



**Charles
Stoddard**

Army

Charles Stoddard

SOLDIER DETAILS

DIVISION: Army, 158th Field Artillery Battalion 45th Infantry Division

THEATER OF OPERATION: European

SERVED: Feb 20, 1941 - Aug 9, 1945

HONORED BY: Eisenhower Foundation

BIOGRAPHY

Charles received his notice for induction into the armed forces on Feb. 14, 1941. He entered active duty into the U. S. Army at Boston, Massachusetts on Feb, 20, 1941. Processing was completed at Fort Devens, Massachusetts, and he was assigned to Battery 'B' 17th Field Artillery Regiment transportation section at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. The 17th trained at Fort Bragg, Camp Blanding, FL., and while participating in the Carolina maneuvers were ordered back to Fort Bragg on the 23rd of July to move overseas. The unit moved to Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania, for equipment and staging and sailed from New York Harbor on Aug. 5, 1942, landing in Liverpool, England on Aug. 17, 1942. After months of training in England the 17th Field Artillery Regiment shipped out of Liverpool on November 22, 1942 and landed at Oran, Algeria North Africa on December 6, 1942. With more training in the Oran area the first unit of the 17th moved on to the Tunisian Campaign and fired their first rounds at Kasserine Pass on February 3, 1943. Charles and brother Sheldon met during the Battle of El Guettar, March 28, 1943. Sheldon was a First Sergeant with the 34th Field Artillery Battery 'B', 9th Infantry Division. With the end of the Tunisian Campaign the Regiment was moved to the rest area for training and recreation. Their next move was to a staging area at the Port of Tunis for the assault on Sicily. The regiment boarded Landing Ship Tank (LST) and Landing Craft Infantry (LCI) for the assault landing at Gila, Sicily on July 14, 1943. The unit moved north across Sicily and took up position on the northern coast. Charles met brother Elmer near Palermo, Sicily in Aug. 1943. Elmer was at a rest area with 68th AAA Gun Battalion preparing to depart for Italy. The First Battalion of the 17th Field Artillery Regiment sailed from Termini Immerge, Sicily and landed in Italy on Sept. 23, 1943. At this point in Charles's service record there are some dates that are not too clear. Charles was relieved of duty while he was in the hospital for two months. When he returned to duty in March 1944 the 17th Field Artillery Regiment had been reorganized and he was transferred to a replacement center. It is believed that sometime in April 1944, Charles was assigned to the 157th Infantry Regiment, 45th Infantry Division who were at this date engaged in the battle at Anzio. The Regiment was in the forefront for the breakout at Anzio for the attack on Rome. After the fall of Rome the unit moved south to Naples, Italy for rest and training in preparation for the invasion of Southern France. On August 15, 1944 the Regiment made an assault landing at St. Maxime, France. After the landing

the 157th spearheaded a drive for the Belfort Gap and crossed the Mortagne River on October 23, 1944. While at a rest area on November 8, 1944 Charles was granted a day furlough to the States. He departed Europe on November 17, 1944 and returned to duty on March 1, 1945. When Charles returned to duty the unit was at rest and training for an attack on the Siegfried Line. A short time after Charles returned to duty from the furlough to the States he was promoted from Staff Sergeant in the transportation section in the 157th Infantry Regiment to First Sergeant and was reassigned to the 158th Field Artillery Battalion, Battery 'A'. The Siegfried Line was crossed on March 17, and the city of Nuremberg was taken on April 20, 1945. The 3rd Battalion of the 157th Infantry Regiment liberated the Dachau concentration camp on April 29, 1945 and at days end was on the outskirts of Munich. The end of combat for the 45th Infantry Division came on April 30, 1945 with the surrender of Munich. The 45th Infantry Division occupied the city of Munich and setup a collection point and camp for surrendering troops of the German Army. In June 1945 the 45th Infantry Division returned to the States and was deactivated on Dec. 7, 1945 at Camp Bowie, Texas. It appears that after the 158th Field Artiller