

## Chemist in Battle

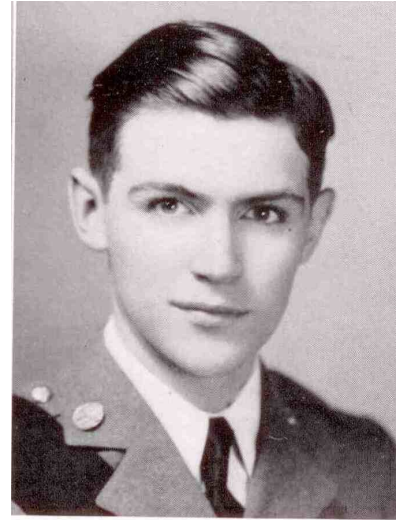
After his 1935 graduation from Greenville High School, Henry Ayer Raysor II headed to Clemson College. Over the next four years, as Raysor worked toward his degree in Chemistry, the world inched ever closer to war.

Harry Raysor marched with the Freshman Platoon and served as a member of the staff of *The Tiger*, the college's student newspaper. He was a member of the Greenville County Club and Alpha Chi Sigma, the national professional chemistry fraternity. Harry was awarded a degree in Chemistry in 1939. That degree set his life on a course that would end in war.

Harry married Melba Burgess in June 1940 and in November was called to military service. Second Lieutenant Raysor reported to the Army's Chemical Warfare Service. Following the United States' entry into the war, Harry was assigned to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Chemical Battalion at Fort Benning, Georgia. The battalion was equipped with 4.2 inch mortars for firing chemicals, smoke, and high explosive rounds in support of infantry operations. Following stateside training, the battalion shipped to North Africa in April 1943, joining the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division in time for its participation in the July invasion of Sicily. According to Harry's classmate James Sweeney, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Chemical Battalion was released to the II Corps reserve within a few days of the Sicily landings. The battalion's soldiers were put to work guarding POW camps and supply depots, but their time in combat was not over: the invasion of Italy loomed just ahead.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division landed at Salerno, Italy in September 1943 with Raysor's 3<sup>rd</sup> Chemical Battalion once more in support. By January 1944, General Mark Clark's Italian campaign had bogged down into a costly slugfest as the Americans battled entrenched German defenders and harsh winter weather. Harry Raysor, now a captain, was the commanding officer of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Chemical Battalion's C Company. On the morning of January 12, Raysor was sheltered in a building near the village of Cerasuolo when a German air raid commenced. Raysor's building was hit by a German bomb and he was killed. On January 17, Raysor's body was interred in a temporary military cemetery in Marzenello, Italy.

After the war, Raysor's remains were returned to Greenville and buried in the Woodlawn Memorial Park. Captain Raysor was survived by his widow and son, his parents, and a sister. For more information on Captain Henry Ayer Raysor II see:



H. A. RAYSOR

