



Honoring Sergeant Carter: Redeeming a Black World War II Hero's Legacy

Allene Carter, Robert L. Allen

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In the early months of 1945, the long and bitter struggle against Nazi Germany reached a decisive stage. Allied forces launched a massive assault on the Rhineland as they prepared to push into the heart of the Third Reich. With the heavy casualties suffered by white soldiers at the Battle of the Bulge, black soldiers, for the first time, played a major combat role. And Sergeant Eddie Carter was right in the thick of the battle, serving in the 12th Armored Division under Patton, as he fought to secure the Rhine and stop the Nazis in their tracks. With a zealous fearlessness, Carter single-handedly captured several Germans and secured reconnaissance that would be critical in capturing Speyer. His efforts would win him a Distinguished Service Cross. But it wasn't until fifty-two years later that Carter was awarded the Medal of Honor.

Here is the untold story of why the American government not only withheld Carter's much due recognition but why they also denied him -- one of the most decorated black American soldiers in WWII -- the opportunity to reenlist. And here, too, is the inspiring story of the valiant Carter family -- from the moving courtship of Eddie and his wife, Mildred, to the family's unrelenting efforts to get the American government to apologize and own up to the racism and McCarthyism that fueled years of deceit and bigotry.

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