

When was it?

A Discussion of Audie's Birthyear

By Richard L. Rodgers

Comments? Comments are welcome. Just use the link below to our message board.

<https://www.audiemurphy.com/msgb/viewtopic.php?f=1&t=4725>

AUDIE Murphy's birthday was, and still is, officially recorded with the Texas Bureau of Vital Statistics as June 20, 1924. The record states that his birthplace was Kingston, Hunt County, Texas. His birth certificate also bears the notarized signature of an attending doctor confirming the date. Moreover, Audie Murphy's military records and headstone at Arlington National Cemetery record the same year which stem from the birth certificate. For these reasons, the question of when Audie was born is easy to answer for the casual observer. When they do, they just point at his birth certificate or headstone. Unfortunately, it is not that easy.

Questions on the accuracy of Audie's age emerge when other sources of information are considered. These sources include federal and state documents, and interviews conducted by professional writers and journalists. There are also statements made by family members and personal friends.

Okay - so when was Audie *really* born? It is widely accepted that June 20 is the correct day. It is the year that creates the confusion. Was it 1923, 1924, or 1925?

The Family Tree

Determining Audie Murphy's birthyear should start with a listing of all family members and their birth years. In Harold B. Simpson's out-of-print biography *Audie Murphy: American Soldier*, considered one of the best Audie Murphy biographical works written, the Murphy family years of birth are listed as ...

Emmett Murphy (Father): 1886
Josie Murphy (Mother): 1891
Elizabeth Corinne Murphy: 1910
Charles Emmett Murphy: 1912
Vernon Murphy: 1915
Ariel June Murphy: 1917
Virginia Oneta Murphy: 1918
J.W. Murphy: 1920
Audie Leon Murphy: 1924
Richard Houston Murphy: 1926
Eugene Porter Murphy: 1928
Veda Nadine Murphy: 1931
Willie Beatrice Murphy: 1933
Joseph Preston Murphy: 1935

First-time observers are usually struck by the fact that there were a lot of children (twelve total). Some might wonder how a mother could manage to remember all the birthdays.

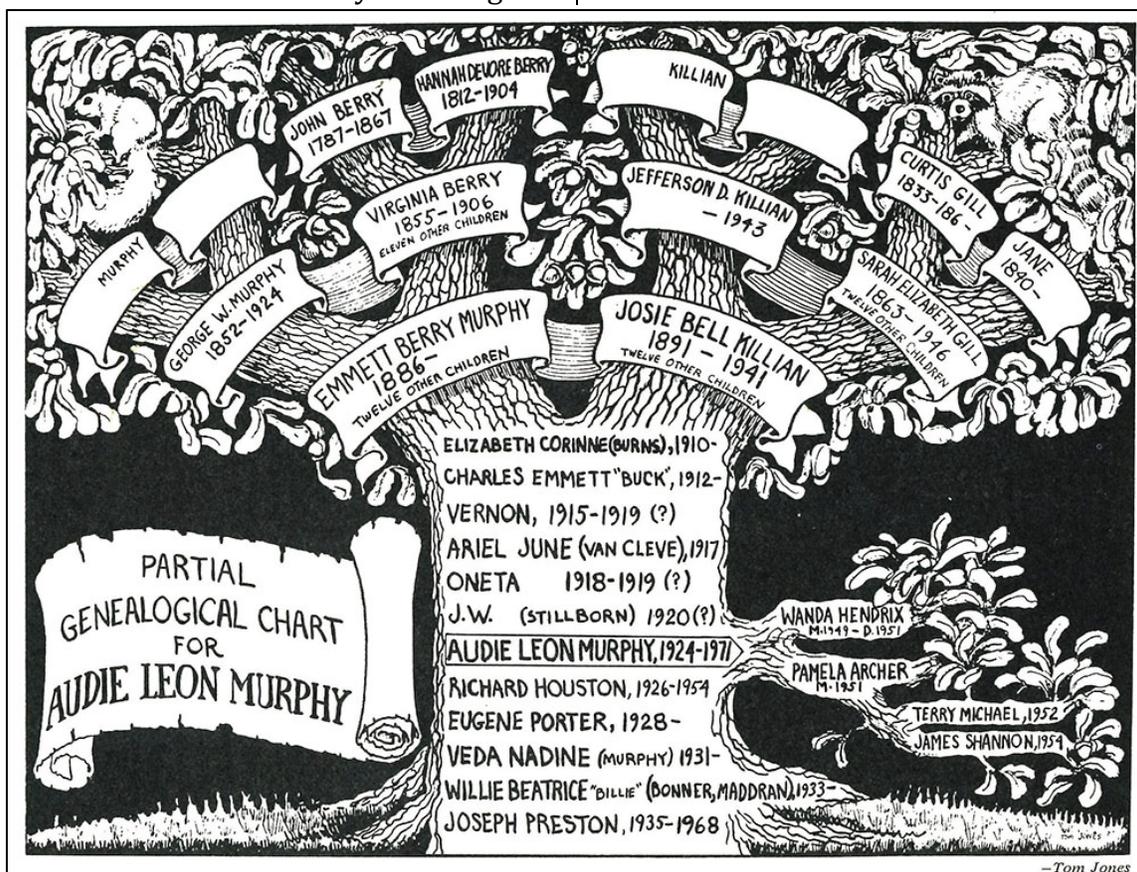
Three of the Murphy siblings (Vernon, J.W. "Bud, and Virginia) were either stillborn or died by the age of 4. Of these, the exact dates of birth and deaths for Virginia and Bud are unknown. Family members, then and now, cannot remember what these dates are, and no written records have ever been located.

Birth Certificates

Doctors in northeast Texas – and just about anywhere else in the United States - who deliver babies generally file a birth certificate form quickly for the parents with the local county courthouse. Occasionally forms get

filed years later. Previously filed birth certificates can also be amended. Regardless of when, there is an official process in place for any individual to acquire or change a birth certificate even long after a birth occurs. Hunt County, Texas was no exception.

Did the Murphy children have birth certificates filed immediately after their births? Some may not have. In the case of Bud and Virginia it seems that the filed certificates never existed. Bud's case is understandable because he was stillborn.



Audie Murphy's Family Tree. This is the original tree printed in Simpson's out-of-print biographical work *Audie Murphy: American Soldier* (page 6). Many of the family members have since passed on since the drawing was rendered and their dates of death are not provided.

In Virginia's case, the question is harder to answer. Was a doctor available at the time of Virginia's birth? If not, this might account for the missing document assuming there was no physician present to later file a form.

Did Audie have a birth certificate filed shortly after his birth? There is no reason to think the attending doctor failed to do so. Maybe it was given to the family, and the family lost it. The fact is that years later when Audie enlisted, he first had to go through the legal process of securing one.

Family Bible

A common practice in many families was to record the birth and deaths of family members in a family bible. Unfortunately, no such family bible for the Murphy's has ever been found.

1930's Federal Census

The earliest existing recorded source of information on Audie Murphy's birth year is the 1930's Federal Census. Federal census takers, known as

"enumerators", were responsible for collecting this information.

According to the National Archives records, enumerator applicants in 1930 were only required to take and pass a written test, based on a "hypothetical narrative" which probably described a fictional neighborhood of families. If the applicants were able to record the test data adequately, they were hired. Preference was given to hiring honorably discharged military veterans or their widows.

Enumerator working conditions in northeast Texas during 1930 included long hours and lots of travel on dusty rural roads mostly done on foot. Bad weather was always a possibility and squalid living conditions at crowded homes, boarding houses, shacks, and any other place people could be found staying, had to be contended with.

Regardless of where the enumerator was working, the job required knocking on every door and, if no one

1930 Federal Census Extract,
Hunt County, Texas
Enumeration District 116-15
Sheet 5b
April 11, 1930

	Names				Ages			
89	110110	Murphy	Virginia	44	W	W	41	W
90		Jessie	H	38	W	W	38	W
91		Charles	17	W	W	W	17	W
92		Jessie	11	W	W	W	11	W
93		Audie	6	W	W	W	6	W
94		Richard	4	W	W	W	4	W
95		Bessie	18	W	W	W	18	W
96		Ann	18	W	W	W	18	W

Audie, Line 94

1930 Federal Census Extract. The entire sheet can be found at the end of this document. Original Source: <https://www.archives.gov/research/census/1930/1930-enumerators.html>

answered, returning later. Interviews were tedious and exhausting. Families were not always receptive. Even still, it was a job and jobs in those days were hard to come by.

On April 11, 1930, Mr. Thomas A. Harris, enumerator for district 116-15, Hunt County, Texas transcribed census information on the Murphy household on sheet number 5b, near the bottom of the page beginning on line 89. An address for the Murphy home was not recorded - but houses rarely had addresses during this period of history.

The names and ages (in years) at the time of the last birthday was hand-recorded for each family member beginning with "Emmitt" (sic) Murphy, age 41, who was listed as a "farmer", and followed by Josie (wife, 38), who was listed as "wife" and "H" which was the symbol for "homemaker". Even though a farmer Emmett did not own land he share-cropped. Josie, as a homemaker and wife, was known to help in the fields even while caring for small toddlers.

The census listed the children as Corinne (daughter, 19), Charlie (son, 17), June (daughter, 11), Audie (son, 6), Richard (son, 4-2/12), and Eugene (son, 1-7/12). A fraction was used to represent the completed months for children under 5. Other household information was included but was unrelated to the family members' ages.

Here is where things get interesting. A carefully built timeline based on

Audie's 1930 census age reveals that his birth year was 1923 and not 1924 (see table 1, next page). This, of course contradicts military records and his recorded birth certificate. It also contradicts later interviews and testimony.

Should the census be tossed aside just because it does not fit the popular

Table 1		
If Audie was Born 1923		
<i>Based on the 1930 Federal Census</i>		
Event	Date	Age
Born	June 20, 1923	0
Birthday	June 20, 1924	1
Birthday	June 20, 1925	2
Birthday	June 20, 1926	3
Birthday	June 20, 1927	4
Birthday	June 20, 1928	5
Birthday	June 20, 1929	6
Census taken	April 11, 1930	6
Birthday	June 20, 1930	7
Birthday	June 20, 1931	8
Birthday	June 20, 1932	9
Birthday	June 20, 1933	10
Birthday	June 20, 1934	11
Birthday	June 20, 1935	12
Birthday	June 20, 1936	13
Birthday	June 20, 1937	14
Birthday	June 20, 1938	15
Birthday	June 20, 1939	16
Birthday	June 20, 1940	17
Birthday	June 20, 1941	18
Birthday	June 20, 1942	19
Birthday	June 20, 1943	20
Birthday	June 20, 1944	21
Medal of Honor (MOH) Earned	January 26, 1945	22
Birthday	June 20, 1945	23

narrative? No. Doing so would be poor research. On the other hand, finding evidence that shows it is historically wrong is a better approach and would have the added benefit of providing reasons to future researchers why – or why not - the 1930 Census should be used or not used when determining Audie's age.

Speculating About the 1930 Census Interview with the Murphy Family

The name of the family member interviewed by Mr. Harris and the circumstances surrounding his visit is not known. Was Emmett Murphy interviewed? It seems unlikely – but maybe. Or, was the information provided by his wife Josie? This seems more reasonable.

Based on heavy speculation questions can be asked. Was Mr. Harris' interview have poorly timed? Were the immediate needs of the children who may have been playing loudly, wanting to be fed, crying, or requiring other forms of attention putting pressure on completing the census as rapidly as possible? Could the person being interviewed have suffered from a lapse of memory? Did Mr. Harris misunderstand any responses? Are these questions even fair?

The only thing that is known is that the 1930 Federal Census states that Audie's age was 6 on April 11, 1930 which places his date of birth on June 20, 1923.

Audie's Enlistment

Around April 1940, Emmett Murphy abandoned his wife and children. Josie Murphy would later die, from endocarditis with pneumonia, according to her death certificate. Audie's younger siblings Nadine, Beatrice (Billie), and Joe were placed in an orphanage. Richard and Eugene managed to find work near Floyd, Texas. While Audie was not legally of adult age, he was considered old enough by the state of Texas to take care of himself. His oldest sister Corinne, now married, was designated Audie's legal guardian although Audie found small jobs to sustain himself with and places to stay. It was probably a miserable life for a young teenager.

Audie saw an opportunity with the onset of World War II. Audie personally knew others who had already served in the military. Their tales of service had an impact on Audie's desire to enlist.

The life of a serviceman would likely have seemed exciting to any poor, orphaned teen. The allure of not having to worry about food, clothes, a place to sleep – all while receiving a small yet steady income – would have been hard to resist. Of course, military service was widely respected and admired too. This probably did not escape Audie's attention either.

To enlist, Audie had to prove he was at least 18 years old. A birth certificate was required by the recruiters who were assembled in the basement of the

post office in Greenville, Texas, and Audie did not have one.

To secure the document, Audie needed the assistance of the doctor who delivered him, Dr. Preston S. Pearson, who still practiced medicine in Greenville and who lived a short distance from Audie. When approached, Dr. Pearson, agreed as any good doctor should, to help Audie.

To help, Dr. Pearson had to write the exact date of birth for Audie on the birth certificate form and then apply his professional signature to the information. Afterwards, the form had to be notarized, approved by a county judge, and then filed in the county courthouse building.

While it is believed that Dr. Pearson kept records concerning the babies he delivered these records have never been located.

It is unclear if Audie met Dr. Pearson at his office or just bumped into him while the doctor was making his rounds. The circumstances of how Audie met and made the request for

Audie Murphy's Birth Certificate. Filed by Dr. P.S. Pearson, M.D. Notarized and filed at the Hunt County Court House on March 25, 1942.

Event	Date	Age
Born	June 20, 1924	0
Birthday	June 20, 1925	1
Birthday	June 20, 1926	2
Birthday	June 20, 1927	3
Birthday	June 20, 1928	4
Birthday	June 20, 1929	5
Census should be	April 11, 1930	5
Birthday	June 20, 1930	6
Birthday	June 20, 1931	7
Birthday	June 20, 1932	8
Birthday	June 20, 1933	9
Birthday	June 20, 1934	10
Birthday	June 20, 1935	11
Birthday	June 20, 1936	12
Birthday	June 20, 1937	13
Birthday	June 20, 1938	14
Birthday	June 20, 1939	15
Birthday	June 20, 1940	16
Birthday	June 20, 1941	17
Birthday	June 20, 1942	18
Birthday	June 20, 1943	19
Birthday	June 20, 1944	20
MOH Earned	January 26, 1945	20
Birthday	June 20, 1945	21

doctor's assistance for the purpose of generating the document is unknown.

If Dr. Pearson was unable to refer to his patients' medical records, was he able to remember Audie's exact date of Audie's birth by memory? If not, perhaps Audie helped him remember.

What is known is that a birth certificate form was filed on March 25, 1942 at the Hunt County Courthouse which either amended a previous birthdate or represented an original filing. The birthday listed was June 20, 1924.

Legal Guardian's Sworn Affidavit

With a birth certificate in hand, Audie was probably surprised to find out that the Army recruiter was still unsatisfied. Now, Audie needed a notarized affidavit from a legal guardian stating he was old enough to enlist and was without any dependents. Fortunately, Corinne was Audie's legal guardian.

Without knowing the specifics of the conversation between Audie and Corinne, an affidavit was sworn to by Corinne attesting to the fact that as his legal guardian, Audie had no legal dependents - and was born on June 20, 1924 dovetailing nicely with the date on his recently acquired birth certificate.

The document was then signed, notarized in an insurance agency office at Farmersville, Texas on June 26, 1942. Three days later, on June 29, 1942, having satisfied his recruiter that he was 18 years old, Audie enlisted in the U.S. Army.

STATE OF Texas C.A.R.O. Form No. 11
COUNTY OF Collin

Before me, the undersigned, an authority to administer oaths, appeared Audie Leon Murphy who after being duly sworn according to law deposed and says: That ~~at an age~~ he is the legal ~~parent~~ parent guardian of Audie Leon Murphy. That the (Name of applicant) said Audie Leon Murphy was born at Wend, Collin Co. Tex. That (Town, County & State) the date of his birth is June 20, 1924. That ~~he~~ he give (Month, Day & Year) my ~~unconditional~~ consent for his enlistment in the U. S. Army for duration of war and six months. That ~~I~~ we know said Audie Leon Murphy (Name of applicant) is ~~Single~~ Married ~~Widowed~~ Divorced. That he has NO children. That he has NO Dependents of any kind. That the Father & Mother of said Audie Leon Murphy ~~is~~ is ~~deceased~~ Are Deceased & I, being the next living Kin who is of age, give my consent to his Enlistment.

Corinne Burns
(Signature of Father or Legal Guardian)

Corinne Burns
(Signature of Mother)

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 26 day of June 19 42
The affiant is ~~is~~ sworn by me well known to be the identical person(s) claimed herein to be.

Notary's Seal
to appear here. Marsha Lawrence
(Signature of Notary Public)

My commission expires 6/1/43

Strike out words not applicable.
This affidavit must be filled in either with typewriter, ink or indelible pencil, and must be signed by all parties with INK or INDELIBLE PENCIL.

Affidavit. Sworn by Corinne Burns Murphy as the legal guardian of Audie Leon Murphy that his birthday was June 20, 1924.

Questions on Growth and Stature

Official enlistment records show that Audie Murphy, on June 30, 1942 was 65 1/2" tall (5', 5-1/2") and 112 pounds in weight. At the time of his death, he was approximately 5 inches taller and 138 pounds after the war.

Clearly Audie was suffering from malnutrition and this could account for his poor height and weight.

Was Audie's height and weight also a symptom of his age? As it turns out, the question really is not relevant. Certainly, a lot of other young recruits of legal age were malnourished. Like

Audie, they would grow with a better diet.

The fact is the military doctor, Lieutenant Colonel P.H. Anderson, who examined Audie on June 30, 1942, failed to note anything unusual, except a minimal but acceptable level of tuberculosis. Audie, who was within the Army's physical tolerances, was declared medically fit for service.

Army Physical Examination dated June 30, 1942. Source: Audie Murphy's military personal records, page 4; U.S. National Archives Administration.

The Motive

If Audie lied about his age at the time of enlistment, there needed to be a strong, and compelling reason to do so – after all, there were benefits and risks to consider. Said differently if a crime,

such as falsifying a public document and fraudulently enlisting were to have occurred then what were the motives?

To Audie, changing his age would have provided immediate benefits. Becoming a legal adult offered economic opportunities that otherwise would be unavailable. Doors would open which could then lead to a better future. Changing his age would mean a quick escape from the poverty of northeast Texas.

Furthering his education was not an option – Audie had never completed his schooling. His enlistment records indicate that he only completed the 7th grade. Finishing school was something Audie probably considered too time-consuming.

In Audie's mind, escape had to be through the military, and it had to be as soon as possible. There was no telling how short the war might be either. Audie was in a hurry.

If Audie really was underaged, then the troublesome birthyear was all that stood between one of two outcomes: being just another hungry and impoverished teen from Hunt County, Texas or a proud, well-trained, well-clothed, and well-fed member of the U.S. military. Audie was already experienced with the first and found it quite unsatisfactory. He wanted the second.

The Opportunity

Audie may have also realized that changing his age was not a difficult

chore. The secret to illicitly changing one's age for the purpose of enlisting may have been a popular topic already circulating among other potential recruits Audie knew.

In Audie's mind, age was probably just a few inked characters smudged on a piece of paper. If they needed to be altered, he was smart enough to do it.

Audie Murphy's enlistment records.
Source: Audie Murphy's military personal records, page 3; U.S. National Archives Administration.

The Risks

Fraudulent enlistment could result in criminal charges and an arrest - or even a court-martial - if the crime was ever discovered. This was certainly something for Audie to think about.

On the other hand, the risks may have been manageable if all he needed was a notarized affidavit from an older sister - and a date and signature from a doctor whose memory may have faded with time (and the delivery of lots and lots of other babies).

As it turns out, Audie was very skilled at assessing and managing risk as history would prove later.

And of course, the U.S. Government was also desperate in their effort to build and expand an army as Nazi Germany marched across Europe and Japan seized the Pacific. Maybe Uncle Sam would look the other way if Audie could just give the Army the proper paperwork.

The Admissions

There are published postwar accounts where Audie freely admitted that he lied about his age. Why do this?

After the war there was no threat of being court-martialed and Audie knew it. After all, what was the Army going to do - make Audie give back his awards and tell the Nazis that the U.S. cheated?

Audie instantly became one of the most popular heroes in America as the war concluded. And, if that was not enough, his notoriety as a best-selling author, movie star, and song writer elevated his popularity even more. The truth is that no one was interested in prosecuting Audie for lying about his age. He was safe from any repercussions for fraudulently enlisting.

Published References

Published references corroborating Audie's admission that he changed his age include ...

- Photoplay, January 1951, page 80
- Movie Stars Parade, February 1951, page 85
- Modern Screen, July 1951, page 70
- Modern Screen, July 1955, page 85
- Movie Stars Parade, January 1958, page 68
- "The War Hero" by Thomas B. Morgan, Esquire magazine, Vol. 100, No. 6, December 1983, pages 597-604
- "Helmets in the Dust" by David McClure, circa 1956 (based on about 80 pages of writings and conversations of Murphy with McClure)

Admittedly, some of these references are from "gossip magazines" – but others are not. It would be troubling if the only references were from unreliable Hollywood tabloids – but again, this is not the case.

As an industry practice, professional writers and journalists try to minimize the risk of being sued for libel by affording to those they write about the opportunity to review and make comments prior to publication. Did all these writers fail to ask Audie to review their articles? Perhaps but it is not likely.

We do know there is no record of Audie ever claiming he was misquoted when a columnist or journalist reported Audie lied about his age.

There are also newspaper references clearly stating that Audie was born in 1925 or would be 20 years old on June 20, 1945.

- Corsicana Daily Sun (Corsicana, Texas); Thursday, May 24, 1945
- Bonham Herald (Bonham, Texas), June 4, 1945, page 3
- Austin American (Austin, Texas), May 25, 1945, page 10

Both the Bonham and Austin reporters used an interview provided by Corinne Burns and she was probably the source of the June 20, 1925 birthyear (see the image on the last page).

Eugene Porter Murphy Interview

In the late 1990's, the Audie Murphy Research Foundation interviewed Eugene Porter Murphy, Audie's younger brother. In a taped-interview – accompanied with a signed notarized affidavit attesting to the truthfulness of his comments – Eugene Murphy stated for the record that not only did Corinne help Audie lie about his age for the purpose of enlisting but that she also helped Eugene do the same.

A Recent Interview

On August 6, 2020 in an interview with Ms. Terri Eddlemon Prim, a close friend to the Murphy family and a lyricist who collaborated with Audie when composing songs, Ms. Prim stated that Audie personally admitted to her that he had lied about his age.

"We were having a conversation, as I recall, about my step-father being in

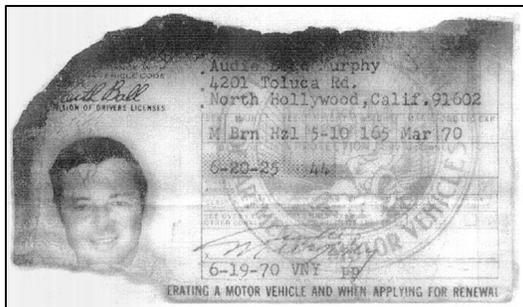
the war and being at some of the places [Audie] had been. I told him he looked so young in those pictures, the ones of him that I have seen with his uniform on.”

“He told me that he *was* young, that Corinne had signed paperwork to say he was a certain age and that he was actually a year younger.”

“I told him it had to be difficult for him to be in a war when he was just a child. He smiled his Audie-smile and then talked about something else. Audie didn’t want to look backwards. He didn’t really care to talk about the past.”

A 1970 California Driver’s License

In the winter of 1998, Audie Murphy’s driver’s license, issued the year before his death, was recovered inside a half-burned wallet. Both were with Audie when he died in a plane crash on May 28, 1971 at the top of Brushy Mountain, Virginia near Roanoke.



Audie Murphy’s drivers license. Source: Audie Murphy’s military personal records, page 3; U.S. National Archives Administration.

A person attempting to sell the wallet contacted the webmaster of the Audie Murphy Research Foundation and

tried to generate interest in purchasing the wallet. The webmaster alerted the attorney for the foundation who then contacted federal authorities.

Soon afterwards, the foundation published a newsletter to its subscribers alerting them that a thief was attempting to sell Audie’s stolen wallet and that buying or selling it was a federal crime.

Table 3		
If Audie was Born 1925		
<i>Based on interviews, publications, 1970 Driver's License</i>		
Event	Date	Age
Born	June 20, 1925	0
Birthday	June 20, 1926	1
Birthday	June 20, 1927	2
Birthday	June 20, 1928	3
Birthday	June 20, 1929	4
Census taken	April 11, 1930	4-10/12
Birthday	June 20, 1930	5
Birthday	June 20, 1931	6
Birthday	June 20, 1932	7
Birthday	June 20, 1933	8
Birthday	June 20, 1934	9
Birthday	June 20, 1935	10
Birthday	June 20, 1936	11
Birthday	June 20, 1937	12
Birthday	June 20, 1938	13
Birthday	June 20, 1939	14
Birthday	June 20, 1940	15
Birthday	June 20, 1941	16
Birthday	June 20, 1942	17
Birthday	June 20, 1943	18
Birthday	June 20, 1944	19
MOH Earned	January 26, 1945	19
Birthday	June 20, 1945	20

The thief, who probably realized that the feds had been alerted, panicked and anonymously mailed the stolen property to the foundation hoping to avoid charges which included mail fraud, wire fraud, theft and tampering with a plane accident site and a federal safety investigation. The thief was never caught.

When the foundation received the wallet, absent of all cash, the attorney noted that Audie's partially charred driver's license was still inside. On it was Audie's birthday – June 20, 1925. Below the date was Audie Murphy's personal signature verifying the information on the document.

What does it all mean?

Audie Murphy's year of birth will continue to be talked about and there will always be a debate.

As it is, there is good and strong evidence to believe that Audie was born in 1925 – but admittedly not a lot.

The single official source document supporting a 1925 birthyear is a burned California driver's license. The rest of the evidence are witness testimonies, and interviews, and other published accounts.

On the other hand, if Audie was really born in 1925, it means that the 1930 Census should have listed Audie's age as "4-10/12" and not 6.

There is also evidence Audie was born in 1924. Normally a birth certificate

would trump all other documents – but in Audie's case there are enough circumstances, open questions, and testimony, as well as an official California state document, to make a good argument that the year is wrong.

Finally, there is the 1923 year which is extrapolated from the 1930 Federal Census. It is the weakest of all three possible birth years and the evidence from the other two years make it the most unlikely.

The Truth and Maybe Some Irony

It is doubtful that an unimpeachable document or family bible will ever be found and prove one way or the other to the satisfaction of all what the actual year of birth was for Audie Murphy.

There will never be an effort to correct any records or rewrite previously written accounts – and no one will ever re-chisel Audie's headstone at Arlington National Cemetery. There will be never be a rush to recast the many historical markers and statues erected to honor Audie either.

This is the way it should be.

The fact is that the very question surrounding Audie's birth year is now a part of his enduring legacy. It is just one more reason why he is so interesting as a national hero and as a prominent celebrity.

Whether you believe Audie was born in 1923, 1924, or 1925 does not change any of his accomplishments – before, during, or after the war.

But, if you believe he was born in 1925 then Audie's personal account of survival, heroism, and professional accomplishment – already compelling – becomes even more so.

Maybe the irony is that somehow a small northeast Texas waif who was diminutive in scale but had the character of a lion – was malnourished but fed by an impelling instinct for survival – was nearly rejected by his nation's military but heroically defeated an advancing enemy juggernaut when no others could.

And what about the truth? The truth is Audie Murphy miraculously did all of this as he walked, grew, and fought his way across the rubble of two wrecked and smoldering continents.

In just three short years Audie Murphy became a legendary warrior and a leader of many. And that was just the beginning.

... *Richard L. Rodgers*

Page 10

Texas Officer Is Awarded Medal of Honor

Farmersville Youth Decorated For Repelling Germans

WASHINGTON, May 24.—(UP)—Terrific is the word for battling Audie Murphy, a first lieutenant from Farmersville, Texas.

The war department Thursday added Murphy to its list of Congressional Medal of Honor winners.

Alone and wounded, Murphy stopped the advance of two entire German infantry companies that were supported by six tanks. Then he led his company in a violent and successful counterattack.

Completely Exposed

It happened near Holtzwihr, France, last January.

To stop the German advance, Murphy climbed into a burning tank destroyer which had received a direct hit from an 88 mm. shell. He began firing its .50 caliber machine gun at the enemy.

He was completely exposed to enemy fire and the blaze under him threatened to set off the tank destroyer ammunition any moment.

Twice more the tank destroyer was hit by direct shell fire and

Luling's Sgt. Logan

T-Sgt. James M. Logan of Luling, whose penchant for "running wild" against the Germans won him the Congressional Medal of Honor, the Distinguished Service Cross and the Purple Heart, has applied for a discharge at the army ground and service forces redistribution station at Fort Sam Houston, where he has been stationed recently, ac-

Murphy was engulfed in smoke and flames. His clothing was riddled by flying fragments and his leg wounded.

Reorganizes Company

At this point he swung his machine gun to where 12 Germans were trying to flank his position, killing them all.

Without infantry, the tanks could not continue forward. After an hour, exhausted and with his ammunition spent, Murphy limped back to his company. Reorganized, it followed him in a violent counterattack that drove the Germans from the area.

HE NEVER WOULD LET ANYBODY RUN OVER HIM

FARMERSVILLE, May 24.—(AP) Lt. Audie L. Murphy of Hunt county, Texas, Congressional Medal of Honor winner, is just a little fellow but he never would let anybody run over him, his sisters said here Thursday.

Of Murphy, credited with killing or wounding 50 Germans during a lone stand atop a blazing tank destroyer, his sister, Mrs. Corinne Burns, remarked:

"Why, he's only five feet three inches tall and he doesn't weigh more than 135 pounds but maybe it's because he's so little that he gets around so well.

Not Surprised

"I'm tickled to death to hear he has won the Medal of Honor but I'm not surprised—he always was active at getting things done. He already holds the Distinguished Service Cross, the Silver Star and the Bronze Star for things he has done and I figured some day he might get the top decoration."

Murphy will be 20 June 20. He was born on a farm in Hunt county and attended schools in Celeste and Greenville. He worked as a farmer's helper and held jobs at Greenville in a grocery and radio shop.

Wounded 3 Times

He was enlisted in the army at Greenville in 1942, was trained at Camp Wolters, Mineral Wells, Texas, and Fort Meade, Md. He went overseas about 30 months ago and saw action in the African, Sicilian, Italian and French campaigns. He was wounded three times.

"Before he left," Mrs. Burns said, "my brother told me he would do his part in winning the war. I think he kept his word."



June 20, 1925 Reference from Corinne? In this article, Corinne Burns is interviewed and provides her feelings regarding her younger brother's accomplishments. The reporter references a birthday for Audie that was probably provided by Corinne.

Source: *Austin American*, (Austin, Texas); Friday, May 25, 1945, page 10.

Audie-graphing Holsters in Italy

Audie visits Boscomantico US Army Airfield, Italy

By Richard L. Rodgers

Comments? Comments are welcome. Just use the link below to our message board.

<https://www.audiemurphy.com/msgb/viewtopic.php?f=1&t=4722>

RECENTLY Mr. George Swartz, left an interesting note on the Audie L. Murphy Memorial Website guestbook regarding a personal photograph taken of him and a friend as youngsters with Audie Murph while on a military base in Europe.

After contacting Mr. Schwartz, he provided the following photo with a description of the event.

"I believe the photo was taken in 1959 or 1960. My father, Chief Warrant Officer 3 (CWO3) Elmer Schwartz and Chief Warrant CWO3 Aubrey J. Weibelt, Jr., were both military pilots. They piloted a Sikorsky H-34 helicopter."

Mr. Schwartz then added that "At the time, they were assigned to fly Audie to

various World War II battlefields in Europe. As I remember, the trip was about a documentary being filmed in Italy. They were gone about a month flying and filming."

As a follow on, Mr. Schwartz recalled that "When they returned, they stopped at Boscomantico Army Airfield base near Verona, Italy. My friend Aubrey J. "Butchie" Weibelt is on the left and I am on the right. We are standing in front of an L-23D Beechcraft airplane when we were able to meet Audie and get this picture with him. "

He then concluded by saying that "In the photo Audie is autographing my gun holster. Unfortunately, I lost it about 50 years ago."



Left to right: Aubrey Weibelt, Jr. and George Schwartz stand in front of a U.S. Army L-23D "Seminole" Beechcraft while Audie Murphy autographs a set of toy holsters.

Photo contributed by George Schwartz

Audie Celebrates Davy Crockett's Birthday

By M.D. Marks

Editor's note: please provide comments on this article by following this link to our message board discussion. We appreciate and value your thoughts.

<http://www.audiemurphy.com/msgb/viewtopic.php?f=1&t=4718>

IN June of 2014, this photo was added to the "Lost and Found Photos" section of the Audie Murphy Memorial Website message boards by contributor "Ringo Kid". All that was known, at the time, was that it was Captain Audie Murphy, dressed in his Class A military dress service uniform and that he was making an appearance at the Alamo.

Based on the wreath and the 19th century dress wear of the group behind him, the figures in the photo appear to be attending some sort of celebration. Murphy's hand rests on the top of the wreath in a gesture that suggests respect and regard.

Audie was probably way too modest to have posed for this photo if the gathering had been for just him. It seems something else is going on. So, for whom or what was this event planned?

Items discovered in a private collection which recently became available offered the hint which was needed and the mystery has finally been solved.

In Simpson's "American Soldier", on pages 272-273, a description of the world premiere of the movie "To Hell and Back" is written. An advance showing had taken place in Portland, Oregon, on July 18, 1955, in connection with a reunion of 3rd Infantry Division personnel, but the world premiere was held in Texas during August of 1955.



Captain Audie Murphy at the Alamo, San Antonio, Texas.

Photo submitted by "Ringo Kid" to the AMRF, June 2014.

Four Texas cities were on the schedule for the official "Premiere Tour", San Antonio, Houston, Dallas and Fort Worth. San Antonio had the distinction of hosting the official world premiere on Wednesday, August 17th. San Antonio's Majestic Theater, having the largest seating capacity of the four theaters, grossed \$7,300 on opening day.

In an article printed in the Dallas Morning News on August 18, it was stated Audie

“lured an estimated 20,000 fans through the box office during his five stage appearances...”.

On Wednesday, August 17, 1955, the City of San Antonio's Chamber of Commerce held a joint celebration in observance of Davy Crockett's birthday and to also honor the appearance of Texas native Audie Murphy at the promotional appearance for his movie “To Hell and Back”. Guest speakers at the event included city, county, state and military officials, Daughters of the Republic of Texas, Tennessee visitors and descendants of the Alamo heroes, themselves.

Audie helped launch a week-long “Summer Frontier Festival and Davy Crockett Week” program by serving as Grand Marshal for its parade before a cheering crowd of 200,000 who lined the streets to watch him ride horseback along the parade route.

Following the parade, a large crowd at the front of the Alamo, with an estimated 5,000 viewers, listened patiently to introductory speeches under a hot sun until Murphy was introduced. As Murphy took to the microphone, many young Davy Crockett fans stormed the ropes directly in front of the speaker's stand and stared steadily at Texas's own young hero.

In his uniform, Murphy spoke modestly and briefly, declaring that his heart still belonged to his native Texas. He pointed out that he had arrived at Fort Sam Houston from Europe after the war for his

separation from the Army. He then placed the wreath of yellow and orange flowers before the Alamo. This was the moment captured in the “mystery photo”.

A history of the Alamo and Crockett's life was then presented by Andrew Dilworth. Other special guests introduced included some 22 descendants of Alamo heroes, with the majority being descendants of Davy Crockett.

At the completion of the ceremony, Audie cut a large birthday cake bearing a replica of the Alamo, itself. Murphy then was escorted to the Menger Hotel, where he attended luncheons honoring Crockett's descendants and 16 “unsung heroes” representing the military.

A photo of the event and the large crowd gathering outside the Alma, was taken by Zintgraff Photographs¹ of San Antonio and shown on the next page with other event memorabilia. The photo was part of the collection of items recently obtained.

In the photo A military band is visible, just to the left of the speaker's stand. As amusing anecdote to the event, a large sign bearing the title “Crockett Hotel” is visible in the background and may have been the reason the photographer chose to take the photo from this angle.

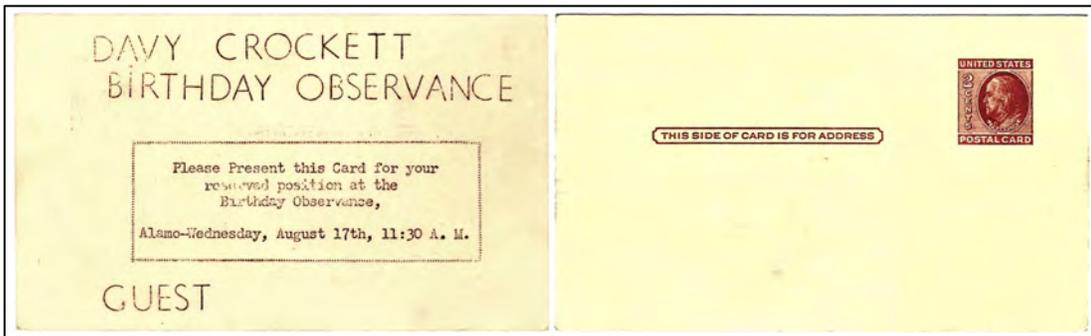
¹ Zintgraff Photography, San Antonio, is no longer in business. A notice found with the photograph stated that the University of Texas, San Antonio is the

copyright holder for Zintgraph material and “is for use by researchers under the Creative common license” requiring attribution of work.



Zintgraff Photo: A large crowd is assembled in front of the Alamo, August 17, 1955 as speakers prepare to deliver remarks.

Photo source: from the private collection of M.D. Marks.



Davy Crockett Guest Reservation: Front and backside of a reservation card for the Davy Crockett Birthday Observance, held 11:30 a.m. at the Alamo on August 17, 1955.

Photo source: from the private collection of M.D. Marks.



SAN ANTONIO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

*Insurance Building
San Antonio, 5-Texas-Capitol 7-8181*

August 13, 1955

TO THE DAUGHTERS OF THE REPUBLIC OF TEXAS

Dear Friends:

You are cordially invited to take advantage of the many interesting events scheduled for Davy Crockett Week, here in San Antonio beginning, Wednesday, August 17th.

Particularly, we invite you to be at the Birthday Celebration in front of the Alamo, 11:30 AM, Wednesday, August 17th.

Also, we invite you to be the guests (free) of the San Antonio Restaurant Association at the Frontier Breakfast to be held at 8:00 AM, Thursday, August 18th, in front of the Alamo. This is an invitation affair, without cost but we must know how many will be present. Please let us know by mailing the enclosed return card AT ONCE or phone CA7-8181.

Hope to see you there -

Cordially,

SAN ANTONIO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Howard N. Yates
Exec. Vice Pres.

HNY/mmc

San Antonio — America's Fastest Growing Major City

Birthday Invitation: A scan of an original letter sent to the Daughters of the Republic of Texas from the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce.

Photo source: from the private collection of M.D. Marks.

Share Fiesta Honors

It was Davy Crockett's birthday observance, but there was no doubt he shared honors with Audie Murphy.

Gathering in front of the Alamo Wednesday following the opening parade of the Crockett festival, dignitaries paid homage to both heroes.

Guests and speakers included city, county, state and military officials. Daughters of the Republic of Texas, Tennessee visitors and descendants of Alamo heroes.

LARGE CROWD

An estimated 5000 crowded the ropes strung around the grounds in front of the Alamo to watch proceedings.

They listened patiently under a hot sun until Murphy was introduced. Then many viewers—most of them young Davy fans—stormed the ropes and stationed themselves directly in front of the speakers stand to stare steadily at the young Texas hero.

In true hero fashion Murphy withstood the battery of eyes.

In uniform, he spoke modestly and briefly, declaring his heart still belonged to his native Texas. He said he was especially happy to be back in San Antonio, pointing out he had come to Ft. Sam Houston after the war for separation from the army.

PLACES WREATH

He then placed a wreath of yellow and orange flowers before the Alamo.

Other special guests introduced included some 22 descendants of Alamo heroes. Majority were Crockett descendants. A great-granddaughter from California for the first time met great-granddaughters from Illinois and Texas.

Also introduced were M/Sgt. Cleto Rodriguez, local Congressional Medal of Honor winner, and bearded representatives of Davy's home town, Morristown, Tenn.

Texas Secretary of State A. M. Muldrow brought greetings from Gov. Shivers who suggested there be no argument between Texas and Tennessee over ownership of Davy since there was enough glory "to go round with a little left over for Hollywood."



AUDIE MURPHY PLACES WREATH AT ALAMO
War hero, now a movie actor, was a principal attraction.

MULDROW SPEAKS

Muldrow cautioned his listeners not to let the lights of television and Hollywood blind them to the deeper significance of the occasion, which he declared should revitalize their love of freedom.

James Bomar, speaker of the house of representatives of Tennessee, delivered greetings from the state of Tennessee and reported he had been commissioned to present to San Antonio Davy Crockett's marriage certificate.

Others who welcomed the crowd were Mayor Ed Kuykendall and Mrs. Barclay Megarity, Austin, state president of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas.

A history of the Alamo and Crockett's life were presented by Andrew Dilworth.

WIRES READ

Leslie R. Neal sr., president of the chamber of commerce, introduced speakers and read telegrams from the governors of Tennessee and Texas.

The invocation was given by Dr. Mark Richards, pastor of the Alamo Heights Baptist church, and the U. S. WAF band provided music.

Following the ceremony Murphy cut a large birthday cake baked by Handy-Andy, topped with a replica of the Alamo. Staying for samples after majority of the crowd had left was a long line, made up mostly of youngsters.

Murphy was then escorted to the Menger hotel where he appeared at luncheons honoring Crockett's descendants and 16 "unsung heroes" representing the military.

Local Writeup: An unsourced article probably locally published at the time of the Davy Crockett Birthday Celebration.

Photo source: from the private collection of M.D. Marks.

The Day Hitler's Supermen met a Texas Insurance Agent, an Aging Country Doctor, and a Former Cook (or What's in a Signature?)

By Mike P. West

Editor's note: please provide comments on this article by following this link to our message board discussion. We appreciate and value your thoughts.

<https://www.audiemurphy.com/msgb/viewtopic.php?f=1&t=4716>

THE time was a little after 2:30 on the afternoon of January 26, 1945. The location was known as the "Colmar Pocket" and it was in eastern France close to the German border. The day was bitterly cold, and snow covered the ground.

At that moment, a solitary soldier climbed atop a knocked-out American M10 tank destroyer in the face of a fierce, determined German attack. They were about to meet the full fury of a single American soldier who was equally determined to stop them. His name was Audie Leon Murphy and he did not spring up from nobility but, like most Americans, from common, unassuming people – the backbone of our nation.

Allow me to also introduce to you three more such Americans who simply, by quietly going about their daily lives, indirectly placed Audie Murphy on that tank destroyer.

In early 1942, Audie Murphy desperately tried to join the military – first the Marines, next the Paratroopers, and finally the Army. As Audie appeared before the various recruiters assembled in the basement of the Greenville, Texas post office, he found himself rejected by all of them. We must not think ill of the recruiters for they saw standing before them a diminutive young man who appeared to be fifteen years old and was in fact the approximate size of an average American girl of 1940.



Old Greenville, Tx. Post Office where Audie Murphy enlisted. Photo by M.D. Marks

Not only did Audie appear far too young and too small but Audie had another handicap: no birth certificate. Beyond the fact that he stood before them, Audie could not officially prove he was born. He was instructed that until he could produce an official birth certificate, no branch of the military would accept him. So, the task before Audie was to produce a Texas birth certificate.

Audie's first objective was to locate the old doctor who brought him into the world. Fortunately, the doctor was closer than you might think. Dr. Preston Shadrack Pearson, the man who delivered Audie, was still practicing medicine. "Where" might you ask? Dr. Preston could be found at 3803 Lee Street in Greenville, Texas.

Once found, Dr. Pearson and Audie journeyed to the Hunt County Courthouse in downtown Greenville where the good country doctor confirmed with his signature that he had brought Audie into this world on June 20, 1924. Why 1924? Simply because Audie needed to be 18 and it was 1942.

The birth certificate was officially filed March 25, 1942 but it apparently was still not enough to convince the seasoned Army recruiter, a fellow Texan, that Audie was old enough to enlist.

The recruiter's name was Roy Allen Gann. Mr. Gann graduated from Mexia, Limestone County, Texas in May 1939

and was from Groesbeck, Texas. The 1940 Federal Census described him as a "cook" but it is unknown if this is a civilian or military reference. Mr. Gann and several of his friends had joined the 143rd Infantry Regiment, part of the 36th Infantry Division, better known as the Texas National Guard. Later, in 1940 Mr. Gann went regular army and was posted at Randolph field, San Antonio.

Gann now told Audie he must obtain an affidavit granting permission from a guardian attesting to the fact that he was 18 and had no dependents. With yet another obstacle to overcome, Audie then headed to Farmersville, Texas.



Former office of insurance agent and Notary, Martha C. Lawrence located in Farmersville, Tx. Photo by M.D. Marks

As soon as possible, Audie arrived at the home of Corinne Murphy Burns. Corinne was not only Audie's oldest

sister but was also his legal guardian. With Corinne in hand, Audie marched up south Main Street in Farmersville to a small office just north of the old Cornes Theater.

In that small office, Mrs. Martha Carver Lawrence, an insurance agent, conducted business. Martha had another position far more important to Audie than that of insurance agent. You see, Martha Lawrence was also a notary public.

There in that insurance office, on June 26, 1942, after Corinne Burns swore that Audie was 18 and had no dependents, Mrs. Lawrence lawfully put her stamp of approval on the requisite document with official verification of age and legal guardian approval. Audie could now join the Army.

But, not so quick. Audie still had one more obstacle.

There remained one more person to convince and one more signature was still required. On June 29th, 1942 with the stroke of a pen, the former cook and now Army recruiter Tech 4 Roy Allen Gann, now satisfied, made it official. Audie became serial number 18,038,707.

Little did these 3 people know that in less than 3 years, their actions made it possible for Audie Murphy to stop a determined German attack.

I suspect that after having placed their respective signatures on these separate documents, the doctor, the insurance agent, and the former cook simply went back to work – for you see, there were still more soldiers to be signed-up, more papers to be notarized, and more babies to be delivered.

... Mike P. West

War Department Adjutant General Office's Form No. 22 with Tech. 4 Roy A. Gann's signature dated 29 June 1942, as witness and as the Army recruiter for Audie Leon Murphy.

THIS CERTIFICATE MUST BE PREPARED AND APPROVED AS REQUIRED BY THE LAW PRINTED ON THE REVERSE SIDE

1. PLACE OF BIRTH		TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH		BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS		CERTIFICATE OF BIRTH	
STATE OF TEXAS		COUNTY OF <u>Hunt</u>		CITY OR PRECINCT NO. <u>Kingston</u>		866825	
3. FULL NAME OF CHILD		5. SEX		6. LEGITIMACY		7. DATE OF BIRTH	
<u>Audie Leon Murphy</u>		<u>Male</u>		<u>Yes</u>		<u>June 29, 1924</u>	
8. FULL NAME		10. COLOR OR RACE		12. TRADE, PRO- FESSIO N, OR V O C A T I O N		14. FULL MAIDEN NAME	
FATHER: <u>Emmitt Murphy</u>		<u>White</u>		<u>Farmer</u>		MOTHER: <u>Jessie Hillian</u>	
9. RESIDENCE AT TIME OF THIS BIRTH		11. AGE AT TIME OF THIS BIRTH		13. INDUSTRY OR BUSINESS IN WHICH ENGAGED		15. RESIDENCE AT TIME OF THIS BIRTH	
<u>Kingston, Tex</u>		<u>35</u> YEARS		<u>"</u>		<u>Kingston, Tex</u>	
16. BIRTHPLACE (STATE OR COUNTRY)		18. INDUSTRY OR BUSINESS IN WHICH ENGAGED		20. NUMBER OF CHILDREN BORN TO THIS MOTHER, INCLUDING THIS BIRTH		17. BIRTHPLACE (STATE OR COUNTRY)	
<u>Texas</u>		<u>"</u>		<u>4</u>		<u>Texas</u>	
19. TRADE, PRO- FESSIO N, OR V O C A T I O N		21. AGE AT TIME OF THIS BIRTH		23. NUMBER OF CHILDREN BORN TO THIS MOTHER, AND NOW LIVING		19. TRADE, PRO- FESSIO N, OR V O C A T I O N	
<u>Housewife</u>		<u>33</u> YEARS		<u>4</u>		<u>Housewife</u>	
22. NUMBER OF CHILDREN BORN TO THIS MOTHER, AND NOW LIVING		24. SIGNATURE OF PHYSICIAN		25. ADDRESS		26. DATE	
<u>4</u>		<u>P. S. Pearson M.D.</u>		<u>Greenville, Tex</u>		<u>1942</u>	

MEDICAL ATTENDANT'S AFFIDAVIT

STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF Hunt
Before me on this day appeared P. S. Pearson M.D.
(Name of Physician)
known to me to be the person who signed the foregoing certificate of birth, who on oath deposes and says that he was the medical attendant at the birth of Audie Leon Murphy, and that the facts stated in the certificate attached hereto are true and correct to the best of his knowledge and belief.
Signature of Physician P. S. Pearson M.D.
Sworn to and subscribed before me, this 12 day of Mar., 1942
Notary Public Hollis Cathey
in and for Hunt County, Texas

STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF Hunt
THE BIRTH CERTIFICATE OF Audie Leon Murphy
attached hereto, was submitted to this Court, as provided for in H.B. No. 614, 46th Leg., P.S., 1939.
It is the order of this Court that this record be accepted by the State Registrar for filing in the State Bureau of Vital Statistics.
Signature: J. E. Parker, Judge
Date: March 12, 1942 of Hunt County

Birth certificate of Audie Leon Murphy filed March 25, 1942 bearing the signature of Dr. P. S. Pearson, MD.

STATE OF Texas C.A.R.O. Form No. 11
COUNTY OF Collin

Before me, the undersigned, an authority to administer oaths,
appeared Audie Leon ~~Murphy~~ ^{Corinne Burns} who after being
~~sworn~~ Nearest Living Kin
duly sworn according to law deposes and says: That *I am ~~we~~ are the
legal *parent *Parents *guardian of Audie Leon Murphy. That the
(Name of applicant)
said Audie Leon Murphy was born at Hard Co. Tex. That
(Name of applicant) (Town, County & State)
the date of his birth is June 20, 1924. That *I ~~we~~ give
(Month, Day & Year)
*my ~~our~~ unconditional consent for his enlistment in the U. S. Army for
duration of war and six months. That *I ~~we~~ know said Audie Leon Murphy
(Name of applicant)
is *Single ~~*Married~~ ~~*Widower~~ ~~*Divorced~~. That he has NO children.
That he has NO Dependents of any kind. That the ~~*Father~~ ~~*Mother~~ Father & Mother
of said Audie Leon Murphy ~~are deceased~~
(Name of applicant)
Are Deceased & I, being the next living Kin who is of age, give my consent
to his Enlistment.

Corinne Burns
(Signature of Father or Legal Guardian)
Martha Lawrence
(Signature of Mother)

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 26 day of June 19 42
The affiant ~~*is~~ ~~*are~~ by me well known to be the identical person(s)
claimed herein to be.

Notary's Seal
to appear here. Martha Lawrence
(Signature of Notary Public)

My commission expires 6/1/43

Strike out words not applicable.
This affidavit must be filled in either with typewriter, ink or indelible
pencil, and must be signed by all parties with INK or INDELIBLE PENCIL.

Affidavit of birthdate and submitted by Audie Murphy's legal guardian, Corinne Burns, notarized and signed by Martha Lawrence, June 26, 1942.

A 95th Birthday Present By Charlotte Thompson

A personal account of her June 2020 birthday trip and celebration

“I recently spoke to Nadine Murphy Lockey on the phone and asked if she would like me to place something on his grave for brother Audie’s 95th birthday. Nadine told me that this would be sweet.

I was so disappointed when Audie Days in Greenville was cancelled this year. I had planned to take Nadine to lunch while I was in Greenville for the event. Living in Virginia, I was so excited about the trip to Texas to participate in the celebration and to see Nadine. I was determined to do something else for her instead.

I went to my neighborhood florist here in Virginia and asked if they could make something special for the occasion. Could they insert a sash showing it was from a family member? Once I told them the story of Audie Murphy, they were all too happy to create a beautiful. The florist even ordered silk flowers so they would last longer. I later told some friends that I never pass up a teaching moment when it comes to Audie.

My nearby friend Roxanna and I referred to it as our covert mission (a.k.a. “Operation Audie”) as Arlington was closed to the public due to the Corona virus pandemic but we were

bound and determined to get it there. I even told my family not to be surprised if they saw us on the news being chased through Arlington Cemetery by federal security.

On Audie’s birthday, June 2020, we made the 45-minute trip to Arlington National Cemetery. Fortunately, Roxanna had family members interred in the cemetery and had an old family cemetery parking pass. When we arrived, security checked the pass out thoroughly before giving her a more current one. We were then allowed access.



Charlotte Thompson places silk flowers on Audie Murphy's grave, Arlington National Cemetery, to commemorate his 95th birthday.

We did go to visit Roxanna's family members and as luck would have it, the last interred family member we visited was not too far from Audie. I told her it was meant to be.

There was a guard in front of the amphitheater watching us, so Roxanna walked over and started talking to him. I thought she was trying to covertly distract him. She later said she wanted to give me a moment alone.

I knew it had been 49 years since Audie's passing, but I am still moved

when I stand at his grave and remember the sacrifices he made and

the price he paid for his gallantry and for his country.

When Roxanna rejoined me she told me the guard told her how glad he was to see someone place something on Audie's grave. The guard said he had been there for a year and that this was the first time he had seen anyone do that.

Happy Birthday Audie."



Photos courtesy of Roxanna Polk and Charlotte Thompson.

“How Could This Have Happened?” On Audie, Quarter Horses, and a Puzzling Picture

Written by M.D. Marks

Editor's note: please provide comments on this article by following this link to our message board discussion. We appreciate and value your thoughts.

<https://www.audiemurphy.com/msgb/viewtopic.php?f=1&t=4710>

AUDIE Murphy's life was somewhat "compartmentalized". While there is a lot in print about his movies and his war record, which he tried desperately to leave behind, not a lot about his other interests is publicly known. He probably wanted it that way.

The Western Horseman *Legends* series were books created to document and recognize "outstanding Quarter Horse stallions and mares who have had a significant impact on the breed". Its articles depict the careers of famous horses and give readers the opportunity to learn about the owners, trainers and breeders who believed in them and led them on their journeys to greatness.

Audie Murphy was one of those individuals.

Exactly when Murphy officially got into the horse racing business as an owner and breeder is not documented. But what is known is that the mid 1950's and up to the time of Audie's death, the Quarter Horse world was undergoing enormous changes. A group of horsemen, owners, trainers and breeders, wanted to upgrade

the world of the Quarter Horse. Thoroughbred racing was known as the "Sport of Kings" and attracted a lot of people, and more importantly, investors from all walks of life. The Quarter Horse enthusiasts wanted the same for their breed.

It took guts and determination for these believers to take a chance and crossbreed their best Quarter Horse racing stock to those Thoroughbreds who were quick for a short distance, like Murphy's Depth Charge, but did not have the stamina for the longer, standard Thoroughbred tracks. It was not long before the breeding program was producing some exciting racing stock and exciting races to go with it. Quarter Horses bred with "TB" (Thoroughbred) blood and their performance on the racetrack became the newest interest in a breed of horse that until then had been mostly known for livestock work.

The money-investors soon followed into the sport.

The photo on the next page was taken in the winner's circle of the All American

Futurity finals on September 5, 1960, at Ruidoso Downs in Ruidoso, N.M. Audie had a reputation of never appearing in the winner's circle photo for the horses he, himself, owned. So why is he standing with Tonto Bars Hank and his owners and trainer?

A closer inspection of the photo reveals that Audie appears to be looking or

talking to someone out of camera range. Is that a mild version of the "Murphy smirk" on his face? Those who knew Audie would probably say "why yes, it is."

So why is he standing with Tonto Bars Hank with that look? A description of the race could provide an explanation.



Audie Murphy stands with the owners, trainer, and jockey of Tonto Bars Hanks, winner of the All American Futurity at Ruidoso Downs, New Mexico.

Originally published in "The Western Horseman Legends", volume 4.

At the time of the race, Tonto Bars Hank was only a two-year-old. He had already earned the nickname "The Flying Boxcar" because of his stocky build and how fast he could move all of it.

Another colt born the same year who would go on to be just as famous and proved to be "Hank's" chief rival had also been entered in the same race. That horse's name was Rebel Cause, bred by Murphy's friends, Chet and Dale Robertson at their Yukon, Oklahoma, Haymaker Farms. Dale Robertson, besides being a renown horse breeder, was also the popular star of an NBC western television series known as "Tales of Wells Fargo", where his character, 'Jim Hardie' was famous for using a left handed gun holster despite being right handed. The series ran from 1957 to 1962.

Yep, Rebel Cause belonged to Jim Hardie, himself.

You can bet that Chet, Dale (a.k.a "Jim") were all in attendance at the race with Audie supporting their horse, Rebel Cause.

The track was characterized as "fast" on the day of the event. When the race began Tonto Bars Hank broke sharply and very unexpectedly led the race wire-to-wire. Rebel Cause came in third, also somewhat unexpectedly, and probably with some disappointment to Chet and Dale.

Only those who were there at that moment will know why Murphy jumped into the picture and what words, if any, he was saying. Maybe Audie was communicating to his friends off camera a message that expressed "How could this have happened?" If so, it would be a safe bet to speculate that "Jim Hardie" was desperately trying to think up a comeback to Murphy's comments and his sudden endorsement of "the other side".

Audie “Nabbed” in Kitzingen, Germany by MP’s

A recollection of a photo and event in 1960

Editor’s note: please provide comments on this article by following this link to our message board discussion. We appreciate and value your thoughts.

<https://www.audiemurphy.com/msgb/viewtopic.php?f=1&t=4711>

AUDIE Murphy, in 1960, visited Kitzingen, Germany to help make a film honoring the 3rd Infantry Division. During the filming, he met two young military police officers, Specialist Syl R. Zembrzuski of Natrona Heights, Pennsylvania and

Specialist Merle Spicer of Cedar Rapids Iowa who had the pleasure to “apprehend” America’s Most Decorated Combat Soldier of World War II. (see next page for more).



For more information visit the Audie L. Murphy Memorial Website at www.audiemurphy.com

Photo taken in June 1960, Kitzigen, Federal Republic of Germany

In a recent message to the Audie Murphy Research Foundation accompanied with a copy of the photo Mr. Zembrzuski wrote the following account:

“In June of 1960, Audie L. Murphy came to Kitzingen, Germany to be a part in a movie commemorating the *Return To The 3rd Division, Then And Now.*”

Mr. Zembrzuski then continued his account by noting that ... “Myself and Merle Spicer of Cedar Rapids, Iowa as [members of the] 536th Military Police, were given the honor of guarding and

protecting Audie while on the set ... an old air-landing-strip area. We also had the privilege of a photograph which [Audie] said, "make it look like you're apprehending me". We lifted him off the ground and the photo was shot. I felt very close to Audie at that production.”

The scanned photo provided by Mr. Zembrzuski also included a separate autograph and message (also shown) that Audie Murphy penned to Specialist Zembrzuski and Spicer at the time of the filming.

Sunday Pictorial Review

Originally printed in the Boston Advertiser

Editor's note: please provide comments on this article by following this link to our message board discussion. We appreciate and value your thoughts.

<https://www.audiemurphy.com/msgb/viewtopic.php?f=1&t=4709>

“**L**IEUT. AUDIE relives the heroic action which won him the Congressional Medal of Honor in this scene from *To Hell and Back*, Universal-International's moving human drama in which he stars. The picture, based on his own best-selling biography, is in Technicolor CinemaScope. Artist Jacques Kapralik selected this scene to graphically illustrate the high point in the career of the United States' most decorated soldier's ...”

Editor's Note: a color copy of the original artwork is rare and was only recently located in 2020 by the Audie Murphy Research Foundation. A full-page sized faded scan along with a newly remastered digital version are available on the pages.

Sunday
Pictorial
Review

SECTION OF THE
BOSTON ADVERTISER
OCTOBER 16, 1955

REMAGEN
KOBLENZ
NAUHEIM
FRANKFURT
WIESBADEN
MAINZ
DARMSTADT
ASCHAFFENBURG
MANNHEIM
HEIDELBERG
LUDWIGSHAFEN
STUTTGART
BADEN
WURTEMBERG
EBINGEN
TUTTLINGEN
VERDUN
BAR-LE-DUC
CHAUMONT
VESOUL
DIJON

LIEUT. AUDIE MURPHY relives the heroic action which won him the Congressional Medal of Honor in this scene from *To Hell and Back*, Universal-International's moving human drama in which he stars. The picture, based on his own best-selling biography, is in Technicolor CinemaScope. Artist Jacques Kapralik selected this scene to graphically illustrate the high point in the career of the United States' most decorated soldier.

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