

February 11, 1954
Memorandum, Headquarters of the Eighth Army,
Fact Sheet on the 40th Division

Citation:

"Memorandum, Headquarters of the Eighth Army, Fact Sheet on the 40th Division", February 11, 1954, Wilson Center Digital Archive, B-013-156, Official Correspondences, President Rhee's Correspondences, Syngman Rhee Institute, Yonsei University.
<https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/122890>

Summary:

Brief history of 40th Infantry Division from September 1950 to July 1953. The 40th US Division was originally the California National Guard Division, and moved to Japan on April 1951. On December 1951, the 40th Division was alerted for Korea duty,

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Syngman Rhee Institute, Yonsei University

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan



PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
 HEADQUARTERS, EIGHTH ARMY
 APO 801 8/0 POSTMASTER
 SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

11 FEBRUARY 1954

PAGE SUBJECT

The following brief history of the 40th U. S. Infantry Division has been furnished by the Military History Section, Headquarters Eighth Army:

40th U S Division

TRADITIONAL DESIGNATION: Ball of Fire

DATE OF ENTRY INTO KOREA: 22 January 1952

COMMANDERS IN KOREA:	Maj Gen Daniel H. Hudelson	19 Jan 52 - 2 Jun 52
	Maj Gen Joseph P. Cleland	3 Jun 52 - 16 Apr 53
	Maj Gen Ridgley Gaither	17 Apr 53 - 17 Jan 54
	Brig Gen John F.R. Seitz	17 Jan 54 - 7 Feb 54
	Brig Gen William J Bradley	7 Feb 54 - Present

On 1 September 1950, the 40th US Division, commanded by Maj Gen D. H. Hudelson, was called to active duty from its status as the California National Guard Division of Southern California. Subsequently it moved to Camp Cook, California, where it conducted the early phases of its training.

The division was alerted for overseas shipment, and began arriving in Japan on 10 April 1951. Elements of the division occupied various camps throughout northern HONSHU, with the division headquarters located at Camp Schemmelfonnig, near SENDAI, Japan. As a part of XVI US Corps, the division was given the dual mission of defending northern HONSHU and conducting additional training.

On 22 December 1951, the division was alerted for Korea duty, where it was to relieve the 24th US Division. On 22 January 1952 the 40th Division returned to Korea for the second time in six years, having performed occupational duty there at the end of World War II. The division assumed responsibility for a sector of the line in the KUMHWA-KUMSONG sector on the central front on 28 January. Because of the great width of the front, all three regiments of the division were placed on line, facing such famed hills as CAPITOL HILL and FINGER RIDGE and JANE RUSSELL HILL. Fighting during this period consisted mainly of aggressive patrolling and combat raids launched to maintain contact with the enemy and destroy him at every opportunity.

It was during this period that company-size raids were initiated, with each regiment making one such raid every third night. In all cases these raids were conducted without prior artillery preparation to take



advantage of the element of surprise as much as possible. It was also during this period that two members of the division were awarded the Medal of Honor for gallantry in action.

On 30 June 1952 the 40th Division was relieved and went into a reserve status to begin a period of training and rehabilitation. At this time the 224th Regiment of the division was sent to take over guard duty at the prisoner-of-war camps on the islands of KOJE-DO and CHEJU-DO, off the southern coast of Korea. The regiment continued in this mission until 16 September 1952 when it was relieved and rejoined its parent unit.

The division returned to the front lines in October 1952, relieving the 25th US Division in the vicinity of TOKKOL-LI. Action at this time was confined to aggressive patrolling, raids, and ambushes. Occasionally the enemy struck the division's positions in battalion strength, but these attacks were always repulsed. On 17 November 1952 elements of the division stormed and took the heights of SANDIAG CASTLE, an enemy stronghold to the front, in a bitterly fought contest. The enemy also suffered heavy casualties as the division attacked HARTEREAH Ridge during the month. Vigorous patrolling continued during December, and as the year closed the division was continuing to hold its positions in the line.

The opening of 1953 found the division maintaining its positions on line until relieved by the 45th US Division in late January. Moving into reserve positions, the division assumed the additional mission of providing support for the newly-organized 12th ROK Division. Throughout the reserve period the division conducted intensive training and rehabilitation.

In April the 40th Division relieved the 20th ROK Division in the PUNCI-EOWL sector, with the main effort directed toward improving and strengthening the main line of resistance. On 27 May 1953, the 160th Regiment of the division was sent to the island of KOJE-DO with the mission of guarding prisoners of war there.

On the night of 2 June 1953 the division was hit by a series of attacks all along the front, preceded by heavy concentrations of enemy mortar and artillery fire. After close hand-to-hand combat, enemy forces were driven back after suffering heavy casualties. On 10 July the



division was relieved from the PUNCHBOWL sector and moved to the HEARTBREAK Ridge- SANDBAG CASTLE Area, where it remained until the signing of the Armistice agreement on 27 July 1953. With the signing of the agreement, the 40th US Division moved south of the Demilitarized Zone.