



**Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution  
Patriot of the Month  
February 2014**



**Lex Donaldson**

Sponsored by

**Poplar Bluff Chapter**

Lex Donaldson, one of seven children, was born into a farm family in Topoccola, Mississippi. He was drafted into the United States Army in 1943. Leaving the farm fields was an experience of a lifetime. He was in for a real education that would far surpass the one he received in the three years he attended school. He traveled to the Northern States, shipped out for Liverpool, England, and then went across the English Channel to France.

He first went to Camp Shelby for basic training, then to Indiantown Gap and along the way became ill and was hospitalized in a military hospital on Staten Island, New York. Following his recovery he was sent to Camp Kilmer in New Jersey and for the first time in his life slept under the roof with white men. This was before the order to desegregate the military was issued by President Harry Truman in 1945. Lex encountered no hostility or problems and soon he was on his way to Europe.

Lex landed in Liverpool, England and after suffering for several months with relentless bombing raids was shipped across the English Channel to Le Harve, France whose harbor had been rebuilt by American Forces after France fell to Germany. His base camp was Camp Phillip Morris. This was one of the famous "cigarette" camps that encircled Le Harve and each camp was named for a different cigarette. This was an effort to hide the actual location of the camps which were depots

for supplies and ultimately for troops coming and returning to the States from the European Theater of Operations. Outlying the “cigarette” camps were a ring of “city camps” so named for U. S. cities again thinking that if the enemy intercepted any messages mentioning either cigarettes or U. S. cities they would be confused about the conversation.

Lex was assigned to the 4253<sup>rd</sup> Quartermaster Truck Company and became a driver of supplies and troops. He spent most of his road time going back and forth to Brussels and Liege, Belgium. He became ill just before his duties at Camp Phillip Morris were ending and he was hospitalized in the 76<sup>th</sup> General Hospital. Private Donaldson was released just in time to catch a ride home on a ship which was waiting in the harbor for his unit, it was April, 1946. Among his awards and medals were the European, African, Mid Eastern (EAME) Campaign Medal, Meritorious Unit Badge, and the WWII Victory Medal.

Returning home, Lex again went to the farms to work but now was working on the farm equipment and keeping it in good repair. In MO and soon made Earsie Davis his bride. They were married forty-nine years and five months before Earsie passed. They had seven children and his grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren number in the seventies.

Lex is very respected in his community and church. His phone is quite busy as he talks with family and friends. Sadly the Donaldson home burned in 1948 and nothing was salvaged. While Lex has no pictures or mementos of his family or time in the war he remembers quite vividly where he was serving and what he was doing. Lex is a member of the Church of God in Christ.

The members of the Poplar Bluff Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution are honored to nominate Lex Donaldson as Patriot of the Month and thank him for his service to our country. His unit, the 4253<sup>rd</sup> Quartermaster Truck Company under the command of General George S. Patton, was one of hundreds of Black Quartermaster Companies serving in France and England. We also salute all of the men of those companies and thank them for their service, though not in combat they were in harm’s way making sure their fellow troops on the front line had what they needed to keep the Army strong.