

Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution

Proudly Honors



Patriot of the Month

August 2021

Climeth Odel Layman

United States Army



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Ozark Spring
Chapter

Climeth Odel Layman entered the US Army on October 2, 1942, at Jefferson Barracks and received an honorable discharge on June 18, 1945, at Camp Carson, Colorado. He rose to the rank of staff sergeant in command of an anti-tank gun unit in the European Theater of Operations during WWII. He states that he did not feel confident to lead men, but his superior told him he could, so he said, "Yes sir."

He served in the 10th Armored Division of the US Army, arriving at Normandy in September of 1944. He recalls that they first cleared land mines off the beach and then began their trek from northern France toward Germany, with a mounted 60 mm mortar on his half-track, providing protection for truck convoys on supply routes. When his unit arrived at the Siegfried Line that he described as pillars in rows placed so that a jeep could not get through, he told a couple of his most memorable moments.

His unit was on outpost duty one night when they saw the enemy advancing toward their position. One of his men could speak German pretty well, and as the enemy advanced, his man yelled something, taking the Germans by surprise. They threw up their hands and his unit captured 17 soldiers. He also recalled and stated, "This is quite a story", and proceeded to tell of hearing a motor crank up, then another and another and after a bit a bunch were active. It was dark and he knew he had to stay alert and be ready for anything. When the motors started cranking up, he recalled being told by a Lieutenant that if he needed a strike called, all he had to do was call him and the Lieutenant would see that it was done. Layman and his unit had no big artillery to defend their location, just their rifles, but the Germans didn't know this and that lack of knowledge had worked well so that they did not think an artillery strike would be necessary but upon hearing all the commotion with the tanks, he called the Lieutenant. It took a while for his call to get through, but it did, and the strike was called. He remembers hearing the scream of the artillery come in and light up the countryside. Shortly after this incident, he and his company were relieved and went to a nearby town to rest. For several days Climeth had pretty much been awake around the clock, always waiting for the enemy to strike, and he was so glad of the rest but much to his dismay he found he was suffering from, as he describes, "Gangrene setting in his feet." By mid-February 1945, Climeth was back stateside to receive treatment and rehab.



After serving in the Normandy Campaign, Norther France Campaign and German Campaign, Climeth received the EAME (European-African-Middle Eastern) Campaign Ribbon. He also received the Combat Infantry Badge, 3 Bronze Battle Stars and the Good Conduct Ribbon.

During Climeth's interview, one could tell he was a caring leader. Most likely one aspect that his commanding officer saw in promoting him to lead a unit.

Climeth and his late wife of 71 years have three sons and three daughters. He presently lives in his home with the care of his loving family.

Ozark Spring Daughters are proud to honor and recognize Climeth Odel Layman as Patriot of the Month for his very patriotic and dedicated service to our great nation.