



Dale Garland

BIRTHPLACE: St George, KS

SOLDIER DETAILS

HIGHEST RANK: Sergeant

DIVISION: Army

THEATER OF OPERATION: European

SERVED: 1941 - 1945

HONORED BY: Mont & Dennis Fair

BIOGRAPHY

Dale Garland was married in the fall/winter of 1941 and immediately after Pearl Harbor, enlisted in the Army. For his trip to England he was assigned the Queen Mary, the fastest ship in its convoy. It did not seem to matter though as the convoy goes the speed of its slowest ship. Two nights out of New York, the convoy was attacked by a wolf pack of German submarines. He said it was terrifying watching ships exploding all around him and the night was as bright as day. The convoy cannot stop to pick up survivors so the loss of life was tremendous. At some point the captain of his ship decided to make a break for it and proceeded by itself. Forty-eight hours later in the North Atlantic, he said there was three inches of ice on everything. Not good as there were three men to a bunk, each having eight hours so 1/3 of their time they had to be up on deck as there was not room for everyone below decks. They eventually reached England safely. Dale said he was in England a long-time training for D-Day. D-Day finally arrives and his truck and low boy trailer is about all the small vessel can handle headed to the beach. There was a crew of four sailors and another few soldiers on board. In all of the confusion and shelling another vessel rammed the boat he was on and it started to sink about a mile from shore and there were not enough life jackets for the soldiers. As some of the sailors made to abandon ship the Petty Officer in charge pulled his pistol and said he was shooting the first man in the water and for the sailors to get their ass manning the pumps. The boat made it to shore! Dale drove the first truck ashore on Omaha Beach on D-Day. Once ashore he had no idea where to go and every time, he stopped to ask directions, Dale was told to get the hell out of there as he was a magnet for German artillery. Finally at night fall Dale pulled into a grove of trees and there was his unit. Dale was a truck driver and had three trucks blown out from under him, but never received a scratch! He talked about how cold it was and said one evening they received 40 new replacements. Dale told them whatever they did one of the two men in each hole had to stay awake otherwise they would freeze to death, the next morning they were all dead. Another time they stopped at an abandoned farm house where they discovered a case of brandy. Dale told them not to drink it as the Germans had been known to poison bottles of alcohol. Sure enough, the ones that drank the stuff all died. Dale later was part of the "Red Ball Express" hauling fuel to Patton's tanks as they raced towards Germany. After the

war was over and Dale was returning home on a Navy ship, they anchored outside Baltimore where a huge storm engulfed the ship. All of the soldiers were very seasick but a lot of fuel drums below deck became loose and threatened the ship and had to be stacked and tied down again. The soldiers had to help the sailors with this task. Dale said this was very hazardous and resulted in many broken bones. Dale also stated later there was no way in hell he would have ever been in the Navy as every time he got close to the water all hell broke loose. Dale never saw his wife from the time he left in late 1941 till until the war was over in 1945.