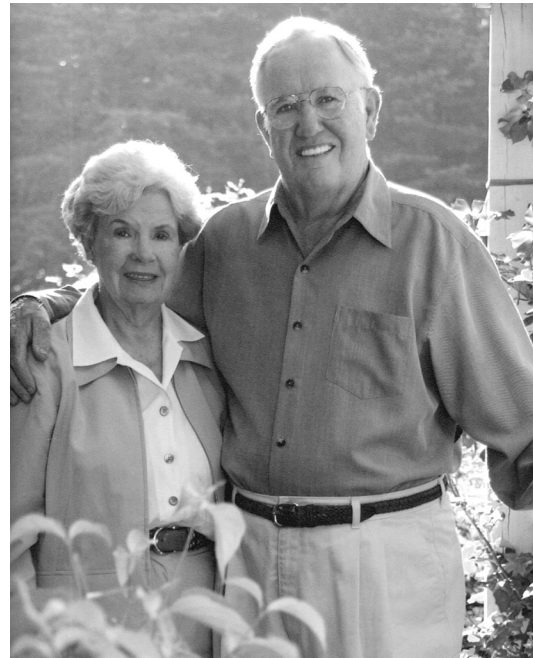




This was made shortly after our capture of the City, Krefeld, Germany. It was the first large German community captured where we confronted dealing with civilians, since it was too large for the Germans to evacuate them. The picture was taken outside the City Hall in Krefeld. We set up a temporary Division Command post in the building.



VETERAN OF THE QUARTER 2ND. QTR, 2007

Our Veteran of the quarter is Mr. Ted Mills, a native Tennessean. After completing his high school education he joined the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), since the throes of the Great Depression had not subsided. College would have to wait. Subsequent employment involved the construction of America's leading TNT ammunition plant.

Upon completion of the TNT plant, Ted's employer offered to seek a deferment for him since their next construction contract was the Oak Ridge, Tennessee plant that produced the atom bomb. Declining the deferment, Ted entered the Army in May, 1943. It was then that he met and became a friend to Alvin C. York, Jr., the son of the World War I hero, Sergeant York.

Basic Training in the Infantry followed at Camp Croft, South Carolina. This camp was an Infantry Training Center for replacements. After a rigorous 17-week training cycle, Ted was retained as cadre for incoming trainees. Upon learning that he could type, he was assigned to the office as a Company Clerk. Ironically, this happened to Ted in the aforementioned CCC service.

At the conclusion of the 3rd. training cycle, Ted was shipped overseas as a battle replacement. Landing in Scotland, the 15,000 soldiers on board ship were transported to England where a month's training session was conducted before the channel crossing to Normandy. This was sometime after the invasion as the Allied Forces had swept to the German border.

Traveling via a French freight train, this assembly of soldiers was transported to Herleen, Holland. Staged there for the purpose of entering combat a few miles away, Ted was assigned to the 84th Infantry Division which had just arrived in the area. The Division's first objective was to serve the Allied line's northernmost flank in the Siegfried Line. Taking the German industrial town of Geilenkirchen was the assignment. This was done in quick order as the Division displayed its fighting savvy.

The 84th Infantry Division participated in three major battle campaigns---Central Europe, Ardennes (Battle of the Bulge), and Rhineland. In writing in his Division's newsletter, Ted wrote "from its initial action in the Siegfried Line to the banks of the Elbe River, its men fought with dauntless courage and helped drive the enemy to unconditional surrender." Dignitaries in the 84th Infantry Division were the former Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger and Malcolm Forbes, the publisher.

Arriving at the front with artillery shells exploding nearby, Ted was suddenly escorted to the rear for an unknown reason. Later it was learned that his ability to type placed him in the Division Headquarters to keep records of battle casualties. The typing incident had repeated itself. However, Ted did encounter a taste of combat near the end of the war. Having just captured Hanover, Division Headquarters was off to a rapid race to the Elbe River. To their surprise, the woods outside Hanover had not been cleared of German Forces. Almost at point blank, the convoy was fired upon by the enemy. Severe casualties were experienced and many of the American troops were made captives. Ted narrowly escaped this ambush and withdrew to the woods with a few other soldiers. Second Armored Division tanks were radioed and soon the Germans became Allied captives. All of the captured American troops were rescued. Also, during the Battle of the Bulge, clerks, cooks, and all available personnel were placed on duty to drive the Germans back. It was during this period that Ted saw General Bradley and Field Marshall Montgomery up close.

After almost three years in the Army, and having been awarded the Bronze Star Medal for meritorious service, Ted was homeward bound to be welcomed by a happy family in January, 1946. He continued his education at the University of Chattanooga and Rutgers University. He became a banker and retired as a Senior Vice President after 35 years with the American National Bank (now SunTrust Bank), Chattanooga.

While interviewing Ted I asked him about his spiritual life during the war and if he had opportunity to attend worship services, etc. He said, "worship services during World War II were limited and mostly an individual experience with much prayer, as the war activity was brisk and continual." Ted does recall an instance when he was able to attend the worship service on Easter Sunday, just before the war ended. Although a Protestant, Ted located a Catholic Service and accompanied by a few of his Army friends, was able to attend the service. "It was uncanny to kneel in a pew with a rifle by his side and worship the 'Prince of Peace.'"

Ted is most proud of his Navy wife, Mary Alice, a Chief Petty Officer with three years WWII service in various naval installations, the last being the Naval Supply Depot in Oakland, CA. Her late father and four brothers are military veterans.

Ted is nationally known for his expertise in rose growing. His fellow citizens refer to him as the "Rose Man." Having risen to the top in American Rose Society activities, Ted continues to teach rose culture with a monthly column in the American Rose Magazine. His development of organic rose fertilizers has resulted in national acceptance. The American Rose Society awarded him the Silver Honor Medal for his meritorious contribution to rose culture.

Ted's church affiliation has been as a Presbyterian for all his married life---56 years. He has served as a Sunday School teacher for 15 years and has been a deacon for his entire membership period with various Presbyterian Churches. His current membership is with the First Presbyterian Church of Chattanooga---the city's oldest church.

Editors Note: It was a great joy and an inspirational time for me to be able to interview and fellowship with our Veteran of the Quarter, Ted Mills. I was blessed to spend time with him, plus it was a great learning experience.