

History of the 7th Infantry Division

BAYONET!

The BAYONET was forged in the fields of France, tempered on the frozen tundra and mountains of the Aleutians, the coral atolls and islands of the South Pacific, and then honed razor sharp in the mountains and rice paddies of Korea. The Bayonet--or the 7th Infantry Division, as it is officially known--continued to stand guard in Korea, manning our outpost line in strife-ridden Korea until 1971 when the Division was returned to US soil for the first time since 1943. The Division was assigned to Fort Lewis, Washington, and inactivated for a brief period of time. In October 1985, the Division was resurrected as the 7th Infantry Division (Light) at its old post, Fort Ord, California. The Lightfighters of the Bayonet Division were called to the Honduras in 1988 for "Operation Golden Pheasant" and to Panama in 1989-90 for "Operation Just Cause." In August 1993, the Division was reassigned to Fort Lewis and subsequently inactivated in June 1994. The 7th Infantry Division was re-activated June 4, 1999, at Fort Carson, Colorado and inactivated in August 2006. The Division is now being re-activated at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washing on October 1, 2012.

WORLD WAR I

Organized originally to serve in the AEF in World War I, the 7th (its Hourglass insignia dates back to 1918) saw little action as a unit, although it carried some notoriety by having helped the S. S. Leviathan set a troop- carrying record of 13,585 passengers on one crossing. It was October 11, a month before the Armistice, when the 7th was shelled for the first time. Later it encountered gas attacks in the Saint-Mihiel woods.

A strong raiding party made up of Hourglass soldiers sliced into enemy positions in mid-October and came back with 69 German prisoners. Then the infantry elements of the 7th probed up toward Prény near the Moselle River, captured Hills 323 and 310, and drove the Germans out of the Bois- duTrou-de-la-Haie salient.

The first week in November found the Division, under General Edward Wittenmyer, readying itself for the new Second Army's drive against the Hindenburg Line. The Division launched a reconnaissance in force on the Voëvre Plain, but before it could shift into high gear the Armistice was signed and the war in Europe was over. After 33 days in the line the 7th Division had suffered 1,988 casualties.

Returned to the States during June, 1919, the Division was gradually immobilized until 1921, when it was inactivated.

WORLD WAR II

In July 1940, a skeleton force of officers and enlisted men were ordered to Ford Ord, California, to reactivate the 7th Infantry Division under the eagle eye of Major General Joseph W. Stilwell.

Initially the Division in 1940 consisted of two infantry regiments destined to remain in the 7th--the 17th and 32nd; and one that was not, the 53rd. In the ranks of the regiments there were comparatively few regulars. For the most part the Division was manned by selective service soldiers, recently inducted in the nation's first peacetime draft.

Stilwell took the Division up to Oregon for the Fourth Army maneuvers. Then, after its return to Ord from maneuvers the 7th got a new commander, Major General C. H. White, as Stilwell became the commander of the III Corps, senior tactical command of the Coast. The 7th, continuing to work hard under its new commander, practiced boat loading at the Monterey Wharf, and stormed the beaches along the Salinas River.

Just as most of the selective service soldiers could start looking forward to the end of their tour of duty, the Japanese struck at Pearl Harbor and we were officially involved in the Second World War. The west coast of the U. S. had a bad case of the jitters over rumors of the enemy's approach. At one point, Stilwell called White, and sent the 7th Reconnaissance Troop down Highway No.1 on the alert after a naval report stated that the Japanese Fleet was ten miles off Monterey--but this was only a false alarm, and the 7th Recon soon went back on more routine duties.

In the days that followed this initial scare, wild stories were rampant. The main battle fleet of the Japanese was 164 miles off 'Frisco: general alert all units . . . Suspicious signaling was seen: put the Japanese colony under arrest . . . Enemy paratroopers have landed: a division artillery sergeant swore he was fired on driving back to Ord one night. Eventually sanity was restored, but the 7th was mighty happy to be pulled off guard duty and sent to Camp San Luis Obispo to resume training as a combat division.

Word came that the Division's designation was being changed to 7th Motorized Division. The 7th was jubilant. They weren't going to walk to war the way their daddies had. Their next assignment was a rugged training session on the Mojave Desert; the soldiers of the 7th put two and two together and figured that being both motorized and desert-trained could mean only one thing: they were going to chase General Rommel out of North Africa. Consequently, the Division returned to Camp San Luis Obispo confident that they were about to pack their bags and head for an east

coast port en route to Africa. It was something of a jolt, therefore, when the motorized equipment was taken away from them and they were ordered to embark upon an arduous program of amphibious training under the watchful eyes of grim-faced Marines from the Fleet Marine Force.

The 53d Infantry had, by this time, been replaced by the 159th Infantry, a local National Guard outfit also called the "Fifth California." Although it had seen very little campaigning in its 62-year existence, the 159th traced its lineage to several colorful California militia companies--the Oakland Guards, San Jose Zouaves, Hewston Guard, and the Oakland Light Cavalry Company, among others. The Guardsmen joined the Hourglass Division shortly before Peal Harbor, but remained in the 7th for only a single campaign--the battle for Attu in the Aleutians.

In 1942 a Japanese assault force had been dispatched to seize Dutch Harbor, the U. S. outpost in the Aleutians. They got cold feet, however, and decided to settle for Kiska and Attu at the western end of the chain of islands we had obtained from Russia in 1867. It was clear that the Japanese hoped to use the islands as a springboard for an attack against Alaska.

The job of getting these islands back was given to the 7th Division. The Hourglass soldiers found it hard to believe that they were headed for arctic terrain after their desert training.

The first elements to land moved up on to Attu's "Red Beach" on May 11, 1943. They probed about for several hours and were able to consolidate beach positions before the Japanese learned they were there and started to bring defensive fire to bear. Then they had to fight a brutal campaign which was not concluded until the defeat of the Japanese at Chiehagof Harbor. The 7th Recon Troop went ashore first, moving in resolutely despite a pea- soup fog which reduced visibility to zero. The principal landings were carried out by elements of the 17th Infantry Regiment under the command of Colonel Edward P. Earle, who was killed in the battle. The 17th was neither properly equipped nor clothed for a northern campaign, for in those days we knew practically nothing about waging extensive winter warfare. Nevertheless, the 17th Infantry soldiers carried on, and for this action won a Distinguished Unit Citation.

Company B scaled a sheer cliff in the face of Japanese gunfire to attack positions which were holding up an important advance against a ridge between the valleys of Holtz Bay. Company F's attack in the pass between the valleys was magnificent. The GI's used rifles, bayonets, and hand grenades to drive the enemy out of a series of trenches near the vital Cold Mountain. Company E charged the enemy entrenched in

the Saran Valley- Massacre Valley Pass, and buried the Japanese out by the sheer fury of their assault. Companies I and K, though depleted by battle losses, conducted the attack on the upper plateau of Attu which led to the capture of Chichagof Harbor, where the fighting was at its fiercest.

All efforts to dislodge the enemy from his defense positions in the snow- covered mountain passes leading to Chichagof failed. On May 26 a new attempt was made by a reinforced battalion of the 32d, which was successful at first, then stalled as the intensity of the enemy's defensive fires drove the GI's to cover.

Then Private Jose P. Martinez, a Company K Barman from Taos, New Mexico, started to charge the enemy trench lines. A few hardy soldiers ventured to follow him. Martinez completed the climb, and firing his BAR and throwing hand grenades he knocked out part of the enemy strong point. The main pass was still 150 feet above him, and the way was barred by enemy fire from both flanks and from tiers of snow trenches to his front. But Martinez was confident; he rallied the men who had come with him, and once more started the climb, blazing a path with fire from his BAR. As he reached the final trench and started to clean it out, he was hit and mortally wounded. But a few minutes later the infantrymen swarmed over the Pass. Its capture was the end of organized Japanese resistance on Attu, although the enemy had enough strength in reserve to mount a night Banzai attack in the Clevesy Pass on the last day of the month of May.

With Attu under control the Division turned its attention to the next target: Kiska, westernmost of the Rat Islands.

Meanwhile, the 159th Infantry had taken over on Attu, and it was decided that this regiment should stay there. The 184th Infantry, another California National Guard outfit, then at Fort Ord, was alerted to get ready to join the Division when the campaign in the Aleutians ended. This was sooner than anyone expected. The Japanese on Kiska, possibly as a result of what happened on Attu, decided not to fight after all. 'The Hourglass soldiers invaded Kiska to find not a single enemy soldier there.

The Division assembled in its ships and prepared to leave the arctic behind it. Speculation was rife as to where they were going. The diehards still insisted that the 7th was going to fight in North Africa, and predicted that they would probably head for San Francisco first. But the next shoreline they saw was that of the island of Oahu in the Hawaiians.

The Division embarked there on a four-month training program, under a new

commander, Major General C. H. Corlett, and worked hard to perfect the latest amphibious techniques. It took part in a week-long dry run against the island of Maui, then returned to Oahu for a brief respite at Schofield Barracks. On January 22nd the convoy left Pearl Harbor en route to Kwajalein, where it was going to seize the first Japanese-owned territory in the Pacific.

The first Americans to set foot on Japanese-owned soil were members of the 7th Recon Troop led by Captain Paul H. Gritta. Gritta first led his men in a pre-dawn assault against several of the smaller islands around Kwajalein. When they returned to the converted destroyer which was serving as their troop transport, they had killed 106 Japanese, and had taken three prisoners. Their losses were two killed, 22 wounded. Here, as at Attu, the 7th Recon was mentioned in the General Orders, and awarded another DUC.

Another force, the 2d Battalion, 17th Infantry, under Lieutenant Colonel Ed Smith seized Carlson Island, which General Corlett wanted so that his Division Artillery could fire from it in support of the fight on Kwajalein. Smith's Battalion found itself under fire from the Japanese batteries on Kwajalein, but stuck to its task and cleared the way for the artillery to land and set up shop.

Kwajalein has been described as the "most nearly perfect" amphibious operation ever undertaken. The Division accomplished its missions in fine style, quickly subduing the entire atoll of 47 small islands, while the Marines captured nearby Roi and Namur. In one outstanding action, Tech Sergeant Graydon Kickul of Company L, 184th Infantry, destroyed a whole line of reinforced pillboxes by dropping grenades through the slits and then shooting the Japanese down when they tried to escape. The island of Kwajalein was secured by 9 PM of D-plus-3, and the Division, pausing to count its bruises, found it had suffered 176 killed in battle, and 767 wounded. By the morning of February 7 practically all of the Division, except for units assigned temporarily as a

garrison force, was on its way back to the Hawaiian Islands to rest up and train for another campaign.

Its next D-Day was at Leyte, third largest of the Philippine Islands.

The 7th landed on Leyte at 10 AM on October 20, 1944. It met moderate resistance on the Dulag airstrip. Here it met heavy fire which succeeded in stalling its drive. The 184th Infantry seized the Dulag airstrip on October



21. The 32d Infantry, under the command of Colonel John M. Finn, pushed inland on the Division's right, despite heavy fire from Atmon Hill. The 17th Infantry, in the center, drove forward on the Dulag-Burauen Road and within two days had captured the San Pablo airstrip, Burauen, and Bayug. At Buri airstrip, where the Japanese had good camouflaged pillbox defenses, the 32d ran into trouble; but by October 27th it had taken its objective. The 17th, meanwhile, had taken an enemy strong point south of the town of Dagami, and was driving for the town itself.

In the van of the attack toward Dagami was the 2nd Battalion, 17th Infantry,. They jumped off at 0730 with Company F on the left, and Company G on the right. Company E was in reserve, and the heavy weapons outfit, Company H, was to follow.

Company F's assault platoon ran into a withering fire from pillboxes, trenches, and enemy spider holes so well camouflaged that they couldn't be detected at 20 yards. Accurately-placed Japanese machine gun and rifle fire quickly thinned the attackers' ranks. Private First Class Leonard C. Brostrom, a lead scout, was shot three times as he pushed through a bamboo thicket. He saw an enemy pillbox and knew it would have to be taken out if his company were to advance. Brostrom attacked the pillbox, which made him the target of all rifle fire in that area.

He dashed to the rear of the pillbox and threw his grenades through an opening. Six enemy soldiers charged him, their bayonets glinting wickedly. Brostrom fired. One Japanese soldier dropped, the others pulled back. Brostrom was hit again by gunfire and knocked to the ground. In pain, weak, and bleeding badly he nevertheless managed to regain his feet and once again assaulted the pillbox.

As he collapsed the enemy soldiers started running from the fortification, to be killed by Staff Sergeant Paul Doty and PFC's Howard J. Evans and Eldridge V. Sorenson, who had caught up with Brostrom by this time. Another soldier of this platoon, PFC Bill Schmid, meanwhile had gotten a slug in his arm, but had nonetheless attacked another pillbox which he finished off with grenades.

By 1:15 AM Company F had advanced only a few miles, and had suffered 22 casualties. Company G, too, was having its troubles, but Lieutenant Bill Schade, the company commander, kept his men moving along. They had gone 35 yards into a grove when they hit resistance of the same sort that had stalled Company F. Their advance was held up by a heavily fortified enemy position, and Schade sent a platoon to outflank the enemy. Out in the advance of his platoon was Private First Class John F. Thorson, from Armstrong, Iowa. He came upon an enemy fire trench occupied by Japanese riflemen, and attacked them quickly, firing his BAR from the hip. He was within six yards of the trench when he was hit and seriously wounded. As the rest of

the platoon caught up with him, an enemy grenade landed in their midst. In a final supreme effort, Thorson rolled over and smothered the explosion with his body.

By 10 AM on October 29 Colonel Frank Pachler was able to report that the seizure of Dagami was a fait accompli.

Following the capture of Dagami, the Division punched at Shoestring Ridge. By November 23, two battalions were on Shoestring where the fighting was ferocious. At one point, the Japanese slammed an artillery barrage on the U. S. position--three 75's and a vicious little 70-mm. mountain gun. When the barrage lifted the Japanese started streaming in for the kill. Their company was forced to pull off the ridge, and PFC's John Canady of Miami, Florida, Casimir Grabowski of South River, New Jersey, and William Gullet of Farrington, Kentucky, stayed behind and held the enemy off with grenades, rifles, and bayonets. The Japanese kept coming at them in groups of four. Canady and his associates nailed seven groups before they finally rejoined their outfit. The Japanese held this part of the ridge until the next day, when the GI's drove them off.

The Japanese attack on Shoestring cost Finn's men dearly. Company E suffered all of its officers wounded; NCO's were running the company. Thirty men from Companies E, C., and H, all that remained, banded together. Tech Sergeant Marvin H. Raabe took charge and organized them to meet the next attack, which came one hour after the first assault. Raabe's men drove them off, and when a few lingered they were pushed out at the point of a bayonet. Through a long night that followed Raabe and his men continued to hold the ridge despite persistent enemy attempts to infiltrate.

On November 28 Finn's weary warriors were relieved on Shoestring by the 184th Infantry. The Californians were hardly in the positions vacated by Finn's command when fifty diehard Japanese launched an attack. Ten minutes later all of the enemy troops were dead, and Shoestring Ridge was secured. Its defenders later learned they had held their ground against the forays of two full enemy regiments.

Sixth Army ordered the 7th Division to assemble in the Baybay-Damulaan area on the west coast of the war-torn island; this was accomplished by the end of November. From Baybay the Division marched north over extremely rugged terrain until it made contact with the 77th Division at Ipil on December 10. Three days later General Arnold uncorked an attack against the Japanese 26th Division which was holding up the westward movement of the U. S. 11th Airborne Division. The Division's lusty attack took the pressure off the paratroopers.

Leyte was considered "secure" by Christmas--although this was a joke to the

infantrymen who two months later were still flushing out Japanese. The 7th Division did its share of mopping-up; then it marched down to Tacloban where troopships were waiting to carry it to a beachhead close to the heart of the Japanese home islands--Okinawa.

A new field command, the Tenth Army, had been formed in the Pacific under the command of Lieutenant General Simon Bolivar Buckner, Jr. Buckner was to seize the Ryukyus---the island chain directly south of Japan itself--and to do the job he was given six battle-tryed divisions. He and his staff proceeded to draw up their battle plans, and, as usual, the 7th Division was put in the van of the assault.

The attack against Okinawa was launched on Easter Sunday, April 1, 1945. Nobody suspected at the time that it was to be the last beachhead, indeed the last campaign, of World War II.

The sprinting 7th moved inland fast, seized the Kadena airfield many hours ahead of schedule, and on the second day of the operation stormed across the remainder of the 14-mile-wide island to reach its east coast. Thus Okinawa was split at the waist. Buckner sent one corps into the north, another to the south. The 7th, assigned to XXIV Corps, pivoted at the east coast and started on the drive south. Soon it experienced the heaviest Japanese artillery fire of the Pacific war, absorbing more than 40,000 rounds of high explosive in two weeks.

It had to take the Pinnacle, a Japanese watchtower rising 30 feet above a 450-foot saw-toothed ridge. The 184th Infantry took the heights by storm after a bitter struggle. The Division then pushed ahead, taking Tomb Hill and Ouki town. The 32d Infantry was on the Division's left on the Nakagusuku Wan (later Buckner Bay); the 184th Infantry under Colonel Roy A. Greene was on the right. Colonel Frank Pachler's 17th Infantry soldiers were in close support. Finn's 32nd Soldiers met a strong Japanese force on Skyline Ridge, which became the scene of bitter conflict. One platoon found itself under attack by a hundred spear-wielding Japanese. Later, when the GI's examined the enemy dead, they found the spears were about six feet long with a sharpened ten-inch point. In his official report a company commander remarked, "Their appearance suggests that they would be effective if the soldiers using them could get close enough to the enemy."

The Division drove down to the hill mass dominated by Hill 178; again the Japanese threw down what seemed to be an impenetrable curtain of fire. Then the 7th soldiers on the front line were suddenly joined by a mammoth 155-mm howitzer, a gun normally fired from far to the rear. A bulldozer had scooped out the gun's firing position, and the big piece was set into the hole so that its muzzle was almost level

with the ground. Then it went into action, and pounded away at the enemy-held ridge.

This technique proved so successful that two more 155's were brought into play at the front. Despite the counterbattery fire which ensued, none of the 7th's big guns were hit. Watching the peak of the enemy's hill being lowered some 25 feet, an infantry sergeant said, "Them guns talk the kind of language I like to hear."

After five days of grueling fighting the 184th secured Hill 178 and the surrounding terrain. The Hourglass rumbled slowly forward to fight another twelve-day battle at Kochi Ridge, an important approach to the Shuri defenses. Kochi Ridge was finally taken by the 17th Infantry, and the Hourglass Division was sent into reserve after 39 days of continuous combat in which it had suffered more casualties than in the entire 110-day campaign on Leyte.

The war in the Pacific was gathering momentum at an astounding rate. The army was back in Manila and fighting for the rest of Luzon. Superforts based in the Marianas were blasting Japan from the air on an around-the-clock schedule. The brand new battleship USS Missouri bombarded Japan's coast with her giant guns and the British Pacific Fleet arrived to join Admiral Chester W. Nimitz's forces. On Okinawa the 96th Infantry Division captured Conical Hill, the Marines drove into Naha and Shuri, and the Hourglass Division, back in the lines, advanced to important positions in the southern Ozato Mura hills, where the enemy resistance was the heaviest.

Again on the extreme left flank of Tenth Army, the 7th pushed ahead slowly by day and fought off night attacks by enemy swimmers seeking to penetrate the U. S. lines on the east coast. Soon the 184th Infantry was on the coastal plain near Shikya town. On the Division's left, the infantry drove across rain-soaked rice paddies to take the Ghinen peninsula and seize Sashiki and a number of nearby hills. It took O Shima, near the Minatoga cove, in a driving rain; then moved further south to Hanagusuku town, and to Hill 95, where it threw back a series of counterattacks.

The stubborn Japanese resistance continued, even though the Hourglass won the Yaeju-Dake escarpment in a daring surprise attack in the rain. The weather seemed to be on the enemy's side, and the Division's advance was slowed to a crawl. Some days it didn't even advance 300 yards from the previous night's position.

The end, however, was clearly in sight. On June 18th the Tenth Army smashed the enemy's lines and started barreling through in earnest. The 7th finished the day's fighting less than a thousand yards north of the key village of Mabuni. The official end of the campaign finally came on June 21, after 82 days of rugged fighting.

In assessing the Division's accomplishments in the Okinawa campaign, the staff reckoned that the Hourglass men had killed between 25,000 and 28,000 Japanese soldiers, and had taken 4,584 prisoners--more than half of them soldiers of the Japanese regular army, including more than a hundred officers up to the rank of major. The Division suffered 1,116 killed, and nearly 6,000 wounded, to make the total of its World War II casualties 8,135.

Several days after the end of the war with Japan, the 7th was on the high seas once again. Instead of heading for another combat beachhead, however, the Hourglass soldiers were on their way to take part in the occupation of Korea. Here, on September 8, 1945, the Division embarked upon its stay in the Hermit Kingdom. The Russians had entered the war against Japan late in the summer of 1945; they were scheduled to take the surrender of the Japanese forces in the northern part of Korea. Since the U. S. troops would be approaching from the southern part of the peninsula, it was decided at a high level that a temporary line of demarcation was needed to avoid confusion when the two armies met. It was decided that neither side should cross the 38th Parallel. There was no way of foreseeing the grief and tragedy which this arbitrary division of Korea was to yield. Hardly was it settled in Korea than the Division lost 7,500 men who were eligible for return to the States. It also lost General Archie Arnold, who became Military Governor of Korea. A succession of new division commanders followed, starting with Major General Andrew D. Bruce, who had led the 77th Infantry Division on Leyte and Okinawa. In another important change in the Division's structure the battlewise 184th Infantry was cut loose from the 7th, in which it had served for 30 months, to be returned to the control of the California National Guard. Assigned in its place, the ninth and last infantry regiment to become associated with the Division was an outfit near and dear to every regular army man's heart, the 31st Infantry Regiment.

The 31st is not one of the very old regiments--like the 32d Infantry it dates back only to July, 1916--but its background is replete with stories of its adventures during its overseas peacetime garrisons in "the old army"-- meaning before the Second World War. From April 9, 1942, until January 19, 1946, however, when it was reconstituted in Korea and assigned to replace the 184th Infantry, it existed on paper only--for it is the regiment which was forced to surrender to the Japanese after waging a magnificent holding action on Bataan.

On occupation duty in Korea from 1946 to 1948, the men of the 17th, 31st, and 32d Infantry Regiments rotated on the outpost positions along the 38th Parallel. In the fall of 1948, the Korean elections took place, and true to its commitments, the U. S. removed its occupation forces from the country. When the Hourglass Division sailed for Japan in December of 1948, its commander was the last Military Governor of

Korea, Major General William Frishe Dean, who would return to Korea later. In Japan the Division's zone of occupation included nearly half of the total land area of its former enemy. Elements of the Division were garrisoned on Honshu and on Hokkaido, the northernmost island.

Korea

When the Korean conflict erupted in June of 1950, the 7th was under the command of Major General David Goodwin Barr. Barr assembled his Division at Camp Fuji, the tent city on the lower slopes of Fujiyama, and put them through a rigorous training schedule. The Division, which had sent several levies of replacements to the fighting front, was woefully understrength; consequently, 8,000 Republic of Korea soldiers were integrated into its ranks. This was a far from an ideal solution, but it was the best that could be reached under the circumstances. The ROK soldiers were willing and resourceful--and later they showed themselves to be courageous as well. But the language barrier was too much to overcome completely. They had to be taught not only to obey commands, but also to understand what the commands meant. Each 7th soldier was given a Korean "running mate" with whom he was supposed to "buddy" both in training and in combat.

While the 7th trained to a fine edge in Japan, the "police action" in Korea started to assume all the earmarks of an infantryman's shooting war. The U. S. Japan garrison was stripped bit by bit as divisions were rushed across the Sea of Japan in an effort to halt the North Koreans who were riding the crest of aggression behind a vanguard of Russian-made T-34 tanks. The Eighth Army was fighting with its back at the sea when General MacArthur decided on an amphibious invasion of Korea's west coast, designating the 1st Marine Division and the 7th Infantry Division to do the job.

Soon the 7th Division--code-named "Bayonet" for its movement to Korea-- was to board troop transports. A day later the shoreline of Korea was ahead. The old-timers among the men grimaced knowingly long before the embattled peninsula became visible. As many of the GIs expressed it in the letters they wrote home. "You could sure smell Korea a long time before you saw it!"

The amphibious venture was a classic. It put U. S. forces on Korea's west coast while the active front was still on the Naktong perimeter far to the southeast. The landing at Inchon sent the North Koreans reeling, and soon the GI's and Leathernecks were moving in on the South Korean capital city, Seoul. The Division's 32nd Infantry boldly seized Angyang-ni and South Mountain, terrain features dominating Seoul. Then, with the capital in the bag, the Division turned its attention to the south. The 17th Infantry, yanked out of Eighth Army reserve, rejoined the Division in time to

fight a fierce 12-hour battle for two vital hills southeast of Seoul. Soon Barr's soldiers were in command of all terrain south-southwest of the Han River; they continued to drive toward the southeast to seize key terrain, and also to cut off possible enemy escape routes. The Division then marched 25 miles east to Suwon to capture the important rail juncture of Inchon.

Suwon was taken by the 31st Infantry Regiment fighting under its battle flag for the first time since its surrender to the Japanese on Bataan. The 31st pushed below Suwon and after a stiff fight cleared a tank-supported enemy pocket near Osan, site of the Communist tank breakthrough against the 24th Division some sixty days earlier. Here the Division linked up with the flying column from the 1st Cavalry Division, which had raced 102 miles from the Naktong, through enemy-held country, to clear the way for the joining of the two U. S. forces. With the arrival of troops from the Naktong perimeter the mission of the Inchon landing force was complete, and the 7th started a long overland truck march to the east coast of Pusan. Here training was renewed, and harried troop commanders attempted to get replacements for their combat-thinned ranks.

Soon the Bayonet soldiers were again loading into troop transports. This time the target was the east coast village of Iwon. Their orders were: "Advance to the Yalu!"

The Yalu was the river boundary between North Korea and Manchuria. To its north was the "privileged sanctuary" which supplied the North Korean Army, and which was to play so significant a role in the ultimate fate of the Bayonet soldiers who came ashore at Iwon on the last day of October in 1950.

After an unopposed beachhead landing on the last day of October, 1950, the Division started driving north. Along the way they met a sharp skirmish at Pungsan and a harsh firefight at Kapsan. The push continued in arctic-like cold weather, and on November 20, Colonel Herbert B. Powell's 17th Infantry slogged into Hyesanjin-on-the-Yalu--the first U. S. unit to reach the Manchurian border. Hyesanjin, which means "ghost city of broken bridges" was the northernmost point of advance by the United Nations' command in three years of bitter warfare.

"We swept through the city," related Colonel Powell, "and took a good look around. Then we dropped back to a good hill position to wait for something to happen." They didn't have long to wait.

The Chinese Communist Forces (CCF) intervened in the war on November 27, striking twin blows against Eighth Army in western Korea and X Corps in the east. The enemy attack caught the 7th strung out, with some elements as far as 250 miles

apart. The 17th was northwest of the Chosin at Hyesanjin. Neither of the other regiments was intact at the time the action started, nor were they able to get together during the furious action that followed.

Captain Charles Peckham's Company B, 31st Infantry, had been on special detail, and was nearing Koto-ri en route north to rejoin its outfit, the 1st Battalion, which was supposed to reinforce the 3d Battalion on the northeast shore of the Chosin reservoir. The 2nd Battalion was at Majong-dong awaiting orders. Peckham didn't get through. At Koto-ri his Company was impressed into a hurriedly organized special column called Task Force Drysdale. Composed of Peckham's Company, a company of Marines, and the 41st Commando (Royal Marines), Task Force Drysdale fought its way up the main supply route to crash the Chinese road blocks and bring much-needed supplies and ammunition to the sorely-pressed defenders of Hagam-ri. They sustained heavy casualties en route.

Furthest north at this time was the 1st Battalion of the 32d Infantry under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Don Carlos Faith, Jr. Faith's command, beyond the northeast shore of the reservoir, engaged in five days of hellish combat. Fighting in the cruelest weather, surrounded, vastly outnumbered and outgunned, knowing full well that no help could come, they fought to the end.

Behind them was the task group headed by Colonel Allan D. MacLean, commander of the 31st Infantry Regiment. MacLean had with him his 3d Battalion, his heavy mortar company, the 57th Field Artillery battalion, and a few self-propelled automatic weapons. In the five days that followed, MacLean's battalion of the 31st suffered nearly as many casualties as the entire 31st had suffered on Bataan.

In one particularly vicious attack the Chinese drove a wedge between Faith's and MacLean's forces. MacLean was conferring with Faith at the time, and was thus cut off from his command. Furthermore, both outfits were completely surrounded. Knowing it was essential for them to link up again, MacLean and Faith decided to mount an attack to demolish the Chinese block between their outfits. In the firefight that followed, MacLean disappeared, never to be seen by his men again; much later they learned he had been taken prisoner.

Faith's soldiers reached MacLean's command just as the Chinese were getting set to launch an attack on the artillery batteries, hit the Communist soldiers from the rear, and drove them off, killing more than 60 of them. Then Faith combined the two U. S. forces, and decided to attack to the south in an effort to reach the base at Hagaru-ri.

His tattered frost-bitten soldiers were in miserable condition. Most of them were

walking wounded; some were forced to use their weapons for crutches. Faith rallied the dispirited men and led them down the road toward the enemy strong point which threatened to wipe them out. He called the shots all the way as his men, near the point of collapse after five days of savage close quarters' fighting, followed him to the roadblock. Faith was in the lead, and was finally knocked down; but his men overran the enemy position and found themselves momentarily out of contact with the enemy.

Practically none of the officers or key noncoms were left. The remains of the task force dissolved into small groups for the last ten miles down to Hagaru-ri. It was only ten miles, but it might as well have been ten thousand for some of them. That night, December 1, the dazed and bloodied survivors started straggling in. When the last survivors of Task Force Faith reached the lines at Hagaru-ri on December 4, the 1st Battalion, 32d Infantry, which had started its march north on November 25 one thousand strong, was able to muster only 181 officers and men.

Nor was the ordeal over. In column with the Marines, the elements of the 7th Division which were in or around Koto ri had to fight their way south to the Hamhung perimeter in a blinding snowstorm with the enemy dogging at them all the way, sniping at them from the ridgelines, and getting closer with each passing hour.

Not all of the 7th Division had suffered the terrible toll inflicted on Faith's Battalion and MacLean's Task Force. A number of units redeployed to the Hungnam port area intact, still fit to fight. But the last days of 1950 were mostly sad ones for a Division which had once been known as the "Lucky Seventh." It had barreled up to the Yalu River, the only U. S. Division to achieve that high water mark, and then had been set upon by the massed divisions of a new enemy and forced to retrace its steps, fighting every inch of the way. Phase II of the Division's combat career in Korea ended with the bitter campaign of the Chosin Reservoir.

New Year's Day 1951, found the Division, spearheaded by the 17th Infantry Regiment, again heading north, attacking at Tanyang in South Korea, and blocking enemy threats from the northwest. Soon all of the refurbished Bayonet was back in action around Cheehon, Chungju, and Pyongchang. The 7th was under a new commander, Major General Claude Birkett Ferenbaugh. The Bayonet engaged in a series of successful "limited objective" attacks in the early weeks of February. Late February found the 17th Infantry Buffalos, now under the command of Colonel William Quinn, driving against a ridge near the village of Maltari. A platoon from Company E inched close to the crest only to be enveloped in automatic weapons fire from both flanks and the front. The leaders of both front- running squads went down, and the leaderless men were dazed and bewildered. Corporal, Einar H. Ingman, a 21-year-old soldier from Tomahawk, Wisconsin, quickly assumed command. He

reorganized the squads under fire, then waded into the enemy all by himself, taking out a machine gun crew with grenades and rifle fire. Another enemy gun 50 yards to his right opened up, and Ingman went after it. Halfway there he was hit by a grenade, but managed to keep going. He was almost to his target when the enemy gunner spotted him and fired a long burst that caught Ingman in the head and neck and sent him reeling to the ground. But the Wisconsin soldier rose to his feet and resolutely resumed his one-man war. He wiped out the machine gun crew, then slumped unconscious over the gun he had taken. The two squads followed him and got to the emplacement he had taken just in time to see a large number of the enemy fleeing down the far side of the hill, throwing away their rifles. Ingman, who had also been wounded in the fighting near Seoul, recovered from the wounds he got in this furious action, was promoted to Sergeant First Class, and awarded the Medal of Honor.

The Bayonet was put in the van of the IX Corps assault, and fought a fierce three-day battle culminating with the recapture of the terrain that had been lost near the Hwachon Reservoir just over the 38th Parallel in North Korea. Here the Division enjoyed a victory that was doubly sweet. In capturing the town bordering on the reservoir it cut off thousands of enemy troops who were trapped in the important electrical power center, and at the same time gained some measure of revenge for the bitter memories of the Chosin campaign. The IX Corps' attack, Operation Piledriver, continued in the face of fanatical Chinese resistance. The enemy waited for the GI's in the hills beyond the Hwachon, entrenched in log bunkers and reinforced pillboxes behind heavily-mined roads, coming out to fight at night.

The end of June brought the 7th a welcome assignment to the rear, the first relief from frontline duty since the Division had reached Korea. There was the inevitable reshuffling of assignments. Colonel Quinn was ordered to a new assignment; His successor was Lieutenant Colonel Hal Dale McCown. Lieutenant Colonel Glen A. Nelson, who had been a battalion commander under Mickey Finn back in the Hourglass days of World War II, took over the 31st Infantry Regiment; and Colonel Charles McNamara Mount, Jr., took over the 32nd Infantry.

After a brief rest the Division was ordered into defensive positions north of Hwachon. Toward the end of August, a number of limited objective attacks were ordered to take key terrain features and improve the front lines. In ten days the Division captured five important hills, in what one division historian has described as "the best fighting in tire Division's history."

When the Division returned to the lines after another assignment in reserve, it was to the Heartbreak Ridge sector recently vacated by the 2d Division. The 7th also took in the northern the of the "Punchbowl." About this time General Ferenbaugh left, to be

replaced by Major General Lyman L. Lemnitzer, under whom the Bayonet continued to defend "Line Missouri" through September 1952. By that time General Lemnitzer had been replaced by Major General Wayne C. Smith, who took over while the Division was still on the so-called "Static Line."

The Division's Operation Showdown was launched in the early morning hours of October 14, 1952, with the 31st Infantry Polar Bears passing swiftly through the lines of the 32nd Infantry Buccaneers. The target of the assault was the Triangle Hill complex northeast of Kumhwa. The 31st moved against a strategic spot which for obvious reasons was named "Jane Russell Hill."

The next day the Bayonet attacked again. And again on the day after that. Three days later the attack finally succeeded. In one of the counterattacks mounted by the Communists, a strategic Bayonet position on the hill would have been overrun but for the courage of PFC Ralph E. Pomeroy, who calmly pulled his machine gun off its tripod and started walking downhill toward the enemy, firing into them as he walked, hand grenades blew the helmet off his head, but he continued into the enemy's midst. And when he came to the end of the ammunition belt, he swung the machine gun as a club, continuing to close with the enemy until they engulfed him by sheer numbers. He was still fighting them when his buddies of Company E, 31st Infantry, got their last glimpse of him.

The Bayonet remained in the Triangle Hill area until the end of October, when it was relieved by the 25th Infantry Division. It had won an important victory in what Lieutenant General Reuben E. Jenkins, commander of IX Corps, termed "the most violent action of this corps in over a year." General Jenkins also said, "In my opinion there could be no finer assignment for a Corps Commander than to command a corps composed of divisions of the quality of the 7th Infantry Division."



'The New Year (1953) found the 31st Polar Bears and the 32nd Buccaneers holding positions on "Line Jamestown" awaiting the return of the 17th from Koje-do. The Buffalos rejoined the Division in mid-January, to join in the patrol activity around Old Baldy and Pork Chop. April brought a stepping-up of the enemy's ground activity and Operation Little Switch, the exchange of sick and wounded prisoners. The

Communists overran Pork Chop, but the 7th counterattacked and re-won the OP the next day. While the negotiations continued their deliberations at Panmunjom, the frontline activity continued. July 6 the Reds launched a determined attack against Pork Chop--the strongest display of force the Bayonet had seen in that sector. Five days of savage, fighting followed with the same ground being taken and retaken as the tide of battle surged first one way and then the other. At twenty minutes before eleven AM. on July 27, 1953, a message was received by the Division--and immediately flashed to all units--that an Armistice had been signed and was to go into effect at ten that night. Collectively and individually the Division breathed a sigh of relief, and each man prayed silently that, having got this close, his luck would hold out another twelve hours.

On OP Westview, where a ninety-minute battle had raged the night before, the Bayonet soldiers wondered anxiously if the enemy might decide to finish the war in a blaze of glory. Those were 12 extra-long hours.

The men checked and rechecked their gear, and cleaned their weapons. At one outpost six rounds of mortar fire fell inside the perimeter during the afternoon, but none of the boys were hit. Around nine PM the 7th soldiers noticed that the Reds had a huge searchlight beam playing on Old Baldy.

Forty-five minutes ticked slowly by. The latest order was passed from man to man: "No firing from now on--it's up to them!" Then the hour struck; the campaign in Korea had come to an end. Someone said, "Look. They shut off that damned searchlight." A 7th Division soldier wrote in his diary, "We could hear voices across the line, but for the first time the angry noises of warfare had disappeared."

Forty-eight months after the cease fire the 7th Division was still on duty within shouting distance of the battlefields of 1950-53. But the men who wore the Hourglass-shaped shoulder patch of the Bayonet Division refused to be annoyed when, as often happens, some humorist points to their insignia and says, "Why, there goes the Korean National Guard."

The 7th Division remained on security duty in South Korea until early 1971. The men and women of the Division shared the defense duty along the demilitarized zone from 1953 to 1971. They served their time at Camp Boniface located in the Joint Security Area just south of the Panmunjom Armistice complex. During these almost 20 post hostility years the soldiers of the Division continued to encounter hostile actions and served well in maintaining the fragile armistice. The Division was ordered to return to the United States after was transferred to Fort Lewis, WA

7TH INFANTRY DIVISION

Statistics

Activation Dates:

December 6, 1917-September 22, 1921
July 1, 1940 to April 2, 1971
October 21, 1974 to August 9, 1993
June 4, 1999 to August 18, 2006
October 1, 2012 to

Commanding Officers:

Col. Guy H. Preston - January 1918
Brig. Gen. C. H. Barth - January 1918
Brig. Gen. Tiemann N. Horn - February 1918
Brig. Gen. C. H. Barth - February 1918
Brig. Gen. T. N. Horn - June 1918
Brig. Gen. C. H. Barth - June 1918
Brig. Gen. Lutz Wahl - October 1918
Maj. Gen. Edward Wittenmyer - October 1918
Maj. Gen. G. J. Bailey - July 1921
Maj. Gen. Harry H. Bandholtz - August 1921
Maj. Gen. Joseph W. Stilwell - July 1940
Maj. Gen. Charles H. White - August 1941
Maj. Gen. Albert E. Brown - April 1942
Maj. Gen. Eugene Landrum - May 1943
Brig. Gen. Archibald V. Arnold, - July 1943
Maj. Gen. Charles H. Corlett - September 1943
Maj. Gen. Archibald V. Arnold - February 1944
Brig. Gen. Joseph L. Ready - September 1945
Maj. Gen. Andrew D. Bruce - March 1946
Brig. Gen. Leroy J. Stewart - June 1946
Brig. Gen. Harlan N. Hartness - October 1947
Maj. Gen. John B. Coulter - January 1948
Brig. Gen. E. W. Pibum - June 1948
Maj. Gen. William F. Dean - September 1948
Maj. Gen. David G. Barr - May 1949
Maj. Gen. Claude B. Ferenbaugh - January 1951
Maj. Gen. Lyman L. Lemnitzer - December 1951

Maj. Gen. Wayne G. Smith - July 1952
Maj. Gen. Arthur G. Trudeau - March 1953
Maj. Gen. Lionel C. McGarr - October 1953
Maj. Gen. Edmund B. Sehree - May 1954
Maj. Gen. Paul W. Caraway - August 1955
Brig. Gen. Ralph J. Butchers - April 1956
Maj. Gen. Carl H. Jark - June 1956
Maj. Gen. Thomas J. Sands - September 1957
Maj. Gen. Teddy H. Sanford - 1958 to 1959
Maj. Gen. Harold Gregory Moore, Jr. – May 1970 to March 1971
Maj. Gen. William Harrison - 1985 to 1987
Maj. Gen. Edwin Hess Burba, Jr. - 1987 - 1989
Maj. Gen. Carmen Cavezza - 1989 to 1990
Maj. Gen. Jerry White – 1990 to 1991
Maj. Gen. Marvin G. Covault – 1991 to 1993
Maj. Gen. Richard Timmons – 1994
Maj. Gen. John Riggs – June 1999
Maj. Gen. Edward Soriano – 1999 to 2001
Maj. Gen. Charles C. Campbell – 2001 to 2002
Maj. Gen. Robert Wilson – 2002 to 2004
Maj. Gen. Robert Mixon – 2004 to August 2006
Maj. Gen. Stephen R. Lanza – October 2012 to February 4, 2014
Maj. Gen. Terry Ferrell – February 2014 to

Locations of Division Headquarters:

Camp Wheeler, Georgia - December 1917 to July 1918
Overseas (France), September 1918 to June 1919
Camp Funston, Kansas - July 1919 to July 1920
Camp Meade, Maryland - August 1920 to September 1921
Fort Ord, California - July 1940 to March 1942
Camp San Luis Obispo, California - April 1942 to July 1942
Desert Training Center, Mojave, California - August 1942 to October 1942
Camp San Luis Obispo, California November 1942 to January 1943
Fort Ord, California - January 1943 to March 1943
Aleutians Islands - April 1943 to August 1943
Hawaiian Islands - September 1943 to January 1944
Marshall Islands - January 1944 to February 1944
Hawaiian Islands - March 1944 to September 1944
Philippine Islands - October 1944 to March 1945
Ryukyu Islands - April 1945 to August 1945

South Korea - September 1945 to September 1948

Japan - September 1948 to September 1950

Korea - September 1950 to March 1971

Fort Lewis, Washington - April 1971

Fort Ord, California - October 1974 to August 1993

Fort Lewis, Washington - September 1993 to June 1994

Fort Carson, Colorado – June 1999 to August 2006

Joint Base Lewis-McChord – October 2012 to

Days of Combat Casualties Casualties per day

World War I	35	1,709	48.83
World War II	208	9,212	44.29
Korean Conflict	850	15,126	17.80

Battles & Campaigns

World War I

Elements of Division in action at Prény Ridge, November 10, 1918.

World War II

Aleutian Islands, Attu & Kiska

Eastern Mandates, Kwajalein

Philippines, Leyte

Ryukyu Islands, Okinawa

Korea

UN Defensive - 1950

UN Offensive - 1950

CCF Intervention - 1950-1951

First UN Counteroffensive - 1951

CCF Spring Offensive - 1951

UN Summer/Fall Offensive - 1951

Second Korean Winter - 1951-1952

Korean Summer Fall - 1952

Third Korean Winter - 1952

Korean Spring/Summer – 1953

**Principal Components of the
Division**

World War I

Infantry Brigades

13th and 14th

Infantry Regiments

34th, 55th, 56th, 64th

Machine Gun Battalions

19th, 20th, 21st

Field Artillery Brigades

7th

Field Artillery Regiments

8th, 79th, 80th

Engineering Regiment

5th

World War II

Infantry Regiments

17th, 32nd, 53rd, 159th, 184th

Field Artillery Battalions

31st, 48th, 49th, 57th

Combat Engineer Battalion

13th

Korea

Infantry Regiments:

17th, 31st, 32nd

Field Artillery Battalions:

31st, 48th, 49th, 57th

AAA Battalions

15th

Combat Engineer Battalion

13th

Tank Battalion

73rd

Medal of Honor Recipients

World War II

Leonard C. Brostrom, PFC, 17th Infantry Regiment
John F. Thorson, PFC, 17th Infantry Regiment
Joe P. Martinez, Pvt, 32nd Infantry Regiment

Korea

Charles H. Baker, Pvt, 17th Infantry Regiment
Don C. Faith, Jr., Lt. Col., 32nd Infantry Regiment
Jack G. Hanson, PFC, 31st Infantry Regiment
Raymond Harvey, Capt., 17th Infantry Regiment
Einar H. Ingman, Sgt., 17th Infantry Regiment
William F. Lyell, Cpl., 17th Infantry Regiment
Ralph E. Pomeroy, PFC, 31st Infantry Regiment
Joseph C. Rodriguez, Sgt., 17th Infantry Regiment
Daniel D. Schoonover, Cpl., 13th Combat Engineers
Edward R. Schowalter, Jr, 1st Lt., 31st Infantry Regiment
Richard T. Shea, 1st Lt., 17th Infantry Regiment
Benjamin F. Wilson, 1st Lt., 31st Infantry Regiment
Anthony T. Kaho'ohanohano, PFC, 17th Infantry Regiment
Henry Svehla, PFC, 32nd Infantry Regiment

Bibliography

7th Infantry Division History Book, Turner Publishing Co., Lib. Of Cong. 97-60772 ISBN 1-56311-398-8

Appleman, Ray: *East of Chosin: Entrapment and Breakout in Korea, 1950*; Texas A & M University Press, 1987

Blair, Clay: *The Forgotten War: America in Korea*; Times Books, New York Times, 1988

Hammel, Eric: *Chosin: Heroic Ordeal of the Korean War*; Vanguard Press, 1981

Hoyt, Edwin Palmer: *On the Yalu*; Stein & Day, 1984

Knox, Donald: *The Korean War: Pusan to Chosin: An oral History*; Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1985

Love, Edmund G.: *History of the 7th Infantry Division in World War II*: Battery Press, 1988

Middleton, Harry Joseph: *The Compact History of the Korean War*: Hawthorn Books, 1965