



Panthers Under The Rainbow : A Search For One of France's Highest Military Decorations

William P.L. Maynard III

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"This is literally two books in one. Not only is this a story of the 263rd Infantry in France and what happened to the men after their transfers, but also you can get an understanding as to what it is like trying to research a family member's military history.

After the surrender of both the German and Japanese Army, the U.S. military began to drastically down size. In the fall of 1945, thousands of soldiers from the famed 66th Black Panther Division were transferred to the 42nd Rainbow Division for occupation duty in Austria. For some, the war would not be over. Thousands of displaced persons had to be cared for. Armed patrols were sent into the mountains to capture SS soldiers that were hiding out, along with the rounding up and guarding of Nazi officials took place. As a result of one of these patrols, a squad of men that were transferred from the Panther Division would be awarded one of Frances highest military awards that can be bestowed on an allied soldier. The story of the award remained silent for sixty years until a grandson asked a simple question, "What is the criteria for the French Croix de Guerre?" The significance of the story is there is not one documented case of the French Croix de Guerre being being issued to a member of the Rainbow Division during WWII or post WWII. I believe this book would be a great reference tool for anyone wanting to research a family members military history.

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Lisa Gaither:

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