



Edward D. Manning 73-43

First Lieutenant, U.S. Army

Service # O1183919

203rd Field Artillery Battalion

Entered the Service from: North Carolina

Died: 8-Aug-1944

Buried at: Plot J Row 13 Grave 9

Brittany American Cemetery

St. James, France

Awards: Purple Heart

Hometown: Bland County, VA

Following graduation from O.C.S., Edward was assigned to Battery A, 203rd Field Artillery Battalion at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, and was assigned to leadership positions ahead of senior officers. His letters express the hope that he would be able to successfully carry out his duties in his assignment. Apparently, he fulfilled his assigned duties without difficulty. He remained with the 203rd F.A. as it transferred to England and with it in the invasion of Europe. He was killed in action in France or Belgium before he had an opportunity to develop his full potential as the fine army officer I'm sure he would have become. Letters from the chaplain of his battalion and from a fellow artillery officer speak of him in glowing terms as courageous and fearless in combat and a good officer.

Edward was wounded in action on August 6, 1944, and died on August 8, 1944.

From the book *A Life in Service* by Fletcher A. Manning (brother)

26 September 1944

My Dear Mrs. Manning:

I have your letter of 6 September 1944, in which you request information concerning your husband, Lt. Edward D. Manning. I am very sorry that I can give you so little information but I am allowed only to say that he was wounded in action on August 6th and died of those wounds on August 8th, which is the same information you received from the Adjutant General's office in Washington.

However, I can give you some additional information about your husband which have nothing to do with the extent or manner of his injury. No words of praise can give you back his life, but they may help you in your grief.

Lt. Manning was an excellent officer and served expertly as a forward observer in combat. He was heroic and defiant of the enemy. He advanced to the most forward position in the front lines and went at times beyond the infantry outposts in order better to observe the enemy. He was enthusiastic and diligent and sought to be always at the right place at the right time. His loss to the battalion was one that has been extremely difficult to replace.

But even more than this, he was a real gentleman and a strict adherent to the American ideals and to the true beliefs of Christianity. He showed that he had learned at an early age to live uprightly and honestly. He was afraid of neither life nor death because he had within him a love and a faith that transcended time and space. His fellow officers and the men who served under him respected him and admired him and all of us felt a great personal grief when we lost him.

Rightly, you may be proud of your husband, and also you may be proud to have been the wife of such a man whose life was torn from him by the horrors of war. Some men must die before their allotted time has passed, but there are two classical utterances by other heroes who preceded Lt. Manning in time that may serve to help you in your grief. The first is this:

I had not loved thee, Dear, so much,
Had I not loved honor more.
and the second:
The valiant taste of death but once.

Those among men who love honor and truth are those whose loss we mourn because their hearts are more full with the love of family and of their fellow men. Those among men who are not afraid to die pass through the valley of the shadow of death bravely and as one who lies down to pleasant sleep. Finally, there was another who gave his life for all mankind who said in his greatest hour of need, "Not my will but thine be done." That man, too, went bravely to his death and lived again to become the Savior of Mankind.

The officers and men who knew Lt. Manning send to you, his wife, their sympathies. We were sorry to lose him but we are also proud to have served with him in this cause we think is just, and true and good. Our nation, which your husband loved, owes to him and to the thousands of others who have given their lives, a debt of honor and gratitude. The world itself must bow the knee of homage to those men among us who have died in the defense of freedom.

Sincerely,
/s/Randolph E. Phillips
Randolph E. Phillips
Chaplain, U.S.A

Sept 26, 1944
Somewhere in Holland

My Dear Mrs. Manning,

Lt. Sitterly just gave me a letter you had written to him. I will try to reveal as many of the details that military censorship will permit in Ed's case.

I was with Ed at the time of the unfortunate event. The detail was composed of two parties—Ed's and my own—I can truthfully add that it might have turned out to be serious for all of us since we were with Ed at the time, as I mentioned before. What really happened is as follows—

We walked into a situation not knowing too much of what was lying ahead—when we got to our destination they (the Jerries) let us have it from three sides, the other side, our rear, was the only way of escape. We all managed to get away safely but Ed was hit in the arm and abdomen. I immediately put him into a vehicle and sent him to an aid station where they gave him all the care that circumstances would permit—at that moment. I remember seeing Ed there on the stretcher, he was conscious but evidently in great pain and shock. I'm sure the medics did all they could for him there, but the abdominal wound was more severe and they immediately evacuated him to a hospital. I can say without a doubt, that they did not waste any time in giving Ed the best care in the fastest possible time, for it was no longer than one-half hour from the time of accident before Ed was delivered to the hospital and that's quite a feat.

I also want to say that Ed took it like a man, he was not afraid, and we all admire him for his courage to stand up under enemy fire. I am sure that you will find pride in knowing that Ed tried to carry out his mission but was unlucky—it might have been any one of us.

I hope that my few comments might have enlightened you on the situation. I knew Ed quite well, we've been together for a long time, he's shown me your picture several times. My only regret is that it had to be such a swell guy. May I extend to you my deepest sympathy and hope that you will feel mighty proud of a swell fellow.

Sincerely yours,
/s/Jack M. Sachs
Jack M. Sachs
1st Lt. F.A.

P.S. Incidentally, Ed was promoted to 1st Lt. His orders came through about the 27th or 28th of August