

# DOUGHBOYS, DOG FACES > and darned good!

Story by Walter S. Zapotoczny Jr.



Artwork by retired Lt. Col. David W. Russell.

*This watercolor of the Pennsylvania National Guard's 1/112th Infantry on patrol in Iraq is just one of the distinguished tours of duty this unit has participated in. Below is their story as captured by Sgt. Maj. Walter Zapotoczny, 28th Division command historian. This is the first article in a series to feature unsung units and heroes in the Pennsylvania Army National Guard. Retired Lt. Col. David Russell, a former Pa. Guard aviator, deployed to Iraq in 2005 to capture on canvas National Guard contributions to the war effort.*

The GIs of Company A, 1st Battalion, 112th Infantry, located in Butler, Pa., are once again preparing for patrol. This time they are members of the 56th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 28th Inf. Div., Pennsylvania ARNG, scheduled to deploy to Iraq early next year.

Patrolling is nothing new to this unit. They have done it under several names.

They were called *Billy Yanks* when they went on patrol and won battle streamers for action at the battles of Manassas, Antietam, Fredericksburg, Gettysburg, the Wilderness and Spotsylvania during the Civil War.

*Iron Mike* was their name during the Spanish American War, when they sailed to Puerto Rico in July 1898, and won a battle streamer.

It was during duty on the Mexican border in July 1916 that their name changed to *Doughboy*.

Their name was still *Doughboy* as they sailed to France in May 1918, and won more battle streamers at Champagne, Champagne-Marne, Aisne-Marne, Oise-Marne, Lorraine and Meuse-Argonne.



Entering World War II in Europe by the way of Normandy Beach, the Soldiers of Company A were now *Dog Faces*. Fighting their way through France and the Huertgen Forest near Belgium, they added more battle streamers to their flag for performance at Normandy, Northern France, Ardennes-Alsace, Rhineland and Central Europe. The unit was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation for the actions during the Battle of the Bulge.

On patrol in Germany in 1950, in support of the Korean Conflict, the Soldiers of Company A were called *Doggies* by their Marine counterparts.

The terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, once again pressed the GIs from Butler into service. Some participated in peacekeeping missions in Bosnia and Kosovo.

When the call for volunteers to serve in Iraq went out, members of the unit volunteered and served in Operation Iraqi Freedom II.

On April 1, 2004, Company A received an alert order to be prepared to deploy yet again. Not long after their arrival in Iraq, later that year, Company A was attached to

the 42nd Infantry Division in Tikrit to, among other duties, operate checkpoints and conduct patrols. This is where the artist, retired Lt. Col. Dave Russell, met up with one of their patrols. He describes them as unique among the units that he visited.

Russell wrote, “[Except for] the NCOIC – who was quiet, yet confident and clearly in charge – the remainder of the crew were a colorful bunch. They swore continually, smoked whenever able, were cynical about everything and slouched just a bit – though more like athletes conserving energy.”

Russell goes on, “They are, as best I can determine, the *Bad Boys* from your local high school. These were the guys who skipped school, got into trouble, smoked in the bathroom, played football and graduated from the northwestern Pennsylvania schools into the rusting remains of the coal and steel regions. They are fun! They laugh the hardest as they criticize [their] leadership. As they survey [the terrain] outside Tikrit, they resemble a bunch of hunting buddies at deer camp. They’re *Bad Boys*, but I’m sure glad they’re on our team.”

True to their tradition, one of Company A’s patrols identified and swiftly apprehended two insurgents who had wired a 120-millimeter artillery round as an improvised explosive device to their car.

Whether they are called *Bad Boys*, *Dog Faces*, *Doughboys* or a name that has not yet been coined, the Soldiers of Company A, 1st Battalion, 112th Infantry, will be on patrol again in another far-away land in the service of the nation. Just like their predecessors, they will probably swear continually, smoke when able and be cynical about everything. They have always been the football players, the boys who skipped school and the ones who make a difference. ❖

*Sgt. Maj. Walter S. Zapotoczny Jr. is the command historian for the 28th Infantry Division, Pennsylvania Army National Guard, Harrisburg, Pa.*

## Retired Lt. Col. David W. Russell

*By Walter S. Zapotoczny Jr.*

A Harrisburg, Pa., native, David Russell graduated from the fine arts program at Kutztown State College and from Penn State University with a Master of Arts in American Studies. He joined the Marine Corps in 1981, and attended flight school in Pensacola, Fla. He transferred to the Pennsylvania Army National Guard in 1989. Nearing retirement at the Eastern Army Aviation Training Site in 2004, he noticed that there did not seem to be any artists working in Afghanistan or Iraq. He presented his idea of deploying to Iraq to produce National Guard-related art to the Guard leadership. His idea was accepted and in March 2005, Russell went to Iraq, attaching himself to units in and around Baghdad. He produced 30 pieces of art, some of which are on display in the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs building, Fort Indiantown Gap. Dave retired from the Guard in October 2005, and now concentrates on producing fine art. ❖

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