

The Big Picture – 42nd Rainbow Division

Sergeant Stuart Queen: To anyone who was around in those exciting days of World War I, when the victorious troops were coming home to parades up Fifth Avenue and main streets throughout the country, the name 42nd Rainbow Division rings a bell loud and clear. In World War II as well, the 42nd Division contributed to the victory in Europe. And nowadays the hallowed insignia of the Rainbow is worn by the crack 42nd Division of the New York National Guard. Our story today covers an exciting span of eventful years as it looks up at the men of the Rainbow, the fighting 42nd Infantry Division.

Narrator: I had a long drive to make that day, but there was one stop I wanted to make first. It was my first visit to a monument in a small park in Garden City, Long Island, a suburb of New York City. The monument is dedicated to the men of the Rainbow, the 42nd Division of World War I.

You see, this morning I was on my way to the New York National Guard Officer Candidate School, and if all went well, before too long I'd be an officer in the 42nd Division. All of us in the 42nd know a lot about the history of our outfit. And why shouldn't we? We're proud of our record from the time the Division was formed in the late summer of 1917 at Camp Mills, Long Island in the very shadow of the monument I'd come to visit.

Camp Mills, old Rainbow men had often told me of those early days. They'd come to those wind-battered tents on Long Island in August 1917 from all over the country. The Division was composed of crack National Guard units from...