



Leslie D. Tomlinson Jr.

Leslie Tomlinson Jr.

May 26, 1920 — April 4, 2009

Leslie D. Tomlinson Jr., 88, of Black Creek, died Saturday. Funeral services will be held Tuesday at 2 p.m. at Joyner's Funeral Home, 4100 Raleigh Road Parkway, conducted by the Rev. Phil Baucom. The family will receive friends following the service until 3:30 p.m. and at other times at 5229 Church Loop Road, Black Creek. A private committal will be held for the family only.

Leslie Daniel Tomlinson Jr. graduated from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill in 1941 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in agriculture and economics. He also played baseball and football for UNC.

Mr. Tomlinson served in the United States Army Air Force as a Staff Sergeant in Squadron A. 301st AAF Base Unit at Eglin Field, Florida, from Sept. 26, 1942, until Dec. 19, 1945. He served as an airplane armorer and inspected and maintained all armament equipment on American bomber, fighter, and cargo type aircraft. He performed special and highly skilled experimental work on allied and enemy armament, examining such features as serial cannons, bomb release mechanisms, and pyrotechnics. He also supervised experimental labor on power turrets, buss bombs, rockets, and all phases of gunnery. He served as technical inspector on group level, of adjustment, repair and replacement of armament apparatus. He took great pride in his military service all of his life.

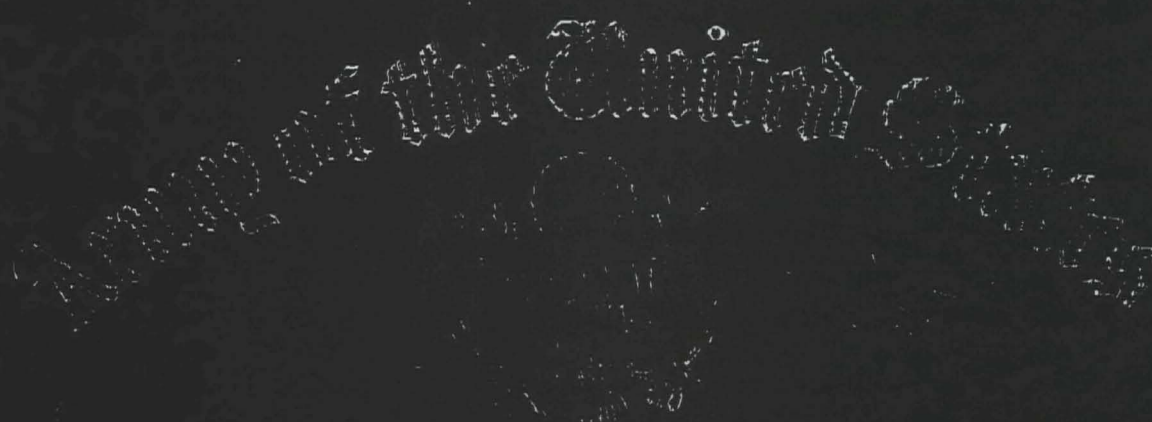
After Mr. Tomlinson graduated from college, he spent his life as a farmer and business man until retirement. He was awarded Tree Farmer of the Year in 2006.

He loved nature and the environment and after his retirement, spent many happy hours fishing.

Surviving are his wife, Huldah Deans Rowe Tomlinson; a son, L.D. Tomlinson III and wife, Sheila, of Black Creek; and a grandson, Brandon Eric Tomlinson and wife, Jaymi, of Black Creek.

He was preceded in death by a son, George Rowe Tomlinson; and two sisters, Janet Miller Tomlinson and Rebecca McCotter Tomlinson.

Condolences may be



Honorable Discharge

This is to certify that

LESLIE D. TOLMELSON JR. 34 451 299 Staff Sergeant

Squadron 1, 301st AF Base Unit

Army of the United States

Given at THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
GAINESVILLE, Florida

Date 17 December 1945

WITNESSES

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ENLISTED RECORD AND REPORT OF SEPARATION

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HONORABLE DISCHARGE

Tomlinson Leslie D Jr		34 451 399		S/Sgt		AC		AUS	
Sg A 301st AAFPU		19 Dec 45		AF Separation Base Inw Fld 24					
Black Creek Wilson Co N C		26 May 20		Wilson N C					
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x		x		x		Student College x-02			
MILITARY HISTORY									
12 Sep 42		26 Sep 42		Ft Bragg N C					
x		1		Wilson Co N C		See 9			
As Armorer 911		AAF Crew Member		Lodge		AAF Tech Badge			
None									
American Theater Ribbon-Victory Medal-Good Conduct Medal-AF 600-68									
None									
Sep 42		Jan 45		Dec 45		T 20 Mar 45		None	
						YF Dec 44		None	
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None									
AR 615-365 WD GAF 220.6 22 Sep 45 AFR P 13-3545 3 years service									
As Armorer Orsc									
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x		x		31 Dec 45		31 Jan 46		6.60	
								x	
WD 12 Sep 42 - 26 Sep 42 Large Button Issued (ASR 35 2 Sep 45)									
W A SPAUGH Capt AC									

14 October 1945

1. This report is to be made by the person who has the custody of the record of this person, and it will not be made by the person who has the custody of the record of this person.

ROBERT L. TOMLINSON, JR.

Bob

~~Robert~~ Tomlinson, son of Dr. & Mrs.

Robert L. Tomlinson was drafted in World War II in August of 1943. Basic training for Bob was at Camp Rucker, Alabama. He was assigned to the 88th Chemical Mortar Battalion and after basic training was transferred to Oahu, Hawaii awaiting combat assignments.

The first combat assignment was with the 17th Infantry Division for the invasion of Guam in the Summer of 1944. In the Fall of 1944 Bob's company was assigned again with the 17th Division for the invasion of Leyte, Philippine Islands.

In April 1945 the battle of Okinawa was begun and again Bob's heavy mortar company was in support of the 17th Infantry Division. As platoon leader, Bob quite often was assigned as forward observer for "A" company's mortars.

After Okinawa was secured his company returned to Leyte in the Philippines to await assignment in Japan, but this invasion was not necessary since the Japanese surrendered in late Summer of 1945. Bob returned home and was discharged from the Army in December 1945, as a staff sergeant.

THIS STORY ABOUT ERNIE PYLE'S
DEATH IS VERY INTERESTING BECAUSE
THE 7TH INFANTRY DIVISION MADE
MADE THE IESIMA INVASION.
BOTH PHILLIP WILLIAMS AND
BOB TOMLINSON WERE SERGEANTS
OF 4.2 MORTAR SQUADS IN THE
7TH DIVISION. THEY WERE ON THE
PERCH WITH ERNIE PYLE WHEN
HE WAS KILLED AND WITNESSED
THE EVENT.

'... I considered sending the photo to [Pyle's widow], but had mixed feelings about it. ...'

RICHARD STRASSER, NAVY OFFICER ON THE USS PANAMINT WHO RECEIVED A COPY OF THE PHOTO IN AUGUST 1945



Famed World War II correspondent Ernie Pyle is seen shortly after he was killed on the island of Ie Shima on April 18, 1945.

PHOTO BY ALEXANDER ROBERTS COURTESY OF RICHARD STRASSER VIA AP

PHOTO SURFACES OF ERNIE PYLE'S DEATH

BY RICHARD PYLE
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK

The figure in the photograph is clad in Army fatigues, boots and helmet, lying on his back in peaceful repose, folded hands holding a military cap. Except for a thin trickle of blood from the corner of his mouth, he could be asleep.

But he is not asleep; he is dead. And this is not just another fallen GI; it is Ernie Pyle, the most celebrated war correspondent of World War II.

As far as can be determined, the photograph has never been published. Sixty-three years after Pyle was killed by the Japanese, it has surfaced — surprising historians, reminding a forgetful world of a humble correspondent who artfully and ardently told

Pyle writing provided drama

Ernie Pyle's writings during World War II dealt mainly with the lives of ordinary soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines, hundreds of whom were named in his stories from North Africa, Italy, France and the Pacific. Here are some excerpts from

Ernie Pyle was killed by a Japanese machine gun at Ie Shima on April 18, 1945.

The news stunned a nation still mourning the death of Franklin D. Roosevelt six days earlier. Ernie Pyle was not just any reporter. He was a household name during World War II and for years afterward. From 1941 until his death, Pyle riveted the nation with personal, straight-from-the-heart tales about hometown soldiers in history's greatest conflict.

In 1944, his columns for Scripps-Howard Newspapers earned a Pulitzer Prize, and Hollywood made a movie, "Ernie Pyle's Story of G.I. Joe," starring Burgess Meredith as the slender, balding 44-year-old reporter.

Typically self-effacing, Pyle insisted the film include fellow war correspondents playing themselves. But he was killed before it was released.

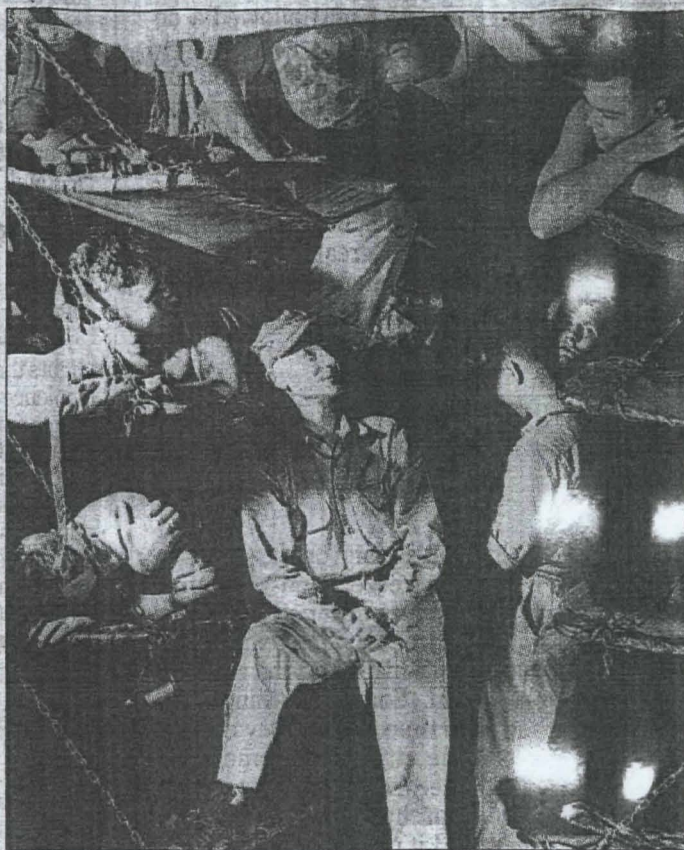
In April 1945, the one-time Indiana farm boy had just arrived in the Pacific after four years of covering combat in North Africa, Italy and France. With Germany on the verge of surrender, he wanted to see the war to its end but confided to colleagues that he didn't expect to survive.

At Okinawa, he found U.S. forces battling entrenched Japanese defenders while "kamikaze" suicide pilots wreaked carnage on the Allied fleet offshore.

On April 16, the Army's 77th Infantry Division landed on Ie Shima, a small island off Okinawa, to capture an airfield. Although a sideshow to the main battle, it was "warfare in its worst form," Army photographer Alexander Roberts wrote later.

On the third morning, a jeep carrying Pyle and three officers came under fire from a hidden machine gun. All scrambled for cover in roadside ditches, but when Pyle raised his head, a .30-caliber bullet caught him in the left temple, killing him instantly.

Roberts and two other photographers, including AP's Grant MacDonald, were at a command post 300 yards away when Col. Joseph Coolidge, who had been with Pyle in the jeep, reported



In March 1945, Ernie Pyle talks with Marines below decks on a Navy transport before the invasion of Okinawa.

AP FILE PHOTO

what happened.

Roberts, despite continuing enemy fire, crept forward — a "laborious, dirt-eating crawl," he later called it — to record the scene with his Speed Graphic camera. Roberts' photograph, however, was never seen by the public. He told Miller the War Department had withheld it "out of deference" to Ernie's ailing widow, Jerry.

Photo a mystery

Eight military museums and history centers queried by AP said the negative and photo were unknown to them. This included the National Archives & Records Administration, the most likely repository.

Prints taken from Roberts' negative at the time of Pyle's death "would appear to be the only record that the photo was actually made," said Edward McCarter,

NARA's top still-photos archivist.

At least two 35mm prints were kept as souvenirs by veterans who served aboard the USS Panamint, a Navy communications ship in the Okinawa campaign.

Retired naval officer Richard Strasser, 88, of Goshen, Ind., who recalls Pyle's visiting the ship before he was killed, said a friend named George, who ran the ship's darkroom, gave him a packet of pictures after Japan surrendered in August 1945.

Months later, back in civilian life, Strasser finally opened the envelope. "I was surprised to find a picture of Ernie Pyle," he said. "At the time, Ernie's widow was still alive and I considered sending the photo to her, but had mixed feelings about it. In the end I did nothing."

Strasser recently provided his photo — a still-pristine contact print from the 4-by-5-inch negative — to the AP.

appeared regularly in more than 200 daily newspapers.

NORTH AFRICA, 1943

"Is war dramatic, or isn't it? Certainly there are great tragedies, unbelievable heroics, even a constant undertone of comedy. It is the job of us writers to transfer all that drama back to you folks at home. Most of the other correspondents have the ability to do it. But when I sit down to write, here is what I see instead:

"Men at the front suffering and wishing they were somewhere else, men in routine jobs just behind the lines bellyaching because they can't get to the front, all of them desperate for somebody to talk to besides themselves, no women to be heroes in front of, damn little wine to drink, precious little song, cold and fairly dirty, just toiling from day to day in a world full of insecurity, discomfort, homesickness and a dulled sense of danger ..."

ITALY, JAN. 10, 1944

Pyle's most famous column concerned the death of infantry Capt. Henry Waskow, who was exceptionally popular with his men. His body was brought down a mountainside by mule and laid next to four others:

"The men in the road seemed reluctant to leave ... one soldier came and looked down, and he said out loud, 'God damn it.' That's all he said and then he walked away ...

"Then a soldier came and stood beside the officer and bent over, and he too spoke to his dead captain, not in a whisper but awfully tenderly, and he said: 'I sure am sorry, sir.'

"Then the first man squatted down, and he reached down and took the dead hand in his own, he sat there for a full five minutes ... looking intently into the dead face, and he never uttered a sound all the time he sat there.

"And finally he put the hand down, and then reached up and gently straightened the points of the captain's shirt collar, and then he sort of rearranged the tattered edges of the uniform around the wound, and then he got up and walked away down the road in the moonlight, all alone."

Richard Pyle, who has covered six wars for The Associated Press, is no relation to Ernie Pyle.



Pvt. Robert L. Bowman, left, of Hogansville, Ga., poses for Stars and Stripes artist Sgt. Bill Mauldin, on the Anzio beachhead in Italy during World War II in May 1944.

AP PHOTO

Mauldin's pen was his badge of courage

By SCOTT EYMAN
COX NEWS SERVICE

As Bill Mauldin lay dying in Newport Beach, Calif., old men who remembered how much his cartoons had meant to them made pilgrimages to the nursing home. On his medical records, he was just former Army Sgt. William Mauldin. But to the men who came bearing medals, photographs and clippings of cartoons they had saved for nearly 60 years, he was a hero, a man who had stood up to George S. Patton, for God's sake, and given voice to the ordinary foot soldier.

Perhaps the best feature of this first biography of Mauldin is that it's generously illustrated with Mauldin's wartime cartoons, which have lost none of their wry power. Mauldin was the visual equivalent of Ernie Pyle's war dispatches. His cartoons, featuring two GIs named Willie and Joe, emphasized the exhaustion and filth of the war — Willie and Joe are usually unshaven and bedraggled — and the ironic tension between the lofty verbiage of the brass and the gut-level reality of the foot soldiers.

Mauldin drew what he saw.

In later years, Mauldin believed that he should have killed Willie and Joe off, in order to be completely honest about the reality of war. In Mauldin's experience, preparation and training were almost useless;

Whether you lived or died was usually a question of luck.

Mauldin was a product of the Southwest, a scrappy, slightly wild kid whose orphan father had been raised in a whorehouse. Mauldin got his early art training from a correspondence school in Cleveland.

Mauldin was always a hard worker, who immersed himself in every aspect of a new interest. He threw himself into his art with the same alacrity he would throw himself into piloting 20 years later, and he always wanted to be the best. (One of the main regrets of his life was never being able to sell a cartoon to *The New Yorker*.)

ROTC got him into the service, and most of Mauldin's most famous cartoons were done for either the 45th Division News, a newspaper that Mauldin and crew put out through the Sicilian and Italian campaigns, or *Stars and Stripes*. Mauldin's Pulitzer Prize-winning book "Up Front" was written in Grenoble, France, while he holed up in a hotel for a couple of weeks, stopping his writing only to eat and make love with an 18-year-old French girl he'd picked up.

World War II and a Pulitzer before you're 25 is a tough act to follow, and Mauldin didn't follow it.

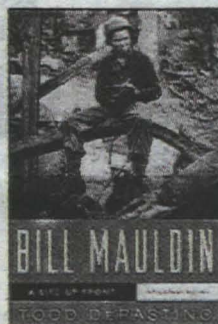
He dribbled away the next 10 years. He gave a credible performance in John Huston's "The Red Badge of Courage" — he and Huston had met and

bonded during the Italian campaign. Mauldin had plenty of money from his books and cartoons, but he also had a wife who was alcoholic and given to bouts of depression (She later died in a car accident.) He wrote, he drew, and he even ran for Congress as a liberal Democrat in a heavily Republican district. He lost, but not by much.

Ultimately, Mauldin gave up his attempt at being a lat-

ter-day Mark Twain when he agreed to become the editorial cartoonist for the *St. Louis Globe-Dispatch*, later moving to the *Chicago Tribune*.

It's hard not to conclude that Mauldin peaked at 24, but it was quite a peak. "A Life Up Front" is far more of a professional biography than it is a personal one; given the achievement of those early years, maybe that's the way it should be.



BIOGRAPHY

**Bill Mauldin:
A Life Up Front**

Todd DePastino
Norton, 320 pages



22 "Aim between th' eyes, Joe. Sometimes they charge when the wounded."

The Glamorous Service



“Uncle Willie!”

The youthfulness and rapid promotion of fliers were well known, and no

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ARTIFACT SPOTLIGHT

M1A1 Chemical Mortar Cart and M2 4.2-inch Chemical Mortar



The National World War II Museum is pleased to add an M1A1 Chemical Mortar Cart to the collection. As a companion piece to the M2 Chemical Mortar, this particular mortar cart was designed to actually carry the mortar into action.

The mortar has been a standard piece of equipment since the introduction of black powder at the end of the Middle Ages. This artillery weapon is designed to fire with a high arching trajectory that is particularly useful in firing over fortifications. The modern mortar was developed during the Siege of Port Arthur in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905. Widely used in World War I, the mortar had been greatly improved upon by the beginning of World War II. The 4.2-inch mortar was originally designed in the 1930s to fire chemical weapons, like poisonous mustard gas or flammable white phosphorous.

When it became apparent that chemical warfare would not be employed in World War II, additional uses were considered for the chemical mortar, and high explosive shells were developed that could be used with this weapon. A battalion of 4.2-inch mortar had as much fire power as a battalion of 105mm howitzers but required fewer boats to bring them ashore. Beginning with the landings at Sicily, chemical mortar battalions were assigned to accompany infantry divisions in their initial landings.

At 330 pounds, the M2 Chemical Mortar was too heavy to carry by hand. The M1A1 Cart was developed to carry the mortar and accessories while a similar cart carried ammunition. During the invasion of Normandy, the 81st Chemical Mortar Battalion landed on Omaha Beach and the 87th Chemical Mortar Battalion landed on Utah Beach. They both landed from Landing Craft Vehicle and Personnel (LCVP), dragging their mortar carts ashore by hand. On Omaha Beach, the front line was too close for most of the day to allow the mortars to be brought into action, but on Utah Beach, they were quickly put to use. The After Action Report stated "the infantry was amazed at the rapidity and accuracy with which our mortars replied."

