Anthony Benedetto

Aug 3, 1926 -

BIRTHPLACE: Queens, NY

Anthony Benedetto

Army

SOLDIER DETAILS

DIVISION: Army, 255th Infantry Regiment of 63rd Infantry Division314th Army Special Services Band

THEATER OF OPERATION: European

SERVED: Nov 2, 1944 -

BATTLE: Battle of the Bulge

HONORED BY: The Eisenhower Foundation

BIOGRAPHY

Antonio Benedetto know as Tony Bennett, was born in Queens, New York and enlisted in the US Army 11/2/1944 at the age of 18. He completed his basic training at Fort Dix, New Jersey and then Fort Robinson Nebraska. In January 1945, Bennett was assigned the 255th Infantry Regiment of the 63rd Infantry Division, a unit filling in for the heavy losses suffered in the Battle of the Bulge. The 255th moved across France and later into Germany. In March of 1945 Bennett entered the front line as the German Army was pushed back to its homeland. The 255th saw bitter fighting in cold winter conditions, often hunkering down in foxholes as German 88 mm guns fired on them. At the end of March the unit crossed the Rhine River and entered Germany, engaging.in dangerous house- to - house, town-to-town fighting to clear out German soldiers. During the first week of April, they crossed the Kocher River and by the end of the month reached the Danube. During his time in combat, Bennett narrowly escaped death several times. At the war's conclusion Bennett was involved in the liberation of Kaufering concentration camp in southern Germany, where some American Prisoners of War from the 63rd Division had been held. Under the stage name of Joe Bari, he began singing with he official 314th Army Special Services Band. After returning to the US in 1946, singer, Pearl Bailey invited him to open for her show at a club in Greenwich Village. At the show, Bennett met the actor and singer Bob Hope who gave him the stage name, Tony Bennett and encouraged him to tour. Tony signed with Columbia Records in 1950 and had his first nunber-one song with "Because of you". Courtesy of US Department of Veterans Affairs and PBS