



Millerton American Legion Post 178
Millerton NY

Killed in Action Tribute



Seymour G. Russell

Seymour G. Russell was born on December 21, 1919 in New Hampshire and was the second child and son of Emory F. Russell and Gertrude B. Stevens. His older brother Ira and younger sister Laurel spent their early years in Winsor Vermont before moving to New York during the 1930's.

Seymour enlisted into the United States Army on November 9, 1942 (SN: 32661119) and was assigned to 361st Infantry Regiment, which had been activated at Camp White Oregon, along with the rest of the 91st Infantry Division on August 15, 1942.

Throughout the remainder of 1942, all of 1943 and early 1944, Russell along with his unit trained in the United States until they were ordered to stage for overseas deployment at Camp Patrick Henry Va on March 30, 1944 where they learned they were earmarked for the Mediterranean Theater of Operations. They left Hampton Roads Va for the Mediterranean on 14 April 1944. Russell and the rest of the 91st Division arrived in allied occupied North Africa seven days later on April 21, 1944.

The 361st Regiment arrived in Italy at the Anzio landing beaches on June 1st 1944, just in time to take part on the drive on and final capture of Rome 5 days later on June 5th 1944.

The 361st Regiment and the 91st Division as a whole saw heavy fighting from mid-June through mid-August of 1944, advancing north along Highway 65 pushing the German Army back toward the Po River valley.

In early September 1944 the American Fifth Army and the British Eighth Army both took part in what was called Operation Olive, the first major offensive after the fall of Rome to break the German defensive line that became known to history as the Gothic Line.

The division's objective during the first phase of Operation Olive was the capture of Mount Oggioli, a key mountain that would help the Americans secure the Radicaosa Pass. Along the way the American GIs would name this part of the offensive the "Battle of the Mountains" as nearly every major engagement that took place until the division secured Mount Oggioli would be for a critical mountain top.

The 91st Divisions part in this offensive began on September 10th 1944, and for seven days beginning on September 12 the division was heavily engaged in the Battle for Mount Monticelli, which resulted in heavy casualties.

Beginning on September 18th and persisting for the next week rain and fog would ground virtually all Allied aircraft, especially the artillery spotter planes that would sharply reduce the effectiveness of Allied Artillery in the critical days that followed. On September 21st the Division



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crossed the Saterno River and proceeded to their next intermediate objective Mount Beni, a key mountain top that overlooked Highway 65 and along the route toward their objective of Mount Oggioli. After three days of heavy fighting going up the slopes, which had been made treeless by the Allied artillery strikes, Mount Beni was secured on Monday, September 25, 1944, the same day that a young PFC from Millerton NY named Seymour Russell was killed in action on its slopes. Seymour was just 3 months shy of his 25th Birthday.

From when Russell's division landed in Italy on June 1st to that fateful day when he departed this world on the slopes on Mount Beni on September 25th, Russell had been in near continuous combat for 117 straight days. In that brief period of time Russell had been wounded twice before being killed in action.

Regrettably, despite all the efforts made, we were unable to make contact with the family of Seymour Russell and invite them to be here with us today. On the table to my front is the shadow box we have constructed to the memory of PFC Seymour Russell. That shadow box along with a brief overview will be posted in the foyer to entrance of the post home beginning today and will hang there for the next 12 months till Memorial Day 2014.