

Three Generals

Chapter 7
by Kay Hively

Michael did not have long to wait for lunch. When everyone was back in the car, Mr. Barnes headed to the main road. On the outskirts of town, they found an area that had a nice pair of picnic tables.

As soon as they parked the car, everyone got out. There was a slight breeze and Mrs. Barnes put on a sweater. She took the blanket from the car and spread it over the table for a tablecloth. Mr. Barnes had the boys put the picnic basket and the ice chest on the tables.

Michael forgot about not stopping at a restaurant, once he saw all the food laid out on the picnic table. There was fried chicken and Mrs. Barnes' potato salad. The ice chest was actually holding hot chocolate, and there was a piece of chocolate cake for everyone.

In no time at all, everyone was digging in. It had been a busy morning and they were all hungry. Mrs. Barnes had made big dinner rolls. They were a special treat for Eddie.

While they ate, the boys talked about the great military men they had heard about all morning. The boys asked all kinds of questions. They wanted to know what it was like on a battlefield.

Eddie's father said it was awful, and he hoped there would never be another war.

But the boys wanted to know about the men who had lived near them. Eddie wanted to know if his dad had fought with General Bradley.

His father said he had not fought with him, but he got to see him and shake his hand once. The general was visiting the troops along the battle line. He said General Bradley was what they called a

"soldier's general." He liked to visit with the troops and shake their hands. He hated to see men go into battle, and he wanted them to know someone cared.

Mr. Barnes held up his right hand and told the boys that was the one that shook Omar Bradley's hand. The boys wanted to shake Mr. Barnes' hand.

Michael asked about General Taylor.

Mr. Barnes said that General Taylor had been a paratrooper during the war, and he actually made a jump during a battle. The jump was on June 6, 1944, when Allied Forces were going into France

from the sea. He was the first general to land in France on D-Day.

Eddie took a bite of his chicken and then he said he didn't know that two generals had been born so near each other. Yes, Mr. Barnes said. They were born only about 65 miles apart.

By then the wind had picked up, so everyone hurried through lunch. Before long they had all the picnic items put away and were nice and warm in the car.

It was nearly 1:30 in the afternoon when they pulled away from the picnic spot.

As they rode along, Mr. Barnes told the boys that General Taylor and General Bradley were leaders who commanded soldiers in a time of war. They had been good leaders and set good examples. The men under their command fought for them in battle because they trusted them.

Eddie sat back in his seat and said he would not forget this day as long as he lived.

But to his surprise, Mr. Barnes said the day was not over yet.



Next Chapter: Lead the way

Things to Think About and Do

- What is "a soldier's general?" Draw a picture of a five-star general.
- When was General Bradley born and when did he die? Was he living when Eddie and Michael visited his birthplace?
- Look in your newspaper for stories on local citizens serving in the military. As a class or family, write a thank-you note.

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