

## FUNERAL OF COLONEL W.A. HEDDEN

April 27<sup>th</sup>, 1979

### Eulogy

Col. Willis A. Hedden was born in Harrodsburg, Indiana on 19 July 1894 and spent his childhood in that area. During his young adult years he served with the Indiana National Guard where he rose to the rank of 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant. His initial army service dates back to 1917. During World War I he served in France and Luxembourg.

In the mid-twenties, the then Captain Hedden served as PMST and Commandant at North Georgia College. While there he married Mary Lou Quillian and their daughter Mary Jane, was born during his years in Dahlonega. Thus, he placed his roots here in the north Georgia mountains.

His military career carried him and his family to many army posts, but Dahlonega was always home. In World War II, Col. Hedden's fondest memories are of the men of the 612<sup>th</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion whom he trained and equipped at Fort Hood, Texas. This unit had a superior combat record and served with valor. Especially noteworthy was this unit's participation in the Battle of the Bulge.

Upon Col. Hedden's retirement from active service in 1945, he and his family returned to Dahlonega where he became an active participant in all aspects of community life. Evidence of community interest can be found in his activities in the following groups: The Dahlonega Lion's Club, the Blue Mountain Lodge #38, The Chamber of Commerce, and Chattahoochee National Forest Association. He also was one of the founders of the local American Legion Post, helped initiate public housing in Dahlonega, and served as administrator for a while. He was the Lumpkin County representative for the American Red Cross for a number of years and was active in the early development of Lake Lanier. Until the last, he kept a keen interest in people and the community with special concern for our younger generation. His participation in Boy Scouts and other youth projects was evidence of his interest. Many a person has received a helping hand from him in time of need. He was always ready and willing to give of his time and labor when needed.

This community and the places he has traveled are far better today because of him. He was truly a person who sought to live by his standards, "I am my brother's keeper".

The 612<sup>th</sup> was well represented at Col. Hedden's funeral by:

Col. James B. Kemp; East Point, Georgia	Jewel Raulins; Meridian, Mississippi
Dr. John Brennan; Belleville, Illinois	Leonard Brown; Atlanta, Georgia
Hugh Waldrop; Lithia Springs, Georgia	Clint Patrick; Covington, Georgia