

Elements of the 92nd moved to the Serchio sector, 3 November 1944, and advanced in the Serchio River Valley against light resistance, but the attempt to capture Castelnuovo di Garfagnana did not succeed. Patrol activities continued until 26 December when the enemy attacked, forcing units of the 92nd to withdraw. According to David Irving's book, The War Between the Generals, the 92nd had "turned and run, clear proof in the army's view that black troops were unreliable unless led by white officers and NCOs". The attack ended on 28 December. The attacking forces were mainly from the Republic of Salò's Fascist Army, the *4th "Monte Rosa" Alpine Division* (four battalions), with the support of three German battalions. Aside from patrols and reconnaissance, units of the 92nd attacked enemy forces in the Serchio sector from 5–8 February 1945, advancing against the *1st "Italia" Bersaglieri Division*, but enemy counterattacks nullified all Division advances.

1945[edit]

On 1 April, the 370th RCT and the attached 442nd Regimental Combat Team (Nisei) attacked the Ligurian coastal sector and drove rapidly north against light opposition from the German 148th Infantry Division, which was supported only by Italian coastal units. The 370th took over the Serchio sector and pursued the retreating enemy from 18 April until the collapse of all enemy forces on 29 April 1945. Elements of the 92nd Division entered La Spezia and Genoa on 27th and took over selected towns along the Ligurian coast until the enemy surrendered on 2 May 1945.

Medal of Honor recipients[edit]

- John R. Fox, 1st Lt, Cannon Company, 366th Infantry Regiment, 92nd Infantry Division, near Sommocolonia, Serchio Valley, Italy, 26 December 1944.
- Vernon J. Baker, 1st Lt, 92nd Infantry Division, near Viareggio, Italy, 5–6 April 1945.

The division was reactivated as an infantry division on 15 October 1942 at Fort Huachuca, Arizona. After two years of training, the 370th Infantry Regiment would be sent overseas in August 1944 and temporarily attached to the 1st Armored Division. The rest of the division would be sent overseas in September of that year, and the division as a whole would see heavy combat during the remainder of the Italian Campaign. Between August 1944 and May 1945 the 92nd Division suffered 3,200 casualties, and the factoring in of losses from the 442nd Regimental Combat Team (442nd RCT) and other units attached to the division brings the total up to 5,000 casualties.^[4]

During the division's participation in the Italian Front, the Buffalo Soldiers made contact with units of many nationalities: beyond the attached 442nd RCT, they also had contact with the segregated troops of the British and French colonial empires (Black Africans, Moroccans, Algerians, Indians, Gurkhas, Arab and Jewish Palestinians) as well as with exiled Poles, Greeks and Czechs, anti-fascist Italians and the nonsegregated troops of the Brazilian Expeditionary Force.^{[5][6][7]}

The division's magazine was *The Buffalo*.^[8] Its art director, Ted Shearer, would go on to create the early African-American comic strip *Quncy*.^[9]

Commanders[edit]

The division's commander, Major General Edward Almond, was for a time highly regarded by George C. Marshall, who was a fellow Virginia Military Institute (VMI) graduate, and was Army Chief of Staff during World War II. This was a major factor in Almond's promotion to major general and subsequent command of the division, a position he held from its formation in October 1942 until August 1945. He led the division in combat throughout the Italian Campaign of 1944–1945. Almond was chosen by Marshall to command the division because Marshall believed Almond would excel at what was seen as a difficult assignment. However, Almond performed poorly and went on to blame his poor performance on the fact that the division was made up of largely African American troops. He saw his troops as the source of his failure in combat, and went on to advise the Army against ever again using African Americans as combat troops.^[10]

According to Colonel Howard Donovan Queen: "*...Whatever shortcomings the 92nd had, it rested entirely on the shoulders of Major General Almond. His entire staff was incompetent, excepting for Brigadier General (William H.) Coburn, the artillery commander, whose artillery was rated among the best on the front.*"^[11]

Gothic Line[edit]

The 370th Regimental Combat Team, attached to the 1st Armored Division, arrived in Naples, Italy, 1 August 1944 and entered combat on 24th. It participated in the crossing of the Arno River, the occupation of Lucca and the penetration of the Gothic Line. Enemy resistance was negligible in its area. As Task Force 92, elements of the 92nd attacked on the Ligurian coastal flank toward Massa, 5 October. By the 12th, the slight gains achieved were lost to counterattacks. On 13 October, the remainder of the Division concentrated for patrol activities.

trenches. They began to be fed into the French sector front lines by company in mid-August 1918. The 92nd Artillery Brigade only came online in October 1918.

Unlike the 93rd, the 92nd would ultimately fight as a whole under American command. The division saw combat in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive during November 1918. Their indifferent showing was more due to brittle morale and poor handling by their white superiors than any real failings.

Units[[edit](#)]

92nd Division (1917–19)

- 92nd Division Headquarters Troop
- Support units
 - 317th Engineer Regiment
 - 317th Signals Battalion
 - 349th MG Battalion
- 183rd Brigade (Infantry)
 - 365th Infantry Regiment
 - 366th Infantry Regiment
 - 350th MG Battalion
- 184rd Brigade (Infantry)
 - 367th Infantry Regiment
 - 368th Infantry Regiment
 - 351st MG Battalion
- 167th Brigade (Field Artillery)
 - 349th Field Artillery Regiment
 - 350th Field Artillery Regiment
 - 351st Field Artillery Regiment
 - 317th Trench Mortar Battery

World War II[[edit](#)]

- Activated: 15 October 1942.
- Overseas: 22 September 1944.
- Campaigns: North Apennines, Po Valley.
- Awards: Medal of Honor: 2 (Posthumously in 1997); Distinguished Service Cross (United States): 2; Distinguished Service Medal (United States): 1; Silver Star: 208; Legion of Merit: 16; Soldier's Medal: 6; Bronze Star: 1,166; Purple Heart: 1,891; Order of the Crown of Italy: 8; Military Cross for Military Valor (Italian): 17; Military Cross for Merit in War (Italian): 22; War Medal (Brazil): 1
- Commanders: Maj. Gen. Edward Almond (October 1942 – August 1945), Brig. Gen. John E. Wood (August 1945 to inactivation).
- Returned to U.S.: 26 November 1945.
- Inactivated: 28 November 1945.

92nd Infantry Division (United States)



The **92nd Infantry Division** was an infantry division of the United States Army that served in both World War I and World War II. Organized in October 1917 at Camp Funston, Kansas, the unit was formed with African American soldiers from all states. Before leaving for France in 1918, the buffalo was selected as the divisional insignia due to the "Buffalo Soldiers" nickname, given to African American cavalymen by Native Americans in the 19th century. The "Buffalo Soldiers Division" divisional nickname was inherited from the 367th Infantry, one of the first units of the division organized. This segregated unit was the only African American infantry division to see combat in Europe during World War II, as part of the U.S. Fifth Army, fighting in the Italian Campaign.^[1] It served in the Italian Campaign from 1944 to the war's end.

History[[edit](#)]

The 92nd Division was first constituted on paper 24 October 1917 in the National Army.^[2] The division comprised the 183rd Infantry Brigade with the 365th and 366th Infantry Regiments, and the 184th Infantry Brigade with the 367th and 368th Infantry Regiments.^[2] The division was actually organized on 27 October 1917 at Camp Funston, Kansas.^[2]

World War I[[edit](#)]

- Activated: October 1917
- Overseas: 18 July 1918
- Major operations: Meuse-Argonne less field artillery
- Casualties: total: 1,647 (KIA: 120; WIA: 1,527).
- Commanders: Maj. Gen. Charles C. Ballou (29 October 1917), Maj. Gen. Charles Henry Martin (19 November 1918), Brig. Gen. James B. Erwin (16 December 1918).
- Returned to U S. and deactivated: February 1919.

For an account of the fighting of the Buffalo Division in the Woevre Plain offensive see the article on William M Cain at Kaiserscross.com.

As would be the case with the 93rd Infantry Division, parts of the 92nd would serve under and alongside the French Army after both the main American Expeditionary Force (AEF) and the British Army refused to have African-American soldiers serve in combat under them.

The 92nd was a National Army unit formed from black draftees, with a cadre of 154 NCOs transferred from the four Regular Army regiments, mostly led by inexperienced black junior officers fresh out of training and commanded by indifferent white officers. They were a green and untried unit that was not allowed to maneuver as a division before they were committed to the line. After arrival in France, the 92nd like all AEF units, trained for deployment in the

distinguished themselves - the Japanese American 100th Infantry Battalion, one of the first outfits to receive a Presidential Unit Citation for fighting in Italy.

On April 30, 1945, General Clark announced that the long, weary, bitter campaign, begun on the beaches of Salerno in September 1943, had ended. His polyglot troops had so smashed the German armies in Italy that they had been virtually eliminated as a military force. Nearly 1,000,000 Germans in Northern Italy and Western Austria laid down their arms in unconditional surrender on May 2, 1945, at 2 p.m. The surrender had been signed in the royal palace of Caserta on April 29, by representatives of the German commander, Col. Gen. Heinrich von Vietinghoff-Scheel, and of the Allied Mediterranean commander, Field Marshall Sir Harold R. L. G. Alexander.

On the day the campaign in Italy ended, the 92nd Division had lost almost one-fourth of its men through casualties. Three hundred and thirty had been killed in action, 2,215 wounded, and 616 were missing in action.

A soldier of the 92nd Division, Private Woodall I. Marsh, of Pittsburgh, Pa., was the first Black to win the Silver Star in Italy. He got it for taking 12 wounded paratroopers from the front lines to safety in his truck, after officers said it could not be done.

When he was told that he could not make it because the water of a raging torrent he had to ford to get to the wounded paratroopers was too deep, Private Marsh replied: "Well, there's dirt underneath ain't there?" and he proceeded to ford it.

Under terrific enemy fire, he drove his truck through water up to the hubs of the wheels to get to the wounded men. On return trip, he tried another route, but it turned out to be just as bad. He had to dig his truck out of the muck and mire again and again. For 30 minutes during the trip, the Germans were trying to get him and his truck with heavy mortar and artillery fire.

Another hero of the 92nd Division was Second Lieutenant Vernon J. Baker, of Cheyenne, Wyoming, a rifle platoon leader. He won the Distinguished Service Cross for the bravery he exhibited in action on 2 days, April 5 and 6, 1945, near Viareggio, Italy. The citation reads: "Second Lieutenant Baker, demonstrated outstanding courage and leadership in destroying enemy installations, personnel, and equipment during his company's attack against a strongly entrenched enemy in mountainous terrain."

"When his company was stopped by the concentrated fire from several machine-gun emplacements, he crawled to one position and destroyed it, killing three Germans. Continuing forward, he attacked an enemy observation post and killed its two occupants."

"With the aid of one of his men, 2nd Lieutenant Baker attacked two more machine-gun nests, killing or wounding the four enemy soldiers occupying these positions. He then covered the evacuation of the wounded personnel of his company by occupying an exposed position and drawing the enemy's fire."

"On the following night 2nd Lieutenant Baker voluntarily led a battalion advance through enemy mine fields and heavy fire toward the division objective. Second Lieutenant Baker's fighting spirit and daring leadership were an inspiration to his men and exemplify the highest traditions of the armed forces."

One of the officers of the 92nd Division awarded posthumously the Silver Star for gallantry in action was Captain Charles F. Gaudy, Jr., of Washington, D.C. On October 12, 1944, Captain Gaudy was ordered to deploy his company in position on difficult mountainous terrain. His citation states: "He personally led his company out in broad daylight and, through further reconnaissance and by personal example and leadership, succeeded in getting his entire company across a canal, with an abrupt 12-foot wall. This was accomplished in rain and under extremely heavy enemy fire."

"Halting the company at its intermediate objective, Captain Gaudy went forward alone to reconnoiter the route of the next movement. While engaged in this activity, he was mortally wounded by enemy machine-gun fire. His outstanding gallantry and leadership in combat exemplifies the heroic traditions of the United States Army."

Lieutenant Theodore O. Smith, aged 24 years, was killed in action in Italy on February 11, 1945, 1 month after he had been awarded the Silver Star for his bravery in leading a small patrol on a mission that netted the Americans two Nazi

Ninety Second Infantry Division

NINETY-SECOND INFANTRY DIVISION

....World War II Buffalo Soldiers

SOURCE: Ninety-Second Infantry Division World War II Association and the Appendix to the Congressional Record, Volume 92 - Part 9, January 14, 1946 to March 8, 1946. Submitted by Spencer Moore, Magnolia, New Jersey. Mr. Moore, a former Captain with the 92nd Infantry Division, is currently Director of Public Relations of the 92nd Infantry Division Association

The 92nd Infantry Division was reactivated for duty in World War II on October 15, 1942, less than a year after Pearl Harbor. Immediately after activation its units were distributed among four military encampments: Fort McClellan, Alabama; Camp Atterbury, Indiana; Camp Breckinridge, Kentucky; and Camp Robinson, Arkansas. Seven months later, all components of the Division arrived at Fort Huachuca, Arizona to continue training before deployment overseas. The division was composed of Black enlisted personnel and a mix of black and white officer personnel. All senior commanders were white.

During April, 1944, at the completion of Corps Maneuvers in the vicinity of Merryville and De Rider, Louisiana, the division commander, Major General Edward M. Almond, announced that the 92nd Division would join the Fifth U.S. Army in the Mediterranean Theater of Operations. The first unit to sail overseas was the 370th Combat Team (CT 370) which departed the United States on July 15, 1944.

The regimental combat team went into the line on the Fifth Army front in Italy in August, 1944. Ten minutes later they went into action against some of the best trained and seasoned troops Hitler had in his army.

From then on, until the Italian campaign finally ended with the surrender of a million crack German troops in April 1945, the 92nd Division fought in General Mark Clark's Fifth Army. Some of them were in the line as long as 68 days at a stretch, more that 2 months.

It is one of the marvels of the war that the 92nd Division with an enlisted personnel made up almost entirely of Black soldiers from the South, who had been sent out to work in the fields before they were even adolescents, and who in many cases never had a chance to learn to read or write. They had grown up in an area where they and their people were always treated as inferiors and sometime less than humans. Despite this stayed in there week in and week out, through some of the harshest fighting in the whole war, against Hitler's best, a superb army of self-assured German veterans fighting with all they had to protect their homeland from the attack rolling up from the South.

The 92nd Division consisted of approximately 12,000 officers and men, including some 200 white officers and 600 black officers. Its enlisted personnel was all black - a majority of them rated as IV and V, the lowest grades in the Army classifications. This was largely due to the fact that three-fourths of them came from Southern States, where educational opportunities for blacks were practically non-existent. And the 92nd Division was activated before the Army educational program - designed to carry a man only through the fourth grade in school - got under way. But these men - ill equipped as they were - did their job. They stayed in there, giving their best, day in and day out, seesawing back and forth through the rain and cold and mud, locked in a titanic death struggle with an experienced, magnificently trained enemy who knew all the tricks and who had never known defeat.

Through the whole bitter experience, the men of the 92nd Division were dogged by the racial prejudice and segregation that had followed them from the Southern camps where they trained at home. Other troops might yield temporarily, but there was no comment. But if the 92nd Division lost a yard one day - even though they might gain it back the next day - the reports went back across the Atlantic and soon theirs from home would tell them of loud-mouths screaming, even on the floor of Congress, that the Negro soldiers were cracking, that the Negro soldiers were no good.

The Fifth Army in which the 92nd fought was made up of British, American, Brazilian, French, Italian, Greek, Polish, Palestinian, New Zealand, and East Indian troops. It was in this Fifth Army that the Japanese Americans so greatly

These four officers of the 366th Infantry were in some of the heaviest fighting of the war. Left to right they are: Lieut. C. L. Abbott of South Dakota, Capt. Jos. L. Lowe, Pacific Grove, Calif.; Lieut. A. R. Fisher, Lyles, Ind., who won the Distinguished Service Cross, and Captain E. White of the 92nd Division (Buffaloes) of Pine Bluff, Ark.