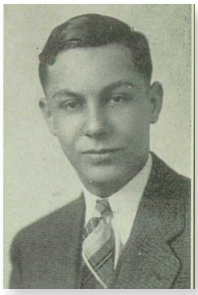
Thomas Munson Foundation
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by Lori Hahn

Munson Greatest Generation cousins who lost their lives during WWII

The last of the "Greatest Generation" are in their 90s and 100s. For many of us, it was the generation of our parents, grandparents, or great grandparents. They had survived the Great Depression only to find themselves mired in war in both Europe and Asia. Without the U.S. participation in the European war, the world would be a different place today. Vanquishing the Japanese and Germans came at a high cost of about 12 million military personnel from 41 countries.

Today, we're honoring some of the unsung heroes of World War II who sacrificed their lives in service to our country.

William Wilson Munson, PVT (Clan Waitstill)

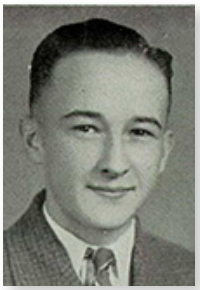


U.S. Army, b: 17 May 1920 Hartford, CT
d: 22 Feb 45, Meischeid, Germany
273rd Infantry Regiment, 69th Infantry Division
The Fighting 69th landed in Le Havre, France, 24 January 1945, and moved to Belgium to relieve the 99th Division, 12 Feb 45, and hold defensive positions on the Siegfried Line. While waiting in a building in the tiny village of Meischeid, a great implosion occurred in the building. The building had collapsed on itself. Attempts were made to rescue the group, but fires broke out. Seven people were pulled from the debris, but 51 soldiers from Company A and B were killed. Germans had apparently left behind detonation devices that someone in the group pulled, causing the explosion and the vaccum that collapsed the building. The 69th would move on from here and ultimately take Liepzig in March of 1945. Munson left behind his wife of three years, the former Mary Ellen Schweikert, and young daughter, Judith Ellen.

Kenneth Vincent Munson SN1 (Clan Solomon)

U.S. Navy, b: 1924, Roseburg, OR
d: 26 Oct 1943 Coral Sea
U.S.S. Tennessee (BB-43)
The Tennessee was berthed in battleship row at Pearl Harbor on 07 Dec 1941 but only minimally damaged in the morning raid by the Japanese. She was repaired and returned to service. After a successful campaign in Alaska in the summer of 1943, the ship moved back towards San Francisco for resupplying and then on to New Hebrides in preparation for the Gilbert Islands campaign. Munson would not survive to fight in the Gilbert Islands. At 9 p.m. on the date of his death, he was killed in an accident in Turret 2's pit. He was buried at sea on 27 Oct 1943.

Israel E. Abernathy, Jr. SGT (Clan WIlliam)



U.S. Army, b. 1 May 1919 Sharon, PA
d. 8 Jan 1945 Anguar, Palau
Initially part of Battery D, 4th Coastal Artillery, 385th Air Artillery Battalion
His regiment was assigned to protect Balboa Harbor in the Suez Canal, but Battery D was pulled in to help in the Leyte Gulf campaign scheduled to start in later October. In the meantime, he joined others in the 36-day siege of the Battle of Anguar in the Palau Island. By early October, the conflict had turned into a series of patrol skirmishes with sniping, ambushing, and widespread booby-trapping. The battle reached its climax on October 22nd after 36 days of fierce fighting, during which the Japanese resistance endured relentless attacks with explosives, tanks, artillery, and flamethrowers. Eventually, the 81st Infantry Division captured all of Anguar, though casualties were high. Abernathy was then assigned to another unit and died in battle in the initial cleanout of Leyte and Samar Islands. Married to Clan William's Alma Alderman in 1942, he served from 2 Jan 1943 until his death. Israel was Jewish and his wife Protestant, they had no children.

Harry Bradshaw, SN1 (Clan William)



U,S, Navy, b. 15 Oct 1921 Charles City, IA
d. 08 May 1942 Coral Sea
U.S.S. Neosha (AO-23).
(See feature pg. 3)

SN1 Harry F. Bradshaw: WWII

Clan William

by Lori Hahn



Harry Bradshaw was raised in Nashua and Belle Plaine, IA, graduating from Belle Plaine High School in 1939. He joined he Navy soon thereafter. While on leave on 04 May 41, he married my grandmother's sister's oldest (twin) daughter, Jeanette Janis Scoles. The childhood sweethearts were married by a local minister with two attendants present. Jeanette went to live with his parents while Harry served.

He was stationed on the USS Arizona until October 1941. He served briefly on the USS Wharton to get stateside to San Francisco. He headed to a training in Virginia from there. His final leave was in November of 1941, and he returned home to his wife and parents. His only child was conceived on this trip. He returned to Hawaii via the USS Neosha, leaving port in San Francisco on 30 Nov 41. The USS Neosha arrived in Pearl Harbor on 06 Dec 41. He was returned to the Arizona that night and was on board when the Japanese attacked early the next morning. Somehow, he survived and was reboarded to the Neosha and was transferred permanently that day.

For the next five months, Neosho sailed alongside aircraft carriers or independently. With escort ships scarce, it often sailed without protection despite its valuable cargo. The Japanese threatened to advance toward Australia and New Zealand. Neosho joined Task Force 17. The priority was to keep the sealanes open and protect them from enemy attacks. During the opening maneuvers of the Battle of the Coral Sea on 06 May 42 Neosho refueled the carrier Yorktown and heavy cruiser Astoria before withdrawing from the carrier force with only the destroyer Sims as escort.

On 07 May 42, Japanese aircraft mistook Neosho and Sims for a carrier and its escort, launching two attacks that sank Sims and severely damaged Neosho. Despite seven direct hits and a suicide dive, Neosho remained afloat, with at least three attackers shot down.

Remarkable seamanship and damage control efforts kept Neosho afloat for the next four days. On May 11, the destroyer Henley arrived, rescuing the 123 survivors and sinking the heavily damaged Neosho. Harry was not located.He was declared MIA. A year later, KIA.

Harry is honored on the list of survivors inscribed at the USS Arizona Memorial in Honolulu, HI, and on the Tablets of the Missing in Manila, the Philippines. The Navy also placed a cenotaph memorializing Harry in Oak Hill Cemetery, Belle Plaine, Iowa. Jeanette lived until 2004.

(cont. from pg. 1)

Archie Theodore Miles, MM2 (Line from Stephen Munson's (1679) daughter Elizabeth "Elsie" Munson)



U.S. Navy, b: 28 Sep 1919 Elmwood, IL
d: 07 Dec 1941, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
U.S.S. Oklahoma (BB-37)
During the Japanese assault on Pearl Harbor on 07 Dec 1941, multiple torpedoes launched by torpedo bombers struck the hull of the Oklahoma, causing the vessel to capsize. Tragically, 429 crew members lost their lives. Survivors either leaped into the fiery sea, navigating through burning oil, or traversed mooring lines connecting the Oklahoma and the Maryland. Some trapped sailors were rescued as rescuers drilled holes and opened hatches to reach them. MM2 Miles, in service since 1938, perished and was MIA. Between June and November 2015, personnel from DPAA exhumed the unidentified crew members from the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific for anthropological analysis. Of the 429 killed, 394 had been buried as unknown persons. MM2 Miles was interred as "unknown" in the National Cemetery of the Pacific, Honululu, Hawaii. Between 2015 and 2021, 346 of the unknowns were identified, including MM2 Miles. MM2 Miles' remains were reinterred in 2019 in Elmwood, Illinois.

Frank Lewis Munson, Jr. 1st Lt. (Clan Caleb)



U.S. Army Air Corps b. 27 Jan 1920
d. 20 May 1944 China Sea
373rd Bomber Squadron, 308th Bomber Group, Heavy
The 308th Bombardment Group was a heavy bomber unit (B-24 Liberator) that was based in China from March 1943 until June 1945, from where it supported the Chinese and attacked the Japanese Empire from the west. Lt. Munson was a seasoned pilot, having served in the theatre for a year before his death.

He received a promotion to first lieutenant (1LT) just prior to his downing and had planned to be returning home for a furlough. On 19 May 44, the 308th landed one day behind the infantry at Wake Island. The next morning, the Japanese succeeded in infiltrating the 308th positions and battle ensued. Lt. Munson and his B-24 were lost in the China Sea, the body never recovered. His unit received two Distinguised Unit Citations, one of which was awarded for the work done when Lt. Munson went down. Lt. Munson received the Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, and Purple Heart. A marker was laid at Fort William McKinley in Manila, Philipines and in his hometown of Rochester, New York.

Harry Arthur Munson, PVT (Clan Obadiah)

U.S. Army, b. 16 Feb 1920 West Virginia d. 10 Apr 1943 Carthage, Tunisia
135th Infantry Regiment, 34th Infantry Division in the Vicinity of Fondouk El Okbi, North Africa, 26 March-11 April 1943 (Tunisian Campaign).

Pvt Munson participated in the Allies' battles against the Axis powers from 1942-1943. The Germans had the Brits and Americans on the run more than once, but by the beginning of April 1943, the Germans were on the run for good. On the 10th of April, just as things had really turned sour for Rommel, Pvt Munson was hit by schrapnel multiple times in the chest and head. He was transported to the military field hospital for surgery but did not survive. His marker is located in the Tunisian American Cemetery in Carthage, Tunisia. He was awarded the Purple Heart.

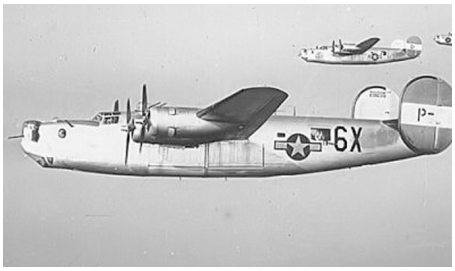
Robert Curtis Munson, 2Lt (Clan Obadiah)



U.S. Army Air Corps, b. 22 Jul 1922
d. 10 Apr 1943 Over Weiner Neustadt, Austria
15th Air Force, 464 Bombardment Group, 778th Bomb Squadron
The 464th BG was transferred to Gaioia del Colle, Pulia, Italy on 30 Apr 1944 and began flying combat missions. Just 10 days later, B-24 Liberator Aircraft 42-4441 joined its formation to bomb the aircraft works at Weiner Neustadt in Austria. Heavy anti-aircraft fire struck the number two engine, and the ensuing fire leaked to the fuel cells, causing the aircraft to explode in mid-air after it pulled away from the formation, banked left and started a downward dive. The pilot, navigator, bombardier, and nose turret gunner, as well as co-pilot Lt. Munson were all killed by the explosion, but miraculously, six of the crew, all enlisted, bailed out before it blew up. They were later captured by the Germans and were eventually released in 1945. Lt. Munson was married to the former Florence Reid of Hartford, Connecticut. They had no children.

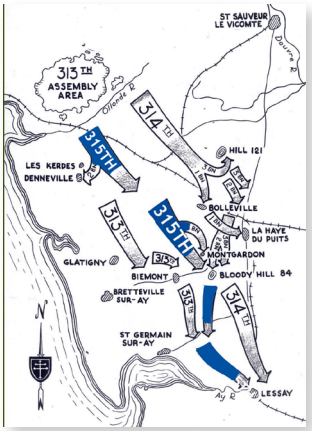


Lt. & Mrs. Robert C. Munson



B-24 H Liberator

Eddy Woodrow Munson, PFC (Clan Solomon)



U.S. Army, b. 28 Mar 1913
Harrison County, Kentucky
d. 9 Jul 1944, France
315th Infantry Regiment, 79th Infantry Division
On 03 Jul 1944, the 315th Infantry Regiment was ordered to attempt to encircle the town of La Haye-du-Puits and to meet 313th and 314th Infantry Regiments at the south. The three regiments were charged, along with other specialized units, in taking Hill 84, the last German command post in this area of Normandy. The Hill was taken finally on 11 Jul 1944 after a hard-won fight. It is unknown in which battalion Monson fought, but he lost his life on 09 Jul 1944 in this region.

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