

# 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment

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The history of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment actually entails the histories of two 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiments, the original 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry and the present 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry. The first is the history of the original 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry that was authorized by an Act of Congress on 3 March 1791. That regiment fought in the Miami Indian Campaign in the Northwest Territory from 1791 to 1795 and in the southern district during the War of 1812 and in 1815 was consolidated with 3 other regiments to form the present 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment. It is included in this narrative for several reasons. One because there is not a current history of that regiment and another because the present regiment carries two battle honors earned by that regiment.

In 1815 the Army was drastically reduced and a new 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment was formed by consolidating the remains of 5 existing regiments, the 6th, 16th, 22nd, 23rd, and 32<sup>nd</sup>. The second part of this history is about the present regiment.

This is but a brief narrative of the regiment's long and glorious history which entails literally thousands of pages of material from numerous sources which the author began compiling and condensing into a single record beginning in the early 1990's. Various portions of this material are combined here so that those interested can get an overview of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiments history.

Lawrence R. Grzywinski

## Original 2nd Infantry Regiment

It was on 3 March 1791 that Congress added to the Army the **Second United States Regiment of Infantry** to aid in combating Indian outrages in the Northwest Territory. On 4 March 1791 John Doughty was appointed Lieutenant Colonel Commandant of the regiment but he resigned from the Army on 12 March 1791 in protest to the reduction of enlisted pay. John Toomy was appointed as the first Sergeant Major of the regiment. SGM Toomy and Sergeant Samuel Pollesey, who was appointed regimental quartermaster sergeant, were charged with establishing the regiment's headquarters at Fort Pitt in Pennsylvania. On 22 October 1791 Lieutenant Colonel James Wilkinson was then appointed Lieutenant Colonel Commandant of the regiment but he did not take command until January 1792. The regiment was to be made up as follows, a lieutenant colonel commandant, two majors, eight captains, eight lieutenants, eight ensigns, one surgeon, two surgeon's mates, and eight companies of about 100 men each. Recruiting began almost immediately in Connecticut, Delaware, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and New Hampshire. Pay and muster records indicate that the first enlisted man is Rueben King from Delaware. The companies were known by their commanding officers name and the first one formed was under the command of Captain Robert Kirkwood. Between March 1791 and May 1792 all recruits passed through New Brunswick Recruit Barracks in New Jersey for outfitting and then on to Fort Pitt.

From Fort Pitt the regiment moved down the Ohio River by barge to Fort Washington (Cincinnati) in the Northwest Territory, where Governor Arthur St. Clair had established his headquarters. On 4 October 1791, the Army under the command of St. Clair commenced a campaign against the Indians. On 4 November 1791 about 60 miles from Fort Washington the Indians, numbering not more than one thousand, surprised the Army and put it to flight with great slaughter. The American Army numbered about 1400, of these 38 officers and 593 men were killed or missing and 31 officers and 252 men were wounded, many of whom later died. On a muster report written on 1 December 1791 by Lt Russell Bissell Jr. and Ens. Micah McDonough, they recorded that out of 261 NCO's and privates 101 were killed, 52 wounded and 50 could not be accounted for. Of the 10 officers present in the battle those killed were Major Jonathan Heart, who was in command of the regiment, Captains Robert Kirkwood and Patrick Phelon, Lieutenants Winslow Warren and Samuel Newman, Ensigns William Balch and David Cobb Jr. and Lieutenant Richard Greaton was seriously wounded. On the day of the battle St. Clair's Army consisted of the following; a US Battalion of Artillery, 2nd Infantry Regiment, 1st and 2nd Regiment of Levies, a company of Pennsylvania Militia and a Kentucky Militia Regiment

## Legion of the United States

In 1792 Congress created the Legion of the United States which was a combined force of infantry, cavalry, and artillery under the Command of Major General Anthony Wayne. This Legion consisted of four Sub-Legions of which the Second Infantry became the "Second Sub-Legion". At this time only the 1st and 2d Infantry were actually organized, therefore it was necessary to go out and recruit infantry for the 3d and 4th Sub-Legions. The new force was reformed and during the winter of 1792-93 and trained at the United States' first training facility which was located at Legionville in Pennsylvania. The Legion fought in the Northwest Indian War finally defeating the Indians at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in the Northwest Territory on 20 August 1794. The conflict with the Indians ended with the signing of the Treaty of Greenville on 2 August 1795. On 1 November 1796 the Legion was discontinued and the Second Sub-Legion again became the Second Regiment of Infantry. The unit colors of the 2nd Sub-Legion were red and white. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment's oldest campaign streamer is for the Miami Indian Campaign, 1790-1795.

## Regiment Motto

The motto, "NOLI ME TANGERE" (Do Not Touch Me), was first applied in 1792 when Major General Anthony Wayne requested Secretary of War Henry Knox to send the newly formed Legion of the United States a legion standard and a standard for each of the four sub-legions. Each standard was to have this motto on a ribbon on the flag. This motto was carried over following the 1815 consolidations and became part of the present regiment's distinctive unit insignia in 1936.

## War of 1812

In the War of 1812 units of the 2nd Infantry fought several engagements with the British. The regiment was made famous by the gallant defense of Fort Bowyer, in Alabama, on 15 September 1814 when 120 2nd infantrymen held off four British vessels and a force of 130 Royal Marines, 100 Spanish infantrymen, and some 600 Indians. The 2nd Infantry losses in the battle were 4 killed and 4 wounded while the British suffered 32 killed and 40 wounded and the loss of one ship. Major William Lawrence, who was in command of the fort, was brevetted for gallantry in this action, together with Captains Chamberlain, Brownlow and Bradley. Lieutenants Villard, Sturgis, Conway, H. Saunders, T. R. Saunders, Brooks, Davis and C. Saunders, are all mentioned by General Jackson in dispatches. Captain John M. Davis of the regiment was made a brevet major for gallantry at the siege of New Orleans in December 1814 and several companies of the 2nd Infantry were in New Orleans at the time of the Battle of New Orleans in January 1815.

On 11–12 February 1815 the British attacked Fort Bowyer again, Major William Lawrence of the 2nd Infantry was still in command there. General Jackson had reinforced Major Lawrence, who now commanded some 370 troops from the regiment, with three long 32-pounders, eight 24s, six 12s, five 9s, a mortar and a howitzer. After a five day siege the British forced Major Lawrence, who had been wounded, to surrender Fort Bowyer. Their victory was short lived because several days later they learned that the war had already ended with the signing of the Treaty of Ghent on 24 December 1814. Still, the British had captured the regiment's colors, which are on display at the Royal Hospital Chelsea, England; several requests have been made for their return to the regiment, which the British have declined. This battle is considered the last battle of the War of 1812 and also the last battle fought by the original 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment. © *copyright, 2008, 2012, 2014*

## Present 2nd Infantry Regiment

No sooner was war over than Congress scrambled to rid itself of its more than 30,000 infantry men. Under an act of Congress dated 3 March 1815 the Regular Army was drastically reduced and eight new regiments were formed from the remains of the 44 existing regiments. This was done with no respect for tradition, the old regiments that happened to be closest together were pooled to form the new regiments and the numbers of the regiments were based on the seniority of the colonels commanding them. Due to these consolidations the regiment was no longer the second oldest and because of having the same lineage date as the 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment share being the third oldest

On 17 May 1815 a new Second Infantry was organized in accordance with this act by the consolidation of the 6th, 16th, 22nd, 23rd, and 32nd Regiments of Infantry, all of which were located in the upper New York area. The date of organization of the present regiment is that of the 6th Infantry, 12 April 1808. At this time the original 2nd Infantry was consolidated with the 3rd, 7th and 44th Infantry Regiments, all of which were located in the New Orleans, Mobile and Creek Nation area, to become the new 1st Infantry Regiment. The 2nd Infantry Regiment's headquarters was located at the cantonment at Sackett's Harbor. Colonel Hugh Brady became the regiment's commanding officer with Ninian Pinkney as lieutenant-colonel and Henry Leavenworth as major. The regimental number "2" was based on Brady being the second most senior among all the regimental commanders of the United States Army. Colonel Brady was in command of the 22nd Infantry when the consolidation took place and although he served in several other commands and attained the rank of major general he remained colonel commandant of the 2nd Infantry Regiment until his death on 15 April 1851. He was in command of the 2nd Infantry longer than any other officer.

### **A brief history of the 5 regiments consolidated to form the present 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment**

The 6th Regiment of United States Infantry was organized under the act of 16 July 1798 and discharged 15 June 1800. Organized under act of 12 April 1808, its recruits were from Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey. The regiment was under the command of Colonel Jonas Simonds 8 July 1808 to 17 May 1815. On 13 October 1812 one company under the command of Captain John Machesney participated in the attack on Queenston Heights, Canada. The 6th Regiment of United States Infantry is credited with being in battles at Fort George, York, Beaver Dams, French Creek, La Colle Mill, and provided the bulk of the Regulars at Plattsburg. Colonel Simonds had a flair for the dramatic; he refused to accept the new, all blue uniform, preferring to keep the older 1812 issue coatee, with its red facings and white trim. Colonel Simonds also refused the US made muskets, instead, he had the 6th issued the British Brown Bess musket. Campaign honors awarded, CANADA

The 16<sup>th</sup> Regiment of United States Infantry was organized under the act of 16 July 1798 and discharged 15 June 1800. Organized under the acts of 11 January and 26 June 1812. Colonel Cromwell Pearce was in command 25 April 1812 to 17 May 1815. The 16<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment is credited with being in battles at York, Fort George, Stony Creek, Crysler's Field and Cook's Mills. Campaign honors awarded, CANADA

The 22<sup>nd</sup> Regiment of United States Infantry was organized on 26 June 1812. In 1814 while under the command of Major Henry Leavenworth it fought at the Battle of Chippawa on 5 July 1814 and under the command of Colonel Hugh Brady at the Battle of Lundy's Lane on 25 July 1814. Brady was seriously wounded during the battle. The 22nd Infantry Regiment is credited with being in battles Fort George, French Creek, Fort Erie, Chippawa and Lundy's Lane. The regiment was located at Sacketts Harbor in 1815 still under the command of Colonel Brady when it was consolidation with the 6th, 16th, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23rd and 32nd to form the 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry. Campaign honors awarded, CANADA, CHIPPAWA, LUNDY'S LANE.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> Regiment of United States Infantry was organized on 26 June 1812. Colonel Daniel Brown was in command 15 April 1812 to 20 June 1813, Colonel John Christie in command 12 March to 22 July 1813 and James Patton Preston in command 15 August 1813 to 17 May 1815. In 1814 while under the command of Major Daniel McFarland fought at the Battle of Chippawa on 5 July 1814 and the Battle of Lundy's Lane on 25 July 1814. The 23rd Infantry regiment is credited with being in battles at Black Rock, Queenston Heights, Stony Point-Sacketts Harbor, Stony Creek, Beaver Dams, Fort George, French Creek, La Cole Mill, Fort Erie, Chippawa and Lundy's Lane. Campaign honors awarded, CANADA, CHIPPAWA, LUNDY'S LANE.

The 32<sup>nd</sup> Regiment of United States Infantry was organized on 29 January 1813. Colonel S. E. Fotherall was in command 6 May 1813 to 9 August 1814 and Colonel J. R. Mullany in command 30 November 1814 to 17 May 1815. The 32<sup>nd</sup> Infantry was not engaged during the war. Campaign honors awarded, NONE

The War Department ruled that the present 2nd Infantry inherited the battle honors of the regiments consolidated into its organization with the 1815 consolidation. The regimental colors therefore bear the campaign streamers for Canada, Chippawa and Lundy's Lane even though the present 2nd Infantry did not participate in any of these battles. The present 2nd Infantry is also entitled to claim the battle honors of the original 2nd Infantry for the Miami Campaign (1790-1795) and Alabama (Fort Bowyer) 1814. © copyright, 2008, 2012, 2014

## First Indian War Period

In the ensuing years the regiment was primarily concerned with manning and constructing forts around the Great Lakes. When the Black Hawk War of 1832 erupted the 2nd Infantry was sent to Illinois but did not actually participate in any fighting. The 2nd Infantry returned to its posts on the Great Lakes. During the Second Seminole War, from 1838 to 1842, the regiment was in Florida, where it was on the move daily, scouting, engaging in skirmishes with the Indians, building roads and establishing military installations. The regiments losses were 10 killed and 10 wounded. In April 1840 with Colonel Brady attending to other duty assignments Lieutenant Colonel Bennett C. Riley was in command of the regiment. In 1843 the regiment returned to its posts on Lakes Ontario and Champlain in upstate New York.

## Baton

In 1843, LTC Bennett Riley, who commanded the 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry through the Seminole and Mexican Wars, presented the regiment with a drum major's baton with a silver knob inscribed with the date of presentation, the name of the officer giving it and the regimental motto, "Noli Me Tangere." At the time Headquarters and Companies C, D, F and K were stationed at Buffalo Barracks, New York. During the heroic assault to capture the fortress at Chapultepec, Mexico in September 1847 Sergeant Major Samuel C. Green broke the baton when he struck an enemy soldier in the head. The flagstaff from that fortress was used to replace the broken wood on the baton, with the silver mountings transferred to it. Also additional silver bands made from a tea set captured at the fortress were placed on the baton, one of them inscribed that the baton was made from the flag staff captured at Chapultepec. It has been stated that the baton was originally made from either a cannon rammer or cypress wood from Florida, neither can be confirmed. The baton is considered the symbol of the Regiments nickname: "**Ramrods**" and is the most cherished regimental relic. The baton had been in the constant possession of the regiment from 1843 until sometime in the 1990's when it was placed in the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Museum (1<sup>st</sup> ID) at Wurzburg, Germany. In 2007 it was transferred to the 1<sup>st</sup> ID museum at Fort Riley, Kansas and in late 2012 it was transferred to the Patton Museum at Fort Knox, Kentucky. © *copyright, 2007, 2012, 2013*

## War with Mexico

When war broke out with Mexico in 1846, the 2nd Infantry Regiment was sent to Camargo, Mexico and joined General David E. Twiggs' Brigade. From September 1846 to December 1847 the regiment campaigned from the Rio Grande to Mexico City. It was part of the amphibious landing and capture of Vera Cruz and fighting in battles at Cerro Gordo, Contreras, Churubusco, Moline del Rey and Chapultepec. The regiment suffered 29 killed and 132 wounded in the war. The regiment had a cannon rammer captured at the Castle of San Juan de'Ulua at Vera Cruz made into a cane and presented it to Colonel Brady upon their return to the United States. (The cane is now in the possession of the Detroit Historical Museum.)

## Second Indian War Period

In September 1848 because of conflicts with the Indians in Oregon and California the regiment was sent west. The regiment sailed via Rio de Janeiro, Cape Horn and Santiago Chile to California. Between 1849 and 1853 the regiment was in California occupying stations from Goose Lake on the north to Fort Yuma on the south and the Pacific Ocean on the west and the Sierra Nevada Mountains on the east, providing protection for the 49'ers, construction forts and campaigning throughout the entire area. In November 1853 the regiment was ordered to return to New York. The regiment began returning in December 1853 with the last companies arriving in September 1854. Two soldiers were killed and 3 wounded during the campaign in California.

In 1855 the regiment is sent to Minnesota Territory and then on to Nebraska and Dakota Territories where it was occupied in the constructing or reconstructing of forts, building roads and scouting the hills and plains along the Missouri River as far west as Fort Kearny, Nebraska and Fort Laramie, Wyoming. During this period the regiment established Forts Lookout, Randall and Abercrombie.

## **American Civil War**

During the Civil War the 2nd Infantry was involved in some of the first fighting of the war that took place at Wilson's Creek in Missouri and the first Battle of Bull Run. The regiment was assigned to the Army of the Potomac and fought in numerous major engagements such as Manassas, Antietam, Chancellorsville, Fredericksburg and Gettysburg. By June 1864 the commissioned and enlisted strength of the regiment had reached such a low figure, less than 100 men that in accordance with the request of the regimental commander the remaining enlisted men were transferred to Company C, and that company was given a full complement of officers, non-commissioned officers. From then until December 1864 the entire regiment consisted of just Company C. The regiment suffered 102 killed and 326 wounded during the Civil War.

On 18 April 1869 the 2nd Infantry was consolidated with the 16th Infantry and the consolidated unit was designated as the 2nd Infantry. The 2nd Infantry bears 9 battle honors from the Southern Campaign through its 1869 consolidation with the 16th Infantry. This unit was present at battles in that sector, including Atlanta, Chickamauga, Chattanooga, Georgia 1864, Kentucky 1862, Mississippi 1862, Murfreesboro, Shiloh and Tennessee 1863.

Between the end of the war in 1865 and 1877 the regiment was deployed throughout the south enforcing the "Reconstruction" laws. On 10 February 1877 2nd Lieutenant Augustine McIntye was brutally murdered in Gelnier County, Georgia while in command of a detachment acting as a posse with two U. S. Marshals and revenue officers engaged in arresting illicit distillers.

## **Third Indian War Period**

From 1877 to 1886 the regiment was in Washington, Oregon and Idaho Territory campaigning against the Nez Perce, then the Bannocks and then a band of the Eastern Shoshone's called the Sheepeaters. During this entire period, the regiment suffered 1 soldier killed, 2 wounded, 1 death by drowning and 10 deaths by other causes. In 1886 the 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry moved to Fort Omaha in Nebraska to help fight the Sioux. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry was on the Pine Ridge Reservation on 29 December 1890 when the Wounded Knee Massacre occurred and although the regiment was not involved; one officer from the regiment was wounded there. On the same day, in a separate attack by the Sioux Indians, 3 soldiers from the regiment were wounded. The regiment remained on the western plains until 1898.

## **Spanish–American War**

In 1898 the regiment was deployed to Cuba at the start of the Spanish–American War, with Headquarters, Band and Companies C and G sailing on the same ship with the Rough Riders. The regiment, under the command of LTC William Wherry, regimental commander COL John C. Bates had been promoted to brigadier general of volunteers, fought in battles along the road to San Juan Heights and the battle of Santiago, where it fought on the extreme left of San Juan Heights. In August 1898, the regiment returned to the United States only to return to Cuba in January 1899. The regiment stayed in Cuba until September 1899 when it returned to the United States to prepare for deployment to the Philippines. The regiment suffered 22 dead and 50 wounded during their campaign in Cuba.

## **Philippine Insurrection**

In September/October 1900 the 2nd Infantry less the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion was deployed to deal with the Philippine Insurrection during which it fought in over 25 engagements on several of the islands. Three soldiers were killed and twelve wounded between 4 November 1900 and 10 February 1902. The 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion arrived in the Philippines in May 1902. The war officially ended on 4 July 1902, however, some groups continued to battle the American forces for several more years. In May 1903 the regiment returned to duty in the western United States, it was stationed at Fort Logan, Colorado and Fort D. A. Russell, Wyoming. In February 1906 the regiment redeployed to the Philippines and remained there until returning to the United States in March 1908. The 3rd Battalion went to Fort Assiniboine, Montana and the balance of the regiment to Fort Thomas, Kentucky for training and garrison duties until deploying to Hawaii in 1911.

## **World War I**

When war broke out, the regiment was assigned security duty in the Hawaiian Islands guarding interned German ships and sailors, as well as various US installations. On 18 November 1917, the regiment less Machine Gun Company and a detachment from Company H turned out for the funeral of Hawaii's ex-queen Lilioukalani. In July 1918, it returned to the United States and was assigned to the 19th Division at Camp Dodge, Iowa. The war ended just as the regiment was about to deploy to France. In 1919, the 2nd Infantry was relieved from the 19th Division and resumed as a separate regiment.

## **Post World War I**

In September 1919 following its release from the 19th Division the regiment was stationed at Camp Sherman, Ohio. In October 1921 the regiment was ordered to Fort Snelling, Minnesota and Fort Sheridan, Illinois but as they reach their destinations the 2nd and 3rd Battalions were eliminated and Headquarters and 1st Battalion are at Fort Sheridan as a training battalion. In August 1922 the regiment is redesignated a combat regiment and the 2nd and 3rd Battalions are reorganized using personnel from the 54th Infantry. In March 1923 the regiment was assigned to the 6th Division. Headquarters and 1st Battalion stay at Fort Sheridan, 2nd Battalion is at Fort Wayne (Detroit), Michigan and 3rd Battalion is at Fort Brady, Michigan. On 19 June 1936 a new distinctive unit insignia was authorized. Between August 1922 and October 1939 no major changes were made to the regiment and the regiment participated in the usual garrison training, maneuvers, field training and other duties.

## **World War II**

In 1939 prior to World War II, the regiment was assigned to the 5th Infantry Division. In February 1942 the regiment was sent to Iceland for training, to provide security for U. S. bases located there and to load and unload supply ships. The regiment was then sent to England and then Ireland for training. In July 1944 the regiment along with the 5th Infantry Division landed in Normandy, France. It became part of General George Patton's Third United States Army, leading the way in the breakout from the beaches of Normandy in Operation Cobra, capturing Rheims and then seized Metz after a major battle at Fort Driant. On 13 July 1944 SSGT Robert Bass was killed by enemy artillery fire, he was the first KIA of the war from the 2nd Infantry and also the 5th Division. When the Battle of the Bulge began the regiment moved to the battle zone in the area of Nideranven, Luxembourg. In January 1945 the 2nd Infantry Regiment forced a crossing of the Sauer River and attacked into the Siegfried Line. The regiment crossed the Rhine River near Oppenheim and secured the crossing for other Third Army units. The unit then led the attack into Czechoslovakia and was located near the town of Volary when the word came to cease all forward movement at 0831 hours on the 7th of May 1945. In securing Volary soldiers of the regiment along with others liberated a concentration camp where Jewish women were being held. In 276 days of combat the regiment captured 275 cities and towns, crossed 20 rivers and captured 22,103 of the enemy, the regiment suffered 906 killed, 2736 wounded and 295 missing or prisoner of war. Twelve Distinguished Service Crosses, 184 Silver Stars and 664 Bronze Stars were awarded to soldiers of the regiment.

## **Post World War II**

Following World War II the regiment returned to the United States and was inactivated and activated several times and even returned to Germany for a period. During the Korean War the regiment was stationed at Indiantown Gap Military Reservation, Pennsylvania with the 5th Infantry Division training recruits for deployment to Korea. In June 1957 at the time of the Pentomic reorganization the regiment was stationed at Fort Ord, California with the 5th Infantry Division, serving as a training regiment. The 2nd Battalion was reorganized and redesignated as Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battle Group, 2nd Infantry and released from assignment with 5th Infantry Division and assigned to the 1st Infantry Division. During the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle Groups time assigned to the 1<sup>st</sup> Division they were called "RAMS" and had a ram, named Sam the Ram, as a mascot. It was given to them by Kansas State College located in Manhattan, Kansas. At this time both the 1st and 3rd Battalions were inactivated. In January 1959 the 2nd Battle Group was reassigned to the 24th Infantry Division in Germany. In February 1962 the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion was activated and assigned to the 2nd Brigade, 5<sup>th</sup>

Infantry Division. The 2d Battalion was reorganized and redesignated and concurrently relieved from assignment to the 24th Infantry Division and also assigned to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, 5th Infantry Division and both battalions were stationed at Fort Devens, Massachusetts.

## Vietnam

With the fighting in Vietnam escalating the change in assignment from NATO reinforcement to counterinsurgency in Vietnam, the 1st Infantry Division was restructured. Battle Groups were redesignated as infantry battalions and the requirements for 9 infantry battalions rise. When the division received orders to deploy to Vietnam it was told to leave its 2 armored battalions behind, therefore the division was in need of two more infantry battalions. As no pool of unassigned maneuver battalions existed, on 12 July 1965, the two infantry battalions, the 1st and 2nd Battalions, 2nd Infantry from the 2d Brigade, 5th Infantry Division, at Fort Devens, Massachusetts were assigned to the 1st Infantry Division with no change of station. The 1st Infantry Division also reorganized its two mechanized infantry battalions as standard infantry, bringing the number of infantry battalions in the division to nine. In September 1965 the two battalions deployed to Vietnam, arriving off the coast of South Vietnam in October 1965 and landed on the beach at Vung Tau and from there proceeded to their assigned areas, The 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion to Phouc Vinh and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion to Lai Khe. The battalions initially fought as light infantry in the areas North and West of Saigon. In the June–July 1966 time period it was determined that mechanized infantry would work in Vietnam so the 2nd Battalion was assigned the task of changing over, this took place from 17 July-31 December 1966. On 2 January 1967 the 2nd Battalion officially became a mechanized infantry battalion; it was the first one in the 1st Division in Vietnam.

The first major battles were fought by the 2nd Battalion at Ap Bau Bang on 12 November 1965 and Ap Nha Mat on 5 December 1965. Heavy losses were suffered at Ap Nha Mat with 40 killed and over 100 wounded and 3 soldiers missing. The 1st Battalion sustained its first major casualties of the war on 21 December 1965 when the enemy ambushed the command group of Company B as the company was moving out of Bien Hoa on routine patrol. On 25 August 1966 a patrol from Company C, 1st Battalion became involved in what became known as the Battle of Bong Trang, losses were heavy for both sides.

During the four and a half year deployment the battalions were involved in major operations such as: Junction City, the largest operation conducted up to that time, Lam Son II, Paul Bunyan, Bu Dop, AKA Battle of Hill 172, An Loc and An Loc II, plus numerous other operations and small unit actions. It is difficult to detail all of the 2 battalion's actions in Vietnam because contact with the enemy was almost daily. Most engagements were sudden, quick and furious with the battalions winning the day. In March/April 1970 when the 1st Infantry Division stood down the 1st and 2nd Battalion's colors were cases and the soldiers were either reassigned to other units in Vietnam or returned to the United States to be discharged. Losses were 276 killed from the 1st Battalion and 266 from the 2nd Battalion. Fourteen Distinguished Service Cross's and numerous Silver and Bronze Stars were awarded to soldiers of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion's.

One soldier from Company B, 1st Battalion and three soldiers from Company B, 2nd Battalion are still listed as body not recovered, Casualty Type: Hostile, died while missing.

### "BLACK SCARVES"

On 30 April 1966 in a sweep through the village of Lo Go, the 1st Battalion was engaged in heavy fighting and it was during this time that a large quantity of black cloth was captured. This cloth was used by the Viet Cong to make their "Black Pajama" uniforms. At the direction of battalion commander, LTC Richard Prillaman, this cloth was made into scarves to be worn by the battalion's soldiers. LTC Prillaman wanted to be able to distinguish his battalion from other division soldiers and to provide the soldiers with something more appropriate than the towels the men were wearing around their necks. It is from this that the battalion has as its nickname "Black Scarves". The printing on the scarves was a different color for each company: HHC, yellow, Company A, red, Company B, white, Company C, blue and Company D, green. © copyright 2007

## "IRON FIST"

The following statement was in a press release from Headquarters, 1st Infantry Division, in January 1968 describing the 2nd Battalion's accomplishments. "The 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry (Mechanized) *The Iron Fist of the Big Red One* is one of the most versatile units in the First Division. The use of armored personnel carriers for fast ground deployment adds greatly to the battalions reactionary capabilities." The 2nd Battalion soldiers called themselves "Iron Fists" from that time until the battalion returned to the United States and was inactivated in 1970. © copyright 2007

## Post-Vietnam

In early April 1970 an honor guard returned the 1st and 2nd Battalion's colors to Fort Riley, Kansas and on 15 April the 2nd Battalion was inactivated. The 1st Battalion remained active and in October 1970 the battalion, along with the entire division, participated in Operation Reforger II in Germany. Following this it returned to Fort Riley and remained with the 1st Infantry Division until it was inactivated on 1 October 1983.

On 21 March 1973 the 2nd Battalion was relieved from assignment to the 1st Infantry Division and reassigned to the 9th Infantry Division. It was activated at Fort Lewis, Washington with the reflagging of the 1st Battalion, 60th Infantry. On 6 November 1987 the 2nd Battalion was reactivated as a "Motorized" Combined Arms Battalion-Heavy (CAB-H). On 17 June 1988 the 2nd Battalion was inactivated and then in August 1988 was activated with the reflagging of the 3rd Battalion, 60th Infantry, still with the 9th Division. In May 1991 the 2nd Battalion was inactivated and relieved from assignment to the 9th Infantry Division.

On 16 February 1996 the 2nd Battalion was reassigned to the 1st Infantry Division and on 27 March was activated at Rose Barracks, Vilseck, Germany as Task Force 2/2 Infantry, which was a mechanized battalion, with the reflagging of the 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry. The 2nd Battalion deployed to Bosnia in support of operation Joint Guard in 1996. In 1997 the battalion was awarded the Army Superior Unit Award for actions such as Brcko riots and Hill 562. The 2nd Battalion redeployed to Vilseck in October 1997. On the 24th of November 1999, the battalion deployed to Camp Monteith, Kosovo. The battalion was redeployed to Vilseck in June 2000. The unit was again deployed to Camp Monteith, Kosovo in November 2002 until July 2003 as the last regular Army unit conducting operations. The National Guard took formal command of operations from the 2nd Battalion.

## War on Terrorism

### 1st Battalion

On 17 March 2008, for the first time in over 24 years, the 1st Battalion was activated in Schweinfurt, Germany with the reflagging of the 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry. 1-18 was a part of 2nd "Dagger" Brigade, 1st Infantry Division which was also reflagged as the 172nd Infantry Brigade (Separate). The 1st Battalion was assigned to 172nd Infantry Brigade and was a mechanized infantry battalion. The battalion has adopted the motto "Back in Black" and the soldiers wear black scarves in recognition of the battalion's service in Vietnam.

In December 2008 the 1st Battalion (TF 1-2) deployed to Iraq and suffered its first casualty in April 2009 when a soldier was killed by an IED. In late October 2009 the first elements of the 1st Battalion, 2nd Infantry and the 172nd Infantry Brigade began returning to Germany from Iraq. By mid-November the entire battalion was back in Germany. TF 1-2 suffered four killed and three wounded during its deployment. The 1st Battalion had a change of command on 19 May 2010 and along with the entire 172d Infantry Brigade moved to Grafenwoehr, Germany.

In late July 2011 the 1st Battalion, 2nd Infantry (TF 1-2) along with the entire 172nd Infantry Brigade deployed to Afghanistan. The transfer of authority from 1st Battalion, 61st Cavalry (101st Airborne Division) to Task Force 1-2 Infantry (TF 1-2) occurred on 13 August 2011 at 10:00. TF 1-2 was detached from the 172nd and is working for the 3rd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division and is in control of Western Nangarhar.



On 14 August 2011 the 1st Battalion sustained its first casualties when two soldiers from Company A were killed by an IED while recovering a damaged vehicle. Company A, 1st Battalion, 2nd Infantry has been attached to TF 3-66 Armor since 2008. Alpha Company, 3rd Battalion, 66th Armor (attached) worked in the Zio Haq area and Company B, 1st Battalion, 2nd Infantry fought at FOB Altimur.

On 24 November 2011, the Black Scarves were ordered to move from Nangarhar to FOB Andar in Ghazni Province, Afghanistan to conduct a relief in place with the 2nd Battalion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry. This was the first time since the Vietnam War that the two battalions had been together in the same location. On 3 January 2012 at 10:30 the transfer of authority between the two units occurred. Following the ceremony the 2nd Battalion began departing Afghanistan. In its one-year deployment the 2nd Battalion suffered 3 killed and 49 wounded while conducting over 1900 combat patrols and 22 air assaults as they and their Afghan partners captured 111 caches and killed 250 insurgents.

In early June 2012 the 1st Battalion began departing Afghanistan and returned to their base in Grafenwoehr, Germany with the last troops arriving back in Germany on 19 June. Task Force 1-2 suffered over 15 wounded during their latest deployment and A 1-2 suffered 2 KIA's and 3 wounded while attached to Task Force 3-66 Armor. Since returning to Germany the battalion has training and conducting EIB testing. The battalion was inactivated on 15 June 2013 along with the entire 172nf Infantry Brigade.

## **2nd Battalion**

In April 2003 with Operation Iraqi Freedom under way, Company B, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry deployed to Bashur Airfield in Northern Iraq as part of 173rd Airborne Brigade Task Force 1-63 ARMOR, to aid in opening a northern front in Iraq. This was called Operation Airborne Dragon, Northern Iraq, with the entire Task Force being air lifted from Germany. Company B as well as the entire Task Force returned to Germany in February 2004.

In the spring of 2004 the 2nd Battalion, less Company B, deployed to Iraq with the 1st Infantry Division. On 20 July 2004 SSGT Raymond Bittinger, 3rd Platoon, Company C, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry was awarded a Silver Star for leadership and heroism under fire on 9 April 2004 in Baqubah, Iraq. SSGT Bittinger was the first soldier of the 1st Infantry Division to receive a Silver Star during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

In November 2004 Task Force 2-2, which comprised HHC, Company A, and Scouts of the 2/2, Company A, 2/63 Armor, 2d Platoon, Company B, 1st Engineer Battalion, 63d Armor, 2d Platoon, Company A, 82d Engineer Battalion and Troop F, 4 Cavalry fought alongside US Marines in the Battle of Fallujah. Task Force 2-2 also fought at Al Muqdadiyah, An Najaf, Al Fallujah, Mosul, and Baqubah. Task Force 2-2 received a Presidential Unit Citation for their actions in the Battle of Fallujah.

The 2nd Battalion returned to Germany in February 2005. In May 2006 the battalion was disbanded and the colors were cased. During the period from February 1996 to May 2006 the battalion operated as a mechanized infantry battalion.

On 19 April 2007 the 2nd Battalion was activated as a light infantry battalion with the 1st Infantry Division, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team at Fort Hood, Texas.

In June 2008 the 2nd Battalion, along with the 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, deployed to Afghanistan. The battalion conducted operations in the Maywand District of Kandahar Province. On 4 September 2008 Company C, 2nd Battalion suffered its first casualties when a Humvee was hit by an IED. On 6 May 2009 At FOB Ramrod, Defense Secretary [[Robert M. Gates]] presented awards to six members of company C of the 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, for their actions on 4 September.

After enduring many hardships, including IED's, a suicide bomber and many soldiers wounded and several killed the troops and civilians dedicated a new chapel at FOB Ramrod. The 2nd Battalion returned to Fort Hood in June 2009. On

10 September 2009 the 2nd Battalion had a change of command and on 16 October 2009 the battalion along with the entire 3rd Brigade Combat Team moved to Fort Knox, Kentucky.

In January 2011 the 2nd Battalion, along with the 3rd Brigade Combat Team once deployed to Afghanistan. The battalion conducted operations in Ghazni Province. On 27 February 2011 the battalion sustained its first casualties when one soldier was killed and four wounded by an IED. In its one-year deployment the 2nd Battalion suffered 3 killed and 49 wounded while conducting over 1900 combat patrols and 22 air assaults as they and their Afghani partners captured 111 caches and killed 250 insurgents. On 3 January 2012 following a change of authority ceremony with the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry the 2nd Battalion began departing Afghanistan. Since returning the Fort Knox the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion had been in i training for its next deployment to Afghanistan in mid-2013.

On 17 January 2013 after years of being in a museum and storage the "Ramrod" is once again, through the efforts of the battalion commander LTC Eric Lopez and CSM John Morales, in a place that all can see it. At a ceremony held at Fort Knox in the George Patton Museum the "Ramrod" was presented to the soldiers of both battalions and guests. The "Ramrod" is to be on display at the museum for the present time.

In June 2013 the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion once again deployed to Afghanistan. The battalion took responsibility for the security forces assistance team mission in Zabul Province at a TOA ceremony when it relieves the 5th Troop, 7th Cavalry. During the uncasing of the 2nd Battalion colors that marked the beginning of this deployment, the battalion commander stated, "the Ramrods have a daunting task but its effects will create a lasting impact for the future of Zabul Province and ultimately for Afghanistan". The battalion is operating out of FOB Apache and is involved I conducting patrols and training the Afghan National Army soldiers.

On 27 February 2014 it was announced that following a transfer of authority ceremony with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 12 Infantry the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion left FOB Apache in Afghanistan and has returned to Fort Knox.

## **Medal of Honor Recipients**

Three soldiers earned the Medal of Honor while serving with the 2nd Infantry:

First Sergeant Daniel W. Burke, Company B, received the award for his actions on 20 September 1862 at Shepherdstown Ford, Virginia. When his unit retreated across the Potomac River, he volunteered to go back to disable some abandoned Rebel guns that were located near the shore of the river. He came under withering enemy fire and was unable to complete the task and retreated back across the river. He was commissioned a second lieutenant in the 2nd Infantry on 18 July 1862 and promoted to first lieutenant on 2 July 1863. He was wounded at the Battle of Wilson's Creek in 1861 and again at the Battle of Gettysburg in 1863. He remained in the Army and retired as a Brigadier General on 21 October 1899. He is buried at Arlington National Cemetery. © *copyright, 2009, 2011, 2014*

Staff Sergeant James Leroy Bondsteel, Company A, 2nd Battalion, for his actions in An Loc Province, Vietnam, on 24 May 1969. The major U.S. Army base in Kosovo, Camp Bondsteel, was named in his honor. SSGT Bondsteel's citation can be found at this link, <http://www.secinfreg.org/medalofhonor.htm>

Sergeant Candelario Garcia Jr. was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor on 18 March 2014 for his courageous actions while serving as an acting Team Leader for Company B, 1st Battalion, 2d Infantry, 1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division during combat operations against an armed enemy in Lai Khe, Republic of Vietnam on December 8, 1968. Sergeant Garcia was originally awarded a Distinguished Service Cross for his actions.

Two officers who would later become executive officers of the 2nd Infantry received the Medal of Honor for their actions in the Civil War:

Major General Henry C. Merriam, for his conspicuous gallantry at Fort Blakely, Alabama, 9 April 1865 while in command of the 73rd U.S. Colored Troops. As a lieutenant colonel, Merriam was executive officer of the 2nd Infantry from June 1876 to July 1885. He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

Brigadier General William M. Wherry, for his actions at Wilson Creek on 10 August 1861 while serving as a first lieutenant with Company D, 3rd U.S. Reserve Missouri Infantry. As a lieutenant colonel, Wherry was executive officer of the 2nd Infantry from December 1894 to December 1898 and commanded the regiment, in the absence of Colonel John Bates, during its deployment to Cuba in 1898 during the Spanish-American War.

## Casualties

Casualty lists for all the conflicts that both the original 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry and the present 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry has fought in from 1791 until the present can be found at <http://www.secinfrac.org/rosters.htm>

## Heraldry

Information for the current Coat of Arms and Distinctive Unit Insignia can be found at the following link; <http://www.tioh.hqda.pentagon.mil/Catalog/HeraldryMulti.aspx?CategoryId=3615&grp=2&menu=Uniformed%20Services>

## Lineage and Honors

The most current lineage and honors for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment and the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalions can be found at the following links;

### **2d Infantry Regiment**

<http://www.history.army.mil/html/forcestruc/lineages/branches/inf/0002in.htm>

### **1st Battalion, 2d Infantry Regiment**

<http://www.history.army.mil/html/forcestruc/lineages/branches/inf/0002in001bn.htm>

### **2d Battalion, 2d Infantry Regiment**

<http://www.history.army.mil/html/forcestruc/lineages/branches/inf/0002in002bn.htm>

## 2nd Infantry Honors

### Campaign Participation

War of 1812: Canada; Chippewa; Lundy's Lane; Alabama 1814

Mexican War: Vera Cruz; Cerro Gordo; Contreras; Churubusco; Molino del Rey; Chapultepec

Civil War: Bull Run; Peninsula; Shiloh; Manassas; Antietam; Fredericksburg; Murfreesborough; Chancellorsville; Gettysburg; Chickamauga; Chattanooga; Wilderness; Atlanta; Spotsylvania; Cold Harbor; Petersburg; Missouri 1861; Kentucky 1862; Mississippi 1862; Virginia 1862; Virginia 1863; Tennessee 1863; Georgia 1864

Indian Wars: Miami; Seminoles; Nez Perces; Bannocks; Pine Ridge; California 1850; California 1851; California 1852

War with Spain: Santiago

Philippine Insurrection: Streamer without inscription

World War II: Normandy; Northern France; Rhineland; Ardennes-Alsace; Central Europe

Vietnam: Defense; Counteroffensive; Counteroffensive, Phase II; Counteroffensive, Phase III; Tet Counteroffensive; Counteroffensive, Phase IV; Counteroffensive, Phase V; Counteroffensive, Phase VI; Tet 69/Counteroffensive; Summer-Fall 1969; Winter-Spring 1970

## Decorations

### Regiment

- Presidential Unit Citation (Army) for FALLUJAH 2004
- Valorous Unit Award for AP BAU BANG 1965
- Valorous Unit Award for BINH DUONG PROVINCE 1965
- Valorous Unit Award for BINH LONG PROVINCE 1969
- Army Superior Unit Award for 1997

### 1st Battalion

- Meritorious Unit Commendation, IRAQ 2008-2009
- Meritorious Unit Commendation, AFGHANISTAN August 2011-June 2012
- Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm for VIETNAM 1965-1968
- Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm for VIETNAM 1969
- Republic of Vietnam Civil Action Honor Medal, First Class for VIETNAM 1965-1970
- Company A entitled to: Valorous Unit Award for AN LOC 1969
- Company A entitled to: Meritorious Unit Commendation (Army), Streamer embroidered IRAQ OCT 2008-SEP 2009

### 2nd Battalion

- Presidential Unit Citation for FALLUJAH 2004
- Valorous Unit Award for AP BAU BANG 1965
- Valorous Unit Award for BINH DUONG PROVINCE 1965
- Valorous Unit Award for BINH LONG PROVINCE 1969
- Meritorious Unit Commendation for GHAZNI PROVINCE 2011
- Army Superior Unit Award for 1997
- Company C entitled to: Valorous Unit Award for BINH LONG PROVINCE 1968
- Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm for VIETNAM 1965-1968
- Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm for VIETNAM 1969
- Republic of Vietnam Civil Action Honor Medal, First Class for VIETNAM 1965-1970

The following awards were earned by companies of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion in World War II.

- Company E entitled to: DUC embroidered SANRY SUR NIED. (WD GO 68, 1945)
- Company E entitled to: Fr CdeG with Palm embroidered SANRY SUR NIED. (DA GO 43, 1950)
- Company H 1st Section, 3rd Platoon entitled to: DUC embroidered SANRY SUR NIED. (nondisplayable) (WD GO 68, 1945)

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