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BULLETIN #28

16 October 2005

GENERAL INFO

[If you don't care to receive future Bulletins, please send me a message and I will remove you from this distribution list. These messages are distributed on a random basis when I feel there is something useful to communicate to everyone.]

PREVIOUS BULLETINS & NEWSLETTERS ARE AVAILABLE

If you or someone else has interest in reading some of the previous Bulletins/Newsletters, they can be viewed or download from the MUMMA archives at <http://www.mumma.org/archives.html?#Bulletins>.

This bulletin is a little unusual as it will deal with just a single subject and the usual discussion of the changes to the database and DNA testing activities will not be presented at this time.

POSTHUMOUS AWARD FOR LT. DANIEL CLOVIS MOOMAW

You are invited and encouraged to attend a posthumous award ceremony for **Daniel Clovis Moomaw** to be held on **Veteran's Day, November 11, 2005, at 4 PM** on the campus of Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Virginia. For those of you who live near Lexington, Virginia, attending this ceremony would be a most patriotic way for you to honor our military personnel, as well as a fellow relative, who have given their lives in support and defense of our great country.

Over the past several years I have communicated with Cecelia and Bruce Smith who serve as the secretary and historian, respectively, of the "**Descendants of 80th Division Veterans**". They have been diligently working to obtain posthumous awards for **Lt. Clovis Moomaw** who was killed on October 5, 1918 in France during WW1. Clovis served second lieutenant in Company D of the 318th Infantry of the 80th Division. Because he was only listed as a "MIA" on official records, he never received the military awards he earned and richly deserved.

In October of 2002, Cecelia and Bruce Smith wrote the following message to me:

"Recommendations were made for a posthumous award of the Distinguished Service Cross for Lt. Clovis Moomaw, dated February 15, 1938, March 13, 1938, and March 22, 1938. They were submitted by Former Major Charles Sweeny, Commander of 1st Battalion 318th Infantry; by Vincent R. Smith, Former Captain of Co. D, 318th Infantry and Automatic Weapons Officer, and James S. Douglas, Jr., former Captain Co. B., 318th Infantry and second in command of 1st Battalion, 318th; and by Earl C. Shively, 1st Lt. 318th Infantry, 1st Battalion Adjutant. Did the family of Lt. Moomaw ever receive notification of these recommendations, and was there ever any response from the U.S. Army?"

Lt. Moomaw's actions, and resulting death, were written about in "Over the Top with the 80th" by Buck Private Rush S. Young. Young was a private from Company B of the 318th (part of 1st Battalion).

This information should be of interest to you, since it is a part of your family's heritage. It is also of interest to me, since any award to Lt. Moomaw would also add one additional honor to the 80th Division A.E.F.

Your veteran ancestor was also entitled to a Purple Heart, but someone from the family would have had to apply for the posthumous award after the medal was reconstituted in 1932.

You may wonder why this is important to me and why I think you should be interested in your heritage. When we first began researching our genealogy, we learned that I was descended from seven Mayflower Pilgrims and

from five Revolutionary War Patriots. I have applied for and been accepted into the Society of Mayflower Descendants and also into the Sons of the American Revolution. We also learned that four distant uncles and cousins served in the Civil War, two of them in the famous "Buck tail Regiment".

While they had hoped to have the **Distinguished Service Cross** awarded to Clovis for which he had been recommended, he will at least be awarded the Victory Medal and Purple Heart at the ceremony to be held appropriately on "Veterans Day" 2005. I would personally like to thank Cecelia and Bruce Smith on behalf of the Mumma/Moomaw families for their successful efforts to honor a fellow relative, Daniel Clovis Moomaw!

If you believe you can attend this ceremony, please contact **Cecelia and Bruce Smith** directly so that formal invitations, along with exact location and directions, can be sent to you. Their address and telephone number are shown below on the announcement letter they sent to me and is shown below. Please respond immediately if you can attend.

Included at the end is a 1938 document describing the circumstances of Clovis Moomaw's military action and tragic death, written by a fellow soldier in support of a recommendation that he be awarded the DSC .

Thank you and I hope many of you will make an effort to honor the memory of Clovis Moomaw and all other American Patriots. I also invite you to view the following web page which honors the memory of Clovis.  
<http://law.wlu.edu/faculty/history/moomaw.asp>

Doug Mumma

## INVITATION TO THE DANIEL CLOVIS MOOMAW AWARD CEREMONY



Daniel Clovis Moomaw

Daniel Clovis Moomaw, son of Daniel Crouse Moomaw and Rebecca Ann Crumpacker, born on September 10, 1886, excelled on the football field and as a student at the University of Virginia. He was a law degree student at Washington and Lee, and later became a full law professor and assistant football coach at W & L. When war commenced in 1917, although he was a conscientious objector and could have avoided the Army, he nevertheless enlisted. He had taken unofficial officers' training at W & L, and was commissioned a second lieutenant in Company D of the 318th Infantry of the 80th Division, which trained at Camp Lee, VA..

In the early morning of October 5, 1918, then First Lt. Moomaw's unit was detached to another Brigade. Having escorted his men to the new assignment, he was dismissed; however being familiar with the assignment of the 1st Battalion that was to advance on the Bois de Faye, Moomaw decided upon a personal reconnaissance of the woods, prior to rejoining his 318th. He could have avoided the area and taken a safer return to his troops, but instead chose to penetrate the woods, all the while under enemy fire. He was able to communicate the location of the enemy which resulted in saving many other lives, but suffered mortal wounds. At first, he was listed as missing in action, but a year later, his brother, through the auspices of the Red Cross, traveled to France and identified Lt. Moomaw's remains by the watch he had been wearing.

Because he was listed as MIA, paper work was never initiated to recognize his heroism. In 1938, four of his former commanding officers wrote affidavits attesting to his gallantry, and recommended that he be awarded a Distinguished Service Cross. It is not known if the affidavits were ever forwarded for action, but copies were located in the Earl Shively Collection, housed at Ohio University a few years ago. Attempts to contact Moomaw relatives when these papers were located, to ascertain if, in fact, any medals had ever been awarded, were not successful.

The Descendants of 80th Division Veterans was organized in 2003, and one of the ongoing projects undertaken by the group was the pursuit of recognition for Lt. Moomaw. Early this past year, the Army rejected the request for a DSC [Distinguished Service Cross], but we are still asking for a review of the affidavits to see if he is entitled to a Silver Star. The Army did tell us that he is entitled to the Victory Medal and Purple Heart, but they would not provide the medals. The Descendants have purchased them, and have completed a shadow box to include the medals, a photo, and other memorabilia.

Washington and Lee University maintains a small memorial to their alumnus. Since Lt. Moomaw had not married, and from what we understand, remaining relatives are distant cousins, it had always been our intention to present any awards that might be forthcoming to the University in his memory.

So it is, that on this Veterans' Day, November 11, 2005 at four p.m., a small service and reception will be held on the campus in Lexington, Virginia. It is being hosted by the University and the Descendants organization. The shadow box, as well as framed copies of the affidavits, will be presented to the President of the University and will be displayed with his other memorabilia there.

We would like to extend invitations to any and all Moomaw/Mumma family members who would like to attend this presentation. Formal invitations, along with exact location and directions will be forwarded to anyone wishing to pay tribute to this World War I hero. We hope that many of the family will join us. You may respond to the address or numbers below.

Cecelia M. Smith, Secretary  
Bruce W. Smith, Historian  
Descendants of 80th Division Veterans  
P.O. Box 206  
Fayetteville, PA 17222

E-mail: [bcsmith@innernet.net](mailto:bcsmith@innernet.net) Telephone: 717-352-4883

**"The 80th Only Moves Forward"**

**1938 recommendation by VINCENT R. SMITH for the *Distinguished Service Cross* for Clovis Moomaw**

*[This recommendation for a posthumous award of the Distinguished Service Cross for Lt. Clovis Moomaw, dated February 15, 1938 which was submitted by Vincent R. Smith, Former Captain of Co. D, 318th Infantry and Automatic Weapons Office. This and three other recommendations are found in the Earl C. Shively Collection at the University of Ohio <http://www.library.ohiou.edu/libinfo/depts/archives/mss/shively1.htm> ]*

Before me, a Notary Public, in and for the said County and State, personally came Vincent R. Smith, of Lincoln Highway East, Greensburg, Pa., who, being duly sworn according to law, did depose and say as follows:

On October 5, 1918, I was a First Lieutenant of the 318<sup>th</sup> Infantry, 80<sup>th</sup> Division, A.E. F. I was Automatic Arms Officer of the First Battalion and on said date was acting as a Liaison Officer between Major Charles Sweeney, Battalion Commander, and the various company commanders.

That on the morning of October 5, 1918, orders were received by Major Sweeney for the First Battalion to take the Bois de Faye, a position of the top of a hill immediately in front of the position we were then in, and about one mile distant. The territory lying between our then position and the Bois de Faye was open and being subjected to enfilade machine gun fire from two sides, direct fire from the front with trench mortars and machine guns and heavy shelling from our right rear, a turn in the Meuse River making this possible. Our attempt to enter the woods was hazardous and our successful arrival there was very questionable. I was directed to keep Battalion Headquarters and the various company commanders in constant contact.

First Lieutenant Clovis Moomaw of "D" Company, 318<sup>th</sup> Infantry and his platoon, was dispatched to the 8<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the Fourth Division, which was on our right. The platoon was to act as liaison between the said 8<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the Fourth Division and our Battalion.

Lt. Moomaw delivered his platoon to the 8<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the Fourth Division and was there advised that he was not personally needed. Lt. Moomaw, knowing the orders of the First Battalion of the 318<sup>th</sup> Infantry, immediately headed for the Bois de Faye in order to make a personal reconnaissance of the same before the Battalion arrived. Lt. Moomaw attempted to acquire this information even though he knew that the Bois de Faye was held by enemy, but also knowing that the information that he could acquire would be of great benefit to his own advancing battalion.

I, with a few runners, arrived at Bois de Faye in advance of the battalion and saw Moomaw in advance of me, entering the woods. At about the same time, our own barrage came down upon us. The bombardment of trench mortars and heavy artillery from the enemy was terrific. I saw a large H.E. explode at the edge of the woods at the point where I had seen Moomaw enter. At the explosion, the lower half of a man's body was seen to fly in the air, approximately 30 or 40 feet. By reason of the terrific shelling, the troops were practically demoralized. The shelling and machine gun fire continued the remainder of the day and at night we received orders to withdraw.

I was discovered that night that Moomaw was missing and he was continued to be carried as missing on our roster. After the Armistice, a search of the vicinity disclosed that the body that had been blown to pieces at the edge of the woods, was that of Clovis Moomaw.

Captain Clinton D. Winant, whose whereabouts are now unknown, was, on October 5<sup>th</sup>, 1918, commander of "D" Company and Clovis Moomaw's Commanding Officer. Captain Winant immediately recommended to Major Sweeney a D.S. C. [Distinguished Service Cross] for Lt. Moomaw. Major Sweeney endorsed the idea, but stated that the recommendation should not be made until we actually learned whether or not Moomaw was living or dead.

On November 4, 1918, Clinton D. Winant was wounded and I was placed in command of "D" Company and later was promoted to Captain and remained in command of the same company. I frequently discussed with Sweeney the D.S.C. for Moomaw. Sweeney repeatedly announced his intention of so doing, but thought the recommendation should not be made until it was definitely known whether Moomaw were living or dead.

In May of 1919, when the 318<sup>th</sup> Infantry was at Brest, Dr. Ben C. Moomaw, of Roanoke, Virginia, a brother of Clovis Moomaw, was there in search of information of Clovis Moomaw. He met Captain James S. Douglas of "B" Company, 318<sup>th</sup> Infantry and myself. We went over the maps with him and showed him the point where we thought Clovis Moomaw had been hit. He went directly to the point and found the remains, which were positively identified by a wrist watch and by the decedent's teeth. Major Charles Sweeney, in the meantime, had been transferred from the division. Consequently, the formal recommendation for the award of a D.S.C. to Clovis Moomaw was never made.

I can state positively that had Lt. Clovis Moomaw not been carried as missing in action, a recommendation should have been made at the time for an award of the D.S.C. His initiative, his complete lack of thought as to his personal safety, his entry alone into the Bois de Fay, with the knowledge that it was infested with the enemy, subjecting himself to enfilade fire from two sides, and a terrific bombardment of H.E.'s and trench mortars, in order to facilitate the entry of his battalion into the said woods, displayed the most outstanding courage I have ever seen in any man.

With the greatest enthusiasm, I again recommend that a posthumous award of the Distinguished Service Cross be made to Lieutenant Clovis Moomaw.

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VINCENT R. SMITH, EX-CAPTAIN of  
"D" COMPANY, 318<sup>TH</sup> INFANTRY,  
80<sup>TH</sup> DIVISION

Sworn to and subscribed before me  
This 3<sup>rd</sup> day of March, 1938.

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NOTARY PUBLIC

\*\*\*\*\* END \*\*\*\*\*