgt in La Wantzenau. Lt. George A. Carroll commanding E Company is ordered to join Force B, 232nd Rgt Task Force for a counterattack launched from Weyersheim toward Gambsheim as the Germans are creating a bridgehead. IN the late afternoon, E company reaches Weyersheim to organize the attack. Ammo's for the bazookas are not available and only 2 of the 6 SCR-536 Radios of the company are functional. The A Force of 242nd Rgt had started the attack from the north axis toward Steinwald Forest. E/222 is to lead the attack followed by E/232 on the southern axis to reach the river Landgraben. Both forces have been under heavy fire of automatic weapons from the Steinwald Forest.

Order is given to reorganize by the Landgraben, but because of few radios coordination with other units is



almost nonexistent. During the first part of the operation five Sherman tanks are supporting the attack. January 6th, by 4 am, the attack is launched with E/222 leading the push toward the train station of Gambsheim. During this advance both E companies 222 and 232 have their toll of casualties but still reaches the outskirts of the railroad track by dawn. As the infantrymen enter the village, the tanks start to pull back leaving the troops with almost no artillery support, except the mortar company. Still the infantry progresses through the village, firing and launching grenades at points of resistance. Advanced troops can reach the townhall area and the RheinStrasse in the east-north part and others destroy the steeple of the church to prevent any Arty observer or sniper.

At this point, all outfits in the advance are low in munitions.

In addition, 5 Panther tanks with German infantry are signaled, so the order of withdrawal to the west of the village is given by Colonel Ellis, commander, Force B.

In the process, some troops can escape the village and reach the Landgraben line as others try to cover the withdrawal at a high cost of casualties. Reaching the area of the train station, Lt. Hartwell remains in an exposed position trying to coordinate his men to come under cover. He is then mortally wounded by artillery and later a medic diagnosed him not being transportable. Under heavy enemy fire and with no artillery cover, American wounded and dead must be left behind.

Ever since, Lt. Hartwell has remained MIA. As some wounded men are staying at the Train station, others are just across staying in the house of the Family Schall, owners of the restaurant "Zur Eisenbahn". German



troops are entrenched all around and no one tries to go outside his shelter as shelling keeps going from both sides. Eugénie Schall and her father-in-law Philippe Schall are taking care of several wounded during a couple of days. 2nd Lt. Arthur W. Vervaet E/232 wounded by shrapnel found shelter in their house, and in recognition of their help gave a one dollar note of 1935 to Eugénie. That same day, close to their garden, she could see outside the body of a dead GI holding a booklet in his hand. Within the following days the

Germans came to evacuate and take prisoner the valid remaining GI's. After the war, Arthur Vervaet came back with his wife and kept in touch with the Schall family. Mrs. Suzanne Zinck, daughter of Eugénie Schall gave us the testimony of her mother.

During the operations of the bridgehead, German Troops had an Aid Station in a Maginot line bunker, most likely the "Muehlrhein". The main Military hospital was located on the German side, in Freistett. If any GI was treated there, no report is known to this point. Though, ID Tags of Lt. Hartwell were found there in the 90's, and to this day he is still reported MIA.



that all was clear in Gamsbheim and Offendorf by early January. As he talked with the mother, he added that he had family in Germany and that he was planning to come back after the war. The next day he was lying dead in their courtyard. The family buried him on the property. The

house was located on the north-east of Gamsbheim, 20 Rheinstrasse and was partially destroyed by shelling during the combats. The father Eugène with his wife and the two daughters took shelter in the cellar. Like all valid men, Eugène could be enrolled in the Volksturm and so tried to hide from the Germans. From there, they can listen to the Germans shouting and firing at the Americans. Anne Vix, granddaughter of Annette Vix, sister of Suzanne Jung collected both



Mrs. Suzanne Michel, born Jung, remembers a Boy being in the area of their house coming to their house to say

testimonies.



At various places of the Villages, German troops ordered the civilians to bury the dead American soldiers.

A common grave is created at the

cemetery close to the church at Bettenhoffen. Several GI's are reported there by Maxime Kleinpeter, interpreter with

American forces. Casualties are high among both Regiments 232 and 242 and as well in E Company/222 itself having suffered more than half its strength, killed, wounded or captured.

During January, shelling and combats are increasing in and around Gamsbheim.

BY January 15th, the German commander of the troops in Gamsbheim decided to evacuate the remaining population in Germany. Most of the civilians were transferred in the Black Forest near Oberkirsch.

The French army troops brought them back as they reached the Black Forest area in April 1945.

By April 20th 1945, The Grave Registration Unit came to Gamsbheim to exhume the bodies of Joseph Patterson G/242, Dominic De Luca E/222, John Ratchek E/222, Eugene Crabtree E/232...Among the buried soldiers were some unknown like Lt. Hartwell. Which one was he?



Investigations have been followed by Christophe Viller and Eric Schell, both found of History specialized in US Army WWII and Zachariah Fike, US Army Historian.

An X-file with matching matters was suggested to the next of kin of Dallas B. Hartwell, when the family was contacted 3 years ago. DPAA allowed a procedure of identification at the request of the Hartwell Family. We are all hoping that will come to a positive issue soon and that the Lt. Hartwell remains will come back home.

Becky Brown, the niece of Dallas B. Hartwell has expressed the recognition of the family to remember their missing uncle.

Many more testimonies should be told and any complementary information, document or photo is welcome to complete this page of history. You can join me at: ch.viller@gmail.com

Hoping that some of you will have the opportunity to visit this place of history.

Photo 1 – Lt. Dallas B. Hartwell

Photos 2,3,4 and 5– The plaque dedication ceremony; center: Gary Hess, family member of Lt. Hartwell

Photo 6 – Gamsbheim Train Station

Photos 7, 8 and 9 – Mrs. Shall; Lt. Arthur Vervaet; the dollar bill he gave Mrs. Shall

Photos 10, 11 and 12 – the Jung residence; the Shall-owned Restaurant “Zur Eisenbahn” 1920 and during the war

Photo 13 – the plaque.

NEW WORLD, NEW LIFE

The Life and Service of Thomas S.F. Chin

Companies L and M, 242nd Infantry Regiment, 42nd Infantry “Rainbow” Division

By his daughter, Betty Chin

My brave and courageous father, Thomas Chin left China in the late 1930s and headed to the United States of America. Thomas had dreams and goals and he achieved them successfully against all the odds, including exclusion laws. He traveled to the USA from a small village in Tai Shan, China as a young teenager who didn't speak English and his father died shortly after their arrival to the USA. He enrolled himself at Brookline High School for a couple of years and then answered the urgent call for WWII servicemen and he enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1944, assigned to the famous 42nd Infantry Division. My Dad was in heavy combat in the European Rhineland and in the worst winter there, conditions he was not accustomed to coming from southern China. He did not speak English very well, ate new foods, and he was foreign to his fellow soldiers, but my Dad carried out orders, survived it all and returned to the USA.



My father received an honorable discharge as a Corporal in 1946, awarded several medals and the meritorious Bronze Star Medal, recognized for his expert marksmanship with the Combat Infantryman Badge, followed by the distinguished Congressional Gold Medal (CGM) posthumously awarded in 2021.

The Congressional Gold Medal was awarded to all Chinese American Veterans that were registered through that project. The CGM was awarded to many Chinese American Veterans who had already



passed away, hence posthumously for my father and many other Chinese American Vets.



family brought him a lot of joy. My father was a successful businessman and a very much appreciated, great father. While he did not speak about his WWII 42nd Infantry Division war experience it changed the way he looked at life and he was grateful for the good life he created in the USA and shared with his family. New world, new life!

My father married my mother and they wanted many children, having 6 kids and his

SEARCHING FOR PRIVATE LUNG SUN CHIN



In an email to this editor dated July 16, 2025, Betty Chin wrote: "I did my family cemetery visits the other day and happened to stumble upon this head stone in the WWII burial section in Boston, MA.

Is there any info you might have in your database on:
Mr. Lung Sun Chin
PVT. 14 SERV. GP. AAF
OCTOBER 10, 1915
JULY 30, 1944

Thanks for help on anything you might dig up."

Betty told us that Pvt. Chin was not a relative and sent a photo of the grave stone she discovered at Mt. Hope Cemetery, Boston, MA.

In discovering information about this Soldier's service, we teamed up with Patrick Chaisson (LTC, Ret.), RDVF Historian Emeritus, Erin Faith Allen, battlefield historian and Jim Fisher, WWII Rainbow son and WWII Rainbow Division Battle Deaths researcher, all dedicated to understanding the histories of our veterans and our country.

Combining his responses July 20, 2025, Pat Chaisson wrote:

"The reason why I am writing is to forward along the (sadly meager) results of my search on the wartime service of PVT Lung Sun Chin, US Army Air Forces. Please let me express my apologies for not being able to find more on this individual. I also admit that the data provided leaves me confused and wanting to know more.

"First, you'll find a Draft Registration Card (front and back) on Mr. Chin dated 16 OCT 1940. The second document (again, front and back) is an application for a headstone dated 24 FEB 1945. I also found a roster of Suffolk County MA war dead showing PVT Chin's cause of death -- DNB. This stands for Died, Non-Battle,

and indicates that a soldier died while serving in the line of duty, but not due to combat-related injuries or deaths in a combat zone.

“Unfortunately, that's all I have on his death. I don't know why, how, or where he perished. A search of the National Archives' holdings in St. Louis might uncover more, but sadly most WWII-era paper files stored there were destroyed in a fire several decades ago.

“Take a look at the Headstone Application (page one) again. Someone inscribed his unit of assignment in red crayon. They did not do a good job. I can't read it and I used to teach High School English! Anyway, that may have led to an error when the workers at Mount Hope Cemetery inscribed his headstone.

“Let me explain. The unit of assignment on PVT Chin's headstone says "14th Service Group United States Army Air Forces". Trouble is, there was never a 14th SVC GP USAAF. I think someone misread his file or just took a guess from the information provided. This happened a lot, and Suellen will remember helping our organization correct the headstone of PFC Silvio Campanella, Company A, 232nd Infantry Regiment, 42nd Infantry Division, who died in action on 19 JAN 1945 but whose grave marker was incorrect for decades (until we got it fixed).

“I'm guessing that's what happened to PVT Chin's headstone too. Unfortunately, I can't tell you with any certainty what unit he belonged to...but I can take an educated guess. Given PVT Chin's national origin, I can suppose he was sent to the 14th Air Force in the China-Burma-India Theater of Operations. The 12th Service Group supported 14th Air Force during WWII (a copy of their unit history is enclosed).

“As PVT Chin died in service, he would not have received discharge paperwork. The best we could hope for is something called an Individual Deceased Personnel File (IDPF), which was supposed to be completed on every soldier who died in service during WWII up until today. Note that I said "supposed to be completed". They often weren't done, and those that were completed mostly burned up in that 1973 Archives fire.

“I am afraid that if you want to know more about PVT Chin, you may have to either visit the Archives in St. Louis or hire a researcher to see if his personnel records miraculously survived the fire.”

As Pvt. Chin's service number was on the information sent by Pat, Erin Faith Allen was able to contact the NPRC to ask first, if his Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) was still intact after the 1973 fire. She quickly learned that Pvt. Chin's file had burned and was no longer available.

Erin wrote, “I've just sent off the request to know if there is an IDPF or OMPF for Chin. Accessing it will require a trip to NPRC or a formal request through their site but at least we'll know what exists.

On July 23, 2025, a minor miracle occurred – Erin received Pvt. Chin's IDPF file electronically and forwarded it on to the team.

Suellen wrote:

“Erin and her contact at the National Archives have enabled us to find at least some answers as to the fate of Pvt. Lung Sun Chin, whose grave Betty found in the same cemetery as her father's resting place recently. First, the National Archives confirmed that his personnel records were burned in the fire of 1973. But today Erin received his IDPF. It is the briefest one I've ever seen but has this information:

cause of death: mediastinitis (spelled in the IDPF as mediastintis)

place of death: Station Hospital, Buckingham AAF, Fla.

“I had to look up this debilitating disease and it seems to have the potential of a number of causes. Just my humble guess is that after Pvt. Chin's enlistment and training in 1941, he was sent somewhere out of the country where his health was affected and he was returned to the USA for treatment, unable to be saved and died in hospital.”

Pat then wrote, “Good morning. I was fascinated to read the IDFP on PVT Chin (great work, Erin!) and thanks to that document may have discovered another piece to the puzzle surrounding his service.

“His correct unit of assignment is the 14th Air Service Group, which has a very unusual story. Briefly, the 14th was specifically organized and manned with bilingual Chinese-American soldiers for service in China with Gen. Chennault's "Flying Tigers" (14th Air Force). Anyway, the unit was for a time in early 1944 stationed at Venice Army Airfield in Florida (I've been there -- it's all condos and shopping malls now).

“I am going to guess that PVT Chin contracted mediastinitis while stationed at Venice AAF and was transported to Buckingham AAF (about an hour away by ambulance) where he unfortunately succumbed to his condition.

“A brief US Air Force history of the 14th Air Service Group is attached.”

Here is the part of its history concerning the unit's OPERATIONS:



“The **Fourteenth Air Service Group** was made up of Chinese Americans, many who responded to articles describing the units and the need for Chinese men who spoke Chinese and had technical skills, to serve in China. The 407th Air Service Squadron and the 987th Signal Company were created under the Fourteenth, followed by the 555th Air Service Squadron, a quartermaster company, and two ordnance companies. Units under the Fourteenth Air Service Group were created as hundreds of Chinese Americans heeded the call. The service group was sent to the China-India-Burma theater in early 1944. It was a frontline unit made up of mechanics who traveled with and provided routine services for aircraft. Supplies, support equipment and technicians also were included which made the service group invaluable and a target for the enemy.

“The 14th Air Service Group was formed in a very unique way in the summer of 1942. General Claire Chenault, commander of the Fourteenth Air Force and General Stilwell, Supreme Armed Forces Commander in China, requested to have a group of Chinese Americans who spoke Chinese and English fluently, to support the American Armed Forces in the China, Burma and India Theater. As bilingual administrators, engineers and technicians they coordinated and supported the functioning of 14th Air Force airfields and as mechanics and specialized technicians they recovered, and repaired battle-damaged aircraft operating in Chinese Theater of Operations. Coincidentally, it was learned that such a group already existed and was employed by the 5th Air Service Command at Patterson Field, Ohio. Immediately, a high priority communication was sent to the War Department for confirmation and details. The answer confirmed that the existing group of twenty civilian workers were highly trained as radio communication technicians and was headed by Mr. Sing Yung Yee. Secretly, through the arrangement between the 5th Air Service Command and the War Department, Mr. Yee and his staff had agreed to enlist into the United States Army Air Forces. Mr. Yee was then commissioned as Second Lieutenant in command.

“In the same year, the 407th Air Service Squadron left Patterson Field, Ohio. They embarked from Newport News, Virginia to Oran, North Africa, and then to Bombay, India. Many of the personnel were shipped to China by air, and the rest via the Burma Road at a later date. These men, with their administrative, electrical and mechanical skills, helped service the aircraft in combat against the enemy. The rest of the 14th Air Service Group soon joined them in the China, Burma, India Theater.

“At the end of the war, in August 1945, the majority of the 14th Air Service Group returned to the United States via Shanghai to Seattle, Washington, for their final processing and discharge.”

From Erin – “It's always the most wonderful thing to know that a service member is remembered - and an honor to pitch in however possible.

Betty, please do tell PVT Chin - and your father - a thank you from me the next time you visit with them. Pat, I agree with Suellen. This is an important piece of our history you've brought to light through Betty's discovery. Team work makes the dream work!”



On July 27, 2025 Betty wrote:

Erin et Al,

Your kindness and research help truly touched my heart. Connecting with you is an incredible privilege and through our communications I have learned a lot of history on the 42nd ID and about the U.S. Army.

I reached out to the local VFW post and alerted them to Mr. Chin's grave to ensure he receives the proper considerations and flag placement during Memorial Day. Thank you and my heart overfloweth with gratitude.
Respectfully, Betty Chin

Photo is one sent by Betty; with her, last May 2025 at the Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site for the 80th Anniversary of its liberation are Ludwig Stoeckl and his wife, Evelin, who unfailingly support the Rainbow Division Veterans Foundation in honoring this commemoration each year.

Flying Tigers of WWII: Claire Chennault and The American Volunteers Who Saved China

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PtlFpCLNosa>

3:20 in length; For first 23 min. Bio of Gen. Chennault; at 23 min. the history of his forces is narrated by Gary Sinese.

How to Tour Europe while on a Secret Mission

Being an Account of a Trip made in Europe in the Spring of 1945

by Major F.G. Hammer



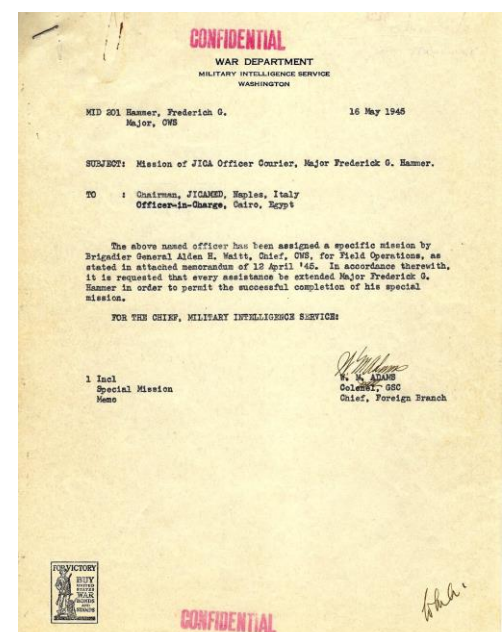
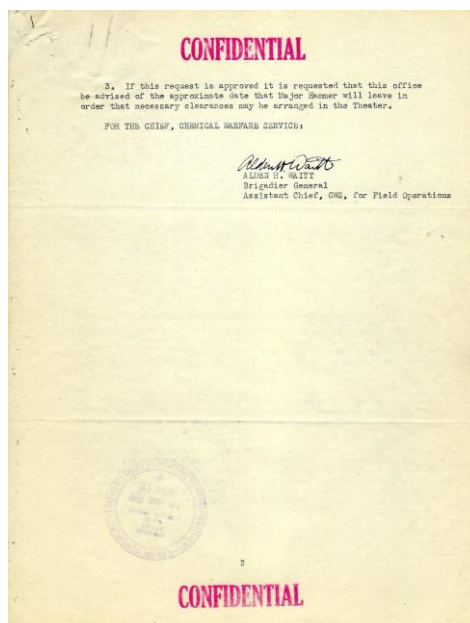
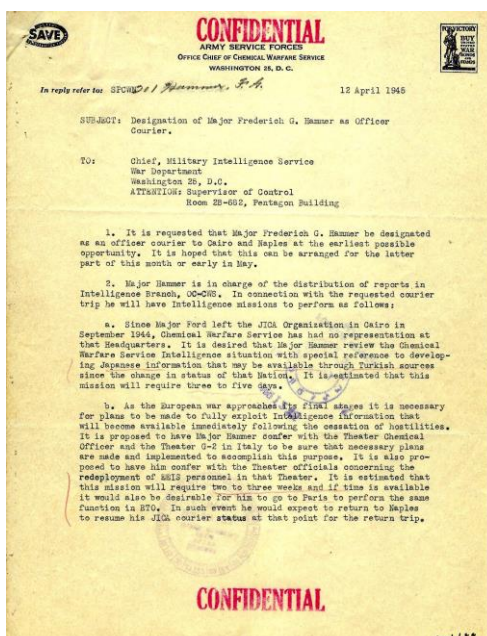
FRED HAMMER, WWI (RSM, HQ, 42nd Division)
and
WWII Veteran

Major, OC-CWS [Chemical Warfare Service], Wash. D.C.
and later, as Lt. Col. Chief, Intelligence Branch CWS
EUROPE IN 1945



(Orders were issued in May, 1945, by the War Department, sending me to the European, Mediterranean and Middle East theaters of Operation, and following my return an official report

was made to them covering military activities accomplished upon this trip. As this account omits all official aspects, and is merely a narrative of personal experiences, the first person is used rather than the third, because of the impersonality of the latter. The reader is, therefore, requested to pardon the necessary repetition of the "I" letter which may appear quite frequently. F.G.H.)



Thursday May 17th was not too hot, but on the warm side, and in the afternoon it began to cloud up. My plane was scheduled to leave the National Airport at Washington, D.C., at 7:30 p.m., but by that time we were having a terrific thunderstorm. So much rain fell in such a short time, in fact, that a puddle formed inside of the waiting room, having seeped in under one of the doors. Information received over the teletypes indicated that heavy showers of unusual intensity and line squalls prevailed along the course from Washington to Patuxent, Md., which did not lift until 11 p.m.

We finally took off in a shuttle plane for Patuxent, where we transferred to a Navy R5D plane which is similar to the Army's C54 – a beautiful, four-motored Aluminum job with the most amazing instrument panel I had ever seen. In the passenger compartment where I was the only officer, there was a detachment of enlisted personnel from the Navy, especially trained in submarine operation, who were on their way to England to return with captured German subs.

It was still raining when we left around midnight, and as the plane carried considerable cargo in the rear end, two petty officers and myself were asked to come forward during the takeoff, and this naturally gave us the opportunity to watch the proceeding from a better vantage point. About two in the morning we were served a hot meal, then bedded down for the night, some being lucky enough to find a bed on the floor of the plane for their blankets while the others tried unsuccessfully to lie “comfortably” on the bucket seats.

Friday morning early, we sighted land and learned that it was Newfoundland. Sweeping in to a perfect landing at Harmon Airfield, (Stephenville) at 7:30, we debarked for breakfast at the post mess halls. As I looked around at the bleak scenery, with snow lodging in the upper hollows of the mountains I tried to visualize as best I could, just how this country would look in the winter, when snow covered the entire landscape, and so realize the difficulties encountered in landing and take-off operations. We pulled stakes (or I should say “raised wheels”) about nine and headed southeast over the ocean at an elevation of from 7,000 to 9,000 feet. Most of the time we were above a thick white mass of clouds which gave the illusion of riding over a snow field, stretching as far as the human eye could reach. Occasionally a break would occur and I could look down as through a funnel, and see patches of blue water containing white specks of various sizes and shapes, which I finally decided were icebergs. They must look different from the air than from the deck of a surface craft.

Right after leaving Patuxent, a few “galloping dominoes” made their appearance, then a deck of cards was produced. At first the stakes were fairly high – then they grew smaller – finally lapsing into a game with no stakes. But by the time we were flying across the ocean, the boys were content to either read or look out of the small portholes, and all desire for cards had passed.

[to read a humorous article in explanation of ‘galloping dominoes’ by Ernest Hemingway published in the *Toronto Star Weekly* 20 May, 1920, <https://the-big-archive.com/galloping-dominoes-alias-african-golf-taken-up-by-torontos-smart-set/>]

About 1:30 p.m., we were served another hot meal. These hot meals on a Navy plane, incidentally, were unusual to me. They usually consisted of wholesome beef stew, a vegetable and a roll. Portions had been placed in a plastic plate with compartments, the entire meal frozen, wrapped in wax paper and stored in a box with dry ice. The plane steward would take them out, remove the waxed paper wrapping, and place them in a hot electric oven for a given time; when he took them out, they were piping hot. Plenty of good coffee, such as the Navy demands, and gets, was available in thermos jugs.



Our plane, officially listed as “Flight 141,” landed at Lages Field, Terceira Island, in the Azores at 6:32 p.m. Circling over and around, preparatory to letting down, I had a very good opportunity to see the neatly kept farms and outbuildings which covered the island. While waiting for the plane to be serviced and refueled, we visited a dining hall for a substantial dinner and then had a look around. It was beginning to grow darker however before our plane took off at 7:48,

so that by the time we had climbed to its flying altitude, the island had vanished below the clouds. *Lagens Field, Terceira Island, Azores 1946* <https://masterbombercraig.wordpress.com/post-war-raf-career/operation-lancaster-46/departure-graveley/lagens-azores/>

We were flying northeast, now, heading for the Brest peninsula, but well above a deep bank of clouds on which the moon played, creating a series of lights and shadows. This was, indeed, a most thrilling sight which gave one the feeling of moving over the surface of a snow-covered deserted planet. Every once in a while, we would hit a “thermal downdraft” (formerly called an “air pocket”), and we would drop down into the clouds with the same feeling which you have when a roller coaster car goes down a dip, then we would rise again to our former level. It was well past midnight when we discovered that we had left the ocean behind, and were over terra firma once more. Periodically we would see an occasional light or two way down beneath us, and occasionally a cluster of lights that indicated a town, was visible.



By Royal Air Force - <http://ncap.org.uk/frame/1-1-70-12-93>, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=33569677> Orly Airfield after two Eighth Air Force bombing raids, taken on 6 June 1944. The Luftwaffe-controlled airfield would have one more heavy bomber attack on 25 June, when 18 B-17s would bomb the facility.

A little after five o'clock we sighted Paris and slowing down passed directly over the metropolis. Below we could make out certain well-known landmarks such as the Eiffel Tower, Arc de Triomphe (the Seine, of course), “The Island” with Notre Dame Cathedral, and others. At last our wheels touched the runway at Orly Airfield at 5:48 a.m., Saturday the 19th, such a short time after leaving Washington that it seemed almost incredible. And yet it was sufficient time for a heavy beard to develop and so naturally the first thing I did was to look around for a place to shave and shower. Following this, I had breakfast at the Officers’ Mess, then went back to the terminal building to arrange priority and transportation on to my destination at Cairo. Incidentally, from this time on, I had to set up a priority for each trip I made – which was not always too easy – but “where there’s a will, there’s a priority!”

It was about 11:30 that morning that an Army DC3 plane arose from Orly Field, bearing this ambassador of good drill, and what a lovely day it turned out to be! The air was clear, the sun bright and the beautiful fields of France lay beneath us in the typically French crazy-quilt patterns so commonplace in every air photo.

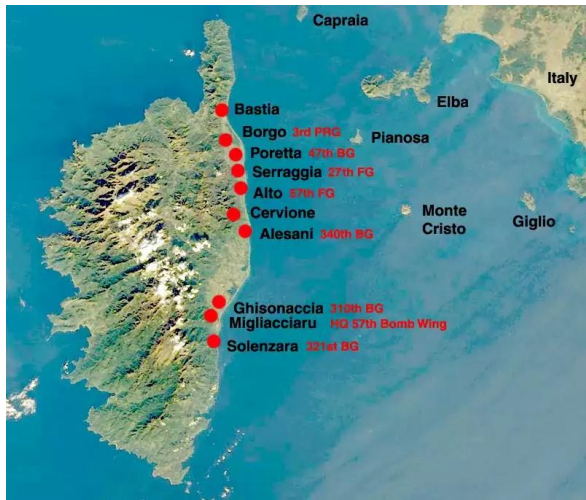
Heading southeast and crossing over Melun, Fontainebleau, Sens Auxerre and Avallon, we soon picked up the Rhone River valley that took us over Chalon-sur-Saone, Macon, Lyon (largest city between Paris and Marseille), Valence, Avignon and on to Marseille. So, we arrived at the last-named place in the afternoon at 2:33, alighting at Marignane Airfield in a swirling cloud of dust. This airfield had been heavily damaged by bombing, and skeletons of hangars with blue sky showing through their warped steel girders, were visible about the place. After a hot lunch we resumed our trip, departing at 3:30 – and it was beginning to warm up inside the plane.

Now came a beautiful ride, though bumpy at times. For a time, we were over the mountains on the east of Marseille – mountains of brown and gray.



Invasion of Southern France, Toulon, August 1944. Aerial view of the destruction to the harbor and installations at Toulon, France. Taken by crew of USS Catocin (AGC-5). Photograph received on 2 April 1946. Official U.S. Navy Photograph, now in the collections of the National Archives. (2014/7/10).

On our right, as we passed by, could be seen the great naval port of Toulon, where the French fleet was sunk in the harbor on the approach of the German armies. We passed over that landing point of the American forces which invaded France from the south, St. Tropez, then headed over the azure waters of the Mediterranean before reaching the vicinity of Cannes and Nice. With a blue sky, flecked with small white clouds above us and the blue Mediterranean flecked with occasional whitecaps below us, it was the proper setting for a picturesque ride. Oh! for a camera with some color film!

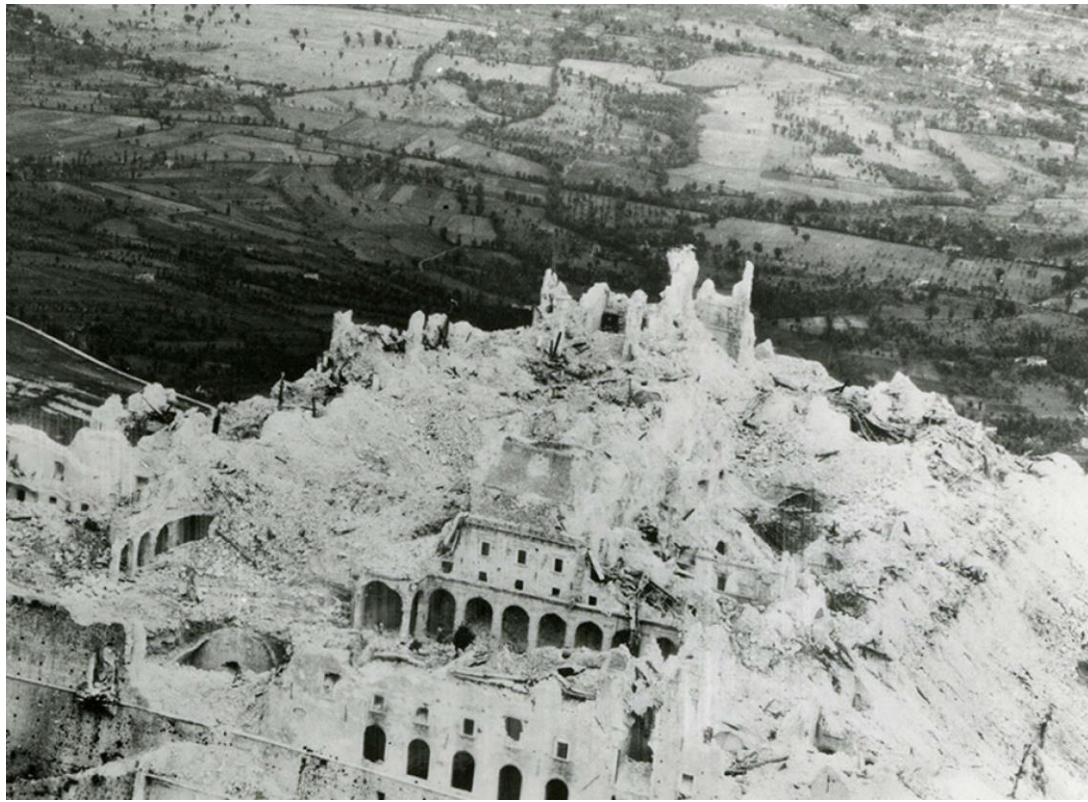


Soon we were passing by the northern end of Corsica, and as I gazed at its barren hillsides with snow still in the upper reaches, I wondered what Napoleon would have thought of his native island – if he could have seen it from the air as I was now doing. Then on our left the shores of Italy gradually materialized from the mists and soon we were flying over Italian soil.

Assigned 12th Air Force Group stations on Corsica Airfield Complex during 1944.

Southward we traveled, and from our windows we could see below us some splendid roadways running straight as arrows, from town to town. Suddenly the co-pilot opened the small door in the front end of the passenger compartment to announce that we would soon be passing over Rome. As we approached “The Eternal City”, the plane dropped to a lower level and circled about, permitting a wonderful view of this

historical metropolis. My eyes were so busy for the next few minutes as I tried to take in everything I could, that it left me almost dizzy. There were so many things to look for – the Tiber River, the “seven hills,” old ruins and modern buildings – Vatican City, the marshalling yards of the railroads (where plenty of bomb craters appeared to be the only sign of destruction to the capital of Italy), and many other sights I had in mind in connection with Rome.



Then swiftly it was all gone, left behind, and we were crossing over more mountains, with the roads not so straight now as in the flatter sections we had passed over earlier. We dipped down a little over Cassino, which had been so bitterly fought over during the Italian campaign and where casualties had been so high on both sides. The whole valley was pockmarked with shell holes and bomb craters and the

town itself was a mass of stone rubble. Up on top of the hill beyond the town could be seen the monastery which also had been heavily damaged.

Piles of rubble surrounding the bombed-out Abbey of Monte Cassino. Official caption on front: “The ruined Abbey of Monte Cassino after German Surrender. USAAF photo 232-6 from the collection of the National WWII Museum 2013-495-1681

Finally, just ahead of us, we could make out Mt. Vesuvius and at a word of caution from a member of the crew, adjusted our belts for landing. Circling around slowly, we dropped down, and landed at Capodichino Airport, one of those serving the city of Naples at 6:28 just as the sun was beginning to go down in the west. This, too, proved to be a dusty airfield, with steel link mats, but not nearly in as much bad shape as that at Marseille. A sergeant at the field arranged for me to stay at the Terminus Hotel, which was at the bottom of a long, winding hill, not far from the bay, and just across the street from the Naples railroad station; it was reached by a truck with seats, referred to as a “bus.”

Due to the late hour, the hotel dining room was closed when I arrived and I had to visit a café up the street for my evening repast. It consisted of a breakfast plate of spaghetti with tomato sauce and a small bottle of orange drink, at a cost of \$1.80! My room was clean, the bed was comfortable, and the private bath was equipped with a shower. After writing a letter I retired early – but because of so many interesting sights of the day my eyes were tired and sleep was slow in coming. Then, too, a motor park had been installed across the street, and with motorcycles, trucks and cars coming and going, it was a bit noisy.

The following morning, Sunday, I called at the local office on an official matter, arranged transportation, and was ready to leave again. The C47 plane on which I was a passenger (Flight 265) took off at noon. We traveled practically due east over the hills and mountains of Italy which was a surprise to me as I had not the least realization of the ruggedness of terrain in the central portion of this country, and finally sighted the Adriatic Sea where a series of fine roads converge on the town of Bari. Below us could be seen some of the boats which had been sunk in the harbor, still under water. Here we turned southward to the town of Brindisi, on the “heel of the boot” then swinging across the body of water that separates the Adriatic from the Ionian Sea. On our left could be discerned the shores of Albania and northern Greece, and the small islands just off shore.

Now, we were turning eastward, passing over the Corinth Canal, a long, straight ribbon of water with very little width. The Germans had sunk a weighted ship at the mouth of this canal when they evacuated the country and the boat was still there, blocking this waterway’s entrance. Finally we glimpsed Athens, away off in the distance, then the plane began to descend and the mountains rolled in to shut off the view. We landed at Eleusis Airfield, about 18 miles from Athens at 5:00 p.m., and had a bite to eat while ground crews came to refuel and service the plane. Taking off again about six, we headed southeast passing over Scarpanto Island (one of the Dodecanese) and getting a glimpse of the eastern end of Crete, off on our right. There followed a series of smaller islands, fringed with green water in contrast to the blue of the open spaces. Darkness fell and still we flew on until finally the lights of Alexandria, Egypt, gleamed brightly ahead; passing on, the town of Cairo finally greeted us with a blaze of lights from every street.

An Air Transport Command plane flies over the pyramids in Egypt, 1943. - NARA - 531163 – restored

<https://jenikirbyhistory.getarchive.net/topics/douglas+c+47+skytrain+of+the+united+states+army+air+forces>

Source: U.S. National Archives and Records Administration



The plane wheels touched the runway at 10:30 p.m., and we had arrived at Cairo, about 66 hours from the time I had left Washington – some traveling! As it was late, I had a bite to eat at the “Flying Wolf” dining room, and then bedded down at the airport for the night. Incidentally the Cairo airport is known as Payne Field. [John Payne Field Air Force Base]

Part II and Conclusion of Major Fred Hammer’s excellent secret mission adventure will unfold in our February 2026 issue of RAINBOW TRAIL.

Our many thanks to the family of Fred Hammer who sent us his own collection of materials to appreciate, share and preserve.

[Ed. For an interesting assessment of what Major Fred Hammer’s Secret Mission may have included, please visit

<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d40>

Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1945, The Near East and Africa, Volume VIII

811.79600/11-2145

Memorandum by the Assistant Chief of the Aviation Division (Walstrom) to the Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs (Henderson)

Preserving and Enjoying History with Honor

A SUMMER 2025 UPDATE FROM

HILBERT MARGOL, B Btry, 392nd Field Artillery Bn, 42nd “Rainbow” Division

A note from Hilbert on July 6, 2025 –

Suellen: I'm doing fine. Exactly two weeks after returning from Normandy, I went to Germany. Two days in Munich, a half day in the Dachau Concentration Camp, then to Nuremberg for a Symphony Orchestra recital special for our entire group of about 138 passengers, followed by six days on a beautiful boat sailing on different rivers, stopping at different cities for land tours. Everything first-class for me and my son, Jerry, plus a special deal for my daughter-in-law, Laurie, to join us. Jerry and I were free of charge!! All I had to do was do a presentation about my 1945 experience at Dachau and respond to a lot of questions in response. A truly marvelous trip. With respect to Normandy, on D-Day Anniversary, Secretary Pete Hegseth spoke, along with his wife, to each of the 22

World War II vets. He was very gracious and didn't rush. Actually, I spent time speaking with his wife while he was talking to the vet on my right. But, no pictures were taken. A friend sent me a picture of me, along with two other vets, that he took a picture of, as it appeared on Fox News, on their D-Day program. We each were sitting in our wheelchairs. Just sent you the picture. Hilbert Hilbert Margol is on the left in this photo.



[Editor: Since then, on August 7, 2025 at the invitation of Crestwood Preparatory College of Toronto, Ontario, Canada on a ZOOM call, Hilbert participated with others in the sharing of memories of the history of the Dachau Concentration Camp for their Oral History Project.]

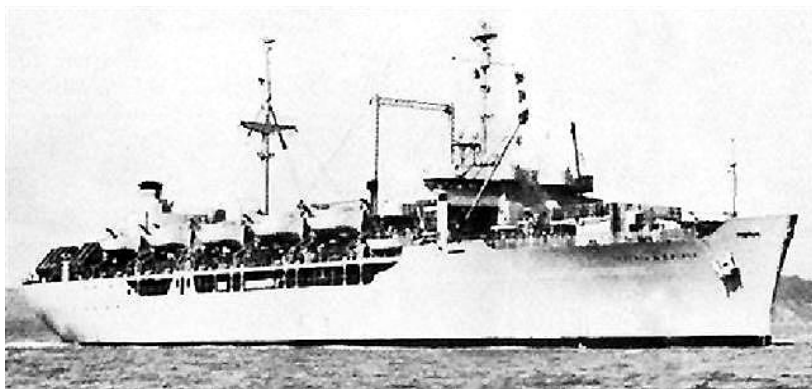
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zr8WnIWafOY>

RAINBOW RIFLEMEN PART VIII

By Robert "Bob" Spearing

Company G, 242nd Infantry Regiment, 42nd Infantry "Rainbow" Division

November 29, 1944 – From the ship's log



The ship was steaming along at 14.7 knots, Latitude 36°, 03 Min. N., Course 95T, 51°, 22 Min. W.

The *Black* is dropping behind convoy to conduct gunnery practice at 9:03 a.m., ceased firing at 09:15.

Ammunition expended, 1276 rounds of 20mm, 140 rounds 1.10, 75 cal., 15 rounds 5-inch 38 cal. Ship back in convoy slot 21 by 10:00. Abandon ship drill for us troops at 13:41. Secured from this drill by 1400.

At 1900, Pfc. Ratcliff is going to entertain our platoon tonight with his magic. We have waited some time for this and are eager to see what he has prepared. All of us are bored stiff of being aboard ship. We are yearning for any kind of recreation that will help us pass the time. Ratcliff says that he'll attempt to put one of us under hypnosis, and by doing so, produce a considerable amount of glee for the rest of us. He says he's checked each of us out during the voyage and believes he will get the best results with my easy-going southern friend, Don Parrish. Don seems agreeable enough to all of this and readily submits to Ratcliff's order to lie down and relax on a waist-high bunk in the main aisle.

The thirty of us gather around to witness what should be an interesting stunt. I had never seen anyone hypnotized before so this is of great interest to me. Some of the others already consider this type of trance a hoax and are busy telling Ratcliff that to prove he's a faker, they're going to stick Parrish in the ass with a pin and see just how hypnotized he is. None of this appears to affect Ratcliff, he acts utterly confident and tells all of us to be quiet or he can't proceed. At this time, his manner is such that even the hecklers are impressed and stop ribbing him. As the noise stops, he tells Parrish to lay back and relax and to listen to everything he is going to say.

He begins by telling Parrish that he is going to get very sleepy, nice and sleepy, comfortably sleepy, and that his eyelids are beginning to feel very heavy. He will not be able to keep them open. Ratcliff drones on with the same phrases over and over again. Meanwhile, I personally can't see much change coming over Parrish except that he

does have his eyes closed and seems to be breathing quite regularly. Never the less, I am intrigued and expecting positive results.

Sure enough, after five minutes, Ratcliff is ordering Parrish to crow like a rooster. Oh boy, this is going to be great! Only ... nothing happens. Parrish continues to lie there motionless. Ratcliff continues to demand that Parrish perform, but to no avail. We are all becoming concerned for Parrish. Is it possible that Ratcliff has put him under such a deep, hypnotic trance that he has become paralyzed? Now how (if this is so) is he going to wake Parrish up?

By this time, Ratcliff is becoming uneasy. He says he'll give Parrish a post-hypnotic suggestion and then wake him up in the prescribed manner. He then turns to Parrish and tells him that in five minutes, after he wakes up, he will suddenly run up to Pfc. Ranjel (one of the squad), pull his cap off, and throw it on the deck. He then tells Parrish that at the count of four, he will awaken and feel just fine. Ratcliff counts to four, and Parrish doesn't wake up. Instead, he opens his mouth and lets out a loud snore! This is just too much for poor Ratcliff, and he just retreats from the compartment amidst a chorus of choice Army ridicule.

Someone shook Parrish awake and asked him what he thought of Ratcliff's hypnosis and he replied, "Oh, it's all crap!"

November 30, 1944 – From the ship's deck log

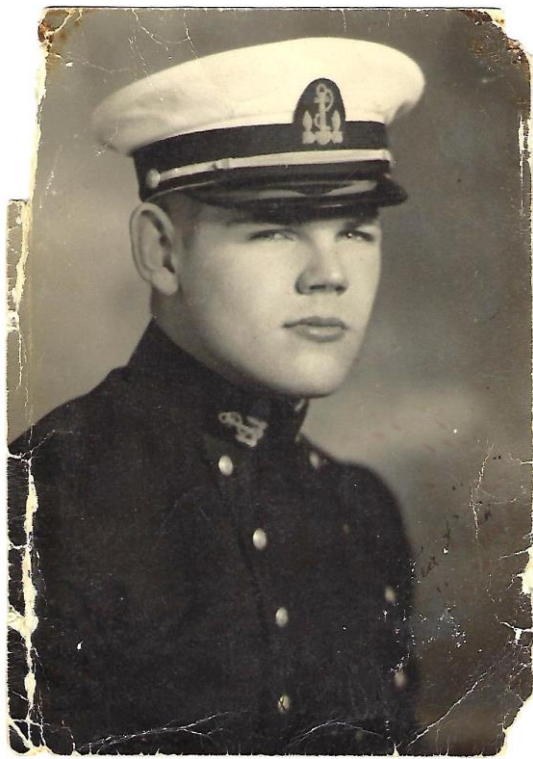
Underway on course 090 (T) 090 (pgc) at standard speed, 14.7 knots (69 RPM) varied to maintain position 21 in convoy UGF17-B, acting as Vice Commodore. Standing condition, IV watches. Material condition, "Baker" set. 0200, advanced ship's clocks one (1) hour, plus two (2). Time, 0400, position 35° 56 min. N., 44° 12 Min. W.

At 1600 – 2000, among ship's other details and exercises, the following always amused me:
1815 proceedings, findings, and sentence of deck court-martial in the case of Rhodes, D.C., Jr. (227-608) BM 2 cm USCG is published this date. Sentence: To lose sixteen (\$16) dollars per month of his pay for a period of two (2) months, total loss of pay amounting to thirty-two (\$32) dollars and deprivation of liberty on (get this, it was always on foreign soil, never in the U.S.A.) shore of a foreign station for a period of one (1) month. Sentence approved by convening authority, but the part of the sentence pertaining to deprivation of liberty on shore of a foreign station is remitted. Proceedings, findings, and sentence of a deck court-martial in the case of Jones, J.H., Jr., S lc, USCG, is published this date. Sentence: to lose five dollars and fifty cents (\$5.50) of his pay, per month for a period of two (2) months total loss of pay amounting to eleven dollars (\$11) and the deprivation of liberty ashore on a foreign station for a period of one (1) month. Sentence approved by convening authority, but (here we go again) that part of the sentence pertaining to deprivation of liberty ashore on a foreign station is remitted.

The more I observe the Coast Guard, the more I regret the day that I was turned down when I tried to enlist in it. With the heat of the Teaneck NJ Draft Board on my neck and knowing that it would only be a matter of time before they snared me anyway, I thought I'd better get into a service where I'd fit in best. I always admired the Coast Guard even though my father always made fun of them, calling them an "undisciplined lot" or referring to them as the "hooligan Navy." Being reared near the Jersey Shore and having had experience with the Coast Guard from private yachting adventures as far away as our Great Lakes, I had always admired their ability to be there and assist in all kinds of weather and danger. Also, I loved the shapes of their vessels, from the small picket boats in the Jersey inlets, to the 75-footers prowling the entrances to New York, or the huge, steel ice-breakers and patrol ships covering both of our oceans.

Creed of the U.S. Coast Guard <https://www.history.uscg.mil/Browse-by-Topic/History-Heritage-Traditions/Creed/>

One of my greatest experiences with a Coast Guard cutter came when I was on a yachting trip to the Chicago's World Fair in the summer of 1933. My stepfather's 48-foot Dawn Cruiser had just navigated the Erie Canal, Lake Erie Detroit River and Lake St. Clair out into Lake Huron. Forty or fifty miles northward, along the Michigan coastline, we came to the Port of Harbor Beach. We had to tie up at the municipal pier to replenish our gasoline and food supplies and tend to some repairs that were needed on the two huge, 8 cylinder Sterling petrol engines that could drive the yacht at 21 miles per hour with both throttles wide open.



Robert Spearing III, age 14, April 1935 Admiral Farragut Academy; photo is from the family of Bob Spearing.

Each engine ate up 15 gallons per hour, which meant the boat could cover about 200 (plus) miles in ten hours before the tanks would run dry. One day, they did run dry, but fortunately, we just made it to our destination before the engines cut. Our yacht was moored, much to my 14-year-old delight, directly in front of a new 125-foot, steel cutter. She was all white with teak decks and displayed the most beautiful sheer. She sat in the water like a queen, classy, but exuding an aura of unlimited power. The ability and grace of a true, deep-water sailor, coupled with the strength of the most powerful harbor tugboat. I couldn't wait to see if I could get aboard, and I didn't have to wait long. I quickly observed that many of the kids in the town were back and forth over her gangplank seemingly without restrictions. And so it was, that anybody was welcome aboard, especially kids.

Almost immediately, I made friends with some of the engine room crew. They were truly pleased to show me the two gleaming diesels and recite all of the statistics, then I got to know the mess crew. All I had to do to get a handout of fresh coffee and buns was to be in the galley at the

proper morning hour. The only restricted areas were the pilothouse and the bridge, and these, I was warned, were off limits to ALL of us. If we wanted to be free to come aboard, then we must never violate that order. We were also told to behave ourselves if any officers were about or they might decide to give us all "the boot," which was something the enlisted personnel said they would do with regret since they were all lonesome for their own kids and families, it was nice just having us around.

During the week that our yacht was moored there, the cutter made only one mission. It rendezvoused with an ore boat some two miles off shore to remove a dead crewman who, the cutter engineer told me, was a fireman who had dropped dead from a heart attack brought on by the extreme heat of the engine room. I didn't manage to see the dead fireman; he was whisked away in a hearse before anyone on the dock knew what the cutter's mission was. I just saw the cutter cast off and leave. She was a grand sight as she rushed away with the sound of her diesels pounding the air.

I was sad when our yacht was ready to leave two days later. But I was even sadder still, shortly after the outbreak of World War II, when I lined up at the Coast Guard office on White Hall Street in lower Broadway to see if I could enlist (the day after I learned that the Teaneck Draft Board had listed me as 1-A, and I was surely going to be inducted into the Army if I didn't do something about it fast). Being inducted into the Army would be a disgrace for me in view of my family background. I had no sooner gotten in line behind several other would-be recruits, when a Coast Guard seaman came along the line and asked to see our draft cards. He told me to "Fall out," and when I asked why, he said that orders had just come through that they were not to accept any 1-A draftees. I turned away disappointed and very upset. "To hell with it all! I'll go overboard, I'll join the Marines!" Their office was just fifty feet across the street, and I quickly entered a small, upstairs office where a Marine lieutenant was seated behind a desk. There was no line there, I was the only customer. The officer looked up and said, "What do you want?" I told him, and he looked me up and down and said, "Go home and lose 25 pounds and then I'll talk to you."

Since I wasn't fat, according to my standards (I always carried 200 to 225 lbs.) I was insulted. I just turned and walked out. The Army could have me now for all I cared.

Back to Lake Huron, before our yacht left for Chicago, I had one more visit aboard the cutter. Some of the crew's enlistments were up and a large seagoing cutter with an admiral aboard would be arriving to take these people off while, at the same time, replacing them with new men. All the kids in the area knew this and swarmed aboard to say farewell to their friends. I climbed aboard with them and went to the starboard rail to watch the transfer.

At 7 a.m., a huge, white cutter with a large stack, hove-to off the outer harbor breakwater, and a long boat was lowered. This proceeded in a leisurely fashion towards us. In the meantime, the commander of our cutter was like

a mother hen, ordering people about as to where to stand and how to conduct themselves when the admiral came to board. I can still recall the measured commands of the long boat coxswain: "Stroke, stroke, stroke. Stand by to toss oars! Toss oars!" The long boat glided perfectly into our cutter's starboard gangway, and was immediately secured. As the admiral mounted the stairway, the crew was brought to attention and the boatswain's pipe gave the proper salute. The admiral faced the stern and saluted the flag, and then swung around to face our captain saying, "*What the hell are you running here, an orphan asylum?*" None of us kids waited around to hear any more. We made a mass exodus over the port side and later that afternoon we learned that visiting would now be very restricted. The Captain wasn't speaking to anyone.

Friday, December 1, 1944—From the ship's log:

Course 88°, Latitude 35°, 39 Min. North Longitude 37°, 30 Min. W. Standard speed, 13.8 knots.

The ship's affairs go on regardless of what transpires with us Army people, and the scuttlebutt is all so amusing. For instance, at 11 a.m. today, the Captain presided over the "Captain's Mast" and the following punishments were dealt out to enlisted personnel for the following offenses: One T.H. Burkheimer, S, 2c, was caught standing watch in an improper manner, namely: rolled in a blanket reading a book. Then there was the case of a V.V. Banacki, Flc., apprehended while endeavoring to take a 5-gallon tin of milk from the galley. When questioned, he claimed to have oil in the can. Burkheimer was awarded Deck Court, and Banacki received 20 hours of extra duty. We Army people notice how lenient these punishments are. None of the miscreants are ever deprived of what would really hurt them most ... shore leave.

Saturday, December 2, 1944

We are not aware of it, of course, but the convoy is nearing the Azores, which places us just about half way to our destination. Course 92°, Latitude 35°, 62 Min. No., Longitude 31°, 16 Min. W.

The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to Lieutenant Commander James Jonas Madison, United States Navy (Reserve Force), for exceptionally heroic service in a position of great responsibility as Commanding Officer of the U.S.S. TICONDEROGA, when, on 4 October 1918, that vessel was attacked by an enemy submarine and was sunk after a prolonged and gallant resistance. The submarine opened fire at a range of 500 yards, the first shots taking effect on the bridge and forecastle, one of the two forward guns of the TICONDEROGA being disabled by the second shot. The fire was returned and the fight continued for nearly two hours. Lieutenant Commander Madison was severely wounded early in the fight, but caused himself to be placed in a chair on the bridge and continued to direct the fire and to maneuver the ship. When the order was finally given to abandon the sinking ship, he became unconscious from loss of blood, but was lowered into a lifeboat and was saved, with thirty-one others, out of a total number of 236 on board.

I am in a deep sleep. The time is 3:52 a.m., and I awake suddenly to find that the ship's engines have stopped. The only noise present is the creaking of the hull as it sloshes back and forth erratically in the huge swells. All power seems to be shut down, even the white lights at the bottom of the gangway. Only the dull, red glow from the emergency night lamps on the compartment stanchions can be seen in the surrounding darkness. All ventilation has stopped and the air is commencing to get warm and humid.

For a few moments, I'm dazed, but then I quickly realize what has happened and calculate the danger. If the ship has fallen behind the protective shield of the convoy and its escort vessels (and this has to be the case) she will become a prime target for any trailing U-boat. Now we are in a situation not very unlike the one my Uncle Joe found himself in while in command of the U.S.N. troop and cargo carrier *Ticonderoga* during World War I.



No one else in the compartment seems to be awake. All around me there are nothing but peaceful, sleeping sounds. This gives me an eerie feeling because at this moment, I think the best place for all of us is on the deck, and as quickly as possible! However, since we are not being alarmed by the p.a. system (I didn't realize at the time that this was also out of order due to the power failure) maybe I might be over-reacting to a situation that isn't as dangerous as I perceive it to be. Never the less, I want to know what's going on.

I quickly slide over the edge of my bunk to the steel deck. I grope my way through the bunk area and into the aisle leading to the main deck. This is not an easy task as the ship is rolling heavily from side to side, and in this new, strange silence, I can hear the splashing of the breaking wave crests against the ship's hull. As I'm about to ascend the stairway, the bright white lights suddenly flash on above me. At the same time, the ship's engines suddenly erupt into action and she surges forward under full power. All I can think is, "Praise God for this!"

Before I can adjust my eyes to the sudden white glare, a crewman bumps into me on his way to the stern engine room hatch. I grab his arm and ask what has happened. Luckily, he is one of the engine room gang and is able to give me a brief, but accurate description of the ship's problem. Due to a lubrication leak in the main generator, it overheated and shut down, throwing the entire load onto the auxiliary generator. This, in turn, also broke down. It took the Chief Engineer, Lt. Cmdr. Joseph E. O'Hagan of Oakland, California, and his able crew exactly 10 minutes from 0352 to 0402 to completely repair the damage. Also, in answer to my question about whether or not we had been completely abandoned by the convoy escorts at this time, the crewman told me that one of the convoy escorts had stayed with us throughout the entire repair operation and was now leading us as fast as she could, back to the convoy, which had long since disappeared over the dark sea. At 0511, the *Black* is finally back in her proper convoy position.

Whether or not the breakdown had something to do with it, I could never ascertain, but from the time the *Black* reentered the convoy, the entire day was taken up with emergency turns and zigzagging patterns that were all controlled by blinker signals from the escorts and horn soundings of all the convoy vessels. From the concentration and serious manner of our ship's crew during these maneuvers, I got the impression that this action wasn't just an exercise. There must have been a few U-boats in the area.

Later on in the evening when I asked how many knew that the ship had broken down during the night, strangely enough, none of my squad knew anything about it!

Sunday, December 3, 1944

It is a clear, sunny day. The ship is on course 102° at 15.5 knots and her position is 36°, 11 Min. N., 25°, 36 Min. W. This is the day that the boxing matches are supposed to take place. I only manage to see the one featuring the light heavyweights. As far as I'm concerned, it was just no contest. I think our boy (now identified as "Brinson") was just too much for his Marine opponent. From what I could see over the crowd, the Marine had his face continually battered by Brinson's jabs and hooks. There was no knockout since our boy never moved in close enough to finish the Marine off. I later learned that this was due to the fact that Brinson was recuperating from a recent hernia operation and didn't want to expose his gut unnecessarily. I had to admire him for even taking such a chance!



Although both fighters were about the same height, 5' 11", the Marine was blond and well knit. He was muscular and stocky with a true pugilist's flattened nose. Our boy Brinson, was a thin, dark-haired, long-armed individual who moved and lashed out with both mitts so quickly, that the Marine never laid a glove on him. He reminded me of Errol Fynn when he played the role of "Gentleman Jim Corbett."

Church services are held at 7 a.m. and 12:30 p.m., then again at 8 p.m., and I did not attend as usual.

Gentleman Jim (1942 film starring Errol Flynn)
<https://www.tcm.com/tcmdb/title/617/gentleman-jim#overview>

Monday, December 4, 1944 – From the ship's log

Course 94°, 15.5 knots, position 35°, 31 Min. N., 18°, 32 Min. W. 0354 Emergency turn, 45° to port. 0355, fire reported in crew's galley. Ventilator screen over galley stove afire. 0405, fire extinguished, two screen doors damaged by fire. 1340, abandon ship drill for troops. Engine trouble, minor, developed at 1535, 1545, defect remedied.

Tuesday, December 5, 1944 – From the ship's log

0400 hours: Ship underway on course 92°, standard speed 15.5 knots. Position, 35°, 17 Min. N., 11°, 37 Min. W. 1835 hours, columns 1 and 4 forming astern of columns 2 and 3 in preparation for passage through the Strait of Gibraltar. Cape Spartel Light sighted at 2035. 2314. Proceeding through Strait of Gibraltar.

All of us who were free, climbed to the deck to witness this. We all went to the port side. Naturally, we wanted to see “the rock,” but all we could see was some lights blinking along the distant shoreline. Also, we noticed the sea was flat and the ship had stopped rolling. There is no real joy in meeting this landmark. It only confirms that we are now 3000 miles away from our homes and our loved ones.

Wednesday, December 6, 1944

Still headed due east, course 90°, in Mediterranean Sea. Sky overcast and the air is cold. I'm surprised, I always had the idea that this sea was warm and tropical. The surface of the water is as calm as a lake, and although I've looked in every direction, there is nothing except our convoy in sight.

December 7, 1944

The course has been changed gradually since yesterday and the ship is gradually being brought to a northerly course. At 1500, convoy course changes to due north. We are now heading directly for Marseille, France. We should arrive there sometime in the morning.

Friday, December 8, 1944

It is a cold, gray day. Whatever sun there is, it's hidden behind a heavily overcast sky. All of our company, except those in sickbay or on some sort of duty, are on deck searching the sea to the north to catch the first glimpse of what I thought would be the sunny, green shores of Southern France. Instead, at least an hour before the drab, brown shore line does appear, the sharp, barren peaks of what I imagine must be part of the French Alps emerge, looking like a scene from one of those eerie epic Hollywood movies. The knife-like pinnacles thrust up above the surrounding clouds are all we can see from this distance, and it is a very foreboding sight. I can tell that I'm not the only one affected, too, because no one else is talking either. We just stand there silently taking it all in.

An hour and a half further on, when the coast and the Port of Marseille finally appear, it, too, is drab and uninviting. It's a big letdown for me. Somehow, I always had the idea (from Geography books) that this part of France was like Florida. All I ever heard from others was, “Ah, the South of France. Palm trees and sunny, white beaches. The Riviera, fabulous yachts, almost naked girls, gambling casinos, and exotic villas . . .” “I should have known better. All I had to do was check the latitude and I'd have found that Jersey City, New Jersey was farther south than Marseille, France! Now that I think of it, I think Jersey City, New Jersey looks a lot better, too!

From the ship's log:

A Moneglia [Italy]-French pilot, aboard 0935, off, 1037.

The convoy commences to slow down and assemble in a single file in preparation for entering the narrow breakwater, which is the entrance to Marseille Harbor. A French pilot boat steams up beside us and from its deck, hands are waving and people are shouting at us. Well, this is more like it, at least we're getting a welcome reception from our allies and we are pleased, that is until we are able to hear and understand what these Frenchmen are shouting about. When we do (and this takes but a moment), our short-lived joy turns to instant

rage because the lousy frogs are jeering us, and in the cruelest manner possible. Although the words are accented, we have no difficulty understanding: “Hey, you American! Blue braid (referring to the braid on our caps, signifying that we are infantry troops) Fresh meat, fresh meat!” They’re making it perfectly obvious that if we think that we’re doing them and France any favors by helping them toss the Germans out of their country, all we are is just the latest batch of cannon fodder. Lucky for them, our rifles were still with our gear and we had no

ammunition, because if we had, no authority on earth could have prevented us from blowing them all apart. The only way we could retaliate was to line up at the rail and give them a continuous and vigorous, “F.U. salute” until they sheepishly disappeared below decks again. None of our officers even made an attempt to dissuade us, either.

The mouth of the breakwater is partially closed by a small freighter sunk there by the Germans. Our ship glides by it with room to spare. I’m amazed to see how clear the water is and how every detail of the wreck is visible. This would never be the case in New York. Our waters are so dirty from raw sewage and garbage that even objects just a few inches below the water’s surface are completely obscured.

**The next episode of RAINBOW RIFLEMEN will continue
in our October issue of The Rainbow REVEILLE**

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