

= 26th Infantry Division (United States) =

The 26th Infantry Division was an infantry division of the United States Army . A major formation of the Massachusetts Army National Guard , it was based in Boston , Massachusetts for most of its history . Today , the division 's heritage is carried on by the 26th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade .

Formed on 18 July 1917 and activated 22 August 1917 at Camp Edwards , MA , consisting of units from the New England area , the division 's commander selected the nickname " Yankee Division " to highlight the division 's geographic makeup . Sent to Europe in World War I as part of the American Expeditionary Forces , the division saw extensive combat in France . Sent to Europe once again for World War II , the division again fought through France , advancing into Germany and liberating the Gusen concentration camp before the end of the war .

Following the end of World War II , the division remained as an active command in the National Guard , gradually expanding its command to contain units from other divisions which had been consolidated . However , the division was never called up to support any major contingencies or see major combat , and was eventually deactivated in 1993 , reorganized as a brigade under the 29th Infantry Division .

= = History = =

= = = World War I = = =

The 26th Infantry Division was first constituted on 18 July 1917 as the 26th Division . It was formally activated on 22 August of that year in Boston , Massachusetts . The division commanded two brigades comprising national guard units from Massachusetts , Connecticut , Rhode Island , New Hampshire , Vermont , and Maine . The 51st Infantry Brigade contained the 101st Infantry Regiment and the 102nd Infantry Regiment , while the 52nd Infantry Brigade contained the 103rd Infantry Regiment and the 104th Infantry Regiment . Shortly thereafter , division commander Major General C. R. Edwards called a press conference to determine a nickname for the newly formed division . Edwards decided to settle on the suggestion of " Yankee Division " since all of the subordinate units of the division were from New England . Shortly thereafter , the division approved a shoulder sleeve insignia with a " YD " monogram to reflect this .

On 21 September 1917 , the division arrived at Saint @-@ Nazaire , France . It was the second division of the American Expeditionary Forces to arrive into the theater at the time , and the first division wholly organized in the United States , joining the 1st Infantry Division . Two additional divisions completed the first wave of American troop deployment , with the 2nd Division formed in France and the 42nd Division arriving at St. Nazaire on 29 October . The division immediately moved to Neufchâteau for training , as most of the division 's soldiers were raw recruits , new to military service . Because of this , much of the division 's force was trained by the experienced French forces . It trained extensively with the other three US divisions , organized as the U.S. I Corps in January 1918 , before being moved into a quiet sector of the trenches in February .

The 26th Infantry Division remained in a relatively quiet region of the lines along the Chemin des Dames for several months before it relieved the 1st Division near St. Mihiel on 3 April . The line here taken over extended from the vicinity of Apremont , on the west , in front of Xivray @-@ Marvoisin , Seicheprey , and Bois de Remieres , as far as the Bois de Jury , on the right , where the French line joined the American line . Division Headquarters were at Boucq .

The stay of the Division in this sector was marked by several serious encounters with the enemy , where considerable forces were engaged . There were furthermore almost nightly encounters between patrols or ambush parties , and the harassing fire of the artillery on both sides was very active .

On 10 , 12 and 13 April , the lines held by the 104th Infantry in Bois Brule (near Apremont) , and by the French to the left , were heavily attacked by the Germans . At first the enemy secured a foothold in some advanced trenches which were not strongly held , but sturdy counterattacks

succeeded in driving the enemy out with serious losses , and the line was entirely re-established .

In late April , German infantry conducted a raid on positions of the 26th Division , one of the first attacks on Americans during the war . At 0400 on 20 April , German field artillery bombarded the 102nd Infantry 's positions near Seicheprey before German stoßtruppen moved against the village . The artillery box barrage , continuing 36 hours , isolated American units . The Germans overwhelmed a machine gun company and two infantry companies of the 102nd and temporarily breached the trenches before elements of the division rallied and recaptured the village . The Germans withdrew before the division could counterattack but inflicted 634 casualties , including 80 killed , 424 wounded , and 130 captured , while losing over 600 men , including 150 killed of their own . Similar raids struck the 101st infantry at Flirey on 27 May , and the 103rd Infantry at Xivray et Marvoisin on 16 June , but were repulsed . The 26th Division was relieved by the 82nd Division on 28 June , moved by train to Meaux , and entered the line again northwest of Chateau Thierry , relieving the U.S. 2nd Division on 5 July .

As the size of the American Expeditionary Force grew , the division was placed under command of I U.S. Corps in July . When the Aisne-Marne campaign began shortly thereafter , the division , under I U.S. Corps was placed under command of the French Sixth Army protecting its east flank . When the offensive began , the division advanced up the spine of the Marne salient for several weeks , pushing through Belleau Wood , moving 10 miles from 18 to 25 July . On 12 August it was pulled from the lines near Toul to prepare for the next offensive . The division was then a part of the offensive at St. Mihiel , during the Battle of Saint Mihiel . The division then moved in position for the last major offensive of the war , at Meuse-Argonne . This campaign was the last of the war , as an armistice was signed shortly thereafter . During World War I the division spent 210 days in combat , and suffered 1,587 killed in action and 12,077 wounded in action . The division returned to the United States and was demobilized on 3 May 1919 at Camp Devens , Massachusetts .

In the years following World War I , the division remained in the National Guard , seeing periodic reorganizations but no major deployments except for weekend training . In 1921 , the 102nd Infantry Regiment was replaced in the guard by the 182nd Infantry Regiment . In 1923 , the 103rd Infantry Regiment was replaced with the 181st Infantry Regiment . In 1941 , the 101st Infantry Regiment was replaced with the 164th Infantry Regiment briefly ; one year later it was relieved from the division , along with the 182nd Infantry Regiment , in order to form the Americal Division .

== = World War II = = =

As a part of Army-wide reorganization , the division 's brigade headquarters were disbanded in favor of regimental commands . The division was instead based around three regiments ; the 101st Infantry Regiment , the 104th Infantry Regiment , and the 328th Infantry Regiment . Also assigned to the division were the 101st , 102nd , 180th , and 263rd Field Artillery Battalions , the 39th Signal Company , the 726th Ordnance Company , the 26th Quartermaster Company , the 26th Reconnaissance Troop , the 101st Engineer Combat Battalion , and the 114th Medical Battalion . Major General Willard S. Paul took command of the division , which he would lead through the rest of the war . Before deploying overseas to the ETO , the 26th ID trained at Camp Campbell , Kentucky .

== = Europe = = =

The division was assigned to III Corps of the U.S. Ninth Army , part of the 12th Army Group , commanded by Lieutenant General Omar Bradley . It was shipped from the United States directly to France , and was never sent to Britain . The 26th Infantry Division landed in France at Cherbourg and Utah Beach on 7 September 1944 , but did not enter combat as a division until a month later . Elements were on patrol duty along the coast from Carteret to Siouville from 13 to 30 September . The 328th Infantry Regiment saw action with the 80th Infantry Division from 5 to 15 October . The

division was then reassigned to XII Corps of the U.S. Third Army . On 7 October , the 26th relieved the 4th Armored Division in the Salonnnes @-@ Moncourt @-@ Canal du Rhine au Marne sector , and maintained defensive positions . The division launched a limited objective attack on 22 October , in the Moncourt woods . On 8 November , the 26th then went on the offensive , took Dieuze on 20 November , advanced across the Saar River to Saar Union , and captured it on 2 December , after house @-@ to @-@ house fighting . Reaching Maginot fortifications on 5 December , it regrouped , entering Saareguemines on 8 December . Around this time it was reassigned to III Corps .

Rest at Metz was interrupted by the German offensive in the Ardennes , the Battle of the Bulge . The division moved north to Luxembourg from 19 to 21 December , to take part in the battle of the Ardennes break @-@ through . It attacked at Rambrouch and Grosbous on 22 December , beat off strong German counterattacks , captured Arsdorf on Christmas Day after heavy fighting , attacked toward the Wiltz River , but was forced to withdraw in the face of determined German resistance . After regrouping on 5 ? 8 January 1945 , it attacked again , crossing the Wiltz River on 20 January . The division continued its advance , taking Grumelscheid on 21 January , and crossed the Clerf River on 24 January . The division was reassigned to XX Corps . The division immediately shifted to the east bank of the Saar , and maintained defensive positions in the Saarlautern area from 29 January until 6 March 1945 .

The division 's drive to the Rhine River jumped off on 13 March 1945 , and carried the division through Merzig from 17 March , to the Rhine by 21 March , and across the Rhine at Oppenheim on 25 ? 26 March . The division was then reassigned to XII Corps . It took part in the house @-@ to @-@ house reduction of Hanau on 28 March , broke out of the Main River bridgehead , drove through Fulda on 1 April , and helped reduce Meiningen on 5 April . Moving southeast into Austria , the division assisted in the capture of Linz , 5 May . It had changed the direction of its advance , and was moving northeast into Czechoslovakia , across the Vlatava River , when the cease @-@ fire order was received . One day later , the division overran the Gusen concentration camp in conjunction with the 11th Armored Division , liberating it from German forces . There , it discovered that the Germans had used forced labor to carve out an elaborate tunnel system with underground aircraft production facilities . SS officers at the camp allegedly planned to demolish the tunnels with the prisoners inside , but the movement of the 26th Infantry and 11th Armored Divisions prevented this .

== == Post @-@ war == ==

During World War II , the 26th Infantry Division spent 199 days in combat . During that time , it suffered 1 @,@ 678 killed in action , 7 @,@ 379 wounded in action , 740 missing in action , 159 prisoners of war , and 6 @,@ 895 non @-@ battle casualties , for a total of 16 @,@ 851 casualties during the conflict . Soldiers of the division received two Medals of Honor , and won 38 Distinguished Service Crosses , seven Legions of Merit , 927 Silver Stars , 42 Soldier 's Medals , 5 @,@ 331 Bronze Star Medals , and 98 Air Medals . The division returned to the United States and inactivated at Camp Myles Standish , Massachusetts on 21 December 1945 .

== == Cold War == ==

The division was reactivated on 11 April 1947 in Boston . It remained as the major command of the Massachusetts Army National Guard , but its command took control of units from other states following consolidation of the Army National Guard . The division remained as an active reserve component of the Army National Guard , but it was not selected for any deployments to cold war contingencies . In 1956 the division received its distinctive unit insignia .

The division was reorganized in accordance with the Pentomic organization , probably in 1959 . Among the battle groups of the division were 1st Battle Group , 101st Infantry , and 1st Battle Group , 182nd Infantry . The 104th Infantry Regiment was reorganized on 1 May 1959 under the Combat Arms Regimental System as the 1st Battle Group , 104th Infantry .

In 1963 , the division was reorganized under the Reorganization Objective Army Division plan . Its

regimental commands were inactivated in favor of brigades . The 101st Infantry Regiment became the 1st Brigade , 26th Infantry Division , headquartered in Dorchester , Massachusetts . The 104th Infantry Regiment became the 3rd Brigade , 26th Infantry Division , headquartered in Springfield , Massachusetts . Among the division 's units in 1965 were the 1 @-@ 101 infantry , 1 @-@ 104 , 2 @-@ 104 , 1 @-@ 181 , 1 @-@ 182 , 1 @-@ 220 Infantry , and 1 @-@ 101 FA . The division was organized as a light infantry division , and at the same time , the 26th Aviation Battalion was established to provide air support . In 1967 the 43rd Infantry Division of the Connecticut Army National Guard was consolidated into the 43rd Brigade , 26th Division , and put under the command of the 26th Infantry Division .

In 1987 , the 26th Aviation Battalion was dissolved and the 126th Aviation Regiment arose in its place . The 126th Aviation Regiment 's battalions formed the basis of the new divisional 26th Aviation Brigade .

On 1 April 1988 , the division was relocated to Camp Edwards , Massachusetts . The division headquarters was consolidated with 1st Brigade , 26th Infantry Division . In its place , the 86th Infantry Brigade was assigned to the division as a round @-@ out unit .

= = = Inactivation = = =

Following the end of the Cold War , the Army began a process of downsizing its forces . The Army reactivated the 29th Infantry Division and began reorganizing its forces and further consolidating them . As a result , the Army decided to downsize the 26th Infantry Division into a brigade , and put it under the command of the 29th Infantry Division . On 1 September 1993 , the division was inactivated , and the 26th Infantry Brigade designated in its place , based in Springfield . The 3rd and 43rd brigades , 26th Infantry Division were inactivated , and the 86th Infantry Brigade was put under the command of the 42nd Infantry Division . On 1 October 1995 , the division was formally designated the 26th Brigade , 29th Infantry Division . In 2004 , the 26th Brigade transitioned into the 26th (Yankee) Infantry Brigade Combat Team .

= = Honors = =

The division received six campaign streamers in World War I and four campaign streamers in World War II , for a total of 10 campaign streamers in its operational lifetime .

= = = Campaign streamers = = =

= = Legacy = =

The beltway around the city of Boston , Massachusetts Route 128 , is nicknamed the " Yankee Division Highway " in honor of the 26th Infantry Division . For its contribution in liberating the Gusen concentration camp , the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum continually flies the division 's colors at its entrance and for high @-@ profile memorial ceremonies , honoring it as one of 35 US divisions to have assisted in the liberation of German concentration camps .

Notable members of the division include Walter Krueger , Edward Lawrence Logan , J. Laurence Moffitt , the last surviving veteran of the Yankee Division from World War One , and Sergeant Stubby , a dog that served with the Division in combat in World War I. PFC Michael J. Perkins , a resident of South Boston and a member of the Division was awarded the Medal of Honor in France in World War I. Additionally , two members of the division received the Medal of Honor in World War II , Ruben Rivers , and Alfred L. Wilson .