

War Era Story Project 2012

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Okinawa - Actually There, April 1945

I arrived on Okinawa in April 1945 and was in command of 125 men, 60 Jeeps and 60 weapons carries. We furnished Transportation for Okinawa Command Headquarters. I saw a number of Kamikazes flying overhead for various intervals, for about a month. They were headed for the U.S. vessels that were in the harbor. They destroyed a number of the naval vessels and many naval personnel.

General Buckner, Command General of all military on Okinawa, wanted to go up and observe the front. So, Sgt. Steele drove him up in a Jeep to where the Japanese were shelling the American Troops. A shell came over and the General had stepped out of the Jeep. He was killed and the Jeep and Sgt. Steele came back safely. There was a naval base named in Honor of General Buckner.

One day on Okinawa I saw the 7th Infantry Division marching in the mud. As they passed, I looked and I saw the writer Ernie Pyle, who generally was with the enlisted men. The division was headed for Ilsa Shima, a small Island held by the Japanese. The next day, Ernie Pyle was killed.