

Husband:	James Kenneth Davis, Jr
Born:	13 Jun 1912
in:	Hobart, Oklahoma
Died:	09 Aug 2000
in:	Kennewick, Washington State
Relationship with Father:	James Kenneth Davis - Natural
Relationship with Mother:	Eva Alice Deardorff - Natural
Address and Phone(s)	

Medical

Notes

The following is from the research of Mansel Phillips of Amarillo, Texas who has done extensive research on the Davis family.

Kenneth entered active federal military service in 1940, with the activation of the 45th infantry division (National Guard). He received a direct commission in the infantry and later transferred to the Airborne infantry. He jumped into Normandy on D-Day. Because of a problem with the aircraft, he and several others were dropped far off their intended drop zone. He landed in water and was able to get out of his parachute and equipment by cutting the harness and straps with his knife. During that first day, he was able to join with two or three other soldiers. They did not know where they were, had no communications and only their personnel weapons and a few rounds of ammunition. They were fired upon by a German machine gun but were able to avoid injury. During the night, while trying to move away from the enemy, they were captured. After a couple of days as prisoner, Lieutenant Davis managed to escape under the cover of darkness and tried to make his way back to friendly forces. After a couple of days he was re-captured and sent to a POW camp in Poland. In early 1945 he escaped again when the Russians were advancing on the camp and he joined their forces and was taken to the Black Sea where he was repatriated along with other American POW's. Kenneth was sent off on a mission a few days before D Day and was out of place when they called for deployment. He hurried back and said he almost missed the plane.

Additional research done by Kenneth's nephew, David E. Boylan of Tullahoma, TN in the summer of 2007 found additional information on Kenneth's WWII experiences.

Sources for the following are Military Records available on Ancestry.com, from the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, MO from the 506th Official Historian Mr. Jake Powers and other 506th survivors and descendants of survivors. His experience as a POW was provided by Mr. Lloyd LeClair who was a fellow prisoner at the POW camp in Poland and who remembers Kenneth from that time. Additional information was provided by William Warthen, another former prisoner at the camp.

His service number was O 404 800. He was an enlisted soldier from Sept. 16, 1940 until Feb. 16, 1941. This service was with the National Guard in Oklahoma. He was a 1st Lt. from Feb. 17, 1941 until Nov. 28, 1945. This service was with the 506th Paratroop Infantry Regiment of the 101st Airborne Division. He is listed as the Executive Officer of Head Quarters Company, Battalion 2 in 1943. A picture of this company may be found on the 506th PIR web site with Kenneth in the front row, middle. He is listed on at least one Company roster for Company E of the 506th which is the company made famous in books and the TV series "Band of Brothers". It appears from records provided by the 506th Historian that Kenneth trained with E Company for a brief period of time. He is recorded on the roster of HQ company in Dec. of 1942. He is next listed on the roster of HQ Company in Feb. of 1943 and listed as a platoon leader of 2/506 HQ CO. He is identified as the XO of HQ Company in the picture taken at Fort Bragg in August of 1943. He is also identified as the XO of HQ Company on the Christmas dinner program for Dec. 25, 1943. Kenneth was listed in March 1944 (only about 70 days before D Day as being on SD (Special Duty) with the Regimental Headquarters and assigned as the assistant to the S-4. It appears that Kenneth dropped into Normandy as a member of the 506th Regimental Headquarters Company.

He was reported taken as a POW on June 6, 1944 (D Day). He was in Oflag 64 POW camp near Schubin, Poland between August of 1944 and late January, 1945. With the approach of the Russian forces the Germans marched most of the prisoners of Oflag 64 to a second camp in Germany. Many soldiers were ill and left behind in the infirmary. In addition, many hid in an escape tunnel that had been partially constructed and never discovered by the Germans. Kenneth apparently was one of these who did not go on the forced March. When the Russians liberated the camp they transported the prisoners to Odessa, Russia where they boarded an English ship. A total of 2900 former POW's were on the ship. They first stopped at Alexandria, Egypt, then Naples Italy where a few rejoined there unit, and finally to Boston, MA.