



# Honor and Fidelity: The 65th Infantry in Korea, 1950-1953

*Gilberto N. Villahermosa*

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## **Honor and Fidelity: The 65th Infantry in Korea, 1950-1953** Gilberto N. Villahermosa

CMH 70-116-1. Discusses the experiences of the 65th Infantry, a Puerto Rican infantry unit, during the Korean War. Formed at the turn of the nineteenth century to protect America's strategic interests in the Caribbean, the 65th Infantry consisted of Puerto Rican soldiers and sergeants and American and Puerto Rican officers. Although in existence for almost fifty years, the 65th had not experienced intense combat until Korea. Despite a lack of previous wartime experience, the regiment did extremely well from September 1950 to August 1951, establishing a solid reputation as a dependable infantry unit. The combat performance of the unit began to slip from the summer of 1951 to the autumn of 1952, when major failures occurred, first at Outpost Kelly in late September and then at Jackson Heights a month later. After the failures at Outpost Kelly and Jackson Heights, the Army recognized that these problems had to be decisively addressed or the regiment's combat effectiveness would be permanently degraded. The Army reconstituted the 65th as a fully integrated infantry regiment in the spring of 1953. By that June, the regiment had redeemed itself in the eyes of the Army's senior leadership. The unit's colors remained in Korea until November 1954, when they returned to Puerto Rico.

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