



DATE OF BIRTH: MARCH 6, 1925

DATE OF ENLISTMENT: FEBRUARY 9, 1943

DATE OF DEATH: DECEMBER 13, 1978

SERVICE NUMBER: 500910

LAST KNOWN RANK: PRIVATE FIRST CLASS

INDIVIDUAL DECORATIONS: PURPLE HEART WITH GOLD STAR

HOMETOWN: MECHAN JUNCTION, MS

NEXT OF KIN: PARENTS, ALBERT & IRENE BARTELS

Ronald Bartels was born in Wisconsin in 1925. His family moved to Mississippi later that decade, and took up residence in Washington County. Ronald enlisted in the Marine Corps shortly before his eighteenth birthday; he attended boot camp in San Diego and trained with Company E of Camp Elliott's infantry battalion before being assigned to Company A, 24th Marines, on August 27, 1943.

"Blackie" Bartels originally qualified as a rifleman; he was reassigned to the weapons platoon when the company expanded, and became an ammunition carrier with the mortar section. He fought in the battle of Namur, after which he was promoted to Private First

Class. Bartels stayed with the mortar section during the battle of Saipan; he was evacuated for illness on July 5, 1944. He may have been suffering from shell shock as the company lost heavily in a Japanese ambush – among the casualties were the first and second in command of Bartels' mortar section. Bartels returned to the company on July 8, in time to participate in the final days of the campaign.

Bartels was wounded in action during the Japanese *banzai* attack early in the Tinian campaign; he was evacuated to a naval hospital on Hawaii to recover. He rejoined the company in the fall of 1944, once again taking a position as a mortarman. PFC Bartels was likely one of the senior members of his squad when they landed on Iwo Jima on February 19, 1945; he was one of several mortar men wounded by Japanese shellfire on the night of the landing. Bartels was evacuated to the *USS Hinsdale* (APA 120) for treatment; he returned to the battle on February 26 and fought through the rest of the battle.



"Blackie" Bartels after Iwo Jima.

Bartels remained with Able Company through April, 1945; with two wounds and four campaigns under his belt, he had more than earned the right to head stateside. He happily traded his mortar for a discharge certificate in October. By January, though, he had reenlisted and was on his way to a post as a guard at Naval Air Station, Pensacola.

Ronald Bartels decided to make a career of the Marines. He married Elizabeth Snow Bartels in June, 1946, and went on to serve his country during the Korean and Vietnam Wars. He retired as a Master Gunnery Sergeant.

Bartels died in 1978. He is buried in **Section 67, Site 1354 of Arlington National Cemetery.**