

*A Glorious Past...  
Blessing A Brilliant Future*

## *Trooper Harold Cole*



148th Anniversary Reunion  
July 20–27th, 2014  
Denver, CO

Trooper Harold Cole is a WWII Vet. It was 1942 when Harold S. Cole, 17 years old, enlisted in the military. On December 7th, 1941, the Japanese Imperial Navy bombed Pearl Harbor. Two days later, the U.S. declared war on Japan, Germany, and Italy. Cole wanted to serve his country. He was born and went to school in North Pelham and New Rochelle, NY. His neighborhood friends were cavalrymen at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and his brother, James, worked at a riding academy. Cole, who enjoyed riding horses, was a perfect fit for the cavalry. At White Hall Station in NYC, he was sworn in and boarded a bus to Camp Upton in Long Island. His next destination was Fort Riley, KS and from there to Fort Clark in Brackettville, TX.

Cole was assigned to the 9th U.S. (Horse) Cavalry Troop F. When the platoon sergeant told the troops to go to the corral and get a horse, Cole got the horses for the inexperienced troopers. Every man was issued a saddle, bridle, horse blankets, stirrups, gun boot, girth, halter, shelter half with pints, feed bag, saddler bags, spurs, poncho, clothing boots, breeches, pistol holder, web belt, magazine holder, cartridge belt, gas mask, steel helmet liner, helmet liner cap, three kinds of gloves, and a general issue of clothing and weapons. In addition to field training with the horses, Cole was a drummer in the Regimental Drum and Bugle Corps and bugler for the 4th Brigade, 2nd Cavalry Division.

He also served as a motion picture operator and the platoon sergeant. In 1943, the 2nd Cavalry Division moved from Texas to Oran, Algeria in North Africa. When the first sergeant told the troopers to dig a foxhole on a rocky mountaintop, the soldiers complained and dug a few holes. That night, a German aircraft flew over Oran and bombed the area. The next morning, every soldier could dig a foxhole. Cole still marvels at what black people can accomplish under adverse conditions.

In 1944, the 2nd Cavalry Division was transferred to the European Theater of Operations and soon after was inactivated. Some troopers transferred to the 92nd Infantry Division but Cole went to Sicily and from there to Naples and Anzio, Italy. He participated in the invasion of Southern France and was sent to Carentan, France as World War II ended. Cole was discharged from the U.S. Army in 1946. His list of military awards includes a Good Conduct Medal, American Campaign Medal, European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with two Bronze Stars, and a World War II Honorable Service Lapel Button. In 1953, Cole enlisted in the U.S. Air Force and went to Aircraft School. He served in the Air Transport Command, Air Defense Command, and Radar Early Warning System Command. In 1956-57, he helped construct the North American Radar Early Warning System. In 1966, he participated in the recovery of aircraft from Vietnam.

With 22 years of service in 17 countries, he retired from the U.S. Air Force. He was awarded the Air Force Longevity Service Award Ribbon with three Oak Leaf Clusters, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with two Oak Leaf Clusters, National Defense Service Medal with one Bronze Star, and Air Force Good Conduct Medal with three loops. Trooper Harold S. Cole returned to aircraft work and retired (again) from Lockheed Aircraft. He was the co-founder of the Los Angeles Area Chapter of the 9th and 10th (Horse) Cavalry Association and was the national president of the Association from 1997-2001.