

## **Remarks for Officers of the First Division**

### **88<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner**

P. F. Gorman

Alexandria, 28 April 2007

The Big Red One is rich with tradition. Of these esprit-nurturing remnants, perhaps the least well known, and most misunderstood, is this event, its Annual Officers Dinner: it is sponsored and funded by an independent, self-organized committee of veterans, neither by the Society of the First Division, nor by the Cantigny First Division Foundation, nor by the Division's regimental associations. Nor does the Dinner Committee make these celebrations open to just any officer who may have once served in the First Division. Instead, invitees must have undergone the initiation of prior service in combat with that division. My purpose tonight is to point out that the Committee's past and present practice may not serve it well in the future.

Antecedents of the Officers Dinner are not well documented: for example the earliest record in the possession of the First Division Museum is a program for the 27<sup>th</sup> Dinner that noted that the first dinner had been held in 1920. The 27<sup>th</sup> Dinner took place in 1946 at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York. It was the first dinner after World War II, and its program listed among participants Generals Bullard and Summerall —division commanders from World War I— and Generals Allen, Huebner and Andrus —division commanders from World War II. Al Preston, who chaired the Dinner Committee for three decades beginning in 1974, has provided from his own files dinner announcements for 1971 through 1976, and 1980, '81, and '82. I will pass these documents, with Al's permission, to the Museum. Each, together with its associated printed menu, helps to frame the Division's past and to foreshadow its future.

For example, Al's program for the 54<sup>th</sup> Dinner in 1973 notes that **"because of their pride in their service...Shipley Thomas, Jim Edgar, and Alex Henderson, three junior officers, organized a New York dinner to provide an opportunity for other veteran combat officers of the FIGHTING FIRST to meet at dinner as they had been doing at luncheon, to see wartime friends and recall their experiences, humorous or otherwise.... Emotionally exhausting to a few, the Dinner is highly spirited with a certain amount of what has been called irreverence, annoying at the time but humorous in retelling. It has been years, however, since a juicy lemon tart was used as a hand grenade..."** The program for the 56<sup>th</sup> Dinner notes that this possibly unseemly behavior can be traced to Phillip of Macedonia, who celebrated victories with what was called in Greek a *komos*, an ostensibly formal dinner for his soldiers with much wine and music that approached revelry. The 56<sup>th</sup> program records that at the 55<sup>th</sup> Dinner the head table had participated in the parade around the room, and that two veteran officers prostrated themselves on the floor in a Chinese *kow tow* when the exalted ones passed their table. Further, that when all 1<sup>st</sup> Division units had paraded, two Air Force officer guests raced around the room as their own *komos*.

Al's contribution also shows that in 1981, after due deliberation by the Dinner Committee, the Dinner's locus was changed from New York to the National Capital Region. Al does not believe that formal dinners such as this were held during World War II, but, as I say, there is a dearth of records on that point.

The Museum would like to enlarge its holdings on this event, and its Executive Director, Paul Herbert hopes that some of you may be able to help by donating to the Museum past Dinner notices and/or programs. Perhaps some of the regimental CPs have scrapbooks that could help. Al Preston informs us that he took over the Chair of the dinner from John

Lincoln Ames, Jr. of the 28<sup>th</sup> Infantry, who had been Secretary-Treasurer on the Dinner Committee for 18 years between World Wars I and II and then became Chairman of 17 dinners post World War II. Col. Ames left his papers to Dartmouth College, and the Museum is exploring arrangements to exploit them.

In response to Paul Herbert's request, Tom Bowers, a military historian associated with the George C. Marshall Foundation and the First Division Museum, came up with a copy of the program for the "Tenth Annual Dinner of the Officers of the First Division A.E.F.," held in the Commodore Hotel in New York in March, 1929. That document lists Shipley Thomas as Chairman of the Dinner Committee; Shipley was an officer who had served with the 26<sup>th</sup> Infantry throughout its campaigns in 1918, and published in 1920 a history of the A.E.F. lauded by General Pershing himself. The Dinner Committee's program also lists subcommittee chairs for the division's two infantry brigades, its artillery brigade, and its four infantry regiments. Attending that Tenth Dinner was General Charles P. Summerall, then Chief of Staff of the Army. Were we to locate other programs, we might discover whether the event attracted earlier Chiefs of Staff of the Army, such as Generals Peyton March, and John Hines, both of whom held commands in the First Division during the war.



Paul Barron of the George C. Marshall Library in Lexington, Virginia, also responding to Paul Herbert's urgings, has documented the fact that Marshall was the Master of Ceremonies at the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Officers Dinner in the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York, March 11, 1939. Marshall was then a Brigadier General, a deputy Chief of Staff of the War Department, shortly before becoming the acting Chief of Staff of the Army. Marshall Library records show that the principal speaker that night was General Adelbert de Chambrun, of the Army of France, who was with Marshall in the Division Command Post during the battle for Cantigny in May 1918, and of whom Marshall said during his

introduction that **“I doubt if any single individual, other than the highest commanders, played a more important part toward the general success of the allies.”**

Before that 20<sup>th</sup> Dinner, John Ames, in a letter to General de Chambrun dated October 18, 1938, described the occasion as follows: **“Essentially the affair is a gathering of the regiments which made up the division. Regimental luncheons in the P C’s which are established by the various regiments precede it at noon, and on Sunday certain of the regiments have informal gatherings (*dejeuners recuperatifs*) at which the ladies are present. In this connection Ted Roosevelt has asked me to tell you that he is writing you shortly to say that the 26<sup>th</sup> Infantry is coming out to his new house at Oyster Bay on Sunday, March 12. He and Mrs. Roosevelt are expecting Mme. De Chambrun and you to stay with them during the general celebration. Following the Dinner on Saturday night there is customarily a reception for distinguished guests, members of the Committee and outstanding members of the Division which is given by Clark Williams, who I am sure I do not need to recall to you as the Representative of the American Red Cross with the Division. He calls it his “Quiet Hour”!”**

In my own inquiries, I located a Signal Corps motion picture film in the National Archives recording a dinner held in March of 1928 at Sagamore Hill, the Long Island estate of the Theodore Roosevelt family, depicting Teddy Roosevelt, Jr. and his wife, Eleanor Butler Roosevelt, welcoming First Division veterans, among whom was General Summerall. [Whether that occasion was the 9th Annual Officers Dinner is not clear.]

As in other years, we veterans have assembled this evening to reminisce, and to honor those, now departed, who served under the colors here displayed. This occasion coincides

with the 90th anniversary of the formation of our Division: born amid crisis, matured in battle, it led the way for all the divisions that were to come over the following nine decades. Paul Herbert, Executive Director of the Museum, has published a fine article, *America's First Division—90 Years Ago*, in the spring edition of On Point, the journal published by the Army Historical Foundation. Herbert's essay details the conceptual origins of the division, and the difficulties it faced as the first organization of its kind.

This coming fall the Museum, in collaboration with the University of Kansas Press, will publish a new book entitled **The Big Red One - America's Legendary First Division, 1917-2000**. The author, James S. "Scott" Wheeler, a professional soldier and military historian, chronicles the division's exceptional achievements in the two World Wars, the Cold War, and the regional wars of the late 20th Century. For anyone who takes pride in what this division did for the Army and the nation in those years, Scott's book is a "must read."

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of this month a number of us here attended the ceremony at Fort Meyer marking the departure of General Pete Schoomaker, the 35<sup>th</sup> Chief of Staff of the Army. During Pete's time in office he inaugurated two fundamental changes in how the Army organizes for war and supports its forces deployed abroad. The Honorable Les Brownlee, who had been the Acting Secretary of the Army when Pete took office, told me there that he thought General Schoomaker would be long remembered for his reorganizing the Army around brigades as opposed to divisions, and for his posturing the Army to rotate brigades through a theater of operations, as opposed to relying on individual replacements as it did throughout the Cold War, Korea and Vietnam. Secretary Brownlee thought that those innovations had already paid rich dividends, notably in the level of combat savvy among battalion officers and sergeants, in historically unprecedented reenlistment rates among the latter, and in cohesive, modular units capable of repetitive

deployments with high efficiency and morale. While he agreed that Army needs more end-strength to meet its current missions, and to lengthen periods of recuperation and training out of combat, he pointed out that the Army's former force structure and personnel policies would have been singularly inept for meeting the challenges of the Global War on Terror.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Division has been in the forefront of Army transformation in the present century, when its units have borne these colors into the Balkans and the Middle East, and pioneered the training for Transition Teams central to building new social and political infrastructure amid counterinsurgency operations. But I put it to you assembled here that the Officers Dinner Committee, no less than the First Division Museum, the Society of the First Infantry Division, and the several regimental associations, must rethink their own organization, policies, and operational concepts if they are to remain relevant to the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division in the changing Army of today, and tomorrow. I am well aware, as are many of you, that considerable realignment has already taken place. The McCormick Tribune Foundation that underwrites the Museum has been extraordinarily generous with funds for aiding the families of casualties. The Society has likewise been active and helpful, and has served as a clearing-house for information for veterans on operations of units of the division overseas. Some of you have no doubt read on the Society's web site editions of the newspaper published in Iraq over the past several months by the 2d Brigade Combat Team — the BRO's Dagger Brigade from Germany. The regimental associations have done yeoman service visiting soldiers in military hospitals, and those of the Veterans Administration, and in helping their families. But by and large our organizations have tackled these roles with concepts and structure that, however well they fit the past, are less than optimal for either the present or the future.

In my view, The Officers Dinner Committee needs to undertake the sort of due diligence that lead to its moving from New York to Washington, and to reconsider whom it will invite to future dinners, because service in combat with the First Division is a criterion that is blurred today, and will be become even more blurred in the future.

Allow me to provide examples. Let's start with brigades. In World War I the division had three brigades, two of infantry and one of artillery. In World War II the brigade echelon was eliminated, and the division operated with regimental combat teams and a division artillery headquarters. For Vietnam the Army reinstated brigades, the 1<sup>st</sup> Division having three maneuver brigades plus a division artillery. Today, the Army and the division is organized around Brigade Combat Teams, or BCTs. Color-bearing units historically aligned with, and assigned to the 1<sup>st</sup> Division often deploy under command of brigade combat teams formed under another division, and frequently operate when deployed under a third divisional headquarters. Dagger Brigade in Iraq has assigned, familiarly enough, battalions of the 7<sup>th</sup> Artillery, 18<sup>th</sup> Infantry, 26<sup>th</sup> Infantry, and 77<sup>th</sup> Armor. But it also has assigned squadrons of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, a battalion of the 23d Infantry, a battalion of the 9<sup>th</sup> Engineers, and the 299<sup>th</sup> Forward Support Battalion and the 57<sup>th</sup> Signal Company. These units operate task organized, usually without regard for doctrinal branch roles, and so that combat often involves elements from most, intermixed.

Another example: on 19 April, on the parade field of the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division at Fort Hood, Texas there was a reactivation ceremony for 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade Combat Team of the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division, to which there is assigned battalions of the 2d and 26<sup>th</sup> Infantry, a squadron of the 4<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, a battalion of the 6<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery, plus the 201<sup>st</sup> Base Support and Brigade Special Troops Battalions. The commander of the 2d Battalion, 26<sup>th</sup> Infantry, there reactivated, is here with us tonight from Fort Hood [recognize Lt. Col. Brett Jenkinson]. Incidentally, his 2d Battalion, 26<sup>th</sup> Infantry in horse-blanket country at

Fort Hood, will be redesignated 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 26<sup>th</sup> Infantry, when the latter battalion now in Iraq is deactivated upon its return to Schweinfurt. The Blue Spaders will train at Fort Hood, and deploy overseas with 3d BCT, under a division headquarters yet to be specified, and then return to Fort Knox, The sojourn at Fort Hood takes advantage of family quarters available there while new housing units are built at Fort Knox. The permanent home station for 3d BCT of the Big Red One, per present plan, will be Fort Knox.

Or look at battalions: since 1965 the 26<sup>th</sup> Infantry has had only one battalion on active duty. 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 26<sup>th</sup> Infantry, spent most of its post Vietnam years stationed in Germany, and rotated from there at command of 1<sup>st</sup> Division into the Balkans. But in its two campaigns in Iraq, it was once assigned to a BCT not part of the 1<sup>st</sup> Division, and is now serving in 2d Brigade of the 1<sup>st</sup> Division, that brigade fighting under command of another division. Now, I have seen how the 26<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regimental Association, closely cooperating with the serving battalion's rear detachment, can adjust to these circumstances. I am sure that, no matter what the future brings, that Association will remain useful in safeguarding the unit's past, and in assisting its rear detachment in family support. And I know that most Blue Spaders would consider any officer who had fought in its ranks to be eligible to join this distinguished gathering in years to come. But whether that will be so depends on how the Dinner Committee extends its invitation. Indeed, it may have to rely on the Regimental Association to identify and locate him so as to pass on the invitation. For future dinners, what will service in combat with the First Division mean?

My own recommendation to the Committee would be to make it clear that any officer who served in combat while assigned or attached to any of the color-bearing units of the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division will be welcome at future dinners. I urge that the Committee take all

**4/26/07 D R A F T**

other practical steps —such as devising a formal role for the Brigade Combat Teams, that are, after all, color-bearing units of the 1<sup>st</sup> Division— to insure that this tradition of an Annual Officers Dinner shall be preserved for future generations. I am certain that the Dinner Committee will receive the strong support of the Society, the Museum, the regimental associations, and the serving units themselves if the Committee acts to enable gatherings like this for the 90<sup>th</sup> Dinner, the 100<sup>th</sup> Dinner, the 110<sup>th</sup> Dinner....into futurity for another 88 years. Together, we can help the First Division remain First, always.

# 1st DIVISION



TENTH ■ ANNUAL  
DINNER ■ OF ■ THE  
OFFICERS ■ OF ■ THE  
FIRST ■ DIVISION  
———— A. E. F. ————

## Committee

♦♦

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*Entertainment*

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*Division Staff*

**C. C. LAWRENCE**  
*1st Inf. Brig.*

**L. L. PARKS**  
*16th Inf.*

**P. G. DALY**  
*18th Inf.*

**B. R. LEGGE**  
*2nd Inf. Brig.*

**D. E. MEEKER**  
*26th Inf.*

**J. H. DONALDSON**  
*28th Inf.*

**DELANO ANDREWS**  
*1st F. A. Brig.*

**L. E. MARKS**  
*5th F. A.*

**C. BAIRD, JR.**  
*6th F. A.*

**H. C. WOODFALL**  
*7th F. A.*

**E. M. POTTER**  
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**T. R. GOWENLOCK**  
*Chicago*



**HOTEL COMMODORE**  
**NEW YORK, MARCH 9, 1929**

**"The Commander-in-Chief has noted in this division a special pride of service and a high state of morale never broken by hardship nor battle"** General Order No. 391, Headquarters American Expeditionary Forces, 1918

## At the Head Table

♦♦

**COLONEL STEPHEN O. FUQUA**  
*Commanding 16th Infantry; Chief of Staff, 1st Division, A. E. F.*

**COLONEL CHARLES F. HUMPHREY, JR.**  
*Commanding 18th Infantry.*

**COLONEL JOHN E. MADDEN**  
*Commanding 26th Infantry; Headquarters 1st Division, A. E. F.*

**BRIGADIER GENERAL HUGH A. DRUM**  
*Commanding 1st Division; Chief of Staff, 1st Army, A. E. F.*

**BRIGADIER GENERAL JAMES PARKER, ret.**  
*Commanded Southern Department, 1917 when 1st Division, A. E. F., was formed.*

**CASS GILBERT**  
*Architect, 1st Division Monument.*

**COLONEL L. H. H. POPE-HENNESSY**  
*British Military Attaché.*

**GENERAL C. P. SUMMERALL**  
*Chief of Staff, Commanding 1st Division, A. E. F.*

**BRIGADIER GENERAL CAMPBELL KING**  
*Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1; Chief of Staff, 1st Division, A. E. F.*

**MAJOR GENERAL GEORGE B. DUNCAN, ret.**  
*Commanded 1st Brigade, 1st Division, A. E. F.*

**MAJOR GENERAL GEORGE S. GIDES**  
*Chief Signal Officer; Chief Signal Officer, A. E. F.*

**MAJOR GENERAL FRANK PARKER**  
*Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3; Commanded 1st Division, A. E. F.*

**BRIGADIER GENERAL STUART HEINTZELMAN**  
*Chief of Staff, 2nd Army, A. E. F.*

**BRIGADIER GENERAL OTTO B. ROSENBAUM**  
*Commanding 1st Brigade, 1st Division.*

**COLONEL FRANK J. MORROW**  
*Chief of Staff, 1st Division; Headquarters 1st Division, A. E. F.*

**COLONEL FRANK E. HOPKINS**  
*Commanding 7th Field Artillery.*

## Menu

♦♦

**Coupe of Fruit Caramel**

♦

**Potage Dauphine**

♦

**Calery                      Salted Nuts                      Olives**

♦

**Alouette of Kingfish Monegasque  
 Potato Lorette**

♦

**Fresh Mushrooms on Toast Colbert**

♦

**Breast of Chicken Sauté Polonaise  
 String Beans au Gratin**

♦

**Salad Verte à l'Éclairçon**

♦

**Frozen Neufchatel Pudding  
 Petit Fours**

♦

**Demi-tasse**