

OLB:vm

December 30, 1942.

MEMORANDUM FOR OPERATIONS BRANCH, A. G. O.:

Subject: Policy as to naming posts.

1. It has long been the custom to give personal names, as a matter of routine, to new posts, camps, batteries, air fields, and other installations. The practice at present is to refer questions of naming to the Historical Section, Army War College, for recommendation of several possible names; selection is then made by higher authority. The result is that names are often selected simply because available, so that they have no honorary significance.
2. In a memorandum for The Adjutant General, dated December 17th, however, the Historical Section suggested a new policy. The suggestion was that naming be no longer considered a matter of routine, but one constituting a high honor - to all intents and purposes a decoration to the person whose name is selected.
3. In the present war, deaths under circumstances of supreme heroism are occurring; and, regrettably, more will occur. Many such cases will involve incidents which the Nation will wish to perpetuate.
4. It is recommended that new posts or other installations be given geographical or other appropriate designations; and that these designations be not changed until such time as the War Department wishes to confer extraordinary honor upon some person who may perform some act of special heroism, or whose career is one of marked distinction; that the personal name be then conferred with due ceremony; and that the present policy of never using the name of any living person be continued. In this case, the batteries all have numerical designations, which might well be continued in use until occasion arises for a personal name.
5. A statement of the existing policy of selecting names follows, and it is recommended that this policy be not changed.
  - a. The use of the name of a living soldier or of any non-military person is not recommended.

b. The name should, if possible, be that of a person identified with the locality of the post by birth or distinguished service.

g. The services of the person whose name is selected should be commensurate with the importance of the post.

d. The names of all soldiers, regardless of rank, who were born in the locality of the proposed post, and who have conspicuously distinguished themselves, should be considered. The evidence of this service can be indicated, for instance, by the award of the Congressional Medal of Honor.

e. Where a post is established for the specific use of a particular arm or service, the name of a soldier belonging to that branch, if a suitable one is available, is recommended.

f. Names which might provoke local objections or controversies, for any reason, should be avoided, if possible.

g. The use of initials or first names is not to be recommended, unless absolutely necessary to distinguish two persons of the same surname.

h. The term "soldier" used in the above is intended to include officers and enlisted men.

OLIVER L. SPAULDING,  
Brig. Gen., U.S.A., Ret.,  
Chief, Historical Section.

**SECRET**