



Half-track Vehicle

Clarence Charles Sechler
Corporal U.S. Army
2 February 1942 – 15 September 1944

Clarence was born on 4 September 1916 in Wescosville, Pennsylvania, where he was raised on the family farm. He was one of seven sons and the fourth of ten children born to **Albert Llewellen Sechler** (30 August 1875 – 21 February 1961) and **Lizzie Mary Ann Yeager** (2 February 1890 – 29 November 1970). After completing grammar school in Fogelsville, Pennsylvania, Clarence worked as a Farm Hand on the family farm and at Ziegler's Foundry in Allentown, Pennsylvania, until he entered the Army. He enlisted as a Private on 2 February 1942 at Fort George G. Meade, Maryland. He was assigned to the 32nd Armored Regiment, 3rd Armored ("Spearhead") Division, and underwent basic training at Camp Polk, Louisiana. The Regiment left Camp Polk and deployed to Rice, California, Desert Training Area on 26 July 1942 for desert warfare training in preparation for deployment to North Africa. However, the need for the Division in Africa was cancelled, and the Regiment was then diverted sent to Camp Pickett, Virginia, and Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania, to train for deployment to the European Theater. On 5 September 1943, they sailed from New York for England on the troop ship *RMS Capetown Castle*. They were stationed at Codford, Wiltshire, England, and received additional training on Britain's Salisbury Plain during the nine-month period before the invasion of Normandy on 6 June 1944. The 32nd Regiment landed at Omaha White Beach on 23 June 1944, and received their baptism of fire in the Normandy breakthrough at Villiers Fossard, Normandy, on 29 June 1944. Clarence was a half-track vehicle operator in the Regiment. They fought their way northward into Belgium and then crossed the German border on 12 September 1944, in order to breach the German forces along the Siegfried Line. Three days later, after the border crossing, Clarence was killed in action in Germany as the Regiment was advancing into the Huertgen Forest. In addition to the campaign medals Clarence was awarded, he earned the Purple Heart for his wounds. The men of the 3rd Armored Division were also cited by the Belgian Government for its part in the liberation and defense of Belgium during the period 3 – 13 September, 1944. The 3rd Armored Division suffered a total of 2126 killed and 6963 wounded during action throughout the European Theater. Clarence never married. Three of Clarence's brothers, **Henry Elias**, **Stanley Raymond**, and **Clinton Albert**, also served in the Army during World War II.



RMS Capetown Castle