

# MEDAL OF HONOR

WILD BILL DONOVAN



**AUSA**

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# MEDAL OF HONOR

## WILD BILL DONOVAN

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1918.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL WILLIAM J. DONOVAN OF THE 165TH INFANTRY REGIMENT, 42ND DIVISION, LED HIS RECRUITS ON A THREE-MILE OBSTACLE COURSE IN FULL PACKS AND GEAR.

WHAT THE HELL'S THE MATTER WITH YOU?

I HAVEN'T LOST MY BREATH!

# WILD BILL DONOVAN

BUT HELL, WE AREN'T AS WILD AS YOU ARE, BILL.

FROM THAT DAY ON HE WOULD BE "WILD BILL."





WILLIAM J. DONOVAN WAS BORN IN BUFFALO, NEW YORK, ON NEW YEAR'S DAY, 1883.



HE EXCELLED IN STUDY AND IN SPORTS, DECIDING AGAINST THE PRIESTHOOD, HE BECAME A SUCCESSFUL LAWYER.



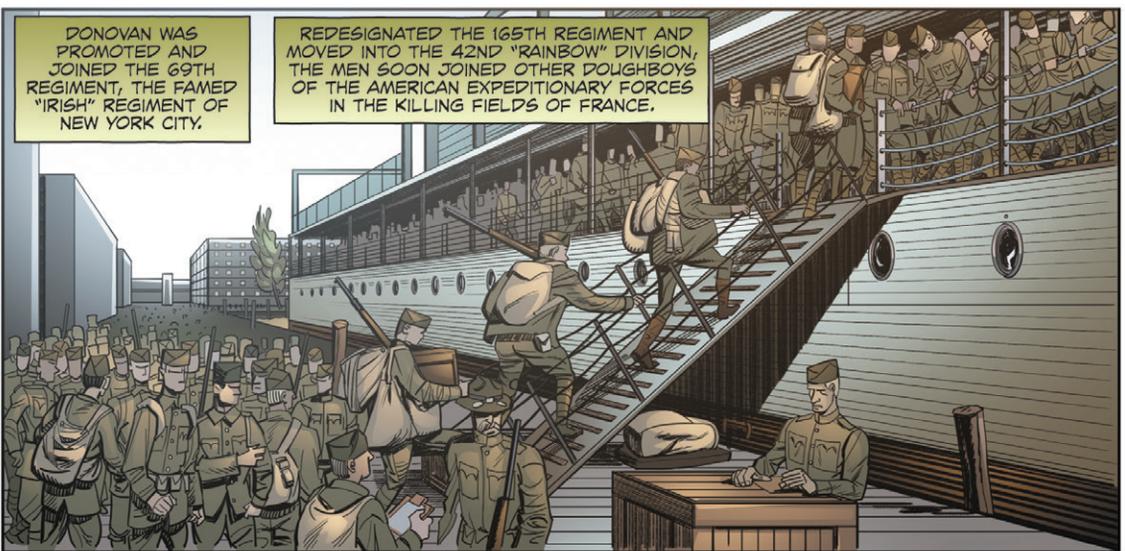
AT THE AGE OF TWENTY-NINE HE ORGANIZED AND LED A CAVALRY TROOP FOR THE NEW YORK NATIONAL GUARD.

TWO YEARS LATER HE MARRIED.

I THOUGHT YOU WOULD CHOOSE SOMEONE OF YOUR OWN CLASS.



HE DEPLOYED TO THE BORDER TO SUPPORT GENERAL JOHN J. PERSHING'S MEXICAN EXPEDITION TO FIND THE BANDIT AND REVOLUTIONARY PANTCHO VILLA.



DONOVAN WAS PROMOTED AND JOINED THE 69TH REGIMENT, THE FAMED "IRISH" REGIMENT OF NEW YORK CITY.

REDESIGNATED THE 165TH REGIMENT AND MOVED INTO THE 42ND "RAINBOW" DIVISION, THE MEN SOON JOINED OTHER DOUGHBOYS OF THE AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES IN THE KILLING FIELDS OF FRANCE.



FEBRUARY 1918.

DONOVAN WROTE TO HIS WIFE RUTH THAT HE FELT THRILLED AT THE DANGER OF COMBAT LIKE A "YOUNGSTER AT HALLOWEEN."

COME ON, BOYS. BUCK UP!



BEGGIN' YER PARDON, SIR. SHOULD YOU BE WEARIN' YOUR RANK AND INSIGNIA?

THEY'RE A TARGET FOR THE ENEMY.

THEY CAN'T HIT ME AND THEY WON'T HIT YOU!



THAT SAME MONTH, DONOVAN'S FIGHTING IRISH WERE ASSIGNED TO THE FRENCH SIXTH ARMY.

DONOVAN LED HIS MEN IN RESCUING SOLDIERS AND OFFICERS TRAPPED WHEN THE REGIMENTAL DUGOUT COLLAPSED UNDER A BOMBARDMENT.



THE FRENCH AWARDED CROIX DE GUERRE TO THE RESCUERS.

DONOVAN INITIALLY REFUSED IT UNTIL A JEWISH SOLDIER IN THE UNIT RECEIVED THE SAME RECOGNITION.



IN SEPTEMBER, GENERAL PERSHING AWARDED HIM THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS FOR VALOR DURING THE AISNE-MARNE CAMPAIGN THAT SUMMER.



OCTOBER 1918.

THE MEUSE-ARGONNE OFFENSIVE.

WILD BILL LED HIS MEN TOWARD THE GERMAN LINE.



ALMOST TWO MILES SEPARATED THE TRENCHES OF THE TWO ARMIES.

A HELLSCAPE OF ARTILLERY AND MACHINE GUN FIRE.



ALL ALONG THE KRIEMHILDE STELLUNG, THE GERMAN MAIN LINE OF DEFENSE, THE ENEMY MOWED DOWN DONOVAN'S MEN FROM THE SAFETY OF BUNKERS.



IN TOTAL DISREGARD FOR HIS OWN SAFETY, DONOVAN URGED HIS MEN TOWARD THE GERMAN POSITION.

COME ON, BOYS!

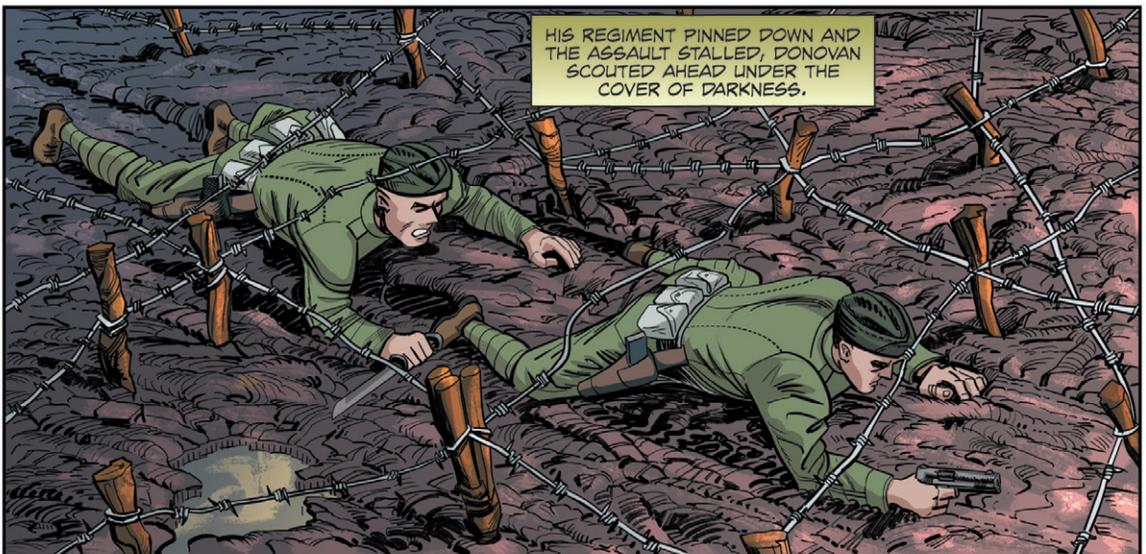
WE'LL NEVER GET THEM IF WE STOP!



WHERE THE HELL IS THAT COMING FROM?

DEADLY FIRE FROM THEIR FLANK SLOWED THE ADVANCE.

BY EARLY AFTERNOON, MORE THAN HALF OF THE BATTALION WAS KILLED OR WOUNDED BEFORE THEY HAD EVEN SEEN A GERMAN.









THIS WAS NOT THE END OF WILD BILL'S SERVICE TO HIS COUNTRY.

HE BECAME A U.S. ATTORNEY BATTLING RUMRUNNERS AND BUSTING TRUSTS.



HIS DILIGENCE AND EXPERIENCE CAUGHT THE ATTENTION OF PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT WHO TOOK DONOVAN ON AS AN ADVISOR.

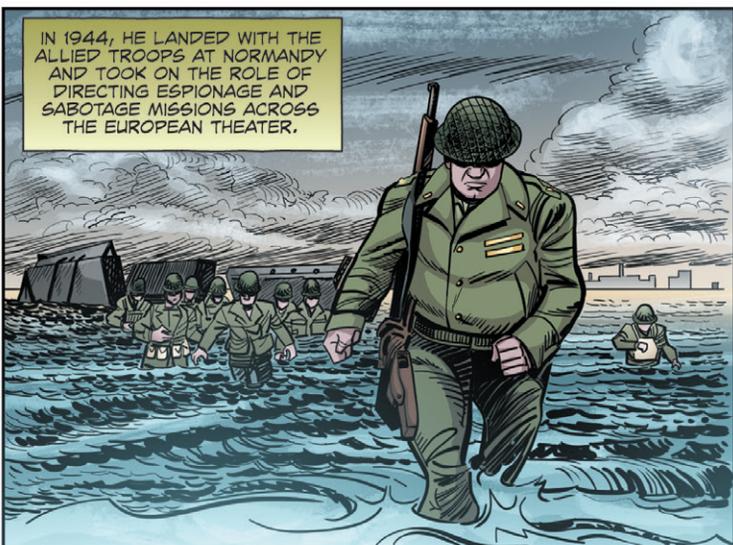


THROUGHOUT THE 1930S DONOVAN VISITED COUNTRIES ACROSS EUROPE AND ASIA TO GATHER INTELLIGENCE.



DONOVAN FOUNDED A SPY AGENCY THAT BECAME THE OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR.

THE OSS WAS A PREDECESSOR TO THE CIA.



IN 1944, HE LANDED WITH THE ALLIED TROOPS AT NORMANDY AND TOOK ON THE ROLE OF DIRECTING ESPIONAGE AND SABOTAGE MISSIONS ACROSS THE EUROPEAN THEATER.



WILLIAM J. DONOVAN IS THE ONLY AMERICAN TO HAVE RECEIVED THE MEDAL OF HONOR, THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS, THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL, AND THE NATIONAL SECURITY MEDAL.

THE END

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