

23rd Headquarters Special Troops Route Map of Allison Severe

Corporal Allison Severe served with the 603rd Combat Engineers in Europe. Severe was wounded in action January 7, 1945, and had to be evacuated. After the war, Severe made this airbrushed and painted map to illustrate the route of the 23rd from the United States and throughout Europe.

Gift In Memory of Allison M. Severe, 2019.179.001

Artwork of Arthur Shilstone

A member of the 603rd Combat Engineers, Arthur Shilstone had a prolific postwar career as an illustrator. He worked for Smithsonian Magazine, National Geographic, and even NASA. Shilstone's paintings about his time in the Ghost Army offer a glimpse in what the men faced on a daily basis conducting their deception operations.

On Loan Courtesy of Robert Mayer, L2020.004, On Loan Courtesy Elizabeth Sayles, L2020.003

Scrapbook Pages of Seymour Nussenbaum

Seymour Nussenbaum served with the 603rd Combat Engineers throughout training in the United States and in Europe. Seymour's scrapbook covers his time in the Army and serves as a great record of not just the everyday life in the 603rd and 23rd. One page shows rare photographs of the 23rd's inflatables and their destruction by fire. It also shows men painting phony bumper markings on a vehicle. Another page offers some of the fake unit patches Nussenbaum and the 23rd would create when depicting other units during deception operations.

Gift of Seymour Nussenbaum, The Ghost Army Legacy Project Collection, 2019.276.001

Scrapbook Pages of Seymour Nussenbaum

These two pages of Nussenbaum's scrapbook show that the 23rd was not always on the frontlines. On November 20, 1944, actress Marlene Dietrich came to the seminary building in Luxembourg City where many of the men of the 23rd were bivouacked and put on a performance. This was the same stage where the Blarney Breakdown, the 23rd's own self produced show occurred. The routines which made it into the 23rd's performance have stars placed next to them on the scripts.

Gift of Seymour Nussenbaum, The Ghost Army Legacy Project Collection, 2019.276.002

Uniform Jacket of Donald Mead

Donald Mead served with the 3133rd Signal Service Company in the United States and Italy. Mead was a member of the first operational platoon of the 3133rd at Pine Camp in November 1944 and sailed for Italy with the unit in March 1945. He saw action during the 3133rd's two successful deception operations in April 1945 near the Italian cities of Massa and Bologna. While Mead and his fellow members of the 3133rd were only in combat 19 days, the unit compiled an outstanding service record before being disbanded in 1946.

On Loan Courtesy of Andrew Mead, L2020.002

3133rd Signal Service Company Patch

The 3133rd Signal Service Company, while a small outfit, had a unique unit insignia. Placed atop a US armored forces patch, the insignia depicts the devil thumbing his nose and was also the Army Experimental Station (AES) crest when the unit trained at Pine Camp. This was Donald Mead's patch from his time in the 3133rd.

On Loan Courtesy of Andrew Mead, L2020.002

Signed Currency and *Worcester Daily Telegram* Newspaper Article of Harold Dahl

Sergeant Harold Dahl served in the 603rd Combat Engineers where he created dummy installations for the many deception operations of the 23rd. He had some of his friends in the 23rd sign this foreign currency as a souvenir. He also kept this newspaper article from the *Worcester Daily Telegram* from October 1945 which was one of the few public mentions of the Ghost Army for over 50 years.

Gift of Harold J. Dahl, The Ghost Army Legacy Project Collection, 2019.266.002-.003

Operations Map of Harold Dahl

Many members of the 23rd created maps to show the unit's journey during the war. Dahl drew this map showing the 23rd's entry into Europe and the dates and locations of the deception operations he was a part of. These maps are important because they are some of the few physical documents the men left behind because of the secrecy behind the unit.

Gift of Harold J. Dahl, The Ghost Army Legacy Project Collection, 2019.266.001

Jim Steg's Vehicle Horseshoe

Corporal Jim Steg served in the 603rd Camouflage Engineers supervising camouflage and the painting of dummy guns and vehicles. He also drove a truck he named "El Toro" on which he placed this horseshoe. This same horseshoe later hung above the door in his kitchen for good luck. When the 23rd was in charge of Displaced Persons in Trier, Germany, Steg sketched many of them. Unfortunately, when people in the camp were returned home, countless were killed by the ruthless Soviet regime. Most of his portraits were the last representation of these people ever taken.

On Loan Courtesy Frances Swigart, L2020.005

Uniform Jacket of Theodore Katz

Theodore Katz served as a private in the 603rd Camouflage Engineers. After the war, Katz went on to be a commercial artist and an art director. One of his later pieces, titled “Volunteers” hung in the Office of Emergency Management and in the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC.

On Loan Courtesy of Richard Katz, L2020.001

Uniform Jacket of Al Albrecht

At 18 years old, Al Albrecht was one of the youngest members of the Ghost Army. A member of the 3132nd Signal Service Company, Special, he was with the unit from the United States through Europe and participated in all its sonic operations. As the driver of a half-track, Albrecht would have been responsible for its destruction to prevent its sensitive equipment from being captured by the Germans.

On Loan Courtesy of Karen Skibba, L2020.006

Artwork of John Jarvie

A member of the 603rd Camouflage Engineers, John Jarvie was a jeep driver who performed dangerous reconnaissance work for many of the 23rd's deceptions. When Jarvie was not driving a jeep, he sketched many different scenes such as brothels, Displaced Persons camps, and bombed out churches as the unit advanced across Europe. After the war, Jarvie, like many Ghost Army veterans, stayed in the art world and became art director for Fairchild Publications, publisher of *Women's Wear Daily*.

Gift of John Jarvie, The Ghost Army Legacy Project Collection, 2019.292.001-.009

Diary of Robert Tompkins

Robert Tompkins, of the 603rd Camouflage Engineers, kept a day to day diary of his time in the 23rd. Although keeping a diary was against standing orders, this tiny journal gives great insight to the inner workings of the 23rd. One entry in particular shows what a successful deception required: “Sept. 16 Sewed on patches. Set up tanks. Built fires simulating armored infantry battalion. Truck goes out every hour into village on atmosphere.” After the end of the war, fashion designer Bill Blass’s mother transcribed the 56 page diary for Tompkins.

Gift of Andrew Tompkins, The Ghost Army Legacy Project Collection, 2019.262.001

Sketchbooks of Victor Dowd

Victor Dowd served as a sergeant in the 603rd Camouflage Engineers. Before the war he was a comic book illustrator, working with the legendary Stan Lee among others. He was one of the earliest members of the 23rd to enter mainland Europe after the Normandy landings in June 1944 as a part of Task Force Mason. After the war, Dowd created illustrations for books, advertisements and the fashion industry.

On loan Courtesy of the Dowd Family, L2019.003

***You on KP!* Booklet**

Corporal Jack Masey, of the 603rd Camouflage Engineers, spent time between deceptions caricaturing the men in his company. He put the caricatures together in a book called *You on KP!*. The men pooled their money and had copies printed in Luxembourg City as souvenirs. After the war, Masey designed exhibitions for the US government and numerous museums – he even led the design team that created the original Pacific theater galleries at The National WWII Museum.

Gift of Jack Masey, The Ghost Army Legacy Project Collection, 2019.261.001

***GI Sketchbook* of George Vander Sluis**

George Vander Sluis served with the 603rd Combat Engineers helping with the set up and tear down of the 23rd's deceptions throughout the war. This sketch by Vander Sluis depicting men spray painting fabric and setting up dummy inflatables appeared in this copy of the *GI Sketchbook*. After the war, Vander Sluis spent 35 years as an art professor at Syracuse University.

Gift of Lynn Golden, The Ghost Army Legacy Project Collection, 2019.269.001

Dog Tags and ID Card of Leonard Davis

Lieutenant, later, Captain Leonard Davis served with the 3132nd Signal Service Company and was one of the first officers into the unit. He served with the 3132nd supervising the unit's efforts simulating sound on the battlefield. These dog tags and ID card were Davis' during his time with the Ghost Army.

Gift of Lynn Golden, The Ghost Army Legacy Project Collection, 2019.279.001-.002

Bronze Star, ID Card, and Jewish Prayer Book of Jacob Goldberg

Jacob Goldberg was a medic in the 603rd Combat Engineers, and was one of the few members of the Ghost Army publically recognized for his heroism during the war. Goldberg was awarded a Bronze Star for Valor for his actions administering aid to wounded soldiers while under fire March 13, 1945, during Operation Bouzonville.

On Loan Courtesy of Linda Arye, L2020.007

German Phrasebook, Radio Pennant, and Sewing Kit of Stanley Nance

Sergeant Stanley Nance served in the Signal Company Special as a radio operator and commander of a radio truck. The German phrasebook contains Nance's notes from many Ghost Army operations. The sewing kit was used by Nance to swap out phony patches on his uniform used by the unit during deceptions, and the pennant flew on his radio truck which he nicknamed "Kilowatt Kommand."

On Loan Courtesy of Michelle Christianson, L2020.004

Artwork of Arthur Singer

After being drafted in May 1942, Arthur Singer soon found himself transferred to the 603rd Camouflage Engineers because of his talent as an artist. Singer served with the 23rd throughout the war and once he was home, in December 1945, he presented an art show of 100 of his wartime watercolors. He later became world famous as a wildlife illustrator and bird artist.

On Loan Courtesy of Paul Singer, L2020.009

Artwork of Ned Harris

Ned Harris served with the 603rd Camouflage Engineers as an assistant truck driver. While Harris was in Europe, he picked up a German hand grenade case from the battlefield and used it to carry around his art supplies. Harris, after the war, graduated art school and had a long career as a graphic designer and photographer.

On Loan Courtesy of Bryan Harris, L2020.003

German Hand Grenade Case

Necessity is the mother of invention on the battlefield and the men of the Ghost Army had to make do with what was easily accessible. These cases were used by the German Army for carrying into combat up to 15 of their M24 stick hand grenades. Ned Harris found a case grenade just like this that he used to carry his art supplies in.

St. Lo Collection, 1994.001.056

Operations Map of the 23rd Headquarters Special Troops

Many units in World War II created maps showing their progress from the United States across Europe and the Pacific. Some of these were as simple as lines on a map, while others more elaborate. The operations map of the 23rd is one of the more robust and detailed from the war. Its colors and illustrations highlight the presence of artists throughout the unit.

Gift of John Borders, The Ghost Army Legacy Project Collection, 2019.277.001

Uniform Jacket of Joseph Spence

Joseph Spence served with the 603rd Camouflage Engineers as a camouflage technician. Spence was a late addition to the 23rd, but soon established himself as a valuable part of the unit. Spence, after the war ended, began a long career as an art teacher and retired as chair of the Department of Creative Arts at the University of North Carolina.

Gift in Memory of Joseph Richard Spence, 2019.251.001

Captured Nazi Flag of Joseph Spence

Joseph Spence, like many Americans in Europe, wanted souvenirs to take back home once the war was over. Nazi flags were common items brought back from fighting overseas because they could be stuffed inside duffle bags easily. This particular Nazi flag was signed by some of Spence's friends in the 603rd Camouflage Engineers and lists many of the different places they passed through during the war.

Gift in Memory of Joseph Richard Spence, 2019.251.002

Inflatable Example of M7 Priest (Reproduction)

While the M4 Sherman tank was the main US tank during the war, many different types of armored vehicles were used. This inflatable is a mock up of an M7 Priest. The Army experimented with a metal tank frame to fit on top of a jeep, but the decision was made to go with inflatables because of the ease of transport and the speed of set up. For Operation Viersen in March 1945, more than 150 inflatable armored vehicles were erected to support the deception.

The National WWII Museum, EDU.220.001

Inflatable Example of L-5 Sentinel (Reproduction)

The Stinson L-5 Sentinel was a lightweight reconnaissance and observation aircraft used by the Allies to operate on unimproved airstrips close to the front lines. Because the plane was a common sight on the battlefield, the 23rd would set up dummy airstrips and L5s to fool the Germans into believing they were real. The deception tactic was so successful, American pilots flying L5s would sometimes land on the fake airfields thinking they were real.

The National WWII Museum, EDU.220.002

Inflatable Example of US Artillery (Reproduction)

Due to the importance of artillery to American soldiers, the Germans made it a point to target their positions. The 23rd would set up its fake, inflatable artillery and try to persuade the Germans to fire at the dummy positions. Empty shell casings, camouflage nets, and flash containers set off at night imitating the bright light of a firing gun helped add to the deception. Throughout the war, the Germans fired numerous times at the 23rd's dummy guns instead of the real ones, saving many lives.

The National WWII Museum, EDU.220.003

PE-214-C Portable Generator

During deception operations in the field, the 23rd had to be able to supply power to work radios, air compressors, and other critical machinery. This air-cooled, two-cycle gas powered PE-214-C portable generator could supply 300 watts of power at either 120 or 240 volts and would have been one of the many different types used in combat. The generator's small size and weight made it ideal for the fast-moving 23rd.

The National WWII Museum, 2011.176.001

SCR-508 Radio

The US Army spent the late 1930s developing radio sets using the new “FM” radio frequency. The most famous of these became the handie-talkie (SCR-536) and walkie-talkie (SCR-300). However, the SCR-508 became critical for use in armored vehicles, such as tanks and half-tracks, using preset channels selected by push button. This was one of six different types of radios used by the Signal Company, Special, to carry out their deception operations.

The National WWII Museum, 2000.332.002

Pierce Model 260 Wire Recorder

Wire recorders, the predecessor to tape recorders, were used to play pre-recorded sound effects to the enemy at night. These might include sounds of men and vehicles on the move, or digging in. A single spool contained two miles of wire, enough for 30 minutes of sound. The men of the 3132nd and 3133rd broadcast these recordings through 500-pound speakers which had a range of up to 15 miles. The halftracks and tank destroyers containing the sound equipment were rigged with explosives to explode to prevent capture.

The National WWII Museum, 2019.176.001