

Oral History Transcript Selected Words for WWII

Campaign Medals & Awards: US

American Service Defense Medal
American Campaign Medal
Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal
European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal
Women's Army Corps Service Medal
WWII Victory Medal
Merchant Marine Victory Medal
Commendation Medal

Purple Heart

Bronze Star

Silver Star

Distinguished Service Medal

Distinguished Flying Cross

Allied powers (BR, US & Russia)

Axis powers (Germany, Japan & Italy)

America First Committee

armistice (mutual agreement to stop fighting)

armoured warfare (tanks)

artillery (big guns)

atabrine (anti-malarial drug)

Pacific Region

Australia region: South Pacific islands

Papua

Port Moresby

Kokoda trail over Owen Stanley mtns on
Papua New Guinea

New Guinea

Rabaul

Solomon Islands

Choisul (Japanese occupied Solomon Isl)

Bougainville

'The Slot'

Vella Lavella

Santa Isabel

Admiralty Islands

Manus

Los Negros

Balikpapan (Dutch oil port SE Dutch Borneo)

Biak, battle for (New Guinea campaign)

Buna, battle for (New Guinea campaign)

Coral Sea, battle of

Guadalcanal campaign

Maj-Gen. Alexander Vandegrift

Florida Islands

Tulagi

Savo Island

Guadalcanal

Henderson Field

Matanikau River

Cape Esperance

Cactus Air Force

Gavutu-Tananbogo

Mariana Islands (15 islands)

Guam

Saipan

Tinian

Rota

Marshall Islands (36 islands in Micronesia)

Eniwetok Atoll

Roi & Namur (twin inlets)

Kwajalein Atoll

Kwajalein

Gilbert Islands

Tarawa

Makin

Hollandia

Caroline Islands

Truk Atoll

Palau: Peleliu & Angaur - base for
Philippine Campaign

Philippines:

(two p's in the middle, only 1 'l')

Bataan peninsula & Death March

Corregidor

Luzon

Manila

Baggio

MacArthur ("I shall return" general)

Mindanao

Mindoro

Samar

Leyte

Lingayen Gulf

Davao

Cabanatuan

Philippine Sea, battle for

carrier Task Force 58 / Admiral Spruance
typhoon (Dec 1944)

Ulithi - repair port for US fleet

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Mog Mog - island for rest & relaxation near
Ulithi

China:

CBI = China-India-Burma Theater

Kumming; the Hump (flying over mtns into
China from Burma and back)

Ledo Road - supply road & oil pipeline
through northern Burma

Chiang Kai-shek - supreme commander of China
Theater

Mao Tse-tung - founder of Chinese Communist Party
Hainan Island

Chou En-lai - a follower of Mao
Kiangsi Province
Long March to Fushih

towns:

Tsingtao
Shanghai
Kunming
Nanchang
Chenghsien
Nanking

Burma = CHINDIT (China-India campaign)

Flying Tigers (US volunteer group)

Japan:

Hiroshima
Nagasaki
Okinawa
Bonin Islands (27 islands) - Volcano Islands
Ie Shima
Iwo Jima
Mt. Suribachi
Tarawa

Bushido (the way of the warrior)

kamikaze pilots (*kamikaze* means divine wind)

Viet Minh communist group in Vietnam
Ho Chi Minh

Europe

Auschwitz
Anschluss (annexation of Austria by Germany)
Ardennes campaign
Berchtesgaden (Hitler's retreat)
Bergen-Belsen (internment camp)
Big Red One = 1st Infantry Division
BEF = British Expeditionary Force

Buchenwald (concentration camp)

Battle of the Bulge (Ardennes Campaign Dec 44-
Jan 45)

D-Day (day of any operation; particularly June 6,
1944 - Operation Overlord)

Eagle Squadrons: three US volunteer units

ETO = European Theater of Operation (ETOUSA=
ETO, US Army)

Greece:

EAM (Ethnikon Apeleftherotikon Metopon
- or national liberation front -
political wing of communist party),

ELAS (Nat. People's Liberation Army)

EDES (Nat. Republican Greek League)

KKE (Communist Party)

France: Normandy landing, etc

Falaise pocket - Normandy Campaign

Ste-Mère-Église

Pointe du Hoc

Carentan

St-Lô

FFI = Forces française de l'Intérieur

(French resistance groups) & Maquis =
French resistance movement

Germany:

Ruhr pocket

Roer River

Huertgen Forest

Rhineland

Aachen

Elbe River

Siegfried Line

Festung Europa

Atlantic Wall

Flak = Fliegerabwehrkanonen (anti-aircraft
artillery)

Romania:

Ploesti - Romanian airfields & oil depots

Italy:

Volturno River

Caserta

Anzio

Monte Cassino, battle for

Mediterranean, battle for

Oran

Bizerta

Gibraltar

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Mines & weapons:

Bangalore torpedo
Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR)

Ships:

USS *Missouri* (note name of ship is always in italics, but not the preface USS)

airborne warfare

Landing Craft:

LST = Landing ships, Tank
LCVP = Landing Craft Vehicle Personnel
(steel boats which replaced wooden Higgins boats)

Liberty Ships - mass-produced merchantmen - to carry freight, troops or fuel, floating repair docks and hospitals

Higgins boats (infantry landing craft)

To search for types of ships and/or specific ships, go to this site: <http://www.nvr.navy.mil/class.htm>

Aircraft:

C-47
P-38, P-51
B-29, B-17, B-24, B-25
ME-109
Spitfire
Mosquito
Zero (Zeke)

To search for the different Air Forces in the Army Air Corps and combat operations in Europe & the Pacific, go to the following site:

<http://www.wpafb.af.mil/museum/history/wwii/wwii.htm>

Some popular Acronyms:

POW = prisoners-of-war
Seabees (derived from CB or construction battalions)
SEALs
SHAEF = Supreme headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force
Slapton Sands - training ground prior to D-Day
slit trench (for more than one soldier) versus foxhole
SS (Schutzstaffeln or protection squads)
Sudetenland
Theresienstadt

U-boat (Unterseeboot) undersea boat

V-E Day = victory in Europe

V-J Day = victory over Japan (Aug 15, 1945 & Sep 2 1945)

Best site for Military Ranks

<http://www2.sjsu.edu/depts/AFROTC/cadet/ranks.html>

To search for military acronyms:

<http://www.militarywords.com/>

Miscellaneous:

Stars and Stripes - US military magazine

G.I. = government issue (US soldiers)

MIA = missing in action

AWOL = absent without leave

V-Mail = miniature letters

USO = entertainment centers or special programs for troops

D+5 (D-Day + five more days)

Operation OVERLORD (Normandy land operations)

Operation NEPTUNE (sea part of Normandy landing)

Spam = tinned meat

CO = commanding officer

PX = post exchange

APO = army post office c/o either San Francisco or NY)

NCO = non-commissioned officer

Units of organization:

Squad - The smallest military unit, usually around 10 soldiers.

1. **Platoon** - Usually comprised of four squads, led by lieutenants with sergeants second in command. (Approx 40 soldiers)

Company - Four platoons with headquarters, commanded by captains (160 soldiers)

Battalion - Generally made up of four to five companies including a support company and a headquarters company. (640-800 soldiers)

Brigade - A few battalions and totaling around 2,000 - 3,000 troops commanded by a colonel.

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Division - Made up of at least three brigades. A major general commands divisions. (At least 6,000 soldiers)

Corps - Anywhere from two to five divisions, corps are the largest tactical units in the US Army. (12,000-30,000 soldiers)

For military dictionaries:

<http://military.dictionaty.kamous.com/translator/reference.asp?sort=&start=20>