General William A. March Biography

William A March was born in Berks County on January 1, 1884. He graduated from Princeton in 1909 with the degree of Civil Engineer. In 1913 he enlisted in the 2nd Infantry Regiment of the National Guard of Pennsylvania. Three years later in 1916 he was appointed Captain of Infantry and assigned to command Company C of the 2nd Pennsylvania Infantry. As company commander during the Mexican American war, he was sent to the Mexican border in June of 1916. While he was there the 2nd Pennsylvania Infantry was changed to a Field Artillery regiment. In 1917 March was assigned to attend the famous "zero class" at the School of Fire in Fort Sill, Oklahoma.

 March went to France on May 19, 1918, as commander of the 1st Battalion of the 28th Infantry Division. He fought in four major offenses of World War One in France and in Belgium: Meuse-Argonne, Champagne, Loraine, Oise-Aisne in France and Ypres-Lys in Belgium. He was awarded the Belgium Crox-de-Guerre by the King of Belgium. After the first world war he was appointed Colonel of Field Artillery and commanded the 108th Field Artillery for nearly 20 years. On December 6, 1940, the 100th anniversary of the 108th Field Artillery, he was appointed Brigadier General and was assigned to command the 73rd Field Artillery Brigade. With this Brigade he again entered the Federal service on January 13, 1941. He served with distinction though the Second World War and retired from service in 1945. He passed away in 1963 at age 79.

History of Dog Tags

Dog tags date back as far as the American Civil War. Though they were not issued by the government, soldiers who fought in the war could purchase a metal tag with their name and identifying information on it. This was to ensure that if they died in battle, they could be identified and buried by family or loved ones.

The first formal order requiring dog tags to be worn was issued by the army in 1906. These original tags were aluminum circles hand stamped with a soldier's name, rank, company, and regiment or corps. They were worn around the neck under uniforms. By the outset of World War One in 1917 all troops were required to wear dog tags, and the Army issued serial number of each soldier was added. Navy dog tags used nitric acid to etch the sailors right index fingerprint on the back of the tag. At the end of World War One, religious symbols were added to army dog tags to identify each soldier's religious preferences.

By World War Two dog tags had become even more regulated and standardized, they were punched by machine rather than hand. Over the years information has been added and removed, such as gas mask size, social security number, and department of defense number. Dog tags are still issued to soldiers, sailors, airmen and guardians today.

Sources

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