

Cold Steel and Courage

Railroads and Armor in World War II

Thank a Vet Day

VFW Duwel Post 7570,

9160 Lawrenceburg Rd, Harrison, Ohio

July 5, 2025, 1-5 PM

An Exhibit by Lawrence Goodridge

This exhibit is an eclectic view of many aspects of World War II. Often under reported is the huge contribution made by American railroads and armor. The Civil War laid the ground work. General Grant marveled as he moved thousands of troops at a dizzying 30 miles an hour. A graceful high wheel woodburner belching smoke and sparks, was the hero of the hour and a catalyst for the future.

The Axis powers struck brutal blows on a sleeping giant. Private enterprise and a huge but untested industrial base rose to meet the challenge. It all came together. Trains rolled troops and tanks across America. Then we put the trains on ships and unloaded instruments of war on European soil. Sherman tanks left flatcars and took on the Panzers and King Tigers of the Third Reich. We rose from the defeat at Kasserine Pass. The cold steel of Hitler's Third Empire was soon to taste our own.

And who built the tanks? Many who also built the trains. Locomotive shops and major car companies like Ford and Chrysler adapted and shared complex assembly systems to build 50,000 Shermans. There were amazing technological overlaps as the aeronautical industry experimented with air cooled radial engines that found their way into motive power on land.

Sherman versus Tiger? No Contest? Come see and decide for yourself.

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