



Third US Army LH Newsletter

Volume 1, Number 5 – December 2012

## A Word from the Commander

Today, we all know that we live in troubled times. There is fighting overseas, the economy is not well and we are frightful for the future and according to the Mayans, this December 21st, we are all toast. At this time in 1944, the economy was not well, the war was still raging, and Hitler was annihilating thousands a day in concentration camps. The Battle of the Bulge going on and tens of thousands of troops had little food, poor clothing and were fighting in the snow and ice. It was the coldest winter in 50 years.

We look back a little over 2000 years ago. The economy was in bad shape, Caesar had issued a degree that all should be taxed more. Herod was going to order that all the male children under 3 years old be killed. He feared a Messiah was to be born, a child King that was to take his power from him.

Yet is all of this then and now, we take time to look around us and help those that need it, hold our loved ones close and find things to be Merry about. This is the season we call Christmas. The soldiers stopped what they were doing on Christmas day and hot food was bought in or air dropped in. With no ornaments they still decorated Christmas trees using what they had and even hung hand grenades from the trees. They stopped for a little while and sang some Christmas Carols. Hitler took his own life, Herod died and excruciating death, the child King Jesus lives on. The Mayans were wrong and well... There is one thing you can count on for sure

On December 25th, this Christmas day, there is time for Peace and Goodwill for all you love and all those that love you. Patton Third Army Living Historians is part of your extended family. Here is wishing you and you're a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Denny Hair  
(Patton)  
CG, Patton Third Army Living Historians

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*Lucky Forward* newsletter where we keep you informed and up to date on our current activities, and articles pertaining to our continued study of the Third Army. We want your contributions and experiences; send your stories to

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## Do not take council of your fears

By Gen. Denny Hair  
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Never and I mean Never be dictated to by how someone else or some organization does it. Those who have achieved greatness very often paid no attention to the ways things had always been done. Do not operate in a vacuum and be aware of how it was being done by others, but if they are not number one at what they are doing, then it does not work for them either.

The greatness of achievement is knowing where you want to go and then go there. You should not care how others do it unless they are number one in what they do. "Patton wrote, "You must be single minded. Drive for the one thing on which you have decided. You will find that you will make some people miserable; those you love and very often yourself. And, if it looks like you are getting there, all kinds of people, including some whom you thought were loyal friends, will suddenly show up doing there G'Damnst hypocritical best to trip you up, blacken you, and break your spirit..."

Patton was consistently number one in what he did. The list of his innovations in his chosen field is huge. He not only changed the cavalry saber in the U.S. Army, he became the first master of it, the first instructor of it and designed it. He then wrote the training manual. I mention this to you for a few reasons that are pretty dear to my heart. I want you to pay no attention to how others do things if they are doing it like everyone else. I want you to learn to think of ways to do it better and pay no attention to those that would have you do it their way because that is how everyone else did it. When horses were on their way out, Patton was fast becoming the world's expert on armor and mechanized cavalry. Cavalry tactics worked well but he used the most modern way he could find to deliver those tactics and use them. In WWII it was armor and fast aircraft. Aircraft covered his flanks, which had never been done before. His critics shuddered at that. Now they teach it.

When Patton studied the art of war he knew how it was fought from prehistoric time to his time. On the battlefield he knew his enemy and how they fought. He knew what they would do based on how they had fought and knew how they would react to attacks. He also knew how they would expect him to attack and he did what they would not expect him to do.

Patton wrote, "I have studied the Germans all of my life. I have read the memoirs of his generals and political leaders. I have even read his philosophers and listen to his music. I have studied in details the accounts of every damned one of his battles. I know exactly how he will react under any given circumstances. He hasn't the slightest idea what I am going to do. Therefore, when the time comes. I will whip the hell out of him."

Most of my life I have heard other people tell me how others did it and why I had to do it this way or that. When you rejected those ideas and do it the way it needs to be done to make it happened you will find you are right and those world experts were full of themselves. The impossible is just an excuse not to find a way to make it happen by those who believe in their own limitations. Look at Patton, Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, John Pershing, Robert E. Lee, and even Napoleon Bonaparte and they succeeded by knowing their craft and going forward. They all did things that they were told were impossible. Patton said you are not defeated until you admit it. So...never admit it and you won't be. When the great generals did fail, they usually took council of their fears and failed. One of Patton favorite says was, "never take council of your fears." He was, unfortunately, surrounded by superiors and peers who did take the council of their fears and missed the moment in time they could have been insured of a victory. This fact, more than any other, prohibited and slowed Patton. He cost many lives because others could not understand and see what he saw. Patton fought more battles off the field than he did on the field. Had he been allowed to fight the way he saw it, it would have finished the war in August of 1944, if he had the backing of all of those above him and was allowed to do it. Ike thought small and so did Bradley. They knew that Patton knew more about battle than they did. He knew it too.

It has been said he was not a modern man. That is utter BS. He was the most modern commander on the field. He was so because he had studied history all his life. That is the key to the future. He knew all the enemy knew but they did not know what he knew. He was not just one but many steps ahead of them. In fact he was many campaigns ahead of them and his superiors, none of which were superior to him on the battlefield and they knew it.

I want you to be that way. Ways ahead of all the reenactors, living historians, societies, associations, museums, historical groups, think tanks, and the status quo. Our way will be the way all others will set their standards, Remember to be the very best, you must study how the others do it, know history and then chart your own way.

At the moment, there is no other organization like us. There were no short cuts. When I first started out I was laughed at. No one laughs now. Don't think about doing anything like everyone else or you'll be like everyone else. Pay no attention to the nay say'ers. You are going to be the best there ever was. We will chart new ground and not cover the ground that others have already been.

We want to be way ahead of everyone in what we do and they will try to copy us. By the time they have, we will be where they are not and they will have to start all over to catch us. By the time they get to where we were we will not be there.

Remember don't care how the other guy does it. A copy is a reflection of the real thing no matter how good the copy is. We will not be the copy; we will be what are copied. Remember, Patton knew what the enemy was going to do but they had no idea what he was going to do.



## Christmas Day 1944 Patton Headquarters What they knew

By Denny Hair  
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December 25 1944 Monday Christmas Day

Daily Briefing 3rd Army Headquarters Luxembourg

0900 hours

December 25 Colonel Wallace, G-3 who attended these meetings wrote of it.

"At the Christmas Day briefing, the Air Officer announced: 'It is prophesied by our weather men that the present clear weather will continue for at least another seven days.'"

That brought a general laugh from the staff, because there hadn't been that many clear days all winter and it just seemed impossible that such a miracle could continue. But the officer went on to explain that "through a freak of nature, two high-pressure areas from opposite directions had come together directly over us, that they were approximately of equal force, and that the clear weather would continue until one or the other weakened and gave way."

And that is what happened. Call it luck, a freak of nature, Providence, what you will; it was a thing that might not happen again at such a psychological moment for a hundred years. For seven days our air force blasted the Germans from the air, while our ground forces battered them on the ground.

The Bastogne pocket was still holding, and air drops with medical supplies, food and ammunition were made into the area almost daily. Then a large group of gliders was sent in and in them, besides much needed supplies, were nine doctors.

The enemy surrounding the Bastogne pocket was beginning to use white snow suits and his tanks were painted white. General Patton ordered our men in the front lines similarly equipped and the Belgian hills began to take on a ghostly appearance as the white figures flitted here and there. Even our artillery guns were painted white, which made them almost invisible in the fields and woods except when the red flashes would show up as they fired. And under the snow many bodies lay for days during this bitter fighting, covered only with the soft white blanket of nature. (Wallace, Brenton G., Patton and His Third Army, Harrisburg, PA: Military Services Publishers, first printing 1946. Pg. 158-159)

It should be noted that Chaplain O'Neal as the Almighty for good weather. It did not go unnoticed in Patton's Headquarters that "Call it luck, a freak of nature, Providence, what you will, it was a thing that might not happen again at such a psychological moment for a hundred years"

During the Battle of the Bulge, Major John Carvey was in charge of dropping medical supplies to the 101st Airborne Division, which was trapped in Bastogne. Due to low cloud cover and horrible weather conditions, the first attempt to make the drop missed the mark and over half of the supplies were dropped behind enemy lines. Major Carvey was working in an office in the Pescatore and hoping not to encounter the General because he knew that the General would know about this unfortunate error. Patton did not take kindly to mistakes!

Lt. Col. Stillman wrote of this day of an incident that shows another side of Patton that his men knew but not many others. "According to Major Carvey, 'So here I was in this office and I heard Willie coming down the hallway. I knew those telltale noises of Willie's toenails. You could hear it everywhere. And I said to myself, 'Oh, praise God, I hope he doesn't stop here' because I didn't want to talk to the General about this first mission. But Willie came up and the toenails stopped clicking so I knew he was standing right outside my door. I didn't move. Finally the door burst open and there he was in all full battle gear. He yelled at me in that high screaming voice of his, 'Major, your goddamn mission was a failure.' I said, 'Yes, sir' in a stutter. He looked at me with those piercing eyes of his and said, 'Well, what the hell are you going to do about it?'" Major Carvey managed to stammer out that he had already scheduled a second mission with additional protection that would be more accurate than the first. His extreme nervousness was apparent to Patton. "I'm sure I chattered and my knees were knocking. My hands were shaking by my side. He looked at me and said, 'Are you scared of me?' I replied, 'Yes, sir.' He inquired, 'Are you married?' I said, 'No, sir.' Then he smiled and said, 'Major, I want you to make me a promise. When you get back to the States, the first thing you're to do is to get married. After you've been through the hell of married life, there will be nothing that I can say to you that will frighten you again.' With that Patton and Willie did an about face and marched away-leaving me speechless." (Stillman, Richard J. /Riggs, Mary F. General Patton's Best Friend, The Story of General, George Smith Patton, Jr. and his Beloved Dog, Willie. R.J Stillman Company, New Orleans 2001 pgs. 75-77)

Patton wrote, "Christmas dawned clear and cold; lovely weather for killing Germans, although the thought seemed somewhat at variance with the spirit of the day. I left early in the morning with the purpose of visiting all the divisions in combat, and succeeded in seeing two combat commands of the 4th Armored, the 26th, the 80th, the 5th, and elements of the 4th Infantry and 10th Armored Divisions.

It is to the great credit of the Quartermaster Corps that on this Christmas Day every soldier had turkey; those in the front had turkey sandwiches and the rest, hot turkey. I know of no army in the world except the American which could have done such a thing. The men were surprisingly cheerful.

When we were with Combat Command "A" (Brigadier General H. L. Earnest) of the 4th Armored, two German airplanes strafed and bombed us, but without success. This was the only time in the fighting in Germany or France that I was actually picked out on the road and attacked by German Air.

As a whole, the day was not too successful. We continued to advance, but we had not relieved Bastogne. Owing to weather conditions, Bastogne had not been resupplied from the air. The only bright spot was that the 5th Infantry Division had driven the enemy back to the Sauer River in its front, and killed quite a few when they tried to escape across the river.

Arrangements had been made for the 6th Armored to relieve the 10th Armored north of Luxembourg, and for the 35th Division, which had been in Metz since the night of the twenty-third, to move up and join the III Corps on the morning of the twenty-sixth, taking its place between the 26th and the 80th Divisions. The 80th Division would then join the XII Corps. (Patton, George S., Jr. *War As I Knew It*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1947. Pg. 202)

Colonel Charles Odom, Patton's physician under orders from directly from Patton, was sent in just behind the 4th Armored division with 70 ambulances and a field hospital unit. Colo. Odom wrote of this day, "I reported to General McAuliffe and told him we were prepared and ready to set up a hospital in Bastogne. His decision was that we should evacuate the wounded by ambulance. He was not ready to run the risk of setting up a hospital in the area. There was a 15 mile perimeter around the city. We loaded the wounded on ambulances and evacuated them to a hospital in Luxembourg. We left behind in Bastogne a complete surgical team and all the supplies and equipment they would need. (Odom, Charles B. General George S. Patton and Eisenhower. Tallahassee: Rose, 1985 pg. 67)

*Excerpts from Patton's Third Army Headquarters From the Ground up and the top down, day by day by Denny Hair ©*

**"Courage is fear holding on a minute longer"**

**GSP**



## Third Army Hero Major Thomas Raymond Iverson

*Third Army Hero is a recurring biography series of individuals who served with Third Army*

Date and place of birth: 10 March 1912, Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Date and place of death: 18 September 1993, Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Major Iverson's military career began in 1931 as an enlisted man with Company B, 109th Engineers, South Dakota National Guard, in Brookings. In 1933 he was assigned to Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 147th Field Artillery in Sioux Falls. He was commissioned on 25 November 1940, at which time he entered federal service. After completing Pilot training, Major Iverson served with the XIX Tactical Air Command under the

9th Air Force, and was attached to the 79th Infantry Division. After the Normandy landings, Major Iverson was attached to Third Army as a Tactical Air Liaison Officer until 1946. After World War II, Major Iverson continued his service with the South Dakota National Guard, becoming commander of Headquarters Battery, 147th Field Artillery. During Major Iverson's National Guard service and he was called up for Federal Service during the Korean War and during the Berlin Crisis in the early 1960s. In July 1964, Major Iverson was promoted to Colonel and transferred to the Army Reserve.



**Major Iverson directing aircraft to a target in Germany, 1945.**

Patton and His Third Army Living Historians are proud to recognize Major Iverson as the Third Army Hero for December 2012 and he is portrayed by Ken Austin.



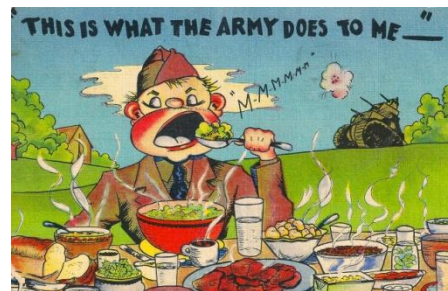
## Welcome to New Third Army Members

By Gen. Denny Hair  
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Please welcome

Charles "Chuck" Toney "Chef of Patton's Mess"

I am a professional educator teaching high school social studies in the Ft Worth ISD. I went through JROTC and ROTC in high school and college and served both as an enlisted man and an officer in



the army. I ran the mess hall at the military school I attended as a youth supervising the student waiters, the cleanup after meals, and assisted the school's baker with his daily duties. In college, I served as staff on The Citadel's yacht; the "Southwind" cooking the meals served to guests of the president of the college in the galley and supervised the serving of said meals to the general and his guests (Gen. Mark Clark and Gen. Hugh Harris). Living history has been part of my life for years employing it in my classrooms and at events was I tell the story from a first person point of view. I feel the connection with Gen. Patton in that when I visited ancient battlefields such as Marathon, Greece, I felt as though I had been there before...

I realize this is WWII, but I have also set formal, period correct dinners at Civil War events complete with period correct china that I own, silverware, salt cellars, wine, and complete menus on tables set with my own linen cloth and napkins. It would be a true pleasure to be doing that for your staff. Know, I do it "right"!

Ken Austin XIX Air Tactical Command Liaison to 3rd US Army



Ken will be assuming the role of Major Thomas Raymond Iverson, Major, 9th Air Force, XIX Tactical Air Command as the Liaison to Headquarters, United States Third Army (see *Third Army Hero*, pg. 4)

Ken has been doing Living history since 1979 and was the first president of one of Texas' first WWII reenactment groups. He has portrayed both axis and allied troops. He is former law enforcement and is an expert in firearms. He is currently a Regional

Safety Manager for an oilfield services company. I have known him for over 30 years. In addition to his interest in knowledge of WWII, he served with me in the Civil War Reenactment Cavalry, 3rd Texas Cavalry and 6th US Cavalry as a mounted trooper for several years. Ken has a broad base of knowledge in both German and Allied military history.



## Chaplain's Corner

By Rev. Kenneth Stewart  
1971chevellness@sbcglobal.net

Bible scripture for the month of December:

Luke 2:8-20

New International Version (NIV)

8 And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. 9 An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. 11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. 12 This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

13 Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

14 "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

16 So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. 17 When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, 18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. 19 But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. 20 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

In December 1944, Gen. George S. Patton Jr. commanded the U.S. Third Army in their breakout from the Normandy bridgehead and race across France to the German border. Faced with lengthening supply lines and stiffening German resistance, the Third Army advance slowed to a halt. Even the weather did not cooperate, as rains and snow delayed supplies, mired his troops, and grounded air support. So Gen. Patton turned to prayer. This story can be told by none other than Colonel Chaplain James H. O'Neill.

"The True Story of The Patton Prayer" by Msgr. James H. O'Neill

(From the Review of the News 6 October 1971)

Many conflicting and some untrue stories have been printed about General George S. Patton and the Third Army Prayer. Some have had the tinge of blasphemy and disrespect for the Deity. Even in "War As I Knew It" by General Patton, the footnote on the Prayer by Colonel Paul D. Harkins, Patton's Deputy Chief of Staff, while containing the elements of a funny story about the General and his Chaplain, is not the true account of the prayer Incident or its sequence.

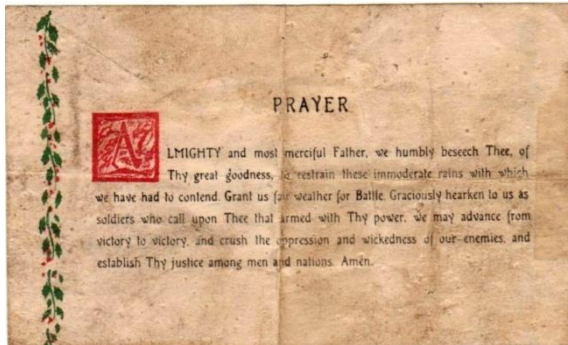
As the Chief Chaplain of the Third Army throughout the five campaigns on the Staff of General Patton, I should have some knowledge of the event because at the direction of General Patton I composed the now world famous Prayer, and wrote Training Letter No. 5, which constitutes an integral, but untold part, of the prayer story. These Incidents, narrated in sequence, should serve to enhance the memory of the man himself, and cause him to be enshrined by generations to come as one of the greatest of our soldiers. He had all the traits of military leadership, fortified by genuine trust in God, intense love of country, and high faith in the American soldier.

He had no use for half-measures. He wrote this line a few days before his death: "Anyone in any walk of life who is content with mediocrity is untrue to himself and to American tradition." He was true to the principles of his religion, Episcopalian, and was regular in Church attendance and practices, unless duty made his presence impossible.

The incident of the now famous Patton Prayer commenced with a telephone call to the Third Army Chaplain on the morning of December 8, 1944, when the Third Army Headquarters were located in the Caserne Molitor in Nancy, France: "This is General Patton; do you have a good prayer for weather? We must do something about those rains if we are to win the war." My reply was that I know where to look for such a prayer, that I would locate, and report within the hour. As I hung up the telephone receiver, about eleven in the morning, I looked out on the steadily falling rain, "immoderate" I would call it -- the same rain that had plagued Patton's Army throughout the Moselle and Saar Campaigns from September until now,

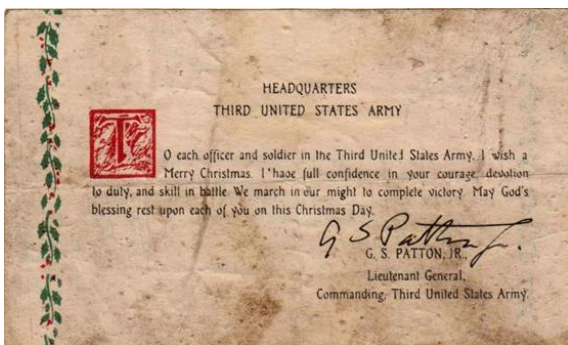
December 8. The few prayer books at hand contained no formal prayer on weather that might prove acceptable to the Army Commander. Keeping his immediate objective in mind, I typed an original and an improved copy on a 5" x 3" filing card:

*Almighty and most merciful Father, we humbly beseech Thee, of Thy great goodness, to restrain these immoderate rains with which we have had to contend. Grant us fair weather for Battle. Graciously hearken to us as soldiers who call upon Thee that, armed with Thy power, we may advance from victory to victory, and crush the oppression and wickedness of our enemies and establish Thy justice among men and nations.*



I pondered the question, What use would General Patton make of the prayer? Surely not for private devotion. If he intended it for circulation to chaplains or others, with Christmas not far removed, it might be proper to type the Army Commander's Christmas Greetings on the reverse side. This would please the recipient, and anything that pleased the men I knew would please him:

*To each officer and soldier in the Third United States Army, I Wish a Merry Christmas. I have full confidence in your courage, devotion to duty, and skill in battle. We march in our might to complete victory. May God's blessings rest upon each of you on this Christmas Day. G.S. Patton, Jr, Lieutenant General, Commanding, Third United States Army.*



This done, I donned my heavy trench coat, crossed the quadrangle of the old French military barracks, and reported to General Patton. He read the prayer copy, returned it to me with a very casual directive, "Have 250,000 copies printed and see to it that every man in the Third Army gets one." The size of

the order amazed me; this was certainly doing something about the weather in a big way. But I said nothing but the usual, "Very well, Sir!" Recovering, I invited his attention to the reverse side containing the Christmas Greeting, with his name and rank typed. "Very good," he said, with a smile of approval. "If the General would sign the card, it would add a personal touch that I am sure the men would like." He took his place at his desk, signed the card, returned it to me and then said: "Chaplain, sit down for a moment; I want to talk to you about this business of prayer." He rubbed his face in his hands, was silent for a moment, then rose and walked over to the high window, and stood there with his back toward me as he looked out on the falling rain. As usual, he was dressed stunningly, and his six-foot-two powerfully built physique made an unforgettable silhouette against the great window. The General Patton I saw there was the Army Commander to whom the welfare of the men under him was a matter of Personal responsibility. Even in the heat of combat he could take time out to direct new methods to prevent trench feet, to see to it that dry socks went forward daily with the rations to troops on the line, to kneel in the mud administering morphine and caring for a wounded soldier until the ambulance came. What was coming now?

"Chaplain, how much praying is being done in the Third Army?" was his question. I parried: "Does the General mean by chaplains, or by the men?" "By everybody," he replied. To this I countered: "I am afraid to admit it, but I do not believe that much praying is going on. When there is fighting, everyone prays, but now with this constant rain -- when things are quiet, dangerously quiet, men just sit and wait for things to happen. Prayer out here is difficult. Both chaplains and men are removed from a special building with a steeple. Prayer to most of them is a formal, ritualized affair, involving special posture and a liturgical setting. I do not believe that much praying is being done."

The General left the window, and again seated himself at his desk, leaned back in his swivel chair, toying with a long lead pencil between his index fingers.

Chaplain, I am a strong believer in Prayer. There are three ways that men get what they want; by planning, by working, and by Praying. Any great military operation takes careful planning, or thinking. Then you must have well-trained troops to carry it out: that's working. But between the plan and the operation there is always an unknown. That unknown spells defeat or victory, success or failure. It is the reaction of the actors to the ordeal when it actually comes. Some people call that getting the breaks; I call it God. God has His part, or margin in everything, That's where prayer comes in. Up to now, in the Third Army, God has been very good to us. We have never retreated; we have suffered no defeats, no famine, and no epidemics. This is because a lot of people back home are praying for us. We were lucky in Africa, in Sicily, and in Italy. Simply because people prayed. But we have to pray for ourselves, too. A good soldier is not made merely by making him think and work. There is something in every soldier that goes deeper than thinking or working--it's his "guts." It is something that he has built in there: it is a world of truth and power that is higher than him. Great living is not all output of thought and work. A man has to have intake as well. I don't know what you call it, but I call it Religion, Prayer, or God.

He talked about Gideon in the Bible, said that men should pray no matter where they were, in church or out of it, that if they did not pray, sooner or later they would "crack up." To all this I commented agreement that one of the major training objectives of my office was to help soldiers recover and make their lives effective in this third realm, prayer. It would do no harm to re-impress this training on chaplains. We had about 486 chaplains in the Third Army at that time, representing 32 denominations. Once the Third Army had become operational, my mode of contact with the chaplains had been chiefly through Training Letters issued from time to time to the Chaplains in the four corps and the 22 to 26 divisions comprising the Third Army. Each treated of a variety of subjects of corrective or training value to a chaplain working with troops in the field. [Patton continued:]

I wish you would put out a Training Letter on this subject of Prayer to all the chaplains; write about nothing else, just the importance of prayer. Let me see it before you send it. We've got to get not only the chaplains but every man in the Third Army to pray. We must ask God to stop these rains. These rains are that margin that holds defeat or victory. If we all pray, it will be like what Dr. Carrel said [the allusion was to a press quote some days previously when Dr. Alexis Carrel, one of the foremost scientists, described prayer "as one of the most powerful forms of energy man can generate"], it will be like plugging in on a current whose source is in Heaven. I believe that prayer completes that circuit. It is power.

With that the General arose from his chair, a sign that the interview was ended. I returned to my field desk, typed Training Letter No. 5 while the "copy" was "hot," touching on some or all of the General's reverie on Prayer, and after staff processing, presented it to General Patton on the next day. The General read it and without change directed that it be circulated not only to the 486 chaplains, but to every organization commander down to and including the regimental level. Three thousand two hundred copies were distributed to every unit in the Third Army over my signature as Third Army Chaplain. Strictly speaking, it was the Army Commander's letter, not mine. Due to the fact that the order came directly from General Patton, distribution was completed on December 11 and 12 in advance of its date line, December 14, 1944. Titled "Training Letter No. 5," with the salutary "Chaplains of the Third Army," the letter continued: "At this stage of the operations I would call upon the chaplains and the men of the Third United States Army to focus their attention on the importance of prayer.

"Our glorious march from the Normandy Beach across France to where we stand, before and beyond the Siegfried Line, with the wreckage of the German Army behind us should convince the most skeptical soldier that God has ridden with our banner. Pestilence and famine have not touched us. We have continued in unity of purpose. We have had no quitters; and our leadership has been masterful. The Third Army has no roster of Retreats. None of Defeats. We have no memory of a lost battle to hand on to our children from this great campaign.

"But we are not stopping at the Siegfried Line. Tough days may be ahead of us before we eat our rations in the Chancellery of the Deutsches Reich.

"As chaplains it is our business to pray. We preach its

importance. We urge its practice. But the time is now to intensify our faith in prayer, not alone with ourselves, but with every believing man, Protestant, Catholic, Jew, or Christian in the ranks of the Third United States Army.

"Those who pray do more for the world than those who fight; and if the world goes from bad to worse, it is because there are more battles than prayers. 'Hands lifted up,' said Bosuet, 'smash more battalions than hands that strike.' Gideon of Bible fame was least in his father's house. He came from Israel's smallest tribe. But he was a mighty man of valor. His strength lay not in his military might, but in his recognition of God's proper claims upon his life. He reduced his Army from thirty-two thousand to three hundred men lest the people of Israel would think that their valor had saved them. We have no intention to reduce our vast striking force. But we must urge, instruct, and indoctrinate every fighting man to pray as well as fight. In Gideon's day, and in our own, spiritually alert minorities carry the burdens and bring the victories.

"Urge all of your men to pray, not alone in church, but everywhere. Pray when driving. Pray when fighting. Pray alone. Pray with others. Pray by night and pray by day. Pray for the cessation of immoderate rains, for good weather for Battle. Pray for the defeat of our wicked enemy whose banner is injustice and whose good is oppression. Pray for victory. Pray for our Army, and Pray for Peace.

"We must march together, all out for God. The soldier who 'cracks up' does not need sympathy or comfort as much as he needs strength. We are not trying to make the best of these days. It is our job to make the most of them. Now is not the time to follow God from 'afar off.' This Army needs the assurance and the faith that God is with us. With prayer, we cannot fail.

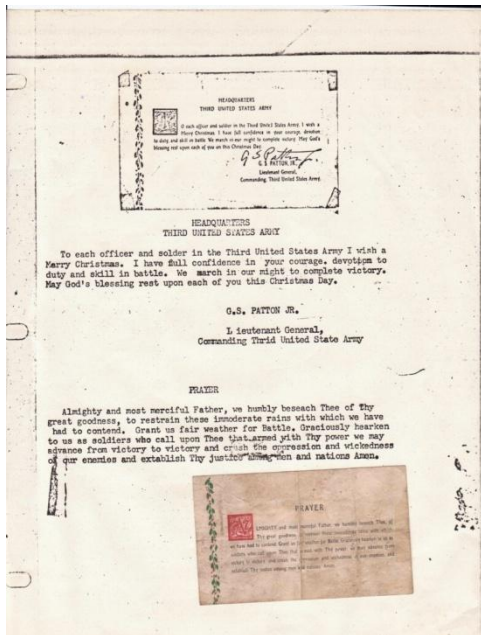
"Be assured that this message on prayer has the approval, the encouragement, and the enthusiastic support of the Third United States Army Commander.

"With every good wish to each of you for a very Happy Christmas, and my personal congratulations for your splendid and courageous work since landing on the beach, I am," etc., etc., signed The Third Army Commander.

The timing of the Prayer story is important: let us rearrange the dates: the "Prayer Conference" with General Patton was 8 December; the 664th Engineer Topographical Company, at the order of Colonel David H. Tulley, C.E., Assistant to the Third Army Engineer, working night and day reproduced 250,000 copies of the Prayer Card; the Adjutant General, Colonel Robert S. Cummings, supervised the distribution of both the Prayer Cards and Training Letter No. 5 to reach the troops by December 12-14. The breakthrough was on December 16 in the First Army Zone when the Germans crept out of the Schnee Eifel Forest in the midst of heavy rains, thick fogs, and swirling ground mists that muffled sound, blotted out the sun, and reduced visibility to a few yards. The few divisions on the Luxembourg frontier were surprised and brushed aside. They found it hard to fight an enemy they could neither see nor hear. For three days it looked to the jubilant Nazis as if their desperate gamble would succeed. They had achieved complete surprise. Their Sixth Panzer Army, rejuvenated in secret after its debacle in France, seared through the Ardennes like a hot knife through butter. The First Army's VIII

Corps was holding this area with three infantry divisions (one of them new and in the line only a few days) thinly disposed over an 88-mile front and with one armored division far to the rear, in reserve. The VIII Corps had been in the sector for months. It was considered a semi-rest area and outside of a little patrolling was wholly an inactive position.

When the blow struck the VIII Corps fought with imperishable heroism. The Germans were slowed down but the Corps was too shattered to stop them with its remnants. Meanwhile, to the north, the Fifth Panzer Army was slugging through another powerful prong along the vulnerable boundary between the VIII and VI Corps. Had the bad weather continued there is no telling how far the Germans might have advanced. On the 19th of December, the Third Army turned from East to North to meet the attack. As General Patton rushed his divisions north from the Saar Valley to the relief of the beleaguered Bastogne, the prayer was answered. On December 20, to the consternation of the Germans and the delight of the American forecasters who were equally surprised at the turn-about-the rains and the fogs ceased. For the better part of a week came bright clear skies and perfect flying weather. Our planes came over by tens, hundreds, and thousands. They knocked out hundreds of tanks, killed thousands of enemy troops in the Bastogne salient, and harried the enemy as he valiantly tried to bring up reinforcements. The 101st Airborne, with the 4th, 9th, and 10th Armored Divisions, which saved Bastogne, and other divisions which assisted so valiantly in driving the Germans home, will testify to the great support rendered by our air forces. General Patton prayed for fair weather for Battle. He got it.



It was late in January of 1945 when I saw the Army Commander again. This was in the city of Luxembourg. He stood directly in front of me, smiled: "Well, Padre, our prayers worked. I knew they would." Then he cracked me on the side of my steel helmet with his riding crop. That was his way of saying, "Well done."

(This article appeared as a government document in 1950. At the time it appeared in the Review of the News, Msgr. O'Neill was a retired Brigadier General living in Pueblo, Colorado.)"

Merry Christmas Patton's Third Army from Chaplain Rev. K.T. Stewart AKA Colonel James O'Neil



## Adopt a Tank Program

By BG Mike Maloney  
Senior Trainer  
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The training class for this season's tanker corps is well under way, the first class held last month being the familiarization of the vehicles and class #2 being held Dec. 1 where the actual training began. The crews were trained in basic drill, hand signals, fire safety, emergency vehicle evacuation drill, and learning how to properly clean the vehicles. The entire class was then given the tour By Brent Mullins and Denny Hair of the new Museum's building and the visions for the future. The class went very well and the students can hardly wait for the next class that will be held Dec. 29th. This promises to be one of the best well trained class this program has produced to date. Again, if anyone is interested in this program, contact me as we will be needing more crews in the future as more vehicles are coming on line.



## Leadership

By Col. Carlos Manning  
[chiefstaff@pattonthirdarmy.com](mailto:chiefstaff@pattonthirdarmy.com)

Due to the recent list of promotions, I began thinking back to my time training at Fort Benning, where I was schooled to be a leader and a gentleman. The Post had a statue in front of our classroom of a fellow Officer pointing and yelling "Follow Me."



**Follow Me Sculpture, Fort Benning, Georgia**

I still have my notes from the class on leadership. I believe it is a good time for us to review what that class was all about. Leadership is defined as the art of influencing people to work towards the accomplishment of a specific goal.

Basic Principles of Leadership - Effective leadership is based on personal example, good management practices, and moral responsibility. Every person in Third Army H.Q. must set an example of military ideals and give personal attention and supervision to those below them in the chain of command. To determine your leadership ability, examine your conduct,

review duties and responsibilities, and determine how well you are performing.

**Moral Principles** - When we speak of moral principles, we think of honesty, integrity, and loyalty. Those positive standards of human conduct provide direction, solidity, and consistency to leadership.

**Personal Example** - Leading by personal example goes hand in hand with moral principles. You do not automatically receive respect as a leader because you have authority. You must earn the respect and confidence of personnel under you by setting a good example. Lead your workers; do not drive them.

**Followship Qualities** - The key ingredients of a good follower are the following: Loyalty- always be loyal to the personnel above you in your chain of command.

**Initiative** - Do what must be done without waiting to be told to do so. Showing initiative demonstrates your ability to be a leader.

**Dependability** - Be Dependable. The person in charge must have help in carrying out the mission. The leader must be able to depend on the followers to get the job done. Being dependable increases the efficiency of the leader and the command.

**Giving Orders** - When you are a leader, part of your job is to give orders. Give orders that are simple, clear, and complete; ensure everyone understands what must be done. A good order makes the following facts clear:

**How to do it** - Why it must be done, if time and circumstances will allow, you may add the following: How to do it. Why it must be done.

**Praise and Reprimand** - Learn when to praise and when to reprimand. Your people will do better work when they know you appreciate their work; that is the only way they will know. You may have to reprimand. Remember the purpose of a reprimand is to teach not to embarrass. Therefore, give reprimands in private. Always be sure of your facts-the person may have a reason for their behavior. Remember to do the following: Praise in public. Reprimand in private.

**Promoting Morale** - Keeping high morale among Third Army personnel keeps the organization fun and accomplishing our mission. Showing an interest in the welfare and morale of your people will keep morale high.

**Keep Personnel Informed** - By passing on information is a good way to keep good morale. Letting people know what they can expect promotes good morale.

**Integrity** - Always be honest with your superiors, your people, and yourself. Make promises only when you can keep them and only when you intend to keep them. Keeping promises earns you respect from your people. You must have respect to be an effective leader.

**Leadership** is the ability to mold the members of a unit into a team that can successfully accomplish the unit's mission. Becoming a successful leader is a challenge. You will always face change in operations or schedules. A good leader will take a few minutes to collect his or her thoughts and then make

a plan to offset the change. I will try very hard as Chief Of Staff to practice what I preach.



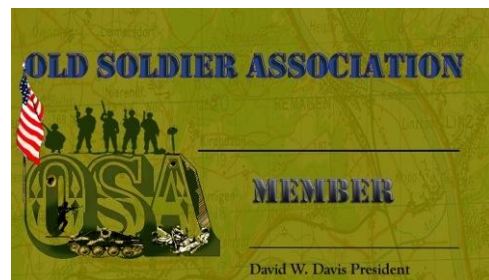
## Old Soldier's Association

By David Davis  
President, Old Soldier's Association  
sgtmajorsattic@yahoo.com

We held our first meeting of the Old Soldier's Association (OSA), on 1 December 2012, in College Station, at Brent Mullin's temporary museum location. The event was very well attended with over 40 persons showing up not counting the board members. I must tell you it was quite an emotional event seeing folks I had not seen in twenty years' time. We spent much time remembering our shared experiences and refighting battles fought long ago.

Carlos Manning set up a touching memorial for all our friends who have passed into "The Mist of History". Denny Hair provided us with a stirring opening invocation and we then pledged our allegiance to the flag of our beloved nation. I then spoke at length about our goals, both short and long term, and the vision we have for our association. The response was exceedingly positive and I was very pleased with the promises of support we received from those attending.

There will be a board meeting soon to set a near term agenda and the a second general meeting in College Station as we gear up to support the Museum there, at its annual event in March. Free refreshments and snacks will be provided on site at the next meeting. I firmly believe the number attending this next meeting will certainly exceed the persons present at the first one. In addition OSA membership cards are being printed to officially identify our current and future members. Hats off to Mr. Hair for a superb job in designing the colorful and unique OSA membership card.



We are beginning the crawl phase with of our group. We will Crawl, then Walk and the Run towards our objective. We will accomplish the mission. We will not rest until the Old Soldier's Association is a success. In our world failure is NOT and MUST NOT an option, and anything less than total success is NOT acceptable.

Gentlemen, it is time to saddle up, move out, and ride towards the sound of the cannons.



## Welcome Sergeant First Class Daniel Symonds

By Capt. Karie Hubnik  
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The Signal Corps has added a new member to its unit and would like to welcome Sergeant First Class Daniel Symonds. While Daniel can be found shooting other soldiers in local reenactments up north in with the Company F, 36th Armored Infantry, 3rd Armored Division, his boots also carry him to faraway places like Iraq and Afghanistan "shooting" real soldiers with media producing equipment. That's because SFC Daniel Symonds is the real deal. Currently serving in the United States Army Reserves, Daniel has completed 3 tours of duty to Iraq and 2 to Afghanistan, shooting and producing TV news stories for the U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps. Among some of his many other assignments Daniel also worked as a media analysis NCO at a US Embassy and served as the personal command photographer for Lt. Gen. Michael Babero. Hailing from Chicago, Illinois where he found his passion in the news industry, Daniel earned his bachelor's degree in television production. His experience covers a range of positions at well-known local news channels in Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin. If it has to do with news production, you name



**SFC Symonds in Afghanistan**

it, Daniel has done it. Everything from freelance and morning news photographer to a backup aerial cameraman. His accomplishments in local news media is extensive, earning him 3rd place in a feature story from the Society of Indiana Professional Journalists, honorable mention for sports videography from the Indiana Associated Press, and nominated for an Emmy for his participation in the coverage of a mass shooting in Brookfield, Wisconsin. But his passion and experience for news production didn't stop at civilian life. Some people are blessed to do what they love. Daniel is blessed to do what he loves and do it while serving his country, and that's really where Daniel's story begins. Coming from a long line of family members who served in the armed forces, among which includes his great-great-grandfather who served in the Civil War, his father, and one brother who served in the Army reserves, and a second brother who served in the National Guard, along with various uncles and cousin who have served, Daniel is no stranger to one's duty to his country. After the attack on September 11,



**SFC Symonds receives his Defense Meritorious Service Medal from Lt. Gen. Babero**

2001, Daniel enlisted almost immediately in order to do his part. This decision would thrust him into another facet of news reporting, only this time as a soldier for the US military. He would initially serve as a broadcaster with the 318th PAOC, which played a pivotal role in covering the pre-invasion of Iraq in 2003. As in civilian life, Daniel's list of accomplishments continued to grow. He would receive the Defense Meritorious Service Medal for his work, took second place in the 2011 Brumfield awards (Army Reserve), and later receive third place in the Keith L Ware awards (Army wide) for the feature story on World War II Re-enactors.

Daniel has a good idea of not only what it means to honor one's country, but what it means to honor those who have gone before you. In 2011, he petitioned the US Army to move and rebury his great-great-grandfather, Civil War veteran, PVT Daniel Rufus Symonds, who was buried in an unmarked pauper grave, to a new grave with full military honors. Daniel's petition was successful and PVT Daniel Rufus Symonds was re-buried at Fort Sheridan Cemetery, April 9, 2011 on the 150 anniversary of the ending of the Civil War.



**SFC Symonds serving as a pall bearer for his great-great grandfather**

With his vast experience as a videographer and as a service member, SFC Daniel Symonds is a fine addition to the 3rd Army Signal Corps Unit living historians. I had a chance to talk with Daniel and ask him a few questions.

**Why did you join the service?** Joining was a 50/50 thing for me. I always knew I wanted to follow in my father's footsteps. When 9/11 happened I knew I needed to be a part of something bigger than myself, which was the catalyst that



**SFC Symonds with Alan Jones and Caleb Beavers**

brought it together.

**You are in the news media, tell me about the morning of 9/11?** I remember feeling uneasy that morning for no particular reason. I was shooting morning traffic over Chicago when the pilot yelled "What's that on the TV screen?!" It was the first plane hitting one of the towers. As soon as we landed we watched the screen as the second plane hit. That's when I knew we would be at war and I had to do something about it.

**Why did you choose to enlist in the Army Reserves over the other branches?** Every person in my family who served has been in the Army, from the Civil War, WWII, Korea, Vietnam and on. All but my maternal grandfather. He was a Marine in WW2, there's always at least one misfit in the family.

**Tell me about serving in Iraq/Afghanistan?** I got to meet a lot of interesting people, like the President of Iraq, a lot of Generals. We had a good time.

**WW2 weapons?** I own a M1, 2 carbines, a grease gun and a BAR. The grease gun and BAR are my favorite.



**SFC Symonds in Iraq**

**Tell me why you reenact?** Back in 2010 a friend of mine convinced me to try it. I like running around shooting blanks at other guys. It's the camaraderie, sitting around with other reenactors or veterans. These people become your friends. And, there are guns involved so it's got to be good. I know I can leave my stuff out and these guys won't touch it or they will stop anyone else from touching it.

**Why did you get involved with TV production?** I had an opportunity to play around at a Cable company and realized it was something I was good. I bought my first production type camera, an Ikegami. One day by chance there was a house burning in the neighborhood, I filmed it, and called the TV station with the footage. They paid me \$100.00 for it.

**Did you play with little green army men as a kid?** Why are you asking me that? Some of us never grew out of the little green army men, and now we reenact instead. Yes, I played with little green army men. I had a Bradley fighting vehicle and a couple of Sheridan's and a German personnel carrier that my brother had. We also played Army with my brothers.



## Another fine job performed by Third Army

By Brig. Gen Mike Malone  
chiefstaff@pattonthirdarmy.com

Fort Oglethorpe was another success this year and one of the finest displays that we have set up so far. We continue to raise the bar at each event, and it showed this year at Ft. Oglethorpe. After set up on Thursday, the display was situated in a way that we have never done before, where allowing visitors to enter one way and exiting by another, thus allowing each and every visitor to see and experience the displays that they have never done before. Also added to the show display was the War Situation tent.

The "War Room" tent was done to show the visitors what an actual briefing looked and sounded like. After the briefing, the CG then took questions from the press corps (aka the visitors). This was another first, where the guests were then put into the show and it went over quite well. A job well done to Maj. Jones for preparing the War Room show.

Another first was the General's breakfast mess. Utilizing fine china and the exact pattern silverware that the real Gen. Patton used, class "A"'s worn, was an experience that was not to be missed and it was a pleasure to dine with the rest of the staff. This will not be the last formal dining that we will have so if you missed this one, another will be coming.

The Third Army mess is about to become operational! I would like to welcome Chuck Toney as our new Mess Sgt. Chuck comes to us after I ran across him at Camp Mabry where I saw him cooking breakfast for about 40 re-enactors by himself whereby he had a mountain of flapjacks, spam slices and fresh coffee going all being cooked on his own original WW 2 squad stoves. After talking to him, I found out he really did not have a home unit and after explaining to him what we have, well, You know the rest. So, our mess section is now complete with a staff. The debut of the operational mess section should be at this year's Open House at the Museum of the American GI.

The first meeting of the Old Soldiers Association is now behind us, It was a reunion filled with memories and reuniting of old friendships that have been lost for 30 + years.

If you missed this one, do not worry, a next one is being planned so plan to attend.

It has been asked several times, what we do and who we portray, are we reenactors? The answer is simple...no; we are living historians.

So, what is the difference between a reenactor and a living historian? Everyone in this hobby has a bit of a different answer, me included, and what I have to offer I hope will clarify this a bit. A reenactor is someone who has an interest in history, who will acquire his/her uniform and equipment for their impression, and will go out to a tactical event or public event and have fun doing it. A living historian is someone who "goes that extra mile" in furthering their impression, to accurately portray a certain individual, to educate the general public in that impression, to acquire as many "small things" that will enhance that impression and to further the education process.



## Col. Charles B. Odom, MD

By Col. Hugh Hall  
hugh.m.hall@gmail.com



**Col. Odom**

In Third U. S. Army, I portray Col. Charles B. Odom, M.D., Consultant to the Surgeon, Third U. S. Army. Let me introduce you to the actual man. Charles B. Odom was born Sept. 3, 1909 to Dr. Guy Leroy Odom and Marion Brown Odom. He grew up in the Jefferson Parish in New Orleans. When Charlie was 9 year old, his father died of influenza and his mother became a pharmacist to provide for the family.

With his father a doctor, his uncle a doctor and his mother a pharmacist, Charlie and his brother became interested in surgery. When Charlie was 14 and his brother Guy was 12, they successfully amputated the leg of their injured collie under chloroform anesthesia, and subsequently fashioned him an artificial limb.

Charlie graduated with honors from New Orleans McDonough-Jefferson High School and went on to graduate from Tulane University in June 1932 with a Bachelor of Science and Medical degree. That was followed by studies at Tulane Medical school where he exhibited exceptional ability.



**Tulane University**

In 1935, he married his sweetheart, Anna May, and honeymooned in Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires. He trained in general surgery for eight years at Charity Hospital in New Orleans, and subsequently had an outstanding career as a general surgeon. He entered the army from civilian life in the spring of 1942 with no previous military training.

Dr. Charles B. Odom began his military service in 1942 as a Major with the 134th General Hospital, the Louisiana State University School of Medicine Unit, which was sent to Fort Jackson, S.C. for training. Shortly afterward Major Odom was transferred to Fort Knox, Ky. The conflict being fought in the desert of North Africa made it apparent that large general hospitals would be too cumbersome to provide the medical support required by mobile tank warfare. As a result, the 91st Evacuation Hospital was formed as a mobile surgical unit, in which he was appointed chief of the surgical section. In November 1941 the unit embarked for service in the African Campaign in the 1st Armored Corps in the Western Task Force, under the command of General Patton. The mission of these troops was to secure beachheads and bases on the coast of Morocco. As a Lt. Colonel and Chief of Surgery, it was Charlie's duty and privilege to escort General Patton through the wards acquainting him with the types of wounds the men had received and the progress they were making.



**Gen. Patton with wounded soldier**

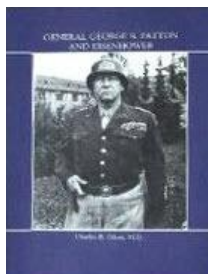
Following the Tunisia campaign the 91st Evacuation Hospital was ordered to Algeria, where it began training for the invasion of Sicily. Just before the invasion, Colonel Odom was placed at the head of a surgical team which was assigned to the S.S. *Monrovia*, General Patton's command ship. On the morning of the invasion, Colonel Odom went ashore with the assault troops at Gela. During the course of the Sicilian campaign, he was appointed surgical

consultant to the Surgeon, Seventh U.S. Army.

In December 1943, after sitting out the storm of publicity precipitated by the so-called slapping incident, General Patton departed for England. Later Colonel Odom became the surgical consultant to the Surgeon, Third U.S. Army, remaining in this position throughout the fighting in Europe. During his time in Third Army, Colonel Odom served as General Patton's personal physician.

After Patton's 3rd Army had crossed the Rhine river, Colonel Odom was a member of the team that General Patton sent to rescue his son-in-law, Colonel John Waters, from the German prison camp at Hammelburg. In June 1945, Col. Odom was transferred to Fort Sam Houston as Chief of Surgery at Brooke General Hospital, Fort Sam Houston, and remained in this position until he was separated from service in December 1945. Colonel Odom was the most decorated medical officer of the war in the European Theater of Operations. He received the following decorations: Legion of Merit, Silver Star, Bronze Star with 1 oak leaf cluster (2 awards), Purple Heart, Croix de Guerre with gold star, European African Middle Eastern Campaign medal (7 campaign stars), American Campaign medal and the World War II Victory Medal

After the Pacific war ended, Charlie returned to New Orleans where he established his general surgical practice. In 1985, Dr. Odom published a book called General George S. Patton and Eisenhower. Dr. Odom died in 1988, having served as coroner of Jefferson Parish and the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners for over 20 years.



**Gen. Patton & Eisenhower book**



## Third Army Medical Statistics

By Col. Hugh Hall  
hugh.m.hall@gmail.com

I would also like to share some interesting medical facts from Col. Charles B. Odom's Semiannual Report, Surgeon, Third



**Initial Establishment of a field hospital**

Army U.S. Army 1 Jan. -30 June 1945, and I quote:  
"The Third U. S. Army created a number of records. It traveled farther and faster on the ground than any army in history. In 281 days between 1 August 1944, when this Army became operational, and 8 May 1945, when the instrument of German surrender was signed, it moved from the invasion beaches of France to the Austrian Alps. During this period, the Third U. S. Army captured 1, 280,688 prisoners, killed 144,500 enemy troops, and wounded 386,200 others." (This is a total of 1,811,388 enemy troops removed from the battle.)

"The medical service of the Third U. S. Army also set records. During the period cited, it treated a total of 313,686 persons, including 5,225 civilians and 23,536 enemy personnel."

"Between 1 August 1944 and 30 April 1945, the following casualties were hospitalized in the Third U. S. Army hospitals:

<u>Designation</u>	<u>Casualties</u>
British Army troops	506
French Army troops	2,095
U.S. Navy and Marine Corps personnel	265
British navy and French Navy personnel	6
Enemy forces personnel	16,989
Civilians	2,635

French Forces of the Interior.....188  
U.S. troops.....91,454

"For the 91,454 U.S. Army battle casualties admitted during this period, the case fatality rate was 2.73%. Wounds in the casualties were divided into:

Serious.....23,283  
Slight.....56,676  
Dec. 44 wounds not categorized.....11,495

"The 91,454 wounds are classified as to anatomic location as follows:

Wound classification	Admission	Deaths
Abdominal	4,203	657
Thoracic	8,020	623
Maxillofacial	5,697	51
Neurologic	7,387	651
Upper extremity	22,919	66
Lower extremity	33,057	304
Buttocks	4,363	98
Other	4,795	79
Subtotal	90,441	2,659
Burns	1,013	27
Total	91,454	2,556 2.79% fatalities

Forty-three percent of all casualties handled in the Third U. S. Army evacuation hospitals were returned to duty in the army area. They were practically always sent back to duty in their original units. Getting personnel back to their own units was as much a requirement in General Patton's command as was neatness of dress. He recognized the tremendous morale factor for both officers and enlisted men inherent in the plan.

Sources:

General George S. Patton and Eisenhower by Charles B. Odom, M.D.

I was Patton's Doctor by Charles M. Province

<http://history.amedd.army.mil/booksdocs/wwii/actvsurgconvoli/CH15.htm>



## Feeding the US Army During WWII – Part I

By SSgt. Chuck Toney  
chucktoney98@yahoo.com

Many past army commanders realized that hungry men are not only weak and unable to perform their duties efficiently, but their resulting low morale makes them susceptible to defeat by a better-fed and even smaller opposing army. For that reason, the Continental Congress established the Quartermaster Corps in 1775 charging it with the duties that including feeding the army.

Well-trained men, good weapons and ammunition, transportation and food are the essentials for defeating any enemy. It was the case during the American Revolutionary War and it is still true today.

When the US Army was sent to Great Britain in the early part of WWII as the European Theater of Operations was being established, there were many adjustments that were forced on the men. Few Americans had lived and trained in the damp, cold, foggy conditions of the British Isles. They soon adapted to those climatic situations.

The food was another matter. GIs were initially fed rations typically consumed by the British army- the "British ration". Food tastes are not universal and the US command soon realized that the Americans were less than pleased to be fed meals heavy with tea, dark bread, potatoes and mutton. The British were not heavy consumers of meat as were the Americans. Further, Americans were used to a larger variety of vegetables than were the Brits.

To boost the morale of men soon destined to go into battle, menus were modified to the British-American Ration that included more coffee, beef, vegetables and other food items they had been used to eating back home while reducing some of the unpopular British items like mutton, very much un-liked by the Americans. It still did not please the men and Washington brass heard the grumbling.

By February 1942, the Quartermaster Service designed what it called the American ration. Monthly menus were carefully prepared and recipes were written for every item on the menus that reflected the GI's tastes. The menus were carefully checked by the army's Medical Service to insure proper nutritional content.

A school was opened to train mess officers so they would know how to properly manage the process. Similarly, mess sergeants were trained on all aspects of food storage, preparation, serving and sanitation. The War Department needed to ship the minimum amount of food necessary to feed the troops. The word was put out to all: there must be no waste!

However, designing menus back home and getting the food to the troops are two different matters and it was not until mid to late summer before all men were being fed those rations. Only the smallest detachments in remote locations well away from the major US Army training centers were still being forced to eat local food.

From the US was shipped many tons of food items in bulk where it was placed in storage. Locally grown food items like cabbage and potatoes were purchased. Command looked at the food on hand and prepared menus for the coming days. An attempt was made to balance what was available locally with what had been received from the US and, at the same time, allow for variety. Based on those factors, the food was issued to units, prepared, and served to the men.

Model facilities were established so that mess officers and NCOs new to the ETO could go to observe how a proper mess was run. Further, inspectors went about checking the facilities and the products served. Company commanders were given a fair amount of latitude in running company messes but the content and volume of garbage was carefully monitored to insure no food was wasted. Any mess that was reported to be wasting precious food had it brought to the attention of that commanding officer.

The QM Service continued to monitor the food situation. They took polls to determine the most popular menu items while eliminating the less favorable. The amount of food prepared for each meal had to be adequate enough to fill the men but not be so much as to cause waste. Any food left over following a given meal was carefully placed in storage and was somehow incorporated into a subsequent meal. Unused food was never placed in garbage cans. Mess sergeants, company commanders, and mess officers were happy. The system still needed some changes.

It was decided that rather than ship the army's needed flour from the states, flour from Britain would be purchased and used. However, the GIs did not like the breads produced.

After some experimenting, army bakers learned how to use the dark British flour to bake breads and biscuits the GIs enjoyed. British coffee was not of the quality the GIs were used to drinking. Green coffee beans from the US were mixed in with the British beans. Coffee roasting and grinding facilities were set up at the bakeries to ensure plenty of hot Joe was available to the men. Every bakery was prepared to produce as much roasted, ground coffee needed per man as they could produce daily bread.

To reduce precious shipping volume and weight, food was dehydrated. It included vegetables, fruit, and in some instances meat. Eggs were turned into powder and placed into sealed metal cans.

Cooks had to be trained on how to reconstitute those food items and prepare them in such a manner as to be pleasing to both the eye and palate. That was often a tall order.

Prior to WWII, officers took many years to progress through the ranks before commanding a company. That experience taught them many lessons in management of small detachments, problem solving, and identifying talent. By the time he became a company commander in the old army, an officer would know which man was the best cook in the outfit and the commander assigned him to duty as the chief cook. The company was blessed when a highly qualified man was in charge of the mess. The cook was blessed because he got out of all the extra duties and often became an NCO in charge of the cooking and cleanup details.

However, when WWII started, the army underwent a huge buildup in numbers of men and units with many new company commanders being promoted after a relatively short period of command and experience. Often, the cook was chosen out of haste. In fact, it seemed that the cook and his staff were the very men who had not done well in regular infantry training and were placed into their positions because the army needed cooks.

The Quartermaster Service had to work hard to overcome that situation.

It was fairly successful!

*SSgt. Toney has life-long interests in history and geography, along with cooking. In his own words, "I am as comfortable cooking in a Dutch oven outdoors as many women are in using their stoves at home. I have been doing military living history for a decade now including Civil War and WWII. I own two 20 man small unit stoves with all the support pieces and look forward to preparing some delicious meals with the M1937. I found an excellent source for powdered eggs and make some mean SOS to go with them." We will see him in the field soon.*

## Headquarters Notes

### G-3 Operations

The G-3 section is currently planning on an event to be held at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana, where the public will view a Battle of the Bulge impression and a visit by General Patton.

### G-4 Supply

Third Army Mugs. If you want one with your name on it, contact Mike Malone at [moonshadow5739@sbcglobal.net](mailto:moonshadow5739@sbcglobal.net). It is \$10 with your name and \$8 without, plus shipping.

## Wanted

Our newest Member Major Ken Austin is looking for a M1 Carbine if you have one for sale please contact him [atkaustin\\_2002@yahoo.com](mailto:atkaustin_2002@yahoo.com)

Wanted M1 Carbine, contact Chris O'Connor @ [oc111e@hotmail.com](mailto:oc111e@hotmail.com), also looking to purchase an MB/GPW in upcoming months



*Lucky Forward*  
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