

45th Division News

November, 1994

Published in support of the 45th Division Association and 45th Division Museum.

THUNDERBIRD LEGENDS



WILLIAM WILLIS EAGLES

William Willis Eagles was born on January 12, 1895 in Albion, Indiana. He graduated from the U.S. Military Academy on April 20, 1917 and accepted a commission as second lieutenant of Infantry.

His first assignment was with the 21st Infantry at San Diego, CA. He was stationed at Fort Sill, OK during December 1917 and returned to San Diego in January

1918. In August 1918 he was transferred to Camp Kearny, CA for duty with the 47th Machine Gun Battalion.

In March 1919, Eagles was assigned as Adjutant of the 21st Infantry at Fort George Wright, Washington. He was then assigned to the Infantry School at Camp Benning, GA as a student in September 1920 and graduated in June 1921. He was then assigned as an instructor at the Infantry School and was largely responsible for development of the Howitzer course there.

Other pre-World War II assignments were: Headquarters, Philippine Department in September 1923 as Assistant Plans & Training Officer; Professor of Military Science and Tactics at Ripon College in Wisconsin in December 1925; student in Infantry Advance Course from September 1930 to June 1931; entered Command & General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth, KS in August 1935; assigned to Eighth Corps headquarters at Fort Sam Houston in June 1936 as assistant deputy Chief of Staff in charge of Civilian Conservation Corps Affair; assistant Plans & Training officer of Eighth Corps.

In June 1942, Eagles was appointed assistant commander of the 3d Infantry Division at Ford Ord, CA, and promoted to Brigadier General. He went overseas with the 3d Division and served in combat with them in Africa, Sicily and Italy.

In November 1943, General Eagles assumed command of the 45th Infantry Division and was promoted to Major General. He commanded the division throughout the balance of the division's combat in Italy, through Anzio, and into southern France, where the division spearheaded the invading forces.

General Eagles was wounded in action on November 30, 1944 in the vicinity of Strasbourg, France. The wound necessitated that he be hospitalized for an extensive period of time; therefore, requiring his relief from command of the 45th Infantry Division.

He was returned to the United States and returned to duty in June 1946 when he assumed command of the Infantry Replacement Center at Camp Hood, TX.

He assumed command of Fort Dix, NJ in August 1946. On July 15, 1947, he became commanding general of the newly activated 9th Infantry Division.

General Eagles commanded the Ryukyus Command in the Far East Theater in 1948 and returned to the U.S. in October 1949 to command the Central Military District, Sixth Army. In December 1949 he was assigned to the Army Personnel Board. He was appointed Inspector General of the European Command in July 1951, then as Director of Military Posts, European Command, in February 1952.

General Eagles many awards included the Distinguished Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart, and the Combat Infantryman Badge.

Major General William Eagles died at age 93 from pneumonia on February 19, 1988. He lived in Washington, D.C. He was survived by his wife, Dorothy, a son Edward P., and a daughter Ann Eagles, all of Washington, D.C.

General Eagles exemplified the true spirit of the Thunderbird. He was a quiet, extremely capable commander who led by example and held the respect and loyalty of his soldiers.

COMBAT CHRONICLES

WW II

By Louis Scott

Operation Dragoon, the Allied amphibious assault of Nazi-held southern France, was the invasion that almost wasn't. From its very conception, all through the planning phases, and up until a few weeks before launching, the operation was fraught with problems, setbacks, indecisions, shortages of men and materials, and heated controversies at the highest levels.

From the time America entered the war in Europe, the desire of the American high command was to invade fortress Europe as early as possible and confront Hitler on his home territory. Those in command knew full well that this was the only way to end the war as quickly as possible with the least amount of lives lost. But, they also had to be practical; the Allies did not have the manpower and equipment in 1942 to accomplish this goal. Therefore, mandatory steps were taken to contain the Germans and whittle down their fighting power by actions on a lesser degree until a large military force could be assembled, trained and equipped that could confront Germany on its own territory. At the same time, the Russians were pressuring the Allies to help relieve some of the German pressure on their homeland.

The Allies agreed to strike at the "soft underbelly" of Europe in order to contain some German forces, and to aid the Russians. A motivating factor was that this action against their homeland would persuade the Italians to quit the war. Winston Churchill was an instigator of this action and he was pleased when it came to fruition.

After the conquest of Sicily, the invasion of Italy began almost immediately with dire and almost catastrophic consequences. The Americans did not want to expend any more time and manpower in conquering Italy, but they went along with the British, feeling that it would draw pressure off the Russians. The Italian campaigns ended up being a nine-month stalemate, a slugging match between the Germans (who held all the advantages of terrain) and the American Fifth Army and British Eighth Army, where real estate was gained or lost by the yard. A tremendous amount of American manpower and equipment was depleted conquering land that had little or no military significance. However, the Allies gained control of the Mediterranean and airfields from which devastating raids could be conducted against German-held territory.

(COMBAT CHRONICLES cont'd on page 2)

(COMBAT CHRONICLES cont'd from page 1)

When the idea of an end-around landing at Anzio was conceived as a possible means of cutting off the entrenched Germans in their Winter Line and capturing Rome quickly, Winston Churchill jumped on the idea and considered it his. With his usual charm and persuasion he convinced everyone, except General George Marshall, that it was the only thing to do. We all know what happened at Anzio. General Marshall was not only opposed to extensive combat in Italy, but was so totally opposed to the Anzio idea that he washed his hands completely of the project, leaving it to be a British operation using American troops, naturally.

The vacillation ended on 19 December 1943 when Seventh Army Headquarters in Palermo, Sicily, received a message from Allied Force Headquarters requesting an urgent estimate of accommodations required for their planning staffs should they be asked to undertake planning for an operation of a similar size to HUSKY (Invasion of Sicily). Thus began the intensive planning for a massive invasion of southern France. Further instructions on 29 December indicated general direction and objective.

The operation, code-named ANVIL, would be launched with a target date of May 1944 against the south coast of France. In conjunction with the OVERLOAD invasion of northern Europe, ANVIL, was to establish a Mediterranean bridgehead and subsequently to exploit towards Lyon and Vichy. The forces involved were to be American and French, but total strength was to be determined later.

From the very beginning, it was decided that the American 3rd and 45th Divisions would spearhead the invading forces and that if three divisions were to be involved that possibly the 85th Division, newly arrived in Africa, would be used.

LTG George Patton left Seventh Army on 1 January 1944 for England and he was replaced by LTG Mark Clark, who still retained his Fifth Army command but was also charged with planning ANVIL. When his pet project at ANZIO, Operation Shingle, came to fruition, he asked to be relieved of the ANVIL responsibility and retain his Fifth Army command, privately believing that the capture of Rome was a bigger plum for his oversized ego than taking on another invasion since his blunders at Salerno nearly ruined his career.

ANVIL planning immediately ran into big problems. The planners felt they were conducting a "command post exercise" with little guidance or assistance. Troops could not be assigned because of the grievous situation in Italy. A shortage of shipping and equipment existed, and the Seventh Army was without a commander. General Sir Henry Wilson, Mediterranean Supreme Commander, strongly opposed the withdrawals of any forces from Italy at any time in the near future. OVERLORD had been slipped three weeks until June and the ANVIL planners knew that time was against an invasion of southern France at the same time OVERLORD was launched.

On 2 March 1944, LTG Alexander Patch, the victor at Guadalcanal, was named commander of Seventh Army and the static situation began to immediately change for the better. He brought many of his combat veteran staff with him and they plunged in to develop ANVIL into a feasible, workable plan. When MG Lucian Truscott, VI Corps commander, learned that the landing forces would be under his Corps, he immediately demanded that he be included in all phases of planning with a voice in decisions. He did not intend to be left in the dark as MG Lucas, his predecessor as VI Corps commander, was left to flounder at Anzio without explicit instructions and no say-so in the SHINGLE invasion planning. Everyone had learned hard, costly lessons at Salerno and Anzio and the ANVIL planners were determined that similar mistakes would not exist with the invasion of southern France.

The 45th Division began movement from the vicinity of Rome on 17 June 1944 to an area around BATTIPAGLIA, in the vicinity of where they had landed 10 months earlier for Operation Avalanche. They were to train extensively, refit, and receive replacements. The division was relieved from assignment to Fifth Army and assigned to Allied Force Headquarters.

The project was changed from the planning name of ANVIL to the operational name of DRAGOON.

From the very beginning, Winston Churchill set out to scuttle the invasion of southern France. He wanted a massive continuance of the offensive in Italy, pushing into northern Italy and invading France from there. He most wanted to invade the Balkans, thus keeping this prime territory from the Russians. Churchill was shrewd politician, but he certainly was a poor military strategist. He appealed to Eisenhower, who said "no." He turned to General Marshall, who gave an emphatic "no!" Then he turned his charm on President Roosevelt, who was not about to support a possible British postwar interest, and was again told "no!" Eisenhower's naval aide, Capt Harry Butcher, wrote in his diary: "The boss told The Prime 'no' in every form in the English language." Less than a week before the scheduled invasion date of August 15, Churchill was still trying to get DRAGOON cancelled.

Even with all the problems besetting DRAGOON, it rivaled OVERLORD in scope, involving a force of three hundred thousand men, a thousand ships, and several thousand warplanes. It had all the elements of a Class A Hollywood movie, including the stars and VIP observers. Lt. Comdr. Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., commanded a flotilla of PT boats and British gunboats. His force was responsible for Operation Rosie, a diversionary action to draw German attention from the proposed Allied landing areas by causing confusion in the vicinity of Cannes and Nice. The operation was crucial to the success of the invasion.

The man largely responsible for creation of the enormous American fleet, U.S. Navy Secretary James Forrestal, was an observer aboard the command ship, USS Catocin, along with the military commanders. Aboard the British destroyer, HMS Kimberley, was none other than the ebullient Winston Churchill, his ever-present oversized cigar stuck in his mouth, flashing his famous "V," and wishing the cheering American soldiers well. Standing beside him at the railing was the U.S. Undersecretary of War, Robert P. Patterson. Churchill had publicly put aside his hostility toward the invasion of southern France and came along to see the fireworks and wish the fighting men good luck. He was to coerce the ship's captain to take the Kimberley as close in as four miles from the beaches in order to get a closer view of the action.

Operation DRAGOON was the worst kept secret of the war. The massing of ships in the harbor at Naples and other ports, the troops movements in Italy, the increased bombardment of the southern coast of France, told the Germans that something big was about to occur and they correctly guessed it would be an invasion of southern France, but they were never able to determine where the Allies would strike.

Until their dying days, Winston Churchill and Mark Clark vehemently held that Operation Dragoon was a monumental blunder. Clark felt that the German armies could have been crushed north of Rome; he had the perfect chance south of Rome, but opted instead for the glory he felt was his by capturing Rome.

Next, the mighty Thunderbirds successfully spearhead Operation DRAGOON and drive up the Rhone Valley to a junction with Patton's Third Army.

KOREAN CHRONICLES

JULY 1952: The general mission of the 45th Division remained defensive in nature. During the period 14-18 July, the division was relieved by 2d US Division on Line JAMESTOWN (MLR), pursuant to Plan THUNDER INDIAN and moved to Eighth US Army reserve positions in X US Corps sector. Division Artillery was placed in support of 7th and 8th ROK Divisions.

The Infantry regiments took up blocking positions: 179th Infantry at YANGGU, 180th Infantry at HWACHON, and 279th Infantry at INJE.

Action from 7-18 July was the heaviest of the entire time spent on line. Enemy attacks of battalion size were made repeatedly again the OPLR and MLR positions. Several battalion size raids were successfully conducted the division.

Battle casualties for July were 367.

AUGUST 1952: Division remained in Eighth US Army reserve with three missions: (1) Provision of a mobile reserve force capable of limiting penetrations and mounting counterattacks; (2) security of the Corps rear area; (3) continue training to develop a skillful team, while integrating Korean personnel attached to the division.

Battle casualties for August were 6.

SEPTEMBER 1952: On 18 September, under Operation Plan EIGHTBIRD, the 45th Division relieved the 8th ROK Division. The division occupied positions on the Line MINNESOTA (MLR) between the I ROK Corps on the right and the 25th US Division on the left. Sector responsibility extended from a point northeast of IHYON-NI to SACHON-NI.

During the first night of the relief, an estimated two-battalion enemy force attacked and overran positions in the 10th ROK Regiment sector. The positions were safely restored by the 180th Infantry Regiment.

Battle casualties for September were 66.

DEFENSE POLICY: THE THREE DEFICITS

(Remarks of Congressman Dave McCurdy Our Banquet Speaker)

US Representative Dave McCurdy Saturday called upon the United States to commit to spending a minimum of 3 1/3 percent of its gross national product on the defense budget. This minimum guarantee would offer a more stable future to members of the armed services.

McCurdy warned that further defense cuts and uncertainty about the course of military policy could put US national security in danger. We are now on the verge of a tragedy in defense policy, said McCurdy. Our levels of morale, readiness and retention are approaching a steep cliff. If we are not careful, we could do serious, long term damage to our military installations.

McCurdy warned of problems in three broad areas, a fiscal deficit, a force structure deficit and a vision deficit. In each, we are amassing debts, debts of funding, debts of readiness, debts of ideas that will have to be repaid in our next conflict.

FISCAL DEFICIT: The Bottom Up Review simply does not have enough money to support its forces. Shortage estimates range from 20 billion to 150 billion dollars over the next four years. Some reasons for this are; authorizing weapons systems without providing funds to procure them; using O & M funds for everything from budget shortfalls to disaster relief and peacekeeping efforts.

FORCE STRUCTURE DEFICIT: This involves the mismatch between our forces and the missions we have laid out for them. The most worrisome aspect of this deficit is not, as many have suggested, our plan to fight two simultaneous regional contin-

gencies. It has to do with our peacetime missions.

Everyone now recognizes that the Bottom Up Review force cannot perform as advertised. It cannot conduct two major, simultaneous regional contingencies. Secretary Perry has admitted this shortfall.

We should abandon our habit of funding peacekeeping operations out of the O & M budget. This is a direct assault on readiness. If the President cannot find a legitimate source of funds, he should not recommend the mission.

VISION DEFICIT: The third deficit is less concrete than the first two. It deals with ideas rather than budgets, concepts rather than forces. It is a similar problem to the one we face in our foreign policy. The vision deficit, McCurdy said, is the lack of a strategy for dealing with the "revolution in military affairs" and nuclear weapons policy.

The Gulf War offered a glimpse into the changes in modern warfare, McCurdy said, "but that was only a hint of the dramatic transformation of war just over the horizon."

VETERANS DAY CEREMONY

The annual veterans day ceremony normally conducted at the 45th Division Museum will not be held this year due to a "Special Veterans Day Program" being conducted at the Oklahoma War Veterans Memorial and a Dedication Ceremony at the State Capitol.

The "Special" Veterans Day Program will be conducted at 11:00 am at the Oklahoma War Veterans Memorial which is located immediately north of the Oklahoma Historical Society Building at 2100 North Lincoln Boulevard in Oklahoma City. This ceremony is "Special" in that it will not only observe Veterans Day but will also observe the completion of the Oklahoma War Veterans Memorial, with the engraving on the World War II section of the Memorial the names of all Oklahomans who gave the supreme sacrifice as soldiers in World War II.

The second ceremony will follow at 12:00 noon on the fourth floor of the State Capitol Building at a location north of the rotunda. This ceremony will be the presentation of the "Spirit of the 45th" memorial glass which will be permanently installed in the State Capitol. This glass memorial was a part of the 45th Infantry Division Appreciation Day recognition which occurred 12 April 1994 with a luncheon at the Myriad in Oklahoma City sponsored by the Nlgh Institute, University of Central Oklahoma.

The 45th Infantry Division Museum will continue to observe future patriotic holidays beginning with Memorial Day, 1995.

THUNDERBIRDS OCS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

The 1994 OCS Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony was conducted at Fort Benning, Georgia 8-9 September 1994. Three individuals with Thunderbird connections were among the inductees.

These individuals were current Oklahoma Army National Guardsmen Jerry W. Grizzle and William R. Wilson Jr, and Ezekiah W. C. Furman a member of the 157th Infantry during World War II.

LOOKING FOR BUDDIES

I am seeking the address of Lee F. Treft who served in Headquarters 1st Battalion, 179th Infantry Regiment during World War II.

Peter Gaidosh, 667 Chelsea Drive, Sanford, NC 27330.

(LOOKING FOR BUDDIES cont'd on page 4)

I was with the Wire Section, Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 179th Infantry from Anzio to Alsace Lorraine.

Could you locate for me anyone in that wire section? I got your address from a friend and I am happy to know there is an association of the 45th, so we can always remember those days.

Arthur Stelzer, 7729 Milwood Street, Canoga Park, CA 91304.

I was a member of Company A, 180th Infantry thru Sicily and Italy, above Rome. I would like to hear from any of my buddies that I served with. I would like very much to contact William Hallerich and Clovis D. Hurd.

Ernest T. Fachan, 3712 General Bradley NE, Albuquerque, NM 87111.

REUNION REPORTS

COMPANY G, 179TH INFANTRY (KOREA) held its 1994 reunion at the Radisson Inn, Oklahoma City, 7-10 July. A total of 60 persons attended, including 35 members and 25 guests. Activities included a bus trip to Fort Sill where the group toured the Field Artillery Training Center, saw a weapons display and had lunch with the troops. They also visited the Fort Sill Museum. A barbecue was held at the Oklahoma Military Department that night and the next day they visited the 45th Division Museum, held a business meeting and a banquet. D.P. Shipes shared some of his experiences as a POW during the business meeting. The banquet program was about the Korea Revisit Tour held in September 1993. The next reunion will be held in Wisconsin in 1996.

Penn V. Rabb Jr., 728 NW 46h Street, Lawton, OK 73505

COMPANY D, 179TH INFANTRY ASSOCIATION held its annual reunion/muster at the Quality Inn, Norman, OK 12-13 August 1994. This year we had 50 attendees from South Carolina, Georgia, Texas, Colorado and Oklahoma.

For the last 21 years our reunion has been held in Norman, OK however, members voted to hold our next reunion in conjunction with the 45th Division reunion in 1995.

Next years World Wide Coordinator will be J. Milton Smith who can be contacted at 1531 Homeland Avenue, Norman, OK 73072. A second POC is Ray Wall, 8508 South Ross, Oklahoma City, OK 73159.

REUNION NOTICES

45TH INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION: 21-24 September 1995, The Radisson Inn, Oklahoma City, OK 401 South Meridian, Oklahoma City, OK 73108

COMPANY A, 179TH INFANTRY (WWII): 11 May 1995, Charleston, SC. For details contact Peter Gaidosh, 667 Chelsea Drive, Sanford, NC 27330, Telephone 1/919/499-9315.

COMPANY M, 179TH INFANTRY (KOREA): A reunion of those who served with the unit during the 1950-1952 active duty

period will be held 4-6 November 1994 at the Radisson Inn, 401 South Meridian, Oklahoma City, OK.

Family members and friends are invited. Anyone interested contact George Brownlee, 1216 Ridgecrest Drive, Kingfisher, OK 73750.

TANK COMPANY, 179TH INFANTRY (KOREA): 19-21 May 1995, Lake Murray Lodge, Ardmore, Oklahoma. POC Robert M. Adams, 61 Broadlawn, Ardmore, OK 73401, 405/223-3050 or 226-5461.

49TH ANNUAL REUNION

The 49th Annual Reunion of the 45th Division Association was conducted 29 September-2 October 1994 at the Radisson Inn, 401 South Meridian, Oklahoma City, OK.

A total of 469 members registered for the reunion, of this total 157 were veterans of World War II, 276 were veterans of the Korean War, 20 were veterans of World War II and Korea and 16 were Post Korea members of the Division.

There were a total of 114 residents of Oklahoma and 355 residents of other states. This equates to 24% Oklahomans and 76% out of state members.

This is the first year we have compiled this information and it appears that the "Home State" members have some work to do. It is very encouraging to see the significant number of Korean veterans supporting the reunion.

The Friday night dinner was attended by 435 members and their guests, 180 Thunderbird Ladies attended the "Brunch" and 600 plus persons attended the Saturday night banquet.

There were very few complaints received, probably the most frequent was from out of State members who commented "I had hoped to see some of my Oklahoma buddies, but none of them are here"!!

The Friday night Country and Western Dance and the Big Band Dance on Saturday night were well attended.

A survey of the ladies attending the Brunch resulted in 53% favoring a Brunch, while 47% favored a luncheon. Debra Campbell did an excellent job on the Ladies Activities.

Preston Willoughby and his crew did a great job of operating the association "Hospitality Room" and dispensing lots of liquid refreshments and a grazing table where you could always get something to chew on that would last you until the next scheduled meal.

As usual Jimmy Jones and the Welcoming Committee did an outstanding job of meeting our members arriving by air.

Tom Meyers and the always congenial gang from transportation did their usual "better than best" job of getting people where they wanted to go.

We had approximately 60 people who attended the Thoroughbred racing at Remington Park on Saturday afternoon.

Frank Garrison, Company F, 179th Infantry Commander during the Korean War was successful in rounding up 43 former members of his unit. Dolphia Blocker the widow of Dan Blocker "Hoss" in the TV Series "Bonanza" was in attendance. Dan was

a former recruit, Platoon Sergeant and First Sergeant in that organization.

Company L, 179th Infantry (Korea) also had a strong contingent at the reunion. Their mover and shaker is Mansell R. Garrett, Leeds, AL, who has been performing this task for several years.

Most units/organizations meeting in conjunction with the association plan their activities on Thursday Night, however, there are still some who schedule conflicting events on Friday and Saturday nights. This creates a problem when the members are not properly advised concerning where the event is scheduled to be conducted: where do you get the tickets? How much do the tickets cost? Do you sell them? If not where can I get them?

Proper planning and cooperation in this area would make all of our jobs a little easier. If you are having a meeting at a different hotel than the Radisson, post a notice near the Division Association Registration Desk which is always located in the Gazebo.

A tragic event occurred during the reunion in that one of members suffered a fatal heart attack early Friday morning on the hotel premises. The victim was Denzil Pryor, Boss, MO, a member of Company L, 179th Infantry during the Korean War. Pryor's family drove down from Missouri, arriving about 11:00 pm Friday evening. The Officers and Directors of the association express their deepest sympathy to the family of this dedicated Thunderbird.

The memorial service on Saturday morning was one of the best ever. The memorial service chairman was Bill Wilson. Bill Shirey, Co B, 179th Infantry, Korea delivered the memorial address. After Korea Bill became a Chaplain, serving both as a regimental chaplain and as State Chaplain for the Oklahoma Military Department. As usual his message got the attention of the record crowd. David Walk a member of the Military Department Recruiting Staff put together an excellent video that scrolled the names of Thunderbirds deceased during the past year. Our hats are off to all who participated in this moving ceremony.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Having just returned to Michigan after attending the 45th Division Reunion with our father Harold Weishuhn, a member of the 179th Infantry Regiment during World War II. My brother Richard and I would like to commend the association for an excellent convention.

All the people who made this convention possible did an excellent job. From the planning committees, Registration and Hospitality workers, the Bus Drivers and Guides all made it an enjoyable experience for us.

Having this forum to be able to visit and meet people with whom our father spent the better part of three years in an unpleasant atmosphere was a pleasurable experience. The feelings and emotions these men shared could well be lost without the 45th Division Association.

Once again, thank you and the association for all the work you did for this reunion. Also a thank you to the museum and staff for keeping the 45th alive for future generations.

Hopefully, our fathers will be able to attend future reunions for many years.

Harvey Weishuhn, 402 North Oakley, Saginaw, MI 48602.

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My wife and I have just returned from the 45th Reunion and we enjoyed it very much. This was the first reunion we have attended, but it will not be the last.

We want to thank you for the hospitality, transportation, dinners and entertainment which was greatly appreciated. We know a lot of time and work went into it.

Robert Schroer, 2528 North 78th Street, Omaha, NE 68134-6507.

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After being a Marine during World War II and having two brothers in the 45th Signal Company, I joined the Signal

Company in 1948 and was inducted with that unit in 1950.

Enjoyed the many moves and exercises from Louisiana to Hokkaido and all that went with it.

Was transferred from Signal Company to the Quartermaster Company in Korea to start a "Competitive Tour" for a Regular Army Commission. I enjoyed all my service and retired in 1969.

Would like to hear from some of those Korean buddies (Mokie, Rex, West, Bouse) and others in Special Troops.

I hope to attend the 1995 reunion.

Phillip L. Clark, 6001 Rue Sophie Street, San Antonio, TX 78238.

(Editor's note: Mokie Webb is deceased, John West and Thurman Bouse are not members of the Association and haven't heard from them in several years, however, Bruce Rey has been in touch with Bouse. I have often wondered what happened to you and look forward to visiting with you in the future.)

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I was wounded by mortar fire in January 1952 in Korea while a member of the 45th Reconnaissance Company. I could not get help as the unit that was to support us lost two tanks and a personnel carrier from mines and mortar fire, and they had fifteen men wounded.

My commanding officer told me to write to the Historical Section of the 45th Infantry Division to see if they have an "after action report".

It has taken me ten years to find most of the men that served with me. Lieutenant Roma J. McDowell was the officer in charge of our unit and Lieutenant Ralph Donnelly was in charge of supporting us.

I would appreciate hearing from anyone who was with me during this action.

(LETTER TO THE EDITOR cont'd on page 6)

Robert W. Bickley, 411 Kensington Square, Stoughton, WI 53589.

(Editor's note: Advice was furnished that we posses very limited records from the Korean War era)

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Was drafted into the US Army 18 October 1950 in Eugene, OR and sent to Fort Riley, KS for processing, then to Camp Polk, LA and assigned to Batter B, 160th FA BN as a 3/4 ton truck driver in the

Communication Section. Probably the luckiest time of my live.

No basic training, we all (draftees, and guardsmen) trained together and became a top-notch outfit.

Served in Japan and Korea from April 1951 to July 1952 when I was rotated on points to Fort Lewis, WA for separation. While in Korea I was promoted to Sergeant and served in the Recon Section and was a forward observer.

Cap Jessup, 20140 NE Sandy Blvd. #49, Troutdale, OR 97060, 503/665-9523.

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My father was a member of the 120th Medical Battalion, attached to the 179th Infantry during World War II. His military records were destroyed in the St. Louis fire of 1973, so I am trying to reconstruct his records as best I can.

During his service he saw action in Sicily, Salerno & Anzio, Italy, Southern France and Germany. He received a Silver Star, Bronze Star and several Purple Hearts, however, the information I have is scanty at best.

Perhaps some former members of the 120th Medical Battalion or the 179th Infantry Regiment would have some information that they could send to me, including recollections.

My father retired as a full Colonel, but during World War II he was: Captain John H. Kilmer, M.D., Company B, 120th Medical Bn.

Thank you for any assistance you can give to me.

Patricia K. Anderson (Nee Kilmer), 5555 East 14th Street #405, Tucson, AZ 85711.

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Recently I was visiting with a friend of mine and found out that he had been a member of the 180th Infantry Regiment, 45th Division during World War II. He was getting ready to leave for a reunion in Oklahoma.

He wanted to know if I belonged to the association for reunions. Since I had never heard of it, I told him that I would like to join and maybe I could find some of my buddies from Oklahoma and around the country.

Enclosed is my application for a four-year membership. Hope to visit the museum soon. We travel to Tennessee and Georgia every few years, so we can make our next trip quite eventful.

Harry H. Hartley, Box 287, Condon, OR 97823.

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I was drafted in January 1951 and completed Infantry Basic at Camp Chaffee, Arkansas. I later attended Officers Candidate School At Fort Riley, Kansas and received a commission in 1952, then attended Ordnance training at Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Maryland.

Shipped overseas to Korea in September 1952 and in January 1953 was assigned to the 45th Infantry Division to reorganize the 700 Ordnance Maintenance Company into a separate battalion. The unit was then redesignated as 700 Ordnance Battalion and I was assigned as Battalion Adjutant until August 1953 when I was returned to the United States.

The battalion was then assigned in support of the 45th Division. I received the Bronze Star and three Battle Stars. The severe cold weather in tents was difficult enough to endure, but the infantry units in contact with the enemy units and exposed to the elements on a twenty four a day basis was much worse.

I have many memories of the time spent with an outstanding fighting force, the 45th Infantry Division. I remained active in the Reserve and retired as a Colonel in 1983.

Milton R. Johnson, 210 Woodcreek Drive, Princeton, TX 75407

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Ralph W. Fink writes in the August 1994 Newsletter about a "ghost-like figure" walking back and forth along the roof beam of the almost destroyed house that contained the headquarters of Company C, 157th Infantry, at that time.

I can clear up the mystery. It wasn't a ghost; it was a dog. I was platoon leader of the 1st platoon, Company C at that time. I often visited the Company Headquarters (at night, of course) to pick up supplies, talk with the company commander, etc. I distinctly remember the dog pacing back and forth along the roof beam, night after night.

The years have passed, and I cannot remember whether some GI's finally got the dog down, or whether he was still up there when we left the position. But it was a dog.

VI Minahan, 4351 West College Avenue (Suite 218), Appleton, WI 54914-3907.

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I was very happy to hear from John Macagney of Pompton Lakes, New Jersey. He informed of the existence of the 45th Infantry Division Association and sent me an application for membership.

I was with the 45th Signal Company from Camp Polk, LA until my completion of service in Korea in September 1952.

I was in the Construction Platoon. My Sergeant was Ralph Rhoades from Oklahoma. Now that I am retired from business, I have more time and would like to hear from anyone that was in the Signal Company in my time span.

Vincent Musum, 250 Ridgedale Avenue #67, Florham Park, NJ 07932

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In looking over the material you sent me I noticed the names of Medal of Honor recipients for World War II.

If I am not mistaken Van T. Barfoot was a member of my old outfit, Company L, 157th Infantry. We had a Sergeant Barfoot who couldn't wait to go out on night patrol on Anzio.

I joined the Company as a replacement while they were at Anzio, and stayed a member during the invasion of Southern France and throughout the campaign until early in December 1944 when I was evacuated to the hospital. At that time we were very near the German border.

I am a recently retired accountant and worked for the Department of the Army Munitions and Chemical Command, Rock Island, Illinois.

Henry Friedland, 2901 N. Placita Nueva, Tucson, AZ 85715-3430.

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

At a recent garage sale I picked up a copy of the October 1991 issue of the 45th Division News in a "free" box. As a combat veteran who served with the 45th Division I was interested. After being in combat in the Asiatic-Pacific Theatre (Umnak and Attu in the Aleutian Islands) as a member of the 7th Division, I was reprocessed in the US and reassigned to the European Theatre as an Infantry replacement in the 45th Division. Old letters which I sent home and my sister still has indicate I was a member of Company L, 157th Infantry Regiment, APO 45, New York, NY.

As a young country kid fresh off the farm in 1942 with one semester at the University of Wisconsin, I don't really remember where I was after I entered the Port at Le Havre, France. I do know that we ended up at Munich at the conclusion of the War in Europe. I do remember passing through Aschaffenburg, however, as a typical "dogface" we just went where we were led. I remember that our Regiment participated in the liberation of the Dachau Concentration Camp. It was easy to recall the places of my US training and to the Aleutians, but Europe is more of a maze. My grandson and daughter-in-law keep asking me to "trace" for them the route in Europe that I did combat in.

My purpose in writing to you is to ask if the 45th Division

published a book on their action in WWII. If so, It probably has maps which I would hope to use to recall the route of the 45th Division.

Dan W. Scheid, 5214 North Autumn Lane, McFarland, WI 53558-9664.

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

I want to thank you for running my father's (Darrell Vonnahme) story in the May issue of the 45th Division News. He would have appreciated this very much. Unfortunately, he died April 20th from open heart surgery.

We received several letters from men who were in the same area, but not from his outfit that remembers him. I hope that someone will respond in the future.

I am asking that you run my father's story again with an addition, that I am trying to correct his service record for him, since he was unable to before he died. I am Darrell's oldest son, Gary.

Darrell's Letter

I served with Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 279th Infantry during the Korean War. I need to validate or confirm the dates of my service and combat record. If I can find some of the individuals that I served with and who remember me, I may be able to get my service confirmed. The personnel center in St. Louis, MO has advised me that my records were destroyed in the great fire.

The only names I remember are my platoon sergeant Greenfield from Virginia, Joseph Carroll from Tennessee or Kentucky and Brad Hess from Kentucky.

I was involved in an enemy shelling incident at approximately 1600, 23 July 1953, on the side of a hill near Christmas Hill. The shelling was so intense that we were covered with dirt, debris and hot pieces of shrapnel. The shelling continued until approximately 2100 hours.

Gary Vonnahme, 1822 South Fir Place, Broken Arrow, OK 74012, Home: 918/250-8847, Business 918/835-0898.



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45th Division News

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