



# **Ghosts of the ETO: American Tactical Deception Units in the European Theater, 1944-1945**

*Jonathan Gawne*

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No history of the war in Europe has ever taken into account the actions of the men of the US 23rd Special Troops. These men took part in over 22 deception operations against the German Army. Some of these operations had tremendous impact upon how the battles in Europe were fought. The men who participated in these actions were sworn to secrecy for 50 years, and are only now willing to talk about their role.

The 23rd was composed of four main units. A signal deception unit to broadcast fake radio signals, an engineer camouflage unit to set up rubber dummies of tanks and trucks, a combat engineer unit to construct emplacements and provide local security, and a sonic deception company. The sonic unit was developed to fool German listening posts by playing audio recordings of various sounds, such as tanks moving up or bridges being built.

The 23rd was the only tactical deception unit of the American Army in World War II combining all aspects of deception. This book also covers the birthplace of sonic deception: the Army Experimental Station at Pine Camp; and their smaller sister unit, the 3133rd Sonic Deception company that saw action for 14 days in Italy.

Jonathan Gawne is a leading military historian and is the author of the best selling *Spearheading D Day* and *The US Army Photo Album* (both published by Histoire & Collections and available from Casemate) as well as books in the Greenhill Books

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