



1st Cavalry Division



X Corps



IX Corps



FAR EAST TOUR 1950-53



I Corps



Eighth U.S. Army



SEOUL

KOREA

KOREA, a rugged, mountainous peninsula, forced American soldiers to battle nature as well as the enemy. The steamy summer exhausted troops, while monsoon rains pounded their ponchos and sub-zero winds whipped through winter clothing. GIs of all job specialties ducked bullets and froze their feet in the line of duty, while nurses in the new mobile Army surgical hospitals faithfully tended the wounded.

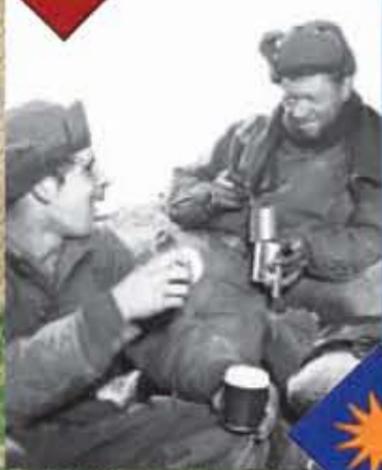
Overshadowed by the Allied victory in World War II, the Korean War hasn't been well remembered.

Tested by both communist attacks and Asian weather, the soldiers in that conflict paid a high price in service and sacrifice. Our nation must never forget their sobering lesson. Despite technological advances, the future will again, no doubt, send our soldiers into the mud, to take and hold the high ground.

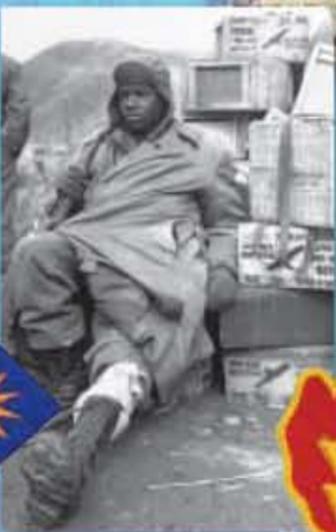
Pusan



45th Infantry Division (NG)



40th Infantry Division (NG)



25th Infantry Division



Soldiers

The Official U.S. Army Magazine
www.soldiersmagazine.com

Courtesy of the staff and collections of the National Museum of the United States Army, U.S. Army Center of Military History.

JAPAN

TODAY'S soldiers fighting overseas against the nation's enemies and to safeguard democracy do so in the spirit of a generation that served 50 years ago.

When the North Korean army invaded South Korea in 1950, the United Nations responded. President Harry S. Truman called upon Americans to once again become soldiers. Even the "push-button" warfare of that day required GIs on the ground to force the 1953 truce that remains in effect today.

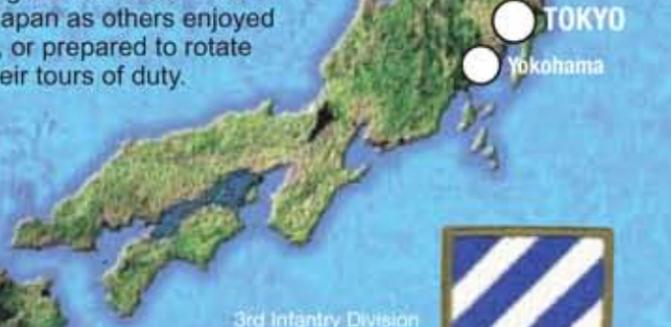
The pipeline to our forces in Korea was the crossroads of Japan. U.S. occupation forces, present since the 1945 end of World War II, sent combat troops. At the same time, reinforcements and support personnel — including members of the Women's Army Corps — arrived from the United States in great numbers. New arrivals in-processed in Japan as others enjoyed rest and relaxation leave, or prepared to rotate home after completing their tours of duty.



24th Infantry Division



7th Infantry Division



2nd Infantry Division

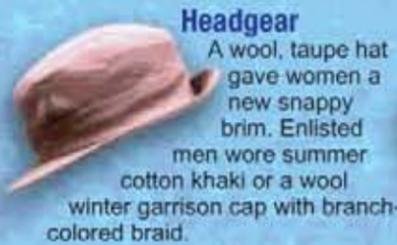


3rd Infantry Division

SOLDIERS IN KOREA

EQUIPPING KOREA-BOUND GIs IN 1950-53

The years just after World War II were a time of transition for U.S. military uniforms. The 1946 Doolittle Board wanted the same uniforms for officers and enlisted soldiers, and the 1948 Uniform Board wanted separate garrison and field uniforms. Budgets slowed change, mixing old with new. This meant cotton khaki for summer and interim use of the earlier olive drab (OD) wool field jacket and trousers as winter garrison wear, until the present Army green arrived. Showing these changes are original historical items of the Korean War.



Headgear

A wool, taupe hat gave women a new snappy brim. Enlisted men wore summer cotton khaki or a wool winter garrison cap with branch-colored braid.

Insignia

The right-shoulder "combat patch" returned and overseas "Hershey" bars moved to the right sleeve. Green-felt combat leaders identification and infantry sky-blue distinctions were added in 1951 and 1952, respectively.

Chevrons

The 1948 career plan created the Army's current pay grades and led to changes in chevrons. Small gold and blue combat and noncombat insignia eliminated the three-stripe sergeant and added a "rocker," but the World War II large OD and blue chevrons returned in 1951.



Accessories

In 1948 the necktie changed from World War II khaki to OD. Enlisted men received the cotton poplin shirt in place of the heavier twill for wear with their tailored wool jackets.

Service Footgear

Boots replaced low-quarter shoes. Common were the 1943 leather combat service boots with buckled cuff. Also popular was the 1948-pattern, full-face russet combat boot with a cap toe and grain leather.



Awards

Authorized in order of precedence were the National Defense Service Medal (1953) for Cold War service, with the Korean Service Medal (1950) and the United Nations Medal (1951) in U.N. blue and white.



Field Clothing

for American military women in Korea, mostly Army nurses, had to be practical. Their uniforms resembled male uniforms, but were tailored for female figures. There were cotton herringbone twill fatigues in summer, and the OD cotton jacket and slacks for winter wear.

Weapons

— rifles, carbines or pistols — indicated soldier military specialties. Mostly carried by officers, NCOs and support personnel, the M-2 carbine with post-1941 modifications for automatic fire used a 30-round magazine and M-4 knife-bayonet in M-8 scabbard.



A Duffle Bag

with carrying strap held a GI's clothing and equipment to Korea and back. Developed in World War II from the Marine Corps seabag, it featured an improved closure and chafing band.



REPLACEMENT GOING TO WAR (1952)

Soldiers arriving in the Korean theater of operations received seasonal field clothing and equipment, which included summer cotton, OD herringbone twill fatigues or a winter ensemble such as the M-1943 field jacket and trousers, in OD cotton, worn over wool layers, with pile cap, parka-style overcoat and M-1944 shoepacs.

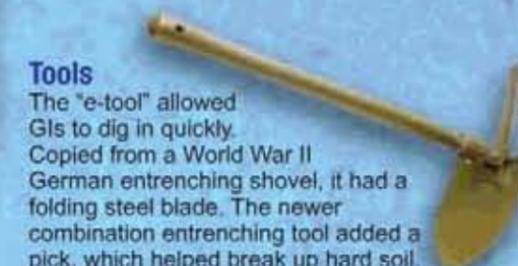
Steel Helmet

Adopted in 1941, the helmet gave only fragment protection. It featured a plastic liner fitted into a removable shell and a web chinstrap with a breakaway release.



Tent

Each soldier carried a shelter half. Two shelter halves formed a pup tent. The horseshoe roll held a blanket, three tent-pole sections and five wooden or aluminum tent pins.



Tools

The "e-tool" allowed GIs to dig in quickly. Copied from a World War II German entrenching shovel, it had a folding steel blade. The newer combination entrenching tool added a pick, which helped break up hard soil.

Sleeping Bags

replaced earlier heavy OD wool blankets. The wool bag was "mummy-style" laced into a cotton case. The M-1949 mountain bag was filled with insulating goose down.

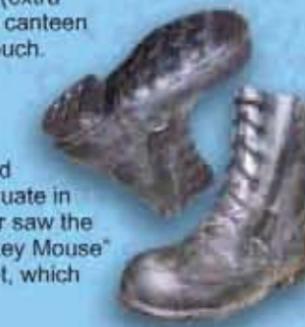


Web Equipment

carried combat and bivouac soldier loads. Based on a Marine Corps system, the M-1945 combat field pack (carrying underwear, toilet articles, mess kit, poncho) joined to the M-1945 field cargo pack (extra clothing) and belt with canteen and first-aid packet pouch.

Winter Footgear

The old wet-cold M-1944 shoepac, with rubber foot and leather upper, proved inadequate in Korea. The 1951-1952 winter saw the introduction of the new "Mickey Mouse" rubber-insulated combat boot, which was often too warm.



ROTATEE GOING HOME (1953)

Personnel on rotation or rest and recreation wore seasonal Class A uniforms. In Japan, enlisted men turned in field clothing and received summer or winter khaki cotton uniforms, M-1950 garrison caps, jackets (without cuffs) and wool trousers, and khaki poplin shirts and OD neckties to wear with their combat service boots.