

OUTLINE FOR 135TH INFANTRY REGIMENTAL HISTORY

1. Introduction, Induction, training, preparation for and departure from the United States.
2. Arrival in United Kingdom and training and preparation for departure for North Africa.
3. Eastern assault force landing, arrival of rest of Regiment in Africa and the varied experiences of units up to the concentration of the Regiment in ROCHIA area in preparation for the FONDOUK attack.
4. Attack phase of the African campaign beginning with FONDOUCK and continuing up to the end of the African campaign.
5. Clean-up day of TUNISIA, return to CRAM area, training and rehabilitation in preparation for the Italian offensive.
6. Departure from and arrival of units in Italy up to and including the concentration of the Regiment for the first crossing of the VOLTURNO River.
7. Crossing of the VOLTURNO River up to and including the attack of the Winter Line and withdrawal of the Regiment to rest area.
8. Rest, training and preparation for the offensive, concentration in Venafro, area, attack up the LIRI Valley up to and including CASSINO.
9. Relief at CASSINO, rest, replacements, and preparation for departure for ANZIC, departure for and period of static defense at ANZIC.
10. Preparation for offensive, push out to capture ROMA, pursuit of Enemy North to TARQUINIA.
11. Relief and rest and training area at TARQUINIA; resumption of the offensive North from GROSSETO up to and including capture of LEGHORN and occupation of the ARNO River line.
12. Relief of the Regiment, rest area period at resort area South of LEGHORN, movement, concentration and attack of the Regiment into the GOTHIC LINE up to the time of the stalemate for the Winter.
13. Defense of the line during the winter months and preparation and training up to the time of the offensive.
14. Attack from ARNO Valley up to and including surrender of the XXXV Corps German Troops.

HISTORY OF THE 135TH INFANTRY REGIMENT

FOREWORD:

The 135th Infantry Regiment was first organized as the Minnesota Volunteers of 27 April 1861 largely from units existing at that time, the oldest being the Pioneer Guards who were organized in 1856. The Regiment entered the Civil War on 29 April 1861, participating in numerous engagements in Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania; it served in the 1st Brigade, 2nd Division II Corps (Hancock's) at Gettysburg with especial distinction, sustaining very heavy casualties. It was at this time that the famous statement, "To the last Man", was made by Colonel Colville who was in command of the Regiment; this statement was later to become the Regimental motto. The Regiment was mustered out on 28 April 1864. Veterans and recruits reorganized as a two Company Battalion, which was increased to nine (9) Companies and redesignated as the 1st Minnesota Volunteers in March of 1865 and mustered out of service on 14 July 1865. Reorganization again took place in 1870-1871 from veteran and semi-military units, and it was redesignated as the 1st Infantry on 11 September 1871, reorganized as the 1st Battalion in 1880, and redesignated as the 1st Infantry in 1885.

The Regiment was redesignated as the 13th Volunteers on 7 May 1898, and embarked from San Francisco and arrived in the Philippines Island on 31 July 1898 to take part in the Spanish War and Philippine Insurrection. It was assigned to the 1st Brigade, 2nd Division, VIII Corps and participated in several engagements. The Regiment was again Mustered out on the 3rd October 1899 and reverted to its former status as the 1st Infantry on 27 March 1900.

On 19 June 1916, the Regiment was stationed at Llano Grande and San Antonio, Texas, performing guard duties and expeditions during the Mexican Border uprising. Again the Regiment was mustered out on 14 March 1917.

HISTORY OF THE 135TH INFANTRY REGIMENT (Cont'd)

The unit was next designated as the 135th Infantry Regiment of the 34th Infantry Division on 7 April 1917. It served with the 34th Division in France and was mustered out on 18 February 1919. Reorganization as the 1st Infantry again occurred on 31 January 1920, being redesignated as the 135th Infantry Regiment on 21 November 1921.

The following steamers are authorized by the War Department to be displayed with the Regimental Colors:

Civil War

Bull Run
Peninsula
Valley
Antietam
Virginia, 1862, 1861, 1863, 1864, 1865
Fredericksburg
Gettysburg
Petersburg

Spanish War

Manila

Philippine Insurrection

Luzon
San Isidro

World War

Without Inscription

The Coat of Arms was approved on 23rd June 1926. It is a shield of Argent on a saltire azure between in chief a Fleur-de-lis gules, in fess the corps badge of the 2nd Division, VIII Corps during the Spanish War proper (2 white circles overlapping each other on third radius, resembling the figure "8") fringed of the Third and 2 bolos saltirewise of the last, the 2nd Division II Corps badge of the Civil War of the fourth (a white 3 leaf clover with stem, voided). The crest is that of Regiments of Minnesota National Guard with the wreath Argent and Azure. The Motto is "TO THE LAST MAN".

HISTORY OF THE 135TH INFANTRY REGIMENT (Cont'd)

The shield is white, the old Infantry color. The blue saltire is from the Confederate flag for Civil War Service. At Gettysburg the Regiment was in the 2nd Division II Corps, whose badge was a 3 leaf clover. The figure "8" represents Spanish War Service, the crossed bolos, Philippine Insurrection service and the Fleur-de-lis World War Service. The distinctive insignia was approved on 18 June 1926.

HEADQUARTERS 135TH INFANTRY
UNITED STATES ARMY

1 March 1944.

Subject: Regimental Hymn.

To : All Units.

1. For the information of all concerned, the Regimental Hymn is herewith reproduced. Singing of the Hymn will be encouraged throughout the Regiment. It is sung to the music of the "Men in Gray".

Our fathers who with Colville stood
upon that sacred day,
Our last man pledged
And so we should
Repledge ourselves today.

Chorus

Rifles crossed and at their peaks,
The 1-3-5 shall stand;
Our Regiment, a toast to thee
The finest in the land.

2

To Minnesota's Northern Star
Our arms presented be.
Through time or change
Though near or far,
We sing All Hail to Thee.

Chorus

Rifle crossed and at their peaks,
The 1-3-5 shall stand;
Our Regiment, a toast to thee
The finest in the land.

By order of Lt. Colonel EVEREST;

S/P.T. Smith, Jr.
T/P.T. Smith, Jr.
Capt., 135th Inf.,
Adjutant.

34th Division History

The 34th Infantry Division was organized on July 15th, 1917, from National Guard Units of Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, and North and South Dakota. For training, the Division went to Camp Cody, New Mexico, and while there adopted the present insignia, the skull of a steer, in red, superimposed on a black olla, or Spanish-style earthen jug.

The Division arrived in France in the early fall of 1918, but only a few units saw any action, for in October of that year the Division was reduced to a skeleton organization. Some units, especially the 158th Infantry Regiment and the 151st Field Artillery Battalion, saw action with the famed 42nd "Rainbow" Division, while the other units continued their training in various parts of France.

During the following 23 years the units of the Division followed separate paths as components of the National Guard of their home states. With the nation once more threatened with the spectre of war, the 34th Division, commanded by Major General Ellard A. Walsh, was inducted into Federal Service on February 10, 1941, pursuant to Presidential Executive Order 8633, and moved to Camp Claiborne, Louisiana, shortly thereafter. The units comprising the Division at this time were from Iowa, Minnesota, North and South Dakota.

A period of intensive training culminated in the Division's participation in the Louisiana Maneuvers held between 6 August and 30 September, 1941. Following the nation's entry into the war in December 1941, the Division moved to Fort Dix, New Jersey, during the first week of January 1942. While there, the Division was "triangularized", which resulted in the disbandment of several of the units and the reassignment of others. The 164th Infantry Regiment, one of those reassigned, later earned a name for itself as a part of the Americal Division, which saw much service in the South Pacific area.

Following the retirement of Major General Walsh, Brigadier General Russell P. Hartle assumed command on August 25th, 1942.

On January 15th, 1942, the first elements of the Division sailed for North Ireland, being the first U. S. troops of World War II to set foot on European soil. Another period of training followed in Ireland, during which time the command of the Division passed from Major General Hartle to Brigadier (now Major) General Charles W. Ryder, who was to lead the Division through every engagement experienced up to the middle of July, 1944. During the stay in Ireland, personnel was drawn from the Division to organize the 1st Ranger Battalion, which was to cover itself with glory and honor several times during the course of the war.

History

In November 1942, the 168th Regimental Combat Team and the 3rd Battalion, 135th Infantry, participated in the initial landings at Algiers, North Africa, as a part of the Eastern Assault Force, which was commanded by Major General Ryder, whose staff was made up almost entirely of officers from the 34th Division.

January of 1943 brought the remainder of the Division to North Africa, where it participated in the Tunisian Campaign. Among the engagements fought were those of Kasserine Pass, Fondouk el Okbi, Hill 609, and Chouigui. The success of the 34th at Hill 609, where it roundly defeated the Germans in a bitter three-day battle, was instrumental in causing the collapse of Nazi resistance in Northern Tunisia on May 13, 1943.

Following the Tunisian Campaign, the Division entered a period of rest and training until the invasion of Italy in September of 1943. In the Salerno landings, the Division was represented by the 151st Field Artillery Battalion, which was attached to the 36th Infantry Division. The action of the battalion on the beaches was so outstanding that the Chief of Staff of the assault division said, "The beach-head would have been destroyed had it not been for the early arrival of the 151st Field Artillery Battalion thirty minutes before the first counter-attack."

The Division landed in Italy on September 21, 1943, and has been in the thick of the campaign in Italy ever since that time. The principal actions during the winter of 1943-44 were at Benevento, the Volturno River, where the Division made three crossings in the face of bitter German resistance, Mount Pantano, and Cassino. At Cassino, some of the bloodiest fighting of the Italian Campaign was experienced, and advances were measured in terms of rooms of houses. Elements of the Division entered the town on February 3, 1944, and despite almost over-powering German counter-attacks, held on grimly to one-third of Cassino until relieved by Allied troops.

In late March of 1944, the Division moved to the Anzio Beachhead, where it maintained defensive positions until the break-out attack on May 23rd. After a vicious fight at Lanuvio and Villa Crocetta, the Division followed on the heels of the Germans through Rome, Civitavecchia, Cecina, Rosignano, Leghorn, and up to Pisa on the Arno River.

On the 21st of July 1944, Major General Charles W. Ryder, the Division Commander, turned his command over to Major General Charles L. Bolte. Major General Ryder then returned to the United States for a well-deserved leave and future reassignment.

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History

Throughout the entire campaign from Salerno to Pisa, the 100th Infantry Battalion (Separate), an organization composed of Nisei (Japanese-American) volunteer troops, fought with the Division and earned an enviable reputation for itself as well as a high opinion in the minds of all 34th Division personnel.

The battalion took the place of the crack 2nd Battalion, 133rd Infantry Regiment which guarded General Dwight D. Eisenhower's Allied Force Headquarters until March 1944. The 2nd Battalion returned to the Division at Benevento, Italy, after General Eisenhower was appointed SHAEF commander and organized his new Headquarters in England. When the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, also a Nisei organization, was attached to the Division in June, the 100th Battalion came under its command. Both organizations left the Division in August 1944.

After a month's rest in August 1944, the Division moved east and north to the Florence sector, where it helped to pierce the vaunted Gothic Line, following which it assumed an active defense position during the late winter months of 1944 on the edge of the Po Valley.

The first three months of 1945 saw the 34th Division continuing to maintain an active defense on the edge of the Po Valley. In late March and early April, plans were formulated for an offensive designed to destroy the German forces in Italy.

The Allied attack began on 16 April, the 34th Division jumping off with one regiment in the assault. For three days, the battle mounted in ferocity, but by 19 April the enemy began to crack. Relentlessly pressing on, the Division entered Bologna on 21 April and, after a brief pause, continued on to the northwest up Highway 9. By this time, the enemy retreat had become a thoroughly disorganized rout. In rapid succession the Division captured Modena, Reggio, Parma, Fidenza and Piacenza on the Po River. The toll of killed, wounded, and captured in the enemy's ranks rose steadily and his equipment was destroyed or captured in large quantities.

By 26 April, the Division had split the opposing enemy force in two and had reached the Nurc River. The German collapse was now almost complete. The Division moved north to Brescia and Bergamo, continuing the pursuit of the enemy although little actual fighting took place.

On 2 May, 1945, the long, bitter struggle of the 34th Division came to an end, climaxed by the surrender to the Division of the LXXV German Corps whose personnel totaled over 40,000 troops including, ironically enough, the 34th German Division.

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History

Since first committed to action, the Division has had 529 days of actual combat, more than any other American Division in World War II. In the course of this combat time, the personnel of the 34th "Red Bull" Division have earned 21,246 awards and citations.

They include:

9 Congressional Medals of Honor	1228 Silver Stars
3 Presidential Unit Citations	62 Soldier's Medals
7 British awards	2562 Bronze Stars
4 Brazilian awards	141 Air Medals
8 French awards	871 Division Citations
7 Italian awards	8 Meritorious Service Unit Plaques
107 Distinguished Service Crosses	1 Fifth Army Com- mandation of Unit
2 Distinguished Service Medals	
1 Distinguished Flying Cross	
125 Legion of Merits	16,100 Purple Hearts

PRIME MINISTER

WINSTON CHURCHILL'S SPEECH

BEFORE TROOPS OF GENERAL CLARK'S FIFTH ARMY

"General Mark Clark, General Bolte, officers and men of the 34th United States Infantry Division; officers and men of the Brazilian Expeditionary Force; officers and men of the United States Negro troops; Americans of Japanese ancestry and your American officers; I greet you here this morning with feelings of pride that the honor should have fallen to me to inspect these units of the Fifth Army, one of the great armies of the United Nations, which are everywhere advancing victoriously upon the foe.

"The 34th U. S. Division was first, or among the very first of all the United States troops to leave the new world and carry by their sacrifices and their valor the precious blessing of freedom and justice to the lands enslaved by Hitler's tyranny. That tyranny we shall break. We shall shatter the sources from which its evil powers are derived, which will be so obliterated and blasted that for many hundreds of years none will dare to do the like again.

"Officers and soldiers, and the representatives of the Women's Army Corps, Army Nurse Corps, we have here in Italy one of the finest armies in the world. The combination of the Fifth Army and of the British Eighth Army bind together two veteran armies bound together in a bond of brotherhood and comradeship in arms, and in the sense of marching and fighting shoulder to shoulder for a righteous cause. You have done deeds which will long be remembered. In the earliest landings in Italy, the long fighting at Anzio beachhead, the battle of the Cassino front, and the capture of Rome and Leghorn -- all of these are episodes which have played a fruitful and an invaluable part in the entire scheme and design of the Allied Armies. No operation could have been more fruitful in this theater than the work which you have done by drawing away perhaps two dozen or more divisions down into Italy where they have been torn to pieces. You have aided notably and most effectively the great battle now proceeding to its victorious climax on the fields of France. But though you have done great deeds in the past, and may well be proud of what has been achieved, I come here to tell you today that greater ventures and greater achievements now lie ahead of you, and that you will be playing constantly an absolutely vital part in the long, hard struggle for whose speedy end we all strike, and for whose speedy end we all pray.

"I wish you--all of you--all the units represented here and the Brazilians-- I wish all of you all good fortune; I wish you God speed; may God bless you all."