

1st Cavalry Division History

1st Cavalry Division units have served the nation from 1855 to the present; building a history rich in pride with solid ties to the traditions and heritage of the United States Cavalry.

The famed 1st Cavalry Division was baptized by fire and blood on the western plains in an era of horse-mounted cavalry. Dubbed the "First Team" by Major General William C. Chase, the division has always strived not only to be the first, but to be the best.

The division's roots date back to 1855 when the 2nd Cavalry Regiment was organized. Redesignated as the 5th Cavalry in 1861, this unit participated in a number of famous Civil War engagements, including Bullrun, Antietam, Gettysburg, Wilderness, and Appomattox

The sound of the bugle and the cry of "Charge!" sent the thundering hooves of the U.S. Cavalry troopers to protect the western-bound settlers in an era when Indians roamed the western frontier and pioneering settlers clung to their land with determination and luck.

The 5th, 7th, 8th, and 9th Cavalry regiments that would one day form the Division, clashed with the Sioux, Comanche, Arapaho, Apache, and Ute Indian Nations during the Indian Wars, led by colorful characters like Col. George Armstrong Custer.

As the Indian campaigns concluded, the Cavalry patrolled the far western frontiers from the frozen tundras of Alaska to the scorching deserts of the southwest. Just prior to World War I, the Cavalry engaged Pancho Villa's forces during the punitive expedition into Mexico.

With the initiation of the National Defense Act, the 1st Cavalry Division was formally activated on September 13, 1921 at Fort Bliss, Texas. That day, the 7th and 8th Cavalry Regiments were assigned to the division. The 5th Cavalry Regiment was assigned on December 18, 1922.

In addition to three of the four regiments of the cavalry, the original organization included the 82nd Field Artillery Battalion (Horse), the 13th Signal Troops, the 27th Ordnance Company, Division Headquarters, and the 1st Cavalry Division Quartermaster Train which later became the 15th Replacement Company. Major General Robert L. Howze was assigned as the first division commander.

The division's early history is largely a saga of rough riding, patrolling the Mexican border, and constant training. Operating from horseback, the cavalry was the only force capable of piercing the desert's harsh terrain and halting the band of smugglers that operated along the desolate Mexican border.

As the depression of the 30's forced thousands of workers into the streets, the division was asked to provide training for 62,500 people in the Civilian Conservation Youth Corps. These workers constructed barracks for 20,000 anti-aircraft troops at Fort Bliss, Texas in preparation for the Air Age.

Although the division was created as a result of a proven need for large horse-mounted formations, by 1940, the march of progress had left the horse far behind.

The era of the tank, automobile, aircraft, and parachute had dawned and eclipsed the age of the armored horseman. The Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbor erased all doubt. An impatient 1st Cavalry Division was dismounted in 1943 and processed for overseas movement to the Southwest Pacific as foot soldiers.

3-8 Cav "Warhorse"

Unit History

The 3D Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment was constituted in the Regular Army as Company C, 8th Cavalry in July 1866, and organized in October 1866 at Angel Island, California. Designated as a cavalry company, the unit was active throughout the Indian Wars, earning the streamers Comanche's, Apaches, Pine Ridge, Arizona 1867, Arizona 1868, Arizona 1869, Oregon 1868, and Mexico 1877. Cavalry companies were formally redesignated as cavalry troops in 1883. For the next sixty years, C Troop, 8th Cavalry, continued to develop its arsenal and tactics as horse and lever-action rifles were slowly replaced with armored vehicles and machine guns.

The 8th Cavalry regiment as a whole was assigned in December 1917 to the 15th Cavalry Division. The regiment was relieved from service in the 15th Cavalry Division in May of 1918, and assigned in September 1921, to the 1st Cavalry Division. The 8th Cavalry dismounted in February 1943, and reorganized in December 1943, partly under cavalry, and partly under infantry tables of organization and equipment. In July 1945, the 8th Cavalry reorganized wholly as infantry, yet retained its cavalry designation. The Second World War took 3D Battalion, 8th Cavalry, to combat in the Pacific, with streamers for participation in New Guinea, Bismarck Archipelago with (with arrowhead), Leyte and Luzon. In Luzon, the Troop received the Presidential Unit Citation. The Battalion also earned the Philippine Presidential Unit Citation; streamer embroidered 17 OCTOBER 1944 to 4 JULY 1945.

From the Army of occupation in Japan, the 3D Battalion, 8th Cavalry, went to fight in the Korean Conflict. In Korea, 3D Battalion, 8th Cavalry, earned the streamers U.N. Defense, U.N. Offense, CCF Intervention, First U.N. Counteroffensive, CCF Spring Offensive, U.N. Summer-Fall Offensive, Second Korean Winter, Korea, Summer-Fall 1952, and Third Korean Winter. For its extensive actions in Korea, the unit was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation (Army), streamer embroidered TAEGU, The Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation, streamer embroidered WAEGWAN-TAEGU, the Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation, streamer embroidered KOREA, and the Chryssoun Artistian Andrias (Bravery Gold Medal of Greece), streamer embroidered KOREA.

The Battalion was reorganized and redesignated in April 1963, as the 3D Squadron, 8th Cavalry, assigned to the 8th Infantry Division. In December of 1986, the Squadron was inactivated in Germany, and relieved from assignment to the 8th Infantry Division. Shortly thereafter, the Squadron was redesignated in February 1987, to its current designation as the 3D Battalion, 8th Cavalry, assigned to the 3D Armor Division activated in Germany. In the early months of 1991, the Battalion participated in combat actions in Southwest Asia, as part of the 3D Armor Division, and earned the following streamers: Defense of Saudi Arabia, Liberation and Defense of Kuwait, and Cease Fire. For these actions, the Battalion was awarded the Valorous Unit Award, streamer embroidered IRAQ.

The 3D Battalion, 8th Cavalry, was inactivated in November 1991, in Germany, and relieved from assignment to the 3D Armored Division. In December 1992, 3D Battalion, 8th Cavalry, was assigned to the 1st Cavalry Division, and activated at Fort Hood, Texas. In December 1992, to March 1993, B Co, 3D Battalion, 8th Cavalry, deployed to Kuwait with Task Force 2-7 Infantry. In March 1993, A Co, 3D Battalion, 8th Cavalry, became the first company in the U.S. Army to field the M1A2 Abrams tank. In August, 1995, 3D Battalion, 8th Cavalry became the first battalion in the U.S. Army to field the M1A2 Abrams tank. From August to December 1996, 3D Battalion, 8th Cavalry, deployed to Kuwait for Operation Desert Spring.

From August to December 1998, C and D Co, 3D Battalion, 8th Cavalry, deployed to Kuwait as part of Task Force 1/9 Infantry. From August to December 1999, A and D Co deployed to Kuwait as part of Task Force 2-7 Infantry. From April to August 2000, B and C Co deployed to Kuwait as part of Task Force 1/9 Infantry. From April to August, 2001, 3D Battalion, 8th Cavalry, deployed to Kuwait for ODS Rotation 01-02, then redeployed back to Kuwait as part of Task Force Blackjack from November, 2001, to April, 2002.

The 3D Battalion, 8TH Cavalry, was called to deploy to Operation Iraqi Freedom II with the 1ST Cavalry Division, from March 2004 till March 2005. Today, as they have for well over a century,

the soldiers of 3D Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, are trained, ready to answer the bugler's call, and send rounds "ON THE WAY" at any time.

2-8 CAV "Stallions"

Unit History

The story of the 8th Cavalry begins with the activation of Troop Bravo on 23 October 1866, at Angel Island, California. The 8th Cavalry spent their first years in Arizona fighting the Apache and Comanche Indians. They were then moved to Fort Davis, Texas, in 1875, where they served along the Mexican border protecting settlers and ranchers from hostile Indians.

8th Cavalry troopers were sent to foreign shores for the first time at the turn of the century. They first served in Cuba from 1898 to 1902. Their next overseas duty took them to the Philippines for two years. After a brief stateside garrison assignment, they were sent back to the Philippines in 1910.

In 1915, the 8th Cavalry moved again. This time they ended up in Fort Bliss, Texas, where they patrolled the Mexican-American border, protecting ranchers from bandit raids. It was during this assignment that two of the more famous personnel were assigned to the 8th Cavalry: Lieutenant George S. Patton and General John J. Pershing.

The 8th Cavalry became part of the 1st Cavalry Division in September of 1921. Their next assignment was in the Pacific theater during WWII. In 1945, they found themselves in the Philippines receiving orders directly from General Douglas MacArthur.

The 8th Cavalry pressed forward 100 miles from Luzon to Manila, driving a wedge in the enemy lines. They were the "first in Manila" and received a Presidential Unit Citation for this action.

At the end of World War II, they were ordered to accompany General MacArthur to Japan, where they spent the next five years.

Eighteen days after North Korea moved across the 38th parallel, the 8th Cavalry made an amphibious landing behind enemy lines. Upon leaving Korea in December of 1951, the 8th Cavalry returned to Japan where they served another five years.

In September 1963, the 8th Cavalry was reorganized into 2-8 Cavalry, an airborne unit. The Stallions were sent to Vietnam in September 1965. The Stallions saw some of the fiercest battles.

B Company was the first unit in the 1st Cavalry Division to receive the Valorous Unit Citation in 1966. The Battalion left Vietnam in 1971 and was inactivated in June of 1972.

Reactivated in April 1974, the Stallions found their current home: Fort Hood. This time, they were mechanized. 2-8 Cavalry deployed in August 1990 to Saudi Arabia in support of Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm. The Stallions helped the coalition forces overwhelm the Iraqi forces and secure the freedom of Kuwait, then redeployed back to Fort Hood in April 1991.

In August of 1998, the Stallions were called upon to deploy to Bosnia in support of Operation Joint Forge as a part of the peace keeping stabilization force. The 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry occupied Camp Bedrock in September of 1998 and patrolled the Tuzla Corridor. The 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry redeployed back to Fort Hood in March of 1999.

In March of 2004 Task Force Stallion deployed to the CENTCOM area of responsibility in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom II, conducting full spectrum operations as part of the First Cavalry Division and Task Force Baghdad. The Stallions redeployed to Fort Hood in March 2005.

In November of 2006, the Stallions deployed back to the CENTCOM area of responsibility in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 06-08, conducting full spectrum operations in conjunction with their Iraqi Army Counterparts. In February of 2009, the Stallions deployed to Iraq in support Operation Iraqi Freedom 09-10, and continue to conduct operations with their Iraqi counterparts to support and assist the re-building of the Iraqi nation and ensure safety to the local populace while training Iraqi counter-parts.

HERE WE STAND READY TO ANSWER THE CALL OF FORCES AROUND THE WORLD.

Coat of Arms

Shield: Assure on a fess or eight mullets pierced of the field, a demi-horse rampant issuant argent.

Crest: On a wreath of the colors, or and azure, a grizzly bear passant sable.

motto: HONOR AND COURAGE

Unit Crest Meaning

Shield: The eight mullets show the regimental number and Cavalry tradition ascribing the origin of the pierced mullet to the rowel of a spur. This is further indicated by the horse.

Crest: The bear is the emblem of California, where the regiment was organized in 1866.

Lineage and Honors

2d Battalion, 8th Cavalry Constituted 28 July 1866 in the Regular Army as Company B., 8th Cavalry.

Organized 23 October 1866 at Presidio of San Francisco, California (Cavalry companies officially designated as troops in 1883) (8th Cavalry assigned in December 1917 to the 15th Cavalry Division; relieved in May 1918 from assignment to the 15th Cavalry; assigned 13 September 1921 to the 1st Cavalry Division; dismounted 28 February 1943 and reorganized 4 December 1943 partly under cavalry and partly under infantry tables of organization and equipment; reorganized wholly as infantry 20 July 1945 but retained cavalry designations)

Redesignated 25 March 1949 as Company B, 8th Cavalry

Reorganized and redesignated 1 April 1957 as Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 2d Reconnaissance Squadron, 8th Cavalry; concurrently, consolidated with 4th Reconnaissance Company (see ANNEX); transferred (less personnel and equipment) from Japan to Fort Lewis, Washington; relieved from assignment to 1st Cavalry Division and assigned to 4th Infantry Division (organic elements concurrently constituted and activated at Fort Lewis, Washington)

Reorganized and redesignated 1 September 1963 as the 2d Battalion, 8th Cavalry; Concurrently relieved from assignment to the 4th Infantry Division and assigned to the 1st Cavalry Division

Inactivated 28 June 1972 at Fort Hood, Texas

Activated 20 April 1974 at Fort Hood, Texas

ANNEX

Constituted 20 July 1940 in the Regular Army as the 4th Reconnaissance Troop and assigned to the 4th Division, subsequently the 4th Infantry Division

Activated 1 August 1940 at Fort Benning, Georgia

Reorganized and redesignated 10 June 1942 as the 4th Reconnaissance Squadron

Reorganized and redesignated 4 August 1943 as follows:

Troop A as the 4th Reconnaissance Troop, Mechanized; Remained assigned to 4th Infantry Division (4th Reconnaissance Squadron [less Troop A] as the 34th Reconnaissance Troop and relieved from assignment to 4th Infantry Division [hereafter separate lineage]) 4th

Reconnaissance Troop, Mechanized, redesignated 30 July 1945 as the 4th Mechanized Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop Inactivated 12 March 1946 at Camp Butner, North Carolina Redesignated 6 July 1948 as the 4th Reconnaissance Company and activated at Fort Ord, California

CAMPAIGN PARTICIPATION CREDIT

Indian Wars

- Comanches
- Apaches
- Arizona 1867
- Arizona 1868
- Arizona 1869
- Oregon 1868
- Mexico 1877

World War II

- New Guinea
- Bismarck Archipelago (with arrowhead)
- Leyte
- Luzon
- Normandy (with arrowhead)
- Rhineland
- Ardennes-Alsace
- Central Europe

Korean War

- UN Defensive
- UN Offensive
- CCF Intervention
- First UN Counteroffensive

- CCF Spring Offensive
- UN Summer-Fall Offensive
- Second Korean Winter
- Korea, Summer-Fall 1952
- Third Korean Winter

Vietnam War

- 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
- Sanctuary Counteroffensive
- Counteroffensive, Phase VII
- Consolidation I
- Consolidation II
- Cease-fire

DECORATIONS

- Presidential Unit Citation (Army), Streamer embroidered LUZON
- Presidential Unit Citation (Army), Streamer embroidered TEAGU
- Presidential Unit Citation (Army), Streamer embroidered PLEIKU PROVINCE
- Valorous Unit Award, Streamer embroidered TAY NINH PROVINCE
- Valorous Unit Award, Streamer embroidered FISH HOOK

- Philippine Presidential Unit Citation, Streamer embroidered 17 OCTOBER 1944 to 4 JULY 1945
- Belgian Fourragere 1940
- Cited in the Order of the Day of the Belgian Army for action in BELGIUM
- Cited in the Order of the Day of the Belgian Army for action in the ARDENNES
- Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation, Streamer embroidered WAEGWAN_TAEGU
- Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation, Streamer embroidered KOREA
- Chyssoun Aristion Andrias (Bravery Gold Medal of Greece), Streamer embroidered KOREA
- Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm, Streamer embroidered Vietnam 1965-1969
- Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm, Streamer embroidered Vietnam 1969-1970
- Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm, Streamer embroidered Vietnam 1970-1971
- Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm, Streamer embroidered Vietnam 1971-1972
- Republic of Vietnam Civil Action Honor Medal, First Class, Streamer embroidered VIETNAM 1696-1970

Company A, 2d Battalion additionally entitled to:

Valorous Unit Award, Streamer Embroidered SONG RE RIVER VALLEY

Company B, 2d Battalion additionally entitle to:

Valorous Unit Award, Streamer embroidered BINH DINH PROVINCE