



**George
McCalpin**

Army Air Corps

George McCalpin

Dec 4, 1923 -

BIRTHPLACE: St Louis, MO

SOLDIER DETAILS

HIGHEST RANK: Sgt.

**DIVISION: Army Air Corps, 35th Engineer Combat
Battalion**

THEATER OF OPERATION: European

BATTLE: Battle of the Bulge

HONORED BY: The Eisenhower Foundation

BIOGRAPHY

George was born December 4, 1923, in St. Louis, Missouri, to George A. McCalpin, Sr. and Marguerite Miles McCalpin. He had an older brother, Bill and a younger sister, Mary Margaret. George not only had a wicked sense of humor, but was also very intelligent. He often joked that even though he flunked blocks in kindergarten, he was then able to skip second and fourth grades. He graduated from St. Louis University High School at 16 and then went on to St. Louis University. In 1941, three days after his 18th birthday, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. George registered for the draft and continued his schooling. As 1942 progressed, the war occupied everyone's thoughts. In January 1943, when all allowable absences for classes had been used up, George went to the Draft Board to ask when he would be called up. Not surprisingly, the draft notice came days later and in February 1943, George was inducted into the US Army at Jefferson Barracks. Based on George's AGCT and his school subjects, he was assigned to Ft. Leonard Wood, a new Army training camp in central Missouri, near Waynesville/St. Robert. When basic training was completed, George was assigned to the 35th Engineer Regiment. At first, George spent time in Canada working on the CANOL project, a project to build the road which would enable a pipeline to be laid from Norman Wells in the Northwest Territories to Whitehorse, Yukon, to supply fuel to airfields in Alaska and northwestern Canada in order to ferry lend-lease planes to Russia. After Canada, he was sent to Camp White in Oregon, where they went through Basic again because they had been out of the country. Then the 35th was split into two battalions: the 35th and the 145th. George remained with the 35th Engineer Combat Battalion, and on April 9th, 1943 the battalion was sent to Camp Shanks in New York to await deployment overseas. Fortunately for George, his time there was extended, so his Company didn't land on Omaha Beach until August 9th. By October 1944, George's company was sent to Luxembourg and billeted in Mersch, about thirty miles southeast of Bastogne. When the German Army began the Battle of the Bulge, all the engineer companies in the area were recalled to Bastogne to defend VIII Corps headquarters, as

these engineers constituted most of the reserves of the Corps. George's company was moved to Marvie to be part of Bastogne's perimeter defense, about two miles east of Bastogne itself. George's company stayed in this position until relieved by Engineers of the 101st Airborne and then the company spent the night in Bastogne. The company moved out of Bastogne about six hours before the town was surrounded by German forces. In March 1945, George's unit ferried troops of the 87th Infantry across the Rhine River. Unfortunately, the nighttime crossing was discovered by lookouts on the other side of the river, and the heavy German machine gun fire resulted in some 34 engineers being killed, wounded or missing in action. George was made a squad sergeant as a result of these casualties. After the war ended in Europe in May 1945, George was relocated to Marseilles, where a fellow St. Louis native got him an assignment in a typing pool and later was given the job of approving 'Compassionate Leaves and Furloughs' for GIs eligible to return home but who had relatives in Europe. George returned to the US on his birthday, December 4th, 1945. After returning home, George resumed his life where he left off. He continued his education at St. Louis University in 1945 and graduated with a B.S. in Mathematics in 1947. He also continued dating his sweetheart Dorothy "Dot" Schulte. They married in April 1948 in St. Louis. Following the wedding, George and his bride moved to Texas to take a job as a petroleum geophysicist with Sun Oil Company. After a short stop in San Angelo, they ended up in Beaumont Tx and later moved to Richardson, TX. McCalpin passed in September of 2024. Courtesy of the [dallasnews.com/obituaries](https://www.dallasnews.com/obituaries).