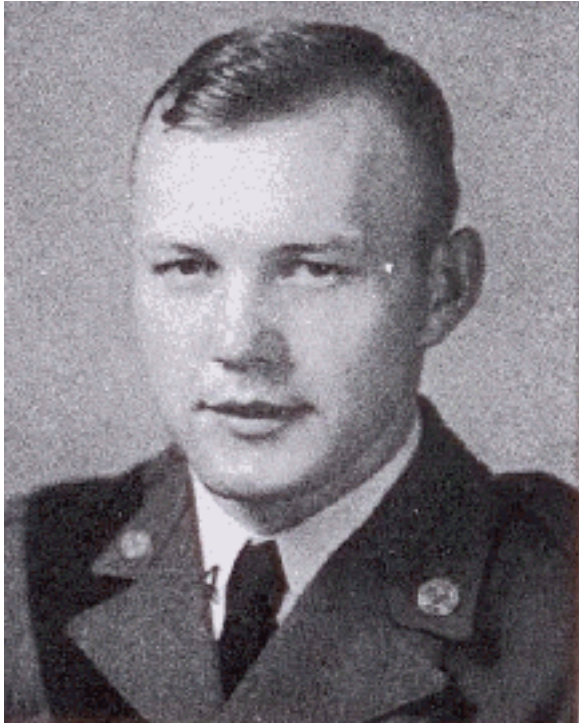


John Frank Hill, "Duck" "J.C."



The tough work ethic learned from growing up on a farm in the Carolinas in the 1920's and 30's was a common foundation for many Clemson Cadets that went on to serve in WWII. 1st Lt. John Frank Hill, "Duck", was one of those very brave soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice and was killed in action in Germany on April 10, 1945.

From Edneyville, NC, "Duck" majored in Dairying at Clemson and played basketball his Sophomore, Junior and Senior years. He graduated in 1943 and served in the US Army. Duck kept his Tiger colors as he went from Clemson College to the 10th Armored "Tiger" Division, Company B, 61st Armored Infantry Regiment.

According to the 10th Armored Division Combat Chronicle, Duck's unit entered combat near Mars La Tour, France, on 2 November 1944. On the 19th of November, they crossed into Germany at Eft. They fought courageously at the Battle of the Bulge. During the month of March, they fought through the cities of Trier, Landau, Mannheim and Heidelberg.

In April, the 10th Armored Division penetrated 40 miles to seize Crailsheim, surprised the Germans and then held on for 3-4 days while the Germans counterattacked. As Duck's date of death is the 10th of April, he was likely killed after the 10th AD had gone on the defensive to try and hold their captured ground. As this was within four weeks of Germany's surrender, this was undoubtedly one of the Germans' last successful counterattacks.

Crailsheim most likely is the location where "Duck" gave his last breath for our great country. As we remember all those brave men and women, our Clemson Heroes, let our Tiger family remember the brave sacrifice of one of our own, 1st Lt. John Frank Hill.

The 10th Armored Division entered combat near Mars La Tour, France, on 2 November 1944 and, on the 15th of the same month, joined in the fight to reduce the fortress city of Metz.

Crossing the Moselle to the north in a wide encircling sweep, it attacked northeast and southeast in a two-pronged drive, reached the Saar River, and on 19 November, crossed into Germany at Eft. When the Ardennes offensive was launched, it rushed north to help stem the German tide, and, while CCB blocked the northern and eastern approaches to Bastogne by organizing defenses at Noville, Longvilly and Bras, and joined the 101st Airborne Division later in holding Bastogne, the remainder of the 10th Armored "Tigers" rammed into the enemy along the southern hinge of the Bulge in the vicinity of Berdorf and Echternach.

Following a rest after the Bulge, the Division returned to the front on 20 February 1945 and helped to clear the Saar-Moselle Triangle. It then swung north and captured the historic city of Trier on 2 March, after which, on the 20th, took Landau on the 22nd, and reached the Rhine that same day. It crossed the river at Worms on the 28th, passed through the 44th Infantry Division at Mannheim on the 30th, and on the 31st, drove into Heidelberg which had been declared an open city.

Racing east to Assamstadt and bypassing Heilbronn enroute, it veered south and seized Crailsheim on 7 April. Isolated at this location deep in the enemy's rear and faced with daily increasing pressure and mounting

casualties, it withdrew a short distance to the north on the 11th, then attacked back to the west, seizing Ohringen on 13 April. Launching a new drive to the south at this point, in rapid order it captured Schwabisch Hall on the 18th, Gaildorf on the 19th, Kercheim on the 20th, and reached the Danube at Ehingen on the 22nd. It then swung east toward Ulm, taking the cathedral city on the 25th. At Ulm, it turned south once more and, attacking into the rugged Alps on two parallel routes, it had reached Mittenwald on one route and had captured Imst in Austria after crossing the border at Fussen on the other when the war ended.

Following VE Day, the Division performed occupation duty in the Garmish-Partenkirchen area until it departed on 12 September for Marseilles, France, from which it sailed for home. Upon debarkation in the United States, the 10th Armored Division was inactivated at Camp Patrick Henry, Virginia on 15 October 1945.