

THE 2D MARINE DIVISION AND ITS REGIMENTS



HISTORY AND MUSEUMS DIVISION
HEADQUARTERS, U.S. MARINE CORPS
WASHINGTON, D.C.

*COVER: LAVs of the 2d Marine Division
move past burning oil wells in Kuwait.*

The 2d Marine Division and Its Regiments

by

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Reference Section, Historical Branch



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The 2d Marine Division

The 2d Marine Division is the direct descendant of the 2d Marine Brigade, which was activated on 1 July 1936 at San Diego, California. Within a year of its activation, the brigade was called upon to reinforce the 4th Marines in China, when unstable conditions threatened American lives and property in Shanghai's International Settlement. Arriving in Shanghai on 19 September 1937, the brigade occupied defensive positions within the American sector of the international zone. When the immediate threat to American lives had passed, the brigade,

less the 4th Marines, was withdrawn and redeployed to California during February-April 1938.

As the prospect of war increased during 1940, the Marine Corps expanded. An immediate reflection of this increase in strength was the creation of division-sized organizations. Accordingly, the 2d Marine Division was officially activated 1 February 1941 at Camp Elliott near San Diego, California, dropping its earlier designation as the 2d Marine Brigade. Major General Clayton B. Vogel became the first commanding general of the division. By

2d Division Marines prepare to advance toward the front lines in trucks captured from Japanese forces in the midst of the intense fighting on Guadalcanal in December 1942.

Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A51400



late spring of 1941, the division consisted of three infantry regiments, the 2d, 6th, and 8th Marines; an artillery regiment, the 10th Marines; service, medical, and engineer battalions; and transport, service, tank, signal, chemical, and antiaircraft machine gun companies.

Each of the three infantry regiments in the new division brought a wealth of Marine Corps combat tradition. The 2d Marines had landed at Veracruz, Mexico, in 1914, and at Haiti in 1915. The 6th Marines had fought in France during World War I, and had seen action in the Dominican Republic and Cuba in 1924. The 8th Marines had manned the Texas border during 1917-1918, and had fought in Haiti during the early 1920s.

As the threat of war intensified, the 6th Marines; the 2d Battalion, 10th Marines; and reinforcing tank, medical, service, and engineering units formed the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade. They sailed for Iceland during May and June 1941 to counter the threat of an anticipated German invasion. The 2d Engineer Battalion was similarly detached and sent to Hawaii in the fall of 1941, where it helped to defend Pearl Harbor during the Japanese attack of 7 December.



Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A62054
LtGen Alexander A. Vandegrift, right, commanding general of all Southwest Pacific Marine forces, confers with MajGen Julian C. Smith, the commanding general of the 2d Marine Division, near Wellington, New Zealand, September 1943.

Marines assault a bomb-proof shelter just off the beach at Tarawa on 20 November 1943.

Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A63930



Immediately after the outbreak of war, the 2d Marine Division, in conjunction with U.S. Army units, was assigned the mission of defending the California coast against possible Japanese invasion. Similarly, the 8th Marines, reinforced by other units from the division, was designated part of a new 2d Marine Brigade, which sailed from San Diego on 6 January 1942 to assume the defense of American Samoa. After the immediate danger of invasion had passed, the division was relieved of its defensive duties, and began the task of reforming into an amphibious assault organization. The 9th Marines became part of the division for a few months. On 1 April 1942, the 6th Marines, back from Iceland, rejoined the division.

By late summer of 1942, the 2d Marine Division was ready to participate in the first United States ground offensive of World War II—the Guadalcanal campaign. In early August 1942 the 2d Marines, along with supporting elements and 1st Marine

Division units, landed on Tulagi, Gavutu, and Florida Islands, distinguishing themselves in bitter fighting during the opening days of the Guadalcanal operation. The 8th Marines arrived on Guadalcanal early in November 1942, and the 6th Marines in January 1943. Now fighting for the first time as a full division, the 2d Marine Division, in conjunction with Army units, succeeded in driving the Japanese back to the westernmost part of the island. Combat operations on Guadalcanal included tank-infantry attacks and point-blank artillery fire, along with grenade and small arms assaults. Organized enemy resistance collapsed early in February 1943. By the end of that month, all units of the 2d Marine Division (with the exception of the 3d Battalion, 18th Marines, and the Seabee battalion of the engineer regiment) embarked for New Zealand, to begin eight months of rehabilitation and retraining.

The 2d Marine Division, commanded by Major

A 2d Marine Division patrol, using a demolition charge, flushes out a stubborn Japanese soldier during the rugged fighting on Saipan on 24 June 1944.

Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A83282





Marines from the 2d Division wade ashore on Tinian in late July 1944.

General Julian C. Smith, opened the drive through the Central Pacific with an assault on Betio Island at Tarawa Atoll in the Gilbert Islands, in the early morning hours of 20 November 1943. The ensuing 76 hours at Tarawa saw some of the fiercest fighting in Marine Corps history. Withering defensive fire from Japanese machine guns and mortars inflicted heavy Marine casualties during the landing, making it difficult to secure a toehold. On D+1, the Marines began to move inland. Despite intense resistance, Betio was secured by 23 November. Five days later the entire atoll was in friendly hands. The battle for Tarawa was the first real Navy and Marine Corps test of amphibious assault doctrine and techniques, which would be refined during subsequent operations in the Pacific. At Tarawa, the 2d Marine Division suffered more than 3,000 casualties. In December 1943, the last elements of the division sailed from Tarawa to rejoin the parent unit now located on the island of Hawaii.

On Hawaii, the 2d Marine Division began intensive training to prepare for its next operation. By early May 1944, the division learned that its next mission, in conjunction with the 4th Marine

Division and the U.S. Army's 27th Infantry Division, would be the assault and seizure of Saipan and Tinian in the Mariana Islands. The capture of the Marianas was central to allied strategy in the Central Pacific campaign. The islands would provide air and sea bases to bring the war directly to Japan.

On 15 June 1944, assault waves of the 6th and 8th Marines landed on the southwestern beaches of Saipan, against moderate resistance. Japanese mortar fire began to build up, however, as the defenders reacted to the initial landings. The Marines pushed steadily forward against stiffening resistance. The remaining elements of the 2d and 4th Marine Divisions were landed on the following day. Later, the Marines would encounter a system of well-defended caves and a last-ditch Japanese counterattack, but after three weeks of fighting, the island was declared secure on 9 July 1944. The seizure of Saipan led to construction of the first base in the Pacific for B-29 bombing missions against the Japanese home islands.

On 24 July 1944, elements of the 2d Marine Division conducted a successful offshore feint near Tinian Town, while units of the 4th Marine Division

landed on the northwest beaches of Tinian. The 2d Marine Division landed on the following day and joined forces with the 4th Marine Division to eliminate Japanese resistance from the southern end of the island. After elements of the 2d Marine Division successfully repulsed Japanese banzai attacks on 1 August, organized resistance on the island ceased. The 2d Marine Division units returned to Saipan to resume mopping-up operations. On 27 March 1945, the division left Saipan to take part in the battle for the Ryukyus.

The landings on Okinawa began on 1 April 1945. The 2d Marine Division was employed as a floating reserve that made feints along the southern approaches to Okinawa. The unopposed main landings were made by Marines and units of the U.S. Tenth Army on the north-central beaches. The 2d Marine Division remained at sea until 11 April, when it returned to Saipan after sending Seabees and amphibian trucks ashore.

In mid-May, during the course of the Ryukyus campaign, the 2d Marine Division had to furnish units to seize two small islands, Iheya and Aguni,

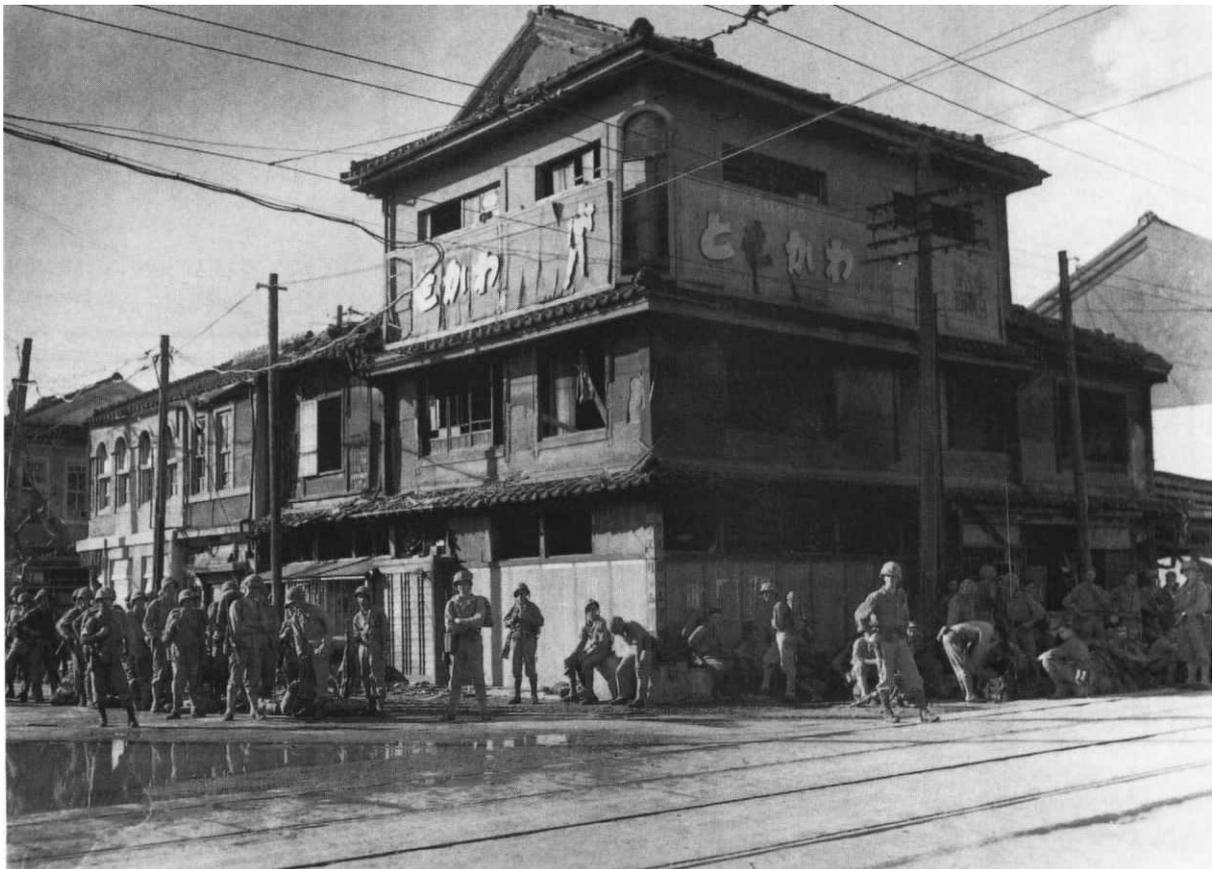
located near Okinawa. A task force composed of the 8th Marines; the 2d Battalion, 10th Marines; and other supporting units, made an unopposed landing on Iheya on 3 June. The island was secured the following day. Aguni was taken on 9 June, again without opposition. The same task force was redeployed several days later to Okinawa. It was placed under the operational control of the 1st Marine Division for the final drive of the Ryukyus campaign. After completing mop-up operations on Okinawa, all 2d Marine Division units were redeployed to Saipan by mid-July 1945.

The end of hostilities in September 1945 did not signal the end of the 2d Marine Division's role in the Pacific. From September 1945 until June 1946, the division took part in the occupation of Japan, primarily on the island of Kyushu. In July 1946, the division finally relocated to Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. At greatly reduced strength, it settled into a peacetime routine.

During the first few postwar years, the division conducted training exercises and maneuvers in the Atlantic and on the East Coast of the United States.

2d Division Marines on a street in Nagasaki on 23 September 1945 during the occupation of Japan.

Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A139774





Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A17500

A 2d Marine Division machine gun crew is positioned on a rooftop in the dock area of Beirut, Lebanon, on 23 July 1958, alert for any contingency that might arise.

In February 1948, the 8th Marines, then at one-battalion strength, sailed for the Mediterranean in response to developing crises in Greece and Turkey. This marked the beginning of a series of forward afloat deployments with the Sixth Fleet that continues to this day. Throughout this period, the 2d Marine Division has provided landing teams and Marine air-ground task forces for service in the Caribbean as well.

The 2d Marine Division's role as a force-in-readiness was tested by the outbreak of war in Korea, in June 1950. Many of the division's personnel were integrated into units of the understrength 1st Marine Division through redesignations and unit transfers to the West Coast, but the 2d Marine Division itself was also brought up quickly to wartime strength. After an intensive training program, it was pronounced ready for any assignment, but did not deploy to Korea.

The division's combat readiness would next be tested during the summer of 1958. On 14 July, three reinforced battalions from the 2d Marine Division, which were then afloat in the Mediterranean with the Sixth Fleet, were ordered into Lebanon. Units of the division were ashore on the beaches of Lebanon within hours of the decision to land, and were joined several days later by air-transported elements of the 2d Battalion, 8th Marines, from Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. Remaining in Lebanon until October, the Marines in and around Beirut helped to maintain political stability, to preserve law and order, and to protect American lives and property. In all, more than 6,000 Marines were committed to the 1958 Lebanon operation, in conjunction with U.S. Army units.

The division's ability to respond decisively in an emergency situation was tested again barely four years later. The Cuban missile crisis of October



Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A19478

Marines of the 2d Division storm ashore in combat gear on Onslow Beach at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, in an amphibious landing exercise during February 1964.

1962 brought the deployment of most of the 2d Marine Division to Guantanamo Bay and the waters off Cuba. Remaining in the Caribbean until early December, the division had once again demonstrated its ability to respond to short-notice embarkation orders with speed and efficiency.

The chaotic conditions created by a Communist-inspired coup in the Dominican Republic during April 1965 led to American intervention. Marines went ashore and entered the capital city of Santo Domingo to protect the lives of American citizens, and to assist in the evacuation of refugees. Units of the division—in all, four reinforced battalions—helped more than 1,300 evacuees during the six-week mission in the Dominican Republic.

During the 1970s, the 2d Marine Division conducted comprehensive training programs to increase combat efficiency and to maintain the capability of responding rapidly to emergencies. Amphibious exercises, many involving North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies, were

held routinely throughout the Caribbean, the Atlantic, and the Mediterranean. The division's units received rigorous combined arms training under live fire conditions at the Marine Air-Ground Combat Center at Twentynine Palms, California; cold weather and mountain warfare training in the Sierra Nevadas; and jungle warfare training in Panama, among other opportunities.

The 2d Marine Division's ability to meet the fast breaking challenges of an uncertain world has continued to be tested through an unending series of alerts, evacuations, and other non-routine deployments. From the summer of 1982, through early 1984, division units served on a rotating basis as peacekeeping forces in Lebanon, accepting the hazards inherent in such a mission with courage and professionalism. In October 1983, as well, the division provided the ground combat element for the Marine landing force that took part in a deftly-executed, short-notice intervention in Grenada.

Throughout the remainder of the decade, the



Department of Defense Photo (USN) DN-ST-84-01282
Men of the 2d Marine Division arrive at vacated buildings of the Lebanese Scientific University in February 1983 to take up watch positions in the northern portion of the 22d Marine Amphibious Unit's perimeter around Beirut International Airport.

division and its regiments conducted numerous training operations to maintain a high level of preparedness. From December 1989 to January 1990, elements of the division participated in Operation Just Cause, a joint operation with the U.S. Army, Navy, and Air Force which helped to restore order and democracy in the Central American nation of Panama.

The 2 August 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait threatened the stability of the entire Persian Gulf region. President George H. Bush ordered the deployment of U.S. Armed Forces to the region, to prevent a possible Iraqi invasion of neighboring Saudi Arabia. As the 2d Marine Division prepared to deploy to the Persian Gulf, the Secretary of Defense authorized the Marine Corps to call up 15,000 reservists. Increments of mobilized Reserve units soon began to arrive at Camp Lejeune for processing and integration into the active forces. On 18 November, the 2d Marine Division received the expected orders to deploy to the Kuwait theater of operations.

After an elaborate 10 December review at Camp Lejeune, the main body of the division began its movement to Saudi Arabia. The 2d Marine Division formally established its presence in Saudi Arabia on 14 December 1990, with the arrival of its Commanding General, Major General William M. Keys. Over the next several weeks, units continued to arrive and join the division. The division's main command post arrived in the vicinity of Al Kibrit on 14 January, with other elements arriving as late as the 24th.

The division began immediate training and preparation for mechanized operations and the breaching of Iraqi minefields. On 10 January 1991, the U.S. Army's 1st Brigade, 2d Armored Division (the "Tiger Brigade"), reported to operational control of the 2d Marine Division, and would prove to be of great benefit during the ensuing campaign. With the arrival of this important brigade, the division's assembly in theater was complete.

By the end of January, the division had begun planning for movement to final assembly areas and, on 27 January, conducted its first offensive operation with an artillery raid against Iraqi positions. By 19 February the division had completed its move to Al Khanjar in preparation for the major allied coalition assault into Kuwait and Iraq. At H-Hour on 24 February, division engineers blew lanes across enemy minefields, which cleared the six lanes necessary for the passage of 2d Marine Division units. After breaking through the obstacles, the division fanned out towards Al Jaber Airfield. Enemy opposition was initially light, consisting mostly of intermittent shelling. On 25 and 26 February, Iraqi armored counterattacks hit the right flank of the division, and were defeated with heavy enemy losses.

Through the execution of rapid maneuver and the skillful application of firepower, Iraqi forces were soon overwhelmed. By outflanking the enemy and destroying their heavy equipment with air and artillery fire, the division gave the Iraqis the choice of surrendering or dying where they stood. In the thousands, they chose the former. By 27 February, the division had consolidated its positions outside of Al Jahrah and Al Kuwait, and cleared the last pockets of Iraqi resistance. On 28 February, a ceasefire was ordered.

During the 100 hours of combat in which the 2d Marine Division was engaged, it amassed an impressive amount of enemy equipment and troops: more than 13,000 prisoners taken and 533 tanks, 127 artillery pieces, 291 armored personnel



Department of Defense Photo (USMC) DM-SC-92-01211

An infantryman of the 2d Marine Division mans a fighting hole as part of a drill at the division combat operations center in Saudi Arabia during Operation Desert Storm.

carriers, and 45 pieces of antiaircraft artillery either destroyed or captured. It was truly an impressive achievement. Elements of the division remained in Southwest Asia to participate in Operation Provide Comfort, which provided disaster relief and established security zones for Kurdish refugees in Iraq. The bulk of the division began its redeployment from the Gulf in April, receiving a well-deserved welcome home at Camp Lejeune.

During the immediate post-Desert Storm years, and throughout the remainder of the decade, elements of the 2d Marine Division participated in military operations and humanitarian missions in areas as diverse as Liberia (Operation Sharp Edge), Haiti (Operation Support Democracy), Somalia (Operation Restore Hope), and Cuba (Operation Sea Signal) in support of American interests at home and abroad. These operations provided humanitarian support, non-combatant evacuations, and in the instance of Haiti, helped to restore democracy and rebuild the nation. Closer to home, elements of the division participated during 1993-94 in Operations Able Manner and Able Vigil, which supported the interdiction of Haitian and Cuban migrants in the Florida Straits.

The 2d Marine Division has also supported continued American foreign policy interests in Europe. During the last years of the decade, elements of the division participated in support of NATO operations in Bosnia, and later Albania and Kosovo, as ethnic strife in the former Yugoslavia threatened the stability of Eastern Europe.

A mechanized patrol of Battalion Landing Team 3/8 halts to interact with children in Gnjilane, Kosovo, in July 1999.

Photo courtesy of Maj Nathan S. Lowrey, USMCR



2d Marine Division Commanding Generals

MajGen Clayton B. Vogel 1 February 1941 - 7 December 1941
 MajGen Charles F. B. Price 8 December 1941 - 23 March 1942
 BGen Joseph C. Fegan 24 March 1942 - 31 March 1942
 MajGen John Marston 1 April 1942 - 30 April 1943
 MajGen Julian C. Smith 1 May 1943 - 10 April 1944

 MajGen Thomas E. Watson 11 April 1944 - 22 June 1945
 MajGen Leroy P. Hunt 23 June 1945 - 9 July 1946
 Col Gregon A. Williams 10 July 1946 - 20 July 1946
 MajGen Thomas E. Watson 21 July 1946 - 31 January 1948
 MajGen Franklin A. Hart 1 February 1948 - 30 June 1950

 MajGen Ray A. Robinson 1 July 1950 - 6 December 1951
 MajGen Edwin A. Pollock 7 December 1951 - 2 September 1952
 MajGen Randolph McC. Pate 3 September 1952 - 29 May 1953
 BGen Robert E. Hogaboom 30 May 1953 - 23 June 1953
 MajGen George F. Good, Jr. 24 June 1953 - 1 July 1954

 MajGen Lewis B. Puller 2 July 1954 - 7 February 1955
 MajGen Edward W. Snedeker 8 February 1955 - 1 July 1955
 MajGen Reginald H. Ridgeley, Jr. 2 July 1955 - 2 June 1957
 MajGen Joseph C. Burger 3 June 1957 - 24 October 1959
 BGen Odell M. Conoley 25 October 1959 - 5 November 1959

 MajGen James P. Berkeley 6 November 1959 - 3 November 1961
 MajGen Frederick L. Wieseman 4 November 1961 - 23 June 1963
 BGen Rathvon McC. Tompkins 24 June 1963 - 26 September 1963
 MajGen William J. Van Ryzin 27 September 1963 - 11 April 1965
 MajGen Ormond R. Simpson 12 April 1965 - 21 November 1967

 MajGen Edwin B. Wheeler 22 November 1967 - 18 May 1969
 MajGen Michael P. Ryan 19 May 1969 - 4 June 1971
 BGen Robert D. Bohn 5 June 1971 - 28 September 1971
 MajGen Fred E. Haynes, Jr. 29 September 1971 - 9 January 1973
 BGen Arthur J. Poillon 10 January 1973 - 1 July 1973

 MajGen Samuel Jaskilka 2 July 1973 - 19 December 1973
 BGen William H. Lanagan, Jr. 20 December 1973 - 15 May 1974
 MajGen William G. Joslyn 16 May 1974 - 30 June 1976
 MajGen Kenneth McLennan 1 July 1976 - 17 May 1978
 MajGen Edward J. Bronars 18 May 1978 - 27 June 1979

 MajGen David M. Twomey 28 June 1979 - 4 June 1981
 MajGen Alfred M. Gray, Jr. 5 June 1981 - 28 August 1984
 MajGen Dennis J. Murphy 29 August 1984 - 29 October 1987
 MajGen Orlo K. Steele 30 October 1987 - 26 September 1989
 MajGen William M. Keys 27 September 1989 - 24 June 1991

MajGen Paul K. Van Riper 25 June 1991 - 3 April 1993
MajGen Richard I. Neal 4 April 1993 - 28 July 1994
MajGen James L. Jones 29 July 1994 - 23 June 1995
MajGen Lawrence H. Livingston 24 June 1995 - 24 July 1997
MajGen Emil R. Bedard 25 July 1997 - 29 June 1999

MajGen Robert R. Blackman, Jr. 30 June 1999 -

2d Marine Division

LINEAGE

1936 - 1940

ACTIVATED 1 JULY 1936 AT SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA, AS THE
2D MARINE BRIGADE, FLEET MARINE FORCE

DEPLOYED DURING AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 1937 TO SHANGHAI, CHINA

RELOCATED DURING FEBRUARY-APRIL 1938 TO SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

1941 - 1957

REDESIGNATED 1 FEBRUARY 1941 AS THE 2D MARINE DIVISION,
FLEET MARINE FORCE

ELEMENTS DEPLOYED TO ICELAND, JULY 1941 - MARCH 1942

DEPLOYED TO THE SOUTH PACIFIC DURING JANUARY 1942 - JANUARY 1943

PARTICIPATED IN THE FOLLOWING WORLD WAR II CAMPAIGNS

GUADALCANAL
SOUTHERN SOLOMONS
TARAWA
SAIPAN
TINIAN
OKINAWA

DEPLOYED DURING SEPTEMBER 1945 TO NAGASAKI, JAPAN

PARTICIPATED IN THE OCCUPATION OF JAPAN, SEPTEMBER 1945 - JUNE 1946

RELOCATED DURING JUNE-JULY 1946 TO CAMP LEJEUNE, NORTH CAROLINA

1958 - 1988

ELEMENTS PARTICIPATED IN THE LANDINGS IN LEBANON, JULY-NOVEMBER 1958

PARTICIPATED IN THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS, OCTOBER-DECEMBER 1962

ELEMENTS PARTICIPATED IN THE INTERVENTION IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, APRIL-JUNE 1965

PARTICIPATED IN NUMEROUS TRAINING EXERCISES THROUGH THE 1970S

ELEMENTS PARTICIPATED AS PART OF THE MULTINATIONAL PEACEKEEPING FORCE IN LEBANON,
AUGUST 1982 - FEBRUARY 1984

ELEMENTS PARTICIPATED IN THE LANDINGS ON GRENADA - CARRIACOU,
OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 1983

1989 - 1999

ELEMENTS PARTICIPATED IN OPERATION JUST CAUSE, PANAMA,
DECEMBER 1989 - JANUARY 1990

ELEMENTS PARTICIPATED IN OPERATION SHARP EDGE, LIBERIA,
MAY 1990 - JANUARY 1991

PARTICIPATED IN OPERATIONS DESERT SHIELD AND DESERT STORM,
SOUTHWEST ASIA, DECEMBER 1990 - APRIL 1991

ELEMENTS PARTICIPATED IN OPERATION PROVIDE COMFORT, IRAQ, APRIL-JULY 1991

ELEMENTS PARTICIPATED IN OPERATIONS IN SOMALIA, DECEMBER 1992 - MARCH 1994

ELEMENTS PARTICIPATED IN OPERATIONS IN HAITI,
OCTOBER 1993 - OCTOBER 1994

ELEMENTS PARTICIPATED IN HAITIAN REFUGEE OPERATIONS, CUBA,
NOVEMBER 1991 - DECEMBER 1995

ELEMENTS PARTICIPATED IN OPERATIONS ABLE MANNER AND ABLE VIGIL,
FLORIDA STRAITS, JANUARY 1993 - OCTOBER 1994

ELEMENTS PARTICIPATED IN OPERATIONS IN BOSNIA, AUGUST 1994, JUNE 1995 - FEBRUARY 1996

ELEMENTS PARTICIPATED IN OPERATION ASSURED RESPONSE,
LIBERIA, APRIL-AUGUST 1996

ELEMENTS PARTICIPATED IN OPERATIONS IN KOSOVO,
MARCH-JULY 1999

2d Marine Division *HONORS*

PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION STREAMER

WORLD WAR II
TARAWA - 1943

NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION STREAMER

SOUTHWEST ASIA
1990 - 1991

MARINE CORPS EXPEDITIONARY STREAMER WITH ONE BRONZE STAR

CHINA SERVICE STREAMER

AMERICAN DEFENSE SERVICE STREAMER WITH ONE BRONZE STAR

EUROPEAN-AFRICAN-MIDDLE EASTERN CAMPAIGN STREAMER

ASIATIC-PACIFIC CAMPAIGN STREAMER WITH ONE SILVER AND TWO BRONZE STARS

WORLD WAR II VICTORY STREAMER

NAVY OCCUPATION SERVICE STREAMER WITH "ASIA" AND "EUROPE"

NATIONAL DEFENSE SERVICE STREAMER WITH TWO BRONZE STARS

ARMED FORCES EXPEDITIONARY STREAMER WITH THREE BRONZE STARS

SOUTHWEST ASIA SERVICE STREAMER WITH THREE BRONZE STARS



THE 2D MARINE DIVISION PATCH

THE 2D MARINE DIVISION SHOULDER PATCH WAS AUTHORIZED FOR WEAR BY UNITS WHICH SERVED WITH OR WERE ATTACHED TO THE DIVISION IN THE PACIFIC DURING WORLD WAR II. DESIGNED AND APPROVED IN LATE 1943, THE INSIGNIA IS IN THE OFFICIAL MARINE CORPS COLORS OF SCARLET AND GOLD. THE INSIGNIA DISPLAYS A SPEARHEAD-SHAPED SCARLET BACKGROUND WITH A HAND HOLDING ALOFT A LIGHTED GOLD TORCH. A SCARLET NUMERAL "2" IS SUPERIMPOSED UPON THE TORCH, AND THE TORCH AND HAND IS ENCIRCLED BY FIVE WHITE STARS IN THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE SOUTHERN CROSS CONSTELLATION, UNDER WHICH THE DIVISION'S FIRST WORLD WAR II COMBAT TOOK PLACE—AT GUADALCANAL. THE WEARING OF UNIT SHOULDER PATCHES BY MARINES WAS DISCONTINUED IN 1947.

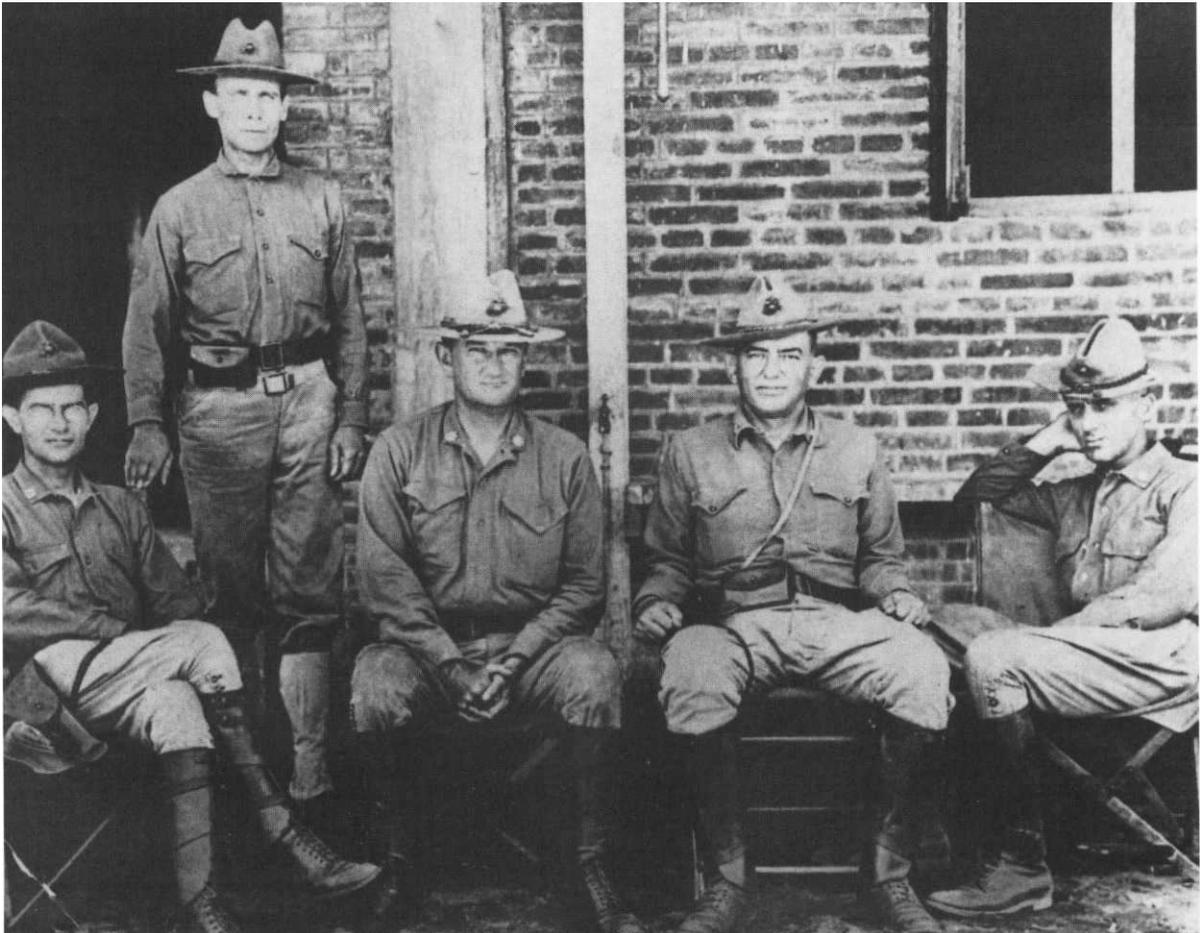
The 2d Marines

The 2d Marines was originally activated on 19 June 1913 as the 1st Advance Base Regiment at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Charles G. Long. The unit became part of the Advance Base Brigade in December 1913 and was redesignated the 1st Regi-

ment, Advance Base Brigade, on 18 February 1914. The regiment had participated in a number of training maneuvers in Puerto Rico, Florida, and Louisiana when political conditions began to deteriorate in Mexico. Marine Corps forces were ordered to land at Veracruz after President Woodrow

Marines at Veracruz, Mexico, 1914, are, from left: Capt Frederick H. Delano, SgtMaj John H. Quick, LtCol Wendell C. Neville, Col John A. Lejeune, and Maj Smedley D. Butler. Col Neville and Maj Butler of the 2d Marines were both awarded Medals of Honor for their distinguished conduct during the fighting at Veracruz.

Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A302177



Wilson received word that a German merchant ship was going there with a cargo of arms. On 22 April 1914, the 1st Regiment landed at Veracruz and joined other forces in clearing the city. Two of the regiment's officers, Major Smedley D. Butler and Lieutenant Colonel Wendell C. Neville, who would later become 14th Commandant of the Marine Corps, received Medals of Honor for distinguished conduct in the battle. The regiment remained there as part of an occupation force for the next seven months, but with the advent of a new and stable government, left Veracruz on 23 November for Philadelphia.

On 3 December 1914, the Advance Base Brigade was reorganized. The 1st Regiment, the fixed defense regiment, was assigned a fire control unit and eight companies, which included four 5-inch gun companies, a searchlight company, a mine company, an engineer company, and an anti-aircraft company. The increase of firepower inherent in this reorganization strengthened the regiment's capabilities for the further developments of the Marine Advance Base Force.

By the summer of 1915, internal disorder and revolution in the Republic of Haiti had become critical, jeopardizing American lives and property. On 15 August, the 1st Regiment landed at Cap-Haitien, to begin a long period of occupation and "bush" warfare. The regiment carried out extensive patrolling into the interior of the country, in search of Caco bandits. Gunnery Sergeant Daniel J. Daly received his second Medal of Honor for his out-

standing contribution to the success of these operations. The Marines had many encounters with the Haitian rebels. These included the attack and capture of Fort Riviere on 17 November 1915, where Major Butler received his second Medal of Honor. Marines assaulted the old French bastion, located on the summit of Montagne Noir, and overwhelmed the enemy in the fort during a vicious hand-to-hand fray.

After the capture of Fort Riviere and other forts, Haiti became relatively stable. Even as the regiment continued to garrison a number of Haitian towns, some of its rifle companies were sent to the neighboring Dominican Republic. During the early months of 1916, internal disorders there had threatened American lives and property. After order had been restored, the regiment was redesignated as the 2d Regiment, 1st Brigade, on 1 July 1916. Its primary activity then shifted to training of the newly formed Haitian Constabulary, as well as its own Marines.

With the decrease in bandit activity, the 2d Regiment spent the World War I years in routine barracks duty in the tropics. By March 1919, however, rebellions had erupted again in Haiti. The 2d Regiment took to the field, as the native *gendarmerie* failed to contain the increasing disorder. During May, the regiment mounted a concerted drive to clear the country of bandits. Within a few months, it had mopped up most rebel strongholds.

The next decade in Haiti was relatively peaceful. The 2d Regiment continued to perform duties

Instruction with compasses was part of many routine field training exercises conducted by the 63d Company, 2d Regiment, while stationed in Haiti during January 1926.



that included training and supervising the native constabulary, patrolling and mapping, and quelling political disturbances. On 1 January 1933, as part of a Marine Corps-wide redesignation of units, the 2d Regiment was redesignated as the 2d Marines and assigned to the 1st Brigade. Slightly more than a year later, the 1st Brigade left Haiti, and the 2d Marines was disestablished on 15 August 1934.

The regiment was reactivated 1 February 1941, at San Diego, California, as part of the 2d Marine Division. Under the command of Colonel John M. Arthur, it deployed to Koro Island on 25 July 1942, in time for the final rehearsal for the Guadalcanal landing. Although its mission was one of division reserve, elements of the regiment landed on Florida Island on 7 August 1942, prior to the main assault on Guadalcanal, to support the Tulagi landing. Other elements landed on Gavutu and Tanambogo, to reinforce units engaged in clearing operations. Two infantry battalions of the regiment landed on Tulagi on 9 August and secured the small islands in the area.

On 29 October the 2d Marines moved to

Guadalcanal, to take part in the attack towards Kokumbona. Through 11 January 1943, the regiment occupied several defensive positions within the Guadalcanal perimeter, reinforcing the front lines where most needed. It launched a final three-day offensive drive to the west of Point Cruz on 12 January, before reassembling in a reserve area. On 31 January 1943, the regiment left Guadalcanal for New Zealand, arriving in Wellington a few weeks later. Here, for the next nine months, the 2d Marines would rest, train, and reorganize.

The regiment sailed on 28 October 1943, for Efate, south of Espiritu Santo, for final rehearsals of the landing at Tarawa. On 20 November, under the command of Colonel David M. Shoup, the 2d Marines assaulted Betio Island, the defensive bastion of the Japanese force on Tarawa Atoll. The assault waves mounted in amphibian tractors crossed the large coral reef which surrounded the island and moved steadily to shore. The 3d Battalion of the 2d Marines was the first unit to reach its assigned beach and gain a foothold. Later waves embarked in landing craft, had trouble cross-

2d Marines advancing on the city of Garapan during the assault on Saipan in June 1944.

Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A85016





Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A87675
Above, Col David M. Shoup at work on Tinian Island in July 1944. Col Shoup, commanding officer of the 2d Marines during November-December 1943, was awarded a Medal of Honor for his heroic actions during the assault and capture of Tarawa in November. Below, infantrymen of the 2d Marines pause on a street in Nagasaki, Japan, in September 1945.

ing the reef, and were forced to wade hundreds of yards to shore under intense fire. Despite heavy losses, the landing force managed to secure Betio within three days. Colonel Shoup was awarded the Medal of Honor.

On 24 November the 2d Marines left Tarawa for Hawaii, where a new camp awaited it at Kamula. Here at Camp Tarawa, the regiment began the task of rehabilitation, reorganization, and intensive training for battles still ahead. Six months later it left Hawaii for the attack on Saipan. Now under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Walter J. Stuart, the 2d Marines were to feint a diversionary landing on 15 June 1944 in the Tanapag area, then to operate in support of the main landing force. Once ashore, the 2d Marines launched an attack toward Garapan on 17 June. A week later, advancing against stiff enemy opposition, the regiment reached the outskirts of Garapan. Here it remained, patrolling and consolidating its lines, while other elements of the division moved into position for a push northward. On 2 July the regiment began its attack through Garapan, taking the town within two days. From 6 to 11 July, the 2d Marines continued to advance, finally helping to compress the enemy into a small area on the northern tip of

Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A139775



the island. Saipan was declared secure on 9 July, but isolated pockets of resistance kept mop-up operations going until 23 July.

On the following day, the 2d Marines conducted another feint landing, this time off Tinian Town, in support of landing forces to the north. A day later, the regiment landed and advanced rapidly against sporadic enemy resistance to help capture the island. After Tinian was declared secured on 1 August, the regiment once again began the task of mopping up.

After the Tinian operation, the 2d Marines returned to Saipan for rehabilitation and reorganization. The regiment remained there for the next seven months, training under semi-battle conditions, as Japanese stragglers continued to emerge from the jungle long after the fighting was officially over.

The 2d Marines sailed for Okinawa on 25 March 1945, under the command of Colonel Richard M. Cutts, Jr. With other forces the regiment was again executing a diversionary landing when a Japanese kamikaze smashed through one of the landing ships, killing and wounding a number of Marines. After withdrawal of this diversionary force, the 2d

Marines returned to Saipan, once again for intensive training, in anticipation of landings on the Japanese home islands.

At the war's end the regiment landed at Nagasaki, for occupation duty. After nine months, the 2d Marines relocated to Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, during June and July 1946. By late 1946 the regiment had an advanced amphibious training program underway, but on 19 November 1947, the 2d Marines was reduced to battalion strength, with the designation "2d Marines" kept intact. Upon the request of the Navy for a battalion-sized unit to be deployed with the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean Sea, the 2d Marines embarked on 5 January 1948 for the island of Malta. As part of the first amphibious unit to reinforce the Sixth Fleet, the 2d Marines took part in landing exercises until relieved in March. The regiment returned to Camp Lejeune, where it regained two-battalion strength on 17 October 1949.

During the 1950s, the regiment engaged in numerous training exercises in the Caribbean and Mediterranean. From 31 October to 3 November 1956, Battalion Landing Team 3/2 assisted in the evacuation of United States observers and other

Marines of the 81mm Mortar Platoon, attached to the 2d Battalion, 2d Marines, man positions overlooking the city of Beirut, Lebanon, in August 1958.

Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A17465



foreign nationals from Alexandria and the Gaza Strip, as war threatened between Egypt and Israel.

In the summer of 1958, political tensions increased in Lebanon. President Dwight D. Eisenhower, complying with a request from the Lebanese president, decided to intervene with military force. Battalion Landing Team 2/2 made the initial landing in Lebanon on 15 July 1958. When tensions began to ease, the Marines withdrew on 15 August. By 23 October, the unit had returned to Camp Lejeune.

In October 1962, after President John F. Kennedy's ultimatum that Soviet offensive missiles be removed from Cuba, the 2d Battalion and other elements of the 2d Marines embarked once again. They sailed for the Caribbean as part of a larger task force ordered to impose a naval quarantine against arms shipments to Cuba. After the crisis had subsided, the Marines returned to Camp Lejeune in early December.

In late April 1965, internal problems in the Dominican Republic led to intervention by forces of the United States. As part of a joint task force, Battalion Landing Team 1/2 sailed on 1 May and remained offshore as a floating reserve for one month.

Through the 1970s and into the 1980s, the 2d Marines continued to deploy units in a high state

of readiness for a wide variety of training exercises and contingency responses. With the advent of the Corps' Unit Deployment Program in 1982, the regiment assumed a truly worldwide posture, periodically deploying battalions to the Pacific for the first time since World War II.

During the 1980s, the 2d Marines took part in many training exercises, which included participation in North Atlantic Treaty Organization exercises, in order to maintain the regiment's traditional high standards of operational readiness.

The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 threatened the stability of the entire Persian Gulf region, and President George H. Bush immediately ordered American forces to the area in order to prevent a possible Iraqi invasion of Saudi Arabia. On 23 August, the 2d Battalion, 2d Marines, was assigned to the operational control of the 6th Marines, and subsequently deployed with that regiment in late December to Saudi Arabia for participation in Operation Desert Shield.

The 2d Marine Division, meanwhile, assigned Regimental Landing Team 2 (RLT 2) to the operational control of the 4th Marine Expeditionary Brigade (4th MEB). During mid-August, RLT 2, consisting of the 1st and 3d Battalions, 2d Marines, along with supporting ground units and aviation

A simulated guerrilla village is searched as part of a training exercise held in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, by Marines of Company E, 2d Battalion, 2d Marines, on 12 August 1966.

Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A452020





Department of Defense Photo (USN) DN-ST-92-07339

A convoy of cargo trucks of the 1st Battalion, 2d Marines, crosses the desert in Saudi Arabia during Operation Desert Shield.

assets, deployed to the Persian Gulf as part of 4th MEB for participation in Operation Desert Shield. In late September, the two battalions participated in training and amphibious rehearsals for possible employment as a landing force along the Kuwaiti coast. In early January 1991, elements of the 1st Battalion, 2d Marines participated in the evacuation of American civilians and other foreign nationals during Operation Eastern Exit in Somalia. The Battalion Landing Team then returned to the Persian Gulf region to continue planning for contingency operations.

On 24 February, RLT 2's ships sailed north into the Persian Gulf to await tasking, prior to the beginning of the ground portion of Operation Desert Storm. Contingency planning and last minute plans for an amphibious landing in Kuwait continued. With the announcement, however, of the 28 February ceasefire, it was realized that the call for an amphibious landing in Kuwait would not occur. In mid-March, RLT 2 sailed for home,

and was briefed and congratulated by the Commanding General, 4th MEB, on its critical role during Operation Desert Storm in deceiving Iraqi forces as to a possible amphibious landing in Kuwait. The RLT's sister battalion, the 2d Battalion, 2d Marines, participated, however, in the ground assault portion of Operation Desert Storm.

By 23 February, the battalion had moved to its final assembly area prior to the major Allied Coalition assault. On 24 February, the 2d Battalion, 2d Marines, was among the units leading the 2d Marine Division assault into Kuwait, by breaching the center sector of the Iraqi minefields and subsequent defensive lines. Throughout the three-day attack, the battalion met and overcame every challenge and obstacle that was encountered. A 28 February ceasefire ended the fighting, with Iraqi forces thoroughly defeated. In late March, the battalion moved back to Al Jubayl, Saudi Arabia, and returned home to Camp Lejeune in April to a warm welcome.

Meanwhile, on 23 March, the USS *Shreveport* (LPD-12), carrying RLT 2, transited the Suez Canal and entered the Mediterranean Sea, enroute to Rota, Spain. On 15 April, RLT 2 arrived at Morehead City, North Carolina, and was greeted by an enthusiastic and supportive crowd which lined the docks to show its appreciation and to welcome the Marines back home. On 6 May the RLT reverted to the operational command of the 2d Marine Division.

During the remainder of the decade, the 2d Marines participated in operations in locales as diverse as the Caribbean, Africa, and Europe. Elements of the regiment deployed during the 1990s to Cuba, Haiti, Liberia, Somalia, Sierra Leone, Zaire, and Albania. The 2d Marines' versatility and rapid response capability in these operations, which included disaster and humanitarian relief, along with non-combatant emergency evacuations, and support for civil authority, demonstrated the regiment's historic versatility and operational readiness.



Department of Defense Photo (USMC) M-0012-DSP-94-A00320
LCpl J. T. Eimer of Company E, 2d Battalion, 2d Marines, stands at his security post in Cap Haitien, Haiti, in support of Operation Uphold Democracy in September 1994.

2d Marines Commanding Officers

LtCol Charles G. Long	19 June 1913 - 5 May 1914
Col James E. Mahoney	6 May 1914 - 4 December 1914
LtCol Charles G. Long	5 December 1914 - 7 August 1915
Col Theodore P. Kane	8 August 1915 - 15 August 1915
Col Eli K. Cole	16 August 1915 - 8 May 1916
LtCol Laurence H. Moses	9 May 1916 - 24 June 1916
Col Eli K. Cole	25 June 1916 - 30 November 1916
LtCol Philip M. Bannon	1 December 1916 - 10 January 1918
Maj Richard S. Hooker	11 January 1918 - 31 March 1918
Maj John W. Wadleigh	1 April 1918 - 28 April 1918
LtCol Richard S. Hooker	29 April 1918 - 14 November 1918
LtCol Thomas H. Brown	15 November 1918 - 28 November 1918
LtCol Richard S. Hooker	29 November 1918 - 9 December 1918
Maj Henry S. Green	10 December 1918 - 17 January 1919
LtCol Richard S. Hooker	18 January 1919 - 20 July 1919
LtCol Thomas H. Brown	21 July 1919 - 10 September 1919
Maj Charles A. Lutz	11 September 1919 - 2 October 1919
Col Randolph C. Berkeley	3 October 1919 - 20 October 1921
Col George Van Orden	21 October 1921 - 8 April 1923
LtCol William H. Pritchett	9 April 1923 - 9 July 1923
Col William N. McKelvy	10 July 1923 - 10 November 1924
Maj Maurice E. Shearer	11 November 1924 - 9 January 1925
Col William N. McKelvy	10 January 1925 - 10 June 1925
Maj Maurice E. Shearer	11 June 1925 - 30 June 1925
Col Harold C. Snyder	1 July 1925 - 8 April 1926
Col Macker Babb	9 April 1926 - 30 June 1927
Maj Archibald Young	1 July 1927 - 19 August 1927
Col Presley M. Rixey II	20 August 1927 - 21 May 1929
Col Richard P. Williams	22 May 1929 - 30 May 1930
Col Edward B. Manwaring	31 May 1930 - 15 May 1932
Col Henry G. Bartlett	16 May 1932 - 16 June 1932
Col James T. Buttrick	17 June 1932 - 27 December 1933
Col Eli T. Fryer	28 December 1933 - 31 May 1934
Maj Samuel P. Budd	1 June 1934 - 15 August 1934
Col Joseph C. Fegan	1 February 1941 - 24 October 1941
LtCol Roy C. Swink	25 October 1941 - 20 November 1941
Col John M. Arthur	21 November 1941 - 6 June 1943
Col William M. Marshall	7 June 1943 - 18 July 1943
LtCol Arnold F. Johnston	19 July 1943 - 26 September 1943
Col William M. Marshall	27 September 1943 - 7 November 1943

Col David M. Shoup 8 November 1943 - 23 December 1943
 LtCol Lloyd Russell 24 December 1943 - 1 January 1944
 LtCol Walter J. Stuart 2 January 1944 - 3 September 1944
 Col Richard M. Cutts, Jr. 4 September 1944 - 24 October 1945
 LtCol Clarence J. O'Donnell 25 October 1945 - 17 April 1946

LtCol Ronald B. Wilde 18 April 1946 - 1 August 1946
 Col Francis H. Brink 2 August 1946 - 6 April 1948
 LtCol Max C. Chapman 7 April 1948 - 30 April 1948
 LtCol Wilbur F. Meyerhoff 1 May 1948 - 18 May 1948
 Col Randall M. Victory 19 May 1948 - 21 November 1948

LtCol Harold Granger 22 November 1948 - 31 July 1949
 LtCol Jack W. Hawkins 1 August 1949 - 2 October 1949
 Col Randall M. Victory 3 October 1949 - 1 February 1950
 LtCol Gould P. Groves 2 February 1950 - 25 February 1950
 Col Reynolds H. Hayden 26 February 1950 - 28 April 1950

LtCol Gould P. Groves 29 April 1950 - 10 August 1950
 LtCol Walter F. Layer 11 August 1950 - 5 September 1950
 Col Reynolds H. Hayden 6 September 1950 - 20 July 1951
 Col Bruno Hochmuth 21 July 1951 - 29 July 1952
 Col Robert F. Scott 30 July 1952 - 16 August 1953

LtCol William A. Stiles 17 August 1953 - 19 October 1953
 Col David W. Stonecliffe 20 October 1953 - 9 July 1954
 Col George W. Hayes 10 July 1954 - 24 August 1955
 Col William R. Collins 25 August 1955 - 5 July 1956
 Col Robert E. Cushman, Jr. 6 July 1956 - 19 February 1957

Col Raymond L. Dean 20 February 1957 - 15 July 1957
 LtCol Tillman N. Peters 16 July 1957 - 1 August 1957
 Col John J. Gormley 2 August 1957 - 25 June 1958
 Col Charles R. Baker 26 June 1958 - 1 December 1959
 Col Erma A. Wright 2 December 1959 - 12 June 1960

Col Charles W. Kelly, Jr. 13 June 1960 - 16 June 1961
 Col Alfred L. Booth 17 June 1961 - 4 April 1962
 Col Robert M. Richards 5 April 1962 - 2 July 1963
 LtCol John B. Bristow 3 July 1963 - 31 July 1963
 Col James Taul 1 August 1963 - 1 August 1964

Col Paul M. Smith 2 August 1964 - 6 February 1965
 Col Charles H. Brush, Jr. 7 February 1965 - 7 June 1966
 Col William R. Burgoyne, Jr. 8 June 1966 - 31 August 1967
 Col Leroy V. Corbett 1 September 1967 - 18 February 1968
 Col William E. Barber 19 February 1968 - 13 May 1969

Col Lawrence J. Bradley 14 May 1969 - 28 May 1970
 LtCol David M. Twomey 29 May 1970 - 2 March 1971
 Col Charles D. Redman 3 March 1971 - 21 April 1972
 Col Alfred M. Gray, Jr. 22 April 1972 - 27 December 1972
 Col James W. Marsh 28 December 1972 - 18 December 1973

Col James K. Coody 19 December 1973 - 14 July 1974
 Col John E. Greenwood 15 July 1974 - 30 September 1975
 Col Harold L. Blanton, Jr. 1 October 1975 - 23 June 1977
 Col Gerald H. Turley 24 June 1977 - 21 November 1978
 Col Pasquale L. Cacace 22 November 1978 - 29 May 1980

 Col John B. Donovan 30 May 1980 - 26 March 1981
 Col Carl E. Mundy, Jr. 27 March 1981 - 30 April 1982
 Col Robert F. Milligan 1 May 1982 - 13 May 1983
 Col John A. Speicher 14 May 1983 - 31 May 1984
 Col Harry W. Jenkins, Jr. 1 June 1984 - 8 June 1986

 Col Michael J. Bryon 9 June 1986 - 13 July 1988
 Col John W. Ripley 14 July 1988 - 19 July 1990
 Col Tom A. Hobbs 20 July 1990 - 12 June 1992
 Col Richard F. Vercauteren 13 June 1992 - 16 June 1993
 Col Thomas S. Jones 17 June 1993 - 21 June 1995

 LtCol Dennis W. Reilly 22 June 1995 - 10 August 1995
 Col John F. Sattler 11 August 1995 - 29 May 1997
 Col Gordon C. Nash 30 May 1997 - 30 June 1998
 Col Dirk R. Ahle 1 July 1998 - 21 June 2000
 Col Jerry L. Durrant 22 June 2000 -

2d Marines

LINEAGE

1913 - 1934

ACTIVATED 19 JUNE 1913 AT PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA, AS 1ST ADVANCE BASE REGIMENT
REDESIGNATED 23 DECEMBER 1913 AS 1ST ADVANCE BASE REGIMENT, ADVANCE BASE BRIGADE
REDESIGNATED 18 FEBRUARY 1914 AS 1ST REGIMENT, ADVANCE BASE BRIGADE
PARTICIPATED IN THE LANDING AT VERACRUZ, MEXICO, APRIL-NOVEMBER 1914
RELOCATED DURING AUGUST 1915 TO CAP HAITIEN, HAITI
REDESIGNATED 1 JULY 1916 AS 2D REGIMENT, 1ST BRIGADE
REDESIGNATED 1 JANUARY 1933 AS 2D MARINES, 1ST BRIGADE
DEACTIVATED 15 AUGUST 1934

1941 - 1946

REACTIVATED 1 FEBRUARY 1941 AT SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA, AS 2D MARINES,
2D MARINE DIVISION
DEPLOYED DURING JULY 1942 TO KORO ISLAND
PARTICIPATED IN THE FOLLOWING WORLD WAR II CAMPAIGNS
GUADALCANAL
TARAWA
SAIPAN
TINIAN
OKINAWA

REDEPLOYED DURING SEPTEMBER 1945 TO NAGASAKI, JAPAN
PARTICIPATED IN THE OCCUPATION OF JAPAN, SEPTEMBER 1945 - JUNE 1946
RELOCATED DURING JUNE-JULY 1946 TO CAMP LEJEUNE, NORTH CAROLINA

1947 - 1989

ELEMENTS PARTICIPATED IN THE LANDINGS IN LEBANON, JULY-AUGUST 1958
PARTICIPATED IN THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS, OCTOBER-DECEMBER 1962
ELEMENTS PARTICIPATED IN THE INTERVENTION IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, MAY 1965

PARTICIPATED IN NUMEROUS TRAINING EXERCISES THROUGHOUT
THE 1970S AND 1980S

1990 - 1999

PARTICIPATED IN OPERATIONS DESERT SHIELD AND DESERT STORM,
SOUTHWEST ASIA, DECEMBER 1990 - APRIL 1991

ELEMENT PARTICIPATED IN HAITIAN REFUGEE OPERATION, CUBA, MAY/JUNE 1992

ELEMENT PARTICIPATED IN OPERATIONS IN SOMALIA, MARCH-AUGUST 1993

ELEMENT PARTICIPATED IN OPERATIONS PROVIDE PROMISE AND DENY FLIGHT, BOSNIA,
AUGUST 1994

ELEMENT PARTICIPATED IN OPERATIONS SUPPORT DEMOCRACY AND UPHOLD DEMOCRACY, HAITI,
AUGUST-OCTOBER 1994

ELEMENTS PARTICIPATED IN OPERATION SEA SIGNAL, CUBA,
SEPTEMBER-DECEMBER 1994 AND JULY-OCTOBER 1995

ELEMENT PARTICIPATED IN OPERATION ASSURED RESPONSE, LIBERIA,
APRIL-JUNE 1996

2d Marines

HONORS

PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION STREAMER WITH ONE BRONZE STAR

WORLD WAR II
GUADALCANAL - 1942
TARAWA - 1943

NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION STREAMER

SOUTHWEST ASIA
1990 - 1991

MEXICAN SERVICE STREAMER

HAITIAN CAMPAIGN STREAMER WITH ONE BRONZE STAR

MARINE CORPS EXPEDITIONARY STREAMER WITH ONE BRONZE STAR

WORLD WAR I VICTORY STREAMER WITH "WEST INDIES"

AMERICAN DEFENSE SERVICE STREAMER

ASIATIC-PACIFIC CAMPAIGN STREAMER WITH ONE SILVER AND ONE BRONZE STAR

WORLD WAR II VICTORY STREAMER

NAVY OCCUPATION SERVICE STREAMER WITH "ASIA" AND "EUROPE"

NATIONAL DEFENSE SERVICE STREAMER WITH TWO BRONZE STARS

ARMED FORCES EXPEDITIONARY STREAMER WITH TWO BRONZE STARS

SOUTHWEST ASIA SERVICE STREAMER WITH TWO BRONZE STARS

The 6th Marines

The 6th Marines was organized on 11 July 1917 at Quantico, Virginia, for combat service with the American Expeditionary Force in France. Commanded by Colonel Albertus W. Catlin, the regiment was composed of the following units: the 1st Battalion, consisting of the 74th, 75th, 76th, and 95th Companies; the 2d Battalion, consisting of the 78th, 79th, 80th, and 96th Companies; and the 3d

Battalion, consisting of the 82d, 83d, 84th, and 97th Companies. The regiment spent the summer of 1917 in extensive training and maneuvers at Quantico, conducting drills in trench and gas warfare, and the use of hand grenades, the bayonet, and machine guns.

In less than eight months, the regiment was fighting on the front lines in France. The 5th and

A contingent of 6th Marines passes in review on 8 August 1919, as the 2d Division parades up 5th Avenue from Washington Square, New York City.

National Archives Photo (USMC) 127-N-519458



6th Marines, along with the 6th Machine Gun Battalion, formed the 4th Marine Brigade commanded by Brigadier General Charles A. Doyen. As part of the U.S. Army's 2d Infantry Division, the 4th Marine Brigade participated in some of the heaviest fighting of World War I.

In a series of bitterly contested battles during 6-25 June 1918, the 6th Marines helped to sweep German troops from Belleau Wood, receiving along with the 5th Marines, special commendation from the French Government. The Belleau Wood area was renamed "Bois de la Brigade de Marine."

Shortly after the engagement at Belleau Wood, the 6th Marines fought at Soissons, suffering heavy casualties from German artillery and machine gun fire. By the end of July 1918, however, the German line had been broken, bringing about the capture of hundreds of guns and thousands of prisoners.

The 6th Marines then moved to a rest and training area, to prepare for the St. Mihiel offensive, which began on 12 November 1918. In this operation the 2d Infantry Division was commanded by Marine Major General John A. Lejeune. The 6th Marines again displayed tenacity and coolness under fire, while driving back a determined enemy.

During October 1918, the 6th Marines participated in the Meuse-Argonne drive. In a series of assaults and counterattacks, the regiment captured the fortified hill of Blanc Mont and the heights of St. Etienne, freeing the Allied approaches to the western Argonne. In the closing weeks of the war, the 6th Marines also took part in the final phase of the Meuse-Argonne drive, and on 10 November 1918, one day before the signing of the Armistice, succeeded in crossing the Meuse River. Two Marines of the regiment received the Medal of Honor: Corporal John H. Pruitt, 78th Company, and Gunnery Sergeant Fred W. Stockham, 96th Company. At the conclusion of World War I the French Government awarded three unit decorations, including the coveted Croix de Guerre with Palm, to the 6th Marines.

After the Armistice, the regiment crossed the Rhine River to serve for a short while in occupied Germany. Redeploying in July 1919, it returned to Quantico, where it was disbanded on 13 August 1919.

Two years later, on 15 September 1921, the 6th Marines was reactivated at Quantico, for a varied history of service with the East Coast Expeditionary Force, overseas duty in China, and maneuvers with the Fleet Marine Force—all interspersed with periods of disbandment or inactivation.

Elements of the 6th Marines served briefly at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and landed in the Dominican Republic during the 1920s to protect American interests. For the most part, however, the regiment's postwar duties focused on training and maneuvers.

In May 1927, when American lives and property in China were threatened, the 6th Marines deployed quickly to Shanghai as part of the 3d Brigade, to help defend the city's International Settlement. The regiment's next two years in China consisted mainly of guard and patrol duty. Early in 1929 the 6th Marines withdrew from the Far East, and returned to San Diego, California, where it disbanded on 31 March 1929.

Upon the establishment of the Fleet Marine Force, the 6th Marines was reactivated on 1 September 1934 at San Diego. The regiment took part in Pacific maneuvers with the U.S. Fleet in the spring of 1935, before returning to San Diego for further training and exercises. During the summer of 1937, more trouble in China caused another deployment in the Far East. The 6th Marines sailed for Shanghai in September 1937, to augment American forces already positioned in the International Settlement. The regiment returned to the United States in April 1938 and assumed an inactive status.

In March 1940, the 6th Marines was reestablished at Marine Corps Base, San Diego. The regiment became the principal infantry unit of the 2d Marine Brigade, which on 1 February 1941, was

Two Marines stand guard at an observation post of the 2d Battalion, 6th Marines, in Shanghai, China, in 1937.

National Archives Photo (USMC) 127G-A521056





Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A524213

A squad of infantrymen from the 6th Marines train in wind-swept, snow-covered fields in a period of half-light during the Icelandic winter in 1941-1942.

redesignated the 2d Marine Division. During the summer of 1941, the 6th Marines was temporarily detached from the division when it was incorporated, along with other Marine units, into the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade. The regiment deployed to Iceland with the brigade, to preclude a threatened German invasion. Upon its return from Iceland in March 1942, the 6th Marines again was stationed at San Diego, and reassigned to the 2d Marine Division.

On 19 October 1942, the 6th Marines began deploying to New Zealand, enroute to rejoining other 2d Marine Division units on Guadalcanal. By mid-January 1943, the regiment had assumed front-line positions in the right half of the 2d Marine Division's sector. The 6th Marines, along with Army units, assaulted Japanese defenses in that area, and in the sectors east and south of Kokumbona. Relieved of frontline duty on 30 January, the regiment continued to assist in mopping-up operations on the island. In early February 1943, the 6th Marines and other units of the 2d Marine Division left Guadalcanal for New Zealand to undergo reha-

bilitation and training in preparation for the Gilbert Islands campaign.

At Tarawa Atoll, on 20 November 1943, the 6th Marines was initially held in reserve. But the precarious position of the 2d Marine Division at the end of the first day's fighting soon required its reserve to be committed to the battle. The 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, landed on Betio Island on 21 November 1943. That afternoon, the 2d Battalion, 6th Marines, landed on Bairiki Island, east of Betio, and seized the island. The Japanese avenue of retreat from Tarawa was now blocked, and the Marine seizure of Bairiki provided an excellent location from which Marine artillery could support operations on Betio. By the following day most of the regiment's men were heavily engaged against strongly defended Japanese pillboxes and artillery on Betio. The island was declared secure on 23 November, and all three battalions of the 6th Marines spent the following days in cleaning out the rest of the atoll. By 28 November, all of Tarawa was in American hands. The 2d Marine Division subsequently relocated to Hawaii during Decem-



Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A64032

Marines move out from the beachhead onto the smoke-covered Japanese airstrip on Tarawa in November 1943.

ber 1943, to begin preparation for its next amphibious operation.

The 6th Marines played a paramount role in the assault on the Marianas during the summer of 1944. The regiment landed on the southwest coast of Saipan on 15 June 1944, with troops of the 2d and 4th Marine Divisions, and advanced inland despite determined enemy resistance. The 6th Marines fought off savage Japanese counterattacks during the night of 16-17 June, and again on 26 June. After recapturing the town of Garapan, on 4 July, the 2d Marine Division briefly went into reserve, but soon rejoined the steady, but slow, advance against a system of well-defended caves. Organized Japanese resistance on Saipan virtually ceased on the island by 8 July. On that day the 2d Marine Division replaced the Army's 27th Division in the front lines, and continued to mop up remaining groups of Japanese holdouts on the island.

The 2d and 4th Divisions landed on Tinian on 24 July 1944, and advanced rapidly inland. The 6th Marines participated in the steady drive southward on Tinian, which by 31 July had brought the regiment to a line of vertical cliffs, where Japanese resistance had stiffened. Fighting alongside the 8th

Marines, the 6th Marines repulsed several enemy counterattacks. By 1 August, organized resistance had ceased, although sporadic clashes continued for another week. The 6th Marines returned to

BGen Merritt A. Edson, assistant division commander of the 2d Marine Division, confers with Col James P. Risely, commanding officer of the 6th Marines, and LtCol Kenneth F. McLeod, executive officer of the 6th Marines, on Saipan during June 1944.

Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A82481





Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A152074

Supported by a medium tank, Marines advance on Tinian during late July 1944.

Saipan in mid-August, where it took part in mopping-up operations, which would include a major drive in November.

The 2d Marine Division left Saipan for Okinawa in late March 1945. On D-Day, 1 April, the 6th Marines engaged in diversionary activities along the southeast coast of the island. The 2d Marine Division remained in floating reserve. The 130th Naval Construction Battalion and the 2d Amphibian Truck Company were put ashore on 11 April, and the remainder of the division returned to Saipan. Later, in June, the 8th Marines and reinforcing units went back to Okinawa and took part in the final days of fighting.

After the Japanese surrender, the 6th Marines accompanied the 2d Marine Division to Japan. The regiment arrived at Nagasaki on 23 September 1945 for occupation duty. It left Japan during June 1946, but in lieu of rejoining the 2d Marine Division units at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, it was relocated instead to Camp Pendleton,

California, where it was attached to the 3d Marine Brigade on 11 September 1946. Upon the deactivation of the 3d Marine Brigade the following year, the 6th Marines was transferred to the 1st Marine Division. The regiment was deactivated on 1 October 1949; on 17 October, however, a new 6th Marines was activated as part of the 2d Marine Division at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

The outbreak of the fighting in Korea in July 1950 created an immediate need to build up the understrength 1st Marine Division. This brought about further changes in the organizational structure of the 6th Marines. Organic units of the regiment were transferred to the 1st and 7th Marines, 1st Marine Division. Within days, however, new elements of the 6th Marines were activated. The regiment was quickly brought up to wartime strength, underwent an intensive training program, and soon resumed its place as one of the major combat elements of the 2d Marine Division.

Since January 1950, the 6th Marines has provid-



Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A19986

Personnel of the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, gathered on the airfield in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, in May 1965.

ed reinforced battalions, on a rotating basis, for service with the U.S. Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean. In July 1958, after an urgent appeal from Lebanon, President Dwight D. Eisenhower ordered American troops into Beirut, to support the Lebanese government. The 3d Battalion, 6th Marines, landed near Beirut on the morning of 16 July 1958 as part of the 2d Provisional Marine Brigade, and remained ashore until 1 October 1958.

During the Cuban missile crisis of October 1962, all elements of the 6th Marines were embarked to assist in the quarantine of Cuba, ready to land if required. In the aftermath of the crisis, 2d Marine Division units remained in the Caribbean area until early December 1962.

Chaotic conditions in the Dominican Republic during April 1965 once more tested the capabilities of the 6th Marines. Elements of the regiment were the first to respond to President Lyndon B. Johnson's orders to deploy Marines into the capital city of Santo Domingo, to protect American lives and property and to assist in evacuations. With the rest of the 4th Marine Expeditionary Brigade, units of the 6th Marines helped in the evacuation of

more than 1,300 refugees from the Dominican Republic during April-June 1965, before returning to Camp Lejeune.

During the 1970s and 1980s, units of the 6th Marines conducted numerous amphibious and training exercises, especially in the Mediterranean and the Caribbean. As part of the 22d Marine Amphibious Unit, the 2d Battalion, 6th Marines—as the nucleus of Battalion Landing Team 2/6—deployed to Beirut, Lebanon, during February-June 1983, as part of a multinational peacekeeping force.

The next test of the regiment's operational readiness occurred in December 1989, when elements of the 6th Marines participated in Operation Just Cause in Panama. This operation was launched to protect American lives, restore the democratic process, and preserve the integrity of the Panama Canal Treaty. The operation concluded in June 1990.

Barely two months after the termination of Operation Just Cause, the readiness of the 6th Marines was again put to the test. In August 1990, the forces of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein invaded



Marines of Company K, 3d Battalion, 6th Marines, man a roadblock that separated Howard Air Force Base from the coastal town of Vera Cruz, Panama, during Operation Just Cause in 1990.

ed Kuwait, sparking a major crisis in the Persian Gulf. After President George H. Bush ordered American military forces to the region, the 6th Marines immediately underwent an aggressive training program. As preparations continued at a rapid pace at Camp Lejeune for possible deployment to Southwest Asia, there was still work to be done on the regiment's organization. The 2d Battalion, 6th Marines, had been deactivated in 1989, and its place in the regiment was taken by the 2d Battalion, 2d Marines. In November, the 2d Marine Division received the anticipated orders for deployment to the Persian Gulf, and in mid-December, the 6th Marines deployed to Saudi Arabia for Operation Desert Shield.

It was quickly recognized that whatever mission might be assigned, the ability to move into Kuwait to engage the enemy would depend on the ability of the 2d Marine Division to conduct a successful breach of Iraqi defenses. By early February, it was determined that the division's breach of these defenses would be conducted by the 6th Marines, as that regiment had the most training in breaching operations.

Early on the morning of 24 February 1991, the 6th Marines, with attached combat engineers, assaulted the Iraqi defensive lines, using mine plows, mine rakes, and line charges to blow up the obstacles. Six breach lanes were successfully made through the enemy minefields. The following day, the 6th Marines was engaged by an Iraqi battalion-sized armor and mechanized infantry force. Fighting back with its own tanks and air support, the regiment routed the enemy. As Iraqi forces began to surrender in large numbers, the regiment continued movement to its assigned objectives. On 28 February, a general ceasefire ended 2d Marine Division offensive operations.

During March, the regiment maintained a defensive posture and continued mopping up operations in the vicinity of Al Jahra, Kuwait, until movement to the south later in the month. During April, the regiment redeployed to North Carolina, and received a hearty welcome at Camp Lejeune for a job well done.

The 6th Marines continued to utilize its skills and team spirit during the 1990s in humanitarian and peacekeeping activities. Elements of the regi-

ment participated from July-October 1994 in support of Operation Sea Signal at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. The operation was a humanitarian relief effort for 14,000 Haitian migrants seeking shelter from a military dictatorship, and more than 30,000 Cubans stymied by the closing of a door to the United States. More recently, elements of the regiment participated during 1995-96 in Operations Deny Flight and Joint Endeavor in Bosnia; Operations Southern Watch and Desert Thunder in Southwest Asia in 1998; and Operation United Force in Kosovo in 1999. The participation of the 6th Marines in these operations was undertaken in conjunction with other American and foreign forces, in support of United Nations peacekeeping efforts in the strife-torn nations.

At right, members of the 6th Marines disembark from the USS Dubuque (LPD-8) upon their arrival in Saudi Arabia as part of Operation Desert Shield in September 1990. (Department of Defense Photo (USN) DN-ST-91-02384) Below, Marines from Company C, 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, participate in Operation Urban Warrior at Camp Lejeune in January 1998. (Photo courtesy of 2d Marine Division)

