

AUDIE MURPHY

Audie Murphy was a famous Hollywood actor who starred in 44 films. Hollywood actors today find it fashionable to blame America first for every problem in the world. Like Jane Fonda, they constantly criticize America, and go to great trouble to encourage our enemies. Murphy, however, lived in a different era. Too bad we do not have Hollywood actors like him today.

Audie Murphy was born June 20, 1924 near Kingston, Texas. He was one of 12 children. At age 16 he was an orphan and was taking care of his younger siblings. When WW II broke out he did everything he could to enlist in the service of his country. Since he was only 5' 5" tall and weighed only 110 lbs. he was rejected by both the Marines and the Paratroopers. Finally he was accepted by the Regular Army as an infantryman. He signed the papers a few days after his 18 th birthday. Some think he was only 17 and altered his birth certificate in order to serve.

After training at Camp Wolters, Texas and Fort Meade, Maryland he arrived in North Africa in Feb. 1943. After helping to mop up there he landed in Sicily on July 10, 1943. Here he distinguished himself under fire and was promoted to Corporal. Next he participated in the invasion of Salerno. After great displays of heroism there he was promoted to Sergeant. He missed the invasion at Anzio because of a serious attack of malaria, but soon rejoined his unit for some of the fiercest fighting of the war. After months of volunteering for many dangerous assignments he came down with another attack of malaria. Ten days later, however, he was back in action. At this point he turned down a battlefield commission to 2 nd Lieutenant so that he might remain with his unit. As the battle raged Audie realized that there was only one route that the enemy armor could pass through. Murphy therefore mined that road and stopped the enemy advance. Disdaining enemy fire he personally attacked and disabled the lead tank with Molotov cocktails and rifle grenades. On May 23 rd his unit broke

through the enemy lines and fought their way to Rome.

On Aug. 15, 1944 they landed in Southern France and were assigned to capture an enemy artillery position. Pinned down by enemy fire Murphy left his men, commandeered a 30 cal machine gun, and returned to lead the charge on the enemy position. When the Germans raised a white flag Private Lattie Tipton stood up to take the prisoners and was gunned down. Murphy was so enraged that he picked up a German machine gun and charged one enemy position after another, killing them all. Wounded in the heel he spent two weeks in an Evac hospital. Back in the battle his unit came under attack and Murphy grabbed a radio, crawled forward so he could see the enemy position. From here he called in mortar and artillery fire. Here also he was promoted to Sergeant and then commissioned as a 2 nd Lieutenant. On Oct. 26, 1944 he was wounded again by a sniper's bullet and spent 3 months recuperating. Rejoining his unit in Jan. 1945 he led his men against the German stronghold at Holtzwihr. After three days of fierce fighting Murphy was the only officer left alive. He organized his men for the next assault. As they waited in the snow they were approached by a vastly superior fighting force of 6 German tanks and 250 Infantrymen. Murphy ordered his men to pull back while he advanced. Standing on a burning tank destroyer he turned a machine gun on the advancing Germans. Approached by German soldiers from three directions he fought until he ran out of ammunition and then dropped to the snow. He ignored the wound in his leg and kept on fighting. His courageous actions saved his unit from being encircled and stopped the enemy advance. On Feb. 22, 1945 he was promoted to 1 st Lieutenant.

After the war Murphy flew back to Texas and was honorable discharged on Sept. 21, 1945. He was the most decorated soldier of WW II. His medals include the Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross, Silver Star, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, Purple Heart, U.S. Army Outstanding Civilian Service Medal, Good Conduct Medal, Distinguished Unit Emblem,

American Campaign Medal, another Silver Star, 4 Bronze Stars (representing 9 campaigns), WW II Victory Medal, Army of Occupation Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, Combat Infantry Badge, Marksman Badge with Rifle bar, Expert Badge with Bayonet Bar, French Fouragere, French Legion of Honor, 2 French Croix de Guerres, Medal of Liberated France, and Belgian Croix de Guerre. With men like Audie Murphy gone, Hollywood just isn't the same, is it?