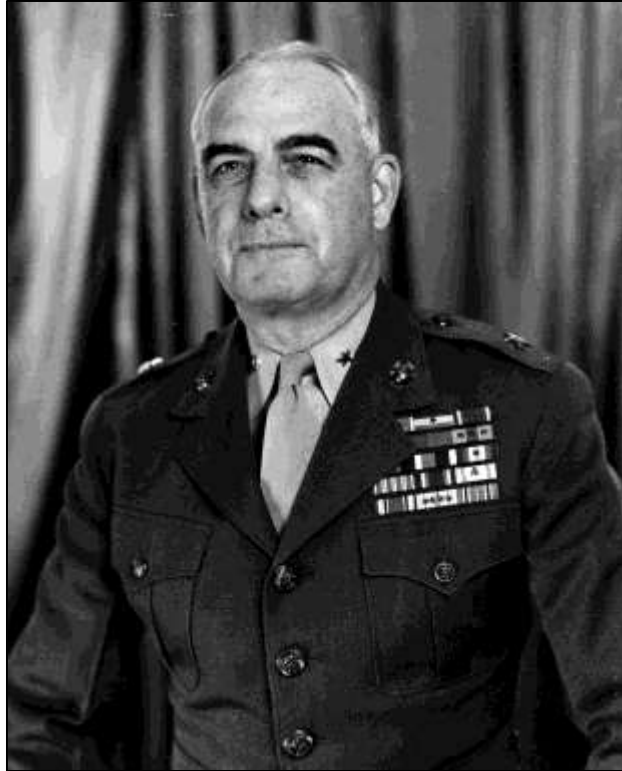


## MAJOR GENERAL WILLIAM S. FELLERS, USMC (DECEASED)



Major General William Stanley Fellers, the first Marine to serve in Washington as Director of the Staff of the Inter-American Defense Board, retired from the Corps on June 30, 1954, after almost 37 years of service. He died 24 November 1973 in Rome, Georgia.

Twice honored with the Legion of Merit citation in World War II, the General began his military career in World War I, when he left the Georgia School of Technology to enlist in the Marine Corps. The first Legion of Merit award was earned at Guadalcanal; the second at Cape Gloucester.

Born December 16, 1895, in Cincinnati, Ohio, General Fellers had had one year at the University of Cincinnati and two years at Georgia Tech when he enlisted in December, 1917. He advanced to the rank of gunnery sergeant before being sent to Quantico, Virginia, for officer training. There he received his commission as a second lieutenant in December, 1918.

Starting with Haiti, where he joined the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Provisional Brigade in 1919, General Fellers carried out a wide variety of Marine Corps assignments between the two world wars.

During 1924, he was stationed at Managua, Nicaragua. In 1927, he was in China on expeditionary duty with the 6<sup>th</sup> Marines. The next year the 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade Marines absorbed the 6<sup>th</sup> Regiment and General Fellers became regimental operations and training officer. After joining the 4<sup>th</sup> Marines in Shanghai in 1929, he had the same duties in that regiment.

In 1930 the General was ordered from Quantico to Nicaragua for a two-year tour with the Marines who were then serving with the Guardia Nacional de Nicaragua. In 1933 he returned to

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the U.S. and was ordered to the Naval ROTC Unit at Georgia Tech. In 1934, he received his promotion to captain. While with the NROTC he instructed in military law and drill regulations, Naval History, leadership, and landing operations involving amphibious forces.

In 1935, as a Captain, U.S. Marine Corps, he went to Quantico to complete the Senior Course at the Marine Corps Schools and graduated therefrom with distinction. Upon completion of the Senior Course he was assigned duties as aide de camp to Major General Charles H. Lyman, USMC, and served at Quantico and the Department of the Pacific (San Francisco) with that general officer for a period of two years. Promoted to Major in 1938, he became Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3 (Operations), at Headquarters, Department of the Pacific.

General Fellers joined the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Brigade at San Diego, California, in July 1938, first becoming Brigade Adjutant and Commanding Officer, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 6<sup>th</sup> Marines. Still later he was named Executive and Operations and Training Officer of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion.

Detached from this duty with special orders to Navy Department, Seattle, Washington, the General worked with that unit in ship rehabilitation and reconditioning in a program that produced and gave to the Marine Corps the first especially designed APA's for service with Amphibious forces. He took the USS HEYWOOD as Transport Quartermaster and trained West Coast Amphibious Forces on "type" ships, moving the first Marine forces from the U.S. to Iceland.

He joined the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division in August 1941, after a six-month tour of duty as Transport Quartermaster and Commanding Officer, Marine Detachment, USS HEYWOOD.



**[USS HEYWOOD, APA-6]  
[Amphibious Attack Transport]**

Promotion to Lieutenant Colonel came while he was Commanding Officer, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Marines, and in June, 1942, while still with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division, he embarked for overseas service as Executive Officer, 2<sup>nd</sup> Marines. As Executive Officer, 2<sup>nd</sup> Marines, General Fellers was directed to establish supply base #2 at Espiritu Santos, from which forces on

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Guadalcanal were supplied during the initial phases of the Guadalcanal landing. While on Espiritu Santos he was reassigned and reported to the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division in October, 1942, becoming Executive Officer, 5<sup>th</sup> Marines. He was advanced to the rank of Colonel in May, 1943, with rank from October 5, 1942.

In May, 1944, he assumed command of the 5<sup>th</sup> Marines, and trained that regiment for its operation at Pelelieu [Peleliu], and in September of that year he returned to the United States. Reporting to Headquarters Marine Corps, he first became Officer in Charge, Rehabilitation Division, Personnel Department, and in November he became Officer in Charge of the Procurement Division.

Returning to the Pacific in April, 1946, General Fellers became Commanding Officer, Marine Barracks, Naval Operating Base, Okinawa, a tour which lasted until May, 1947, at which time the General assumed command of the Marine Barracks, U.S. Fleet Activities, Yokosuka, Japan.

General Fellers serves as Chief of Staff, Troop Training Unit, Amphibious Training Command, Pacific, Naval Amphibious Base, Coronado, California, from July 8, 1948 to July 15, 1949. At that time he was promoted to the rank of brigadier general and became Commanding General of the Troop Training Unit.

In January of 1950 the Troop Training Unit was assigned a mission in Japan which involved the 8<sup>th</sup> U.S. Army. In April, May and June, 1950, Mobile Team "A" was training U.S. Army components of the 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Divisions at Camp McGill, Japan. Additionally, working with staff members of the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division, the team prepared the plans required to move the unit to Korea. With the approval of General Fellers, Mobile Team "A" moved with and became a part of the Landing Teams of the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division which landed at Pohang, Korea, in July of 1950. From that date on, Mobile team "A" became an integral part of the Naval Amphibious Command (Admiral James H. Doyle, USN) and later the Amphibious Staff, 10<sup>th</sup> Corps, in the advance planning and landings at Inchon. Mobile Team "A" operated with the 10<sup>th</sup> Corps on both the East and West Coasts of Korea, and aided in the evacuation of forces from Hungnam. While General Fellers returned to the U.S. in late August, his team continued to perform important services until it was returned to the U.S. in December, 1951. After three years back in the United States, General Fellers was assigned in that capacity until June, 1953, when he began a year of duty as Director of the Staff, Inter-American Defense Board, at Washington. He was serving in that post when he retired on June 30, 1954, receiving his promotion to major general upon retirement.

The General's first Legion of Merit was presented to him by Major General Williams H. Rupertus at an informal ceremony at Cape Gloucester, New Britain. The citation from Admiral Williams F. Halsey, USN, commander of the South Pacific Area and South Pacific Forces, read:

"For exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of service as Assistant Chief of Staff of a Marine Division operating in the Solomon Islands area during the period from November 15 to December 10, 1942, and from December 10, 1942 to October 11, 1943, when the division was undergoing refitting, rearming, and re-equipping. (The then) Colonel Fellers performed his duties as administrator and coordinator for the release of combat equipment to the

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Army and the subsequent refitting. His aggressiveness, loyalty and his complete understanding of the many essentials involved, materially assisted the division to maintain its high state of combat efficiency. His devotion to duty was in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.”

The General’s wife is the former Ellison Bedell, of Atlanta, Georgia. They have two children, Ellison B. and William S., Jr.

- USMC -

Revised  
July 1, 1954

