

TSGT / PVT WALTER (POP) BURNETT - (KIA)

409th, B-Company



Born in Knox County, KY on Oct. 12, 1904, Walter joined the Army and was discharged from the service prior to WWII. After Pearl Harbor, while farming in Kentucky, he was notified that his experience was again needed to train troops. He was re-inducted on May 20, 1942. He then reported to Camp Claiborne and was cadre to the 103d Division as of its activation date of Nov. 15, 1942. SSGT Burnett was then assigned to 409th, B-Company where he was referred to as “Pop” because he was twice the age (38) of most of his trainees.

Pop led the 3rd platoon from Claiborne to Camp Howze where he was promoted to TSGT on Feb. 18, 1944. When it was time for the 103d to deploy to the ETO, Walter was given the option to remain stateside and continue as cadre. He chose to deploy

with his men.

On board the USS Monticello, Pop was reduced to the grade of private to, “allow a younger, more physically active man to be in charge during combat”. This was not uncommon.

Pop Burnett was killed instantly by tank shrapnel in Selestat, France in the early morning hours of Dec. 2, 1944 at the age of 40. He was temporarily interred at Hochfelden, France military cemetery until his remains were returned to his home in Kentucky. Pop now rests in honor at the Burnett-Thompson Family Cemetery in Clay County, Kentucky.