



Todd Sanders, 117 Sunline Drive, Brandon, MS 39042, shares this photo of the George W. Battcher family, taken ca. 1898, at Calvary, Marion County, Kentucky. L-R: John Albert, George William, Bettie Alice, William Joseph, Mary (Sapp), and Laura Mae.

from each other even though they didn't see each other after that. Little did they know, but a few times their units were in the same battles in Italy, Rome, Arno, Po Valley, and on into the Alps heading towards Germany. Still they were never far away.

I remember the stories my dad told of marching the length of Italy, and fighting and chasing after the Germans. He wouldn't go into too much detail about the battles, but he had stories about the marches and the towns he went through. On one such march all the soldiers in his regiment were taking trucks and staff cars left behind by the Germans to ride in instead of walking. After a few hours of enjoying riding instead of walking, they got word from high up that they must abandon the trucks and cars as they were starting to look more like a German column than an allied column, so they were back to walking. Uncle Omar was the same way. He wouldn't talk much about the battles, but would talk about other things in Italy. He told of a time when they were marching with mountains on each side, and they looked up and saw columns on the mountaintops and thought it was allied troops protecting their flanks. But it wasn't, it was retreating Germans and they had advanced faster than the Germans can

retreat. They had to turn around and march back where they had come from so they wouldn't be cut off. They both talked about a couple of little battles in Italy. My dad told of one battle where his unit was in this little town by a mountain lake. On the other side of the lake was a railroad and a tunnel. He and some 20 others decided to take a bath and swim in the lake. So, of course, that meant skinny dipping to take a bath. Then one soldier hollered to look across the lake. They saw some German tanks coming out of the tunnel one by one. They tried to get back to shore, but the Germans opened up on them. Then all of a sudden American tanks showed up and started firing on the Germans driving them back into the tunnel. All 20 men survived the ordeal and came out without a scratch and without a stitch on. But can you imagine being in a lake buck-naked swimming and the enemy shows up? They had no place to go during the firefight but stayed in the lake until it was over. I always wondered if those men got the devil from their sergeant after it was all over.

Uncle Omar told of a battle where his unit was on this mountaintop looking down on this small Italian village. It was lunch time and everyone was settling down to eat some K-rations and take a rest when their captain came by

telling them to get down in a hurry. Germans were occupying the village and they could look down on them. The order was given to open fire, and they all opened up on them. The battle lasted only five minutes as the Germans were looking for allied soldiers to surrender to. They got to finish their K-rations an hour later.

My dad told of going through the town where Mussolini, his wife, and staff were hanged. I remember him telling me that they were still hanging there when his unit went through, and it had happened just hours before they got there.

My dad and uncle made their way up Italy in different divisions, but never too far away from each other. Their units were in the Alps when the Germans surrendered. The last battle my dad was in was at Lake Garda in the Alps. They assaulted the Germans by going across the lake in D.U.K.S. They were being fired on but he made it to the other side and they drove the Germans off. A week later Germany surrendered.

After Germany surrendered, Dad and Uncle stayed in Italy for a few months occupying the country. I remember Dad talking about going to Venice, Naples, Florence, and other towns and villages on leave. Through all this time my uncle was in Italy, but he never mentioned where he had been as he didn't talk much about it and didn't write home that often. One time my aunt had to get the Red Cross to find him and have him write home because she hadn't heard from him in six months. The only thing I can think of is that he was having such a good time he forgot. But my aunt didn't know if he was alive or dead, and I reckon that call from the Red Cross ended his fun.

I know they both left Italy sometime in July, my dad arriving back in New York with the 10th Mountain Division aboard a troop transport. And my uncle? Well, again his whereabouts at that time are unknown. What can I say about him? My dad got a 30-day leave and visited Mom before shipping out to Camp Carson, Colorado, for more training. Their division was to go on after training out to the Pacific for the invasion of Japan. But Japan surrendered before their training was completed and they never shipped out. He stayed out in Colorado until October and was discharged out of the service.



Todd Sanders, 117 Sunline Drive, Brandon, MS 39042, shares this photo with our readers. Pictured is John Henry Batcher, Todd's great-grandfather; and his wife, Elisa Ann "Lyda" (Morgan). John is holding their son, Ernest; and Lyda is holding their daughter, Martha. This photo was taken at Lebanon, Marion County, Kentucky, in 1908.

Last year there were people doing research at my home library from 27 different states. *The Explorer* is an invaluable resource of material.

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Louvin Brothers Song

Dear Editor:

I am looking for an old recording of a song by the Louvin Brothers called *Satan and the Saint*. If you have a tape of this song or know where I might find a copy, please contact me. I'd be more than willing to pay any charges to cover the copying and postage.

My husband subscribes to *The Kentucky Explorer*. We both enjoy it very much.

Bobbie Kaggs
P. O. Box 2

Leitchfield, KY 42755

Overjoyed By Response

Dear Editor:

Thanks to my many new friends who sent me the words and/or copies of the song *My Mother Was A Lady*, also known as *If Brother Jack Were Here*. Some also sent me the story of how the song came to be written.

I am overjoyed by the response to my request. Thank you.

Eliza Rogers
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Lexington, KY 40502
859/278-0150
pkking@eastky.net

Enjoying Magazine

Dear Editor:

The Kentucky Explorer magazine is the best magazine on the market. I can't hardly wait to pick up a copy each month. I've been reading the magazine for about eight years now, after buying my first copy at a yard sale. Keep up the good work.

I'm an Estill County native whose

father worked for the L&N Railroad in Ravenna for ten years (1943-53).

Rose Robinson
235 Dixie Plaza
Richmond, KY 40475

Photo Correction

On page 53 of the June 2002 issue of *The Kentucky Explorer* we identified a postcard photo as being taken in Pineville in 1912. The photo was actually taken in Pikeville. Our apologies for this error. Also, the following letter points out a couple of errors in a recent story published in *The Kentucky Explorer*.

Story Corrections

Dear Editor:

I was pleased with the outcome of "The Great Mt. Sterling Bank Robbery Of 1864" story featured recently in *The Kentucky Explorer*. I am amazed at the good reproduction of the photographs.

I'd like to make two points, one minor and the other of more importance.

I failed to indicate the up and down side of the safe door in the photograph, and the photograph was actually printed upside down in the magazine. This wouldn't be noticeable by anyone else, except those who have visited the bank in Mt. Sterling.

There is also a typographical error in the third paragraph from the end. D. Howard Smith, not Henry Giltner, was the former Confederate officer who ran for state auditor, was elected to two terms, and then was appointed railway commissioner. Perhaps you can correct this.

I recently made a nice photograph of the old University of Louisville Medical School building, a Romanesque structure that might be of some interest. It turns out that medical education was a growth industry in Louisville with some nine proprietary schools there in the late 1800s. One was started by E. S. Galliard, M. D., a former Confederate surgeon, and was operated as a private school.

When medical education was being upgraded at U. of L. and a merger of schools occurred, Galliard's build-