

**Col. Doyle R. Yardley, Home Was Never Like This, Edited by Charles Turnbo, Yardley Enterprises, P0 Box 1335, Evergreen, CO., 80437. Pb., 312 pp., \$25.00.**

It is truly an honor to review this account and to share a great story, which involves a fellow prisoner friend of mine in WW II. It is a wonder that the book came about at all and it did with the discovery of Col. Yardley's diary found in one of the footlockers in his home in Texas. In about a years time, Nina Yardley and Charles Turnbo, brought the book to publication with a tremendous effort and for whom we are so pleased.

The diary begins in April 1942 and concludes in April 1945. with a short epilogue into 1946. It is easily read and certainly exciting. The introductory pages portray the author's qualifying at Fort Benning for the parachute wings and his earliest assignment to the 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion. It then covers the harsh training his unit faced at home and then in England in preparation for the initial employment of America's Airborne Assaults in WW II, which took place in a departure from Lands End in England for a 12 hour flight for over 1500 miles south to liberate and destroy an airbase near Oran, Algeria. That drop was very successful. An interesting aside is that on that jump his battalion was accompanied by a then Major, now a LTG William Yarborough, who was Gen. Mark Clark's airborne advisor, and who lives near me in Pinehurst. He recalled and gave high praise to Col. Yardley, whom he well recalled as we spoke in a recent call on the phone. After about 17 days his unit made a second drop on another target near Gafsa, Algeria, which was well done. And shortly after Gen. Clark gave the 509th a third mission to follow their role in Sicily. It was to fly out of Sicily north well behind the enemy lines at about 20 miles east of Naples to Avallino, Italy. It too was successful and made the third combat jump and qualified the bronze stars on his parachute wings. It is a rare honor and a precious few of us left with even one star, much less three. Today, it s a distinctive honor to see a veteran and recognize it. Unfortunately, he was wounded by German machine gun fire and taken a prisoner of war in Sept. 1943.

The next few chapters relate the tortuous details of his movement by vehicles and train from the battlefield north through Italy and the Brenner Pass to Stalag XIIIC in Hammelburg, Germany. And then later to the permanent camp Of lag 64 in Schubin, Poland arriving in Sept. 1943 as one of the earliest following the losses from North Africa and Sicily.

Next come the keen observations he made of the camp activities. It covers the way many took the prison life, the avocations readily available to relieve the boredom, the leadership and discipline maintained, and impressions of the German and America camp leaders. Notable was its initial Senior American Officer, Col.

Thomas D Drake, a Regimental Commander of the 34th Infantry Division in North Africa. He was badly wounded and later exchanged and sent home to America. His follower was Col. Paul R. Goode, A Regimental commander of the 29th Infantry Division taken in Normandy on Omaha Beach in June 1944. Both of these officers were held in the highest esteem and greatest respect, not only by us, as prisoners and his subordinates, but by the German camp authorities as well.

Near Dec. 1944, Col. Yardley was selected to lead the formation of another Oflag 64Z to accommodate the gradual fill to capacity of Oflag 64, following , Holland, The Bulge and early Rhine campaigns. Then. after our departure from Oflag 64, on 21 Jan. 1945, our respective escapes were planned and executed. His careful observations of the Soviet Army Forces under Marshal Zhukov, are well described, as they made their way onto Berlin. Our path crossed as we progressed across friendly Poland to Warsaw, Kiev and finally by train to Odessa, Russia on the Black Sea ,where in early Mar. we were repatriated by American officers from the Lend Lease Military Mission in Moscow. We sailed on the same ship, the H. M . S. Moreton Bay though Istanbul, Port Said and to Naples, Italy. There we parted company as he was sent home, and the reviewer managed to return back to Marseille, France and then to Dusseldorf, Germany to join my own unit again.

His next assignment stateside was to visit the South American Nations and our Mission with them and to explain, with his fluency in Spanish , the skills our airborne troops had learned in Europe and which the host members welcome.

The story ends with a tragic loss of the author and closed what may have well become a highly successful one. Our deep thanks to Nina and Charles for their research and diligence in bringing this story of an American Airborne Hero to fruition. It is highly recommended for purchase for a library item and fine reading.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dr. Herbert L. Garris  
Box 1693  
Pinehurst, N. C. 28370