



90th Division Association Personal Submissions



Staff Sergeant Dewey Trent
B COMPANY
358th INFANTRY REGIMENT
90th INFANTRY DIVISION

My grandfather, SSgt Dewey Trent, was born 7-30-1922 in Breathitt County, Kentucky. He died 10-6-1997 in Wolfe County, Kentucky. Dewey was the son of Harry and Maggie Taylor Trent. Before the War, Dewey was a farm hand. He went to the fourth grade in school before being pulled out and put behind a horse and taught to toil in the fields and work in timber. Having been in the Civilian Conservation Corps, my papaw and his cousin Conley Trent enlisted in the US Army together in November 1942. Conley would never make it home. He was killed in Mainz, Germany. Papaw would later name his first son after Conley.



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If you ever saw my papaw Dewey Trent, the first thing you would notice was the scar on his face. The scar was on the right side and made his jaw look somewhat warped. The scar was from when he was shot in the head during World War II just one day before the war ended. Papaw said they were in Czechoslovakia going building to building, clearing out Germans in the villages. They had cleared out one of these buildings and were getting ready to leave when he heard something. He looked up and a German was in the rafters and fired down on him. One of the bullets hit him in the lower inside corner of the eye, the bullet broke his jaw, and exited out the back of his neck. Growing up, I'd also heard that the medics had done all they could and left him for dead, but due to them discovering he was still alive some time later, they sought more medical attention for him. American doctors couldn't do anything with the wound, but due to the German's advanced medicine, a German surgeon was able to save him. Years later, he had some problems with how they fixed his busted jaw. Wire was used to fix his jaw, but doctors wouldn't do anything for fear of making it worse. Papaw would keep a pair of wire pliers in his medicine cabinet. Occasionally, as he was shaving, his razor would catch. He would reach for the pliers, push in on his skin, and clip off the wire that had worked its way out.

This was not the first time he had been shot during the war. After recovering from a near death experience while in boot camp due to a ruptured appendix, Private First Class Dewey Trent had rejoined the 90th Division as a replacement on June 26, 1944. This was 20 days after the D-day invasion. Dewey was assigned to Company B, 1st Battalion, of the 358th Infantry Regiment. He was just in time for the Battle of Foret de Mont Castre or Hill 122 on 7-3-1944. On 7-22-1944, Dewey, now the rank of Sergeant, was shot across the legs in the Battle for the Island. Papaw had been one of the lucky ones. He was one of the wounded and not one of the killed or captured. On the 358th's Morning Report for July 23rd, Dewey is listed as evacuated and in need of medical attention. As a kid, I remember seeing the scars on his legs. He had a couple deep circular indentions in one leg, and one in the other. You could stick half your thumb in the indentions. Dewey would heal for the next four months and he would choose to return to the front for the Battle of the Bulge instead of returning home. He fought in the remainder of the War until he was wounded via a head shot on 5-6-1945, a day before the War ended for the 90th.

Dewey served from 11-25-1942 to 11-25-1946. He received a Purple Heart with Oak Leaf Cluster, 7-22-1944 & 5-6-1945. He received a Bronze Star on 5-6-1945 and a Silver Star on 3-22-1945.

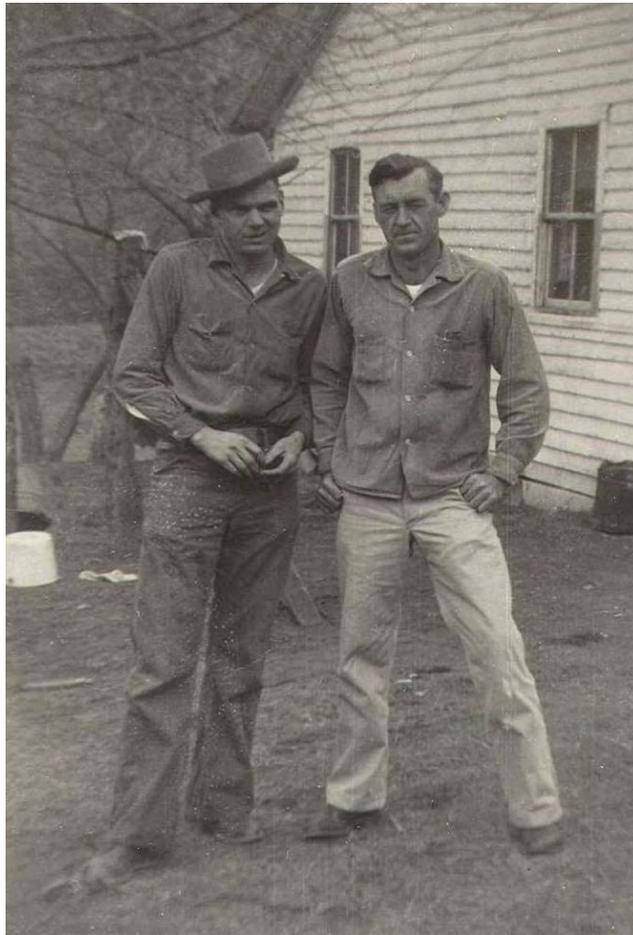
Dewey Trent, 35639688, Sergeant, Infantry, 358th Infantry, United States Army, for gallantry in action on 22 March 1945 in the vicinity of Mainz, Germany, while clearing the town of enemy, a squad was subjected to intense sniper fire. Sighting a building from which his squad could silence the sniper fire, Sgt. Trent, at risk for his life, moved across an open area, deliberately exposing himself to the enemy to draw fire on his person so that his squad could safely reach and enter the building. From this new position in the



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building, he directed the fire of his squad so expertly that three enemy were killed, two wounded, one captured, and all hostile resistance was eliminated. His gallant act and excellent leadership materially aided his platoon to advance and take its objective and were in accordance with high military tradition. Entered military service from Kentucky.

Dewey Trent, 35639688, Staff Sergeant, Infantry, 358th Infantry, United States Army, for heroic achievement on 6 May 1945 in the vicinity of Soobing, Czechoslovakia, a platoon was harassed by heavy fire from a building. With complete disregard for his own safety, Staff Sgt. Trent, entered the house and was suddenly subjected to a hail of fire from one of the rooms. Firing as he moved, he charged forward, forced open the door, and captured seven enemy, some of who were wounded by his shooting. His heroic achievement which wiped out a point of heavy resistance, was in accordance with military tradition. Entered military service from Kentucky.



Dewey was discharged from the hospital and declared 100% disabled. After the War, Dewey returned to farming in Kentucky and raised seven children. He loved to rabbit and squirrel hunt. He kept the sharpest pocket knives and you would often find him on the front porch chewing tobacco with his old dog Butch at his side, whittling on a stick of cedar. He struggled with alcoholism and nightmares for the remainder of his life. He



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never talked much about the War but from time to time a few things would come out. I remember coming home from school one day after learning about WW II and a General named Patton. Like many times before, I ran up the hill to see papaw and get something to eat. You never knew what he might be cooking. Usually some kind of meat would be in a pot on the stove or if I was lucky, my favorite, his “tater” cakes. If all else failed, he always had a roll of Kentucky Border Bologna. Anyway, we got to talking about school and I asked him about the War and if he ever saw General Patton. He said that he fought under General Patton and that he had seen him many times during the War. He said Patton was a good General. When my brother made the rank of Sergeant, it had taken him a few years. Papaw commented that he had made Sergeant in a few months, but under different circumstances. He said he earned his in combat. I also knew he carried a Thompson machine gun and a 45 during the war. Other than a few minor details of the sort, I never heard him talk much about his experience. If I stayed all night with him or he stayed with us, I remember how his experiences would haunt him at night. It would not be unusual to be asleep and hear him yell out in the middle of the night and see him out of bed covered in sweat reliving the past. It about scared me to death each time it happened. My grandfather never claimed to be a good father or a good husband. I heard my papaw say many times, “I guess there was only one thing I was ever good at in my whole life.... I was a good soldier.” I would have to disagree. My papaw might have been a good soldier, but he was also wonderful man and the best grandfather anyone could ask for.

