

## Historical Overview of the 21st Infantry Regiment (Gimlet)



### The Early Years: War of 1812

The origins of the 21st Infantry Regiment can be traced back 200 years to the War of 1812. Since its genesis the 21st Infantry Regiment has faithfully executed all missions task upon it by the United States of America and United States Army. The 21st Infantry Regiment has undergone many changes throughout its long and distinguished history to our country, and always remains faithful to its motto – DUTY. During the past 200 years the regiment has fought or served all over the world. During this time the regiment has amassed over 50 Battle Campaign Streamers as well as numerous individual and unit decorations for valor, domestic and foreign – BORE BROTHER BORE!

The 21st Infantry was created 26 June 1812 and fought with distinction during the War of 1812; however, the regiment's honorable history was short lived when, during May through October 1815, the 21st Infantry Regiment was consolidated with the 4th, 9th, 13th, 40th and 46th Infantry Regiments to form the 5th Infantry Regiment.

The 21st Infantry Regiment achieved major recognition in 1814, during the battle of Lundy's Lane (also known as the Battle of Niagara). The battle was one of the bloodiest battles of the war and deadliest battle fought on Canadian soil. The regiment under the command of COL James Miller fought against overwhelming odds repulsing numerous counter attacks to take up a key position within the British Lines. For COL Miller's decisive role at the Battle of Lundy's Lane, President Madison awarded James Miller with a brevet promotion to the rank of Brigadier General. Congress also recognized COL Miller with a gold coin struck in his honor for his outstanding contributions and leadership throughout the Niagara campaign of 1814.

Army lore suggests that Major General Jacob Brown presented the 21st Infantry Regiment with a bronze British cannon for gallantry during the engagement, which is supposed to be on display in the halls of history at the Army War College located at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. However, after much research no such cannon appears to exist.

According to author Richard V. Barbuto, *Niagara 1814: America Invades Canada* (University Press of Kansas, 2000) he discusses the battle of Lundy's Lane 1814 in his book. The Battle of Lundy's Lane was fought in Upper Canada July 1814 close to the falls. There was no settlement known as Niagara Falls at that time, either in the province of Upper Canada or in the state of New York. One British gun was recovered from the battlefield after the fight and one American gun was mistakenly left behind when the American Left Division returned to its camp south of the Chipawa River to get water and ammunition.

According to Dr. Barbuto while researching for his book he never found any evidence that General Brown gave any cannon to anyone: captured guns reverted to the artillery commander and were incorporated into the artillery park for use. The guns were government property and not Brown's of which to dispose. By the time Jacob Brown became Commanding General of the US Army, the 21st Infantry Regiment was no longer on active Army roles.

### Civil War

The next time the 21st Infantry Regiment was raised was 3 May 1861. This occurred by Presidential Proclamation under General Order 33 as 2nd Battalion, 12th U.S. Infantry at Fort Hamilton, New York. The newly constituted Infantry Regiment received its baptism of fire at Cedar Mountain in 1862, during the Shenandoah Valley Campaign, Virginia. During this campaign Private John L. Younker, Company A, 12th U.S. Infantry was awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroic actions on 9 August 1862. The 12th continued to fight courageously throughout the Civil War years (1861 – 1865) participating in twelve campaigns. At the end of the Civil War the 2-12th U.S. Infantry was retired. By an act of Congress on 28 July 1866, GO 92 the 21st Infantry Regiment was organized and designated as such on 21 September 1866.

### Indian Wars

Colonel George Stoneman, who had gained recognition as a General during the Civil War, was named as the newly formed 21st Infantry's Regimental Commander, on 19 December 1866. The revised regiment needed much more equipment and many more men to bring it up to full combat strength. During the following three years the 21st Infantry located in Virginia began an intense course of training and reorganization. The manpower quota was reached when the 32nd Infantry Regiment was merged with the 21st Infantry in 1869. Thus, the gallant fighting men of 21st Infantry were blended with the courageous soldiers of the 32nd Infantry to form an outstanding new regiment for future Army needs.

Those future needs were close at hand. Outbreaks of Indian violence in the northwest against the settlers were growing more frequent. To aid putting down the unrest the 21st Infantry was called to the northwestern frontier in May 1869. The Regiment left Virginia by what would become the transcontinental railroad, heading west tasked with a mission to help control Indian turbulence. When the Regiment reached Ogden, Utah, the train stopped to left four companies off to witness the ceremony of, Driving of Golden Spike, at Promontory, Utah, which commemorated the joining of the East and West railroads, thereby becoming the Transcontinental Railroad. At this auspicious occasion the Regimental band played. The music was received with cheers from the crowd of onlookers.

In the northwest, Oregon and Idaho, Bannock Indians and Northern Paiutes as well as a number of Cayuses and Umatilla had been restless since the Nez Perce uprisings and the Indian agents had done little to calm the Indians. All hell was about to break loose by mid 1878 when the Paiute and other Indian tribes joined the Bannocks preparing to attack the

**Army, including the 21st Infantry. On 18 July General Howard sent seven companies of the 21st under Captain Evan Miles to meet and engage the Bannocks.**

**One such 21st Infantry Regiment replacement soldier who served during the Bannock Indian War was PVT Gottfried William Quetschenbach. He was born in Rochester, NY, in 1859 to German parents and enlisted in the Army at Buffalo, NY, August 1, 1878 when he was 19 years of age. After being issued his uniform and equipment at David's Island, NYC he along with 200 recruits became part of 21st Infantry Regiment and then sent by transcontinental railroad to the western portion of the United States to fight Indians.**

**By the time the train reached Winnemucca, Nevada, in early September only PVT Gottfried and 17 others of the original 200 soldiers were left on the train when it arrived in Winnemucca. Once the small group of soldiers detrained at Winnemucca they force marched to Fort McDermott where they immediately became engaged in fighting the Bannock Indians and others. PVT Gottfried and the other 17 recruits now assigned to the 21st Infantry under the command of a 2nd Lieutenant were assigned civilian convoy protection duty on the Winnemucca-Boise main road. The F Company 21st Infantry soldiers rode on top of wagons and stagecoaches where they would engage the raiding Bannock, Piute and other hostiles in the area. In October 1878 PVT Gottfried and the surviving recruits were deployed to Fort Klamath, Oregon.**

**Fort Klamath became the home base of Company F, 21st Infantry and Company B, 1st Cavalry. PVT Gottfried then did regular garrison duty - Guard Mount, Road Construction, and Bridge Construction, and then detached duty to round up renegades, deserters and protect payrolls. The summer of 1881 Company F, 21st Infantry was ordered to Vancouver Barracks, Washington Territory.**

**Vancouver Barracks was the 21st Infantry's Regimental Headquarters. PVT Gottfried continued regular garrison duties and detached assignments until his discharge from the Army on July 31, 1883. At the time of his discharge 21st Infantry Regimental Commander Colonel Morrow noted he was an "Excellent Soldier." He then returned to Rochester, NY and spent the rest of his life there. In 1926 the Federal Government finally awarded him the Indian War medal for his combat time in the Bannock War 1878. Gottfried died in 1931. He is buried at the Riverside Cemetery in Rochester, New York.**

**When the Bannock Indian War finally came to a close losses were eighty Indians and civilians killed, nine soldiers were KIA, and the war cost the United States nearly a half million dollars. The year 1889 brought the Indian fighting for the 21st Infantry to a close. Chief Sitting Bull had been killed and his of Sioux Indians scattered. In December, the 21st was included in the troop detail sent to bring Indians to the reservations. After that successful mission the 21st Infantry settled down for a period of extensive training to prepare the regiment to do the job of protecting settlers arriving in the far west. For nine years the regiment was scattered throughout California, Washington and Oregon doing that job.**

## Spanish-American Wars and Philippine Insurrection

Once again in the early 1890s the regiment was on the move and making changes. The 21st Infantry crossed the continent eastward to Fort Niagara and Plattsburg Barracks in New York where it remained until the war with Spain sent the regiment to Tampa, Florida. In 1892 while at Plattsburg Barracks, the 21st Infantry Regiment adopted its Coat-of-Arms and had it approved by the War Department. The first Coat-of-Arms was a shield, at the base of which was a cedar tree, and at the top, four arrows passing through a blue circle that contained a rattlesnake. The blue and white of the shield represented the colors of the United States Infantry. The cedar tree was for the battle of Cedar Mountain during the Civil War campaign. The rattle snake was the Indian sign for war, denoting the Indian Wars, and the four arrows represented the four major Indian campaigns which the 21st Infantry Regiment participated.

The 21st Infantry fought with distinction during the Spanish-American War from 1899 to 1909. Among those soldiers who served during the Spanish-American War was Musician Frederick Albert Studer. Studer was born on August 18, 1873, in Zurich, Wayne County, New York. Studer enlisted in the Army about 1889. Early in his enlistment his unit was posted to Fort Apache, Arizona Territory, now part of present day Fort Huachuca. According to the family he almost drowned when a flash flood struck, roaring down the gully where he and several other troops were located while out searching for the "Apache Kid." During the Spanish American War, he served with Company F, 21st U.S. Infantry, serving in Cuba, and taking part in the Santiago Campaign. After the war he saw service at Forts Totten and Schyler in New York. At Fort Schyler Studer operated a private bus service when off duty. He transported the troops to the town of Westchester for the sum of 25 cents. About 1909/10 Studer was stationed in the Philippines, serving at Corregidor. He ended his military career in 1919 as a steward aboard a U.S. Army Mine vessel operating out of Hoboken, New Jersey. After Studer's retirement from the Army he worked briefly as a conductor for the IRT subway in New York; he also owned a barber shop in the Bronx for about 15 years, retiring about 1940. Studer passed away on November 30, 1959. He is buried in Long Island National Cemetery, Suffolk County, New York.

The 21st Infantry faced the enemy fearlessly in three expeditions during the Philippine Insurrection. After three successful campaigns during that time the 21st Infantry Regiment was reassigned to Vancouver Barracks, Washington, in 1909, remaining there until World War I.



World War I



**The United States entered World War I on 6 April 1917 after hostile actions directed against U.S. shipping. President Wilson asked congress for a declaration of war and the U.S. Congress declared war on 6 April 1917. The Selective Service Act Public Law 65-12, 40 Stat. 76 had been enacted by 18 May 1917 to begin drafting young men to bolster the United States relatively small Army. After the Selective Service Act the federal government began to raise a national Army for American entry into World War I.**

**The Selective Service Act authorized the US to begin drafting young men for combat on the Eastern front. By summer 1918 the U.S. was sending 10,000 fresh soldiers a day to serve with American forces fighting in France. During World War I, the 21st Infantry Regiment was assigned the task of patrolling the American-Mexican border and training troops. The 21st Infantry sent 8,000 highly trained replacement soldiers to units fighting in France. Although the 21st Infantry Regiment was on alert orders for deployment to France when the Armistice was signed on 11 November 1919 it never saw combat during World War I.**



### The Move to Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, and the Gimlet Nickname



**After the Great War ended the entire regiment made its way to Schofield Barracks, Hawaii Territory where on 22 October 1921 the Regiment was assigned to the Hawaiian Division, which later became the 24th Infantry Division. The Taro Leaf Division along with the 21st Infantry Regiment remained in peaceful Hawaii for the next twenty years training for combat and engaging in athletic programs until World War II began.**

**At Schofield Barracks during those 20 plus peaceful years from 1920 until late 1941 was where the 21st Infantry Regiment earned and defend the nickname “Gimlet” as a result of the efforts by regimental athletes led by PFC Eugene Riley. They set regimental standards and traditions, maintaining superiority on the athletic field and were noted mainly for their fighting spirit. The Gimlet motto “Duty” and battle cry of “Bore Brother Bore” exemplifies Gimlets strong will to win.**

**Some Gimlet greats were SSG Lefty Sanders team pitcher 1930 through 33, 1SG Charlie Banks 3rd Baseman 1931 and 32, 1SG Neff Sharer 1st Baseman 1927 to 1940, SGT Red Smith Baseball 1923 to 1941, and Wild Bill Kennedy Boxing, Football and Wrestling 1934 to 1940. Gimlet All Schofield athletes that excelled in sports were: Michaeliski Shortstop**

and Quarterback 1934 to 1940, Bogardus Pitcher 1937 to 1940, Geis Guard 1938 to 39 and Tackle 1940, Charlie Camic Forward 1940 to 41, Chief Swimmer Center 1939 to 40.

On Organization Day 1941 the Regimental Commander, Colonel Gilbert R. Cook delivered the following message to his troops:

**“To be a member of the 21st Infantry is an honor bestowed upon those capable of upholding the standards of our predecessors. This heritage of deeds well done should impress on our minds the history and past performance of our regiment in its duty to our country. The future honor of the regiment rests in our hands. No uncertainty of the outcome is possible, if we carry before us that motto, well earned in the past, DUTY – well done.”**



### World War II and Japan Occupation

On the morning of 7 December 1941 that message given by the Regimental Commander weeks earlier would ring true. Those great regimental athletes as well as all personnel were immediately transformed into Gimlet Warriors. The athletes cast off their athletic gear and drew weapons and uniforms of war. The 21st Infantry Regiment “Gimlet” had been thrust into the explosive throes of World War II after the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor Territory of Hawaii.

The Regiment and its Gimlet Warriors was the first infantry unit to return fire against the Japanese planes wreaking havoc on the island in Hawaii and would be among the last of Allied units to cease hostilities at the end of WW II.

For Gimlets assigned to the 24th ID at Schofield Barracks that Sunday morning in December 1941 would change their lives forever. One such Gimlet was MSG John Carter. Sergeant Carter remembers breakfast looked mighty good to him that December Sunday morning. He remembered vividly that the bacon was crisp and the butter flowed as it melted across the top of his stack of hotcakes. However, he would not get a chance to taste bacon or hotcakes that morning.

He said, “I was hungry that morning, but it would be a long time before I got anything to eat after that first explosion.” In later life in a quite voice whose every syllable sounded like a voice out of the pages of American history Sergeant Carter described what it was like to be a member of the 21st Infantry Regiment on that fateful Sunday morning 7 December 1941. MSG Carter would go on fighting throughout the entire war as a Gimlet Warrior and then serve in Korea.

After Gimlets returned fire from their bolt action rifles shooting at Japanese aircraft that were bombing and strafing the island the 24th Infantry Division, one of the two Army divisions at Schofield Barracks, would assume defensive posture. They began to build an elaborate system of coastal defenses on northern Oahu. However, by May 1943 the Taro Leaf Division was alerted for deployment to Australia.

The 24th ID departed Hawaii and completed movement to Australia by 8 September 1943, using echelon movement. Once in place the division setup training at Camp Caves near Rockhampton. The Taro Leafs staged and rehearsed at Goodenough Island until 14 February 1944, after which the 19th and 21st Infantry landed at Tanahmerah Bay, New Guinea on 22 April 1944. This group along with the 34th Infantry went ashore at Humboldt Bay.

Despite torrential rains and marshy terrain the Gimlet Regiment overran the Hollandia airdrome, linking up with the 41st Infantry Division by 26 April 1944. After occupation duty at Hollandia, New Guinea, the Taro Leaf Division assaulted Leyte, Philippines, on 20 October 1944. The Gimlets landed in the Panon Straight area, while the rest of the division began assaulting Palo-Pawing area, seizing key Hill 522 in heavy combat.

The 21st Infantry relieved the 34th Infantry at Breakneck Ridge west of Pinamopoan on 5 November 1944. By 3 January 1945 the 21st Infantry had landed on Marinduque Island and then returned to Midoro, where the Taro Leaf Division arrived on 29 January 1945. After that action the division landed the 21st Infantry at Baras and the 19th Infantry at Parang on Mindanao on 17 April 1945. Filipino forces were already in control of Malabang. The division drove overland along Highway 1 with the 19th Infantry as the 21st Infantry made amphibious drives up two branches of the Mindanao River.

The 34th Infantry in reserve was landed at the Parang on 19 April 1945 to reinforce, and then moved by water to occupy undefended Fort Pikit before seizing the junction of Highway 1 and the Sayre Highway the following day. On 24 April 1945 the 34th Infantry led the division push into Digos on Davao Gulf. Despite demolitions and delaying obstacles, the 19th Infantry bypassed and contained Hill 550, commanding Davao approaches by 1 May 1945, and then stormed the city on 3 May 1945.

The 34th Infantry reduced a Japanese pocket of resistance in the Guma sector on 12 May 1945, while Gimlets, supported by massed artillery fires attacked along the Talamo River. The 19th Infantry and 34th Infantry tackled Hill 550, which fell to the latter after a battle that lasted several days on 21 May 1945. The end of organized Japanese resistance on Mindanao was declared the end of May 1945, but the Taro Leaf Division continued offensive operations in the Kibangay area. The 21st Infantry landed a Sarangani Bay and secured the area on 12 July 1945. The Taro Leaf Division continued mopping up operations patrolling and performing security on Mindanao until the end of the war.

Along the way to victory on that rugged journey through the Pacific en-route to Japan Gimlet Warrior PFC James H. Diamond earned the MOH posthumously for his heroic

actions at Mintal, Mindanao, Philippine Islands May 1945. After the Atomic Bomb was dropped and Japan surrendered battle weary Gimlets, as part of the Taro Leaf Division, took up occupation duty in Japan from 22 October 1945 to late June 1950.



### Korean War Years

The five years occupation respite in Japan would be short lived. Gimlets at Camp Wood, Japan, were enjoying their break from combat when the regiment was called to action again. The Gimlets were enjoying a relatively good life at Camp Wood and surrounding area until June 1950 when orders came to go to war again. Camp Wood, 153 acres, was a city in itself situated on the island of Kyushu. The camp had all the amenities of military bases in Hawaii or the states. The Gimlet Battalions had once again resumed their dominance on the athletic field during their off-duty hours. However, that would all change on 25 June 1950 for a regiment that was not combat ready by way of equipment or manpower.

On 25 June 1950 Communist North Korea launched a surprise attack on its neighbors to the south. In Japan on orders from then President Harry Truman, General Macarthur gave alert orders for the 24th Infantry Division to prepare for deployment to South Korea. The Gimlets were quickly notified to begin preparing for a combat deployment that was for all practical purposes a show of force and unity with the South Korean forces. The immediate deployment force was the 1st Battalion 21st Infantry Regiment, under the command of LTC Charles Smith. The Gimlets were told as they prepared to leave Japan for Korea that the communists would flee at the first sight of American soldiers – not.

According to Eli Culbertson's account, "The motor convoy to Sasebo consisted of 28 vehicles for Headquarters Company, 19 vehicles for Heavy Mortar Company, 12 vehicles for Medical Company, 9 vehicles for Service Company and 28 vehicles for the Third Battalion. The remainder of the Regiment and the Third Battalion departed from Kumamoto by train. Seven Hundred and eight men left Kumamoto by train to Sasebo, Japan. The train depot was filled with Loved Ones saying goodbye to their men. The Japanese girls especially were visually affected. Each one was with their man to the last moment and the crying towels were very much in evidence. As for those personnel who left their dependants at Camp Wood the movement was not much of an emotional scene. Most of them had said their farewells at their respective quarters in the dependant housing area. Here is where, as I walked away from my wife and two small children, I turned and said to my wife, 'Well, this is just a police action; I will be home in two weeks.' Culbertson A POW remembers more than 38 months later. For many others it was the last time they saw their



loved ones. The 21st Infantry Regiment's Third Battalion lost more than two thirds of its men in the first three weeks of fighting in South Korea." (Ed. Note: The following story written 1992)

On 5 July 1950 Gimlets of Task Force Smith, 1st Battalion 21st Infantry Regiment, 24th ID and augmented units, were the first U. S. Army ground combat troops sent to engage the North Korean Army. The Gimlets of TSF soon discovered that the deployment was not a show of force as the communists had no plans back down. Something they had been told a few days earlier.

Approximately 550 gallant Gimlets of Task Force Smith dauntlessly faced a much larger more well equipped and better trained North Korean Army head-on to slow the penetration of the Korean peninsula. Lieutenant Carl Bernard of Love Company was one of the fearless Gimlets; although seriously out gunned and out numbered he and his men continued to face down North Korean aggressors. However, as more manpower and equipment poured into South Korea, American and Korean soldiers eventually backed the communists down helping to drive them north. During the Korean War two Gimlets earned the Medal of Honor for their gallant actions: SFC Ray E. Duke and PFC Mack A. Jordan.

For Gimlets such as SGT Ezra Phil Burke NCOIC of the advance Medical Platoon element, SGT Hugh Brown, and Platoon Leaders such as Carl Bernard, Bill Wyrick and Volney Warner they would take to heart what GOL Gilbert had said in part years earlier, "The future honor of the regiment rests in our hands. No uncertainty of the outcome is possible, if we carry before us that motto, well earned in the past, DUTY – well done."

After many months of heavy combat in Korea the 21st Infantry would pack up and leave Korea. The 24th ID was relieved in January 1952 and sent by ships to Camp Schimmelpenninck, Japan. The Gimlets true to reputation were first in and the last units of the 24th ID to leave Korea. By the spring of 1952 the 21st Infantry under the command of COL John R. Jeter began an intense training program that would enable them, upon completion, to be designated as a Regimental Combat Team.



### Cold War

After the Cease Fire was signed on 27 July 1953 Gimlets continued to guard against tyranny by deploying back to Korea. Post Korean War Gimlets returned to Korea to guard

prisoners and help enforce the armistice where they would remain until 1957. After post war duty in Korea the regiment was sent to Germany as part of the 24th ID where the division relieved the 11th Airborne Division. Once again the 24th ID and the Gimlet Regiment was in Germany to help enforce Cold War demarcation lines. Throughout the Cold War period Gimlets stood vigilant as global protectors guarding against the spread of communism. Under the short lived Pentomic Concept, whereby the Army began to reorganize into Battle Groups the 21st Infantry was designated as a Battle Group assigned to the 24th ID.

The Gimlets participated in the Battle Group concept serving in Germany and Hawaii until the program was disbanded in favor of the new ROAD concept and designated the 1st Battalion 21st Infantry on 1 February 1963. The 1-21 IN (M) and 2-21 IN (M) part of the 24th ID (M) eventually stood down and were inactivated 15 April 1970 at Augsburg, Germany and 5 June 1972 at Fort Riley, Kansas, respectively.



### The Vietnam War Years

After Korea the 21st Infantry Regiment would never again be active in the U.S Army as a full regimental infantry. During the Cold War and subsequent years only individual battalions of the regiment would stand alone facing aggressors. The 4th and 5th Battalions would be activated at Schofield Barracks as part of the 25th ID for service in Vietnam; however, it was soon determined that the deployment schedule would not allow sufficient time for the two Gimlet battalions to become combat ready. Consequently, the two battalions were inactivated on 3 January 1966.

The Vietnam War years would find Gimlets serving under separate commands in Vietnam and eventually come under command and control of the Americal Division. As America entered the war in Vietnam two Gimlet battalions, 3rd and 4th, were activated to begin training for deployment to the Republic of South Vietnam. The first to be activated was 3rd Battalion 21st Infantry. It was activated as a Light Infantry Battalion on 15 September 1965 at Fort Devens, Massachusetts, to become a battalion to make up the newly formed 196th Light Infantry Brigade (Separate). Initially, the 196th Light Infantry Brigade (Separate) was on alert orders for deployment to the Dominican Republic crisis in 1965; however, the Charger Brigade was redirected to Vietnam in 1966 to engage in combat operations as a Light Infantry Brigade (Separate) in the western portion of III Corps Tactical Zone. The 3-21 Infantry under command of LTC Charles K. Nulsen, Jr., began

immediate combat operations in War Zone C, Tay Ninh Province, which developed into a major ground combat operation after a large enemy base camp was uncovered in September 1966.

The 4th Battalion 21st Infantry was activated on 1 November 1967 in Hawaii where it began training in the jungles of Hawaii for deployment to Vietnam as the fourth infantry battalion of the 11th Infantry Brigade. The 4-21 IN arrived in Vietnam on 14 April 1968 to become part of the newly formed 23rd Infantry Division (Americal).

The 3-21 Infantry as a battalion of the 196th LIB (Separate) moved north from III Corps to I Corps in 1967 to conduct combat operations as part of Task Force Oregon. In February of 1967, General William C. Westmorland, Commander of U.S. Forces Vietnam, formed a planning group to organize an Army Task Force to send to the I Corps. The planning group, commanded by Major General William B. Rossoni organized a multi-brigade force composed of the 196th LIB (Separate), the 1st Brigade (Separate) 101st Airborne Division and the 3rd Brigade, 25th ID (later redesignated the 3rd Brigade 4th ID).

Task Force Oregon became operational on 20 April 1967 when personnel from the 196th LIB landed at the Chu Lai Airstrip and immediately began combat operations. The 196th LIB (Separate) officially came under operational control of the Americal in February 1969. Gimlets from both 21st Regiment Battalions participated in combat operations under operational control of the Americal until the division was inactivated November 1971.

After the 23rd ID (Americal) was disbanded the 196th LIB was reconstituted and remained in Vietnam until it stood down 29 June 1972. After the 196th stood down one battalion from the brigade remained in Vietnam to secure Da Nang – the 3-21 Infantry. Gimlets of the 3-21 Infantry formed Task Force Gimlet and were the last combat ground troops to depart Vietnam in August 1972. Once again Gimlets would prove their mettle and honor the motto, DUTY. SSG Nick Bacon B 4-21 Infantry and PFC Daniel J. (Doc) Shea\* HHC 3-21 Infantry would earn the MOH for their actions in combat.



### Regimental Realignment



After the war in Vietnam concluded battalions of the 21st Infantry Regiment underwent numerous changes in status and locations. Task Force Gimlet ended the 21st Infantry Regiment and United States Army's ground combat operations in Vietnam August 1972 and then a few days later LTC Negriss the TFG Commander stood the battalion down at Oakland, California on 23 August 1972. Of course before this time frame the 1-21 and 2-21 Infantry had stood down in Germany and Fort Riley, Kansas, respectively; thus, ending the regiment's colorful and distinguished history, but that only lasted a short while. Within

months the 1-21 and 2-21 Infantry would see new beginnings at Schofield Barrack, Hawaii and Fort Stewart, Georgia.

The 1-21 Infantry was relieved from assignment with the 24th ID on 5 June 1972 and assigned to the 25th ID at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, where it would later convert to the Lightfighter concept. The 2-21 Infantry was reactivated on 21 June 1975 at Fort Stewart, Georgia as part of the 24th ID (M) and then inactivated December 1987. The 3-21 Infantry was reactivated and assigned to the 25th ID at Schofield Barrack, Hawaii January 1986 and then inactivated on 15 July 1995. The 4-21 Infantry was reactivated on 16 January 1986; the 5-21 Infantry was reactivated 16 May 1985, both assigned to 7th ID (L) at Fort Ord, CA until they were inactivated on September 1993. During a period of time from May 1985 through December 1987 all five battalions of the 21st Infantry Regiment were operational, although not under a regimental command.



### 7th ID Light Fighters, Fort Ord, CA



In May 1985 and January 1986 two Gimlet battalions, 5th and then the 4th, were training at Fort Benning to be sent to the newly reactivated 7th ID (Light) at Fort Ord, CA, where they were activated as Light Fighter Battalions. Once assigned to Fort Ord the Gimlet Light Fighters began training as part of the Lightfighters concept preparing for the eventuality of a combat deployment worldwide.

The 5th Battalion conducted its initial Light Fighter Rites of Passage and unit collective training at Fort Ord and Fort Hunter Liggett, displaying an aggressive spirit embodied in their unofficial motto: "When in Doubt, Attack!" This period culminated in an extended operational deployment as part of the Multinational Force and Observers in the Sinai, June – December 1987.

The Gimlet Battalion led by LTC Robert M. Cronin, 2nd Brigade, 7th ID (L) guided the battalion through its tough training program preparing for a possible combat mission. That mission came as part of Task Force Bayonet Task Force Atlantic to support Operation Just Cause in Panama from 20 December 1989 to 30 January 1990. The 5-21 Infantry Lightfighters proved their mettle during that deployment.

After that successful deployment the battalion returned to Panama from March to May 1990 to support Operation Promote Liberty and complete training at the Jungle Operations Training Center. During their time at Fort Ord, the Gimlet Light Fighters had undergone five collective training periods including two external evaluations, two

emergency deployment readiness exercises (one to Yakima Training Area in Washington and one to Reykjavik, Iceland) and one combined joint training exercise with forces from the UK, Canada, Australia and the U.S. Marine Corps. As a result 5-21 Infantry (L) was considered one of the most highly trained Battalions in a division renowned for its rigorous training. This was to be a critical element in the battalion's success in OJC.

Three years later the two 21st Infantry Regiment Lightfighter Battalions stood down when the 7th ID (L) at Ford Ord, California, and was deactivated September 1993.



### 21st Infantry Regiment Reactivated as Part of the 25th ID (L)

On 5 June 1972 the Army directed that the 25th Infantry Division be expanded to a two brigade division to increase its capability as the strategic reserve for the Pacific. Therefore, the 2nd Brigade which was only at color guard strength since it returned from Vietnam in 1971 would be brought to full combat ready strength and the 3rd Brigade that was at zero strength be inactivated. The 1-21 Infantry was relieved from assignment with the 24th Infantry Division on 5 June 1972, and reassigned as one of three infantry battalions to round out the 2nd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, that was activated at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii.

Gimlets of the 1-21 Infantry were one of the first infantry battalions to convert to the Lightfighter concept. The Gimlets set the standards for equipment turn-in, Light Leaders course at Ft. Benning, Georgia, and Lightfighter Operations 1 and 2. By 1985 the Army ordered the 25th ID (L) to increase the strategic reserve for the Pacific. The 3rd Brigade was reactivated and brought up to full combat ready status as a light infantry division.

The 3-21 Infantry (L) was reactivated on 16 January 1986 as one of the three rifle battalions assigned to the 1st Brigade, 25th ID (Light) where the battalion remained until it was once again deactivated in 1995. During that period of time Gimlets were called upon as part of OPERATION UPHOLD DEMOCRACY and sent to Haiti from January 1995 to June 1995. The Gimlet Lightfighters continued to prepare for combat at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. The 1st Brigade 25th ID less personnel and equipment was inactivated and sent to Fort Lewis, Washington as part of the draw-down and realignment.

The 1-21 Battalion Commander, LTC James C. Close, on 11 January 2001 took more than 525 Gimlets from 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry, 25th Infantry Division (Light) for a six months deployment to join the Multinational Force and Observers mission in the Sinai

(rotation number 40). LTC Close accepted control of South Camp from the 2-505 Infantry on 19 January 2001 and then returned all personnel to Schofield Barracks July 2001.



## Global War on Terror



The new millennium brought with it major changes for the Gimlets as well as the US Military and world. After foiled attack plots on US locations and the attempted bombing of the USS Sullivan and the eventual bombing of the USS Cole on 12 October 2000. All plots and bombings were claimed by the global militant Islamist organization Al-Qaeda founded by Osama bin Laden in late 1988. On September 11, 2001, Al-Qaeda war declared on America. On that Tuesday morning, 19 terrorist from the Islamic militant group hijacked and crashed commercial airliners into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon.

This surprise attack similar to the surprise attack at Pearl Harbor launched the US into the Global War On Terrorism. By October 2001 the US dispatched military personnel to Afghanistan to hunt down Osama in Laden. As the US began closing in on Al-Qaeda and its leader Osama in Laden American Armed Forces were conducting military operations in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Somalia and Yemen. In March 2003 the Bush administration declared war on Iraq.

For the first time since the Persian Gulf War that ended in victory more than a decade earlier massive numbers of US military personnel were alerted for deployment and eventually entered Iraq to capture Sadaam Hussein and his administration as well as any Al-Qaeda in Iraq. Only this time the armada was not going to stop short, it was going all the way to Baghdad. In June 2002 LTC Mark Dewhurst who had served as a rifle platoon leader in the Gulf War would assume command of the 1-21 Infantry Regiment.

After much training the 1-21 Infantry Regiment (Light), part of the 2nd Brigade 25th Infantry Division (Light) would make a historical deployment for the regiment in January 2004. The battalion would deploy to a combat theater of operations for the first time since the Korean War as an all volunteer force.

After communist North Korea launched a surprise attack on their southern neighbor, the Republic of Korea on 25 June 1950 the 24th ID readied a response force in Japan. Because US defense spending had reached a modern day low after World War II the US military was ill prepared to face the North Korean Army: an army that had been quietly building a huge force for the invasion with up to date weapons supplied by China and Russia. Never the less, President Truman made the decision to send American forces to help Republic of Korea forces to drive the invading forces north.

In Japan, the immediate reaction force for the 24th ID was preparing for deployment to Korea. A show of force 540 man battalion size task force of the 24th Infantry Division

**under the command of LTC Charles Smith was rushed to Korea. The men of Task Force Smith were told that the communist would flee at the sight of American soldiers; instead, the communist stood and fought. Those warriors that survived swore that never again would untrained, unseasoned, ill-equipped and outgunned American soldiers face a superior enemy force.**

**Although the deployment to Iraq would be a historical one for the battalion, it would turn out to be a costly event. Sadly, the battalion would lose two of its finest Gimlet Warriors Killed In Action since the 3-21 Infantry lost the last Gimlet Warriors of the Vietnam War before that battalion stood down in August 1972: SPC Amos C / 1-21 KIA 8 April 2004 and SSG Nunes A / 1-21 KIA 2 May 2004 as well as 26 other Gimlet Warrior Wounded in Action.**

**After months of intense training whereby Gimlet Warriors honed their combat skills throughout 2002 and 03 the battalion was considered combat ready. With final leaves at the end of 2003 the 1-21 Infantry (L) was ready to deploy. The battalion began making final preparations to depart Hawaii for combat duty in Iraq by January 2004. Early morning 21 January 2004 Gimlet Warriors packed inside aircraft lifted off the runway at Hickam AFB, Hawaii for the twenty-eight hours (41 with time-zone difference) flight to Kuwait – not a sound was heard inside the aircraft. There was a sense of reality for those Gimlets onboard that they were off to experience combat.**

**Once the Gimlet Battalion arrived in Kuwait there was more training and issuance of some new and more specialized equipment. Finally, at 1100 hours 3 February 2004 LTC Dewhurst gathered the entire 1-21 Task Force together for final orders and an impromptu morale talk before moving out.**

**As the 41 year old Battalion Commander addressed his Gimlet Warriors he recalled how the 1-21 Infantry, Task Force Smith, had been rushed into combat in Korea in 1950 undermanned and outgunned, their equipment and training lacking. A mistake, he said, that would not occur again. After the Battalion Chaplain, Everett Franklin, gave benediction the convoy began moving north into harms way towards the city Kirkuk where they would spend the next year, and hopefully after that year all Gimlets would return to Schofield Barracks safely.**

**The city of Kirkuk, an ancient city in Iraq sits north of Baghdad and southeast of Mosul at the base of the Zagros Mountain range, dates back to 3000 B.C. The city one of the most heavily contested areas in Iraq after Sadaam Hussein's regime was toppled by coalition forces in 2003 was an oil rich area. Oil pipelines run from Kirkuk to the coastal cities of Tripoli in Lebanon and Yamurtalik in Turkey. These pipelines constitute an estimated 40 percent of all the oil in Iraq. The city is comprised of four different ethnic groups and three religions. Arabs, Kurds, Turkoman and Assyrian Christians make up the ethnic cauldron. All of these groups lay claim to Kirkuk in some fashion or the other.**

**The Arabs were comparative the newcomers to the area. The majority of them (some 200,000) were emplaced there by Sadaam Hussein's regime in the 1980s and 1990s during**

his movement to “Arabize” the region. During this period many Kurds were displaced from their homeland. Since the fall of Sadaam’s regime Kurds began to return to the region to reclaim their homeland. Turkoman had lived in the city of Kirkuk since it was part of the Ottoman Empire. The Assyrian Christians inhabited the region since the days of the biblical prophets Daniel and Hosea. All but the Assyrians claim predominance over the city. The rest have been willing to fight for the oil-rich city in some way or another for years. Gimlets of the 1-21 IN Task Force would have their work cut out for them trying to keep peace in the region as well as control.

On 26 March 2003 over 950 Sky Troopers from the 173rd Airborne Brigade filled the wild blue yonder over northern Iraq, making its first combat jump since the Vietnam War onto Bashur Airfield. The next day Sky Troopers and Special Forces advanced on the city of Kirkuk and surrounding area, hoping to take control of oil fields and airfields around the city. Controlling those two were specific mission goals set forth for the Task Force. On 21 February the 173rd Airborne Brigade relinquished control of Kirkuk transferring authority to Task Force 1-21 Infantry and the brigade returned to Italy.

After Task Force 1-21 Infantry was given control of the volatile city of Kirkuk in February 2004 the main focus was to ferret out and destroy enemy terrorist cells and insurgents operating in the area. They were also task with the job of rebuilding the civil infrastructure through various civil-military and stability and support operations.

Senior commanders in the Army were confident that LTC Dewhurst with his well-trained and well-equipped battalion was a combat force that could be counted on to get the tough job done. The Gimlets arrived in Kirkuk in high state of moral and unit cohesion with top notch battalion staff, company commander, NCOs and Gimlet Warriors to accomplish the mission task upon them. Commanders of the rifle companies CPT Todd Moe A Company, CPT Scott Davis B Company, CPT Bill Veneble C Company were ready to direct company size ground operations while the battalion operated in the Kirkuk area.

Alpha Company or Gators 1-21 with Robert Jennings as the Company First Sergeant would not only make a fine senior NCO he turned out to be an outstanding journalist. 1SG Jennings not only participated in combat operations he would be key to keeping the world informed about the deployment of not only his company, but also the entire battalion while in Iraq. He and his helpers by way of the GATOR website and his weekly articles published in the Honolulu Star-Bulletin: A Soldier’s Story.

The following is a portion of 1SG Jennings 9 May 2004 article that reflects in part:

“This week's article has been a difficult one for me to prepare. It almost feels like I've lost one of my own children.

*In the Army you create incredible bonds between soldiers in your unit. This is especially true for units that deploy to combat who have trained together for so long. We all have spent so much time on and off duty together, spent time getting to know*



*each others families, and come to understand the values and beliefs of all the soldiers around us.*

**This week we mourn one of our own (SSG Nunes), the first Alpha Company soldier to fall in combat since Vietnam. We not only lost Nunes, we had to evacuate four other soldiers for further treatment, and six soldiers were returned to duty after their wounds were treated.”**

**[The second paragraph above serves to exemplify Bonds of Brotherhood: Bonds of Brotherhood is what the Gimlet Association is all about.]**

**LTC Mark Dewhurst and CSM Arthur Padilla cased the 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment’s colors as a symbol of relinquishing their authority of Kirkuk during a ceremony held 12 February 2005 in Iraq [COL Dewhurst remains on active Army duty. CSM Padilla has retired from the Army].**



**Brigade Combat Team (STRYKER) 25th ID**

**More changes for the 21st Infantry as both battalions would eventually convert to Stryker Brigade Combat Team concept, deploying with the STRYKER vehicle more than once to support Combat Operations of Iraqi Freedom and eventually Afghanistan in support of OEF.**

**STRYKER is a family of eight-wheeled armored combat vehicles, transportable in a C-130 aircraft, built for the Army by General Dynamics Land System. The vehicle and the new brigade combat team concept combine the capacity for rapid deployment with survivability and tactical mobility. The eight-wheeled vehicle enables the team to maneuver in close and urban terrain, provide protection in open terrain and transport infantry quickly to critical battlefield positions.**



**Brigade Combat Team (STRYKER) 1/25**

**In 2001 LTC Kevin Hyneman once again began the task of reconstituting the 3-21 Infantry at Fort Lewis, Washington. This time the battalion would become one of the infantry battalions to makeup the second Stryker brigade in the Army – 1/25 Brigade Combat Team (STRYKER). The 1st Brigade under command of COL Robert Brown was reactivated at**

**Fort Lewis on 16 March 2002 to become one of the first infantry battalions in the Army to convert to the new STRYKER Brigade Combat Team concept. [MG Robert B. Brown has been nominated for his third star and is scheduled to assume command of I Corps at Joint Base Lewis-McCord June 2012]**

**After activation LTC Hyneman's battalion was the first of the battalions to receive the new eight-wheeled STRYKER vehicles. Gimlet Warriors of the newly constituted battalion began to train on new technology of STRYKER techniques and strategies applicable for deployment to the urban battle areas of Iraq and Afghanistan. After months of training with the new STRYKER vehicles 20 February 2004 LTC Hyneman would relinquish command of the battalion to become Deputy Commander of the 1st Brigade [LTC Hyneman has since retired from the Army].**

**The 3-21 Infantry with its new vehicles and full compliment of trained Gimlet Warriors deployed in 2004 as a STRYKER battalion of the 1/25 SBCT in support of OIF III. A 41 year old LTC Michael Gibler who had already seen combat as a rifle platoon leader in Panama would lead the 3-21 during the year long deployment. This would be the first combat deployment for the 3-21 since it stood down in Vietnam in August 1972; in addition, the deployment would cost seven Gimlets their lives before the 3-21 returned to Fort Lewis [COL Gibler is now a ROTC instructor at his alma mater, Texas A&M University].**

**After the 3-21 returned from Iraq there was a change of command where LTC Reineke assumed command of the 3-21 Infantry on 22 March 2006. He would remain in command until 31 May 2006 when the 3-21 Infantry stood down to be reflagged as the 2-2 SCR and then sent to Germany.**

**The 3-21 Infantry was reactivated on 14 December 2006 as a STRYKER battalion to be part of the 25th ID's 1st STRYKER Brigade Combat Team at Fort Wainwright, AK. The 3-21 Infantry under the Command of LTC James DeMoss deployed to Iraq September 2008 and successfully returned to Fort Wainwright September 2009 without any Gimlets KIA. After the brigade returned from its deployment the Gimlet Battalion underwent a change of command and began training for another deployment.**

**The new Commander, LTC Stephen Miller, was alerted the summer of 2010 that his battalion would deploy ISO of Operation Enduring Freedom. The battalion began an aggressive readiness training program in preparation for the upcoming deployment. The battalion began deploying to Afghanistan April of 2011. Assassins Company 3-21 was the first company to deploy. Creature Company would deploy next with Bushmasters 3-21 deploying last. Headquarters and the battalion colors arrived on 28 May 2011. The colors were uncased on and TFG assumed control of the AO Gimlet from 28e west to the tip of Horn of Panjwa'i (HoP), approximately 100 sq km. For the next year TFG would conduct numerous combat and support operation in their TAOR. The battalion suffered 8 Gimlets KIA supporting OEF.**

**On Thursday 12 July 2012 LTC Miller relinquished command of the 3-21 Infantry, whereby LTC Scott Schumacher assumed command. The legacy of the 3-21 IN continues.**



**Brigade Combat Team (STRYKER) 2/25**

**After LTC Dewhurst returned the battalion to Hawaii from its Iraq deployment LTC Matthew Kelley assumed command of the 1-21 Infantry. The new commander began to reorganize the battalion as one of the STRYKER infantry battalions to make up the 2/25 STRYKER Brigade Combat Team the beginning of 2005 at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. There was a change of command whereby LTC Mario A. Diaz assumed command of the 1-21 Infantry May 2007 as the new STRYKER Battalion Commander. After certification he took the Gimlet Battalion along with its STRYKER vehicles to Iraq in support of OIF for 15 months (OIF 07-09) December 2007. The battalion conducted operations around the Baghdad area, suffering 7 KIA before redeploying to Schofield Barracks, Hawaii.**

**On 3 June 2009 LTC Robert J. Molinari assumed command of the 1-21 IN whereby he began preparing the battalion for another deployment to Iraq as a BCT (STRYKER). The 1-21 deployed to Iraq in 2010 and stayed for a year support combat operations of OIF. In August 2011 the 1-21 Infantry redeployed to Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, where the battalion underwent a change of command. LTC Timothy Hayden assumed command and currently is preparing the battalion for another combat deployment if called upon.**

**Gimlet Brothers, be proud of the regimental heritage and the part you played in it. Over the past 200 years Gimlets have never failed to live up to the regimental motto of DUTY; performing with great courage and selflessness since the War of 1812, and will continue to do so when called upon for future military operations.**

**[For all Gimlets who read the history to the end, the association asks for your input, if you spot any errors or omissions bring said to the attention of the association. If during the process of writing this historical overview some important event was missed or not covered properly let the association hear from you; also, inform the association if you spot anything that is incorrect, so the staff may make corrections. Contact the association national headquarters with your story, photos or recollections. There is a more complete history of the 21st Infantry Regiment in the works for publication. Become a part of helping Gimlet historians maintain the Gimlet history.]**

**21st Infantry Regiment (Gimlet) Coat of Arms**



**The 21st Infantry Regiment Coat of Arms bears that rich history and represents the 21st Infantry's participation in numerous campaigns throughout American history. The colors of blue and white are traditional colors of the infantry.**

**Organized in 1861 as the 2nd Battalion 12th Infantry, the regiment was in the Army of the Potomac and served in several engagements. The cedar tree commemorates the regiment's baptism by fire at Cedar Mountain, 9 August 1862, where it performed its mission with such success as to receive special mention from General Prince, the brigade commander.**

**The arrows of the crest and the rattlesnake skin, an Indian emblem of war, allude to the eight campaigns during the Indian Wars.**

**The five-bastion Fort was the symbol of the 5th Corps at Santiago during the war with Spain.**

**The Katipunan Sun represents the Gimlet's role in the three expeditions during the Philippine Insurrection: 1899, 1905, and 1909.**

**The present Gimlet Coat of Arms was approved on 17 January 1921.**

**The 21st Infantry Regiment's colors are adorned with streamers of 53 campaigns, and the regiment's constant participation is manifested in the Gimlet motto, "Duty."**

**Duty is the motto of the 21st Infantry Regiment (Gimlet), and Bore Brother Bore is the Gimlet battle cry.**

