

## War Era Story Project 2012

Submitted by: Howard Fultz

Current home town: Lebanon, Ohio

Age: Not given

### The Fultz Brothers

Pinkem Fultz, Sr. was a coal miner in Harlan Kentucky on Dec. 7, 1941. He had three sons and two daughters. His sons, Leroy, Pink, Jr., and Troy were in their early 20s and late teens in the beginning of 1942.

#### Leroy

Leroy Fultz, the oldest, was a coal miner and was a little on the wild side. He got into trouble occasionally. Leroy was married to Clara, who had a problem with her vision. They lived in Harlan County when he entered the U.S. Army in 1943. He was age 21. Not much more is known about Leroy. Leroy was in the 273rd. Infantry Regiment, 69 Division, called the "fighting 69th." He was assigned to the Quarter Master Corps. Leroy's 69th division had many encounters with the Germans across France and Germany. They made the first contact with the Russians and were involved in the last major battle for the Americans at the city of Leipzig Germany. Leroy obtained the rank of TSgt. On April 19, 1945, life ended for Leroy as he was hit with a German 88 mm howitzer round and was killed, just 3 weeks before the Germans surrendered on May 8, 1945. Leroy's remains were returned to the U.S. and he is interned in the Harlan County Cemetery.

#### Pink, Jr.

Pink Jr., age 20, liked to be called 'Junior' and was a store clerk when he entered the U.S. Army Air Corps in 1943. He was always interested in flying. He wanted to be a pilot. He hadn't been to college, so he became a gunner and flight mechanic on the Glenn Martin B-26G Marauder. This bomber was a twin-engine, medium aircraft that had 11 - 50 cal. Machine guns and carried 4,000 Lbs. of bombs. The B-26G Marauder carried a crew of 7, but 6 was normal.

Pink Jr. was married to his first love Agnes, whom he met in church, on Feb. 5, 1944. Agnes said later: "when for the first time I fixed his blue eyes, I understood that this was the beginning of a love story and I knew he felt the same". Agnes joined him at Lake Charles, Louisiana for 11 days during his military training. The day Agnes saw Junior for the last time, he kissed her and boarded the bus without looking back. His first letter to Agnes from England started "Baby, when I had to leave you at the bus stop, I felt that I was losing my best friend." All his following letters began by "Somewhere in France." \*Ref. Christian Dieppedalle of Coinces France; Troy Fultz Jr.

Junior joined the 394th Bomb Group, 584th Bomb squadron of the 9th Air Force. In October 1944, he went on several bombing missions over Germany: Ulbach, Duren and finally over Dilligen on Oct. 7. War doesn't care for love, and on October 8, over Bricy Air Base near Orleans, France, the destiny of the two

lovers was sealed. Just numbering 21 years, Junior's life toppled to the ground, as did those of his comrades. Returning from a bombing mission over Germany in an 18-plane formation, Junior's B-26G Marauder was involved in a mid air collision with another B-26G Marauder. The two aircraft crashed, killing all 12 Americans aboard both aircraft. Every October 8, Coinces, France, honors the 12 American airmen killed in that tragic event. A plaque with all 12 names is mounted on the city building. Junior obtained the rank of TSgt. and his remains were returned to the U.S. and he is interned in the Harlan County Cemetery.



(Continued)



## Troy

Troy was the youngest of the three Fultz brothers. He was a truck driver in Harlan County when he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in 1943. Troy was only 18 years old and was not married when he entered the Corps. He was sent to the Orient during the war and fought in two major battles against the Japanese. During the battle for the island of Guam, he was a light machine gunner. Also during the battle of Okinawa, he continued serving as a machine gunner in the 6th Marine Div. Troy achieved the rank of PFC (Private First Class) during his tour.

During the battle of Okinawa around June 1945, Troy was located and pulled out of the battle for Okinawa. Both his brothers had been killed in Germany, and his parents notified the Marines that he was their sole surviving son. Troy was not told why he was pulled out and only found out why from his parents when he returned home.

After returning to Harlan, his sister introduced him to my mother, Reva, who lived in East Bernstead, Kentucky. Troy and Reva had eight children; Troy Jr., Howard, Daryl, Debra, Karen, Rick, Phil and Kimmy. Though Troy passed away in 2007, Reva is still living in Hamilton, Ohio, and all children are alive and

well, living in the Cincinnati and Dayton, Ohio area. Troy is interned in Warren County, Ohio in the Cemetery of Morrow, Ohio. Troy's sons followed their father into the Marine Corps, two serving in Vietnam and the others in the Fleet Marine Force. Daryl, who was too young for Vietnam was in Marine Corps ROTC in school.



Pinkem Fultz, Sr., never got over losing his boys during WWII. He told his first son, Troy, on the birth of his first son, Troy Jr., that he hoped and prayed he wouldn't lose him or any other sons during a war. Pinkem Fultz Sr. died in 1948. He is interned in the Harlan County Cemetery.

2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Devin D. Fultz is the first Marine Officer and grandson of Troy's. He is the second son of Phil Fultz. He is currently stationed at Camp Pendleton, California. He's a 0302 Infantry Officer located with the Raiders of Alpha Company 1st Battalion 4th Marines.