



**Arthur
Gorham**
Army

Arthur Gorham

Jan 11, 1915 - Jul 12, 1943

BIRTHPLACE: Brooklyn, NY

SOLDIER DETAILS

HIGHEST RANK: LTC

DIVISION: Army, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment

THEATER OF OPERATION: European

BATTLE: Operation Husky--the invasion of Sicily

MILITARY HONORS: DSC, DSC 1 OLC. Purple Heart, Paratrooper Jump Wings, Combat Infantryman's badge

HONORED BY: His son

KILLED IN ACTION

BIOGRAPHY

Gorham was born in Brooklyn, New York, to James Allison Gorham, Sr. (September 13, 1890 – February 9, 1972) and Louise Fox Gorham (April 1885 – July 4, 1966). His older brother was James Allison Gorham, Jr. (November 26, 1911 – May 15, 2005). Gorham's parents were second generation Americans and were both of Scottish descent. The Gorham moved from Brooklyn to Bellevue, Ohio, in July 1917. James, Sr. owned a successful dry goods business. While awaiting transportation from Governors Island in New York to his first assignment after graduating from West Point, Gorham renewed a previous acquaintance with Corrine "Colonel" Bennett (later Clarke) (October 21, 1917 – October 20, 2001). They had met for the first time a few years earlier at an army football game. Bennett was then a senior at the University of Wichita where she was president of the Pi Beta Phi sorority (then called the Sorosis Sorority), captain of the rifle team and had held titles in both golf and tennis. The two were married on June 21, 1939, in Wichita, Kansas. Gorham was educated in Bellevue, Ohio, first at the Ellis School and he later graduated from Bellevue High School in 1932. During high school, he played in the band for four years, was secretary of the junior and senior classes, earned two varsity letters in football and two more in track and served on the high school newspaper, the Blazer, for four years. He was also a member of the National Honor Society. After his high school graduation, having not secured a sought-after appointment to West Point, he attended Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, for a year where he played football winning his "numeral." During this time he pledged the Ohio Alpha chapter of Phi Delta Theta Fraternity. Gorham left Miami when he received the principal Congressional appointment to West Point from Rep. William L. Fiesinger After

taking the West Point substantiating examination in February 1934 he spent time at Stanton Preparatory Academy in Cornwall, New York. On July 2, 1934, Gorham joined the Class of 1938 at West Point. While at West Point, Gorham was known for pipe smoking, surviving academics and maintaining a famously clean M1 rifle. To his classmates, he was known for his easy-going way and love of jazz. He played football for two years winning two monograms as an end on the Army "B" team and earned a marksmanship medal—one shot short of winning an "expert" badge he refused to wear the award mailing it home to his parents instead. During his four years he was an acting corporal, acting sergeant, sergeant, acting company supply officer, and, in his fourth year, wore three chevrons as the lieutenant for Company B. Gorham graduated in the middle of his class and received a commission as an Infantry officer. Gorham's graduation was front page news in his native Bellevue. At the time, he was just the second graduate of Central High School to graduate from a service academy. Admiral John Greenslade was previously the school's sole graduate. Early Career and Leadership Style After less than two years with the 30th Infantry in San Francisco, Gorham moved to Fort Benning, Georgia. In November 1941 he graduated from the newly created Airborne School receiving a "Certificate of Proficiency" signed by then Major Robert Sink and, more importantly, a set of silver jump wings. A month later, he completed the School's demolition and sabotage course. It was at this point in his short career that he began to stand out. As one of the early airborne qualified officers, he gained more rank and responsibility as the United States began to form parachute regiments and later airborne divisions. In 1941 he volunteered to organize the first group of paratroopers on skis. So in February 1942 then-Captain Gorham took his B Company, 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment to Alta, Utah, where the United States was testing the concept of dropping paratroopers into the Alps behind the Germans and having them ski down to attack and harass their lines of communication. During this period Gorham is credited with having made the first parachute jump from over 10,000 feet. As was his leadership style, before Gorham would let anyone else jump he first made a solo jump to test whether it was safe. Information on LTC Gorham's bravery in Operation Husky is in documents below and the full story can be reviewed at www.OhioHero.org.