

Soldiers of 213
Tank Regiment, IAD.



1ST ARMORED DIVISION

Operation Torch

North Africa

As part of Operation Torch, the Allied invasion of French Northwest Africa, November 8, 1942. In doing so, Old Ironsides became the first American Armored Division to see combat. Although encountering unexpectedly heavy Vichy-French opposition, the Allied invasion force suppressed all resistance in the beachhead within three days.

The Division then advanced toward Tunisia where it clashed with Axis forces and learned many hard lessons in armored warfare. Harsh conditions and primitive roads spoiled an early opportunity to capture Tunisia and cut off Rommel's supply lines.

January 1943 found the Division under control of the II Corps. Old Ironsides received the mission of defending central Tunisia against an Axis counterattack. A month later, the 1st Armored Division collided with a superior German armored force at Kasserine Pass. Sustaining heavy personnel and equipment losses, Old Ironsides withdrew, battered but wiser. Outrunning his supply lines and facing stiffening Allied resistance, Rommel's advance ground to a halt. Regardless, three more months of fierce fighting followed before the Allies could finally claim victory in North Africa.

It was in the final days of the Tunisian campaign PVT Nicholas Minue of the 6th Infantry earned the Congressional Medal of Honor.



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