

Turning Points in World War II:
The Legacy of the 10th Mountain Division

Aesop Birkemeier

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My dad competed in National History Day, and his accounts made me want to participate. I wanted to explore a personal topic and had seen pictures of my great grandfather, Glenn Inman, on skis wearing his Army uniform. I knew he served in the 10th Mountain Division in World War II and learned that his division was America's only mountain winter warfare unit. They trained in the Colorado Rockies, were sent to the Italian front, and broke up the heavily artillieried German line in the Apennine mountains, marking a major turning point for the Allies. But their impact doesn't stop there. Many veterans of the 10th came home after the war and used their training to revolutionize outdoor recreation. I decided my Great-Grandpa's story with the 10th is perfect for this year's NHD theme.

My research started online. The Denver Public Library site has a special collection on the 10th where I found photographs, oral histories, and a map of the Italian Campaign. I explored the National Archives and the WWII Library site and found useful timelines. I went to the IU Library and found several books by historians. I read two books written by sons of 10th Mountain veterans, and their stories were similar to my great-grandpa's. I watched a film featuring interviews with Allied Commander General Hays, German General Hilderbrand, local Italians, and excerpts from a German soldier's diary. These provided multiple perspectives.

Personal interviews were helpful. The 10th Mountain Descendents group connected me to a surviving veteran, Howard Koch. I interviewed him by telephone and his personal account was touching. I interviewed my great uncle who provided photographs, newspapers, and books my great-grandpa saved.

A performance seemed the best way to explain the significance of the 10th Mountain Division by telling my great-grandpa's story and incorporating his Eisenhower jacket, photographs, and books as props. I found an old postcard revealing that he arrived for basic training on his 25th birthday, so I wrote my script as him talking to his grandchildren 50 years later. I built my set, using primary sources on the backdrop.

By fall 1944, the Germans had driven the Allies from Rome and were embedded in the harsh Italian Apennines. Three attempts to break their formidable line had failed and special forces were needed. In January 1945, the 10th Mountain Division arrived. Because of their mountain training, they were able to break the German Line. This was a significant turning point in the Italian Campaign, and the Germans surrendered. The 10th Mountain Division was essential in ending WW11, and saved many lives by destroying Hitler's final grip on Europe..

After turning the tide in Italy, over 2000 veterans of the 10th Mountain Division returned to the states and applied their skills. They founded 60 ski resorts, designed ski lifts, developed safer winter gear, and opened mountain survival schools, turning outdoor recreation into a bigger and safer industry. These turning points are the legacy of the epic soldiers of the 10th Mountain Division.

Annotated Bibliography

Primary Sources:

American Military Activities Photographs. *Members of the 10th Mountain Troop Witness Springtime in the Rockies at 13,000 feet near the timberline at Camp Hale, Colorado*. Photograph. May 1, 1943. National Archives, College Park, MD. Accessed Feb.16, 2024. <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/100310366>

I used this photograph in my performance to demonstrate the intensive mountain training that the 10th Mountain Division endured at Camp Hale.

Boddington, William. Oral History. Audio File. 10th Mountain Resource Center, Denver Public Library, Denver, Colorado. Aug-Nov. 1996. accessed Dec.10, 2023. <https://digital.denverlibrary.org/digital/collection/p16079coll36/id/2685/rec/1>

This is an audio recorded interview with a 10th mountain veteran that I found at the Denver Public Library website. In this interview Mr. Boddington talks about how he learned to ski in 1938 and later enlisted with the 10th Mountain Division. I learned more about the training at Camp Hale and his stories of serving in Italy.

Clark, Earl. Oral History. Audio File. The Digital Files of the World War II Museum. New Orleans, LA. 2015. Accessed Jan.12. 2024. <https://www.ww2online.org/view/earl-clark#reflections>

Mr. Clark was a Lt. Commander in the 10th Mountain Division, and in this oral history, he talks about his experiences. From this interview, I learned more about post World War II and the role of the 10th mountain division, and their legacy.

Dole, Bob. *One Soldier's Story*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers. 2005.

Senator Bob Dole served in the 10th Mountain Division and was injured early in the Italian campaign. This taught me the perspective of being a soldier in greater detail. It also helped me understand what it would be like to be seriously injured in war.

Eisenhower, Dwight. *Report by The Supreme Commander to the Combined Chiefs of Staff on the Operations in Europe of the Allied Expeditionary Force, 6 June 1944 to 8 May 1945*. Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office. 13 July 1945.

I found this book in my great grandpa's papers and it provided an overall view of the major battles in Europe, including the Italian campaign. The maps provided me with a better understanding of the geography of the region.

Fuller, Graydon T. to Mr and Mrs. Fuller. Letter. June 2, 1945. As contained in "Climb to Glory - The Tenth Mountain Division". Display. Vail, CO: The Colorado Snowsport Museum and Hall of Fame.

The Colorado Snowsport Museum and Hall of Fame emailed me a copy of this letter when I contacted them about a letter from General Hays because they thought I might be interested. The letter is a first hand account from a 10th Mountain veteran of the battles in Italy, and from this letter, I learned more about what my great-grandpa experienced and it helped me write my script.

Goodman, Donald. *A 10th Mountain Division Soldier Stands in a "Weasel" Vehicle*. Photograph. 1943-1944. 10th Mountain Resource Center. Denver Public Library. Denver, CO. Accessed Jan. 20, 2024.
<https://digital.denverlibrary.org/digital/collection/p16079coll36/id/3052/rec/12>

I used this photograph in my play to show how the testing of the weasel by the 10th Mountain Division at Camp Hale led to development of the modern snowmobile.

Hays, George P. Major General, Commanding 10th Mountain Division. *Mountaineers*. Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office. 1950.

This pamphlet was sent to my great grandfather and all of the 10th Mountain Veterans after the Victory in Italy. It is an annotated timeline of the day-by-day battles in the Italian Campaign, written by the 10th Mountain Division's commanding officer, from the time the 10th Mountain Division entered Italy to the time they left. This provided me with more details about each of the battles and I use this pamphlet as a prop in my performance.

Hays, George P. Major General, Commander of the 10th Mountain Division, U.S. Army to Mr. Donald P. Douglas. Letter. June 23, 1944. As contained in "Climb to Glory - The Tenth Mountain Division". Display. Vail, CO: The Colorado Snowsport Museum and Hall of Fame.

The original copy of this letter is on display at the Colorado Snowsport Museum in Vail, Colorado, and my uncle had a photograph of it. I called the museum and they emailed me a copy of the letter in which Gen. Hayes talks about the German surrender and says the commanding General of the German Division called the 10th a "worthy foe". This letter provided a clear understanding of how the Italian Campaign was a turning point in the war, and provided another perspective, what the German Commander thought of the 10th Mountain Division. .

Inman, Onas Glenn. *Inis and Onas Glenn Inman at Home in Indiana on Front Porch*. 1992. Personal Photograph. Doans, IN.

My grandma gave me this photograph of my great-grandpa and my great-grandma sitting on their front porch, as my grandma said they often did in the evenings. From this photograph, I learned that my great-grandpa always wore overalls because he was a carpenter by trade, and overalls had the pockets needed to hold his tools. I decided to dress like him in my performance and I use this photograph as a background prop.

Inman, Onas Glenn. *Learning to Ski*. Winter, 1943. Personal Photograph. Camp Hale, CO.

My great-grandpa had never skied when he was sent to be a part of the 10th Mountain Division. He took this picture while training at Camp Hale and I used it as a prop in my performance.

Inman, Onas Glenn. *Mule Crossing Frozen Creek*. 1944. Personal Photograph. Camp Hale, CO..

Because he was a country boy, my great-grandpa was assigned to be in charge of the mules, as well as his engineering duties. I used this photo as a prop in my play.

Inman, Onas Glenn. *Sgt. Inman on his Skis, Outside Barracks*. 1944. Personal Photograph. Camp Hale, CO.

This is a photograph of my great-grandpa at Camp Hale and I used it as a prop in my play.

Inman, Onas Glenn to Miss Olive Inman. Postcard. Doans, Indiana. July 7, 1942.

This postcard from my great-grandpa to his sister was written as he was just getting to Fort Benjamin in Indianapolis for basic training on his 25th birthday. I used July 7, 1992 as the setting for my performance, 50 years after his induction.

Irvin, Jefferson. Lt. Col. OSC. Chief of Staff, U.S. Army. Letter of Citation to The Officers and Enlisted Men of the 10th Mountain Division. May 18, 1945.

My great-uncle showed me this letter that he found in my great-grandpa's treasures that were saved. Lt Col. Jefferson Irvin marks the accomplishment that Major General Hays and his men completed in the Apennine Mountains and I learned more about the significance of the 10th Mountain Division and their role in turning around the Italian Campaign.

Jay, John. Maj. Inf. Res. *History of the Mountain Training Center. Study No. 24. Fort Knox, KY: Historical Section-Army Ground Forces*. June 30, 1948.
<https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/ADA955065.pdf>

John Jay was a famous skier before he enlisted in the 10th Mountain Division and he was commissioned by the Army to write the history of the training of the 10th. I downloaded this PDF document and it was very interesting because it provided me with more details on the background of the National Ski Patrol and the founding of the 10th Mountain Division.

Koch, Howard. Telephone Interview by Author. Nashville, IN. Feb. 9, 2024.

Mr. Koch is one of very few surviving 10th Mountain veterans, and from this interview I gained more understanding about the soldier's personal experiences. He told me about his experience at the Po River and how the engineering battalion helped get the men across. Mr. Koch was awarded the Bronze Medal and I was honored to talk to an old soldier who has accomplished such heroic deeds.

Lunday, Phillip. "Company D, 126th Mountain Engineer Battalion: The Italian Campaign". In *Packs On! Memoirs of the 10th Mountain Division in WWII*. compiled by A.B. Feuer. 113-138. Mechanicsburg PA: Stackpole Books. 2004.

This book contains a publication of memoirs, written by 10th Mountain veterans, their stories unedited. Because Lunday was in the same Battalion as my great grandpa, this chapter really stood out to me. I learned about the horrible conditions on the way to and from Italy, and he provided a vivid description of the battle at Riva Ridge.

Lunday, Phillip. *126th Engineering Battalion on their Way to Lecture at Camp Hale*. Photograph. 1943-1944. 10th Mountain Resource Center, Denver Public Library. Denver, CO. Accessed Jan. 20, 2024.
<https://cdm16079.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p16079coll36/id/146/rec/7>

Mr. Lunday was in the same battalion as my great-grandpa. I found his photograph on the Denver Public Library site and I used this photograph in my performance to show my great-grandpa's battalion at Camp Hale, CO.

Mountain Winter and Warfare Board. *Mountain Obstacle Course at Camp Hale*. 1943. Photograph. National Archives, College Park, MD. Accessed Feb. 16, 2024.
<https://unwritten-record.blogs.archives.gov/2023/01/10/camp-hale-colorado-training-the-10th-mountain-division-during-world-war-ii/#jp-carousel-29724>

I found this picture online at the National Archives, and used it in my performance to illustrate rock climbing training by the 10th Mountain Division.

Parker, Robert. *What'd You Do in the War, Dad? A Personal Look at 34 Months in the 10th Mountain Division*. Santa Fe: Rio Grande Publishing. 2005.

The author was in the 10th Mountain Division, and this book provided a good timeline of the battles. The accounts were personal and helped me understand better how my great-grandpa must have felt during the battles. It was easy to follow and a big help to me when writing my script.

.Pollack, Merrill PFC U.S.Army. "Battlefield Notebook". *Blizzard*. Florence, Italy. Published by and for the Men of the 10th Mountain Division. 1-5. May 22, 1945.

My great-grandpa brought this newspaper home from the war. PFC Pollack wrote penciled notes from the battlefield and sent his notes to be published in this newspaper that was distributed to the men on the battlefield. The notes are day to day, from 16 April to 2 May 1945, and were very interesting and from this I gained more knowledge about the battles in Italy.

Richardson, Donald Wayne. "Papers and Photographs". May 1945. Hoover Institute Library and Archives. Stanford University, California. Accessed Mar. 5, 2024. <https://www.hoover.org/news/papers-donald-wayne-richardson-now-available-hoover-institution>

Donald Wayne Richardson, a 10th Mountain Division soldier, led a patrol that searched German Officer Hermann Goring's hunting cabin and found many photographs and personal papers. This provided me with new information as I did not know that the 10th Mountain Division moved that far into the Alps, and helped me realize the wide impact of the men of the 10th Mountain Division.

Ripley, Gerald. *A Panoramic View of Riva Ridge*. 1945. Photograph. 10th Mountain Resource Center, Denver Public Library. Denver, Colorado. Accessed Jan. 20, 2024. <https://digital.denverlibrary.org/digital/collection/p16079coll36/id/3094/rec/1>

I used this photograph in my performance to show the depth of the mountains the 10th Mountain Division had to cross to break the German Line.

Schaeffer, Mead. "Ski Patrol Soldier". Cover Photograph. *Saturday Evening Post*. Indianapolis, IN. Curtis Publishing. Mar. 27, 1943. Accessed Mar. 14, 2024. https://archive.org/details/sim_saturday-evening-post_1943-03-27_215_39/mode/2up

The Saturday Evening Post was a very popular magazine at the time and informed the people on the homefront what was happening in the war. The front cover of this magazine featured a soldier from the 10th Mountain Division, and it really showed the importance of the Division.

“Snow Fighters”. Photograph. *Asbury Park Press*. Asbury, New Jersey. 2. Jan. 23, 1943. Accessed Mar. 10, 2024.

<https://www.newspapers.com/article/asbury-park-press-10th-mountain-division/15625838/>

This photograph is of 10th Division soldiers training at Camp Hale. It shows how the snow camouflaged the soldiers in their white uniforms and you could barely tell they were there. It was an associated press photograph, and was not clear enough for me to use in my presentation but it provided me with a better understanding of how deep the snow was and how intense the cold must have been.

Thompson. “And the 10th Shall be First Division Led the 5th Army Into, Across Po Valley, Cut Nazi Escape Route”. *Blizzard*. Florence, Italy. Published by and for the Men of the 10th Mountain Division. 1-2. May 22, 1945.

This newspaper was brought home from the war by my great grandfather. From this article, I learned more about the 10th mountain’s drive across the Po Valley and I included some of these details in my script.

Treat, Sandy, Personal Interview by Glenn Birkemeier. Vail, Colorado. Aug. 18, 2018. Cell Phone Video. Accessed Jan. 15, 2024.

My uncle visited the Colorado Snow Museum and met Mr. Treat, a 10th Mountain Veteran. My uncle interviewed Mr. Treat, videotaping it on his phone. From this video interview, I learned about the construction of Camp Hale, how much the site means to the veterans of the 10th, and how important veterans of the 10th were to the development of Vail and the ski industry.

United States Army. *Allies Break Through the German Gothic Line*. 1945. Army Pictorial Center. Queens, N.Y. Best Film Archives. 1963. Accessed Feb. 4, 2024.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=03rT6g-kJRU>

This Army documentary film contains actual footage of the battles in Italy and was made right after the war, and edited in 1963. It contains interviews with the German Commander Hilderbrand, the 10th Mountain Commander, General Hays, and with Italian villagers. It also contains a translated excerpt from a German soldier’s diary that stated that the 10th Mountain Division had broken their hope for victory, and provided multiple perspectives that I share in my script.

Winter, Milo. *Italian Campaign: Course taken by the 10th Mountain Division*. 1944-1945. Lithograph. Denver Public Library. Special Collections. Denver, Colorado. Accessed Jan. 25, 2024.
<https://cdm16079.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15330coll22/id/72438?fbclid=IwAR1M4a598u03CDFc4-XVVSgPAgB0udxgLDJBldqk24QerpIFtc5wfbLwY7>

I downloaded this map of the 10th Mountain Division's course through Italy, and I used it as a prop in my performance.

Secondary Sources:

Biden, Joseph. President. *Camp Hale-Continental Divide National Monument*. Speech. Oct. 12, 2022. The White House: President Biden designates Camp Hale-Continental Divide a National Monument. Accessed Feb. 10, 2024. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/10/12/fact-sheet-president-biden-designates-camp-hale-continental-divide-national-monument/>

This is a transcript of the speech given by President Biden when he designated Camp Hale as a national monument. From this I learned the widespread fame of the 10th Mountain Division. I was surprised to learn that they trained in more areas of the Rockies around Camp Hale.

Chabalko, Justin J. Major, U.S. Army. *Art of War Papers: Forging the 10th Mountain Division for War, 1940-45. How Innovation Created a Highly Adaptive Formation*. 2020. Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: US Army Command and General Staff College Press. Accessed Feb. 18, 2024. <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GOVPUB-D110-PURL-gpo141718/pdf/GOVPUB-D110-PURL-gpo141718.pdf>

From this paper, I learned that the 10th Mountain Division not only revolutionized equipment, but also played a key role in developing mountain warfare doctrine. I learned that the Army actually rewrote their Field Manual based on the 10th's tactical missions in cold weather.

Gage, Beth. Directed by George Gage. *Fire on the Mountain: The Story of the Tenth Mountain Division*. City: First Run Features. 1995. DVD.

This documentary contained interviews with surviving veterans of the 10th, photographs, and actual film of battles from archives and I believe it is a primary source within a secondary source. It contains a clip of an interview with the 10th Commander, General Hays, stating "these important battles were the turning point in the Italian Campaign". This documentary brought the war alive to me and I incorporated some of the drama into my performance.

Inman, Mike. Interview by Author. Bloomfield, Indiana. Jan. 3, 2024.

Mike is the son of my great-grandpa, and he told me stories that he heard from his father, and I learned more about the battles at Mt. Belvedere and the Po River and my great grandpa's role. Mike recommended a book, loaned me a pamphlet, books, newspaper, photographs and the Army Eisenhower jacket that my great-grandpa brought home from the war. I used all of these to write my play.

Isserman, Maurice. *The Winter Army*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. 2019.

This book describes the story of the 10th Mountain Division from Camp Hale to the Italian Campaign. From the epilogue, I learned what Mt. Belvedere and Riva Ridge look like today.

Jenkins, McKay. *The Last Ridge*. New York, NY: Random House. 2003.

This is one of the first books I found about the 10th Mountain Division. Written by the son of a 10th Mountain veteran, I learned about their training, and the book contains several maps of the areas where the 10th were. I also learned about the contributions of the 10th after the war.

Kennedy, Michelle. *Boot Prints in History: Mountaineers Take the Ridge*. Fort Drum, N.Y. U.S. Army. Feb. 19, 2015. Accessed Dec. 6, 2023.
https://www.army.mil/article/143088/bootprints_in_history_mountaineers_take_the_ride

This article provided me with more details about the beginning of the 10th mountain division and how Charles Dole from the National Ski Patrol met with General George Marshall and General George Hays to set up the mountain ski division.

Noyer, Griffin. *U.S. Army's Tenth Mountain Division's Role in WWII and its Connection to Vail Resorts*. Norfolk, VA: The Flagship. Oct. 12, 2023. Accessed Dec. 5, 2023.
https://www.militarynews.com/norfolk-navy-flagship/community/our-history-is-also-epic-a-tenth-mountai-divisions-role-in/article_e23d1a94-692d-11ee-af0b-7bc0b673f70.html@comments

This is one of the first articles that I found on the web and from this I learned about the importance of the German defensive line in the Apennine mountains and how hard it was for the 10th to break through that line.

Renda, Matthew. *The 10th Mountain Division: WWII'S High Altitude Heroes*. Incline Village, NV: Tahoe Quarterly. Winter 2015. Accessed Dec 12, 2023. <https://tahoequarterly.com/ski-ride-2015/the-10th-mountain-division-wwiis-high-altitude-heroes>.

This article provided a timeline, including photos, of the development of the 10th Mountain Division and their legacy after the war. It was useful to me when writing my script.

Sanders, Charles J. *The Boys of Winter: Life and Death in the U.S. Ski Troops during the Second World War*. Boulder CO: University Press of Colorado. 2005.

I found this book by historian Sanders in the IU Library and he talks about how the 10th Mountain Division soldiers endured heavy training for two years in Colorado and many were getting depressed because they felt they were stuck in Colorado and were not part of the action.

Shelton, Peter. *Climb To Conquer: The Untold Story of World War II's 10th Mountain Division Ski Troops*. New York: Scribner. 2003.

Mr. Shelton's father was in the 10th Mountain Division and this book is his recollection of stories his father told. This was interesting to me because the stories were so similar to my great-grandpa's.