



# Case Studies of Junior Leaders





# Von Steuben



- <https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/trecms/pdf/AD1159755.pdf>
- How did he effectively change the Army?
- Why was he able to do things no one else accomplished?
- Why did the troops trust him?
- What lessons can you learn from studying von Steuben?
- How can these case studies help develop you as a leader?
- Book on Von Stueben: <https://www.amazon.com/Drillmaster-Valley-Forge-Steuben-American/dp/0061451649>





King Frederick II "The Great" of Prussia



Von Steuben arrives at Valley Forge in 1778 and reports to Washington

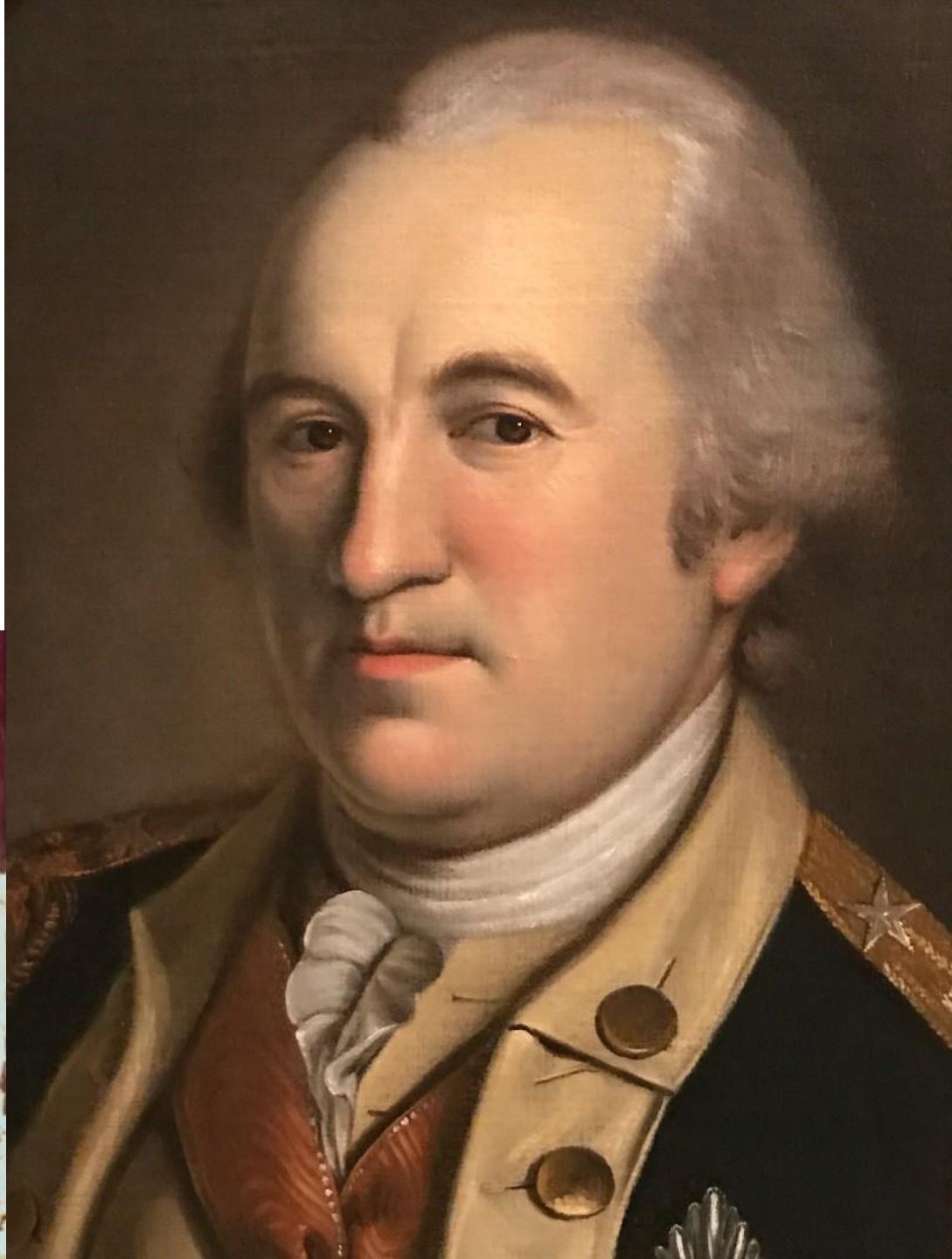


Infantry Captain Frederick Wilhelm von Steuben





Von Steuben was appointed the Inspector General of the Continental Army by Washington and reported at Valley Forge in 1778. He created a “model company” similar to the Prussian Cadet Companies. These 100 Soldiers were assigned from each of the Infantry companies of the army and were used to use a “train-the-trainer” system to create quickly a system of drill masters for the companies of the army.



# Battle of Lanzerath: Fought the day before his 21<sup>st</sup> Birthday

- ***The Longest Winter: The Battle of the Bulge and the Epic Story of WWII's Most Decorated Platoon. Alex Kershaw. (1LT Lyle Bouck)***

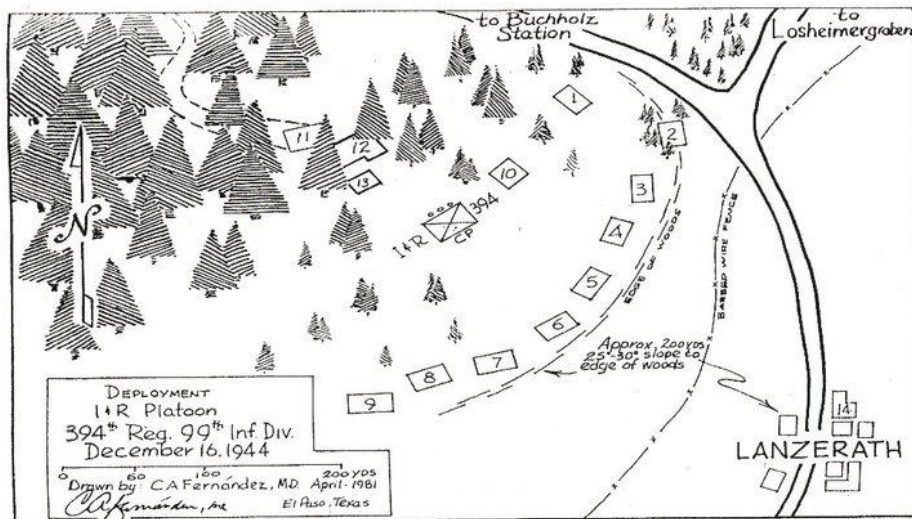




# The Longest Winter...

## The Battle of Lanzerath, Belgium

On a cold morning in December, 1944, deep in the Ardennes forest, a platoon of eighteen Infantrymen and four observers under the command of twenty-year-old lieutenant Lyle Bouck were huddled in their foxholes trying desperately to keep warm. Suddenly, the early morning silence was broken by the roar of a huge artillery bombardment and the dreadful sound of approaching tanks. Hitler had launched his bold and risky offensive against the Allies-his "last gamble"-and the small American platoon was facing the main thrust of the entire German assault. Vastly outnumbered, they repulsed the five assaults of the German 9<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regiment in a fierce day-long battle, killing over one hundred German soldiers and defending a strategically vital hill. Only when Bouck's men had run out of ammunition did they surrender to the enemy.

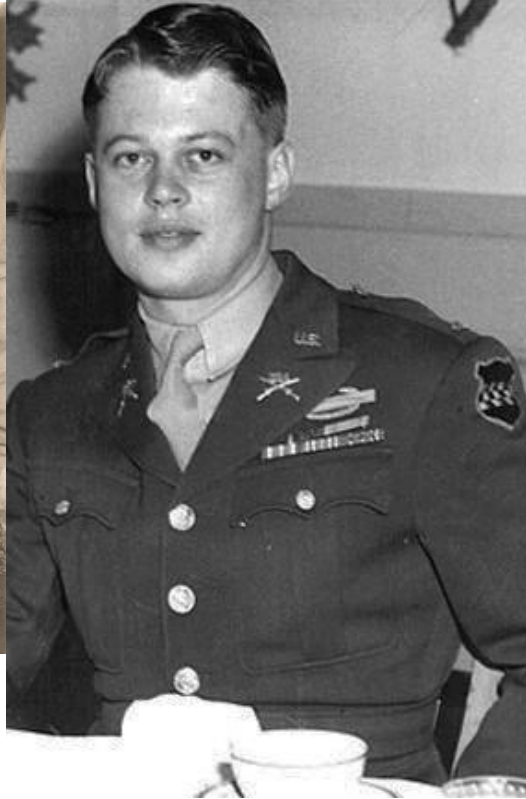




Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-J28589  
Foto: Büschel | 1944/1945 Winter

As POWs, Bouck's platoon began an ordeal almost as bad as combat-survive in captivity under trigger-happy German guards, Allied bombing raids, and a daily ration of only thin soup. In German POW camps, hundreds of captured Americans were either killed or died of disease, and most lost all hope. But the men of Bouck's platoon survived-miraculously, all of them.





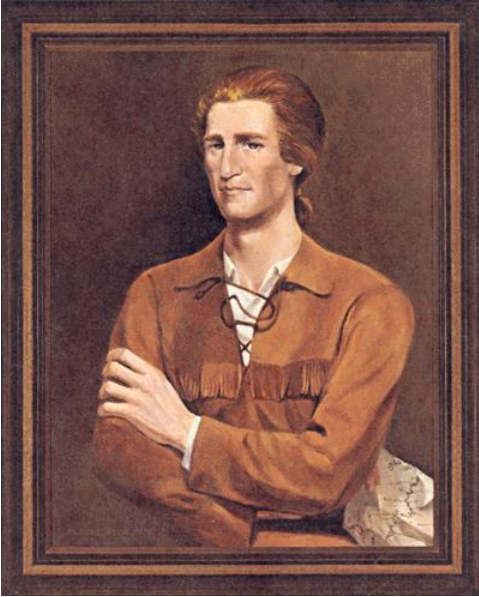
The members of Bouck's platoon were finally recognized for their heroism on October 26, 1981. Bouck and three others received the Distinguished Service Cross, five were awarded the Silver Star, and ten were presented the Bronze Star with V for Valor. According to a recent platoon history, *The Longest Winter*, this became the highest decorated Infantry Platoon in World War II.

Further Reading:

<https://www.ausa.org/sites/default/files/LWP-12-Hitlers-Watch-on-the-Rhine-The-Battle-of-the-Bulge.pdf>

<https://www.amazon.com/Longest-Winter-Story-Decorated-Platoon/dp/0718147456>





## Best Ranger? George Rogers Clark?

In 1778, at the age of 25, Clark was commissioned as a Lieutenant Colonel in the Virginia Militia. He led an expedition of 150 volunteers from Kentucky County into the Illinois region and captured Vincennes in present-day Indiana, and Kaskaskia and Cahokia in present-day Illinois on the Mississippi River.



British Colonel Henry Hamilton's forces recaptured Vincennes and built Fort Sackville. The Virginians deployed on the Mississippi River were cut off from supplies and reinforcements.





**The March to Vincennes**

Lowell Thomas, *The Hero of Vincennes: The Story of George Rogers Clark*, illustrations by F. C. Yohn (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1929), facing p. 146.



Clark left Kaskaskia on February 6, 1779 with about 150 men, beginning an arduous overland trek from the Mississippi River eastward into present-day Indiana, encountering melting snow, ice, and cold rain along the journey. They arrived at Vincennes on February 23 and launched a surprise attack on Fort Sackville. British Colonel Hamilton surrendered the garrison on February 25 and was captured in the process. **Long term result?**





**Clark Fighting Indians**

The struggle and occupation of the disputed territories resulted in the Western boundary of the new nation extended from the east coast to include the Mississippi River, and from the Great Lakes nearly to the Gulf of Mexico. For further Reading:

<https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/tr/pdf/ADA356215.pdf>

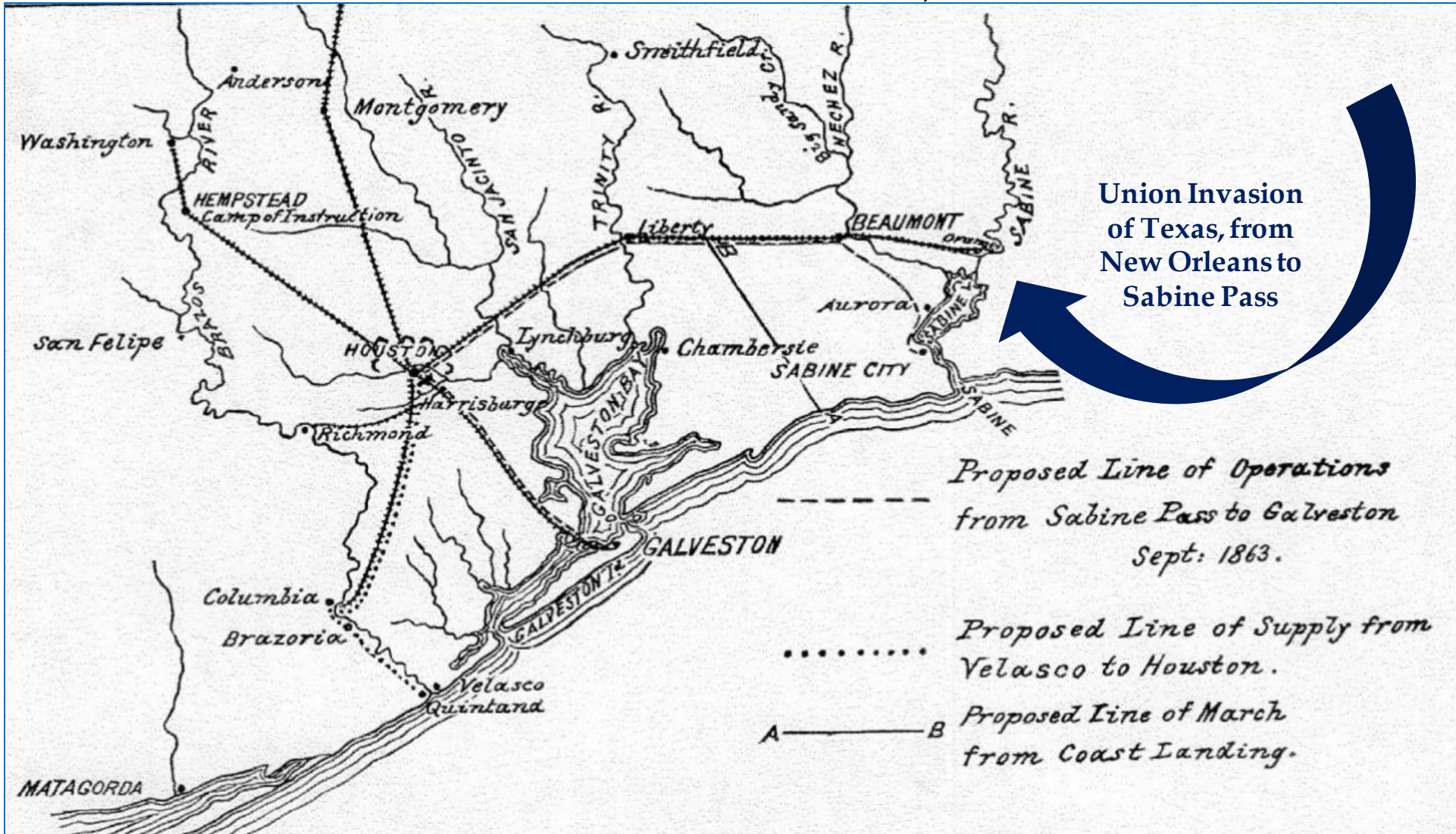
<https://www.amazon.com/Journals-Robert-Rogers-Rangers/dp/1846770106>





# 1LT Richard "Dick" Dowling

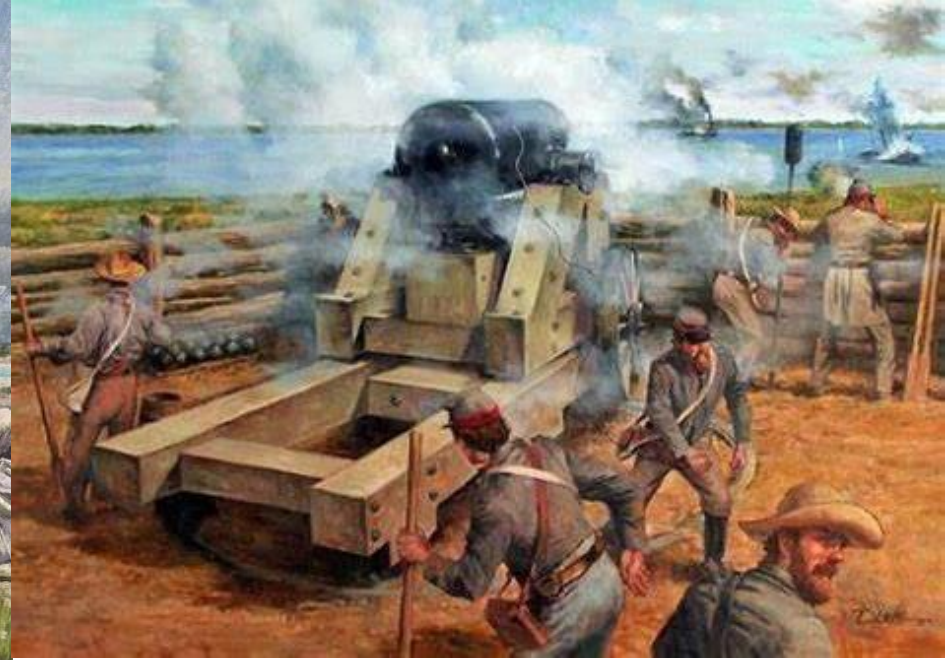
The 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of Sabine Pass, 1863







On September 8, 1863, a Union Navy Flotilla of some 22 gunboats and transports with 5,000 men accompanied by cavalry and artillery arrived off the mouth of Sabine Pass. The plan of invasion was sound, but monumentally mismanaged. Four of the flanking gunboats were to steam up the pass at speed and draw the fire of the fort, two in each channel. The four obsolete Confederate cannons held their fire until 1LT Dowling gave the order.



Dowling's artillery drills paid off as the Confederates poured a rapid and withering fire onto the incoming gunboats, scoring several direct hits, disabling and capturing two ships, while the others retreated in disarray. The rest of the flotilla retreated from the mouth of the pass and returned ignominiously to New Orleans, leaving the disabled ships with no option but to surrender to Dowling and the handful of troops of the "Davis Guard."



# 1LT Richard “Dick” Dowling

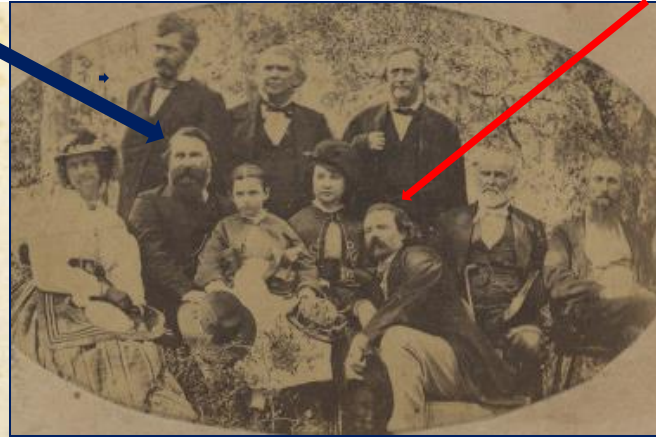
With a command of just 47 men, the twenty-six-year-old 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Dowling had thwarted an attempted invasion of Texas, in the process capturing two gunboats, some 350 prisoners, and a large quantity of supplies and munitions. The only medal commissioned by the Confederate Congress during the Civil War was awarded to each of Dowling’s men, “One of the most brilliant and achievements in the history of this war.” Dowling died two years after the war from yellow fever.

Further Reading: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25535816>

Major Dowling



General Longstreet



# Samuel Woodfill

General John J. Pershing called Woodfill the most outstanding soldier in World War I.

Woodfill enlisted in the 11<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment in 1901 and served in the Philippines. After seeing combat several times, Woodfill also served in Alaska, Kentucky and on the Mexican Border.

When World War I broke out, Woodfill was temporarily promoted to 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant and assigned to Company M, 60th Infantry, 5th Division. He was the acting commander of his company as he led it forward during the Meuse-Argonne Battle.





## Citation for MOH

“While he was leading his company against the enemy, First Lieutenant Woodfill's line came under heavy machinegun fire, which threatened to hold up the advance. Followed by two soldiers at 25 yards, this officer went out ahead of his first line toward a machinegun nest and worked his way around its flank, leaving the two soldiers in front....



When he got within ten yards of the gun it ceased firing, and four of the enemy appeared, three of whom were shot by First Lieutenant Woodfill. The fourth, an officer, rushed at First Lieutenant Woodfill, who attempted to club the officer with his rifle. After a hand-to-hand struggle, First Lieutenant Woodfill killed the officer with his pistol....





His company thereupon continued to advance, until shortly afterwards another machinegun nest was encountered. Calling on his men to follow, First Lieutenant Woodfill rushed ahead of his line in the face of heavy fire from the nest,

and when several of the enemy appeared above the nest he shot them, capturing three other members of the crew and silencing the gun....



A few minutes later this officer for the third time demonstrated conspicuous daring by charging another machinegun position, killing five men in one machinegun pit with his rifle. He then drew his revolver and started to jump into the pit, when two other gunners only a few yards away turned their gun on him....





Failing to kill them with his revolver, he grabbed a pick lying nearby and killed both of them. Inspired by the exceptional courage displayed by this officer, his men pressed on to their objective under severe shell and machinegun fire.”



# Sam Woodfill

Woodfill received the Medal of Honor from General Pershing on 9 February 1919, the French Légion d'honneur in the degree of Chevalier, the French Croix de guerre with bronze palm, the Montenegrin Order of Prince Danilo I in the degree of Knight and the Italian Croce al Merito di Guerra among other awards. Eleven years after the war ended, a Polish Army delegation presented him two medals.



Further Reading:

<https://www.ausa.org/news/graphic-novel-features-wwis-greatest-single-hero>



# Top Three AEF Heroes



Woodfill was among the three soldiers chosen to dedicate the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in 1921, joining fellow Medal of Honor recipients Charles Whittlesey and Alvin York.