

Some gave all: Boulware reflects on Memorial Day

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Staff Writer

WINNSBORO — For Winnsboro native Palmer Boulware, Memorial Day holds special memories of the brave men he served with in World War II. Boulware was in the Army infantry and was based in Georgia when Japan bombed Pearl Harbor.

One of the first draftees to join the Ninth Infantry Division, on Nov. 8, 1942, he was stationed in Morocco about six miles from Casablanca.

"We landed and camped next to the ocean beside a town about the size of Rock Hill but a lot like Winnsboro," he said. "FDR at the time attended the first conference at Casablanca."

Then Boulware went by boxcar in the late evening to Tunisia for a tour in North Africa. They saw fierce fighting and took on heavy casualties during tank battles in Tunisia. The infantry he was with was commanded by Gen. George T. Patton. Boulware spent some time in Lybia and Benghazi but mostly was in Tunisia.

See BOULWARE | 7



Palmer Boulware
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Palmer Boulware received four Bronze Stars for bravery as well as a Purple Heart.



Palmer Boulware, seen here before the invasion at D-Day, reflected upon his military experiences and comrades for Memorial Day.

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Boulware

From page 1

He said there was rough fighting around Tunis and other sea-ports where the area was blockaded. This was a key strategic point of the war because if Hitler's war machine could have captured oil rich land, he could have expanded his operations.

From North Africa, Boulware and his unit went to Sicily where a lot of his regiment invaded though he was not a part of the invasion.

"The boys gave a lot over there. I think about them on Memorial Day. I go to the cemetery at Hickory Ridge to see graves of some of my kinfolk who died in Germany," Boulware said.

He recalls other Army buddies who gave the ultimate sacrifice in Sicily and in Normandy.

"We were up in the mountains where a billy goat would not go, up in the clouds," he said.

From there his unit went to England for the D-Day invasion. Though he was not in the first day of invasion, he recalls that the clouds were just black with airplanes. He boarded a boat in South Hampton and landed on Utah Beach four days after D-Day.

The unit he was with cut through the peninsula to seize a sea-port. During the mission he was wounded with shrapnel injuring his trigger finger. Once

D-Day was settled, was placed in the area of occupation that was headquarters out of London.

From there, he served in Versailles, France, Frankfurt, Germany, left Frankfurt and went to Luxembourg after VJ day prior to his discharge from Army in September 1945.

This Memorial Day as he reflects on time in the service, Boulware said he is grateful to have been part of a legacy that was handed down to the men and women fighting today in war against terrorism.

"It means a lot to our soldiers today taking up the cause (our) country like he did so many years ago," he said.

Born Jan. 12, 1912, in Shelton, Boulware attended Hickory Ridge and Mt. Zion schools. He was awarded the Combat Infantryman's Badge, four Bronze Stars, a Good Conduct Medal, the Purple Heart and an American Defense Service Medal.

He returned from military service and took a job at Winnsboro Mills, from which he retired after 33 years. He is grateful for those who gave the ultimate sacrifice so that he could return home to Winnsboro to work, buy a house and have a small farm. He continues to garden at age 93.