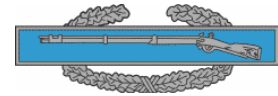




63rd Infantry Division
Blood and Fire



253d Infantry



Elwood H. Kolb
Technician 4th Grade U.S. Army
29 August 1944 – 1 August 1946

Elwood was born on 4 October 1926 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In 1933, he and his family moved to Allentown, Pennsylvania, where Elwood attended grades 1–4 at Muhlenberg School, grades 5–6 at McKinley School, grades 7–9 at Raub Jr. High School, and 10th grade at Allentown High School. Under an accelerated program he completed 11th and 12th grades by August 1944 at Valley Forge Military Academy in Wayne, Pennsylvania. After the Academy, Elwood enlisted in the Army Reserves as a Private at age 17 in Allentown on 29 August 1944. He was called to active duty on 23 October 1944 and inducted at New Cumberland, Pennsylvania. He was sent to Camp Croft, South Carolina, on 6 November 1944 and assigned to Company A, 37th Infantry Training Battalion, where he underwent basic training. After completing basic training on 17 February 1945 and returning from a weekend pass, his unit was ordered to Fort George G. Meade, Maryland, for a few days, and on 15 March 1945 boarded a troop ship bound for the European Theatre as part of a convoy. They arrived in France on 27 March 1945 and were transported by train to Germany where Elwood joined his assigned unit, the 253rd Infantry Regiment, 63rd Infantry (“Blood and Fire”) Division, the next day. His unit had been engaged in combat operations in Central Europe since mid-February 1945, and Elwood was thrust into combat with the Germans the day after joining the Regiment. They fought their way across a bridge spanning the Danube River into the town of Gunzburg, Germany, in April 1945 and on into Landsberg, Germany, at the end of April. After Landsberg the Division was pulled from the front for rest, and Elwood was assigned to guard duty at Division Headquarters in Bad Mergentheim, Germany. After World War II ended in September 1945, Elwood was transferred to a Replacement Center in Marseilles, France, where he was assigned duty in a film library that was a unit of the 6814th Motion Picture Company. After a few months he was ordered to the 6814th Headquarters in Frankfurt, Germany, where he was promoted to T/4 and served out his overseas duty and enlistment as a Warehouse Foreman. He returned to the States on 26 July 1946, was discharged at Fort Dix, New Jersey, on 1 August 1946, and returned to Allentown. In addition to the Combat Infantry Badge, Elwood was awarded the Bronze Star, Good Conduct, European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign, and Army of Occupation Medals. Seven months after returning home, Elwood enrolled in the Pennsylvania State College of Optometry in Philadelphia, graduating in 1950 with a Doctorate Degree in Optometry. He then entered into practice with his father and started to teach at the Pennsylvania State College of Optometry. He retired from teaching in 1988, having served as Chief of the Contact Lens Service and Associate Professor of Contact Lenses. His father retired from their Allentown office in 1966; Elwood continued to practice there until 1996. Elwood became a member of numerous optometric and other organizations including the Lehigh County Chapter of the Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children and the Sertoma Club of Allentown. He served as President of the latter two and some of the optometric organizations. He has been a volunteer for the Lehigh County Historical Society since 1999 and the Emmaus Library since 2000. Elwood married **Vivian Frumer** (27 March 1927 – 23 November 1985) in 1947. He and Vivian moved from Philadelphia to Allentown in 1949. They had a daughter **Beverly** and son **David**. Elwood married **Marilyn Rosenfield** (born 7 January 1938) in 1988. He and Marilyn moved from Allentown to Lower Macungie Township in January 1992. Elwood’s parents were **Dr. Leon Kolb** (1 December 1896 – 15 January 1995) and **Frances Kauffman** (31 July 1898 – 29 June 1967).