

“Strike and Hold”

Story of **Liberator**, T. Moffatt Burriss

22 September, 1919--Born the youngest of three children. His father died when Burriss was 12. He lived in Anderson, SC and graduated from Anderson Boys High School in 1936.

June, 1940--Graduated from Clemson University with a degree in Education.

7 December, 1941-- Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, in Hawaii.

24 December, 1941--Having a reserve commission in the Army, Burriss received orders to report to Fort Benning, GA.



9 January, 1942--Reported to Fort Benning as German U-boats were already patrolling the East Coast of the U.S. Assigned to the Infantry School and placed in an officer’s refresher course.

January, 1942--As Burriss watched the training of paratroopers from the bleachers at Fort Benning, he decided that it looked like it was more “fun” than being an infantryman, so he applied and became a paratrooper.



February, 1942--Proposed marriage to Louisa “Squee” Hay, who accepted.

22 June, 1942--Married Louisa “Squee” in Morristown, Tennessee. After the honeymoon, he returned to Fort Benning and was assigned to the 3d Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division.

September, 1942-- Promoted to first lieutenant and became Battalion S2 (intelligence officer). Louisa “Squee” was pregnant with first child, due in June, 1943.

10 May, 1943--Two months after Burriss’ unit went on alert, he left the U.S. by ship and docked at the port of Casablanca, Morocco. North Africa was the staging area where the Allies prepared for the invasion of Europe.



June, 1943--“Squee” gave birth to a baby boy, but the baby died after a few minutes. Burriss was still in North Africa, awaiting the first jump into Europe, by way of Sicily. “The invasion of Sicily presented me with my first opportunity to fight the enemy, so, instead of entertaining fears, I was eager to get on with the grim business of war. I was determined to do what I could to defeat Hitler and return to my grieving wife.”

