



**Richard
Winters**

Army

Richard Winters

Jan 21, 1918 - Jan 2, 2011

BIRTHPLACE: New Holland, PA

SOLDIER DETAILS

HIGHEST RANK: Major

DIVISION: Army, 2nd Battalion, 506th Parachute
Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne

THEATER OF OPERATION: European

SERVED: Aug 25, 1941 - 1946

BATTLE: Normandy - D-Day Rhineland, Ardennes -
Alsace

MILITARY HONORS: Bronze Star Purple Heart
Distinguished Service Cross, Croix de Guerr -
France & Belgium

HONORED BY: The Eisenhower Foundation

BIOGRAPHY

Richard "Dick" Winters was born in New Holland, Pennsylvania, [to Richard and Edith Winters on January 21, 1918. The family soon moved to nearby Ephrata, and then to Lancaster when he was eight years old. He graduated from Lancaster Boys High School in 1937 and attended Franklin and Marshall College. At Franklin and Marshall, Winters was a member of the Upsilon chapter of Delta Sigma Phi fraternity and participated in intramural football and basketball. He had to give up wrestling, his favorite sport, and most of his social activities for his studies and the part-time jobs that paid his way through college. He graduated in 1941 with a B.S. in Economics. He obtained the highest academic standing in the business college. On August 25, 1941, Winters enlisted in the Army. He would write in his memoirs that he "had no desire to get into the war" but joined to fulfill a one-year requirement of service and to avoid being drafted later. He had basic training in South Carolina and after being identified as a person with leadership potential, he was subsequently sent to Fort Benning, Georgia to attend Officer Candidate School. It was here that he decided to become a paratrooper. He was assigned to the Company E, 2nd Battalion, 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment. The 506th regiment was the first one to pursue airborne training as a cohesive unit and as such was a bit of an experiment; of the 5,300 volunteers only 1,800 men made it through. At around 1 am on June 6th, 1944, Winters had landed in Normandy. Vital Ally planes had been gunned down and he had lost his weapon. Quick on his feet, he employed his natural leadership skills and rallied what paratroopers he

could and carried on with the assignment; Winters assumed the role of acting commanding officer due to the fact that the previous lieutenant had been gunned down during the raid. He took his thirteen men, who were currently being fired upon and was able to destroy a German artillery of 105 guns manned by fifty platoons. After the battle he was promoted to captain and would lead his troops in several other tactical military strikes. The E company also took part in other two major assaults under his command. The first being in September of 1944, Operation Market Garden, which ended up being a failed attempt to regain the Netherlands. The second operation, in December of the same year, the Battle of the Bulge, was far more successful and proved to be instrumental in weakening German forces. During his time served he was promoted to the rank of Major. Winter's valiant efforts earned him the Distinguished Service Cross, the second highest award that can be given to a member of the army. He earned numerous other medals and accolades. On June 6th, 2012, the 68th anniversary of D-Day, a bronze statue in his likeness was erected in Saint-Marie du Mont, France. The actions of Richard Winters south of the village of Le Grand-Chemin, called the Brécourt Manor Assault, has been taught at the military academy at West Point as an example of a textbook assault on a fixed position by a numerically inferior force. Courtesy of militarymedals.com.