

# In the Footsteps of Sergeant York

An Exhibit



The Museum of the  
American Military Experience

*Help Support...*

## IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF SERGEANT YORK

Between 2006 and 2009, an international team of historians, archaeologists, and geographers made a series of expeditions to the Western Front battlefields of World War One to rediscover the site where Alvin York made his epic stand against overwhelming odds and was awarded the Medal of Honor, the Distinguished Service Cross, the Croix de Guerre (Cross of War), and the Ordre national de la Légion d'honneur (Legion of Honor) for his courage under fire.

*In the Footsteps of Sergeant York*, a new exhibit from the Museum of the American Military Experience, explores the research behind the expeditions, the marriage of history and science, the Alvin York story, the men who lost their lives, recovered artifacts, and sheds new light on what really happened on that fateful day in October 1918 that made Sergeant York one of America's best known military heroes.

Highlights:

- 1000 square feet of exhibit space
- 18 exhibit panels
- 9-minute documentary film
- 8 exhibit cases with artifacts



# Life in Pall Mall



Figgs History Center © University



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In 1928, the Army War College staged a military exercise for the benefit of the Army Relief Society. Part of the arrangement was a reenactment of the York fight. Capt. Henry Berthel was selected with writing an account of the action to guide the reenactment. Berthel was unable to reconstruct the fight from the accounts available and in July of 1928, wrote to Colonel G. Edward Bacon asking to study notes of the details (December 1928). Bacon had been York's battalion commander and later wrote the history of the 8th division in 1910 and was a logical choice for help. Berthel included a copy of the 120000 French "Front 22 August" map along in his letter and asked Bacon to sketch on the map the position of G Company when the attack started, the position of the York's patrol, location of the German machine guns, and the position of York, the German prisoners and other members of the patrol during the fight. Bacon replied on July 23, 1929 with a detailed letter and the annotated 120000 map (March 1929). (Figgs photo of annotated map and letter)



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"Alvin Cullom York was the third of eleven children born to William and Mary York on December 13, 1887. York's father taught him to shoot a muzzle loader with deadly accuracy while still a small child. By the age of seven he owned his own rifle. As he matured, Alvin earned a reputation as an expert shot, and helped put food on the family table through marksmanship competitions for turkeys and beef.

York's family considered education beyond the basics to be a luxury. Alvin attended a subscription school for three months each year for three years. Because of the family's size and the cramped quarters, the York children like many of their counterparts in Fentress County, attended school after the harvest and before spring planting. York was large enough and stout enough to work on the farm and go hunting with his father by age nine when his formal education ended."



# IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF SERGEANT YORK



Co. "G" 328th Infantry.  
62nd Division.

SAVAGE, Murray L. Cpl. 1910273.  
Home. Bristol Center, N.Y.

Cpl. Savage was advancing with his Squad on the morning of October 8th, 1918 just west of Chatel Chebery, in the Argonne Forest. He and his men had taken some 16 or 20 prisoners and were lining them up, when he was fired on from the flank, and shot through the stomach. He attempted to take shelter, but had only gone a few feet when he died. He was buried by the Chaplain of the 78th Division, at Chatel Chebery, Foret D'Argonne, 97.4-60-5.

Emergency Address.  
Mrs. Belle McPherson  
East Bloomfield, N.Y.

Informant. Macina, Michael A. PFC. 1910393.  
Home. Co. "G" 328th Infantry.  
625 St. Anne St.  
Bronx, N. Y.

Signed. Bertrand Cox.  
Commanding Officer.

Feb. 18/  
19.

"The fire fight that erupted in the dense foggy morning of October 8, 1918 took the lives of six men in the 328th rifle company. Three of York's fellow soldiers were killed instantly by German machine gun fire - Privates Carl Swanson, Maryan Dymowski, and Ralph Weiler. Two others - Privates Fred Wareing and William Wine - were mortally wounded and died within minutes. Corporal Murray Savage, Alvin York's best friend, was shot in the stomach and tried to crawl to safety. He too died shortly after being hit. Following the engagement, the bodies of the dead Americans were left where they died for more than two weeks."



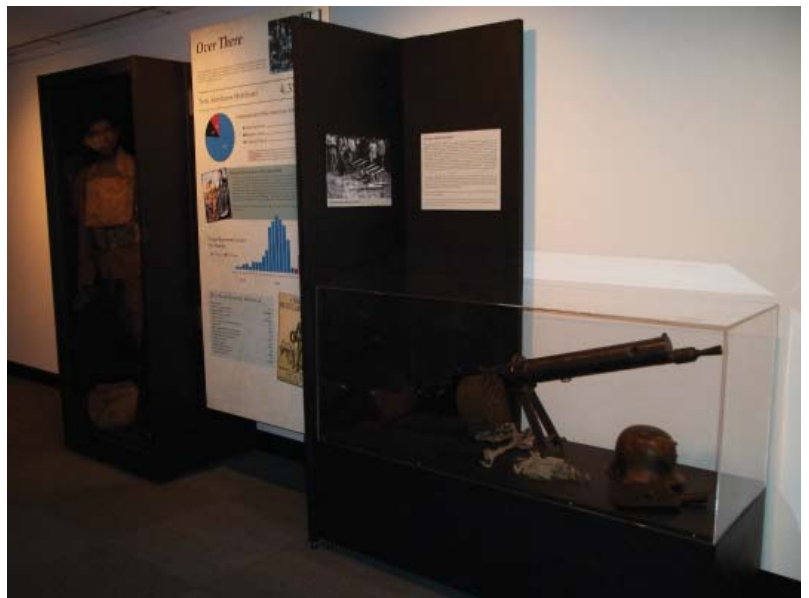


Exhibit Images