

50TH INFANTRY REGIMENT OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY

A History & Timeline



- As authorized in the National Defense Act of 1916, the 50th Infantry (Regiment) was Constituted on 15 May 1917 in the Regular Army
- The 50th Infantry was organized beginning 1 June 1917 at Syracuse, New York, drawing a majority of it's initial members from drafts of the 23rd Infantry Regiment which had previously seen occupation duty in Alaska in 1867 after that territory's acquisition from Russia.



50th U.S. Infantry - 16 October 1917 - Camp Syracuse, New York.

This recruitment and training camp was set up on the New York State Fairgrounds in the Lakeland section of Syracuse near Lake Onondaga.

- Company sized movement south had already begun when the 50th Infantry Regiment was Assigned to the 20th Infantry Division on July 31, 1918. Along the way various units stayed in New Jersey, Washington, DC, Curtis Bay, Maryland, and Camp Greene, North Carolina, before arriving at the new home of the 40th Infantry Brigade of the 20th Infantry Division at Camp Sevier near Greenville, South Carolina.



Company "L" shown here in Washington, DC in May of 1918.

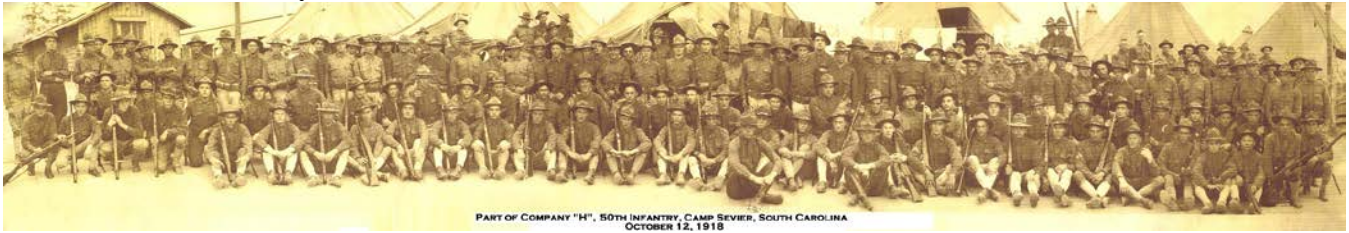
As the 20th Infantry Division began to take shape and train for deployment to Middle and Lower Silesia near Germany, the Spanish Influenza outbreak decimated the regiment's ranks as well as those of the entire military installation. The entire camp was quarantined on September 23rd, 1918, until the outbreak subsided. Hundreds died from this outbreak.



Camp Sevier

The Armistice between the Allies and Germany ended the fighting in the First World War. It went into effect at 11 am on 11 November 1918...thus ending the need for the mobilization of the 20th Infantry Division for war. The 20th Division was Demobilized on 25 February, 1919.

- The 50th Infantry Regiment was relieved from Assignment to the 20th Infantry Division on the 28th of February, 1919.



Company "H" at Camp Sevier, October of 1918

The Regiment had already received its orders that it would be deployed to Europe as part of the occupation forces when relieved from assignment to the 20th Infantry Division. They were, in fact, moved to Camp Dix, New Jersey in December of 1918 until departing by ship from the port of Hoboken, New Jersey on October 16, 1919.

- In November of 1919 the 50th Infantry Regiment was assigned to the 2nd Brigade, Armed Forces in Germany and stationed near Laacher See, Mayen, Germany. (Near Koblenz and the Rhein River). Their encampment was named "Camp Krufft" after a nearby village.



50th Infantry at Laacher See, August, 1921



Headquarters, 50th Infantry, Laacher See, Germany, August, 1921. Note the horses. The infantry was still reliant on Horses and Mules for transport of men and material during and after World War I. Of note: During this occupation, Sergeant Edward F. Younger, 50th Infantry, was chosen to select the 1st "unknown soldier". to be entombed at Arlington National Cemetery.

- The 50th Infantry Regiment was Inactivated on December 31, 1921
- The Regiment was Demobilized on July 31, 1922.

- On February 15, 1942, the regiment was activated at Fort Knox, Kentucky.
- On March 20, 1942, the regiment was assigned to the 6th Armored Division and moved to Camp Chaffee, Arkansas where they participated in the August to September Louisiana Maneuvers. Headquarters for the maneuvers was the newly built Camp Polk (later Fort Polk).
- The Regiment was transferred to Camp Young, California on October 11, 1942 and to Camp Cooke, California, on March 19, 1943.

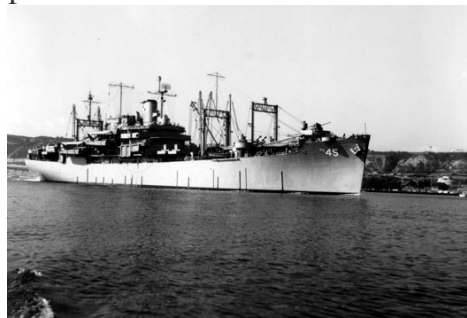
- It was while at Camp Cooke that the regiment was redesignated, less the 1st and second battalions, as the 50th Armored Infantry Battalion. The 1st and 2nd Battalions were redesignated as the 44th and 9th Armored Infantry Battalions, respectively. (Historian's note: Since these Battalions were redesignated into other Regimental lineage, they are not chronicled here during this period. In essence, what had been the 3rd Battalion became the only battalion of the 50th Infantry Regiment and "carried the colors" of the regiment until 1956. It should be noted, however, that the 9th and 44th Armored Infantry Battalions also served in the 6th Armored Division and participated in the same campaigns as the 50th Armored infantry Battalion)



In continued preparation at Camp Cooke, the 50th Armored Infantry Battalion participated in 5 months of maneuvers in the Mojave Desert. The ranks of the 50th were also increased to full strength with men from the 69th Armored Regiment...a regiment whose 1st Battalion, after reconstitution, the 50th Infantry would work with in 1968 and 1969 in Vietnam.

Early on the morning of January 27, 1944, the Battalion assembled in Camp Cooke for the last time, and by late afternoon had entrained for the cross country journey that was to terminate at Camp Shanks, New York, the Port of Embarkation.

- Boarded the USS Henrico on February 11, 1943 to the 14 day trip which ended with the Battalion disembarking at Greenock, Scotland on February 25, 1944. From Scotland, the Battalion travelled by train to Burford, Oxfordshire, England for final training and preparation for embarkation for the European Theater.



USS Henrico, APA-45

- The 50th Armored Infantry Battalion moved ashore at Normandy after the beachhead had been established...and did not participate in the initial beach landings. Action soon followed as the 50th was responsible for the liberation of the towns of Brehal and Granville, France, and the capture of over 300 enemy soldiers.
- The 50th Armored Infantry Regiment participated in all major campaigns of the 6th Armored Division in World War II including:
 - Normandy - 6 June 1944 to 24 July 1944
 - Northern France - 25 July 1944 to 14 September 1944
 - Rhineland - 15 September 1944 to 21 March 1945
 - Ardennes-Alsace - 16 December 1944 to 25 January 1945
 - Central Europe - 22 March 1945 to 11 May 1945



Company C - Near Bastogne in January of 1945.

- The 50th Armored Infantry returned to New York on September 17, 1945.
 - Inactivated September 18, 1945 at Camp Shanks, New York.
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The Korean conflict brought demand for more trained troops and Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, was reactivated in August of 1950. The 6th Armored Division was designated as a replacement training division.

- As part of the 6th Armored Division, the 50th Armored Infantry Battalion was activated on September 5, 1950.
- The 50th Armored Infantry Battalion was Inactivated on 16 March, 1956 at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri.
- The 50th Armored Infantry Battalion was Relieved July 1, 1957, from Assignment to the 6th Armored Division.
- The 3 Battalions of the Regiment were moved to Fort Hood Texas and assigned to the 2nd Armored Division (Date unknown).

On February 25th, 1958, The 3rd Battalion was redesignated as Headquarters & Headquarters Company, 3rd Armored Rifle Battalion, 50th Infantry and relieved from Assignment to the 6th Armored Division.

On April 1, 1958, the 3rd Armored Rifle Battalion was activated with the 7th Army. They were the primary opposing forces (OPFOR) for training & maneuvers at Wildflecken Germany.

The 3rd Armored Rifle Battalion retired it's colors on July 15, 1962

- The 3 Battalions were officially consolidated on July 1, 1959, to form the 50th Infantry, a parent regiment under the Combat Arms Regimental System.
- On July 1st, 1963, the 1st and 2nd Battalions were reorganized and redesignated as the 1st and 2nd Battalions (Mechanized), 50th Infantry. Both the 1st and 2nd Battalions took part in the massive "Operation Big Lift" in October of 1963 when the entire 2nd Armored Division was airlifted to Germany as a show of force in the cold war. The 1st Battalion participated in "Operation Long Thrust " in 1964 and took part in maneuvers near the Czech border.
- December of 1965 the 1st and 2nd Battalions became Infantry Training Battalions, each training 3 cycles of Basic Combat Trainees. The 3rd group of Basic Combat Trainees were also given Advanced Infantry Training and retained.
- In the Spring of 1967, the 1st Battalion was notified that they should prepare for deployment to the Republic of Vietnam. Drafts of men from the 2nd Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry and 2nd Battalion (Mechanized), 41st Infantry were used to bring the 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry to full strength.



The 2nd Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry saw service in Erlangen, Germany at Ferris Barracks and in 1983 was redesignated as the 4th Battalion, 41st Infantry.

- The 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry was Relieved on September 1, 1967, from assignment to the 2nd Armored Division
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- Boarded the USS General John Pope on September 1, 1967 at Oakland, California for the 21 day trip which ended with the Battalion disembarking at Qui Nhon, Binh Dinh Province, Republic of Vietnam on September 21, 1967.



GEN Westmoreland, COMUSMACV, addressing 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry shortly after they arrived in Vietnam in September 1967.

The 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry served in Vietnam under the U.S. Army, Pacific (USARPAC) command, as a general reserve and was attached to the following units:

- September 22, 1967 to February 28, 1968 attached to the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile).
- March 1, 1968 to April 4, 1968 attached to the 3rd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division.
- April 5, 1968 to October 6, 1969 attached to the 173rd Airborne Brigade.
- October 7, 1969 to September 30, 1970 attached to Task Force South, I Field Force, Vietnam.
- October 1, 1970 to December 13, 1970 attached to I Field Force, Vietnam.

The following 50th Infantry Designations were used by units not a contiguous part of the 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry in Vietnam:

- Company E, 50th Infantry (Long Range Patrol), 9th Infantry Division from December 20, 1967 to February 1, 1969. On February 1, 1969, the department of the Army reorganized the 75th Infantry as the parent regiment for long-range patrol companies under the combat arms regimental system. Maj. Gen. Ewell activated Company E (Ranger), 75th Infantry, from Company E, 50th Infantry.
- Company F, 50th Infantry (Long Range Patrol), 25th Infantry Division, from December 20, 1967 to February 1, 1969. The unit was redesignated as Company F (Ranger), 75th Infantry on February 1, 1969.
- 50th Infantry Scout Dog Platoon, 4th Infantry Division from March 7, 1967 to December 10, 1970.
- Company E (Rifle Security), 50th Infantry, U.S. Army Support Command, Da Nang, 1st Log Command, USARV from June 30, 1971 to January, 1972...formed from the ranks of the 2nd Security Police Company, Camp Baxter, Da Nang.
- Company F (Rifle Security), 50th Infantry, U.S. Army Support Command, Da Nang, 1st Log Command, USARV from January, 1972 to November 16, 1972.

The 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry participated in 10 Vietnam Campaigns. Other 50th Infantry Designations participated in 3 additional campaigns.

Major Battles of the 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry in Vietnam:

- Attack on the Night Laager of Company C, Halloween, 1967.
 - Battle of Tam Quan, December 6 to 20, 1967.
 - Battle of An Tinh at An Loc (1), January 2 to 4, 1968.
 - Battle of Trung Thanh, January 23, 1968.
 - Tet Offensive - Phu My, January 31 to February 4, 1968.
 - Attack on LZ Litts, March 9, 1968.
 - Battle of An Bao, May 5 to 7, 1968.
 - Battle of Trung Hoi (2), May 11 to 13, 1968.
 - Battle of Trinh Van (1), May 25 to 26, 1968.
 - Battle of Thien Gaio, December 15, 1969.
 - Attack on LZ Betty, May 3, 1970.
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- The 1st Battalion (mechanized), 50th Infantry was assigned to the 2nd Armored Division at Fort Hood Texas on December 16, 1970.
- Inactivated on January 27, 1983 at Fort Hood, Texas and relieved from assignment to the 2nd Armored Division.
- Withdrawn August 28, 1987, from the Combat Arms Regimental System, reorganized under the United States Army Regimental System as the 1st Battalion, 50th Infantry, and transferred to the United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, Infantry Training Brigade, Fort Benning, Georgia.
- Infantry Training Brigade Deactivated 18 May, 2007 and replaced with the newly Activated 198th Infantry Brigade, United States Army Infantry Center, Fort Benning, Georgia.



198th Infantry Brigade Distinctive Unit Insignia



50th Infantry Regimental Distinctive Unit Insignia



50th Infantry Regimental History compiled by James Howard Sheppard, Historian for the 1st Battalion, 50th Infantry Association who served with Company C, 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry from December of 1965 to June of 1968.

~ Compiled November, 2012 ~
 ~ updated April, 2014 ~

Source Material:

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- U.S. Army Order of Battle 1919 - 1941. Volume 1. The Arms: Major Commands and Infantry Organizations.
- World War II Order of Battle by Shelby L. Stanton
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- 1st Cavalry Division Daily Staff Journals & Intelligence Summaries: 1967-1968.
- 3rd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division Daily Staff Journals: March, 1968.
- 1st Battalion (M), 50th Infantry Battalion Histories & After Action Reports (Various)
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- IFFV, Task Force South, Daily Staff Journals 1969 - 1970.
- IFFV Daily Staff Journals, 1970.
- National Archives Records Administration, Textual Records Center, College Park, MD.