

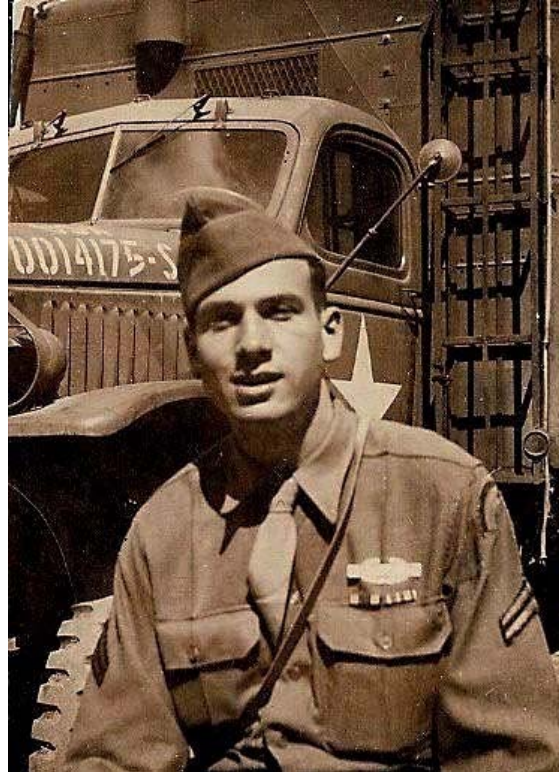
Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution
Proudly "Spotlights" our January 2011
Patriot of the Month



Marvin Ancell

Sponsored by:

**Armstrong Chapter
Armstrong, Missouri**



Marvin Ancell graduated from Moberly High School in 1940. He was drafted into the Army at Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas on December 10, 1942 and took basic training at Ft. McClellan, Alabama. After basic training, he was attached to the Air Force and sent to Florida as a leather and canvas worker. After one year he was sent to Camp Gruber, Oklahoma, to retrain for Central Europe.

Marvin was assigned to a mortar battalion with Company M, 222nd Infantry, 42nd Rainbow Division. He left aboard a ship on November 25, 1944 from New York and arrived in Marseille, France on December 9, 1944. The GI's were put on railroad boxcars and taken to the front line on the Rhine River at Lyon, Germany. One night the Germans were going down the river on a barge and Marvin, being a forward observer and radioman, called in the firing order and two barges were sunk. They fought their way to Strasbourg and then up through Hagenau, Germany where the 42nd Rainbow Division stopped the last great German offensive. They crossed the Hardt Mountains by foot, which took three days and three nights. This was accomplished by using Missouri mules to carry their ammunition and mortars. While going over the mountains, two mules fell off the cliffs. The captain said to him, "Marvin, you were a farmer, go back and see what the problem is". Marvin retraced his steps back to where the mules were and found the problem. The ammunition and mortars were strapped on top of the

mule's back, instead of being slung over their sides and this caused them to lose their balance and topple off the cliffs. Marvin carried his K rations in his jacket and when he got hot, he hung his jacket over a mule. He forgot his jacket when he went back up front, and was without food for three days. On the third day, he found a farmhouse. He went to the cellar and found some eggs and boiled a dozen of them. After completing the trip over the mountains, they got in jeeps and went to Worms, Germany. There they crossed the Rhine River on a pontoon bridge and continued on to Vienna, Austria. They were there when the war ended on May 8, 1945.

For almost a year after the end of the war, Marvin and four other soldiers stayed in Vienna and ran the switchboard. On February 26, 1946 he left for the states on a ship and arrived in the states on March 7, 1946. He was discharged at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri on March 12, 1946, as a Corporal.

Marvin was in battles in the Rhineland and Central Europe. He had two brothers in the European Theatre Operation at the same time he was there. He was fortunate to see both of them and he also got to see General Patton. His medals include:

- Victory Ribbon
- American Theater Ribbon
- European-African-Middle Eastern Theater Ribbon with two Bronze Stars
- Good Conduct Medal
- Two Overseas Service Bars

Not all war stories are pleasant, as is this one that Marvin related. He was on a high hill and their machine guns were below them. A Sergeant was to go down and call the firing orders for the mortars to Marvin. The Sergeant ran back and said the Germans were coming. The Sergeant reported what he had seen and that was when the American soldiers of the rifle company put their hands up and surrendered. The Germans stabbed them with bayonets, killing them. The only soldiers alive the next morning were the ones who had played dead.

Marvin married Vickie Thomas of Holliday, Missouri on July 18, 1948, and they had two children. They also have three grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

After discharge from the Army, Marvin became a farmer. Later, he moved to Moberly and worked for two different department stores in maintenance, as a supervisor of the home furnishings department, and a carpet and furniture salesman. In 1976, he bought his own furniture store and retired from there in 1981. Not enjoying retirement, he went back to work at J.C. Penney's until he once again retired at the age of 79 in 2001.

Marvin has been on a World War II veterans Honor Flight to Washington DC.