

# Heroes Amongst Us

What do these two Pictures Have in Common ?



Clarence Ray Hipp, USMC



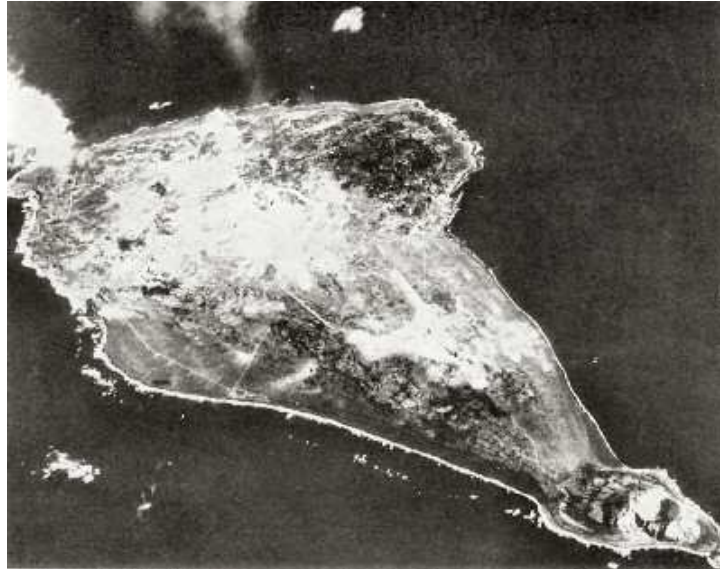
Iwo Jima Memorial

Clarence Ray Hipp, of Brownwood, Texas, was 24 years old in 1943 when he enlisted in the Marine Corps. He worked for the local Coca-Cola bottling company, driving a truck and delivering drinks. Even though he had a wife and child, he felt compelled to join the effort to help win victory in the war that was raging in the world at that time.

In 1943, he volunteered for service in the Marine Corp and was sworn in, at Dallas, Texas. After being sworn in, he boarded a Santa Fe train for San Diego, California.. He was fortunate enough that the train came through Brownwood, where he was able to lay over from 21st of December 1943 until the 4th January 1944, before continuing his journey to California and training as an Ordinance Demolition Technician.

In April of 1945, he was one of over 70,000 young men that would find Iwo Jima as their destination. There were some 24,000 Japanese on the Island under two Generals. The 28th Marines was part of that American force that was to capture and rid the island of any and all Japanese. Iwo Jima was to become an important staging island preparing for the defeat of Japan.

As a member of the 2nd Battalion, 28th Marines, 5th Marine Division, his company was one of the first ashore on February 19, 1945 when allied forces stormed the Pacific Island of Iwo Jima (Japanese for sulfur).



Iwo Jima Island

On the fifth day of battle, Clarence Hipp's 3rd Platoon, Company E, 2nd Battalion, was sent to raise a large American flag on the island's highest point, Mount Suribachi.

The event was captured in a world famous photograph by Joe Rosenthal, which inspired Felix de Weldon to sculpt the Iwo Jima War Memorial for the Arlington National Cemetery.



"America's Battle", What else can you call a battle that in one day had more casualties than two and a half months at Guadalcanal?

Normandy was terrible, but at the end of one day, at the end of 24 hours, one could have had a tea party on the beaches of Normandy. It was completely safe.

***Boys died on the beaches of Iwo Jima -- on the beaches -- for two weeks!***

On March 15, 1945, Clarence was wounded during the clean up operation and was shipped stateside to a Marine Corp. Hospital in Norman Oklahoma. He was honorably discharged in October of 1945 and returned to his family in Brownwood. They would move to Santa Anna and raise their three daughters there.

Like many of the true heroes of WWII, he quietly went about his life, never mentioning his story on Iwo Jima, expecting no special favors, just picking up his life and feeling a personal pride of having done his "duty". Clarence, like so many others was as humble as they were brave.

Clarence was one of only four in his platoon that survived that eventful episode on

that small volcanic island in the South Pacific.



Clarence Ray Hipp passed away 28th of March 1997 in Santa Anna, Coleman County and is buried in Santa Anna Cemetery. Another of our brave and humble heroes having gone home.

~ Clay Riley October 2012