

MEDAL OF HONOR

VAN T. BARFOOT



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MEDAL OF HONOR

VAN T. BARFOOT

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GENERAL DYNAMICS

IN A WAR ZONE, A MAN CAN LIVE A LIFETIME IN ONE DAY. WHEN CALLED UPON BY DUTY, THAT DAY CAN LIVE ON IN LEGEND.

VAN T. BARFOOT



VAN THOMAS BARFOOT WAS BORN IN EDINBURG, MISSISSIPPI, IN 1919.

HE AND HIS EIGHT SIBLINGS HELPED TAKE CARE OF THE FAMILY FARM.



WITH THE CLOUDS OF WAR SPREADING ACROSS EUROPE, BARFOOT ENLISTED IN THE ARMY IN 1940.





HE WAS ASSIGNED TO THE FIRST DIVISION, "THE BIG RED ONE."

HE SERVED WITH THAT UNIT IN PUERTO RICO AND LOUISIANA.



AFTER EXTENSIVE TRAINING, BARFOOT WAS SERVING IN VIRGINIA WHEN THE WORLD CHANGED YET AGAIN.

HEY SARGE, THE JAPANESE JUST BOMBED PEARL HARBOR!



HE WAS SENT OVERSEAS IN MID-1943 AS PART OF 157TH INFANTRY REGIMENT OF THE 45TH DIVISION.

THE FIRST ASSAULTS ON FORTRESS EUROPE WERE UNDERWAY.



BUT THIRD DIVISION GOT IN WITHOUT A SHOT!

JUST KEEP MOVING.

HE PARTICIPATED IN AMPHIBIOUS LANDINGS IN SICILY AND SALERNO BEFORE HITTING THE BEACH AT ANZIO IN JANUARY 1944.



ATTACKS AND COUNTERATTACKS OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS LED TO STALEMATE ON THE BEACHHEAD.

BARFOOT PUT THE TIME TO GOOD USE.

LOOK FOR ANY CHANGES. IT COULD MEAN MINES.

THE STALEMATE LIFTED
ON MAY 23, 1944.

THE REGIMENT STARTED THE
BREAKOUT FROM THEIR POSITION
ALONG THE CARANO CREEK



GERMAN DEFENSES ENSURED
IT WOULDN'T BE EASY.



LET ME GO
OUT ON THEIR
FLANK, SIR.

YOU'RE OUR
MAN. I KNOW
YOU KNOW THE
GROUND.



LEADING FROM THE FRONT, HE
MOVED TOWARD THE GERMAN
DEFENSES AHEAD OF HIS SQUAD.



ALONE, HE
NAVIGATED THE
HEAVILY MINED
NO MAN'S LAND.

COMING UPON
A MACHINE GUN
NEST, BARFOOT
TOOK IT OUT
WITH A HAND
GRENADE.







KEEP WALKING.

BY THE TIME HE RETURNED TO HIS SQUAD, HE HAD KILLED EIGHT ENEMY AND TAKEN SEVENTEEN PRISONER.

BUT THE DAY WAS FAR FROM OVER.



AMERICAN TROOPS TOOK POSSESSION OF THE GERMAN POSITIONS.

THESE WERE THE ALLIES' FIRST STEPS ON THE ROAD TO ROME.



BARFOOT REORGANIZED HIS MEN AND CONSOLIDATED THEIR NEW GROUND.

THE EXPECTED COUNTERATTACK WAS NOT LONG IN ARRIVING.



LET ME TAKE CARE OF THIS.



BARFOOT WAS NOT ABOUT TO GIVE UP THE GAINS HE'D WORKED SO HARD FOR.

STAY OUT OF SIGHT!





BARFOOT FOLLOWED HIS EXEMPLARY SERVICE IN WWII WITH TOURS OF DUTY IN THE KOREAN CONFLICT.



HE WENT ON TO SERVE IN VIETNAM AS A DEPUTY AVIATION OFFICER, LOGGING ALMOST TWO HUNDRED COMBAT HOURS IN BOTH ROTARY AND FIXED WING AIRCRAFT.



HIS FINAL YEARS OF SERVICE WERE AS A SENIOR NATIONAL ADVISOR TO THE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD.



THE GREATEST ASSET WE HAVE NOW IS OUR NATIONAL GUARD.

BARFOOT LATER DREW NATIONAL ATTENTION BECAUSE OF A DISPUTE WITH HIS HOME ASSOCIATION OVER A FLAGPOLE ON HIS LAWN.



COLONEL VAN T. BARFOOT WILL ALWAYS BE REMEMBERED FOR HIS HUMILITY AND UNDAUNTED COURAGE IN SERVICE OF HIS NATION.

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