



Purple Heart Award

Private First Class Joseph G. Bishop

Private First Class Joe Bishop served first in South Korea in 1949 with the 5th Regimental Combat Team providing security while all U.S. occupation troops were withdrawn from the country. The Regiment left Korea on 31 June 1949 and transferred to Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. The Regiment was redeployed to Korea on 22 July 1950 at the outbreak of the war and assigned to the 25th Infantry Division as a Regimental Combat Team, then reassigned to the 1st Cavalry Division and then assigned to the 24th Infantry Division until 1952. As one of the first combat units sent to Korea at the outbreak of the war, the Division was tasked with the mission to halt the advance of the NKPA advance and delay the much larger North Korean units from advancing and buying time to allow follow-on forces to arrive. Throughout the months of July and August, fierce battles were fought to hold off the advancing North Korean Army. At the end of August, the division established a perimeter around the Port City of Pusan that stretched 140 miles from the Korean Strait to the Sea of Japan. At the end of August, General Walker and the Eight Army began a counter offensive known as the Battle of Masan and then the Battle of the Naktong Bulge. On August 31st 1950, during this offensive while manning a machine gun position with two other soldiers, PFC Bishop was directed to pick up and move to assist another gun position. As he moved from his fighting position, he was hit by an enemy grenade/mortar explosion that blew him through the air and landed on his face. Two other soldiers in Joe's Company were killed and three others wounded. Joe suffered facial abrasions, a broken nose and a mild concussion. He was taken to a field medical unit where his wounds were treated and after three days he returned to his unit. PFC Bishop served with the 5h RCT continuing the offensive until the peace talks started in June 1951. He was among the first returning soldiers of the Korean war landing in San Francisco in July 1951. He came down with malaria while on leave after return to the states to be discharged from the Army on July 10th 1951. In three years of fighting in the Korean War the 5th Regimental Combat Team suffered 949 men killed in action, 3,188 wounded in action, 151 prisoners of war and 86 missing in action. Joe was awarded the Purple Heart after his combat tour was completed but was never notified of the award. So today after 60 years, it gives us great pleasure to make this presentation of the Purple Heart to Private First Class Joseph G. Bishop