

Three Remarkable U.S. Army Non-Commissioned Officers

by

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- I. Introduction: Three remarkable NCOs; a Negro Soldier, a cartoonist, and a young I infantryman, all three Soldiers served their country in their own distinct way.

Reference: Lee, Ulysses The Employment Of Negro Troops United States Army in World War II, Special Studies, Chapter XXII, Volunteer Infantry Replacements, Center Of Military History, pp. 699-700.

Pucket, Msg. Richard, Army pays tribute Pulitzer Prize winning cartoonist, Army News Service, Sep. 25 2002.

<http://www.squad-leader.com/ergeant/RemarkableSgt>

<http://www.sixtyninth.net/NCO.com>

Research: There have been many great NCOs in the United States Army. The most notable one quietly made great sacrifices and formed the Army we serve in today.

- II. Body: Three remarkable NCOs that made a difference in the Army, all three NCOs are different from each other, all performed different jobs in the Army; but they all had one common goal, to serve the Army beyond there own personal need.

- A. SFC Carter succeeded in serving his country in peacetime and war.

1. Events prior to the Army
2. Events in the Army
3. Events after the Army
4. Final recognition

- B. SGT Mauldin was a normal infantry Soldier with an artistic talent.

1. Personal information
2. Events in the Army
3. Events after the Army
4. His death

- C. SGT Ruiz efforts against an enemy emplacement saved the lives of his comrades.

1. First assignment

2. Heroic act
3. Significant of heroic act
4. Medal earned

- III. Closing: In closing, the Army is more than a group of individuals. The Army is a group of Soldiers with similar beliefs that make a difference.
- A. In summary, many NCOs in the United States Army demonstrated a great number heroic acts, acts of selfless and courage that go un-noticed.
 - B. A question and answer period.
 - C. In conclusion, "What acts have you performed as an NCO that will be remembered by our future Army?"

Three remarkable non-commissioned officers (NCOs), who made a difference in the United States Army: SFC Carter, a Negro Soldier that had a vast experience as an infantryman, despite this fact he could not initially serve in the U.S. Army as an infantryman. SGT Mauldin, an infantryman that never earned any type of heroic medal, despite this, he single handily changed the morale of hundreds of thousands of Soldiers with his imagination and infamous cartoons. SGT Ruiz, as an infantryman made a great sacrifice for his country, despite this great sacrifice, few know about him and his brave acts. A Negro Soldier, a cartoonist and an infantryman, all three men made differences in the Army in a time when the Army definitely needed it, during World War II.

SFC Edward A. Carter was born to the Reverend Carter and wife Mary on a visit to United States. Soon after his birth, his parents returned to Calcutta where Rev. Carter served as a missionary. SFC Carter attended military school in Calcutta until his parents divorced, soon after their divorce he joined the Chinese Nationalist Army fighting against the Japanese. His service with the Chinese Army was not a long one, when his father informed the authorities that his son was not of age, he was discharged. After his time in the Chinese Army, SFC Carter went to Manila where he attempted to join the U.S. Army without any success. In time Carter arrived in Europe and joined the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, an American volunteer force fighting the fascist in the Spanish Civil war. Carter served with the Lincoln Brigade for over two years, at one time being captured. When he escaped, Carter returned to the United States and joined the U.S. Army on 26 September 1941. Carter's complete basic training at Camp Wolters Texas, his combat experience impressed his drill sergeants so much that during his first year of service, he was quickly promoted to Staff Sergeant. When Carter completed training in Texas, he proceeded to Ft. Benning, Georgia where he served as a cook in the

3535th Quartermaster Truck Company. Despite his extensive combat experience, Carter could not serve the Army as an infantryman as he wanted; many believed at the time that Negro's were not reliable in combat situations and were forced to serve in combat service support roles. By November of 1944, SSG Carter's unit shipped out to Europe where they transported supplies throughout the European theater. In 1945 combat troops were desperately needed in the front line, as a result, the restriction on blacks in infantry positions were lifted. SSG Carter was one of the first ones to volunteer for an all black unit of 2,800, as a result he lost his sergeant stripes and returned to a private. PVT Carter served with the Seventh Army Provisional Infantry Company No. 1, assigned with the 56th Armored Infantry Battalion. It was during this period that his commander returned him to a Staff Sergeant and made him an infantry squad leader as well. On 23 March 1945, SSG Carters was riding on the Army's main battle tank at the time, a Sherman tank with his squad in Speyer, Germany, his patrol ran into bazooka and small arms fire. Jumping into combat mode, Carter and three of his infantrymen attempted to neutralize enemy fire, two of his men suffered injuries and the third one killed. SSG Carter continued towards the enemy alone, as a result he was shot five times and forced to take cover. Various enemy Soldiers attempted to capture him at this time, he single handily killed six of them and captured the other two, using them as human shields as he moved onto the enemy position. For his actions in Speyer, he earned the Distinguished Service Cross, one of only nine awarded to blacks in total. SSG Carter returned to civilian life after the war with his wife in Los Angeles for a short period. Missing military service, Carter rejoined the Army at his previous rank, he was sent to Ft. Lewis, Washington and shortly afterwards promoted to Sergeant First Class. At the time of his ETS, the Army denied SFC Carter re-enlistment due to his involvement with Abraham Lincoln Brigade. Despite the objections, letters and recommendations from his former commanders and a personal

visit to Washington from SFC Carter, he left the Army involuntarily on 21 September 1949. On 30 January 1963, Carter died of cancer and buried at the National Cemetery in Los Angeles without ever knowing why he was not able to continue his career in the Army. Fortunately, in 1995 the Army pursued a study to determine why no black Soldiers earned the Medal of Honor during WWII, the Army concentrated on the nine negro Soldiers that had earned Distinguished Service Cross, of which Carter was one. On 13 January 1997 at the White House, Carter's family accepted the Medal of Honor on his behalf, soon after SFC Carter's remains were moved to Arlington National Cemetery as well. The Army realized as well that their suspicions of Carter's service with the Abraham Lincoln Brigade were unfounded as well; a full apology and Carter's discharged certificate was given to his family, his certificate showed that he was fully eligible for re-enlistment.

In the same war as SFC Carter but on a different continent, SGT Mauldin also made a difference in the U.S. Army. Unlike SFC Carter, SGT Mauldin did not perform any heroic acts, he did not earn any prestigious medals, but with his anti-authoritarian attitude and imagination, he improved the morale of hundreds of thousands of Soldiers throughout the entire theater in World War II. William H. Mauldin was born on 29 October 1921 in Mountain Park, New Mexico. There he grew up and attended high school, it was during high school that he joined the 45th Infantry Division as an infantryman in the National Guard. In the fall of 1940, just prior to World War II, Mauldin's unit mobilized for training; it was during this first year that Mauldin developed the two infamous cartoon characters Willie and Joe. Willie and Joe represented what Mauldin encountered on a daily basis as an infantryman. In 1942 the 45th ID was shipped to North Africa in Operation Torch, it was there that SGT Mauldin's Willie and Joe gained the attention of the Division paper and began to develop the characters throughout the operation.

After the success of SGT Mauldin's Willie and Joe, he began drawing Willie and Joe for the Stars and Stripes in a series called, "Up front with Mauldin". General Patton of the Third Army soon became aware of SGT Mauldin's characters and their anti-authority attitude. Soon there after SGT Mauldin and GEN Patton had a meeting. GEN Patton gave SGT Mauldin a thorough dressing as regards to his cartoons but dared not restrict Mauldin from continuing his series with the Stars and Stripes; he knew it would undermine morale to troop abroad. SGT Mauldin was quoted as say after the meeting, "I left the meeting with my hide, and I don't think we changed each other mind, but we left as friends". SGT Mauldin continue to develop Willie and Joe as well as many other characters that the described in detail the real feelings of the common Soldier at the front lines. Before the end of the war, SGT Mauldin would earn his first Pulitzer Prize, and before his twenty-third birthday, he would earn a second one. His citation for his war-time Pulitzer read: "Sergeant Bill Mauldin of United Feature Syndicates for distinguished service as a cartoonist, as exemplified by the cartoon entitled, :Fresh, spirited American troops, flushed with victory, are bringing in thousands of hungry, ragged, battle-weary prisoners," in the series entitled, "Up Front With Mauldin". Eventually World War II ended and Mauldin returned to civilian life, he continued to write the "Willie and Joe" series as well as political cartoons and everything that concerned the everyday American. On 19 September 2001, Sergeant Major of the Army Tilley presented Mauldin a personal letter from General Shensiki, thanking him for all his service during the war. One year later on 22 January 2002 William H. Mauldin die in Newport Beach, California. On twenty-ninth of the same month, William H. Mauldin was interred in Arlington National cemetery with full honors; twenty-one gun salute, bugler playing taps and the American flag draped over his casket.

Unlike SFC Carter and SGT Mauldin, not very much is known about SGT Alejandro R.

Ruiz. His picture appears nowhere on any wall of honor, his name is seldom ever heard and the memory of his heroic acts are all but forgotten. Like SFC Carter and SGT Mauldin served his country during World War II and made a remarkable difference. SGT Ruiz was born in Loving, New Mexico on a date that is not listed anywhere. He entered into the U.S. Army at Carlsbad, New Mexico and soon found himself with 165th Infantry, 27th Infantry Division fighting the Japanese in Okinawa on an island called Ryuku. On 26 June 1946, SGT Ruiz saw action; his actions in combat earned him the Medal of Honor, and presented to him by President Harry S. Truman. His citation read, "When his unit was stopped by a skillfully camouflaged enemy pillbox, he displayed conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty. His squad, suddenly brought under a hail of machinegun fire and a vicious grenade attack, subsequently pinned down. Jumping to his feet, PFC. Ruiz seized an automatic rifle and lunged through the flying grenades and rifle and automatic fire for the top of the emplacement. When an enemy Soldier charged him, his rifle jammed. Undaunted, PFC Ruiz whirled on his assailant and clubbed him down. Then he ran back again through the bullets and grenades and seized more ammunition and another automatic rifle, miraculously reaching the position in plain view of the enemy, he climbed to the top of the pill box. Leaping from one opening to another, he sent burst after burst into the pillbox, killing twelve of the enemy and destroying the position. PFC Ruiz's heroic conduct, in the face of overwhelming odds, saved the lives of many comrades and eliminated an obstacle that long would have checked his unit's advanced."

Three very different Non-commissioned Officers, all three served their country in three very different ways, all in the same war. What is amazing about all three of these NCOs is their uniqueness, much like the NCOs who serve in today's Army. All the NCOs in today's Army are capable of the same dedication, discipline and sacrifice. A Negro Soldier who initially was not allowed to serve in a combat role, SFC Carter, a cartoonist who possessed an anti-authoritarian attitude and a young Private who without regard to his own safety saved his unit from overwhelming odds. All three NCO's served the Army the best they could, all three made a difference, all three will never be forgotten by their comrades in arms, the same Army of today that inspire us to make a difference as they did.

Work Cited

Lee, Ulysses. The Employment Of Negro Troops United States Army in World War II, Special Studies, Chapter XXII, Volunteer Infantry Replacements, Center of Military History. pp. 699-700

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