

FELIX SPARKS

BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE



Felix L. Sparks was born in San Antonio, TX, United States on August 2, 1917. When Felix was four years old, his family moved to Miami, where Felix's father made a living working for a copper mining company.

Felix was the oldest of five children; he had one brother, Earl, and three sisters, Ladelle, Frances, and Margaret.

When his father was laid off during the Great Depression, there were no extra funds to send Felix to college after completion of his high school degree; and in 1936 Felix enlisted in the U.S. Army. As a member of artillery regiment he was sent to Pearl Harbor in Hawaii. Felix was discharged in 1938 and enrolled in University of Arizona in Tucson, AZ. While at the University of Arizona, he worked his way through ROTC and Citizen Elder Training camp to earn the rank of 2nd Lieutenant.

In December 1940, Felix received a notice to report back to the army. Having returned to active duty in January 1941, he was assigned to the 45th infantry division at Fort Sill, OK. In June 1941, Felix married his college sweetheart, Mary Blair.

In June 1943, in the rank of a captain, Felix was shipped to North Africa; after that he participated in the July 1943 assault landing of Sicily. From Italy, Felix's unit continued fighting through France, taking part in liberation of southern France, the Battle of the Ardennes (1944 - 1945), and the Battle of the Bulge (16 December 1944 – 25 January 1945).

Moving through France into Germany at the end of 1944, Felix continued leading the 45th division. He was part of the 7th US Army, which helped capture Nuremburg and then took part in liberation of the Dachau concentration camp.

In a ten-year army career, which included the period of World War II, Sparks rose to the rank of colonel. Upon returning to civilian life, he attended the University of Colorado Law School, graduating in 1947. He had a law practice in Delta, CO, was elected district attorney there, then worked on the Colorado Supreme Court. At the end of that term, he returned to his law practice in Delta. He was also in the Colorado Army National Guard, notably during the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis and, between 1968 and 1979 served as its Commander, retiring with the rank of Brigadier General.

Felix and his wife had three children, one girl and two boys.

The interview was recorded on September 17, 1996, in Lakewood, CO, U.S.A. Felix Sparks passed away on September 25, 2007 at the age of 90.