

Dedication of the 45th Infantry Division Museum Library

to

Colonel Preston J. C. Murphy



Saturday,
2 p.m., August 25, 1984
in the Theater of the Museum

Few, if any men, have served with greater distinction in the 45th Infantry Division than Colonel Preston J. C. Murphy. He was a commander at regimental level in both World War II and Korea, and was one of the most capable officers ever produced by the division.

Likewise he was a man of warmth and compassion, and was loved by all who were privileged to know and to serve either beside or under him.

Colonel Murphy was a native of British Columbia in Canada, whose high school education was on Prince Edward Island, before he attended college at Colorado State University, studying engineering. Prior to World War II he operated Murphy Clothing Store in Fort Collins, Colorado.

He joined Company H, 157th Infantry regiment, of the Colorado National Guard in 1921, and within five years he had moved upward from private to commander of his company. By the time he was called to active duty for World War II he was a major and assistant G-3 of the 45th Infantry Division.

By the time the division moved overseas he was commander of the First Battalion, 157th Infantry, which was the only 45th battalion to enter Messina, Italy, closing the Sicilian campaign.

He next became executive officer of the 179th Infantry, and just in time to make the beachhead at Anzio with his regiment. He assumed command of the regiment soon afterwards, when Colonel Harold A. Meyer, its commander, was wounded.

On April 16, 1945, Colonel Murphy was wounded near Nurnburg, Germany, and returned to the United States.

Moving into the regular army following the war, he served in a number of capacities until 1950, when Major General James C. Styron, Commanding General of the 45th Infantry Division, which had been recalled for the Korean War, requested his service as division Chief of Staff. He served in this capacity at Camp Polk, La., and in Japan. Then, shortly before the division moved to Korea, he was transferred to command the 279th Infantry Regiment.

Following the war he served in a number of capacities, climaxing his career as Senior Army Adviser for the National Guard of the State of Texas. Following his retirement in 1957, he continued serving the Texas Guard as contact agent for the Armory Board for another 20 years.

His distinguished service earned him the Silver Star with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Legion of Merit with Cluster, the Bronze Star with two Clusters, the Purple Heart, the Combat Infantry Badge, and the French Croix de Guerre with Gold Star.

It is in recognition, not only of his distinguished service to the defense of his country, but also of his admirable personal qualities, making him one of the great Thunderbirds of all time, that the 45th Infantry Division Museum board and the 45th Infantry Division Association dedicate the museum library to Colonel Preston J. C. Murphy.