

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

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REPORT CHANGES OF ADDRESS TO YOUR APPROPRIATE HEADQUARTERS

THE 81st INFANTRY DIVISION, USAR

(Seventh in series)



HISTORY: The 81st Infantry Division was established and organized in August 1917, participated in the Meuse-Argonne Operation and in the occupation of the St. Die Sector, and was demobilized in

June 1919. It was activated for World War II on 15 June 1942 at Camp Rucker. It participated in the Tennessee maneuvers, April to June 1943, and in those at the Desert Training Center from July to November 1943. After continued training at Camp San Luis Obispo and Camp Beale, it moved to San Francisco where it departed for overseas on 31 July 1944.

DATE OF: Activation, 15 June 1942; Inactivation, 20 January 1946; Reactivation, 10 November 1947, at Atlanta, Georgia, in the Organized Reserve Corps.

COMBAT CHRONICLE: The 81st Infantry Division landed in Hawaii between 11 June and 8 July 1944. The Division minus RCT 323 invaded Angaur Island in the Palau group on 17 September, and pushed through to the western shore in a quick movement, cutting the island in half. The enemy was driven into isolated pockets, and mopping-up operations began on the 20th. RCT 321, attached to the 1st Marine Division, went into action on Peleliu Island in the Palaus and assisted in

splitting defense forces and isolating them in mountainous areas in the central part of the island. The team aided in mopping up Ngesebus Island and capturing Kongauru and Garakayo Islands. RCT 323, under naval task force command, occupied Ulithi Island 21-23 September 1944. Elements of the team landed on Ngulu Atoll and destroyed enemy personnel and installations on 16 October, completing the outflanking of the enemy base at Yap. On the 18th of October, RCT 323 left to rejoin the 81st on Peleliu, which assumed command of all troops on that island and on Angaur on 20 October 1944. Resistance was ended on Peleliu on 27 November. Between 4 November 1944 and 1 January 1945, the Division seized Pulo Anna Island, Kyangel Atoll, and Fais Island. The 81st left in increments from 1 January to 8 February for New Caledonia for rehabilitation and training. It arrived in Leyte on 17 May 1945, and after a period of training participated in mopping-up operations in the northwest part of the island from 21 July to 12 August. After rest and training, the 81st moved to Japan on 18 September and performed occupational duties in Aomori Prefecture until inactivation.

BATTLE CREDITS: (Division) Western Pacific, and Leyte.

COMMANDERS: Maj. Gen. Gustav H. Franke, June to August 1942; Maj. Gen. Paul J. Mueller, August 1942 to inactivation; Brig. Gen. Carl T. Sutherland, present.

Officer Procurement

Between 10,000 and 11,000 graduates of senior division ROTC will be commissioned next month and will be ordered into the active military service in monthly increments in July, August, and September.

Approximately 1,500 graduates of OCS will be commissioned this month and monthly thereafter from the nine Officer Candidate Schools now in operation. These individuals will be ordered into the active military service immediately upon receipt of their commissions.

The sources mentioned above of newly commissioned officers, in addition to the voluntary extension of reserve component officers now on active duty, are making further recalls of reserve component officers unnecessary, except for professional Medical Service officers and a limited number of specialists not available in the active Army. It is contemplated that members of the Army Reserve will not be ordered to active duty as individuals during the balance of this calendar year. The possibility does exist, however, that some small ORC units may be ordered into active military service as units.

In July, 555 officers of the Army Medical Service Reserve will be ordered into active military service. Included are 367 physicians, 160 dentists, and 28 veterinarians. Physicians and veterinarians will be selected from the Volunteer Reserve, but it may be necessary to call some dentists from the Inactive Reserve.

Unless these doctors wish to report at an earlier date, they will be given at least 30 days in which to close out personal and business affairs.

Recruiting Detachments Authorized To Aid Guard AAA Units

Special advance recruiting detachments may be organized to assist in bringing the strength of National Guard AAA units soon to be released from active duty to authorized strength.

When possible, one detachment will be organized for each battery or similar size unit, some 90 days before the return of the unit. The release of National Guard AAA units was scheduled to begin last month, with several being released each month until all have been returned to home stations by May 1953.

Detachments will be organized in the home communities to which the Guard AAA unit is scheduled

to return. Personnel recruited will be transferred to the returning AAA unit and the detachment disbanded within seven days after the return of the unit to State control.

Recruiting detachments may gain Federal recognition and personnel authorized paid training periods. Requirements for enlistments in Guard non-divisional AAA units have recently been liberalized to include qualified men 17 through 44 years of age. Qualified individuals through age 55 will be accepted if they have at least one year of previous honorable service in the Armed Forces.

Service Women's Progress Reported

A committee of 47 prominent American women have completed a study of the program and activities affecting women in the Armed Services. Their report has reaffirmed the need for thousands more women in all branches of the Service.

Calling for nation-wide acceptance of the fact that "young women, no less than young men, must come forward to accept the challenge with which our country is presented," the committee report to the Department of Defense added that a woman who has been in the Service becomes a more valuable member of her community and a more responsible member of her family.

Sub-committees visited a military installation of each of the services, seeking first-hand information on conditions affecting women in uniform. Housing, recreational facilities, health, nutrition, and personal conduct were included in the study. The Services were commended for their attention to these details.



A tank commander signals to a Helicopter to evacuate a simulated casualty "wounded" during the March Joint Army-Air Force Exercise "Long Horn" held at Fort Hood, Texas. Army photo.

SIGFM/HC-MU (15 Oct 59)
SUBJECT: Unit History

1st Ind

Miss Phillips/emt

HEADQUARTERS Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, 21 OCT 1959

TO: Commanding Officer, 181st Signal Battalion USAR, 2323 Dauphine St., East Point, Georgia

1. Forwarded is a copy of the only unit history of the 81st Infantry Division available in the Museum and Historical Division, this headquarters. Inclosure 1. The U. S. Army Signal Corps Museum has no record of battle honors nor of any official insignia authorized the 81st.

2. It is requested that upon receipt of approval of the coat of arms and unit motto, one of the insignia be forwarded to this headquarters, ATTN: Museum and Historical Division, for display and retention in the Museum.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

2 Incl

1. History of 81st Inf Div, USAR
2. Museum folder

R. J. MASI
Capt, SigC
Act Asst AG

COPY FOR RECORD OFFICE: Mus & Hist Div

CONCURRENCE

OFF	DATE	INITIAL
Museum and Hist Div	20 Oct 59	Neo
1st Signal Battalion	21 Oct 59	[Signature]

15 October 1959

SUBJECT: Unit History

TO: Office of the Chief Signal Officer
Ft. Monmouth, N.J.

ATTN: Historical Section

1. On 1 May 1959, with the conversion of the 81st Infantry Division USAR to the Pentomic concept, this unit was converted from a Signal Company to a Signal Battalion.
2. The Heraldic Section, Office of the Quartermaster General has supplied a suggested Coat of Arms for the Unit. It is necessary that they be given suggestions for the Unit Motto.
3. In order to properly select a Unit Motto, it would be appreciated if your office could furnish this unit with a resume of it's Unit History including any battle honours that will accrue to the Battalion from the Original 81st Signal Company.
4. There is some doubt here as to whether the 81st Signal Company's history will accrue to the Battalion, especially the Presidential Unit Citation which it is understood the Company was awarded during World War II.
5. An early reply concerning this request would be appreciated.

WILLIAM A. HICKS
Lt Col Sig C USAR
Commanding

THE 81st INFANTRY DIVISION, USAR

HISTORY: The 81st Infantry Division was established and organized in August 1917, participated in the Meuse-Argonne Operation and in the occupation of the St. Die Sector, and was demobilized in June 1919. It was activated for World War II on 15 June 1942 at Camp Rucker. It participated in the Tennessee maneuvers, April to June 1943, and in those at the Desert Training Center from July to November 1943. After continued training at Camp San Luis Obispo and Camp Beale, it moved to San Francisco where it departed for overseas on 31 July 1944.

DATE OF ACTIVATION - 15 June 1952 - **INACTIVATION** 20 January 1946.
Reactivation, 10 November 1947, at Atlanta, Georgia, in the Organized Reserve Corps.

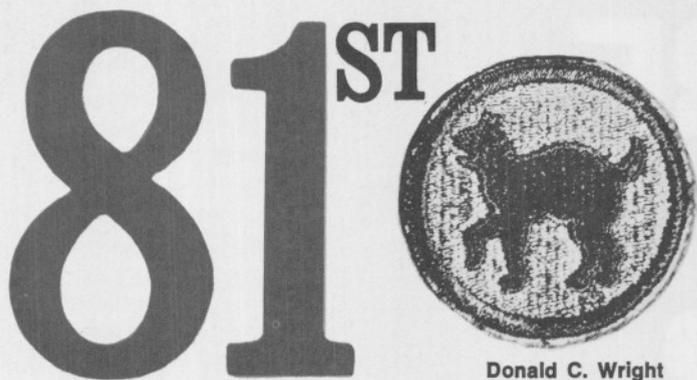
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BATTLE CREDITS: (Division) Western Pacific, and Leyte.

COMMANDERS: Maj.Gen. Gustav H. Franke, June to August 1942
Major Gen. Paul J. Mueller, August 1942 to inactivation; Brig. Gen. Carl T. Sutherland, present.

REPORT TO THE ARMY, May 1952 - (folder 392)

A First for the



Donald C. Wright

Sergeant Dan Silverman of Asheville, N.C., really started something in 1918 when he took pencil in hand and drew a circle around the full silhouette of a Carolina wildcat and designed the Army's first division "shoulder patch"—the insignia of the 81st Division.

Earlier that year Major Charles J. Bailey, commander of the division, toured the front in France and noted that British Tommies in the trenches wore distinctive insignia on their sleeves. These shoulder "flashes," as the British called them, permitted quick unit identification and boosted morale and pride of organization.

Bailey came home with a memorandum that made its way down to SGT Silverman's desk in the 321st Infantry Regiment asking for designs. The idea for a wildcat came from Regimental Commander Colonel Frank Halstead. At the time the 81st Division was training at Camp Jackson, S.C., Wildcat Creek and the predator were "kissin' kin" to the Carolina and Florida doughboys in the division.

MG Bailey liked the idea but was practical enough to realize if he waited for authorization the Wildcat patch might never see the light of day. Fearing delay Bailey ordered production without troubling the War Department.

The original Wildcat came in various colors—white to distinguish the 161st Infantry Brigade and blue for the 162d; Artillery got red. It was black for Engineers and division headquarters, green for the medics. The outside circle matched the color of the cat. Two decades later when the sons of these men donned khaki in World War II the 81st Wildcat was black for everybody. The background color stayed khaki. The cloth patch was to be sewn on the left sleeve below the shoulder—but not before MG Bailey gave the word.

Meanwhile, the division got sailing orders and started up the gangplanks at Hoboken, N.J., on July 31, 1918. Once aboard, the men were told to sew

DONALD R. WRIGHT, formerly a captain in the Army Reserve, is a freelance writer on military subjects. His recent articles include "A Different Drummer" and "Wearing the Purple" in April '74 SOLDIERS and "Gettysburg: Last Full Measure" in the May '74 issue.

on their Wildcats and if anybody questioned the authority they were to say: "Division headquarters!" For a month after arrival "over there" nobody questioned the unauthorized insignia. The French assumed the division was a crack outfit that had earned special distinction for valor.

But the patch didn't go unnoticed. One Paris weekly with a less than sterling reputation ran a cartoon of a wildcat in a compromising pose with a scantily-clad mademoiselle. The caption: "This is what makes the Wildcats wild!"

Inevitably the word seeped up to General John J. "Blackjack" Pershing, commanding the American Expeditionary Forces, who bristled. He wired MG Bailey to remove the unofficial, unauthorized insignia.

But Bailey lost no time. He went to Chaumont and told the imposing "Blackjack" removal of the Wildcat "would cause serious loss of morale in the division."

GEN Pershing thought it over and snapped, "All right, go ahead and wear it. See to it that you live up to it!"

Pershing realized the morale value of shoulder sleeve insignia among the new units of the American army because he had a problem that threatened to disrupt the unit integrity of that army. Since the AEF had arrived in France both British and French high commands had been pushing for piecemeal commitment of American troops as replacements in war-worn units depleted by 4 years of grinding battle. Pershing resisted this with the backing of President Woodrow Wilson; he was determined when Americans fought they would fight as an *American* army—not as British and French replacements.

With an order to all other American divisions to create their own shoulder patches Pershing may have been thinking such insignia might symbolize his determination to prevent fragmentation of American forces in France.

So most of the early patches were designed in the field and manufactured in France with the designs applied on felt over the background color of the uniform. Today, shoulder sleeve insignia are embroidered and must meet rigid Army specifications.

By the end of the "Great War" there were 34 Army and National Guard divisions in Europe and more in the continental United States, all with their own shoulder insignia.

GEN Pershing himself selected the design for the General Headquarters patch: a circle with three stripes—red, white and blue, red uppermost. When the identification was adopted by the Army Ground Forces during World War II, the colors were reversed with blue on top.

Today, shoulder patches are the largest single class of emblems in the Army, next to distinctive unit insignia (which are inaccurately called "regimental crests"). There are literally hundreds of bright, tradition-inspired designs that began with a crude drawing on a World War I sergeant's sketch pad.