

**Veteran Chronicles: Carroll's *War Letters*: Selections from Some of America's Wars: World War II: Fritz Schnaittacher & Horace Evers; Korea: Molton A. Schuler, Jr.; Vietnam: Roy H. Boehm; Afghanistan: Mark J. Davey**

### WORLD WAR II: (Continued)

#### 1st Lt. Fritz Schnaittacher and S. Sgt. Horace Evers:

The Holocaust is a calamity beyond words. Over six-million Jews was callously slaughtered by the Nazis in ways that those who witnessed liberation of the various concentration camps asserted defied their ability to comprehend. The next communications have to do with eyewitness accounts by two men who wrote home regarding this atrocity.

I include this portion of our study due to claims by some – most recently Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, president of Iran – that the Holocaust never occurred. Here some proof that it did:

Pages 272-277.

### KOREA:

#### Capt. Molton A. Shuler, Jr.

In the fog of war Capt. Shuler had clear vision regarding the source of ultimate sustenance – reliance on the power of God in the midst of conflict.

### VIETNAM:

#### Lt. Cmdr. Roy Boehm: Father of the U.S. Navy SEALs

Roy Boehm was born in Brooklyn, New York, April 9, 1924, and died in Punta Gorda, Florida, December 30, 2008.

According to his on-line biography, he was awarded these metals:

Bronze Star with combat "V"; Purple Heart; Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal, Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal w/1 Silver Star/1 Bronze Star/ 1 Arrow Head, Victory Medal WW II, National Defense Service Medal with 1 Bronze Star, Korean Service Medal w/2 Bronze Stars, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, US Vietnam Service Medal, Philippine Liberation Medal, USN Expert Rifle and Pistol Medals.

Pages 394-96.

### AFGHANISTAN:

#### MSG Mark J. Davey

Mark is presently engaged in his third tour of duty in Afghanistan. I received an e-mail from Mark yesterday that I think is a fitting conclusion to today's retrospective into the private communications of our nation's veterans. He writes from FOB Rushmore near Sharan, the capital city of Paktika Province in Afghanistan.

13 November 2010

Pastor Griffin,

I was sitting behind my computer in a staring contest with exhaustion trying to remember what the hell I was going to do when I received your e-mail. I think if I leaned forward right now I would bleed to death because my eyes are so bloodshot and in serious need of closing for a while. Sleep will come soon enough.

Well, here we are at the front of a war (I think) where NOBODY knows what the hell we should be doing. It is like trusting a drunken donkey wearing roller skates to lead you down into the Grand Canyon. We receive these magnificently designed PowerPoint presentations on the ROE in hopes that we, the ground fighters and leaders of this Army, will convey it to our young warriors in hopes reducing "civilian casualties." Soldiers aren't so easily entranced when it comes to fighting not only for your country, but for your own life.

I have been to four memorial ceremonies for our fallen heroes in the past six weeks knowing that God had these fine American Warriors wove into His perfect plan.

I will tell you that in the years that I have been here I have come to love the American Soldier as if he were my own child. When things like this happen I take a moment with the formation and talk to them about temporary remorse, not allowing revenge motivation to seize your soul, and the impact of driving on with honor for those that have fallen, your country, and your faith. I really don't escape my time here, nor compartmentalize the tragedies that occur, so I can truly lead with clarity and purpose in a war that seems to have lost its way. Moreover, so I can pass down a confidence in Christ and the power of His word to the Soldiers the same way it was passed down to me.

I would like to briefly share a story with you that epitomize the Christian Warrior fighting selflessly on the visible battlefield.

It was the middle of September and we were expecting a batch of new Soldiers in and a few of the NCOs were looking forward to putting a light coat of sweat on the "newbies" just to break them in. I was serving as the BSTB Command Sergeant Major at the time. Part of my morning routine was walking the perimeter of the FOB with a hot cup of whatever the chow hall was calling coffee that day.

I saw a couple of the green horns dragging duffle bags and their ass as the NCOs were trying to find a cot for them to lay their head. In other words, the NCOs were conducting the "duffle bag drag", where the new guys get one hell of a workout running back and forth with all of their gear on their back. As I walked past them I got a good morning from one of the boys and returned the greeting. He asked me if I knew where he and his *compadres* were supposed to stay because the NCOs that were in charge obviously didn't. I laughed my ass off and ask for his name. This kid belched out a breathlessly proud, "PFC Byrd, Sergeant Major". I could see they had had enough and told the NCOs to get them settled, fed, and integrated into their platoon. The fun was over and it was time to bring these guys into the family.

Later that night we had Bible study and there was Byrd sitting with one of the other newbies that (I would later find out) he had convinced to attend; ready to rock, Bible in hand, and a soul to be saved. We were working our way through Romans 5 at the time and it couldn't have been a better study. Birdie and I talked afterwards - turns out he was saved at a young age and had a good grasp on Bible doctrine. I found out he was married and his wife had just given birth to a child a few weeks before his deployment. I don't think I could have taken the smile off of that kids face with a baseball bat when he talked about his new son.

We talked about fear and the battlefield, a pretty common question for many, if not most of those that have fresh dirt on their boots. I told him the only thing I feared was God and another one of me. He thought that was pretty funny and walked out laughing.

Later that week PFC Byrd, or "Birdie" as he was referred to by his platoon, was moving out to FOB Yah Yah Kahl where he would serve as the 3rd platoon, A Company, 1-506 INFANTRY BN medic. I took a knee with those that wanted to and prayed before they left. He was sure to make his way to me to let me know, "God and another one of me." I shook his hand and off to the fight he went.

On the morning of October 13th Birdie's platoon would come in contact with the enemy while on patrol just outside the village of Yah Yah Khal. While engaging the enemy one of the team leaders was hit in the leg by sniper fire. This is an old tactic to draw other Soldiers out into the open in order to maximize body count. As it was told to me by the platoon sergeant on the ground, PFC Birdie, without hesitation, maneuvered to the wounded soldier and rendered first aid, ultimately stopping the bleeding. It was then PFC Birdie was struck in the neck by the same sniper and instantly killed. His lifeless body slumped over the casualty ending his mission here on Earth.

Joe, I can't even type this without holding back tears of veneration just having briefly known such an incredibly selfless warrior, who defined courage and honor both on the visible and invisible battlefield.

I hope someday to sit with his son and tell him what a hero his father was. I would like to tell him of his father's confidence in Christ which no doubt allowed his legs to move that day when most men's wouldn't.

I look forward to seeing you all the next opportunity God sees fit. Know that we will continue to engage the enemy with honor irrespective the constraints this world tries to put on us as we humbly submit to the awesome will of God.

Thank you for your continued leadership from the pulpit. I will continue to pray for your strength and clarity as you fight the good fight.

I love you all.

Forever Forward!

Mark

On receiving this tragic news, I sent an e-mail back to Mark that reads in part as follows:

13 November 2010

I was saddened to hear about PFC Byrd. What a testimony he would have been in your outfit had he lived. However, his demise was in the decree and therefore the plan of God moves on. The decree may well use this very incident to serve as an on-going reminder of the principle of esprit-de-corps love that is imperative for the safety and success of any military organization. I gathered that Birdie was the company medic and therefore he fulfilled the biblical principle espoused by our Lord in John 15:13, "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends." He did his duty, a virtue that General Lee emphasized in a letter to his son, Custis Lee, a cadet at West Point: "Duty is the sublimest word in our language. Do your duty in all things. You cannot do more, you should never do less." I am sure you mourn the fall of a good man whose faith in Christ insures that he is presently with the Lord, eternally out of danger of snipers, and eagerly awaiting the certain arrival of his wife and hopefully that of his son.

NOTE: Andrew Carroll's book *War Letters* is available in paperback. Here is its link on amazon.com:

[http://www.amazon.com/War-Letters-Extraordinary-Correspondence-American/dp/0743410068/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1289691326&sr=1-1](http://www.amazon.com/War-Letters-Extraordinary-Correspondence-American/dp/0743410068/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1289691326&sr=1-1)



