



MEDAL OF HONOR:

Sgt. 1st Class Alwyn C. Cashe



Biography



Hometown: Oviedo, Florida
Unit: Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division
Military Occupation (MOS): Infantryman (11B)
Enlisted: July 1989
Deployments: Gulf War (1991), Operation Iraqi Freedom (2003 and 2005)



Born on July 13, 1970, Sgt. 1st Class Alwyn C. Cashe grew up in poverty in Oviedo, Florida, and joined the U.S. Army as a supply specialist shortly after graduating from Oviedo High School. He initially served two years in Korea, followed by nearly three years at Fort Lewis, Washington. In 1993, he became an infantryman and served another yearlong tour in Korea. Cashe served as a squad leader for two years at Fort Hood, Texas, and for two years in Germany. He graduated from Drill Sergeant School in 1998, and served two and a half years as a drill sergeant at Fort Benning, Georgia. He returned to Europe in February 2001 as an operations noncommissioned officer for the 19th Battlefield Coordination Detachment, then served in Germany for two years as a squad leader in the 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment. Finally, in April 2004 Cashe served as a platoon sergeant in the 3rd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, at Fort Benning, Georgia.

Cashe deployed in support of the Gulf War in 1991, participated in the 2003 invasion of Iraq, and deployed in 2005 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

On October 17, 2005, near Samarra, Iraq, Cashe's Bradley Fighting Vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device. Cashe retrieved six Soldiers and an Iraqi interpreter from the burning vehicle, receiving burns on nearly 72% of his body. Alwyn Cashe died on Nov. 8, 2005, at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas.

Cashe's awards and decorations include the Army Commendation Medal with one silver and two bronze oak leaf clusters, the Army Achievement Medal with one silver oak leaf cluster, the Army Good Conduct Medal with five knots, the National Defense Service with bronze star device, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Korean Defense Service Medal, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, the Kosovo Campaign Medal, the Armed Forces Service Medal, the Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon, the Army Service Ribbon, the Overseas Service Ribbon, two NATO Medals, the Drill Sergeant Identification Badge, the Expert Infantryman Badge, the Combat Infantryman Badge, the Parachutist Badge, the Driver Badge and the Expert Rifle Marksmanship Badge.

Cashe is survived by his spouse, Tamara Cashe, daughters Lajada and Alexis, and son, Andrew.





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Battle Narrative

Sgt. 1st Class Alwyn C. Cashe distinguished himself by acts of gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty while engaging with the enemy in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom on Oct. 17, 2005.

Cashe was conducting a night-time mounted patrol when the Bradley Fighting Vehicle he was in charge of was attacked by enemy small-arms fire. An improvised explosive device disabled the vehicle, causing it to become engulfed in flames.

After exiting the vehicle, Cashe began to extract the trapped driver from the vehicle. After opening the hatch, Cashe and a fellow Soldier pulled the driver out, extinguished the flames on him and moved him to a position of relative safety. While doing so, Cashe's fuel-soaked uniform ignited, causing severe burns to his body, but he continued toward the rear of the vehicle to help other Soldiers who were trapped in the troop compartment.

At this time, the enemy noted Cashe's movements and began to direct fire on his position. When another element of the company engaged the enemy, Cashe seized the opportunity by moving into the open troop door and aiding four of his Soldiers to escape from the burning vehicle. Afterwards, he noticed two other Soldiers had not been accounted for, and he reentered the burning vehicle to retrieve them. Despite the severe second- and third-degree burns covering the majority of his body, Cashe persevered through the pain to encourage his fellow Soldiers and ensured they received needed medical care.

When the medical evacuation helicopters arrived, he selflessly refused to board until all of the other wounded Soldiers were evacuated first. Cashe died from wounds sustained in this action on Nov. 8, 2008, at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas. His heroic actions, at the cost of his life, saved the lives of his teammates.

Throughout the entire engagement, Cashe repeatedly placed himself in extreme danger to protect his team and to defeat the enemy. Cashe's extraordinary heroism and selflessness beyond the call of duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit and the United States Army.





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Unit History

The 3rd Infantry Division was constituted Nov. 12, 1917, in the Regular Army as Headquarters, 3rd Division, and organized on Nov. 21, 1917, at Camp Greene, North Carolina. for service in World War I. Eight months later, it saw combat for the first time in France. At midnight on July 14, 1918, the division earned its nickname on the banks of the Marne River while holding the allied forces' line against a German onslaught. During the war, two members of the division were awarded the Medal of Honor.

During World War II, the 3rd Division was one of the few American divisions that fought the Axis on all European fronts and was among the first U.S. combat units to engage in offensive ground combat operations. The division first saw action as part of the Western Task Force during the North African invasion, landing at Fedala on Nov. 8, 1942, before capturing half of French Morocco. The 3rd Division participated in major battles from 1942-1945 against Italian and German forces in Italy and France, and ended their participation in the war in Germany by taking Nuremberg and moving south toward Munich. The 3rd Division suffered more combat deaths in World War II than any other U.S. division, and ranks as the third highest among modern U.S. divisions, behind only the 2nd Infantry Division in the Korean War and the 1st Cavalry Division in the Vietnam War.

During the Korean War, General MacArthur specifically asked for the 3rd Infantry Division for his Far East Command. The division became known as "The Fire Brigade" for quickly moving up to cover breaks in the United Nations' lines. In May 1951, the division was given orders to disengage on the east coast and move all the way across Korea to stop a major enemy breakthrough in the west. Members of the Fire Brigade received eight Battle Stars and 13 Medals of Honor, bringing the total number of Medals of Honor earned by its members to 54.

From April 1958 to April 1996, the Marne Division was stationed with the VII Corps in West Germany near the Czech border westward throughout various towns, including Würzburg, Schweinfurt, Kitzingen, and Aschaffenburg. In November 1990, Soldiers of the 3rd Infantry Division were once again called into action. Following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, more than 6,000 Marne men and women deployed with the 1st Armored Division as part of Operation Desert Storm until September 1991.

In 2003, the Marne Division demonstrated that it was the premier mechanized force in the world by leading the advance up the Euphrates River Valley in Iraq. The 3rd Infantry Division crushed several fiercely defended positions before reaching Saddam International Airport and the Al Faw Palace on the western side of Baghdad in early April. Several days later, the 2nd Brigade made two daring "Thunder Runs" into the middle of Baghdad, the second of which culminated in the toppling of the Saddam Hussein statue with a mechanized recovery vehicle. Following the fall of this regime and further operations in Baghdad and Anbar, the division returned to the United States in August 2003. By early 2007, the entire division had returned to Iraq as part of the "Surge." The division headquarters became the core of a newly-formed Multi-National Division-Central that was to operate in the "southern belts" on the edge of Baghdad. Under the new modular organization, the 3rd Infantry Division deployed its headquarters and brigade combat teams to different locations throughout 2009 and 2010.

This series of deployments marked the fourth time the division deployed to Iraq, the most of any division.

The 3rd Infantry Division's role in Operation Enduring Freedom has been characterized by the flexible and modular nature of the elements that make up the whole of the division. The 3rd Infantry Division conducted a series of deployments to Afghanistan from November 2009 through April 2018, serving as Regional Command-South Headquarters from 2012-2013, elements of Joint Task Force 3 from 2013-2015 and supporting Operation Resolute Support from 2017-2018.

The 3rd Infantry Division is based at Fort Stewart, Fort Benning, and Hunter Army Airfield, Georgia. Its current organization includes two brigade combat teams, one aviation brigade, support elements, a division artillery brigade, and one sustainment brigade. The division boasts a storied history of valorous service in World War I, World War II, Korea, and Operations Iraqi Freedom and New Dawn. Additionally, units from the division deployed and fought in Operation Desert Storm and Enduring Freedom. It was the first conventional U.S. unit to enter Baghdad during the 2003 invasion and the first division to serve four tours in Iraq. This outstanding combat record was earned at the high price of more than 50,000 wartime casualties. Fifty-five members of the 3rd Infantry Division have been awarded the Medal of Honor, more than any other division.

