

MEDAL OF HONOR

EDWARD CARTER JR.



AUSA

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MEDAL OF HONOR

EDWARD CARTER JR.

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GENERAL DYNAMICS

DURING A CHILDHOOD SPENT TRAVELING THE WORLD, HE WOULD DREAM OF ONE DAY BECOMING A GREAT WARRIOR. THOSE WISHES WOULD BE REALIZED OUTSIDE A SMALL TOWN IN GERMANY IN 1945.



EDWARD CARTER JR.

HIS FATHER WAS A MISSIONARY.

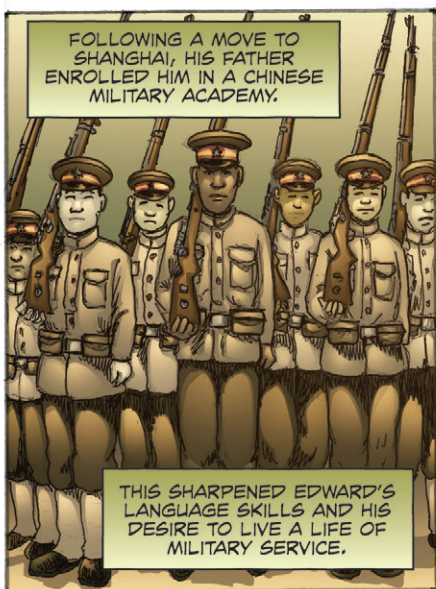
WHEN EDWARD WAS NINE, THE FAMILY MOVED FROM LOS ANGELES TO INDIA TO START A CHURCH.

MOM, WHEN DID YOU LEAVE CALCUTTA?



AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY, HE WOULD SNEAK AWAY TO WATCH TROOPS MANEUVER AT A NEARBY BRITISH ARMY BASE.





BUT THE DRAW OF A MILITARY CAREER WAS TOO STRONG A DRAW AND HE ENLISTED IN THE ARMY IN THE FALL OF 1941.



THE UNITED STATES ARMY WAS SEGREGATED IN THOSE DAYS.

DESPITE HIS COMBAT EXPERIENCE, CARTER WAS RELEGATED TO THE COOKS AND BAKERS OF A TRANSPORTATION UNIT.



HIS DETERMINATION AND HARD WORK TOOK HIM TO STAFF SERGEANT.

BUT HE WAS STILL EAGER TO GET INTO THE FIGHT.



HIS CHANCE CAME WHEN COMBAT UNITS DESPERATELY NEEDED REINFORCEMENTS FOLLOWING THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE.

AFRICAN AMERICANS WERE FINALLY WELCOME-- AS LONG AS THEY WOULD SERVE AS PRIVATES.

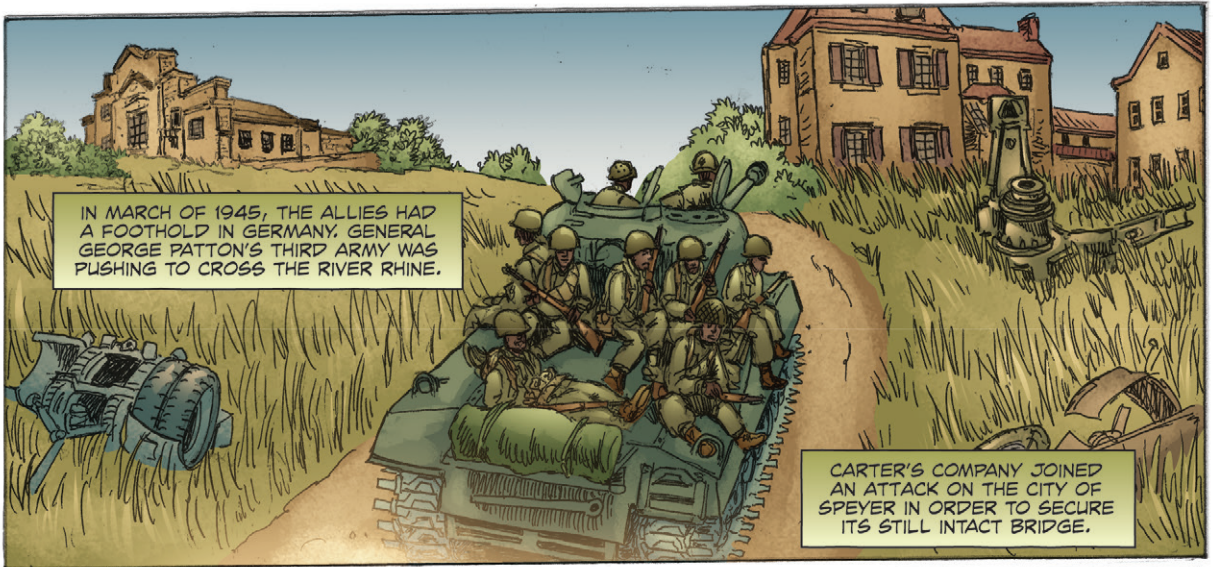


AFTER THE TRAINING PERIOD, CARTER WAS ASSIGNED TO PROVISIONAL COMPANY 1, 56TH ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION, 12TH ARMORED DIVISION.

OUT! OUT!
THIS AIN'T A PARTY WE'RE GOING TO!



LOOKS LIKE WE MAY HAVE OUR FIRST SQUAD LEADER.

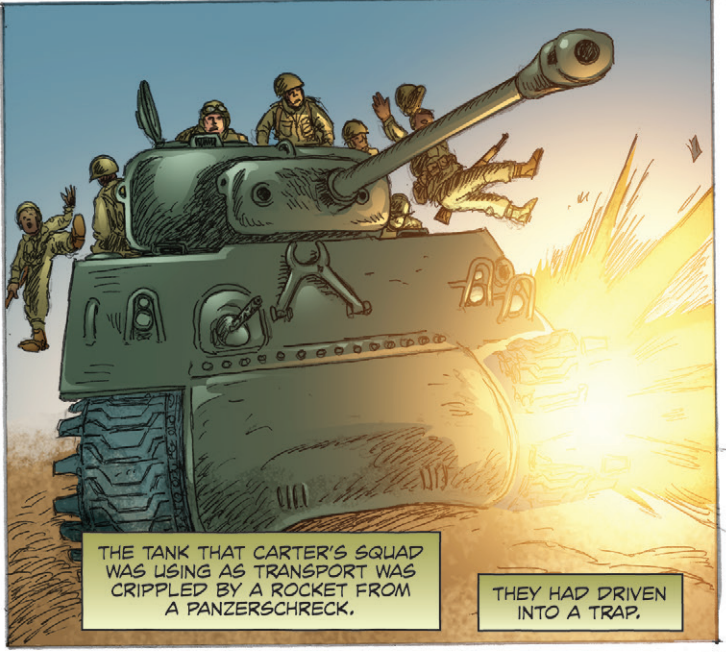


IN MARCH OF 1945, THE ALLIES HAD A Foothold IN GERMANY. GENERAL GEORGE PATTON'S THIRD ARMY WAS PUSHING TO CROSS THE RIVER RHINE.

CARTER'S COMPANY JOINED AN ATTACK ON THE CITY OF SPEYER IN ORDER TO SECURE ITS STILL INTACT BRIDGE.



AS AMERICAN AND BRITISH FORCES WERE DISCOVERING, THE GERMAN ARMY WAS STILL AS DANGEROUS IN RETREAT AS ON THE ATTACK.



THE TANK THAT CARTER'S SQUAD WAS USING AS TRANSPORT WAS CRIPPLED BY A ROCKET FROM A PANZERSCHRECK.

THEY HAD DRIVEN INTO A TRAP.



UNDER HEAVY SMALL ARMS FIRE, CARTER GATHERED HIS MEN UNDER COVER.

ON ME!



WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

WELL, WE DAMN SURE CAN'T STAY HERE.

CARTER VOLUNTEERED TO LEAD A PATROL TOWARD ENEMY FIRE.



CARTER LED THE MEN TOWARD THE FORTIFIED WAREHOUSE BUILDING.

MOVE IT!



ONE OF THEM DIED INSTANTLY.



CARTER ORDERED THE REMAINING TWO TO WITHDRAW.

BACK UNDER COVER, YOU TWO!



MACHINE GUN FIRE KILLED ONE AND WOUNDED THE OTHER AS THEY RETREATED.

UNNH!



DETERMINED TO SAVE HIS SQUAD FROM THE DEADLY ENFILADE, CARTER CONTINUED ON ALONE.



ON OPEN GROUND, CARTER WAS AN EASY TARGET FOR THE MACHINE GUNNERS.



HE TOOK THREE ROUNDS IN THE ARM BUT KEPT RUNNING.



A BULLET THROUGH HIS LEFT LEG BROUGHT HIM TO THE GROUND.

HE TOOK COVER TO TREAT HIS WOUNDS.



IT PROVED TO BE POOR COVER.



BLEEDING AND IN PAIN, STILL CARTER MOVED ON TOWARD HIS OBJECTIVE.



HE WAS CLOSE ENOUGH TO HEAR THE GERMANS INSIDE.

HERE CARTER RESTED AND BOUND HIS WOUNDS.

FOR TWO HOURS HE LAY STILL, WATCHING AND LISTENING.



THE GERMANS EMERGED FROM THEIR REFUGE, INTENT ON TAKING THE AMERICAN SOLDIER PRISONER.

ER IST HIER!



INSTEAD, CARTER KILLED SIX OF THE EIGHT-MAN PATROL.



HE TOOK THE REMAINING TWO PRISONER AND ESCORTED THEM BACK TO HIS MEN WAITING ALONG THE ROAD.

GEHT IHR!



YOU NEED BLOOD AND MORE CARE THAN WE CAN GIVE YOU HERE.

THE INFORMATION OFFERED BY THE CAPTIVES HELPED CLEAR THE ROAD TO SPEYER.

YOU CAN TAKE ME TO THE REAR AFTER I GET MORE FROM THE PRISONERS.



CARTER LEFT THE HOSPITAL EARLY TO GET BACK TO HIS UNIT. HE WAS AWARDED THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS FOR HIS ACTIONS IN SPEYER.



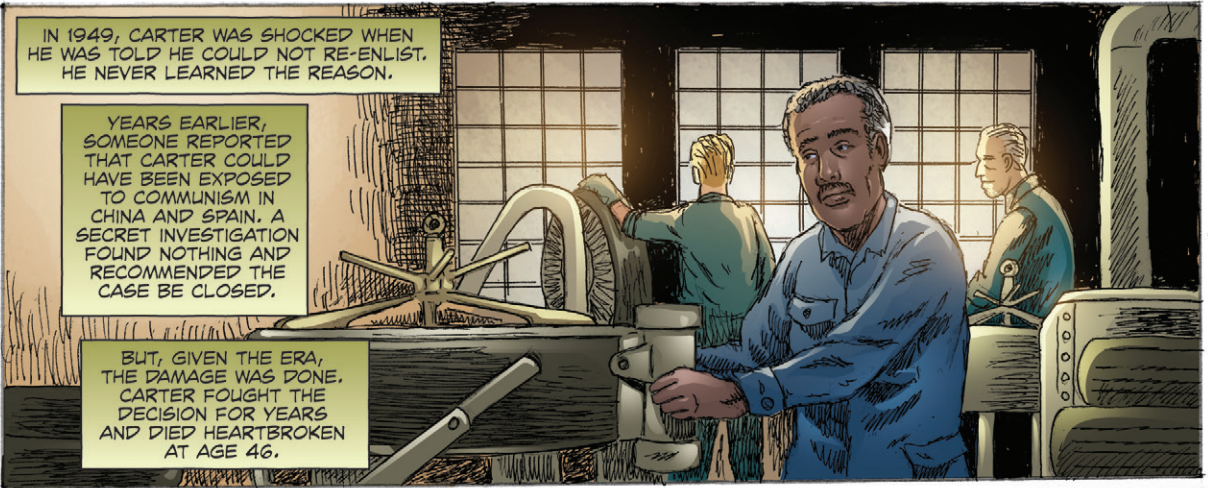
AFTER THE WAR, CARTER WAS PROMOTED TO SERGEANT FIRST CLASS. HE WAS HAND-PICKED TO TRAIN AN AFRICAN AMERICAN ENGINEER UNIT IN THE NATIONAL GUARD.



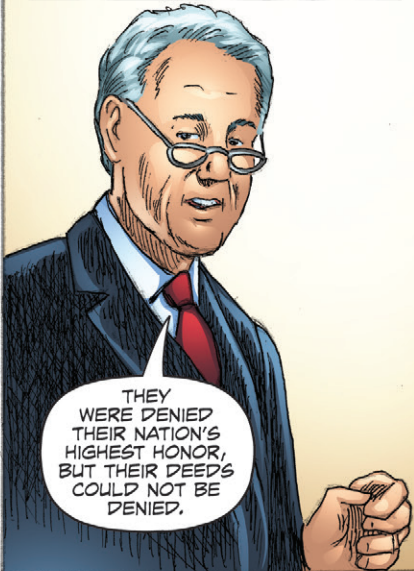
IN 1949, CARTER WAS SHOCKED WHEN HE WAS TOLD HE COULD NOT RE-ENLIST. HE NEVER LEARNED THE REASON.

YEARS EARLIER, SOMEONE REPORTED THAT CARTER COULD HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO COMMUNISM IN CHINA AND SPAIN. A SECRET INVESTIGATION FOUND NOTHING AND RECOMMENDED THE CASE BE CLOSED.

BUT, GIVEN THE ERA, THE DAMAGE WAS DONE. CARTER FOUGHT THE DECISION FOR YEARS AND DIED HEARTBROKEN AT AGE 46.



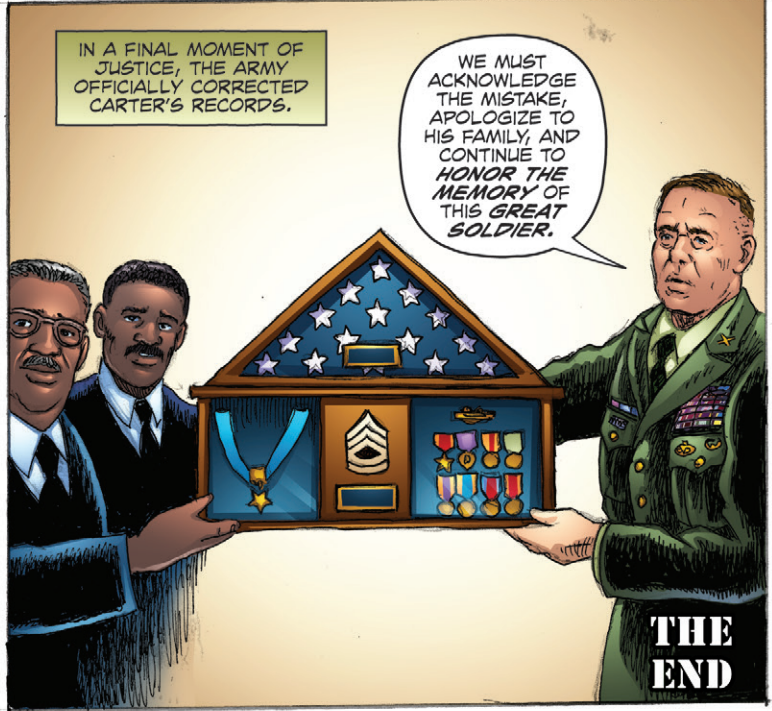
EDWARD CARTER JR. WAS RECOGNIZED WITH THE MEDAL OF HONOR IN 1997, ALONG WITH SIX FELLOW SOLDIERS. THEY REMAIN THE ONLY AFRICAN AMERICAN RECIPIENTS FROM WORLD WAR II.



THEY WERE DENIED THEIR NATION'S HIGHEST HONOR, BUT THEIR DEEDS COULD NOT BE DENIED.

IN A FINAL MOMENT OF JUSTICE, THE ARMY OFFICIALLY CORRECTED CARTER'S RECORDS.

WE MUST ACKNOWLEDGE THE MISTAKE, APOLOGIZE TO HIS FAMILY, AND CONTINUE TO HONOR THE MEMORY OF THIS GREAT SOLDIER.



THE END

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