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CORPORAL WOJTEK: THE BEAR WHO WENT TO WAR

The true story of the 22nd Artillery Supply Company's unlikeliest hero.

A Historical Dossier on the Polish II Corps' recruit.
Date: 1942-1963 \
Subject: Soldier 11175

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Exiles on the Road to Nowhere

In 1942, the Polish II Corps, known as "Anders" Army," were not typical soldiers. Released from Soviet gulags and trekking through the Middle East to rejoin the fight against the Nazis, they were refugees as much as warriors.

Homeless and starved, they moved from Siberia to Iran to Palestine, seeking a path back to a Poland that no longer existed. They needed hope.

They found a bear.

UNIT DATA:

Unit:	Polish II Corps
Commander:	General Władysław Anders
Origin:	Soviet Prison Camps
Status:	Exiles / Refugees

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Hamadan, 1942.

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A Trade in the Mountains of Hamadan

April 1942, near Hamadan, Iran.
Starving Polish soldiers encountered a local boy carrying a sack. Inside was a Syrian brown bear cub, orphaned by hunters. The soldiers, perhaps seeing a reflection of their own orphan status, struck a trade.

THE TRANSACTION

- One Swiss Army Knife
- Tinned Beef
- A handful of chocolates

"We named him Wojtek—the 'Happy Warrior'."
— Peter, 22nd Artillery Supply Company

INITIAL STATS (1942)	
Name:	Wojtek
Rank:	None (Mascot)
Weight:	10 lbs
Diet:	Condensed milk from a vodka bottle

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Not a Pet, But a Recruit

Wojtek didn't just live with the soldiers; he mimicked them. He learned to march on his hind legs and salute officers with a paw to his brow. He engaged in wrestling matches with the men (always careful not to hurt them) and grew rapidly on a soldier's diet.



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PROGRESS REPORT

Subject: Wojtek

Height: Approaching 6ft

Weight: Increasing to 500lbs

Training Modules:

- [x] Saluting
- [x] Wrestling
- [x] Marching

Role: Unofficial Guard Dog (Deterrent against thieves)

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One of the Boys



Wojtek adopted the vices of his unit. He developed a taste for beer (his favorite drink), which he guzzled from mugs. He also “smoked” cigarettes—accepting them lit, taking a puff, and then eating the burning butt whole.

THE SPY INCIDENT

During his time in the Middle East, Wojtek discovered an Arab spy hiding in the bathhouse. The spy, terrified by the sudden appearance of a massive bear, surrendered immediately to the Polish command.

MORALE BOOSTER: HIGH

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Private Wojtek, Serial Number 11175

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1944. As the unit prepared to board a British transport ship for the Italian campaign, they hit a snag: regulations strictly forbade animals on board.

The Polish command found a loophole. They formally drafted him.

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NAME: Wojtek

RANK: Private

SERVICE NO: 11175

UNIT: 22nd Artillery Supply Company

PAY: Standard Soldier's Rate (Paid in Beer/Food)

Fingerprint



MORALE BOOSTER: CRITICAL

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Cargo on the High Seas

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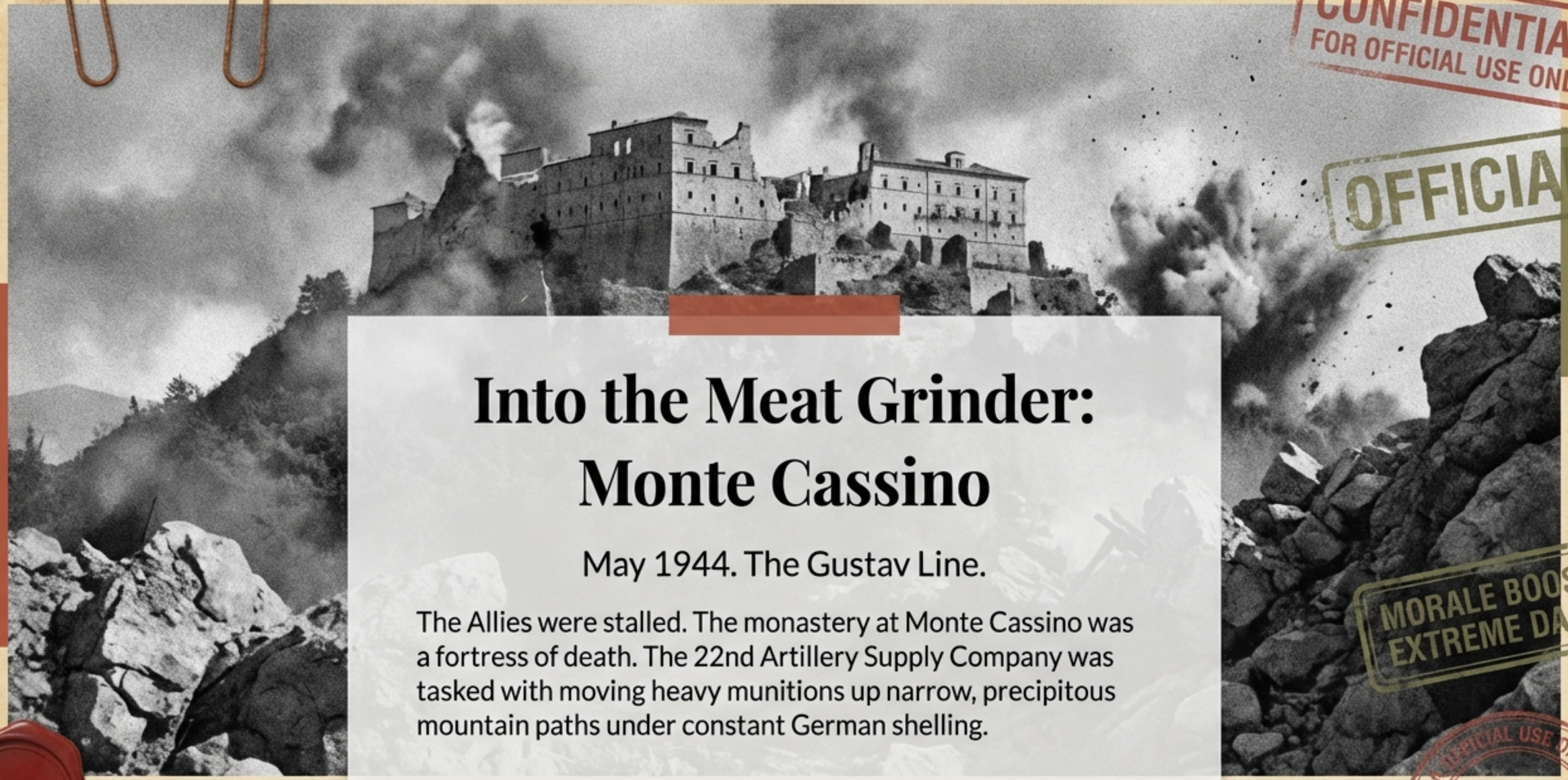


On the voyage to Italy, Wojtek was more than cargo. He helped lift crates, mimicking the work of the crane operators. To cool off, he learned to turn on the showers in the communal bathrooms, often depleting the ship's water supply.

> **"He showered under hoses, wrestled fellow soldiers, and once raided an orchard, tossing ripe pears to cheering troops like a fuzzy Santa." — Scotsman Dave Zwolski**

MORALE BOOSTER: HIGH

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MORALE BOOSTER:
EXTREME DANGER

Into the Meat Grinder: Monte Cassino

May 1944. The Gustav Line.

The Allies were stalled. The monastery at Monte Cassino was a fortress of death. The 22nd Artillery Supply Company was tasked with moving heavy munitions up narrow, precipitous mountain paths under constant German shelling.

Casualty Risk: EXTREME

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The Bear Who Passed the Ammunition



Data	Table	Data	Ryte	Tope

Amidst the deafening roar of artillery, Wojtek watched his handlers struggling. Unprompted, he stood up, approached the supply trucks, and extended his paws.

He carried 100lb crates of artillery shells—loads that usually required two men—moving effortlessly through the mud and fire. He never dropped a single crate.

WITNESS STATEMENT - PRIVATE ROMAN:

Special Elite
He braved shellfire, balancing shells on his back while dodging bullets, faster than any truck.

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Promotion to Corporal

Following the victory at Monte Cassino, the legend of the “Ammo Bear” spread through the Allied lines. In recognition of his bravery and efficiency, Private Wojtek was promoted to the rank of Corporal.

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Official Emblem of the 22nd Artillery Supply Company

Special Elite

This image was painted on vehicles and sewn onto uniforms, immortalizing the bear as the face of the unit.

Lato

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The Celebrity of Berwickshire

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Nate:	Wojtek	Data Type:	Playfair Display
Headline:	Playfair Display	Brick Date:	Brick Red
Headline:	1y.88	Meam Length	1946
Beok Color:	Brick Red		

Bear name:	Wojtek	Rete name:	Young
Title:	Winfield Camp	Language:	Rtaromn
Dogs:	Scottin baar, uout, olad bean, breder	Wresily:	Necesek
Capacity passture:	United Borannians	Serial Date	*

With Poland under Soviet control, the Anders Army could not return home. They were stationed in Winfield Camp, Scotland. Wojtek became a local sensation, attending village dances, wrestling dogs, and continuing his beer-drinking habits.

While the locals saw a circus attraction, the Polish soldiers saw their last connection to a free Poland.

WINFIELD CAMP, SCOTLAND - 1946

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November 15, 1947: The Final Goodbye

DEMOBILIZATION ORDER #47

Demobilization forced the soldiers to scatter across the globe.

Wojtek could not go with them. He was given a home at the Edinburgh Zoo.



For years, Polish veterans would visit the zoo. They would toss cigarettes into his enclosure and speak to him in Polish.

Keepers reported that Wojtek would perk up upon hearing his native tongue, but his spirits faded as the visits became fewer.

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The Warrior Rests

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Wojtek died in **December 1963** at the age of 21. His passing was covered by major news outlets. He was more than a mascot; he was a **symbol of the Polish nation's wandering spirit** and **resilience** during WWII.



Krakow, Poland



Edinburgh, Scotland



Sikorski Museum, London

FINAL DOSSIER
Born: 1942 (Hamadan, Iran)
Died: 1963 (Edinburgh, Scotland)
Final Rank: Corporal
Service: Polish II Corps

DECEASED

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Rewriting History: The Legend Lives On

Today, Wojtek's story is being reimagined for a digital generation. Concepts like 'Wojtek's Wild War' gamify his heroic feats, ensuring the story never fades.



STEALTH MODE - Reenacting the Spy Catcher incident.



STRENGTH MODE - The Shell-Haul Dash at Monte Cassino.



MORALE SYSTEM - Pear-toss challenges.

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Interactive history keeps the memory alive.

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HE WAS A POLISH SOLDIER.
He was an orphan found in Iran, a registered Private in the British Army, a combat veteran of Italy, and a prisoner in Scotland. But to the men of the 22nd Artillery, he was simply a brother in arms.
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WHO'S READY TO ENLIST?
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