

A Tale of Two Brothers

PFC Oscar O Jones, Jr. & PFC James Cecil Jones



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PFC Oscar Jones

81st Chemical Mortar Battalion, Co. C - Big Red 1

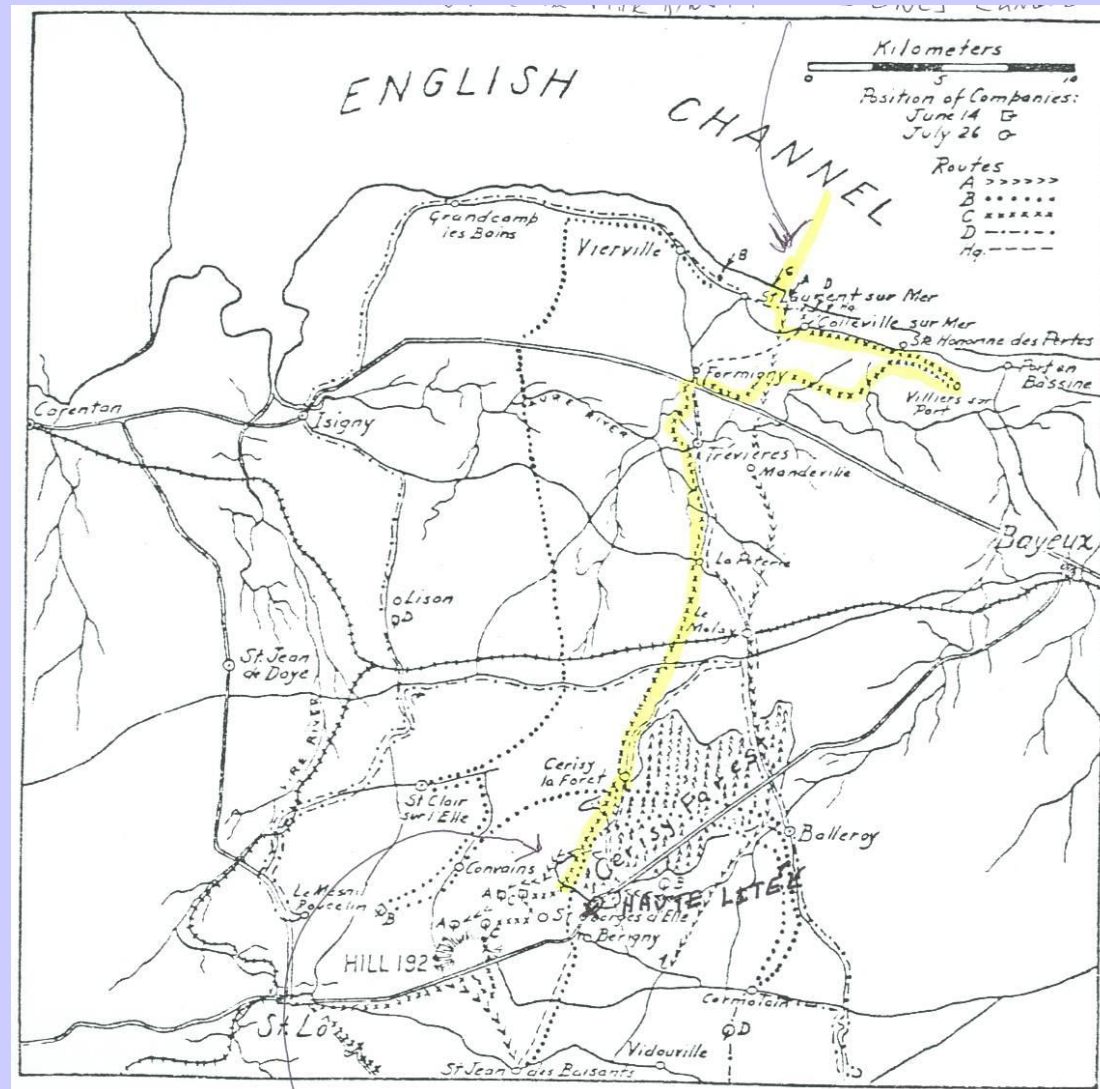


Oscar graduated high school from French Camp Academy, French Camp, MS ca 1940. He entered the US Army in 1942. He served as a lineman in the 81st Chem Mortar Btn. Co. C, 1st Div. US Army. He first entered combat on June 6, 1944 on Omaha Beach - D-Day.

The Omaha Landing for Co. C took place a few hours after the invasion began (H-Hour) – approximately in the location cited by arrow on this postcard (near Colleville sur Mer). The memorial pictured was built to honor the U.S. soldiers who invaded on D-Day.



Six days later, June 12, 1944, Oscar was captured during a German Counter attack. He was one of a party of 4 on an observation post near the French town of Haute Lisse at the edge of the Ceresy Forest when the counter attack began. The OP was quickly overrun. The squad leader, Lt Mann, was killed in this attack, Jones & one other were captured, the fourth managed to hide made it back to US lines.



POW's were often forced to unload damaged (by Allied air attacks) box cars full of ammo, repair airfield runways, etc. That was a violation of the Geneva Convention. The POW's were often strafed, bombed and killed by their own planes as they were forced to do this illegal work. Eventually some were marched through the streets of Paris, where French citizens spit on them and threw things at them. (On the other hand, many local people in occupied France were part of resistance movements who helped the allied cause at great risk). Eventually, POW's were loaded on boxcars & sent into Germany. They were fed very little on the trip - box cars were so crowded they had to sit and lean on each others backs to get sleep. The "toilet" was on bucket put in the box car.

In Germany POW's were given the "opportunity" to work. Oscar worked first in a sugar beet factory. POW's would steal sugar and trade to civilians for food. In November he - along with 16 others (see photo slide 9) were sent to work in sand pits near Torgau Germany. Winter became very bitter while in this camp. Food got more scarce. Daily diet often consisted of a cup of something like coffee and a sugar beet for breakfast, lunch was soup (mostly water) - usually potato peeling soup, sometimes with lots of carrots NEVER any meat, water to drink; supper was 2 boiled potatoes & sometimes a loaf of black bread (for each 7 men).

- In almost every letter home asked Oscar asked about his brother Cecil (who was serving in the Pacific Theater of Operations (PTO). Oscar & Cecil were very close. Cecil's letters home asked about Oscar – he mentioned he felt Oscar would make it even though a POW.
- During captivity Oscar lost nearly half of his body weight. His feet were frostbitten, he became very nervous. During his first months home his sister, Lois reported that almost anytime a plane would go over the house where he was staying Oscar would jump behind a couch or some other large object. POWs had become accustomed to taking shelter from “ALLIED” bombers.
- He was liberated on Friday, April 13, 1945 by Patton's 3rd Army - Friday the 13th - his “lucky” day - until he found out about Cecil.
- Exactly 2 months earlier, Feb. 13, 1945 on the other side of the world it would be a sad day for the Jones family.

Class of Service

This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.

WESTERN UNION

A. N. WILLIAMS
PRESIDENT

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SYMBOLS

DL = Day Letter
NT = Overnight Telegram
LC = Letter-Cable
NLT = Cable Night Letter
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The time shown in the date line on telegrams and day letters is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination.

4 ME K 56 Gov't

Washington D C

347A July 7, 1944

Mrs Oscar O Jones
Decatur Miss.

The secretary of war desires me to express his deep regret that your son Private First Class Oscar O Jones Jr has been reported missing in action since twelve June in France if further details or other information are received you will be promptly notified.

Wlio The Adjutant General

1039A

Oscar's timeline –D-Day to Discharge

- 6 June, 1944 – landed on Omaha Beach
- 12 June, 1944 – captured between St. Claire & Haute Lisse
- 30 June – 4 July, 1944 – illegally forced to work on ammunition cars and air fields in France
- 13 July – 21 July, '44 – sent on box car into Germany
- 21 July – 3 August, '44 – Stalag 12A, Limburg, Germany
- 3 Aug. – 15 Sept., '44 – Stalag 4B, Muhlburg / Helmsdorf
- 15 Sept. '44– 13 April, '45 – Stalag 4D, Torgau
- 13 April, '45 LIBERATED
- April – June, 45 – Camp Lucky Strike, France
- July – 1 November – Camp Shelby, MS USA
- 1 November, 1945 – Honorable Discharge



Picture from Camp Lucky Strike France, ca late April, 1945. Includes most of POW's from Sand Pit - Oscar is on Front row - 2nd from left

PFC James Cecil Jones

First Cavalry – 12th Regiment, F Troop - US Army

- James Cecil Jones - Cecil also attended French Camp Academy. Cecil went in a different direction in World War II. He fought in the Pacific - from New Guinea to the Philippines.
- Unfortunately Cecil did not survive the war - he paid the supreme price of Freedom as he gave his life for his country during the battle to retake the Philippines.
- He died February 13, 1945 on Luzon Island during the Battle of Manila (see Purple Heart - next slide)





THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO ALL WHO SHALL SEE THESE PRESENTS, GREETING:

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
PURSUANT TO AUTHORITY VESTED IN HIM BY CONGRESS
HAS AWARDED THE

PURPLE HEART

ESTABLISHED BY GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON
AT NEWBURGH, NEW YORK, AUGUST 7, 1782

TO

Private First Class James C. Jones, A.S.No. 34634924,
FOR MILITARY MERIT AND FOR WOUNDS RECEIVED
IN ACTION

resulting in his death February 13, 1945.

OFFICIAL:

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND IN THE CITY OF WASHINGTON

THIS 20th

DAY OF

April

19 45

PFC James Cecil Jones

June 22, 1922 - February 13, 1945

Killed in Action in service of his country

World War II - Luzon Island, Philippines



- **THE PURPLE HEART AWARDED
POSTHUMOUSLY**

- The Purple Heart was originally established by General George Washington at Newburgh [New York], 7 August 1782, during the War of the Revolution. The decoration was revived by the War Department on 22 February 1932, the 200th anniversary of General Washington's birth. It is awarded to persons who, while serving in any capacity with the Army of the United States, are wounded in action against an enemy of the United States, or who since 6 December 1941 are killed in action, or who die as a direct result of wounds received in action.

> Jones Museum - 2002 <

pictures of exhibit in classroom



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Jones Museum - 2004 <

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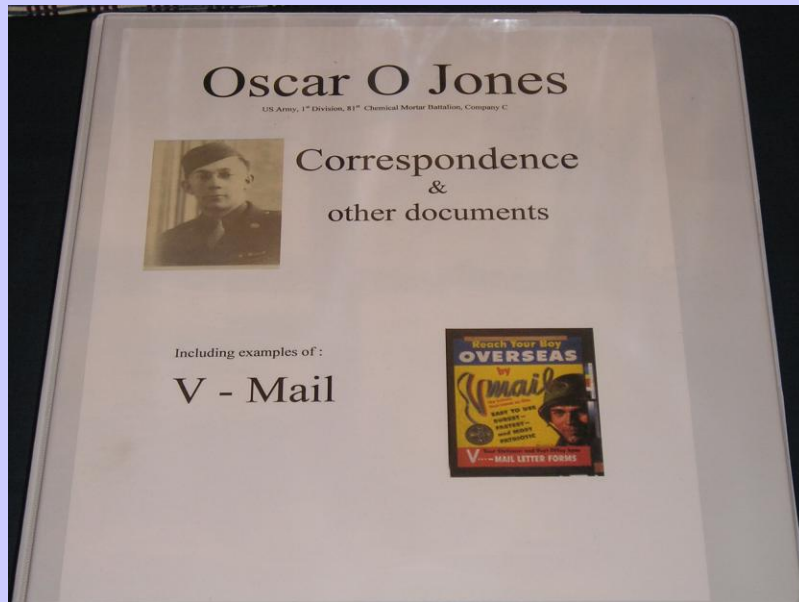
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pictures of exhibit in classroom



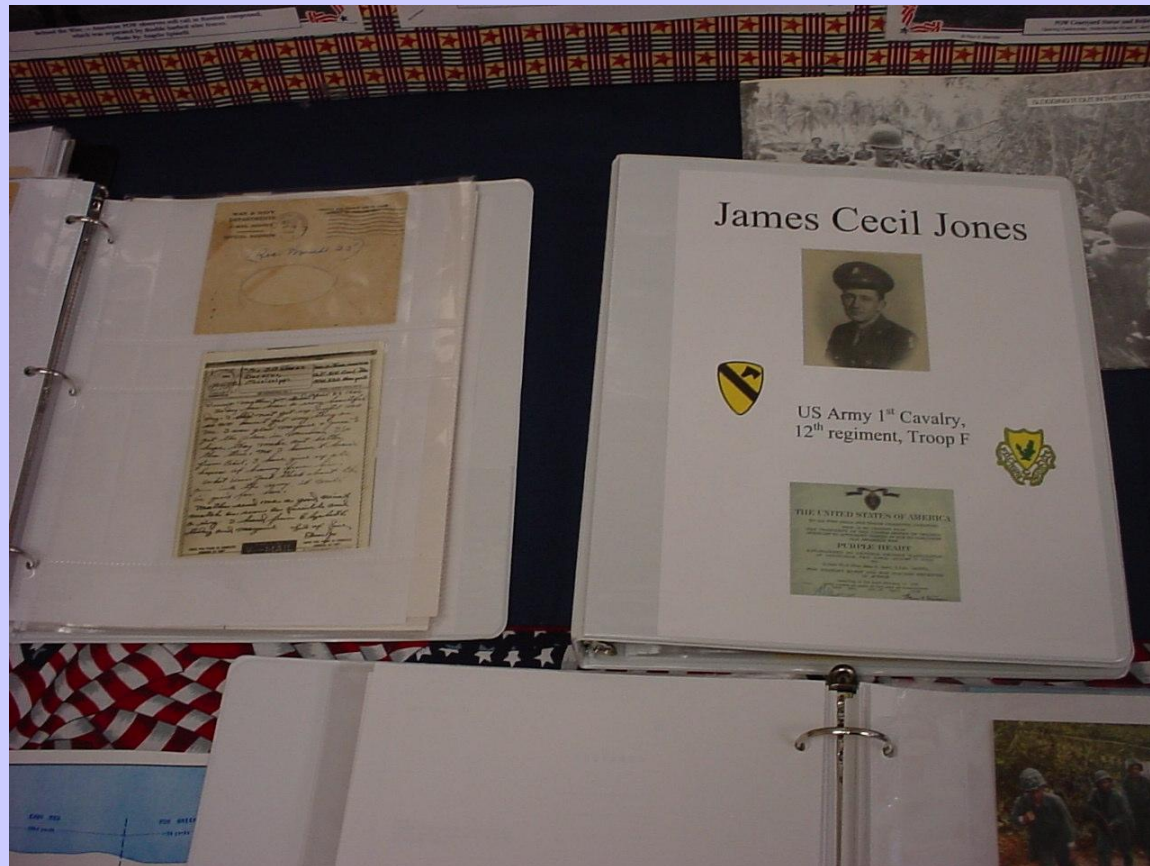
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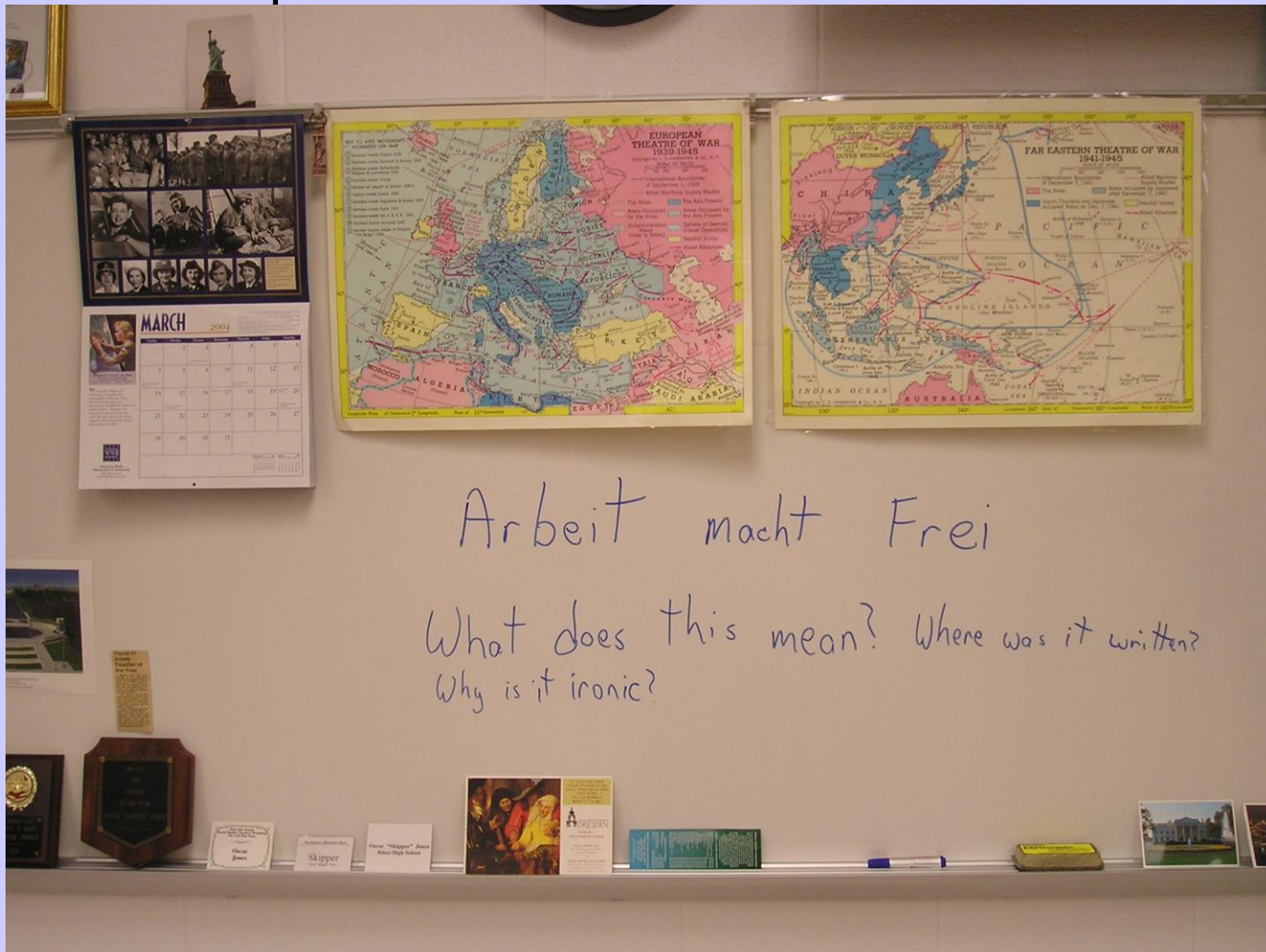
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