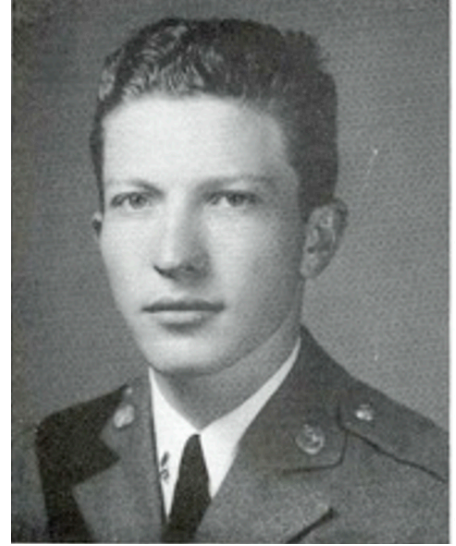


With the 13th

William Bernard Sharpe of Orangeburg graduated from Clemson College in 1940. A chemistry major, Sharpe was a member of Alpha Chi Sigma, the national honorary chemical fraternity. He was a member of the Tri-County Club and sang with the Glee Club. He attended ROTC summer training at Fort McClellan, Alabama after his junior year. As a senior, he was appointed a first lieutenant and executive officer of Company A, 1st Battalion, 1st Regiment in the Cadet Brigade.

Following graduation, Sharpe married his wife Colleen and took a position with Wannamaker Chemical Company. As the United States mobilized its military, Sharpe reported for active duty in March 1941.



Sharpe was assigned to the 13th Infantry Regiment of the 8th Infantry Division at Fort Jackson. The regiment's preparation for combat operations is representative of other units that would eventually be committed to overseas fighting during World War II. In September, even before the United States was attacked, the 13th participated in the Carolina Maneuvers. Following the Japanese raid on Pearl Harbor, the regiment was assigned coastal defense duties along America's south Atlantic coast from the Carolinas to Florida.

Recalled to Fort Jackson, the regiment absorbed new personnel and in September 1942, traveled to Tennessee for large-scale maneuvers. A movement to cold, icy Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri followed in November as the regiment focused on physical conditioning. Then, in March 1943, the regiment went to the other weather extreme, entraining for Camp Laguna, Arizona and exercises in the desert. In August, the regiment returned to Tennessee, and in November proceeded to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey to prepare for overseas movement.

Sharpe's 3rd Battalion boarded the SS *Athos II* and departed New York on December 5. It arrived at Belfast, Northern Ireland on December 16 and moved to Enniskillen where it would continue its training into the summer of 1944.

On July 4, the 13th Infantry Regiment crossed Utah Beach on France's Cotentin Peninsula. At that time, Captain Sharpe was serving as the commanding officer of 3rd Battalion's Company M. His fellow Clemson alumnus, Ben Anderson, was commanding officer of the battalion's Company K.

The regiment was committed to combat for the first time on the morning of July 13 when it attacked south of La Haye du Puits. On August 4, Sharpe's battalion helped lead the way into Rennes, the first large inland city of France to be liberated.

From August 24 until the surrender of the German garrison on September 19, Sharpe's regiment participated in the liberation of the port city of Brest. The 13th then moved northeast by rail and

road to the convergence of the borders of Belgium, Luxembourg, and Germany, taking positions opposite the Germans' Siegfried Line of fortifications.

On November 16, the 13th Infantry Regiment moved into the Hurtgen Forrest, occupying a 2,700-yard front to the east of the town of Schmidt. The terrain here, noted the regiment's official history, "was ideally suited for defense, having steep embankments, dense woods, and deep mud, with the added obstacles of fallen trees, enemy wire and mines." The Hurtgen battle would become the Army's longest of the war—and for very little benefit. The weather was horrible, the fighting brutal, and the casualties severe. One of these was Captain Sharpe. By then assigned to the 3rd Battalion's headquarters, Sharpe was killed in action on December 17, 1944.

William Bernard Sharpe was awarded the Purple Heart. He was survived by his wife, his parents, his sister, and his brother Raymond, then an Army major serving in England. After the war, his remains were reinterred at Orangeburg's Sunnyside Cemetery.

