

# Melvin Hale

## U.S. Army 3rd Division



**Melvin Hale**  
Sergeant-U.S. Army  
Amphibious Beachhead - WWII

Melvin Hale was inducted into the U. S. Army on September 23, 1942 and completed basic training at Camp Crowder, Missouri with the 74th Signal Company Special. After amphibious training at Norfolk, Virginia Naval Base, Camp Pickett at Fort Pierce, Florida and Camp Bradford in Virginia, Mel shipped out on June 8., 1943 to Oran Africa on the U. S. S. Harry Lee. He made the first amphibious invasion at Sicily on July 10, 1943 with the 45th Division. On September 9, 1943, Mel's unit landed at Salerno, Italy with the 36th Division. On the third amphibious beachhead at Anzio, Italy, Mel was wounded and sent to an Army hospital. With his 33rd Division moving on, recovering from wounds and sick with malaria, Mel opted to leave the hospital to go on with his unit. On August 28, 1944, he was back with the 45th Division in the 4th amphibious beachhead assault at Southern France.

Mel remained with the 45th Division and continued north through France to Alsace and the west wall of Germany where they broke through the Siegfried Line. Then, they went on to Nuremberg and, Munich, Germany. Outside Munich, Mel's unit came upon Dachau Concentration Camp where they fought the SS troops of the German Army and liberated the camp. There, they witnessed the untold horrors of death and

starvation and saw the shower rooms used to gas the Jewish prisoners of war.

The 45th Division continued on to Mt. Gaisberg, Austria where they captured and held a group of German scientists who were working on the infra-red-radar program. After that, Mel and his unit returned to France and arrived home at Boston Harbor. Mel was discharged on November 10, 1945 at Camp Grant, Rockford, Illinois and still carries the shrapnel from Anzio in his leg to this day. The Army hospital at Anzio treated 33,000 casualties in 150 days of fighting. Mel remembers a remark made by a chaplain there who said, "All who served at Anzio ought to go straight to heaven because they've already been to hell."

Mel Hale  
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