

COLUMBUS FILE - Ft. Benning
- History

FORT BENNING

"HOME OF THE INFANTRY"



MAJOR GENERAL HENRY LEWIS BENNING, CSA



Fort Benning was named after the Confederate Major General Benning. Born Henry Lewis Benning on 2 April 1814 in Columbia County, Georgia, Benning was the third child of Pleasant Moon and Malinda Meriweather White Benning. While he was a very young man he moved with his parents to a plantation in Harris County, Georgia. At the age of 20, he graduated from Franklin College (now the University of Georgia) in Athens, Georgia.

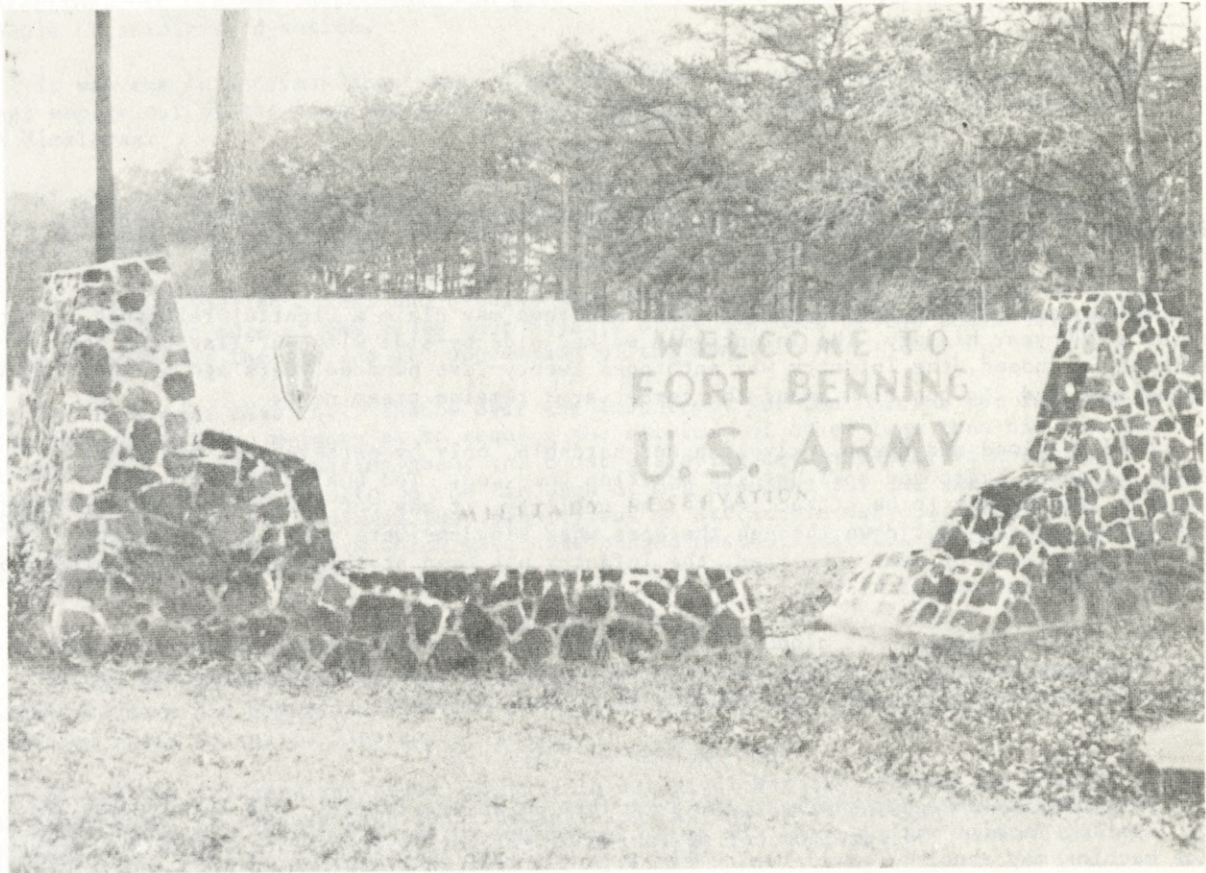
After graduation from college, Henry L. Benning studied law in Talbotton, Georgia and was admitted to the bar in 1835. In 1837, he was made Solicitor General of the Chattahoochee Circuit and was later elected to and served in the General Assembly of Georgia. On 12 September 1839, he married Mary Howard Jones, daughter of Colonel Seaborn Jones. In 1853, Benning was elected as a judge of the Supreme Court of Georgia.

At the beginning of the War Between the States, Benning entered the Confederate Army as Colonel of the 7th Regiment of Georgia Infantry. Approximately one year later he was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General.

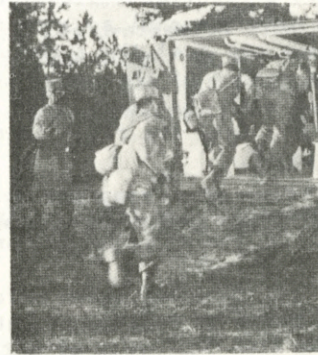
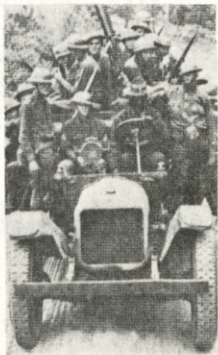
General Benning participated in the battles of Second Manassas, Sharpsburg, Chickamauga, and the Wilderness. He was severely wounded at the Wilderness and never regained the use of his arm.

General Benning was known as "Old Rock" by his troops for his calmness and daring in battle. In the final days before the surrender of the confederate forces he was promoted to Major General.

After the war, General Benning returned to Columbus and practiced law until his death on 10 July 1875.



Fort Benning, which is located 9 miles south of Columbus, Georgia, on US Highway 27, is known as the "Home of the Infantry." It is here that the famed US Army Infantry School was established and through the years gradually emerged as the most influential infantry center in the modern world. Fort Benning and the USAIS are so intertwined that it is virtually impossible to trace the history of Fort Benning without recording the evolution of the school. From 1918 until the present the development of Fort Benning has been directly proportionate to the progress of the USAIS. Throughout the years the mission of Fort Benning and the USAIS has remained fundamentally the same--"to produce the world's finest combat infantryman."



The progress of the Infantry School can be demonstrated by the different modes of transportation utilized.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE INFANTRY

This booklet on the history of Fort Benning, Georgia, was prepared as a national bicentennial salute to the American Infantry, the individual Infantryman, and his home, the U.S. Army Infantry Center and Infantry School.

While Camp Benning was founded in 1918 and thus may claim a rightful reference in our nation's 200-year history, the Infantryman walked side-by-side with our flag from the beginning. Indeed, the Infantry was enthroned twenty-five hundred years ago as the "Queen of Battles" and its position among the combat arms remains preeminent.

Only by blood and sweat, privation and hardship, only by perseverance and steel nerve, by sheer heart and soul has its position been won. Too businesslike to be romantic, too bloody to be attractive to the nobility, it has not always received its mead of written praise. But down through the ages when kingdoms were made or fell, when civilizations rose or were submerged, the Infantry has been at the heart of the contest to influence the outcome of history.

The Infantry stands not alone nor to it belongs the sole credit. There has always been glory enough for all. The human body needs other organs than the heart and so the Infantry needs the other arms to complete the perfect whole.

Fighting Machine With A Soul

The Infantry owes its place to the fact that it is the People. The Infantryman is the fighting machine with a soul. He is an instrument of war created by God and no man-made machine may equal or excel him. When a people have been strong, sturdy, clean and imbued with love of country, its infantry has shown like qualities. But when ease, luxury, licentiousness and the mad pursuit of money have rotted the heart of the body politic, the Infantry has suffered likewise.

The Infantryman is not made in a day. Because he marches against the enemy by the aid of his own legs, to grapple with the enemy with his own hands, because of the iron discipline he must acquire, because of the versatility which must be his, because his very individuality which is his strength when trained may be his undoing when untrained, he may only attain the condition of a good Infantryman after long, unremitting, arduous and thorough training.

There is a peculiar impression of irresistible power by great bodies of marching men. There is no man with soul so sodden that he does not thrill at the steady beat of the Infantry march nor feel the tremendous latent power that lies within. The dash of cavalry, the rumble of the guns may quicken him to greater surface enthusiasm, but they do not leave him with that persistent impression of power. It is the soul of the Infantry that he feels. Only the rush, continuous, mighty, eternal of the waters over Niagara may be likened to it.

The prowess of the Infantry and its influence on man and his affairs stand out dramatically in the pages of history.

It was ten thousand Greek Infantryman who, faced by ten times their number smashed the Persian hosts at Marathon twenty-five hundred years ago and assured to us Greek civilization with its gifts of art and letters.

It was the Infantryman who made good Sparta's boast that men, not walls, were her protection. It was the Infantryman who gave to the world at Thermopylae that unparalleled example of soldierly devotion.

It was the Infantryman about whom Alexander built the army that hewed for him his great empire out of the East and marched with him from the Aegean Sea to the heights of the Himalayas.

It was the Infantryman who carried the Roman law and governmental system over the world and who held Rome's far-flung frontiers against every assault so long as Rome herself deserved such devotion.

It was the English archer who brought down the knight from his blundering horse and drove in the thin edge of the wedge that finally broke the back of the feudal system with its privileges for the few and its oppression of the many.

The Dark Ages cast their shadow over the Infantry. For the warrior who felt the need of an armored skin so weighty as to require the services of other legs than his own and who spent his days philandering about the country slaying seven-headed, fire-eating dragons, or in beating a tattoo on the tin back of his opponent for the smiles of some fair maiden, the bloody, and businesslike infantry was no attractive service. There was a gory crudeness about infantry work which must have proved most distasteful to the scions of the leading families of that day.

It Was The Infantry

It was to the Infantry of the Old Guard that Napoleon turned in his last desperate attempt to save his Empire at Waterloo and it was the British Infantry that broke the Old Guard and wrote an end to Napoleon's story.

It was the Infantry who faced Infantry in our Civil War and strewed the country from the Mississippi to the sea with their bodies. And it was an Infantryman whose infantry qualities of dogged perseverance, loyalty to principle and contempt of losses finally preserved these United States as one.

In World War I, though subjected to all that history and modern ingenuity could devise by way of frightfulness and terror, the Infantryman acquitted himself gloriously. But he paid the time-old price with his dead. Neither bomb nor shell nor bullet nor poison gas nor flame could daunt him and he went his way to victory as was his wont.

In World War II, the Infantry was the heart of the greatest Army ever assembled. It met and defeated the enemy on both sides of the world and wrote sagas of bravery at Bataan, Africa, Normandy, Anzio and St. Lo. In Korea, it was the Infantryman who gathered his strength around Pusan and marched to the Yalu. In Vietnam, he pursued the enemy on the wings of power and conquered him in the rice paddies and forests.

The Infantryman has never felt the need of surrounding his profession with mystery or strange names. But whether it be the javelin or the spear, the dagger or the sword, the long bow or the cross bow, the arquebus, the musket or the rifle, the machinegun, cannon, mortar tank or nuclear arms, to them the Infantry has been ever ready to turn its hand and make good use of them in battle.

The Infantry stands today as it has stood down through the ages -- stouthearted, undaunted, ever ready to take one more step toward the enemy, ever ready to strike him one more blow.

The Development of the American Infantry

The development of Infantry in the Anglo-American tradition, as distinct from the Continental experience, had its beginning in English history following the Norman conquest. It was characterized by the evolution of policy and by the development of a keen appreciation of marksmanship combined with the woodcraft.

Through the Continent, and particularly Prussia and France, had a marked and unfortunate influence on Anglo-American Infantry tactics and equipment, the early Anglo-American Infantry tradition survived.

Early Field Service Regulations (tactics) were copied by the Americans from the French. After the formation of the United States, a Frenchman emerged who was to have a tremendous impact on the development of the Infantry in the Western World. Napoleon and his Army swept through Europe conquering all with whom they came in contact. Napoleon strongly believed that artillery was the dominate arm in waging war. With the use of cannons, the French forces destroyed 72,000 Austrian troops at Austerlutz, 45,000 Prussians at Jena and 56,000 Russians at Friedland. Needless to say, the armies of the world quickly turned their attention to artillery while the Infantry was forced into the background.

Military Policy and Service Regulations (Articles of War) were taken with only slight modification from the British Continental tactics, which became popular with the British in the 18th Century, and with the Americans in the early 19th Century, had an adverse effect on Anglo-American Infantry.

Artillery turned out to not be the absolute weapon it was originally thought, but only after the Infantry returned to a reliance on marksmanship, dispersion, cover and concealment.

Baron von Steuben should be remembered for his effectiveness in instilling discipline in Washington's Army.

When von Steuben arrived at Valley Forge, he found the Colonial Army was an unruly and undisciplined mob. With General Washington's approval he immediately launched a program designed to discipline the Army. First, von Steuben trained the officers and organized them into a cadre for training the remainder of the Army. In addition, he induced General Washington to create a guard of outstanding soldiers to serve as a model for the rest of the Army. Thus formal infantry training was introduced into the American Army; however, because of many events it would take almost a century before a permanent center was established for training officers and soldiers in infantry techniques.

During the War of 1812, even though General Andrew Jackson's 7th Infantry, in the best Infantry tradition, decimated Lord Packingham's British regulars who had been "taken in" by fashions in Continental warfare, the Infantry did not play a significant role. The majority of the victories gained by the U.S. in this war were naval.

In 1813, a New System of Discipline, based on French methods was adopted in an effort to standardize the training of Infantrymen. European military doctrine continued to dominate American thought.

In 1815, a board of officers composed of Generals Scott and Swift and Colonels Fenwick, Cumming and Drayton created a new set of Infantry Drill Regulations, patterned after The Rules and Regulations for the Field Service and Maneuvers of the French Infantry. This was the first significant work of this type to be prepared by American Army officers.

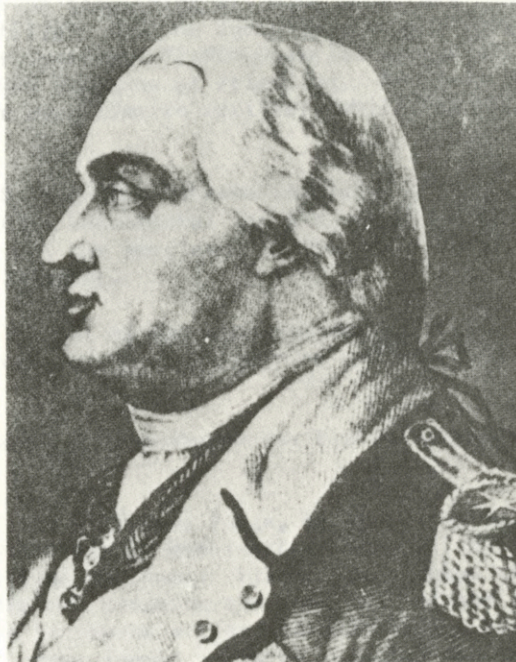
The American people and the government were not willing to accept the need for well-trained Infantry soldiers. With the Industrial Revolution and the expansion of the frontier the people had little time to devote to the long-range concepts of a strong military establishment. Still, military officers pointed out that further penetration into the frontier would require trained military personnel to establish discipline and to maintain law and order through the new territories.

Continental tactics, which emphasized Artillery and maneuver by Infantry on a narrow front without interval, was responsible for heavy British losses in the American Revolution and persisted to later plague the Infantry in the American Civil War and as late as August 1914 for the British.

CHAPTER 2

THE INFANTRY SCHOOL CONCEPTION

In 1826, Major General Edmund P. Gaines persuaded the War Department to authorize the establishment of an infantry post at St. Louis for the purpose of organizing an "Infantry School of Instruction" to improve the efficiency of the Infantry. Thus, in 1826, Jefferson Barracks became the Infantry's first school. The School failed to endure and was officially closed on 24 November 1828.



The concept of a school to train Infantrymen was first engendered by Baron von Steuben during the American Revolution.

The next decades of our history are filled with minor Indian wars, and a punitive expedition into Mexico--an era which did not permit the Infantry to do much towards its improvement.

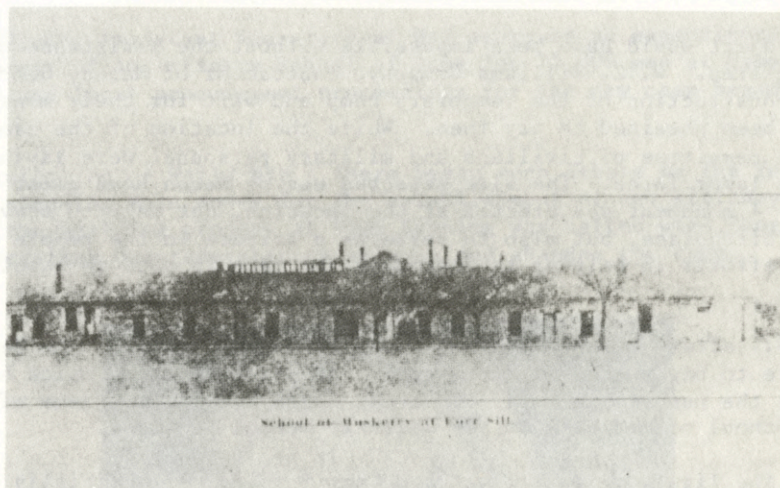
The War Between the States provided a grim picture of the training status of our Infantry forces. Neither the Union forces nor the Confederate forces were able to field well-trained and disciplined troops. Bloody battles like Shiloh, Fredericksburg, and Gettysburg reflected not only the lack of training and leadership; but also the fact that the weapons used (the Minie Rifle) were far in advance of the tactics in which they were employed.

The years following the Civil War can be termed the dark ages of the Army. Once

again apathy towards the military seemed to be the attitude of the citizens of the US.

The Army lacked officers trained for the leadership of large bodies of troops or to serve on large unit staffs. Training doctrine was geared strictly to the small unit. The War Department was loosely organized with officers who had very little knowledge of the problems of the line soldier. The biggest problem, however, was the lack of trained volunteers. The citizen-soldier became almost nonexistent. In summary, the beginning of the 20th Century found the Army weak in organization for command, weak in coordination and planning at all levels, and extremely deficient in training. Basically the United States had no clear cut policy for national defense.

Meanwhile, the military postgraduate-school idea had been gaining popularity throughout the armies of Europe, mostly in Germany and France. To keep up with the trend the US Army established the School of Application for Infantry and Cavalry at Fort Leavenworth in 1881. This school later evolved as the present day Command and General Staff College. In 1892 the Fort Riley School for Cavalry and Field Artillery was created. Later this school was split into the Fort Riley School for Cavalry and the Fort Sill School for Field Artillery. Still no school was established for the Infantry.



In January 1913 The School of Musketry was transferred from Presidio of Monterey, California to Fort Sill, Oklahoma.

Due to his concern over the decline of good marksmanship in the Army, Lieutenant General Arthur MacArthur persuaded the Army to establish the School of Musketry at the Presidio of Monterey, California on 21 February 1907. This may be called the beginning of the present Infantry School, and the event which led to the creation of Fort Benning.

In January 1913 the School of Musketry was transferred from Presidio of Monterey, California to Fort Sill, Oklahoma; however, the development of this school was interrupted shortly after it was transferred in order to send troops to the Mexican border to pursue Mexican bandits. Throughout the next four years the School of Musketry operated in a very limited capacity due to the severe manpower shortage throughout the Army.

With the outbreak of World War I the need to expand our Army became increasingly more apparent. The size of Fort Sill, Oklahoma, was not adequate for the training of both the Infantry and the Artillery. A separate camp for training the Infantry had to be established.

In addition to more Infantrymen, General Pershing also needed a larger number of Artillerymen. This gave the Artillery School of Fire at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, a natural excuse to complain about the lack of training ground available to them because of the

presence of the Infantry School of Arms. The Artillery also wanted more land for the location of another training center. Thus both the Infantry and the Artillery competed for camp sites.

On May 21, 1918, the Adjutant General's Office appointed Colonel Henry E. Eames to head a board of officers to meet at Fort Sill, for the purpose of selecting a site for the Infantry School of Arms. Many sites were considered, but most were disqualified based on severe winter climate, unsuitable terrain, remoteness and excessive transportation costs. The board decided on Fayetteville, North Carolina, but later settled on Columbus, Georgia, after Fayetteville was taken as an artillery site.

Infantry School of Arms

On September 18, 1918, the Adjutant General directed that the Infantry School of Arms with all personnel, property and equipment, move to Columbus, Georgia by 1 October 1918.

Major J. Paul Jones was assigned the monumental task of building a cantonment area to accommodate the arriving troops. The time factor alone was the greatest obstacle he faced, for the first troops would arrive in approximately 2 weeks.

The entire project would have been impossible without the assistance of the citizens of the surrounding area. W. Z. Williams Company, contractor of Macon, Georgia, had agreed to undertake the construction of the temporary camp and wait for their money when proper authorization had been obtained to pay them. While the location of the camp site was being determined a committee of civilians and military personnel were laying out the plans and organizing the labor force. The site selected was on Macon Road about three miles east of Columbus. A monument was erected at the location, not only to serve as a reminder of Camp Benning's birthplace, but also to serve as a tribute to the people of Columbus for their magnificent efforts in helping to construct the camp in such an unbelievably short period.

In January 1917 after General Pershing withdrew his troops from the Mexican border, the School was able to begin classes once again. The war in Europe which had been raging for 2 years became the number one topic of study. Also in 1917 the name of the School was changed from the School of Musketry to the Infantry School of Arms.

On 6 October the first troops arrived and Camp Benning was officially born the following day. The 19th of October a ceremony was held to christen the Army post as Camp Benning.



Temporary buildings and tents which housed the first troops to arrive at Camp Benning located 3 miles from Columbus on Macon Road.

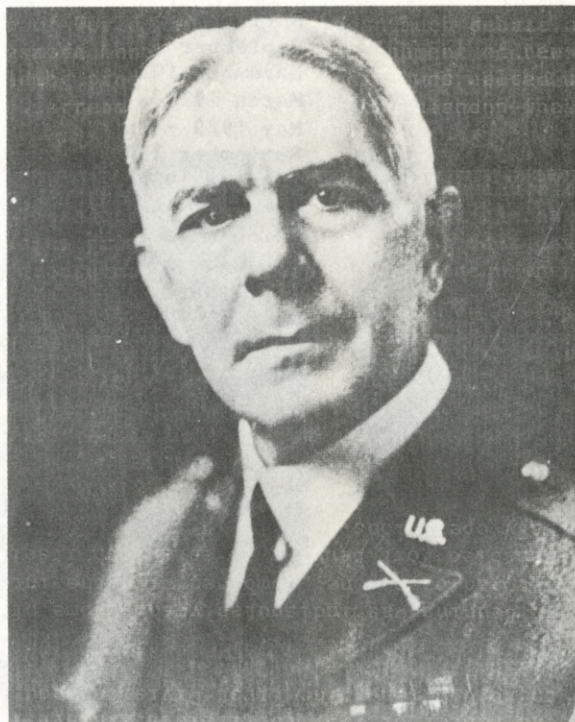
CHAPTER 3

THE EARLY YEARS AT FORT BENNING

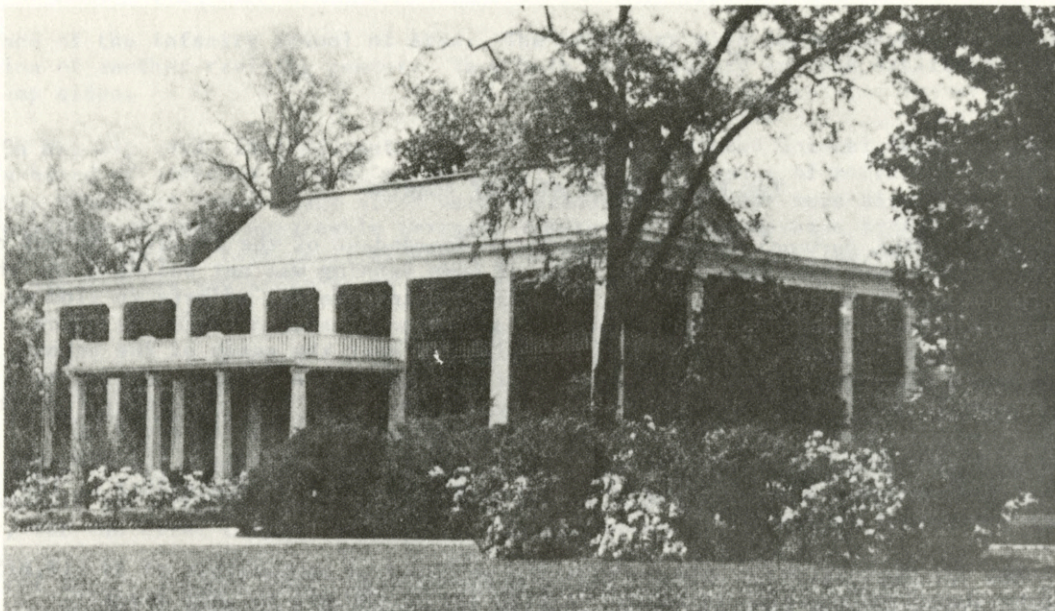
On October 5, 1918, Colonel Eames was appointed Commandant of the Infantry School of Arms. He soon determined that the original site of Camp Benning was not suitable for the type training for which the Infantry School was responsible. In his efforts to find more suitable terrain Colonel Eames discovered an area on the south side of Columbus which appeared to possess the topographical features desired to meet the needs of the school. The land was owned by Arthur Bussey and was part of the Bussey Plantation. Action to acquire the property was initiated by the Secretary of War to the Attorney General of the United States, and on October 19, 1918, the Assistant Secretary of War approved an expenditure of \$3,600,000 for the purchase of what would be Camp Benning's 115,000 acre reservation. The purchase also included the large frame house which now serves as the home for the Commanding General.

On October 30, the Assistant Secretary of War approved an expenditure of \$9,119,875 for the establishment of an Infantry School of Arms for 25,000 men at Camp Benning. Construction work and local procurement proceedings for the new camp began almost immediately.

With the termination of World War I there began much debate on the feasibility and justification of spending more money for the establishment of new military posts. On January 9, 1919, the building project at Camp Benning was halted when Congressional action ordered the Constructing Quartermaster to salvage and abandon the camp.



Colonel Henry E. Eames was appointed the first Commandant of the Infantry School on 5 October 1918.



"Riverside" was part of the Bussey Plantation purchased in 1918. Since its acquisition, "Riverside" has served as the quarters of the Commandant of the Infantry School.

COMMANDANTS OF THE INFANTRY SCHOOL

COL Henry E. Eames	October 1918 - April 1919
MG Charles S. Farnsworth	April 1919 - July 1920
MG Walter H. Gordon	September 1920 - November 1923
BG Briant H. Wells	November 1923 - March 1926
BG Edgar T. Collins	March 1926 - May 1929
MG Campbell King	May 1929 - May 1933
BG George H. Estes	September 1933 - September 1936
BG Asa L. Singleton	October 1936 - August 1940
BG Courtney H. Hodges	October 1940 - March 1941
BG Omar N. Bradley	March 1941 - February 1942
MG Leven C. Allen	February 1942 - September 1943
MG Charles H. Bonesteel	September 1943 - June 1944
MG Fred L. Walker	July 1944 - July 1945
MG John W. O'Daniel	July 1945 - June 1948
MG Withers A. Burress	July 1948 - January 1951
MG John H. Church	March 1951 - May 1952
MG Robert N. Young	June 1952 - January 1953
MG Guy S. Meloy, Jr.	January 1953 - June 1954
MG Joseph H. Harper	June 1954 - May 1956
MG George E. Lynch	May 1956 - August 1956
MG Herbert B. Powell	August 1956 - April 1958
MG Paul L. Freeman	May 1958 - April 1960
MG Hugh P. Harris	April 1960 - July 1961
MG Ben Harrell	August 1961 - February 1963
MG C. W. G. Rich	February 1963 - August 1964
MG John Heintges	August 1964 - July 1965
MG Robert H. York	July 1965 - July 1967
MG John M. Wright, Jr.	July 1967 - May 1969
MG George I. Forsythe	June 1969 - August 1969
MG Orwin C. Talbott	September 1969 - February 1973
MG Thomas M. Tarpley	February 1973 - August 1975
MG Willard Latham	August 1975 - July 1977
MG William J. Livsey, Jr.	August 1977

Over the next few months the Army continued to push for Camp Benning. In March, 1919, the Construction Division of the Army was directed to take over the purchase of land. The project was reauthorized, not on the same wartime level, but at least a start was begun. With the reauthorization came the construction of quarters for officers and noncommissioned officers, a hospital, school buildings, and all facilities for support services to include ammunition magazines, warehouses and storehouses, together with the utility facilities necessary to serve the camp.

On April 21, 1919, Major General Charles S. Farnsworth assumed command of Camp Benning with aspirations to make it the largest and most influential Army post in the United States. His main efforts were concentrated on securing some recognition of permanency for the camp.

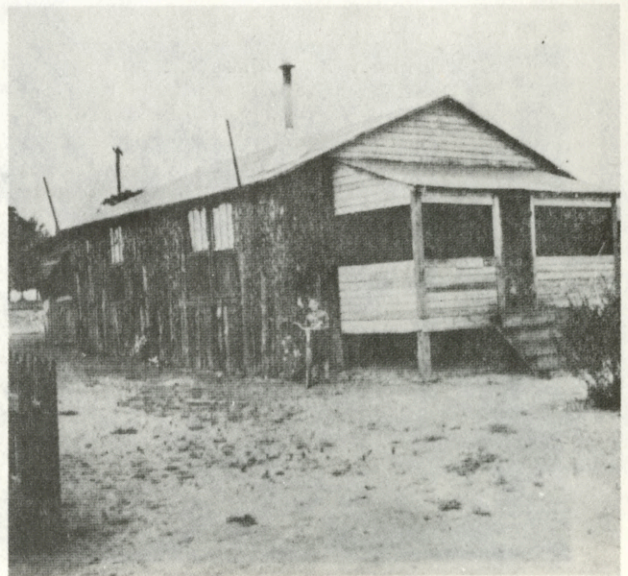
July 22, 1919, General Farnsworth wrote a letter to Brigadier General Paul B. Malone informing him that he was to be the Assistant Commandant, and as such, would have immediate charge of the Infantry School. Upon General Malone's arrival one of his first acts was to begin the preparation of a digest of information on matters pertaining to the Infantry School for Congress. The premise of the report was laid out by judging the relative importance of the Infantry School measured by the magnitude of the task which confronts the Infantry in the winning of battles, and the extent to which Infantry training may serve to reduce the wastage of human lives in the future.

General Malone's report had some effect on Congress in that the Congressional committee agreed to send a representative committee to visit Camp Benning.

A few months later Thomas S. Crago, a representative from Pennsylvania spoke out against Congress in justification of the importance of the Infantry Training School. This action, the delegation visit, and the research data were all effective. In February 1920, the purchase of land to complete Camp Benning was authorized. Although Congress had agreed to complete the purchase of lands contracted for, it had not by any means precluded the possibility that Camp Benning would be discontinued. It was still a great possibility and would remain so as long as Benning was considered a temporary camp.



Officer quarters in the early 1920's



Noncommissioned Officers quarters in 1920's

In General Order Number 1, January 9, 1922, the War Department announced Camp Benning as a permanent military installation. The impossible had come to pass, and the Infantry finally had a home.

In June of 1922 Fort Benning began building again. The Quartermaster General ordered construction of ten double sets of officer quarters. These were to be the first quarters included as part of the permanent construction planned for the school. By 1923 housing conditions for some had improved. Brick quarters were built for permanent officers and noncommissioned officers and it was noted that the laundry, PX, and commissary facilities were not surpassed by any other military post.

Colonel George C. Marshall arrived at Fort Benning in November, 1927, and took the position as Assistant Commandant and head of the Academic Department. During his tenure he revamped the entire instructional system of the Infantry School. Besides the reorganization project, Marshall introduced research into other fields of activity, some of which led to important developments of machinegun techniques, especially anti-aircraft firing. Marshall had a special tank company organized and tried to get an air detachment for the school. Unable to obtain the latter he arranged for annual demonstrations of air support technique by a squadron from Maxwell Field, Montgomery, Alabama.

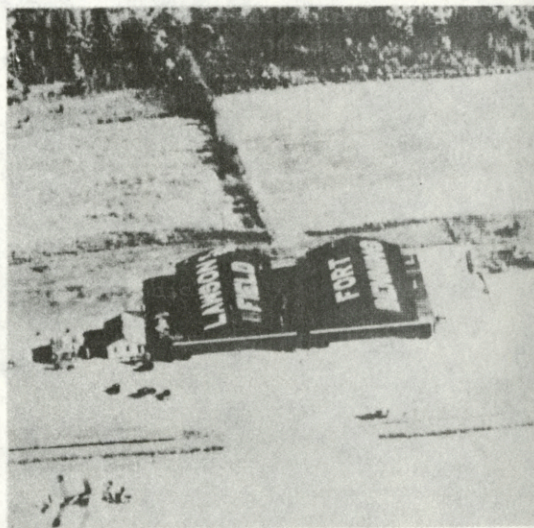
Marshall was also at that time considered one of the most knowledgeable men in the field of foreign armies. Consequently, under his guidance the methods and doctrine of foreign armies were inaugurated and modifications were planned in the course of instruction to keep in line with current developments in infantry armament and tactics.

Housing and construction still remained the central problem at Fort Benning, but construction continued. In 1928 the school library was completed and housed one of the finest military libraries in the Army at that time. In 1929 a new cuartel section was completed and a new water filtration plant was built.

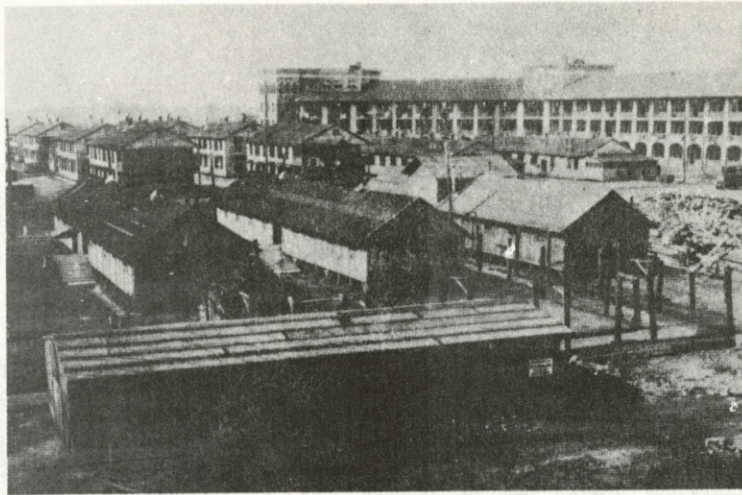
General Campbell King took command of the post on May 1, 1929. As the year 1930 approached, he would supervise the beginning of Fort Benning's greatest era of growth.



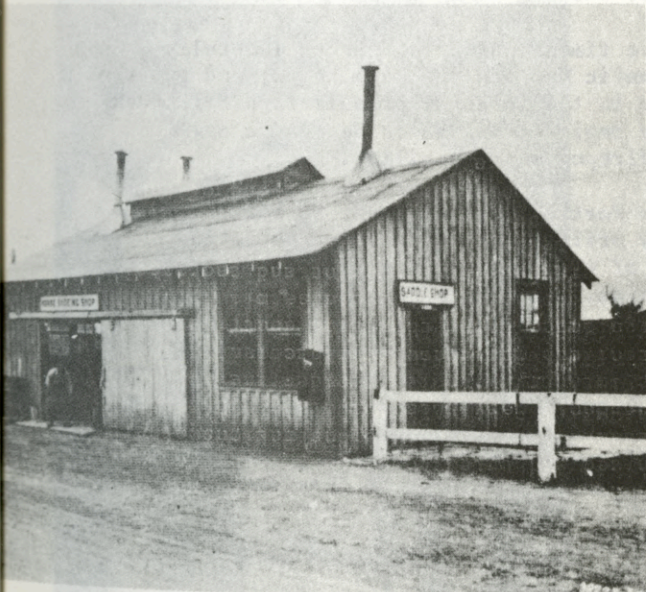
Company Street at early Fort Benning



Lawson Army Air Field in early 1920's



Stockade area in late 1920's



Post Horse Shoeing Shop and Saddle Shop in 1920's



29th Infantry Barracks in late 1920's

CHAPTER 4

THE DEPRESSION - AN ERA OF EXPANSION

The 1930's were eventful years for Fort Benning. George C. Marshall was concluding his enormously influential tenure. Names such as Bradley and Stilwell could be found throughout the staff and faculty at the Infantry School.

The 1930's brought the great depression and with it large amounts of money to be spent in the construction of permanent buildings at Fort Benning. Such projects as the Public Works Administration, Works Progress Administration and Civilian Conservation Corps enabled Fort Benning to at least obtain modern facilities.

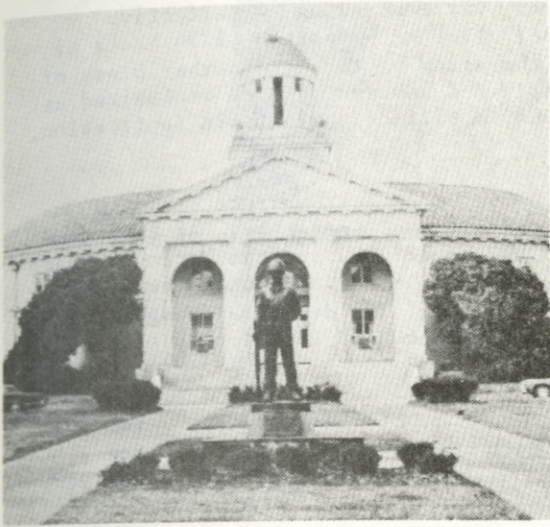
Building #35, for years the post headquarters as well as the academic center of the Infantry School, was completed in 1935. A year earlier a dream of many officers was realized when the Officers Club was built. A modern chapel was constructed along with a radio building, new noncommissioned officers' quarters, a permanent guardhouse, and apartment building for officers. Also the living facilities of both the 29th Infantry and the 24th Infantry were expanded and improved. The 83d Field Artillery received a new guardhouse and stables. In addition, apartments for bachelor officers, a print shop, field grade officer quarters and a new lighting system for streets were constructed.

In 1933, Fort Benning became the regional center for Civilian Conservation Corps. Many of the Infantry School instructors became supervisors of CCC Camps within the vicinity of Fort Benning. At the height of the program approximately 800 men a day were shuttled through the post and on to establish forest camps. Most of these men were conditioned at Fort Benning for 2 weeks and then sent to forestry camps. Some workers remained at Fort Benning and worked on military projects. At one time there was a tent city located on the reservation which housed 8,000 CCC men.

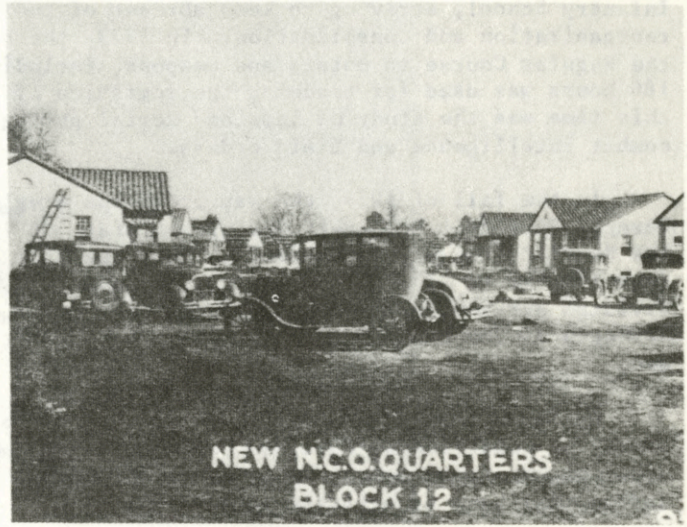
It was during the 1930's, more than any other time, that Fort Benning literally emerged as the "Home of the Infantry." The automatic weapon, the machinegun, and the tank demanded that alterations and adaptations be made in the infantry organization. Through research conducted at Fort Benning, the old style regiment was discarded and a new configuration adopted. The emphasis was now on firepower and mobility.

In 1932 the Tank School was transferred from Fort Meade, Maryland, to Fort Benning. The idea behind the move was to acquaint infantry officers with the characteristics, powers and limitations of the tank. At the time of the move, it was planned to treat the tank exactly like other infantry weapons of the time.

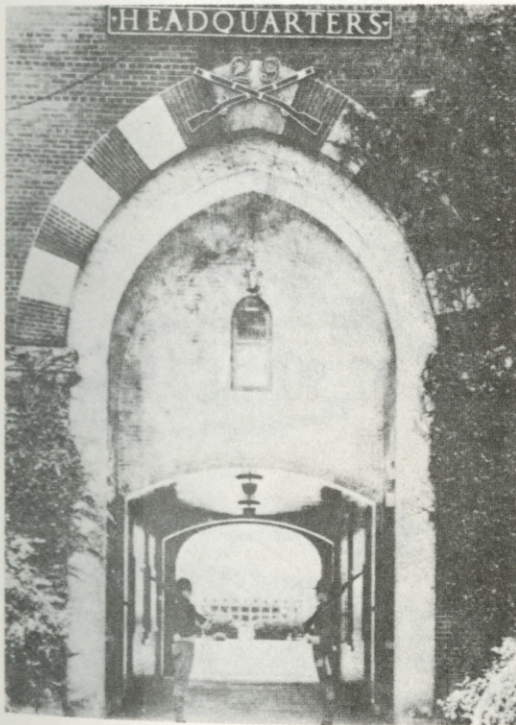
Another innovation was the streamlining of the course at the Infantry School so that the largest number of officers could be taught efficiently and completely in the shortest possible time. This took place in 1934 when the Advanced Course and the Company Officers Course were combined to create the Regular Course. This course was intended for officers in the Regular Army and was designed to train officers in tactical duties, to include both the command staff levels and infantry divisions. Subjects covered in this course included tactics, and the techniques of other arms,



Building 35 which served as Headquarters for the Infantry School was completed in 1935.



Noncommissioned Officers' Quarters were constructed in 1930's.



Sentries in front of Headquarters 29th Infantry in 1930's.



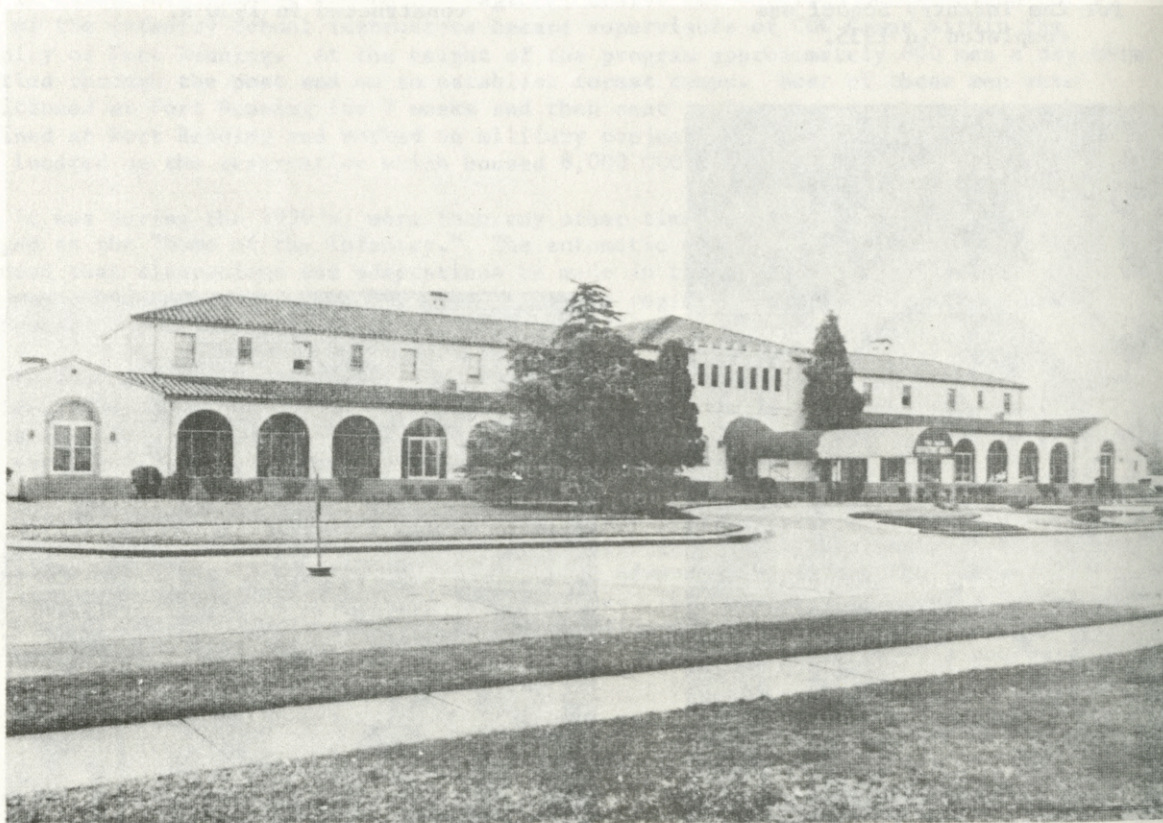
Troops of the 24th Infantry of Headquarters 24th Infantry in 1930's.

including the combined deployment of all branches of the Infantry. Emphasis was placed on practical application of subject matter.

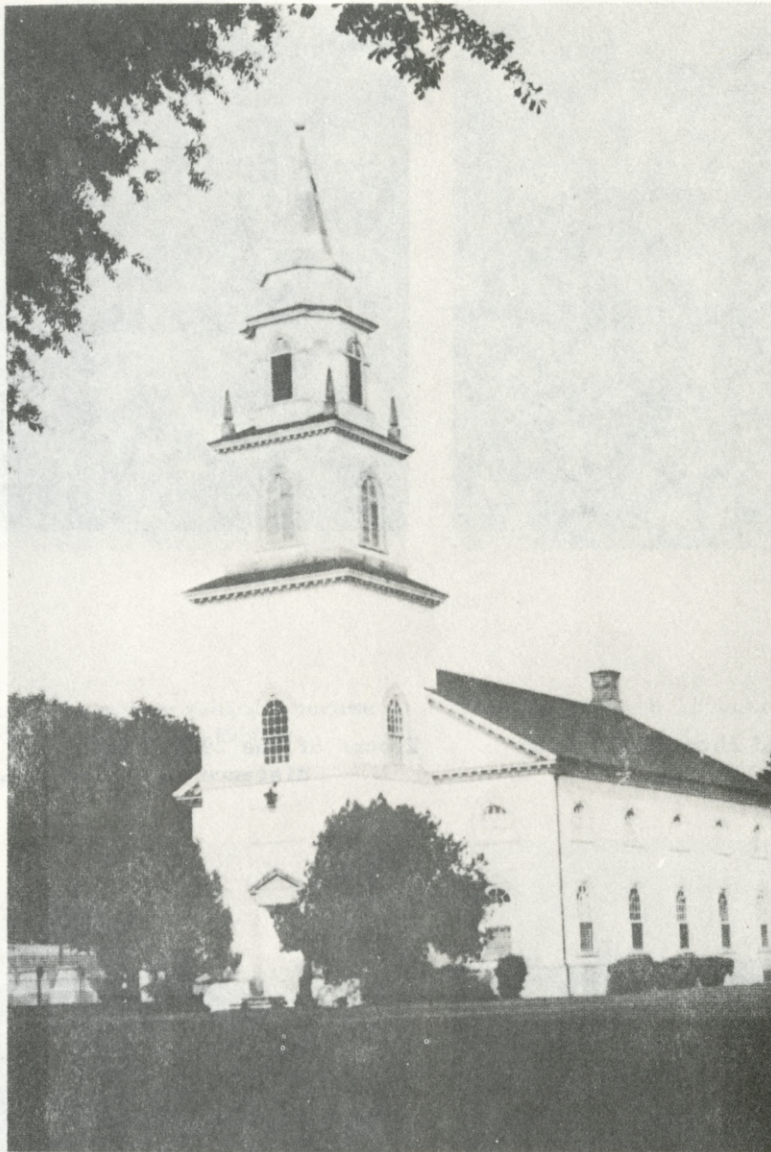
As the 1930's began to close, the world situation was becoming more ominous. The Infantry School, striving to keep abreast of the times, was continuing her effective reorganization and consolidation. In 1939, the school allotted 428 of the 1234 hours of the Regular Course to motors and weapons, including the study of tanks. Another block of 186 hours was used for teaching the logistics of supply and movement. Also emphasized at this time was the study of maps and aerial photographs, mobilization, terrain application, combat intelligence and field orders.

In the fall of 1939, the War in Europe erupted. One week after war was declared in Europe, President Roosevelt declared a state of limited national emergency. At this time the Regular Army was authorized to increase from 210,000 to 227,000 and the National Guard from 190,000 to 235,000. This buildup immediately affected Fort Benning when the First Division arrived during the winter of 1939 for field training. The division brought the strength of the post up to 16,000 men. The First Division occupied a tent city of 8,500 men.

As 1940 emerged, Fort Benning was indisputably the "Home of the Infantry." The vast amount of construction that had been done, combined with the intellectual growth and advancements being made, enabled Fort Benning to establish itself as a permanent and very influential base of military operations.



The Fort Benning Officers' Club was completed in 1934



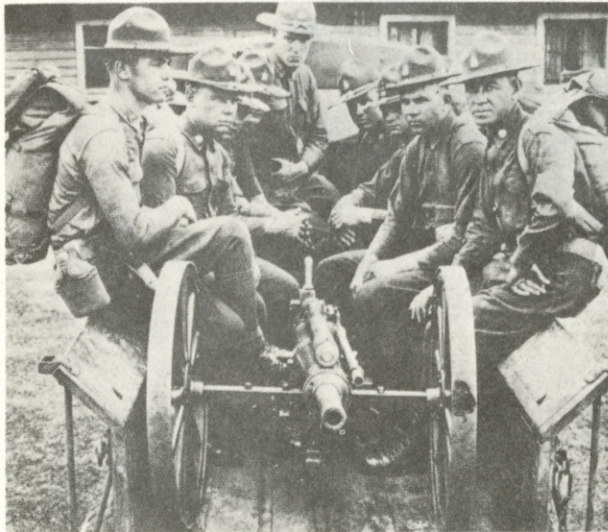
The Fort Benning Chapel was part of massive construction project of 1930's.



Post Exchange and Auto Repair Shop
in 1930's.



Troops of the 29th Infantry on the known
distance range in 1934.



Troops of the 29th Infantry prepare to
depart for the firing range.



Standard Army Wagon-In use until
approximately 1935.



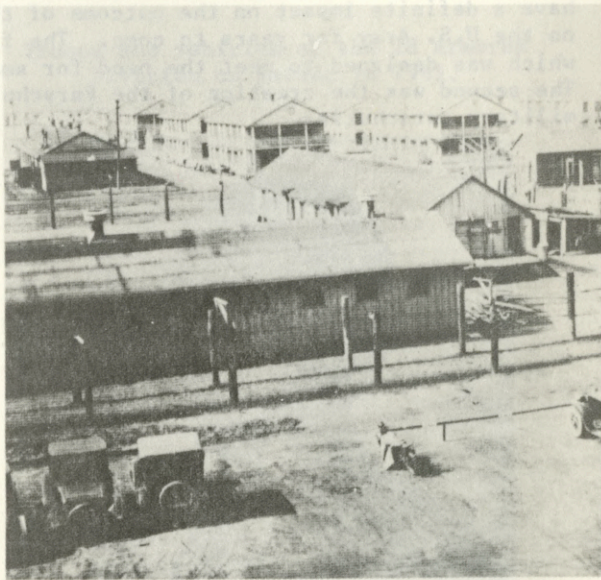
Transportation by motor vehicle became standard procedure in 1930's.



Troops of 24th Infantry for field duty.



In 1931 Fort Benning acquired a new dispensary.



Construction of new billets for 24th and 29th Infantry in 1930's (background).

CHAPTER 5

THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN ARMY - WORLD WAR II - PEACE

In the 1930's, the tank school moved to Fort Benning from Fort Meade. The tactics and techniques of how our tanks and armored forces was to be employed was controlled by the then Chief of Infantry's office, but with the beginning of World War II all of the mechanized effort and all of the tanks were transferred to the Cavalry at Fort Knox and became the foundation of the armored force.

With the eruption of World War II in Europe and with the declaration of a national emergency by President Roosevelt, the Infantry School and Fort Benning rapidly went into action to prepare the nation and the Army for the inevitable war.

By the spring of 1940, there were 45,000 troops at Fort Benning, representing all types of units. This was an increase of 29,000 men from the winter of 1939. Tank units began to appear throughout the post, and the first antitank battalions were organized at Fort Benning. Twenty-six classes of all kinds were being conducted at the Infantry School by late spring of 1941. In addition, Lawson Field was expanded when the 27th Bombardment Group arrived from Barksdale Field, Louisiana.

* By 1941, the training obligations had grown to such huge proportions that the Army was forced to purchase 11,722 acres of land on the west bank of the Chattahoochee River in Russell County, Alabama, in order to meet training obligations. Also the construction program was expanded to meet the growing housing requirement created by the arrival of more troops.

During 1941 and 1942 two programs were initiated at the Infantry School which were to have a definite impact on the outcome of the world war as well as a tremendous influence on the U.S. Army for years to come. The first program was the Officer Candidate Program which was designed to meet the need for small unit commanders created by World War II. The second was the creation of the Parachute School to train soldiers in the techniques of military parachuting.



The typical Infantryman as he appeared in 1940.



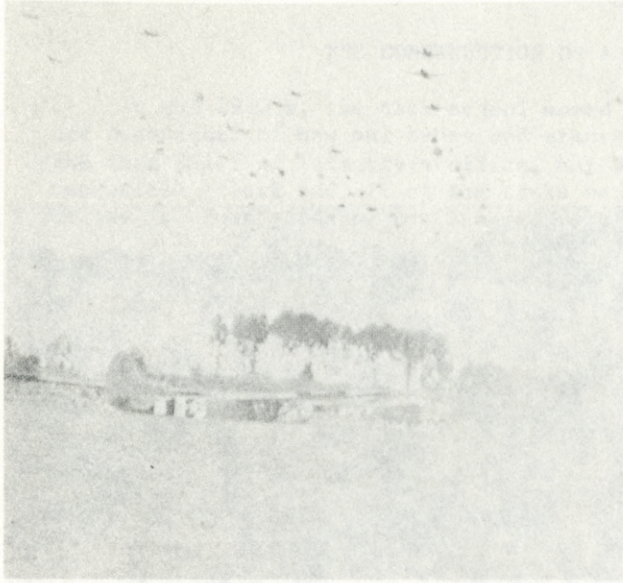
Troops and vehicles of the 2d Armored Division on parade in 1941.



Infantry troops appear in uniform of early 1940's.



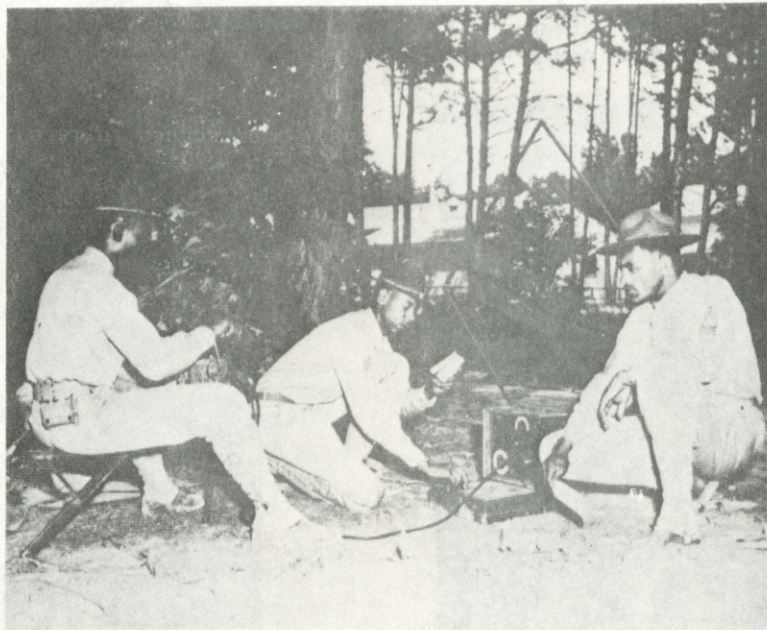
Typical headgear that paratrooper wore while jumping in 1940.



Mass airborne operation in early 1940's.



Glider troops prepare to enter mock-ups for training.



Infantry troops undergo radio training prior to World War II.



Front view of paratrooper wearing T-5 parachute in late 1940.



Side view of paratrooper wearing T-5 parachute in 1940.

The first officer candidates arrived at Fort Benning in July 1941 and by 1946 70,000 officer candidates had been graduated, providing the bulk of the infantry platoon leaders and company commanders in the war. The program was considered so important, in fact, that many of the classes training experienced officers in advanced infantry tactics and techniques were cancelled in order to make facilities and instructors available for OCS classes.

In 1940 2 officers and 46 enlisted men were selected from the 29th Infantry at Fort Benning to form the test platoon for the new airborne concept. The test platoon made its first jump on August 13, 1940, at Lawson Field. On May 15, 1942 after almost 2 years of testing and experimenting, the Parachute School was created. This school was to provide the paratroopers who would make significant contributions to victory in Europe.



Airborne troops prepare to assemble
after landing on drop zone.

With the end of World War II, the Army began to draw down in size and with it Fort Benning and the Infantry School.

Fort Benning became one of the large separation centers located throughout the nation.

By 1947 the Officer Candidate Program was no longer crowded and in the Fall of 1947 the School was transferred to Fort Riley, Kansas, where it remained until January 1951. Also in 1947 the parachute school was placed under the supervision of the Infantry School. The airborne concept had definitely become an integral part of the Army, and the Airborne Department of the Infantry School began training more and more paratroopers. The curriculum of the Infantry School also settled and only 10,000 officers and enlisted soldiers were expected for the academic years of 1947-48.

In 1947, although the Infantry School found itself in a relaxed state, the school could not afford to ride on its past accomplishments for the Cold War was just around the corner--and soon the Infantry School would be called upon to shoulder a large share of the burden of building up the US Army once again.

CHAPTER 6

THE COLD WAR ERA

Following the surrender of the Empire of Japan, US military demobilization proceeded at a furious pace.

In February 1948, construction and renovation of the hospital facilities was the principal activity on post. Conferences were held by representatives of the Surgeon General, Third Army and the Chief of Engineers. It was determined that hospital facilities had to be expanded. During that same period construction was also started on recreation and transportation facilities as well as the Bachelor Officers Mess.

From April 1 to June 30, 1948, the Infantry School carried on routine instruction. There was no change in mission, training policy, doctrine or conduct of courses. The only new instructional change was the opening of a special Auto Mechanics Course for enlisted men of the National Guard.

In an effort to reorganize and consolidate activities, while at the same time reducing strength, the Airborne Requirements Board was established. The Airborne Requirements Board was soon consolidated with the Infantry Requirements Board and redesignated the Infantry Airborne Requirements Committee. This committee was composed of three permanent members and twelve associate members representing Infantry, Artillery, Armor, Cavalry, Engineers, Signal, Medical organizations and Quartermaster branches. The mission of the committee was to assist the Commandant in the development and perfection of Infantry and Airborne tactics and techniques.

In the early part of 1949 Fort Benning began experiencing a tremendous expansion of personnel. The world situation had led President Truman and Congress to believe it was necessary to have a form of peacetime draft. The result was the Selective Service Act passed in June 1948. The first peacetime Selective Service draft brought the Armed Forces of the United States to their authorized strength. The number of personnel at Fort Benning was destined to reach its highest peak since the early days of World War II.

The onslaught of the Korean War brought more changes to Fort Benning. As a result of the war the Infantry School converted from a 40 to 44 hour academic work week. All courses were reviewed to eliminate unnecessary subjects, while at the same time most courses were intensified but reduced in length. The Infantry School's program of instruction emphasized weapons, small unit tactics, physical fitness, night operations, defensive combat, and combined arms teamwork.

One of the greatest difficulties of the accelerated training program was that it did not follow the planned mobilization program. The result was a shortage of training personnel and training equipment.

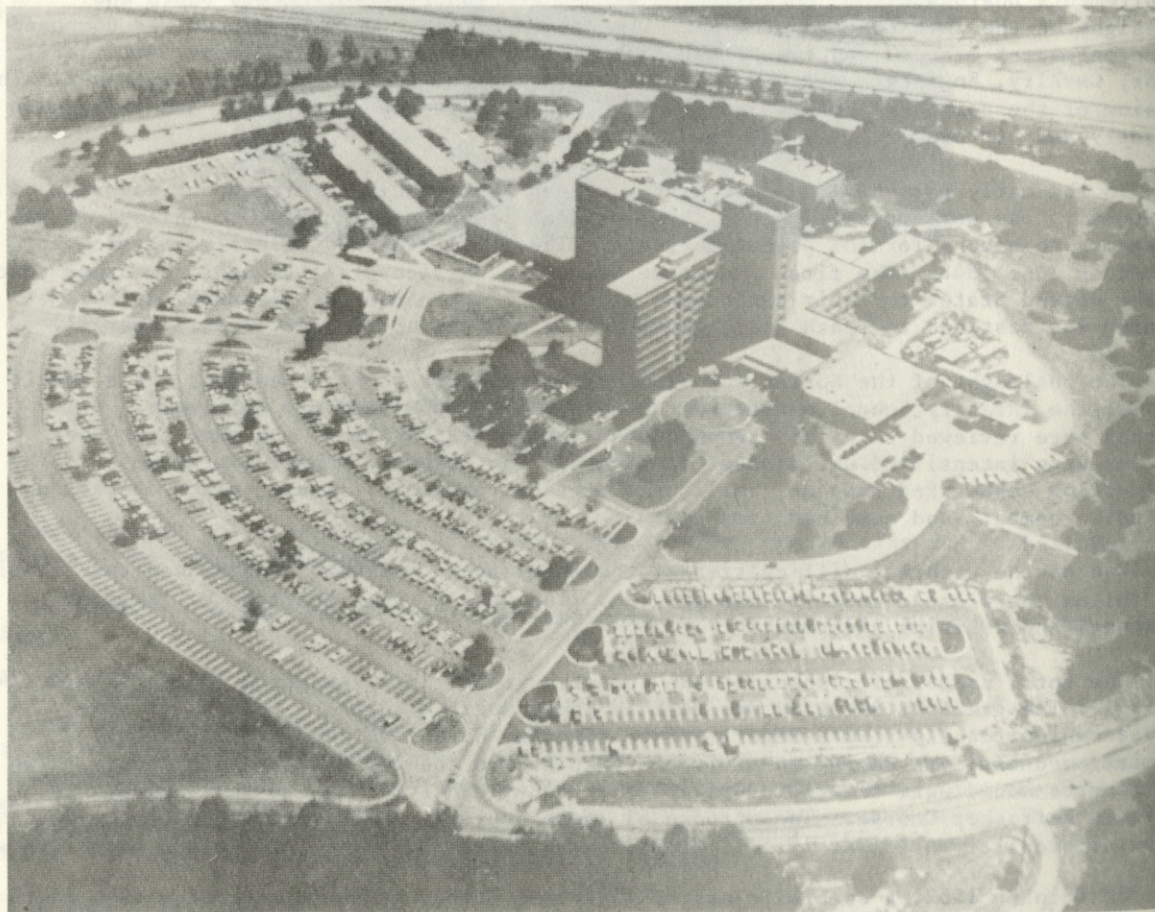
The total number of classes at the Infantry School increased from 104 in 1950 to 247 in 1951. The greatest increase was felt in the Associate Infantry Company Officers classes which results from a Department of the Army directive requiring all newly commissioned officers coming on active duty to attend the branch associate course. Two new courses added were the Field Grade Officers Refresher Course and the Company Grade Officers Refresher Course. The purpose of these courses, which lasted one month, was to acquaint recalled World War II officers with the latest Infantry tactics and techniques.

In October 1952, a special class of 153 South Korean officers started a five month

course based upon the Associate Company Officer program of instruction. This course which was conducted through South Korean interpreters was 20 weeks in duration and designed to train South Korean officers in Infantry tactics. Upon completion of the course these officers returned to their units in South Korea.

The great influx of troops in 1949 resulted in an acute housing shortage. The House Armed Services Committee soon approved a 28.7 million dollar construction program at Fort Benning. The program included additional housing, bridges, training utilities, hospital facilities and the construction of a new school. Proper military housing was somewhat provided for when a two million dollar project, named the "Upatoi Terrace Project," was opened in May of 1952. In 1956, the House Armed Services Committee approved the Capehart housing program for military installations in order to provide home rentals at installations where the tour of duty made it impracticable and costly for an enlisted man or an officer to invest his money in buying a home. The Capehart program insured that home rentals would be provided for the military. The program would be a big saving to the government while at the same time it would not cause any great reduction or pose any threat to the economic community of Columbus.

In the spring of 1958, Martin Army Hospital opened, only three years after the first moves were made to procure the completely air-conditioned modern edifice. The 500-bed hospital helped meet the medical needs of the huge military installation.



Martin Army Hospital



Old Hospital Building

During the 1950's Fort Benning truly became known as the mecca for Infantry training. The anxieties and worries of being discontinued or uprooted had ceased to haunt the Infantry School. It had grown much too large and important. The 3d Infantry Division was at Fort Benning from December 1954 to April 1958 when it gyrosoped to Europe and was succeeded at Fort Benning by the 2d Infantry Division in March 1958 under the ROCID (Reorganization of Combat Infantry Division) - (Pentomic) organization.

With the outbreak of hostilities in Korea in June 1950, the need arose once again for Rangers. A Ranger training section was established at Fort Benning on 10 October 1950. Fourteen Airborne-Ranger companies were formed and trained at the Ranger Training Command, Fort Benning, Georgia, between September 1950 and September 1951. In October 1951, the Chief of Staff, General J. Lawton Collins, directed that "Ranger training be extended to all combat units in the Army." The Commandant of the Infantry School was directed to establish a Ranger Department for the purpose of conducting a Ranger Course of instruction. The overall objective of Ranger training was to raise the standard of training in all combat units. This program was built upon what has been learned from the Rangers of the past. In World War II, the concept of employment was Ranger battalions. During Korea the concept was Airborne-Ranger companies. The training then changed to an individual training the Army today. The individual Ranger training continues to be conducted at Fort Benning, with the mountain phase conducted at Dahlongea, GA, and the jungle phase conducted at Eglin, Florida. However, the World War II concept of Ranger Battalions is one again current doctrine.



A ranger training program was established in 1950

Throughout the 1950's Fort Benning welcomed guests from home and abroad. Infantry demonstrations became a common occurrence as the newest developments were unveiled to civilian and military visitors alike. Fort Benning had become the undisputed representative of Infantry doctrine, tactics and weapons.

The Infantry Center not only helped to bridge the gap between nations, but also between civilian and military communities. Its community relations program was lauded by the Department of the Army. One of the largest and most important gatherings at Fort Benning was the Joint Civilian Orientation Conference, sponsored by the Department of Defense to show leading civilians new developments in weapons, combat readiness and doctrine of the United States Armed Forces.

On October 18, 1956, the Second Tripartite Infantry Conference convened at Fort Benning. Senior officers from the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada discussed and exchanged views on policies of infantry doctrine, organization, and equipment, with plans for eliminating any operational obstacles to full cooperation among the three armies. And in keeping with Infantry School leadership, in 1958, a prestigious and highly successful worldwide Infantry conference was convened at Fort Benning. This conference brought together the top leadership in the Army.

Fort Benning's history reflected high levels of excellence during the 50's. Not only did it train enlisted soldiers and officers in the latest advancements and discoveries in infantry doctrine, tactics and weapons, but it was also responsible for making and incorporating those advancements and discoveries into operational doctrine.



Ranger students training in the swamps of Florida

CHAPTER 7

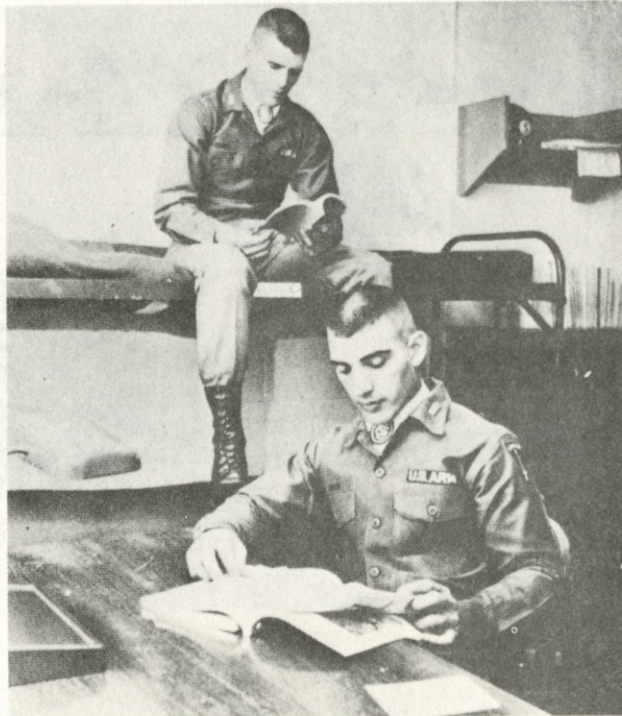
THE 1960's - VIETNAM CONFLICT

The 1960's was an era of rapid change and innovation at Fort Benning and the Infantry Center. It was a decade of war, and the Infantry School once again found itself responsible for formulating new concepts and tactics to fight a guerilla conflict in Vietnam as well as the training of new combat leaders for a rapidly expanding Army.

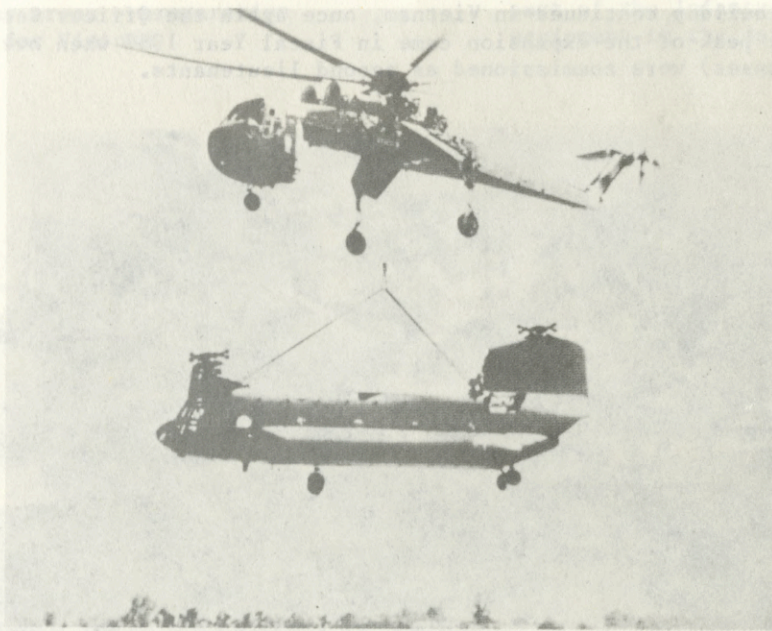
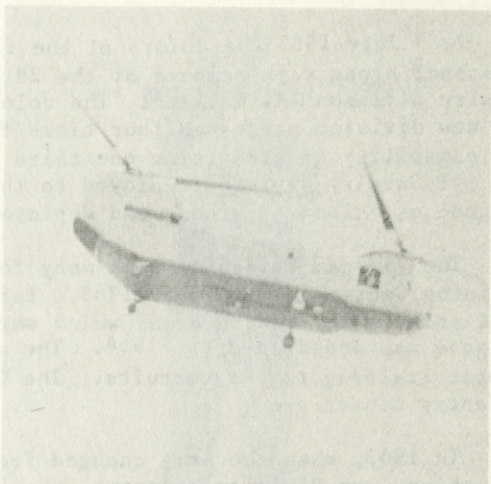
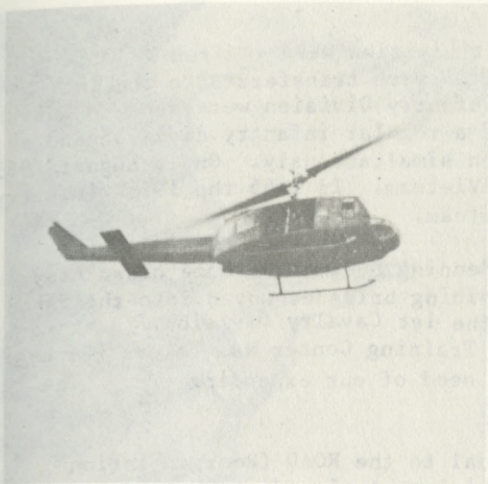
Appropriately enough, the decade of the 60's began with the dedication of the world famous Infantryman Statue which now guards the entrance of the Infantry Center and School headquarters. This event occurred in the spring of 1960 with the assembly of several hundred dignitaries, including President Dwight D. Eisenhower, at "Project Man," an event held to review equipment needs for a modern Army. The renowned statue was then located near the Officer Candidate area (it was moved to its present location in 1964).

On 24 September 1962 the 197th Infantry Brigade (Separate), the largest and most diversified infantry brigade in the U.S. Army, was reactivated with the mission of: "Providing instructional support for the United States Army Infantry School, general support of the USAIC, and the maintenance of operational capability to carry out specific contingency plans." On 7 April 1968, soldiers of the brigade were deployed for riot control duty in Baltimore, Maryland. Order was quickly restored without a shot being fired.

In February 1963 the 11th Air Assault Division was formed at Fort Benning to test the air assault concept. The concept was the result of a study that was ordered by Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara. Basically its purpose was to utilize helicopters in order to provide the Army with increased mobility and flexibility while in combat. The concept was to prove to be one of the most influential to be developed in 20th Century warfare. Its value was to be repeatedly proven during the Vietnam conflict.



Once again the OCS Program was expanded in the 1960's to meet the demand for officers during the Vietnam conflict.



The air assault concept was tested at Fort Benning - in the early 1960's. The concept was to prove to be one of the most influential in 20th Century warfare.

On 3 July 1965 the colors of the 11th Air Assault Division were retired and its personnel along with members of the 2d Infantry Division were transferred to the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile). The colors of the 2d Infantry Division were sent to Korea. The new division possessed four times the aircraft of a regular infantry division and had the capability of airlifting one third of its strength simultaneously. On 18 August 1965, the 1st Cavalry Division deployed to the Republic of Vietnam. In 1966 the 199th Infantry Brigade organized, trained, and deployed to South Vietnam.

The Vietnam expansion took many forms and Fort Benning became the home of an Army Training Center in September 1965. Initially two training brigades moved into the Sand Hill and Harmony Church areas which were vacated by the 1st Cavalry Division. A third brigade was added in April 1966. The mission of the Training Center was to provide basic combat training to new recruits. The Center met the need of our expanding Army. The Infantry Center grew.

In 1963, when the Army changed from the Pentagonal to the ROAD (Reorganization Objective Army Division) concept, the 2d Infantry Division stationed at Fort Benning was the first infantry division in the U.S. Army to be reorganized.

In June of 1964 the Infantry School acquired a new home on Fort Benning when it moved to Infantry Hall (Bldg 4). The new building which was constructed at a cost of approximately 10 million dollars was an ultra modern six story structure designed to house the staff and faculty of the Infantry School as well as the academic classrooms. Infantry Hall, as it is now named, was equipped with the most modern conveniences such as air-conditioned classrooms and closed circuit television to assist in instruction. Progressive analysis and experimentation continued.

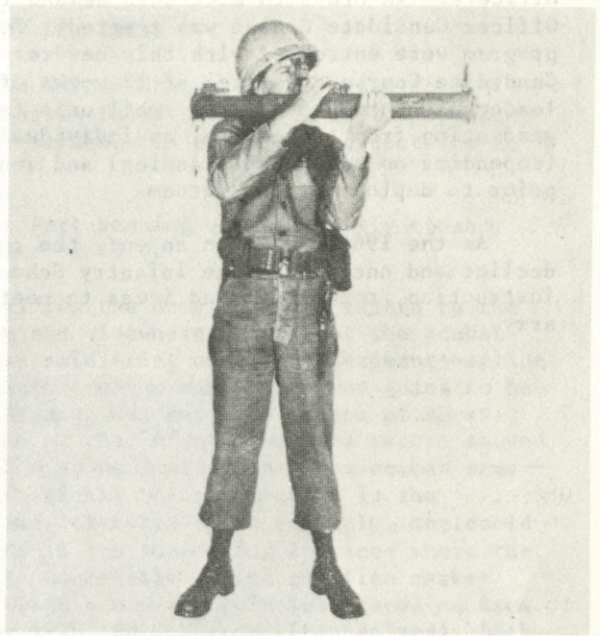
As the troop buildup continued in Vietnam, once again the Officer Candidate School was expanded. The peak of the expansion came in Fiscal Year 1967 when over 8,000 candidates (65 classes) were commissioned as second lieutenants.



NCOC students practice hand-to-hand combat



Student receives training in fighting in buildup areas - preparation for Vietnam.



The Light Anti-tank Weapon (LAW) became part of the Infantry Soldier's equipment in the early 1960's.



During the 1960's much of the training at the Infantry School was designed to acquaint the student with the techniques of the Viet Cong.

A new concept was conceived at the Infantry School when it was discovered that the Vietnam conflict was rapidly deminishing the Army's supply of junior noncommissioned officers. In order to meet this demand for qualified, junior leaders, the Noncommissioned Officer Candidate Course was created. Two battalions formerly committed to the OCS program were entrusted with this new responsibility on 8 September 1967. The NCO Candidate Course consisted of 12 weeks of intensive instruction in subjects such as leadership, communications, small unit tactics, patrolling and indirect fire support. Upon graduation from the course, an individual was promoted to sergeant or staff sergeant (depending on his class standing) and sent to training centers to gain on-the-job training prior to deployment to Vietnam.

As the 1960's came to an end, the role of the United States Army in Vietnam began to decline and once again the Infantry School found itself having to quickly revise its instruction, techniques and ideas to meet the new challenge of the 1970's and a peacetime army.



In June 1964 the Infantry School acquired a new home at Infantry Hall
(Building 4)

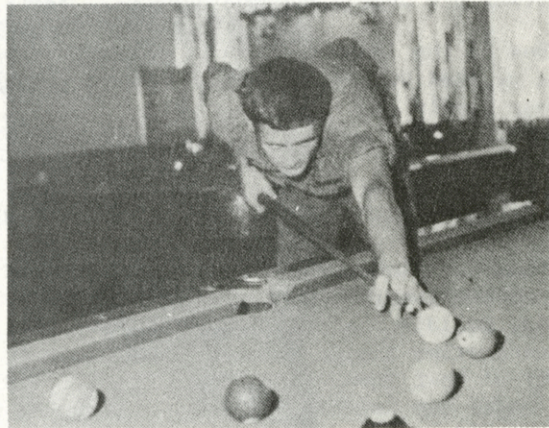
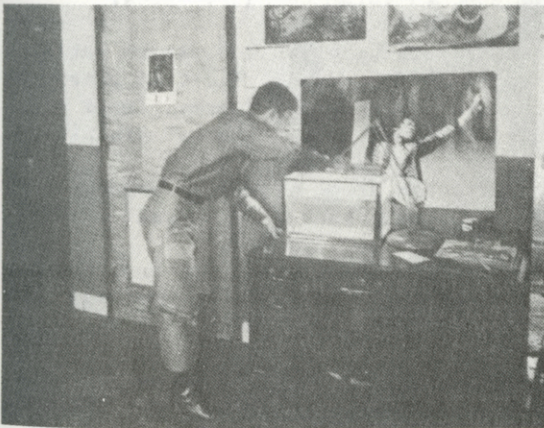
CHAPTER 8

POST VIETNAM - AN ERA OF NEW IDEAS

Upon the completion of combat activities by the United States in the Republic of Vietnam, the Infantry School and Fort Benning once again found themselves rapidly phasing down their activities as well as shifting the major emphasis in training and doctrine to more conventional warfare.

In March 1970 the U.S. Army Training Center at Fort Benning was officially closed, and the OCS program began to be reduced in the summer of 1970.

Also in 1970 the VOLAR concept (Volunteer Army) saw the Army training return to the basics--the duty day of the soldier at Fort Benning and elsewhere throughout the combat arms in the Army began to free the soldier to do his soldiering under his sergeant--action was taken to transmit the message to the soldier that he was a man and he was going to be treated like a man as long as he performed. Fort Benning was selected as one of three test sites for VOLAR concept because it was the Home of the Infantry and the record showed that most personnel drafted into the Armed Forces had to be drafted into the combat arms--if one could succeed in developing first class professional volunteer units in the vanguard of the combat arms, the Queen of Battle, the Infantry, then certainly, one could conclude it could be done in the non-combat arms and in the supporting services where the opportunity to learn high technical skills (that are marketable on the civilian market after service) are readily available. Along with VOLAR a new emphasis was placed on Race Relations activities during the 1970's. In January 1970, Co C, 1st Bn (Mechanized), 58th Infantry of the 197th Infantry Brigade became the first all volunteer unit in the U.S. Army.



Under the VOLAR program the troops were permitted to personally arrange their barracks space to suit their individual interest.

The VOLAR program placed a greater selection of leisure recreation facilities in the troop barracks.

The NCOC program which had been instrumental in providing junior NCO's during the Vietnam conflict was replaced by the Noncommissioned Officer Education System in 1972. The mission of the new program was to establish a professional development program for career NCO's.

Also in the early 1970's, the OCS program was revised. The new program, called the Branch Immaterial Officer Candidate Course, was 12 weeks in duration and trained individuals for commissioning in all branches of the Army. Upon completion graduates were commissioned second lieutenants and sent to the appropriate branch schools for basic branch training.

The increased role of women in the US Army was illustrated when the first women graduated from the Basic Airborne Course in December 1973.

During the Vietnam Era much emphasis had been placed on insurgency and counterinsurgency. Now it was necessary once again to shift the trend towards the development of conventional warfare doctrine.

The latest war in the Middle East caused intensive study to be devoted to the concepts of Mechanized Infantry and antiarmor.

Particular emphasis has been directed toward the development and employment doctrine of the Mechanized Infantry Combat Vehicle (MICV), the TOW and the Dragon (antitank missile systems). Training programs for these and other weapons systems are being closely coordinated at the School.

The continued refinement of the airmobile concept has been particularly emphasized in the post Vietnam Era. Work has also continued on the development of the Utility Tactical Transport Aircraft System (UTTAS) and the Advanced Attack Helicopter (AAH). A major change in organizational structure occurred when the Airborne Department was reorganized as the Airborne/Airmobility Department. The new department assumed all responsibility for teaching, coordinating, and testing of both airborne and airmobile doctrine.

Maximum mobility will be offered the Infantry on the ground by the MICV and in the air by the UTTAS. Mechanized Infantry operations will be greatly enhanced by the MICV possessing the Bushmaster weapon systems. The UTTAS will have the capability of airlifting one complete combat loaded Infantry rifle squad into the battle area.

Due to the identified armor threat in future conflicts, the TOW and Dragon antitank weapon systems become increasingly more valuable to the Infantryman. The full potential of these deadly tank killers will be realized with the adaption of a thermal image night sight which will render them effective at full range under all conditions of visibility.

Other items of priority are: the development of a new squad automatic weapon, a new light weight mortar, a light weight laser range finder, and a hand held thermal viewer.

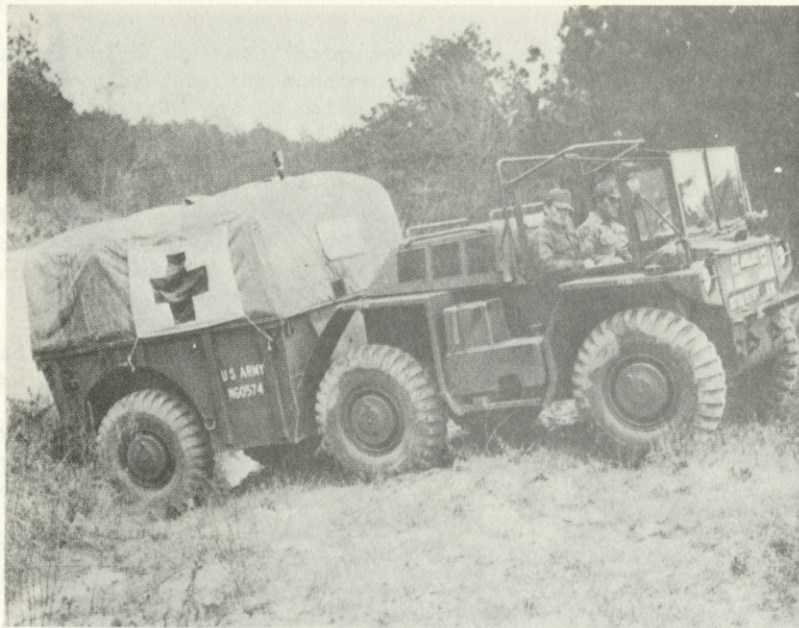
Lessons learned from the most recent mid-east war, and from many other indicators prove beyond question that the key to victory in the modern battlefield is the well-trained, rapidly reacting combined arms team, with Infantry, Armor, Artillery, Air Support and every other combat element acting in precise concert. The Infantry is the critical element of that team, for only Infantry possesses the flexibility and responsiveness to fight under any conditions, over any type of terrain. The emphasis at Fort Benning today is to provide the men, and especially the leaders, who can function with precision and effectiveness as the cutting edge to the combined arms team. Tactical and technical proficiency, physical strength, mental toughness and spiritual awareness are the mandatory qualities of the Infantry leader. It is toward the development of these qualities in all Infantrymen that the Infantry Center of today is dedicated.



VOLAR soldier relaxes in the barracks after work



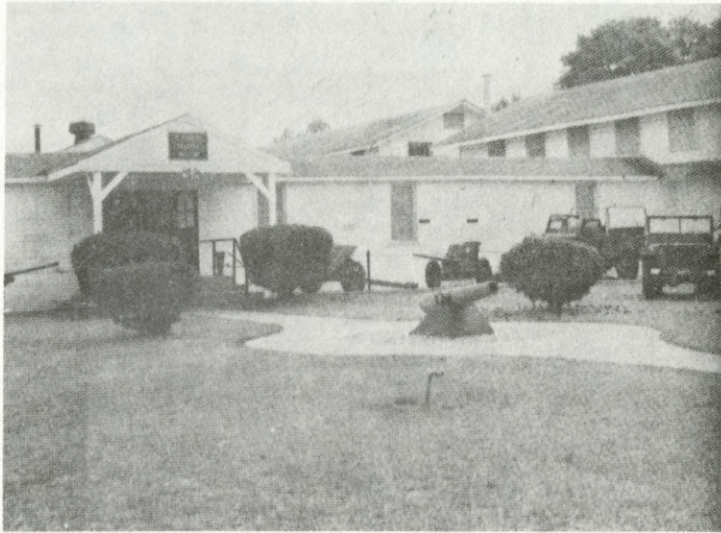
The increased role of women in the US Army could be denoted when the first women graduated from the Basic Airborne Course in 1974.



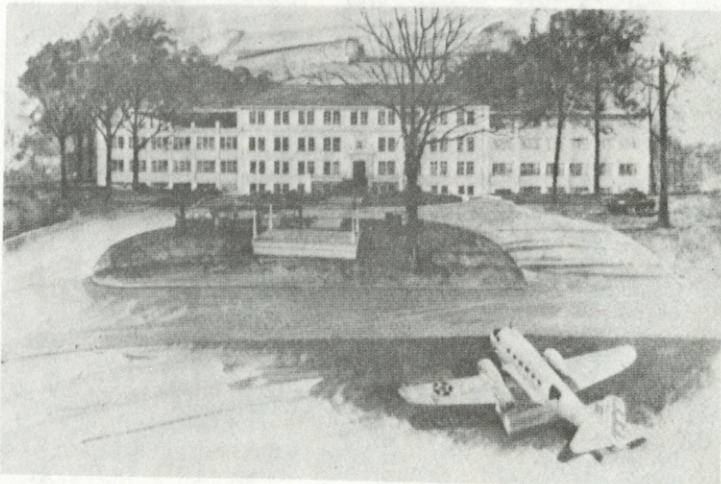
With the termination of the US Army's involvement in Vietnam many new items of equipment could be developed and tested.



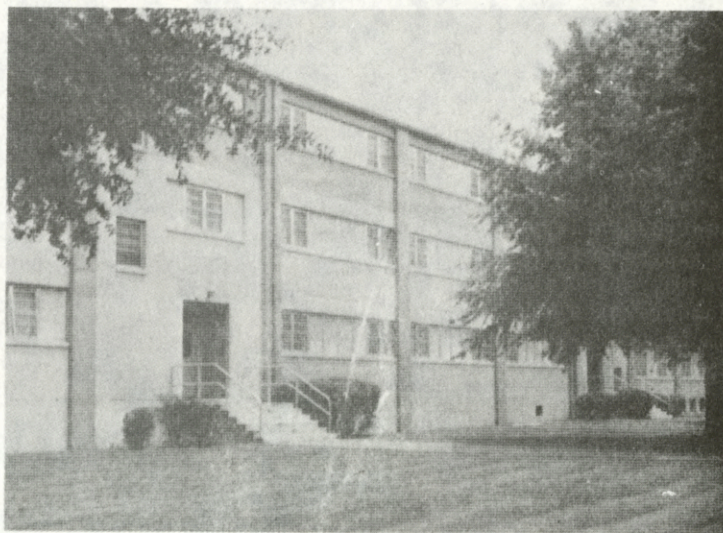
The further development of the Dragon Antitank Missile System is of primary importance in the future.



The National Infantry Museum 1959 - 1976



New home of the National Infantry Museum dedicated 1 July 1977



1800 Block Barracks



Kelley Hill area



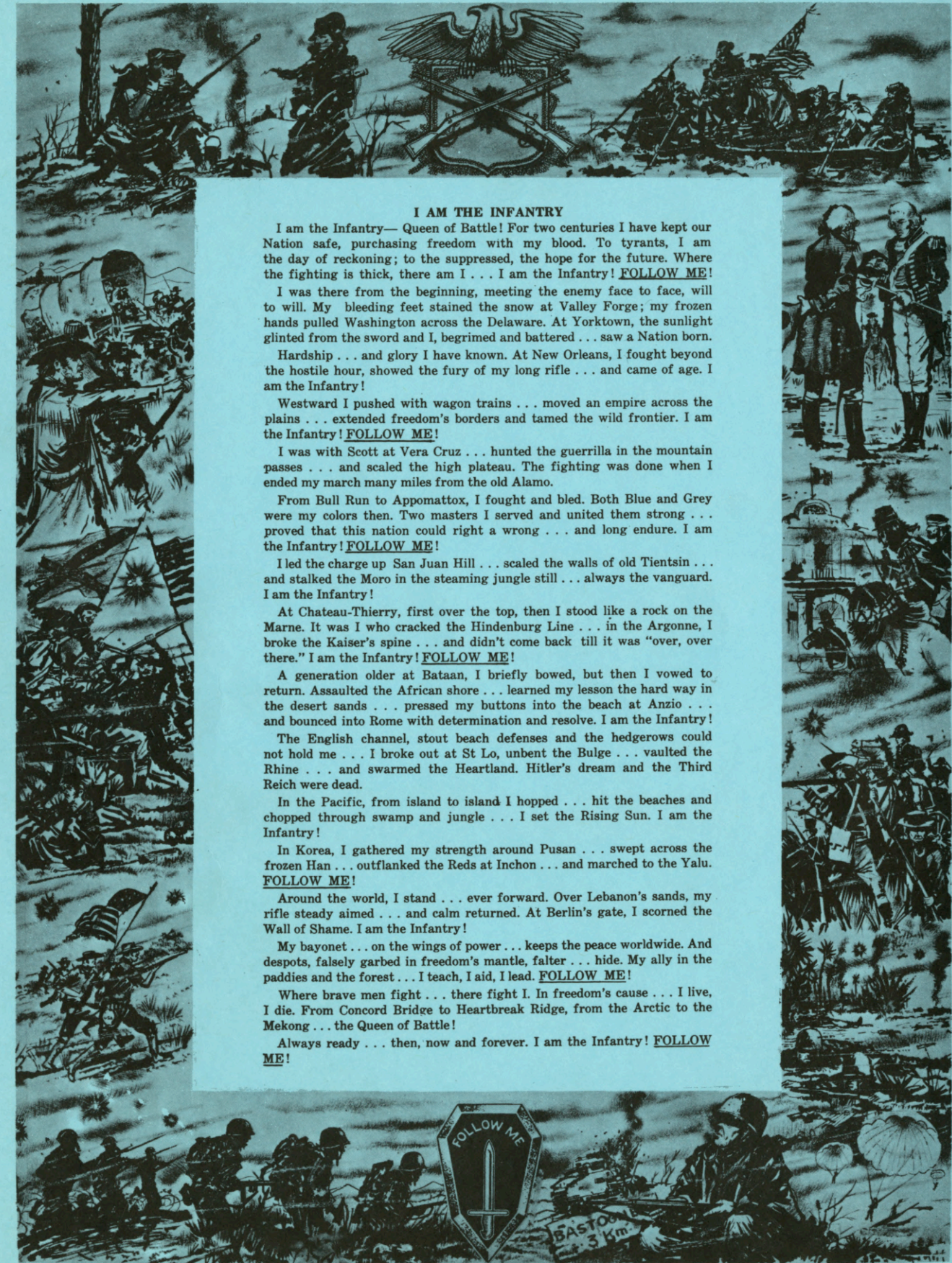
Fort Benning Mall

1918 - HISTORICAL

1976 - HAPPENINGS

- 1918--The Flag was raised over the Infantry's new home, named in honor of Major General Henry Lewis Benning, a distinguished Confederate general from Columbus.
- 1919--The first class was graduated and the Infantry Board established.
- 1922--Camp Benning was redesignated Fort Benning and within a year boasted permanent housing, a gymnasium, railroad shops, and two steel bridges across Upatoi Creek.
- 1930--By the close of the 1930 term, the Infantry School had graduated 5,064 students, among them men such as Marshall, Bradley, Collins, Stilwell, Clark and Hodges.
- 1931--Lawson Field was named.
- 1933--The Infantry School Building, the Post Chapel, and the Officers' Mess were completed.
- 1939--War in Europe sparked the reorganization of the Infantry Division and a consequent reorganization of Infantry School curricula.
- 1940--45,000 troops assembled at Benning for the IV Corps maneuver and the first parachute battalion was organized.
- 1941--The Officer Candidate School opened.
- 1942--The Parachute School was organized and soon graduated 4,000 men a month.
- 1946--Fort Benning was designated The Infantry Center.
- 1950--The Ranger Training Command was organized and again student enrollment surged.
- 1958--Permanent troop barracks were completed in the Kelley Hill area. Martin Army Hospital was opened.
- 1961--Consolidation of all Airborne training was established at the Infantry School.
- 1963--The 11th Air Assault Division activated to develop and test new airmobile concepts for the Army.
- 1964--New six-story Infantry School Building was occupied.
- 1965--The 11th Air Assault Division and 2d Infantry Division merged to form the 1st Cavalry Division, Airmobile, a new concept in modern warfare, and was deployed to South Vietnam. Army Training Center was organized.
- 1966--199th Infantry Brigade organized, trained, and deployed to South Vietnam.
- 1969--Phase out of Army Training Center was announced.
- 1970--Headquarters, the U.S. Army Infantry Center, was reorganized under the CONUS Installation Management Study (CIMS) concept effective 1 July 1970. The 931st Engineer Group (Combat) was elevated to major unit command status and Headquarters Command was activated.
- 1971--The Board for Dynamic Training and the Combat Arms Training Board were organized.
- 1972--Ground was broken for the \$5.5 million Shopping Mall constructed off Marne Road to centralize most of commissary and Post Exchange outlets.
- 1973--The 197th Infantry Brigade became the Army's first all-volunteer brigade-size unit.
- 1974--It was announced that Advanced Individual Training for Infantry would be centralized at Fort Benning with the establishment of a 24-company training brigade.
- 1975--President Gerald Ford visited Fort Benning for 14 June celebration of Infantry's 200th anniversary.
- 1976--All post units and activities geared for National Bicentennial celebration 3-4 July.
- 1977--GOA Omar Bradley visited Fort Benning on 1 July to dedicate the new home of the National Infantry Museum.





I AM THE INFANTRY

I am the Infantry— Queen of Battle! For two centuries I have kept our Nation safe, purchasing freedom with my blood. To tyrants, I am the day of reckoning; to the suppressed, the hope for the future. Where the fighting is thick, there am I . . . I am the Infantry! **FOLLOW ME!**

I was there from the beginning, meeting the enemy face to face, will to will. My bleeding feet stained the snow at Valley Forge; my frozen hands pulled Washington across the Delaware. At Yorktown, the sunlight glinted from the sword and I, begrimed and battered . . . saw a Nation born.

Hardship . . . and glory I have known. At New Orleans, I fought beyond the hostile hour, showed the fury of my long rifle . . . and came of age. I am the Infantry!

Westward I pushed with wagon trains . . . moved an empire across the plains . . . extended freedom's borders and tamed the wild frontier. I am the Infantry! **FOLLOW ME!**

I was with Scott at Vera Cruz . . . hunted the guerrilla in the mountain passes . . . and scaled the high plateau. The fighting was done when I ended my march many miles from the old Alamo.

From Bull Run to Appomattox, I fought and bled. Both Blue and Grey were my colors then. Two masters I served and united them strong . . . proved that this nation could right a wrong . . . and long endure. I am the Infantry! **FOLLOW ME!**

I led the charge up San Juan Hill . . . scaled the walls of old Tientsin . . . and stalked the Moro in the steaming jungle still . . . always the vanguard. I am the Infantry!

At Chateau-Thierry, first over the top, then I stood like a rock on the Marne. It was I who cracked the Hindenburg Line . . . in the Argonne, I broke the Kaiser's spine . . . and didn't come back till it was "over, over there." I am the Infantry! **FOLLOW ME!**

A generation older at Bataan, I briefly bowed, but then I vowed to return. Assaulted the African shore . . . learned my lesson the hard way in the desert sands . . . pressed my buttons into the beach at Anzio . . . and bounced into Rome with determination and resolve. I am the Infantry!

The English channel, stout beach defenses and the hedgerows could not hold me . . . I broke out at St Lo, unbent the Bulge . . . vaulted the Rhine . . . and swarmed the Heartland. Hitler's dream and the Third Reich were dead.

In the Pacific, from island to island I hopped . . . hit the beaches and chopped through swamp and jungle . . . I set the Rising Sun. I am the Infantry!

In Korea, I gathered my strength around Pusan . . . swept across the frozen Han . . . outflanked the Reds at Inchon . . . and marched to the Yalu. **FOLLOW ME!**

Around the world, I stand . . . ever forward. Over Lebanon's sands, my rifle steady aimed . . . and calm returned. At Berlin's gate, I scorned the Wall of Shame. I am the Infantry!

My bayonet . . . on the wings of power . . . keeps the peace worldwide. And despots, falsely garbed in freedom's mantle, falter . . . hide. My ally in the paddies and the forest . . . I teach, I aid, I lead. **FOLLOW ME!**

Where brave men fight . . . there fight I. In freedom's cause . . . I live, I die. From Concord Bridge to Heartbreak Ridge, from the Arctic to the Mekong . . . the Queen of Battle!

Always ready . . . then, now and forever. I am the Infantry! **FOLLOW ME!**