

# A Brief History of Idaho's 183rd Field Artillery, Idaho National Guard

By: Elijah G. Heter

Ever since the first English colonials touched ground and made settlements in North America, the United States has always had some form of a national guard, be it militias and minutemen of the 1600s to trained divisions and soldiers of the present. Beginning from the American Civil War in 1863, the Idaho territory has had its own national guard in the form of pioneers to soldiers for 158 years. Our 183rd Field Artillery Regiment has seen shorter service, having been formed in 1940, during the second World War. However, that does not mean that its service was any less meaningful or valuable to our state and country. Starting as a cavalry unit, climbing its way up to field artillery, the 183rd has served Idaho and the United States faithfully.

The 183rd Field Artillery Regiment's history begins in the year 1940, as World War II was just beginning, Idaho began to modernize its military equipment. By 1940, the 116th Cavalry Regiment had traded more than 200 horses and modernized to artillery and motorized vehicles to be reorganized as the 183rd Field Artillery Regiment. On April 1st, 1941 the 183rd was federalized from all over the state of Idaho, including Boise, Caldwell, Weiser, Nampa, Gooding, Pocatello, Wilder, Emmett, and Rexburg. This meant that those

enlisted, who had qualified for commissions into the 183rd received commission that same day. A mere fourteen days later, the newly federalized 183rd arrived at Fort Francis E. Warren Cheyenne, Wyoming, for training.



183rd howitzer training

After nearly four months with training equipment and wooden substitutes for anti-tank artillery, the 183rd received its military equipment and brought to full strength. The arsenal available to the 183rd: four 155-mm howitzer guns per battery, and the two anti-tank batteries, each received eight 75-mm guns from World War I. On July 21st, 1941, the two anti-tank batteries of the 183rd were reorganized with the anti-tank batteries of the 188th Field Artillery Regiment into a Provisional Anti-Tank Battalion.

## Museum Visitors

Some crew members of the USS Idaho visited in August to tour the Museum as well as other attractions around Idaho. It was a pleasure to spend time getting to know the crew members.



We also had quite a few youth groups visit the Museum over the summer. We really appreciate the opportunity to teach history to the youth of the community and watch them enjoy and explore.



Trinity Learning Center

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

**Don't forget to renew your IMHS membership!**

A renewal form is available on our webpage:

<https://museum.mil.idaho.gov>

Annual renewal rates are:

General Membership:	\$ 25
Senior (60 and older):	\$ 15
Associate (Spouse):	\$ 10
Student:	\$ 10
Lifetime Membership:	\$ 375

(Lifetime payment may be spread out over a one-year period)

The Idaho State Tax Commission offers a tax credit for contributions to Idaho's educational entities which include "An Idaho public or private nonprofit museum."

The Idaho Military Historical Society is such an organization and donations to the Society qualify for this credit. Please remember the Museum as you plan your donations for the year.



**Idaho Military Historical Society**

4040 W. Guard St.  
Boise, ID 83705-5004

**"Shedding light on Idaho's military history"**

# New Exhibit

## Sgt Charles H. Daman Remembered

By: Erik T. Kunkle  
Board Member

The Sgt Daman exhibit tells the story of how America searches for, discovers, and accounts for military service men and women listed as Missing In Action (MIA). The years searching, resources, and the science of how the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) find and repatriate service members are on display using excerpts and pictures from the official report presented to Sgt Charles H. Daman's (USAF) family. His medals, Aerial Gunner Badge, Army Sharp Shooter Badge with weapons qualification bars, and his Army Air Corp Technician Badge with qualification bars, are on display.

Charles H. Daman was born September 25, 1923 in Hamill, South Dakota. He moved with his parents, Frank and Lillas to DeSmet, Idaho, and is a graduate of Plummer High School, Class of 1941. He enlisted in the military on March 19, 1943.

On April 4th 1945, US Army Air Forces Sgt Charles H. Daman, nose gunner and one of ten crewmen on board a B-24 Liberator named "Red Bow", took part in a formation of 400 bombers to attack Luftwaffe airbases at Parchim, Perleberg, and Wesendorf, Germany. "Red Bow" came under fire by a German ME-262 jet fighter, firing rockets. During the attack, the tail section was sheared off, causing the aircraft to go into an immediate dive. One Airman survived by bailing out, and upon repatriation from capture, his testimony led to the recovery and identification of Sgt Daman.

In July, 2018, Sgt Daman was repatriated, and a memorial service with full military

honors was held at Coeur d'Alene Memorial Gardens in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. His family was awarded the Purple Heart and Air Medal with 3 Oak Leaf Clusters on behalf of Sgt Daman.

Learn more about the events and techniques used in the recovery of American servicemen by visiting the Sgt Daman exhibit at the Idaho Military Museum.



Red Bow crew Sgt. Daman standing left

## SAVE THE DATE!

### Notice of Upcoming Annual Meeting

The Idaho Military Historical Society Board has scheduled the Annual Membership Meeting for October 28, 2021 at 6:30 pm to be held at the Museum, 4692 W. Harvard Street, Boise, ID.

At the meeting, elections will be held for three members of the Board of Directors to serve a three-year term.

Along with the annual election, you will also be brought up to date on the various plans and activities the Society/Museum are involved in. Please mark your calendar and join us on October 28, 2021 at 6:30 pm. See you then!



## Spotlight

The Kansas National Guard Museum issued an invitation for the Idaho Military Museum to participate in their annual Heartland Military Days Living History program (9-16 June 2021) as exhibitors. Rick Johnson, IMM Board President, and Ken Swanson, IMM Board member, accepted the invitation.

For the Idaho Military Museum exhibit, Rick and Ken took 3 WWII traveling weapons along with equipment display profiled in the IMM Education Outreach Program. An estimated 450 visitors at the event gave them numerous opportunities throughout the day to promote IMM.

Along with 2 battlefield reenactments between U.S. and German units with several dozen reenactors and battlefield special effects, several more exhibitors had static displays.

The Kansas National Guard had conducted fund raising efforts to host the traveling "Tribute to the Fallen." Fabric panels containing photos and brief biographical sketches of every U.S. Service Member lost since 9/11. After viewing the panels and reading about all the Americans lost, it was described as "Quite humbling."

IMM received a generous donation from a Topeka visitor of a WWII Anti-Aircraft Artillery Observation Telescope. This is a rare find and valued addition to our Museum.

While participating in the Heartland Military Days event, other purposes of the trip were to establish a relationship between both Museums as well as compare operating models, exchange ideas to improve Museum operations, and learn more about the Center for Military History's program in order to gain more artifacts for the Idaho Military Museum.

The Kansas National Guard Museum is located south of Topeka, KS at the former Forbes Air Force Base, has numerous galleries, more than 30 military vehicles and aircraft, meeting rooms, offices, as well as a full kitchen and dining area to host events, and a garage area for vehicle restoration.

Plans are in the works to have the Kansas National Guard Command Historian visit IMM this November to further develop the relationship.

Future regional trips are also planned due to the success of this trip.



Donated WWII Anti-Aircraft  
Observation Telescope



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MilitaryHistoryMuseum***

## New at the Museum

Mischa Brady  
Curator

Walt Jackson, a member of the Idaho Military Historical Society and Military Order of the Purple Heart, donated a sign to designate a Purple Heart recipient parking spot. Walt is a Vietnam veteran and a Purple Heart recipient. Walt is also big supporter of our Museum and stops by with his grandchildren often. Jeff and I thought that it would be a great idea as we are a military museum and both of us are veterans. We contacted the board and got approval to put the sign up. It is a great addition to our museum and parking lot.



Mischa Brady, Walt Jackson, Jeff Packer



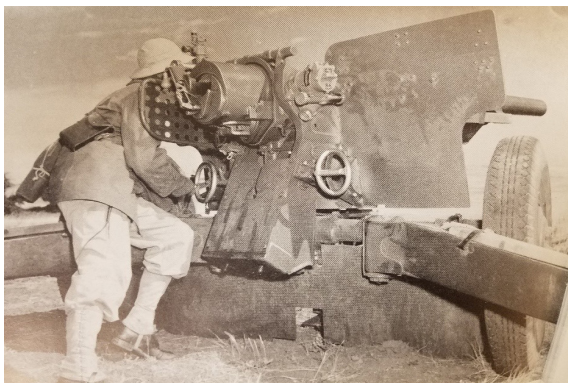
## 183rd continued from page 1

Disaster struck on December 7th, 1941, when Pearl Harbor was attacked and bombed by the Japanese. The USA declared war on Japan the next day, and the 183rd Field Artillery Regiment and the Provisional Anti-Tank Battalion received the command to report to Fort Lewis, Tacoma Washington. On December 10th, 1941, at 8:00 in the morning, the 183rd and the Anti-Tank Battalion departed Fort Francis E. Warren to set out on their 1,500-mile journey, only stopping for supplies and fuel. Despite the icy roads and awful traveling conditions, the regiment kept a constant pace of thirty miles per hour, with their total procession being fifteen miles long. Several pieces of artillery slid off the road in the process, south of Pendleton, Oregon. The regiment made it to Camp Murray, adjacent to Fort Lewis on December 14th. Soon afterwards, new orders directed the 183rd Field Artillery to the Washington coast, to protect against any possible incursions from Japan. The Anti-Tank Battalion joined them in January, both remained at the Washington coast until February 1942, when recalled back to Fort Lewis.

Between December 1941 and February 1942, the US Army was reorganized. Among many other changes to multiple regiments and battalions, the 183rd Field Artillery Regiment was split into two battalions, one being the 183rd Field Artillery Battalion and the other being the 951st Field Artillery Battalion. It was also split into the 183rd Field Artillery Group, which became a headquarters unit. In April 1943, both the newly formed battalions 183rd and 951st left Fort Lewis for Camp Granite, Riverside County, California, for training, new equipment, and ultimately, preparation for England. The 183rd and 951st Battalions received new howitzers and liaison planes at Camp Gruber, Braggs, Oklahoma. After stops in Massachusetts and New York, the 183rd and 951st Battalions left for England, December 5th, 1943. The 183rd Field Artillery Group was the



last unit of the Idaho National Guard to leave for England, leaving in July 1944. The 183rd and 951st Battalions landed at Liverpool December 17th, 1943. It would be early summer before the two battalions would see action. June 10th, 1944, the 951st Field Artillery Battalion loaded up its men and equipment onto Landing Ship Tanks to set off for France. They arrived at Utah Beach on June 12th, 1944 despite a problem with one of the landing ships running afoul of a sandbar. The 951st set up their guns and fired 168 rounds to support the 101st Airborne Division's attack on Carentan.



183rd Guardsmen operating artillery

The 183rd Field Artillery Battalion landed on Utah Beach on June 15th, 1944 to unload equipment under constant fire by enemy aircraft. No one was injured, and the 183rd moved inland, managing to ready their guns and vehicles. The 183rd Field Artillery Group arrived later in the summer, landing at Utah Beach on August 5th, 1944.

All three components of what used to be the 183rd Field Artillery Regiment (being the 183rd and 951st Battalions, and the 183rd Field Artillery Group) played key supportive roles in helping the Allies push Nazi Germany back, using their artillery and their anti-tank guns. The 183rd, as a whole, had many encounters and battles during their time in Europe. The 951st Field Artillery Battalion received the following awards for their service in Europe: eighteen Air Medals, three Croix de Guerres, sixty-eight Bronze Stars, and thirty-seven Purple Hearts.

The 183rd Field Artillery Battalion received the following awards: five Air Medals, one Legion of Merit, seventy-four Bronze Stars, three Croix de Guerres, seventeen Silver Stars, five Campaign Stars, two Distinguished Service Crosses, and ninety-six Purple Hearts.



Bronze Star



Silver Star



Croix de Guerre



Purple Heart

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<https://museum.mil.idaho.gov>